

Episode 1.02

More or Less

Episode Synopsis

Kes' mental abilities continue to get stronger, while Voyager's new crewmember struggles with her weakened state.

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Kes made her way down the busy corridor leading to the Mess Hall. Unlike everyone else, she turned into the turbolift. Her whole body froze as the doors closed behind her.

A familiar voice spoke to her, "don't get too comfy, it's not over yet."

All she could do was stare at the figure standing directly in front of her. It was almost like looking in a mirror.

"You've seen it," the figure spoke. The mirror image illusion shattered as her face aged on the spot. "Voyager's still in grave danger."

"How are you here?" Kes could only manage to say.

"I haven't got much time. I can't allow this to happen."

"Q said," Kes mumbled to herself.

The older woman shook her head. "Q would say anything to you, anything to throw you off."

"I don't understand," Kes said.

"You will. Q will have been telling you the truth about one thing, everything's different. This time, it's all his doing."

Kes stared at her other self, her eyes filled with curiosity. "This time?"

"That isn't important right now. Despite all that's changed, we're heading along a similar path." The older Kes sighed, "must be fate."

"The visions, the Captain's daughter. Is this the difference you were talking about?" Kes questioned.

Her older self gave her a knowing glance as a reply, she nodded in understanding.

"This time around you and I have a chance to fix this," the older woman said.

"How?"

The older Kes started to fade away like she was a hologram. "I will explain all of this later, when you are ready." She looked anxiously at her hands, then back at her younger self. "Voyager's on course for certain disaster, you need to change that."

"But you said things were different, for all we know changing our course causes the destruction I've seen," Kes stuttered.

The older Kes closed her eyes, "I can smell the fire, burning metal, the smoke." Her eyes reopened. "Nothing's happened to stop it. You must."

Kes looked on, a lot more worried than she was before. "What gives us a better opportunity than your last times?" The other Kes looked surprised, her body faded further away into nothing. "You're me, aren't you?"

A smile appeared on the older woman's face. "Yes, but that was a very long time ago. You already know what's changed. Just remember even the smallest of things can change everything else."

She faded away completely, leaving the other Kes looking very desperate. "Oh no."

Her voice filled the air, "don't worry. You've already done your homework; you're on the right track."

Kes frowned in confusion, "what, I have?" She got no reply. "If I'm on the right track, and it involves the new baby." A thought occurred to her. "Computer, deck one." The turbolift sprang into action.

Seven of Nine stood in her alcove, with her eye tightly shut. Three shadows cast over her from her right.

"Ok, she's in her box. Which one of you has the receipt?" Kathryn muttered.

"Captain, we can't send her back. That'd be cruel," the Doctor protested.

Kathryn seemed confused at this remark. "And?"

"She would be a tactical advantage while we are in Borg Space," Tuvok explained.

"Heart-warming," the Doctor rolled his eyes.

Kathryn grunted, sticking one hand on her hip. "How exactly? You do know the Borg adapt to everything. Don't you fools remember the weapon the Enterprise had? That didn't work cos they had assimilated the guy who knew about it." The two men sighed quietly to themselves, knowing it was probably best to wait for her to finish. "Did you think she'd just chuck nanoprobes at every problem we had, and we'd be fine and dandy. Imbecile."

"You know Captain. There is an alternative to going cold coffee for your daughter," the Doctor dared.

"I'm listening."

"Formula. True it may drain the energy reserves replicating it constantly, but it may be good for everyone's morale. I'd say that's important right now," the Doctor answered. He glanced over at Kathryn as he finished, and was shocked to see her standing there, drinking from an inhumanly sized mug. "How did she do that?"

"Years of experience," Tuvok answered without even batting an eyelid.

"Mmm hmm. Now what's the deal? She's still Borgy," Kathryn said after she finished the mug.

"Well erm, her human physiology is fighting back. I'd like to take her to Sickbay to start the extraction process," the Doctor explained.

"I'm not surprised, those things are huge," Kathryn sighed. The Doctor was about to say something to that but she butted in. "Why are we keeping her again? It's not like we care about ratings."

"Continuity," Tuvok and the Doctor both replied.

"Ugh, killjoys. Keep me up to date and... gah!" Kathryn jumped as she noticed the drone was now watching her. "So glad I finished my cup."

"Indeed," Tuvok murmured.

"Captain Janeway," Seven of Nine snapped. "How..." She looked around as she stepped forward. "We can't hear the others voices."

"Isn't that a good thing?" Kathryn whispered to the Doctor.

"How did your crewmember do this to us?" Seven of Nine demanded.

Kathryn smirked as she sipped on a different mug, the Doctor looked on bewilderedly. "Um, you were attacking us, so you were stopped," he answered.

"Ha, that'll teach you," Kathryn smiled, tossing another cup aside. "The Doc here did all the work."

"How?" Seven of Nine asked with a hint of fear in her voice.

"I don't know, there's no replicator here and I swear she never moves from that spot," the Doctor stuttered.

"She means her connection to the Borg," Tuvok said.

"Oh, well recovering humans from the Borg is in my database. It's a piece of cake," the Doctor said.

Kathryn then drifted off, "coffee cake."

"No, how did your crewmember overpower us?" Seven of Nine snapped.

The Doctor frowned, "I see. I..."

Kathryn snorted, "is that all you care about? You think you're better than us? We won, you didn't, boo hoo."

"Return this drone to the Borg!" Seven of Nine demanded.

"Sure. Tuvok, prepare a spare torpedo casing for her," Kathryn said as she walked away.

Tuvok seemed confused, "just the other day she was telling me not to use them."

The Doctor sighed. He leaned forward to inject the drone with a sedative. "Maybe I should have suggested a gradual introduction to coffee."

"She would never have adhered to it," Tuvok responded.

The Doctor nodded in agreement. "How did you subdue her anyway? She seems to take it personally, which is odd for a drone so reliant on the Collective."

"I do not know. I was attempting to lock her out of navigation systems. Mr Paris fired at her but she had already adapted. The attempts to access our position just seized. When I looked up she was already unconscious."

"That's probably why she's a bit rattled then. I'll run a deeper scan once I get her to Sickbay, we can rule out biological or mechanical faults."

"If it is mechanical, then it would be useful to know before we are attacked again."

"I doubt it. You heard the Captain, the Borg probably knew either way as soon as it happened and adapted to it."

Tuvok stared at the drone's face, noticing her eyepiece was damaged. "I don't think they will."

Kes anxiously stood beside the galley, glancing around like she was looking for someone. Neelix appeared from below the counter, holding a basket of vegetables. "Sweeting? You're early for lunch."

"Hmm? Oh, hi Neelix."

"Ah, you have that look on your face."

"What look?"

"The telepathic look," Neelix answered as he put the basket on the counter. "Do you want to talk about it?"

Kes frowned and shook her head. "I don't think I can. I'm trying to make sense of it."

"Perhaps I can help. Sometimes talking about it out loud with someone can clear any jumble," Neelix smiled.

"It's just, things are different, but they're not. It's people's perceptions of it," Kes tried to put it into words. She half smiled, shaking her head again. "See, saying it out loud is probably worse."

"Are you saying that something's happened, but we just haven't seen it?" Neelix tried to make sense of it.

Kes reached forward to help him sort the vegetables in the basket. "In a way. It's not just that though. We never really found out where our new crewmember came from."

"Our Borg?" Neelix seemed puzzled.

"Sorry, our other new crewmember."

Neelix understood, "ah. I just think there's a lot of denial about her. Humans like to keep secrets about the most normal of things. They can be a little odd sometimes."

Kes nodded. "Once she's finished with our Borg crewmember, I'll have to talk to her." Neelix frowned as he noticed her tearing up a leaf of cabbage a little too much. "That's if she even remembers what I'll be talking about."

"You mean about the stuff that nobody knows about," Neelix said as he reached for what was left of the leaf.

"Oh, sorry Neelix," Kes sighed, instead resting her hands on the counter. "I thought it was just that one incident, but..." Her attention went back to Neelix. "Do you remember the rifts a few months ago?"

"Yes of course," Neelix replied sadly. "We lost a few people, the ship was damaged."

"How did we solve them?" Kes asked him intently.

Neelix frowned as he tried to figure it out. "You know, I'm not sure. You always were the most perceptive of us. Perhaps you sensed it..."

"Imagined it you mean. No. I just remember what happened differently to everyone else." Kes sighed to herself, "I guess it doesn't really matter. It doesn't affect what's happening now."

Neelix smiled at her sympathetically. "It's bothering you though, it matters to me." His demeanour changed as a couple of crewmembers entered the room, one of them was James. The unknowns all sat down at one table, James went to the replicator. "Hmm, a lot of people are eager today."

Kes glanced behind her. She resisted the urge to comment and turned back to him. "We're in Borg Space, it's very stressful."

"Ah, my other job," Neelix smiled warmly. "Though, you were here first. My morale officer duties are directed your way first."

"That's not what I meant," Kes said.

Neelix frowned again as the other crewmembers attacked the other replicator. "Oh I see, comfort eating." He glanced at the other replicator in time to see James sit down nearby it with a cup. "May I suggest something?"

"I don't really feel hungry right now, Neelix," Kes replied.

"No. You told me that things happened differently to what you remember. Did you talk to people who you remember being involved in these events?" Neelix questioned.

Kes nodded. "That's the problem. I was in the meeting that discussed it, everyone involved were affected." Her face frowned again. "Well, almost."

"Almost?"

"Not everybody was in that meeting."

Neelix smiled broadly, "I hope I've been some help then."

"I hope so," Kes sighed, her eyes glazed over as she thought about it. Neelix decided to focus his attention just then at chopping the vegetables, and putting them in the pot. He was just about to slice away at some potatoes when Kes spoke again. "Maybe they're connected after all." Neelix's knife went flying backwards into the air; it soon plunged into the wall. "Oh dear, I'm sorry Neelix."

"It's alright," he stuttered, rubbing his wrist. "What's connected?"

"That vision I had when we entered Borg Space, what happened to the ship months ago..." Kes explained.

Neelix felt a headache coming on. "So you're saying that the same thing is going to damage the ship again? Is that why we've forgotten?"

"Perhaps," Kes replied. "Though since people remember the rifts themselves, and forgotten the minor-ish details, I don't think that's the reason."

"Oh," Neelix's headache turned into a migraine. "What does the Captain's new baby have to do with all of this?" Kes looked at him quizzically. "You asked about her earlier."

"Oh! No, no Neelix, I just thought that was another lost memory incident," Kes stammered as she lied to him. She felt terrible considering how nice he'd been to her, but it was probably for the best. His head looked ready to explode.

"Ah, maybe," Neelix cheerfully said, relieved something was making sense to him. "Maybe you should talk to the Captain after all. If the ship's in danger, she should be aware of it. Though are you sure that the vision wasn't warning you about Species 8472?" Kes nodded solemnly. "As for forgetting minor

things, with the exception of making a baby of course, perhaps it would be best to put that on a back burner for the time being. Let it simmer while you roast the ship in danger in the oven. Not literally, as that would be terrible advice."

"You're right," Kes laughed. "I'll try to talk to her again. I just have one last person to double check events with. Thank you."

"Any time, Sweeting," Neelix smiled.

Kes nodded, and then turned on her heel to make her way over to one of the occupied tables. Once she got there, he looked up at her.

"Can I?"

"You don't have to ask," he replied.

Kes pulled out a chair to sit down opposite him. "I have a weird question for you."

James winced a little as he sat back in his chair. He eventually shrugged, "go for it."

"Ok, um... have you noticed anything different?" Kes carefully asked.

"Well, the ship has Borg green crap on it," James replied, he wasn't really sure what she was getting at.

"No, I mean... what do I mean," Kes mumbled. "Like things have changed since you went to night shift and came back again; people forgetting things, treating you differently cos of it."

James leaned forward again to fold his arms on the table. "Now that you mention it."

Kes tried to hide her relief, "for example?"

"Well five months ago I couldn't really turn a corner without somebody making a snide remark. I thought that it's been months, maybe they found something else to bitch about," James answered.

"So you remember what happened?" Kes blurted out without thinking.

James frowned in confusion, "I was wondering when the weird question was coming."

Kes sighed and shook her head. "I thought I was the only one." She noticed he was still frowning at her. "I think the reason why nobody is angry anymore is that they don't remember what they were mad about."

"Um, why do you think that?" James asked her.

"Because they don't remember what they were mad about," Kes could only reply with. "They remember anomalies tearing up the ship, possessed aliens shooting people, terrorist bombings. But all they remember is anomalies tearing up the ship, poss..."

"I get it," James interrupted her, raising his hand up a bit. "I think. I don't see the problem."

"I guess it isn't," Kes sighed. "As long as you remember though, I can ask you the weird question."

"I thought you already did," James commented.

"Not even close. I need a favour," Kes said.

The Ready Room:

It felt like it had been years since she last did this, but it had only been a long five months. The scent of strong coffee filled the room, just how she liked it. She leaned back in her chair, taking in the aroma, clutching her precious cup in her hands. Nothing could ruin this moment, she thought.

Sitting on her desk was a small mobile crib, raised enough so the occupant could watch her mother drink the coffee she deprived her of. As if she did it on purpose, as soon as Kathryn pressed the cup against her lips, her daughter cried louder than any Red Alert signal could.

Determined that her stubborn little girl wouldn't ruin that moment, she continued her sip anyway. With a heavy sigh she put her cup down on the desk, then sat forward.

The door chimed, but then quickly opened to reveal Chakotay. He quickened his pace to reach the desk. "Shall I?"

"Please. I'm so swamped right now," Kathryn replied, grateful for the visit.

Chakotay moved the little crib around so he could lift the tiny baby up into his arms. Kathryn meanwhile leaned back in her chair to finish her coffee moment. He raised an eyebrow in her direction, but he thought it was best for his health if he didn't comment on it. Their daughter settled down after a little rocking.

"B'Elanna has given me an update on the Borg modifications. Apparently there are some stubborn parts that don't want to be removed in Engineering. I'm afraid we're stuck at impulse until they do."

"Why are we removing the Borg armour plating, it may be useful as we'll be in their space for a while," Kathryn questioned. "I doubt they'll honour the safe passage after what happened with Seven of Boobs."

Chakotay's eyebrow managed to raise higher, "are you still fixating on that? Nobody noticed until you mentioned it."

"Alright Tuvok!" Kathryn groaned to herself. "Don't make me laugh, nobody can miss those. It's like somebody spitting in your face. Only it's not spit, it's just a boob job."

Chakotay cleared his throat, smirking a little. "I checked her personnel file. She was assimilated at a very young age. I hardly think that they're artificial somehow."

"Yes because she hasn't been with a species that likes their implants, has she?" Kathryn remarked. Her hand reached for the coffee pot on the other side of the desk. Her demeanour calmed once she poured another cup. "A young age, you say? When did we meet the Borg again?"

Chakotay sat down opposite her, then moved the computer on the desk around so they could both see it. He keyed in a few commands. A personnel file appeared, showing a picture of a small blonde girl. "There's only one record from Deep Space Four. Her parents' ship was last spotted heading in the Delta Quadrant's direction. That was eighteen years ago."

"So you're saying the Enterprise wasn't the Borg's first Human meeting?" Kathryn said after a small sip.

Chakotay smiled mischievously, "which one?"

Kathryn's eyes narrowed, but not seriously. "The D, not that hideous prequel ship."

"That wasn't the one I had in mind," Chakotay decided to push his luck. His daughter made a little squeak as if to tell him that wasn't a good idea. Kathryn's face also told him this. "Before they started to dismantle the Cargo Bay, I thought I'd have a look in their database."

"Oh don't tell me they saw rebooted Kirk's Enterprise, saw that it was run by kids and left because of how ridiculous it was," Kathryn grumbled.

"Um, wrong dimension," Chakotay sighed. "Apparently Earth had another run in with the Borg while we were gone." He keyed in something on the computer, a page full of text appeared on it with a picture of another Federation ship in the corner.

Kathryn covered her head with her spare hand as she read it. "Ugh, time travel gives me a headache."

Chakotay eyed the huge coffee pot that was almost empty. "Sure it does."

"Wait, another Enterprise? What happened to the old one?" Kathryn complained. She gave up reading, and switched the computer back to their new crewmember's details.

Chakotay shrugged, "*strangely* enough, the Borg doesn't know the answer to that. Though thanks to some of the Borg's information when they assimilated it, we know stuff about the new one. Stuff that we could probably use here."

"I think you know better than that Chakotay," Kathryn groaned. "Installing something the Borg already know about isn't... wait, what? Assimilated? That ship will be newer than ours."

Chakotay sighed, his expression showed a little worry. "I know. Hopefully that means the Borg will have no reason to assimilate us. We're old news."

"Even with one of their drones napping in my Cargo Bay?" Kathryn grumbled. "I don't think so." She climbed out of her seat whilst reaching for the pot again. "Maybe once she's mostly implantless she'll help us remove the junk you mentioned."

"Even the armour?" Chakotay smiled.

"Yes, in the meantime she could help with integrating anything new the Enterprise has," Kathryn said. Chakotay showed off his dimples this time, she rolled her eyes. "What?"

"I thought you were against it, and for good reason too," Chakotay replied. "Besides, I don't think getting Seven of Nine on our side will be that easy. She wasn't raised by Humans, she was raised by the Borg as a drone. Being an individual won't come as easily for her."

"Unless she starts assimilating us or wearing ridiculous boob eye catching outfits, keeping her here is for the best," Kathryn said. Chakotay shook his head. "Besides we're already a sitting duck if they know about more modern Starfleet ships. It's better than doing nothing."

Sickbay:

The Doctor was getting a little impatient. Every time he maneuvered around his patient he would almost bump into someone. He contained a sigh as he hovered the separate scanning tool of the tricorder over the ex-Borg's metallic skull.

"This skull plate is connected with over three million junctures. It'll take too long to remove them one at a time." A solution for this was already in his programming, "I'll have to remove a part of the skull itself." With that in mind he straightened back up and turned to walk to the instrument tray. As usual somebody was in his way. Not only was he in the way, Thompson had been leaning over her like he had been treating her too.

"Yikes, I thought I had it rough." That was the last straw, the Doctor swung around to the sanest of the intruders.

"Lieutenant, can you and your team of clowns please leave the surgical area?" he did not ask nicely.

Tuvok responded as he expected. "This Borg is a Security risk." Even he was standing a mere metre away from the biobed, but at least he wasn't almost sharing it.

"If she was conscious yes, but right now she isn't going anywhere," the Doctor argued impatiently.

"Clowns is a little harsh," Craig commented. Out of the three of them, he was the furthest away.

Thompson hadn't budged much to the Doctor's anger. In fact he seemed even closer than he was before. For some reason he moved his hands as if each one was carrying a ball. His eyes were wide. "Bigger than my hands. I dunno if that's a good thing."

"Forget I said anything," Craig muttered, his face red as if he had just done that.

Tuvok gently pulled Thompson away by the arm, they both backed off a metre or so. Craig decided to hang around the doorway instead.

"Thank you," the Doctor said dryly.

The doors swiftly opened, catching Craig off guard for a second. Kes hurried straight through them and passed him. "Sorry I'm late Doctor, I had something to sort out."

The Doctor shook his head, "you're just in time. We'll need to remove some of our patient's skull to remove the plating, she needs to be anaesthetised."

Kes understood right away, "of course, Doctor." She turned in the direction of the equipment tray. One of the hyposprays swung itself through the air, directly at her. She caught it without even blinking an eye. Everyone's attention flew to her in amazement. Both the Doctor and Tuvok approached her as she silently gazed at the spray in her hand.

"Kes?" the Doctor could only say.

"I don't know. I just thought about it, and the next second it came to me," Kes calmly said.

"Have you been practising your telekinetic abilities again?" Tuvok asked her.

Kes shook her head, "no, not for months. I admit, this isn't the only thing that's happened."

"For example?" Tuvok asked with some Vulcan caution in his voice.

"I... I've been feeling a little different lately. More energetic, but I have been sleeping a lot less," Kes explained. She wasn't sure whether to bring up anything else. The Doctor was already scanning her.

"Your serotonin levels are 62% above normal!" he gasped. "Like a few days ago when you were in contact with Species 8472, the parts of your brain that allow telepathy, telekinesis are hyper-stimulated."

"Does this mean that she's in contact with them again?" Tuvok asked, his hand already on the phaser in his belt.

"No. No, it's different," Kes tried to assure him. "This feels a lot more natural. It's hard to explain."

"Perhaps it's an after-effect from her contact with them," Tuvok suggested.

Kes didn't agree but she didn't say it out loud, the Doctor did however. He smiled dryly, "a reasonable diagnosis, for a Security Officer." He turned back to Kes, "I'd like to do some more scans later on, but first we should get back to our Borg."

"Yes, Doctor," Kes nodded.

They were about to get back to work when the doors opened again, this time for Kathryn.

"You called, what's the problem?"

Once again, it was crowded around the surgical biobed. The Doctor sighed as concern lines filled his forehead, he turned to face her. "Captain, I have some bad news. I already mentioned that her Human physiology is fighting back against the Borg technology. However it's intensifying."

"Doesn't that help your treatment of her?" Kathryn asked.

"If you recall, Seven of Nine clearly does not wish to be returned to Humanity," the Doctor carefully replied.

Tuvok noticed the danger signs lurking in Kathryn's face, he backed off.

"So we're supposed to keep a Borg drone walking around, fully connected and fully armoured? What the frick is this logic?" she spat.

Kes quickly handed her a handy travel mug. The aroma steaming out of it quickly disarmed Kathryn's deadly mood. The Doctor beamed proudly at his assistant for her quick thinking. "Good idea," he mouthed. She smiled back.

"Sooo, that's a bummer. She's Human whether she likes it or not..." Kathryn sighed.

"Yes. If we do nothing, it could be deadly to her," the Doctor said. "She'll have to decide if keeping her implants are worth her life."

Thompson sighed too, "that is a shame." Craig glanced at him, it seemed only he knew what he really meant, he shook his head in disgust.

"Weren't you about to start the procedure to remove a giant skull plate thing?" he decided to interrupt.

The Doctor turned to the young Security officer in surprise. "That's different, it's not..."

"Something she'd notice missing if she woke up, oh wait," Kathryn said, her crankiness returning. She took a long sip from the mug. "Next you'll be removing that dentist needle eye of hers, and giving her real clothes to wear. Silly boy."

"It's not my fault, the original episode we removed it before going over this little ethics dilemma," the Doctor protested. He turned to Craig, "and you spotted it, how?"

"It was a reasonable plot hole analysis, for a FV character," Tuvok countered. He frowned, "which sounds implausible, intriguing."

Craig's eyes widened as he noticed Kathryn giving him a motherly smile, she seemed closer as well. "Um no, I never thought that deeply about it. You just went *hey, she doesn't want these implants out*, and I'm like *wait, you were going to anyway*. I'm not..." Kathryn lunged for him, he squeezed his eyes shut and prepared for the worst. All he got was a clasp on the shoulder.

"Well no harm done. We still have to get her decision but..." the Doctor said.

"Hmm, toughie!" Kathryn sighed. She removed her spare hand and rested her chin against its palm. "We can't just dump her back in the collective, which is what she wants. It's too dangerous for us. Besides it's almost like the Borg's completely killed her ability to decide."

Kes frowned, "if she's disconnected and already decided..."

"That would only tell me that she wants the Borg to tell her what to do again, not a real decision," Kathryn said. She ended that thought with a final sip of her coffee. "Until she can choose for herself, somebody else needs to."

"But how do we know she's ready? What if she chooses to go back after all?" Kes questioned.

"First let's save her life. Doctor, disconnect everything," Kathryn ordered. Her attention went to the same place Thompson's was. "Everything." Tuvok's eyebrow went up, Thompson pouted, and Craig resisted the urge to laugh as she was still right beside him.

The Doctor missed this, he nodded grimly, "yes Captain."

"Keep me informed," Kathryn ordered. She quickly made a bee-line to the exit. Kes instinctively followed her, which she noticed right away. "Kes?"

"I need to speak with you, it's important."

Kathryn glanced down at her empty coffee mug, and then into the desperate eyes of the Ocampa. She smiled warmly. "For you, anything. What is it?"

Meanwhile the Doctor decided to make a start on the drone without her. Before he could even touch her, her back arched. All three Security officers quickly reached for their weapons. Within seconds her whole body violently shook, alarms beeped just as violently.

"What is it?" Tuvok directed towards the Doctor. He read the nearest panel.

"She's going into neural shock!" Kes headed over to join him, the Doctor turned to her. "We need to stabilise her motor cortex." He waited only a second, Kes wasn't responding. Her gaze seemed to be aimed at the drone, but seemed much further away. "Kes?"

"Wait, I can see it," she said softly.

The Doctor didn't understand, he looked at the readings but he couldn't see anything different that she could have. "See? See what?"

"I think the problem is in her Caligula," Kes answered plainly. Her eyes never left the drone.

"I'll say, that's what I was going to say," Thompson stuttered. He jumped once he noticed Kathryn had joined him, giving him the stare. He felt himself shrinking, and his insides melting at the sight of it. "I uh... think it's time for us to swap with our teammates, Craigy." He ran out without an acknowledgment. Craig stared after him with his eyes wide.

"It's a nanoprobe. It's attached itself to the nerve," Kes said.

The Doctor didn't know what to say for once. Tuvok approached Kes, concern showing clearly on his face. "What do you mean by you can see it?"

"There's no time. Can we remove it without severing the nerve?" the Doctor asked her.

"I think I can show you better than I can tell you," Kes replied. Her eyes widened slightly. The Doctor could only look on with growing worry. The spasms stopped. Seven of Nine's body relaxed into the biobed. All of the alarms calmed down along with her. The Doctor's tricorder hovered over her again.

"Amazing. Well done Kes," he carefully said. "Unorthodox, but effective."

Kathryn's more lethal gaze died down as she approached the biobed. She maneuvered herself between the Doctor and Tuvok, Kes' stare finally moved to everyone else.

The doors opening made the Doctor sigh in annoyance. He looked over to see Thompson's replacement walk in. He went straight over to Craig, his eyes were so wide they were starting to sting a little. James looked at the group by the biobed, then back at him.

"You do know they're fake, right?"

Craig finally blinked a few times, he turned to him. "What?" He understood immediately. "Oh, no no. Kes just went all deus ex machina on us all."

"What just happened?" Kathryn decided to ask.

"It was like the hypospray. I focused on the problem, and it was if my senses lead me straight to it. I can't really explain better than that," Kes tried to help. "Destroying the implant, I only had to want it."

"That's an extremely dramatic shift in your previous telekinetic prowess," Tuvok said.

"That's an understatement. She just performed micro biology surgery with a single thought. That's incredible," the Doctor said.

"Tops the hypospray mind throw, that's for sure," Craig said in James' direction.

"Still. Your telekinetic powers are still undisciplined, and therefore unpredictable," Tuvok said the same old tired line. Most of the room groaned.

"Wait, she just wished away a tiny implant attached to some old body part, without killing the drone. How much more disciplined does she have to get so you stop saying that?" James said.

Tuvok only answered in his usual silent way. Kes half smiled.

Kathryn sighed, clutching her forehead like she had a headache. "One patronising Security officer at a time, please."

James shook his head while Kes cast a glance back, showing him and Craig her smile.

"Perhaps we should discuss this situation first, after all," Tuvok said, gesturing to Seven of Nine briefly before returning to Kes.

Kes shook her head, her gaze met with the worried Doctor's. "No, I'm fine. I want to help her first."

The Doctor smiled a little proudly, but his worry was trying to overpower it. Kathryn heavily sighed.

"Well, either way keep me informed," she said, focusing most of her sentence on Kes. She knowingly nodded. "If you think of anything, *specific*, call me immediately." She headed for the exit, passing a brief but odd glance James' way as she passed. He pretended he didn't see it.

"Specific?" Tuvok questioned.

Kes glanced down briefly with hesitation, she glanced back at him once she had hidden it.

The Bridge:

Kathryn re-entered the Bridge, holding her now re-filled travel mug. She only had to gesture her head to the side to get Chakotay to follow her. Chakotay looked very concerned once he entered the Ready Room. He felt like he was forgetting something as well, so that didn't help.

"I have the Bridge," both Tom and Harry said. Tom turned around to scowl at him, he did so back.

Jessie rolled her eyes, "not this crap again."

"I think it should be on rank and looks, so I by default..." Tom argued.

"Janeway, really?" Harry butted in. "And that would only even it out, as you only have the rank."

"Wow Harry, I'm hurt and a little proud of you," Tom said.

Harry half rolled his eyes. "Nah, we don't want to give Jessie another shot." Jessie narrowed her eyes as she looked across the Bridge. Harry could feel the iciness of her stare despite the distance between them. "It's a compliment... but an insult too, damn."

"Fine, talent, rank and height. There," Tom argued.

"Minus two so far," Jessie muttered.

"So you think actual command ability and not talking nonsense shouldn't count?" Harry questioned. "I'm obviously better suited to this than you are."

Meanwhile in the Ready Room, Chakotay and Kathryn were standing in silence, deep in their own worried thoughts. The thought that he had forgotten something was completely gone.

He finally broke the silence, "so she has no idea about when or even how?"

Kathryn shook her head. "No. All she knows for certain is that we're in danger."

"I can't imagine it being anything other than the Borg. They betrayed us and here we are, still in their space," Chakotay said.

Kathryn tried to suppress a scowl in his direction, it just looked like she was badly winking at him with both eyes. "I hope that isn't a told you so, Commander."

Chakotay chuckled, "of course not. Just suggesting a possible disaster in the making."

The pair of them threw their heads towards the door, not literally of course, at the already familiar sound of a baby wailing. They looked at each other with quiet dismay.

"That's what I was forgetting," he said in a guilty voice.

Kathryn just sighed in understanding, "we need a babysitter."

Meanwhile on the Bridge, all people could see were a couple of tiny feet kicking from a baby carrier abandoned on Kathryn's chair. They could hear a lot more than that obviously.

"That makes no sense Harry," Tom grumbled.

Yes, they were still arguing. Jessie shook her head and rolled her eyes again.

"You were right before, you're the night shift king. Be my guest," Tom continued, gesturing to the Captain's seat.

Harry timidly shook his head. "I'm only an Ensign, I'm way too confident for my own good."

"Fine, take yourself down a peg," Tom stuttered, still pointing.

Luckily for those two, Kathryn and Chakotay hurried back onto the Bridge. Chakotay got to her first, and quickly scooped her up in his arms. "Hmm, I think I know what she wants." Kathryn grabbed a small bag from between the chairs. Chakotay looked on in surprise, but was quickly deflated when the first thing she brought out was a filter coffee bag. "I hope not." He quickly escaped back into the Ready Room with her.

"What?" Kathryn huffed. She looked at the bag, sighed that she picked up the wrong thing. Then she smiled when she realised it was the right *wrong* thing, she started drooling at the thought.

"A Janeway kid hasn't got a chance, has it?" Jessie muttered to herself. Everyone on the bridge agreed, but they didn't dare vocalise that.

Several bags of coffee later...

"Captain, Captain respond?" the Doctor's voice rang around the room.

"Yes Chakotay, I would like a coffee massage," Kathryn mumbled. She rolled onto her back, her nostrils flared. A loud snore escaped her mouth as she raised her hand like it had a cup in it. Her arm swung out to the right. "Stick it up your backside you..." she trailed off into a sleepy mumble.

"Perhaps she's busy with her baby," Kes' voice said.

"Yeah Tom, nobody likes you," Kathryn continued. "Go eat some Neelix food you pillock."

"I'll give her a few minutes, then I'll call the Commander," the Doctor's voice said.

Kathryn rolled onto her left, she wrapped one arm around herself. "A coffee scented dress, you shouldn't have," she purred. This turned into a giggle, "I didn't know you liked me that way Doccie, you devil." Her face scrunched up, "get some hair and then we'll talk."

"Sickbay to Janeway?"

"It's not crunch time," Kathryn mumbled. She flopped back onto her back. Whilst she had been on her side she had started to drool a little. "Oh Harry, keep dreaming. You'll be a real boy someday... as if!" Her mouth opened wide again, even Deck 15 would hear the resulting snores. "All I want is some coffee, something I can drink all night..." she started to half mumble and half sing. Her right hand reached for the empty cup lying at her side.

"Captain?"

"I wanna drink and drink, and let it all out," the singing continued. The cup holding arm swung it back to her face, but a little too hard. Luckily it was only the plastic travel mug. It was enough to bring her out of her nap. She rose into a seating position while yawning a few times. This was when she noticed her cup was not only the cause of her aching face, but it was empty too.

"Crap, I'd better tell Tuvok about this." She jumped to her feet. After a second of normality, her whole body wobbled a bit. "Red alert time."

"Sickbay to Janeway."

Kathryn tapped her chest a few times until she got the commbadge. "Wow Doctor, good timing. I think I've been attacked."

"Attacked? Really? If you can, come to Sickbay and..."

Kathryn wobbled a bit more, she double checked her cup. "Yeah, I woke up on the floor with a bruise and all my coffee is gone." She looked around at the various coffee packets on the floor. "They're dirty buggers too."

She heard a sigh on the other end of the comm, and just managed to make out quiet laughter. *"Did you have any coffee before this happened?"*

"I was about to put it into my filter machine... Oh! Those impatient assholes just couldn't wait for me to brew some. Can you believe some people would be that impatient?" Kathryn said.

"Um... yes I can really believe that. Come to Sickbay. You can kill two birds with one stone."

Kathryn gasped, "birds stole my coffee? I'll do more than hit them with a stone." With that she ran out.

"No wonder Seven of Nine doesn't want to join the crew," Kes sighed.

Sickbay:

The Doctor was busy showing off his latest creation to the Security members there, they looked a little horrified as it seemed to stare back.

"See, it'll replace the eye piece perfectly and no one will notice the difference," he advertised.

"It's staring at me," Foster whimpered. Craig nodded.

The Doctor didn't hear, he raised the eye in his hand, which was mechanical around the back, so it was face level. "Notice the pigment, it matches our Borg's exactly."

Craig shifted to the side, half expecting the eye to follow his movement. Luckily it didn't. "It's still creepy," he sighed in partial relief. He cringed as Kes walked passed him, carrying the huge skull plate the drone had on before.

"Ah, if you'd like you can put a little forcefield around the chamber that'll go in," the Doctor cheerfully said.

Craig's eyes followed Kes' journey through the office. "I like your thinking." He rushed to follow her.

"It's hard getting good Security these days," the Doctor commented with a wry smile.

Meanwhile:

The turbolift doors swooshed open, the panel on the corridor side of it began to flash red. The occupant stepped out, then turned immediately to it. A few quick presses stopped it and returned it to normal.

Only just around the corner were a group of three Security officers.

"I hate it when it's our turn for Deck Thirteen duty," one man said.

"I'm telling you, this place gets more spookier everytime I come here," a second man said.

"Yeah you feel like something dangerous will pop out at any second," another man said.

"Excuse me?" a fourth said. The Security team jumped out of their skin. Their second reaction was to quickly point phaser rifles at the fourth voice. "Well at least you didn't run away, wetting yourself," James tried not to smirk.

The three officers relaxed, and lowered their rifles. The first man stepped ahead of the other two with an angry look on his face.

"What are you doing here, Taylor? Your team is supposed to be guarding the Borg," he grunted.

"Why else would I be here?" James answered with a frown.

The team stared at him blankly, the first one shook his head in anger. "Funny place to skive isn't it?"

"Yeah, this deck is branded Security Level Ten, authorised personnel only," the second guy said.

James narrowed his eyes slightly, then raised his eyebrow. "Okay, so why is it level ten?" The team looked at him like he had grown a second head, one of them laughed quietly.

"Did you hit your head or something?" the first man asked with a smile.

"I'm starting to wonder the same about you three," James muttered to himself. He shook his head, "look I'm relieving you, go gas around another deck." All three of them laughed to his surprise. "What now?"

"You, alone? That's a good one," the first man sniggered.

"If I didn't know any better he wants to sneak a girl down here," the third man chuckled.

James was starting to get annoyed now, but the men didn't seem to notice or care about that. "You know it's not safe down here, hence the level ten." The laughter continued. "I don't know why I'm bothering," he mumbled with a roll of the eyes.

"If you want, we'll go if you bring the rest of your so called team. You can all cry for your mummy and... what did you say, wet your pants, together," the first man teased.

"I'm only going to say this once, in a way you'll probably not understand cos you're a bunch of forgetful idiots; get off this deck, or I'll make you," James said whilst clenching his fists. Just as he expected the group laughed their butts off to this threat. He sighed, "so I'm going to have to remind some people. Fair enough."

Sickbay:

Kathryn had joined everyone now. Just looking at her or smelling her, you could tell she was still under the coffee influence. However she was trying her best to fool everyone with her best serious face. The Doctor gestured to Kes, she nodded. Not noticing this Kathryn put her hands on her hips, missing one a couple of times.

"She's out of immediate danger for now. She's responded very well to the surgery," he explained.

"How interesting," Kathryn said, her lips threatening to curl a little. "Is she ready to have a little chat?"

"Almost," the Doctor said, making eye contact with an approaching Kes. Before Kathryn could even figure anything out, Kes pressed a hypospray into her arm. Within seconds she didn't have to force her serious face. "No time like the present."

Tuvok decided to interrupt, he approached Kes. "How are you feeling Kes?"

Kes smiled warmly at him. "I feel exhilarated. I feel so much more focused now."

"I see. Perhaps you and I can explore these new abilities further," Tuvok said.

"That would be a good idea. There are some things we need answers to," Kathryn agreed.

Kes nodded, "what do you suggest, Tuvok?"

"A guided focused meditation would be an excellent start. It should help you focus on one ability, allowing you to explore it further," Tuvok explained.

Kes turned towards the Doctor, his smile was enough of an answer. "What are we waiting for?"

Kathryn smirked as this took Tuvok a little off his Vulcan guard. He did what he usually did in that situation, raised his eyebrow. He gestured his arm to the door. "Then we should proceed."

Kes turned back to the Doctor. "We won't be continuing until tomorrow, take your time," he said. She smiled appreciatively at him before she walked out, Tuvok followed her.

"So when can I talk to Seven of Nine?" Kathryn asked.

The Doctor smiled, "I can wake her now if you'd like." Kathryn nodded. He approached the main biobed, his own hypospray in hand. She followed him. Her eyes widened at the sight of the ex drone.

Seven of Nine's skin was no longer a dull grey, but a light pink. Her imposing eye piece had been removed, all that was left was a tiny little circular device covering her pupil. A lot of the technology that covered her body suit was gone, even parts of that suit were missing. Around her neck and various other places were what looked like grey duct tape.

"You couldn't have left the body suit till last?" she asked, with a dark look backwards. Even the Doctor felt like he was melting away from the gaze.

"No, it had to go at the same time as the implants. They're attached."

"Sure," Kathryn didn't believe him.

He quickly pushed a hypospray into the drone's neck, then backed away. With no fear Kathryn leaned on the biobed so she'd be the first thing she saw. Her only eye flickered open. Disoriented she explored her surroundings until she discovered Kathryn. Her body rose to a sitting position, only then noticing the lack of implants and the weird tape on her arm.

"What, what have you done to me?" she growled.

"Your Human physiology was fighting the Borg implants. You were dying," the Doctor answered carefully and sympathetically. "I'm sorry, but we had no choice."

Seven of Nine continued to scan the changes to her body, the disgust on her face grew.

"Those are derma-plastic grafts," the Doctor explained, gesturing to duct tape like material. "They'll help the regeneration process."

"Unacceptable!" Seven of Nine's gaze met Kathryn's, her fury only grew. She leapt off the bed so she was on the opposite side to them. "You should have let us die."

"I could, but continuity's a bitch," Kathryn muttered. The Doctor cleared his throat. "I couldn't do that."

"This drone cannot survive without the collective!" Seven of Nine cried.

Kathryn was about to respond, but the Doctor chimed in first. "I beg to differ. Now the Borg implants are gone, your Human systems are free to thrive, and thriving they are." Seven of Nine stared at him with despair. Kathryn slowly turned her head whilst arming a delete EMH glare. He scampered off with his tail between his legs.

"Why are you doing this to us?" Seven of Nine demanded.

"Because the original producer was a pervert who wanted to sleep with you, and something about ratings," Kathryn replied nonchalantly. "Why it needed to happen in this series, I'll never know." She got the blank stare she expected. "Fine, fine, enough of the fourth wall. You're Human, and as far as we're concerned what the Borg represent is worse than death. To lose our dreams, our futures, all to satisfy a collective consciousness. It's horrifying, and you should have the chance to escape it."

"You are forcing your ideals on us," Seven of Nine growled.

"No, that was you when you were trying to get us assimilated. Having my baby sleep in those weird drawers you have doesn't fly with me," Kathryn muttered.

"This is a punishment?" Seven of Nine questioned.

"No," Kathryn sighed. "All I wanted is for you to start speaking English and have someone punch you in the face."

The Doctor dared to approach with a tiny coffee cup, he left it on the biobed. Kathryn snatched it without even looking.

Seven of Nine's one eye narrowed. "Your weapon, it was foolish to advertise that you owned it. The collective will come for it."

Kathryn scowled at her while sipping on the tiny cup. "Are we back to the nanoprobe weapon again? I tell you, it's hard to get a decent thank you around here."

"No. Your other weapon. The one that disabled us," Seven of Nine plainly answered. Kathryn's death glare came back, Seven of Nine didn't back down though. The Security team nearby though felt the flames from afar, they scuttled backwards as far as the walls would let them.

"You're speaking nonsense. I get more sense out of you when you forget that E's aren't silent," she muttered. "Against my personal dislike of you so far, I want to help you."

"Only to save yourself," Seven of Nine snarled.

Kathryn's scowl was replaced with a smug smile. "Oh so we admit that assimilation isn't a good thing?" Seven of Nine turned away, unable to answer for now. "Now we're getting somewhere. It's obvious that you're in pain, that you're frightened, you feel isolated, alone..."

"You are an individual," Seven of Nine muttered, slowly approaching her. "You are small."

"No, I'm just normal. You really should ask the Doctor to get those things reduced, your back will thank me later," Kathryn countered, pointing at the drone's chest.

Seven of Nine ignored the insult and continued, "you cannot understand what it is to be Borg!"

"No, but I can imagine. You spend your whole life as a mindless automaton, a slave to the hive. No free will, no personality," Kathryn said, circling the drone like an animal. Seven of Nine looked down, deep in thought. "Suddenly all of that is gone. You have to think for yourself, but you don't know how. Your future is uncertain, random, unpredictable." Kathryn stopped mostly behind her, looking over her shoulder. "It must be frightening," she whispered.

Craig and Foster both shuddered as the room felt like it dropped ten Celsius. "God, never cross Janeway," Foster whimpered.

"You're not wrong," Craig agreed.

"This drone is small now, alone," Seven of Nine stepped forward grimly. "One voice, one mind." Squeezing her eye shut, she leaned on the biobed, the pain unbearable. "This is unacceptable, we need the others!"

"As long as you remain on Voyager you won't be alone. It may not be unified, but it is a collective, a Human one. We live and work together," Kathryn said softly. "It will be hard at first, but you'll learn to adapt." Seven of Nine turned to stare at her, her eye wide. "That's what you Borg do best, isn't it?"

"Insufficient," she complained.

"Tough," Kathryn's harsh demeanor returned. The last sip of coffee immediately fixed that. "Besides this collective needs you. The Borg crap you installed is interfering with our warp core. We need your help to remove them. Your expertise, your co-operation." Her face turned stone cold, "you must comply."

The ex drone could only stare at her.

Kes stared deeply into the flame. As it grew in strength, Tuvok's caution did as well.

"Now, reduce the flame," he instructed.

The candle in between them returned to normal. Kes never moved from her sitting position, her demeanor was calm and collected.

"Excellent. You've never demonstrated this level of control before," Tuvok said.

"It was as though I knew what had to be done, and..." Kes trailed off, her eyes seemed to see something different.

"What's wrong?" Tuvok asked.

"Something's happening," Kes only replied with.

The three Security officers lay on the ground, unconscious and bruised. Their rifles lay unused, discarded on the floor. James stepped over one of them, then crouched down. With a heavy sigh he lifted the unconscious man up by the shoulders.

Chakotay stepped out of the turbolift, complete with baby carrier and baby. To everyone's amusement he was now sporting sparkly white hair. "Report."

From the Tactical station all he got was a giggle. This was the trigger to set everyone off as well.

"What!?"

Tom quickly turned his chair around as his face was turning very red. "Isn't that stuff supposed to go on the baby's butt, not you?"

Chakotay didn't know what he meant at first, he then caught a glimpse of the white from the corner of his eye, reflected off a nearby station. He groaned angrily, "damn talc bottle. Can I get a report now?"

"We're still dead in the water and..." Tom snorted into laughter again. This set everyone off again.

Chakotay aimed his anger in Jessie's direction, her laughter made her immune to it. "What are you doing at Tactical? It actually requires you to work, you know."

"It was either her or an unknown," Tom chuckled.

Chakotay rolled his eyes, "all right hyenas, it's not that funny. Where is everyone?"

"Tuvok's with Kes, Harry offered to help in Engineering. Janeway's probably deflating the Borg Queen," Jessie giggled.

"Enough. We're in Borg Space with no warp engines. How can you laugh at a time like this?" Chakotay snapped.

Tom's tried to contain his next laugh in his throat, Chakotay heard it anyway. He turned around, "sorry I just thought... this is the hair of a killer." He couldn't help it and laughed his butt off.

"I don't get it," Jessie frowned.

"Lucky you," Tom said sincerely. He laughed anyway. Chakotay growled in his direction, that just made him laugh even harder.

Most of the Engineering staff gawked in shock and horror as Kathryn arrived, with Seven of Nine and the rest of Security Team One right behind her. B'Elanna slammed her hand down on the computer panel in front of the core, which was a very dark and dull blue with no life in it.

"God, it's like pulling weeds," she growled.

Harry turned her way, his eyes widened to twice their normal size. "Um..."

B'Elanna scowled in his direction, she then looked around to see what his eyes were widening about. "You've got to be kidding."

Kathryn stood in front of her, Seven of Nine stopped at her side. The team stayed at a safe distance behind them both.

"You have neglected to remove the autonomous regeneration sequencers," Seven of Nine explained.

"You remember Seven of Nine?" Kathryn said, not so pleasantly.

"How could I forget?" Harry blurted out, in a chirpy voice. B'Elanna chucked a dirty look at him.

Kathryn did the same thing, "god Harry, surely you should be out of puberty by now." This comment made him drop a few inches in height, and softened B'Elanna's mood a tiny bit. "She's got a few hours to spare between treatments, so put her to good use."

"You can start with the plasma relays," B'Elanna said without even a blink. "You do remember what they looked like before you turned them into a Borg circus?"

Seven of Nine matched her stone cold glare with ease, "yes."

"Good, let's get this over with," B'Elanna growled, turning her back on the Borg.

Harry remained, almost welded to the floor. Kathryn gave him another warning look. "I want updates on the hour." She marched away, the Security team quickly got out of her way.

On the Bridge, Chakotay was finishing off brushing the talc powder from his hair. The floor and his chair were covered in the stuff, even his daughter on the other seat was sparkling.

Both Opps and Tactical beeped madly, Jessie's face drained in colour. "Commander, a quantum singularity's just opened up, two thousand kilometres away."

"What?" Chakotay leapt from his seat, ignoring the powder in the air effect when he did.

Harry lead Seven of Nine and her Security entourage into the Jeffries Tube. They remained at the doorway while she and Harry worked on a Borgified console.

"So er... do you have a name other than Seven of Nine?" he badly improvised. She ignored him. "So what does Seven of Nine mean anyway, settle an argument for me. Seven out of nine drones, or..." The look she gave him made his blood run cold, he quickly scampered off to a different panel.

Her only eye focused on the panel. She turned her head Harry's way. "Ensign Kim, your assistance?"

Harry turned back around.

Tuvok couldn't believe what he was seeing. The candle they were using for the meditation was shimmering. Its entire structure was like liquid being sloshed around in a container. Eventually it settled back to normal, Kes looked up at him immediately. Her eyes were wide with wonder.

Tuvok tried to collect his thoughts as she stared at him, waiting for some kind of feedback.

"I can't explain it any better, it's like the sub atomic was just the surface and there were... waves underneath it," Kes tried to put her thoughts into words.

"I see. It seems that your abilities exceed the limits of the meditation lamp. Perhaps we should..." Tuvok said. Kes scrambled to her feet, pacing forward. "What is it?"

"The Borg," she said, her gaze seemed out of the room. "She's trying to contact her people." Her body swung around in his direction.

Tuvok slapped his commbadge, at the same time the Red Alert klaxon sounded and the red lights began flashing.

"Wait! I think I can stop her," Kes calmly said.

Kathryn ran to the centre of the Bridge to join Chakotay, she tried to ignore the sparkly effect that was there. "What is it?"

Chakotay swallowed hard, "Species 8472, they're back."

Kathryn swung around to look at the viewscreen. One lone bio ship loomed closer.

"Do we have any of those torpedoes left?" Kathryn demanded.

Chakotay nodded, "I checked. She's loading them now."

The unknown at opps dared to add to the drama, "someone is trying to access the subspace transmitter."

"Stop them, is it that hard?" Kathryn growled.

The unknown trembled, "uh... I can't."

One more body fell to the turbolift floor, he landed in a heap right next to his teammate. The turbolift doors shot open as James turned to leave again, one press of the panel kept the doors open once he had stepped out.

In the corner of his eye he saw the blinking red lights. "Damn it." His head swung around to check on the turbolift guys, back ahead of him and once more behind him. He decided to go back into the lift, but only to key in some more commands. Once he stepped back out, the doors shut and the lift went into action.

Just around the corner the third Security officer was stirring, groaning loudly at the throbbing pain in his face. James turned the corner in a hurry, but he ground to a halt. Something straight ahead of him had caught his eye, they widened in terror. The other man was struggling to get up at this point, he hadn't noticed the same thing he did. James ran forward.

The walls looked like they were fluttering in a strong wind. Seven of Nine couldn't believe what she was seeing. The effect slowly closed in on her.

"The nanoprobe weapons are ready," Jessie nervously reported.

Kathryn didn't even look back, she armed her deadly game face. "Fire."

The bio ship fired its devastating weapon towards Voyager. It simultaneously fired a couple of its own.

Both torpedoes hit the alien ship. Within seconds the enemy beam slammed into the side of the lower half of Voyager, shoving it roughly into a slow roll onto its back. Fire blasted through the surrounding hull. It soon spread along like it was following a fuse, spraying space with metal debris.

The bio ship maneuvered to fire again when it froze in its tracks. Like the others it broke apart.

Debris littered Voyager's path as it drifted. The blue lights of the warp drives disappeared. One by one every other light the starship generated did the same. The USS Voyager soon disappeared into the abyss of space.

TO BE CONTINUED