

Episode 1.12

Timeless

All that could be seen ahead of them was white. A strong wind kept trying to push them, as well as the snow backwards. One step crunched, it also felt far more stable than the previous ones. The other foot slid briefly as it came to a stop beside it.

"She's here!" a female voice shouted, but was still muffled by the wind strength.

They crouched down where they were. One hand attempted to wipe away the snow from a particular spot. After a few inches were brushed aside, silver metal could be seen beneath it. The edge of what appeared to be the number seven painted or engraved on it, stood out far more.

"We found it," a younger woman's voice sighed. "Voyager."

The pair looked at each other silently. If the cold hadn't already done so, their whole body would be covered in goosebumps.

The Delta Flyer circled an imposing white planet. The only crewmember sat at the front of the cockpit, keeping his attention solely on the helm controls in front of him.

"How is she?" he asked.

"As we predicted when we pinpointed her location," the first voice said. "We're going in. We might have to use phasers to cut our way in."

He grunted irritably. "I knew I should have gone."

"We didn't want you shooting any polar bears on route," the younger voice said.

"Hilarious," he groaned. "I could transport you now that we have the co-ordinates."

"I have no idea what the interior damage is. I'd prefer not to be transported into an ice cube either," the first voice said. "Keep the channel open."

His eyes flickered to the right. The sight of the world beneath him made him far more sullen. "I wouldn't have it any other way."

The inside looked the same as she remembered it, except for the white tint the ice had given everything. Snow crunched at their feet as the pair walked along the corridor. One of them carefully lowered the mask protecting her half Klingon face, instantly regretting it. It felt as though the air had frozen in place until they disturbed it. It left her exposed skin aching. Every movement they made created a cool breeze that stung them even with their protective clothing.

B'Elanna's first target was a blanked out, frozen wall panel nearby. She expected that and so immediately attached a whirring and flashing device to it. It eventually woke up groggily.

"Oh god," the still masked figure gasped.

B'Elanna assumed she was looking at the same place as her. It chilled her to the bone and she was already freezing. "Decks Eleven to Fifteen no longer register, Deck Ten barely does either. They must have been crushed together on impact. It's a miracle the core didn't breach."

There was an eery and yet awkward silence that followed.

B'Elanna broke it with a sigh that turned into a lingering white cloud in front of her. "Let's move along before we get nit picky."

"At least I sorted out Deck Thirteen. Yay for me."

"Don't," B'Elanna said harshly, although her expression was saddened. "Let's get to the Bridge."

It took a while to climb up slippery ladders and navigate around frozen corpses to get to the Bridge. It was a journey B'Elanna never wanted to do again. The temptation to smash her fist into every wall as she went was so great, she surprised herself that it didn't happen. All the faces she recognised almost choked the life out of her. She had to keep a hardened, strong face for her companion, as well as keep her cool vocally for her teammate on the Flyer.

Though when they reached their destination, she made a point to avoid looking towards the helm. There was no way she'd be able to keep that up if she did.

"Nothing," her partner said as if she was holding back tears. "There's no damage here and yet..." B'Elanna noticed she was looking at the poor souls who had been thrown clear of the back stations.

"They'll have hit the ice at full impulse. The shock of it, it would have been instant," B'Elanna said through a sore throat she didn't notice she had. It didn't help that she now had to step over another familiar face to get to the Engineering station.

The girl meanwhile nodded as she made her way towards Opps.

The Engineering station soon woke up to her device. "The Doc seems to be undamaged. We should be able to upload him into the emitter, if we can find it."

"Instant," the girl said grimly. "So he never felt it?"

B'Elanna felt a twinge go through her while she turned her head towards the girl. "No. It would have been very quick."

The girl nodded, her gaze fell to the ground. She stifled a gasp at the body lying within inches of her feet. "I think I've found her."

B'Elanna carefully stepped around the Engineering station obstacle, she opted for going up by Tactical to go over to Opps. Avoiding the helm was a must. The flashlight in her hand rested on the body by the girl's feet. Borg technology, frost covered skin tight catsuit that unfortunately made the body appear naked, the large assets. This was her, what they were looking for.

"The Borg," she said in her raw voice, giving her partner a brief nod. The girl did the same back, then crouched down to place a tiny device on the body's neck "We got her. Lock on to the relay and beam her to the lab."

"No problem."

"Don't dawdle. If I stay here any longer I'm going to start throwing furniture," B'Elanna snarled. The other woman looked on with worry.

It only took a few seconds for a transporter beam to spirit the body away. The two wasted no time, they headed back the way they came.

The trip back down managed to be even worse. B'Elanna's partner slid on one of the ladders, twisting her ankle. Fortunately it was the second off last climb before they reached Deck Five, and then Sickbay.

"I'm fine, I can wait," she protested as B'Elanna rummaged around a frozen medical tray.

"No, in these temp..." B'Elanna argued back. Her partner had since pulled her mask down to give her a firm stare. She knew she couldn't argue with that. "Fine." And so the engineer hurried over to the wall panel, holding another device that helped bring it back to life.

A few taps later and the shadow of the Doctor flickered in the centre of the room, his voice jumbled as his image cleared up. "Please state the na..." he said, trailing off once he noticed his Sickbay was now an icy white. His face showed his horror.

"Doc, it's good to see you," B'Elanna greeted him.

The Doctor rushed over, his eyes wide. "Lieutenant? What's happened here?"

B'Elanna couldn't help but feel sorry for him. However they didn't have time to stand around and explain it to him. "I'll tell you later. We have to go. Where's your emitter?"

"But..." the Doctor stammered. He noticed the other girl slouching to one side, to keep her weight off her bad leg. He reluctantly pointed at a small circular lump on top of the station in the middle of the room.

B'Elanna rushed over to dust the frost from it, revealing the mobile emitter sitting in its case. She quickly picked it up and headed back to place it on his arm.

The Doctor sullenly watched her do it, "can you at least give me a summary?"

B'Elanna looked him in the eye, sighing sadly. She had no idea where to even begin.

Confetti rained gradually down around the warp core, now upgraded with several vertical and brightly coloured sections surrounding it.

The entirety of Engineering was full of crewmembers cheering and clapping. The ones on the top level occasionally throwing further confetti down.

They watched as B'Elanna slowly walked towards the core, champagne bottle in hand, grinning widely.

One crewmember looked on with a slight frown. "What's with the slow mo?" He then noticed his chair was bleeping, also slowly. Only it turned out that his chair was a console. As soon as he stood back up, the speed of everyone returned to normal. He laughed sheepishly at the people standing near him. "Sorry, sat on the gravity controls."

B'Elanna meanwhile swung the champagne bottle against the metal railings around the warp core. The crowd prematurely raised their cheers. The bottle merely bumped into it. "Oh, if at first you don't succeed," she laughed before trying once more. This time the bottle cracked over the metal, showering the carpet with fizzy champagne.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please!" Kathryn's voice shouted over the noise.

A few looked up to see her on the top level, standing beside Chakotay. He held their daughter in his arm tightly as she tried to climb onto the barrier there.

"Everyone, excuse me!" Kathryn grunted dangerously.

Kiara giggled, to her mother's annoyance she joined in with the clapping. Fortunately she didn't do it for long. "Excuse me, mummy said," she said sweetly, at first. "Shut the hell up!" she screamed loud enough to make Chakotay's ears ring. It definitely did the trick as everyone stopped clapping and cheering to stare up at them.

"Aaaaw," Neelix cooed. "She's like a mini Janeway."

"I think you meant to say, uhoh instead of aaw," the Doctor whispered fearfully.

Kathryn smiled proudly at her daughter, Kiara grinned back. "That's my girl," she said quietly. Her voice raised to address everyone, "may I introduce the next generation of insteller propulsion."

Several members of the crew raised a few eyebrows at 'insteller'. Chakotay meanwhile reached for the Captain's brown champagne glass sitting on the barrier in front of her.

"The Quantum Slipstream Drive!" Kathryn announced, gesturing to the core. The crew didn't dare cheer and clap incase Kiara shouted at them again. Without looking Kathryn snatched the glass back with ease. "Three years, nine months, forty seven days..."

"You couldn't resist could you?" Chakotay sniggered.

Kathryn shrugged before quickly swigging the glass contents. Fortunately it was taken away from her at the last second. She was about to bite Chakotay's head off when she noticed it wasn't him, but her daughter. Chakotay just as quickly got that away from her.

"That's how long we've been in the Delta Quadrant," Kathryn continued on. "During that time we've gone where no crew have gone before. Now it's time to give up and go home." She waited for the applause, which didn't happen until Kiara gave them a nodding cue.

"Enjoy the celebrations but keep in mind that anyone who spills any booze or throws up on the new core, will be left behind with Seven," Kathryn continued once they settled down. Several people laughed, some politely, some for real. Kathryn gestured down to B'Elanna. "So go easy on the champagne, you drunk."

The command team turned to walk away. That was the rest of the crew's cue to start celebrating.

"We're going to have to fine tune a shorter version of this drive's origins before we get back home," Kathryn said quietly.

Chakotay imagined her telling the story of an egghead alien with his *knickers* in a twist to a bunch of Admirals. He almost snorted into laughter. "Why? I quite like the official version."

Kathryn stared at him as if he were mad. "I'd have to start with striking a deal with the Borg so they can carry on assimilating entire races. Yeah, I can practically taste the promotion."

"Do you really need to explain why Arturis wanted revenge on us?" Chakotay asked. "He lied so much. You could use his *a shadow tricked me into hating you* original lie and go with that."

Kathryn smiled, unsure if he was serious or not. "I'll start working on deleting my logs."

Chakotay's own smile spread into a grin and a chuckle. "I suggest deleting any that reference coffee as well."

"Hmm, they may be suspicious if I come home with zero logs," Kathryn said. "Have any dinner plans?"

"Oh I can't tell you that," Chakotay replied.

Kathryn's eyes narrowed suspiciously, "why not?"

"Temporal Prime Directive," Chakotay teased.

"What?" Kathryn's eyebrow shot up higher than Tuvok's.

Chakotay's eyes twinkled mischievously. "Cancel my plans. That's an order."

"What plans? A date with a replicator?" Kathryn sniped, but with a curl in her lips.

"Well we have a lot in common. We're both slaves to the mighty Janeway," Chakotay said. He continued walking, but she didn't, he left Engineering with a full on dimpled smile.

Kathryn stared as if he were still at her side, eyebrow raising higher and higher. "I wonder if he'll bring coffee then," she mumbled, hopes raising slightly.

On the lower level Neelix gently squeezed his way through the crowds, on his way to someone in particular. He found them chatting to someone close by so he rushed to join them, brandishing a strange furry object with wings.

"My contribution to the slipstream drive," Neelix grinned.

B'Elanna took one look at it, yelped, and batted it away with her hand. "Oh my god, warn me next time you try to introduce me to your cousin."

Neelix looked confused, not angry, "no, it's a Talaxian fur fly."

"What's the difference?" B'Elanna asked.

Tuvok thought it would be a good idea to intervene. "How would it benefit the slipstream drive?"

"Oh, it's an old tradition. If you stow one of these creatures on your ship, it would bring good fortune," Neelix explained happily. "I had this little guy preserved. Hung in my engine room for six years."

B'Elanna cringed, then wiped the hand she used against Tuvok's arm. He of course raised his eyebrow, both of them. "I need a few baths," she muttered while rushing away.

"Mr Neelix, you are an unending source of atrociousness," Tuvok said.

Neelix slapped him across the forearm enthusiastically, "why thank you, Mr Vulcan. I aim to please."

The Doctor passed them as he mingled his way through the crowds, reaching the core. He spotted Seven standing close to it, staring at her hand as if she expected it to attack her at any moment. He approached curiously.

"Seven?"

"My visual processors and motor cortex, they are malfunctioning," Seven told him without breaking her gaze.

Luckily the Doctor had learned to always bring a tricorder, and a medical kit, to any kind of party on Voyager. "We'd better have a look." He barely had time to bring it out of his pocket, she wobbled forward, almost tripping over her feet in her attempt to reach the warp core railing a huge few centimetres away. "Hold still."

"I cannot simply," Seven groaned.

The Doctor quickly scanned her, the results didn't surprise him. "You're intoxicated."

"Irrelevant," Seven protested. She scowled, "no, unlikely. In fact."

"You mean impossible, or perhaps again," the Doctor sighed. "Your blood synthehol level is .05 percent. Which opens a whole can of questions."

"I only had worn, I mean one," Seven argued.

The Doctor tried to resist laughing, at least for now. He carefully took the glass of fake champagne away from her. "Obviously the Borg's biggest weakness is the placebo effect. Let's get you to Sickbay."

"Yes Doctor," Seven said. For some reason she tried to climb onto the barrier and lie on the tiny console there.

"Uh..." the Doctor stammered, desperately trying to stop her. "Usually we get there by walking, remember?"

Seven stared at him, her eyes widening. "But we've been walking for too long! This has got to be it." The Doctor covered his face with one hand. "Are we there now?"

"Yes," the Doctor replied sarcastically.

He regretted it immediately. "Oh good," Seven mumbled right before passing out. The Doctor wondered how he was going to get her from the barrier to Sickbay. He didn't have to think about it too long. The drone lurched to the right and dropped to the ground, snoring on impact.

On the other side of the core Craig sniggered, having witnessed the whole thing. The Doctor tried to pick her up, only to be lightly batted away with every attempt. "This is why you always go to a Voyager party," Craig said, turning to his companion. He frowned, she wasn't there anymore. "Triah? Sis?"

It didn't take long to find her. All he had to do was follow the invisible trail of no confetti. On the other end of it was his step sister pushing a broom into people's feet.

"Can't you wait until it's over?" he complained.

"No," Triah bluntly replied.

While he was distracted James arrived on his other side, with his attention fixed on the Doctor's efforts to get Seven to Sickbay. Craig turned back, noticed him and jumped a mile. "James... why? Do you tip toe everywhere?"

James sniggered briefly, "well how else can I compete with all the tall people?" Craig stared at him blankly, which inspired him to laugh a bit longer this time. "Don't tell me that joke flew over your head."

"No. You did this last month, when the power was out. Just standing there, waiting for your moment to scare the hell out of..." Craig said passionately, trailing off in embarrassment. "Neelix."

"Well, tell Neelix that he whimpers so much he sounds like two people," James said.

Craig laughed nervously. "Yeah, what a wimp. So erm..." His face turned a little red. "Is Jessie here? Is she still mad at you?"

James' smile faded into a frown. "Where did you get that idea?"

"Well it couldn't be the other way around, could it? I know I'd be mad if some cute girl kissed me on the cheek. The nerve!" Craig ranted in a put on angry voice.

"You know..." James said, his eyes narrowing slightly. Suddenly Craig felt like the room was getting darker and colder. "People have gotten hurt for a lot less."

Triah wandered back over to her brother's side, huffing impatiently. "I'm trying to keep to a straight line, and these idiots choose there to take a nap." She noticed the recent tension, making her pull a face. "Oh Craig, what have you done now?"

"Gee, thanks for taking my side as always," Craig groaned.

"Sure," Triah smiled warmly.

James sighed, "it's fine. No one's mad."

"Don't speak for yourself," Craig mumbled. Triah scolded him only by looking at him.

James ignored him for now, "if she's not here, she's probably running late from her haircut."

"Oh, you have a hairdresser aboard? My hair's getting awfully long," Triah said, gesturing to her hip length pony tail. "And genius here suggested I cut it off myself. In my own quarters? Clever boy, not."

"Yeah, a couple of people do it in their off hours. Sometimes the Doc does it, he got a taste for it after helping Seven. Ironic really," James said with a smirk.

Craig groaned, "oh god, girl talk." He found the two staring at him, once again the temperatures dropping. "Okay, now I know why you never take my side."

Jessie pushed her way through the crowds to join them. "Oh are we picking on Craig? I'm down," she said.

The three turned their heads towards her, two of them with their jaws dropping a little at the sight of her new bobbed red hair.

"A haircut, huh?" Triah smirked, but mainly at the two men's reactions. She wasn't surprised when James shook it off, Craig was still staring, close to drooling. "Little bro, close your mouth."

"Craig, stop staring or your eyes will get poked out," Jessie muttered at the same time, while her hand clenched. Of course that did the trick.

"Yes, it's only creepy when I do it," Craig mumbled huffily, earning a more bemused stare from James this time.

Triah playfully slapped her brother across the back of the head. It was nothing more than a tap, it still left him pouting. "I dunno about Jessie, but for me, a brief shocked in a good way stare is a compliment. A dislocated jaw with drool after an awkward minute and a half is gross. In more ways than one."

"I wasn't... it wasn't a minute and a half, and I wasn't drooling," Craig stuttered in protest. He decided to tune his sister completely out and return his attention to Jessie. "You look so beautiful with your new hairstyle, do you want to do something for homecoming?"

Jessie reached over to give him a similar slap but in the face. "No," she replied sweetly.

"You didn't have to..." Craig pouted. He noticed James also raising his hand, so he quickly threw his up in front of himself, "no, don't you dare!"

James snorted into brief laughter while lowering his hand, then he feigned disappointment. "What, everyone was doing it. It looked like fun." He wandered off before Craig could even react.

"Who needs enemies?" Craig muttered. He walked away as well.

"What's up with him?" Triah asked.

Jessie thought about it before answering. "Well for one his pickup lines are terrible. He basically said I only look nice because I changed my hair. Gee, hold me back from this smooth talker."

"Not Craig," Triah sniggered. "James. Everytime you're together, he makes a point to leave. Or like today, makes no point at all."

"Oh. Long story," Jessie said, grimacing slightly. "It's my fault, so it's deserved. No worries."

The Doctor passed by them, his arms underneath the Borg's, walking backwards towards the door. Her legs dragging across the floor.

"Really?" Triah frowned in confusion. "Cos I heard from Tom that he saw you two..."

"Quiet!" Jessie shushed her with her eyes darting around, paranoid someone would be listening.

It only amused Triah though. "My god, chill out. It was only a peck on the cheek. What's the big deal?"

"That's the problem," Jessie mumbled with her head down. Her arms folded for a moment, her face continued to twist as she lowered her hands back down to her side. "If I didn't act like it was, it wouldn't be so awkward now."

Harry walked around a few partying crewmembers. He noticed a particular one slumped over a station. On second glance the person was merely leaning over it, working. What surprised him the most was who it was.

"Tom?" he said to make sure. The person jumped slightly, bumping his head on the edge of the station. "I thought your sexual harassment days were over now that you're engaged."

Tom swung around while rubbing his sore head. "It's called flirting. You should try it. It might finally get you a date, with a blind person."

"No, I'd rather not," Harry said, scrunching his face in disgust.

"Not..." Tom said, briefly glancing at the computer. His face turned red. "Forget it. We're doomed anyway."

Harry's eyes drifted to one side while his eyebrow raised. "Of course we are. When are we not?"

"I'm serious," Tom grunted. "We've built a lemon. I ran a simulation last night and I discovered a .42 phase variance in the slipstream threshold."

"Really? Not a .47? That is terrifying," Harry smirked. Tom stared at him with a crazed expression.

The pair stopped to stare at the Doctor slowly passing by. He gave them a disgruntled look. "It's okay, don't help me, she's not heavy," he directed bitterly at them.

"Talk about a bumpy trip," Harry said with a shrug.

"If we get knocked out of slipstream mid flight!" Tom raised his voice, spitting a little. Harry didn't look very happy about it. "It'll overload the quantum matrix," he said quieter and calmer this time.

"So, we didn't test this thing, at all? Not once in the last month?" Harry questioned.

Tom groaned, he'd been wondering the same thing. "Evidently not since our first flight."

"Two tests, 50/50 odds. Maybe we should do further tests," Harry suggested.

"We? I dunno, do I really want a repeat of our last Holodeck team up?" Tom said, gritting his teeth afterwards.

Harry shrugged while folding his arms, all while giving Tom a patronising smile. "All these engineers, experts and Tom Paris is the one to find the tiny problem of the slipstream killing us. No, you don't want anyone to know you're wrong."

Tom's eyes narrowed, "I'm not wrong. You're on."

Ten minutes later:

"We're done for," Harry muttered.

"I knew it, in your dumb face!" Tom shouted a little too gleefully towards Opps.

Harry didn't know whether to laugh or to be embarrassed for him. He settled for a mixture of both; shaking his head while quietly laughing for a few seconds.

The mood in Engineering had dropped drastically. Most of the Senior staff stared sullenly at whatever was in front of them, or down at their feet. Kathryn made a point of leaning on the banister surrounding the core, some assumed she was glaring it into submission. Others were starting to think she was the problem in the first place.

"It would appear we have no choice but to cancel it," Tuvok suggested.

Chakotay's eyes rolled to one side and lingered, "temporarily right, or are we giving up on something else at the first sign? Though I am impressed we bothered to work on it at all after the first flight."

Tom sighed despondently, "I'm sure Harry will know what to do."

Harry stared toward him with his brow furrowed. Everyone else meanwhile looked around, hoping someone would. "Maybe," he said reluctantly, getting their attention. He shook his head. "The problem is everything escalates too fast. If we had a few extra seconds, we'd be able to see the bumps in the road and slow down, or adjust our course, instead of flying over them into a wall."

"You gotta love the imagery," Jessie smirked.

"Perhaps we got a little greedy with our modifications. Too much, too fast," Craig said grimly.

"Slowing down won't make any difference. The gap between the phase variance starting and disaster is the same," Tom pointed out.

Jessie laughed almost silently, "okay, so why don't we scout ahead. Map the path as it were."

"A shuttle," Harry said. He glanced toward her with an affirmative nod and smile, his eyes lighting up. It made Jessie a little uncomfortable, her shoulders hunched and she averted her eye. He winced slightly before continuing. "If it flew ahead, it could get the corrections we need to straighten the path."

B'Elanna walked toward him with a piercing gaze. "Any shuttlecraft would have to be within a few hundred metres ahead of Voyager to be affected by the slipstream."

Harry frowned at her when he briefly looked her way. "Well yeah, but that's still a few more seconds than we had."

Kathryn slowly straightened up, turning to join everyone, showing some interest in her face. "Tom, could you handle it?"

The helmsman didn't look so sure, "couple of seconds? No problem."

"We're definitely done for," James commented.

Tom laughed off any nervousness he was feeling, temporarily at least. "Oh please, I can handle it. It's the schmucks driving the shuttle and relaying the corrections I'm worried about."

"Well..." Chakotay said.

Kathryn directed a glare in his direction, "ohno, you're still banned from even entering the shuttle bay."

"I wasn't going to volunteer," Chakotay protested.

B'Elanna raised an eyebrow while glancing across at them both, "I believe I'm more than qualified to monitor the phase corrections."

Kathryn hesitated, her face twitched slightly. "On second thoughts, a commanding presence on the shuttle in case of an emergency might be a good idea."

"You don't trust me," B'Elanna said with an unreadable expression.

"After your last little run away stunt, you're lucky I let you back on the ship," Kathryn replied bluntly. She turned her attention toward Harry, "can you pull this off?" she asked, gesturing to the core and its modifications.

Harry stared for a moment, thinking about it, his eyes squinting as he did. "Maybe, but it would probably kill us faster than the phase variance problem." Everyone frowned, apart from Jessie who bit her lip to resist laughing. Kathryn's frown turned into a deadly stare. Harry strangely wasn't too bothered at all by it, it made him laugh instead. "Not a fan of literal jokes, huh?"

Tom's frown vanished, he let out a snort as he stifled a laugh. "Oh, literally pull this off. That's clever."

Kathryn rolled her eyes, "if you have to explain the joke, no, no it's not."

"We're not getting anywhere here," Chakotay said a little irritably.

"Tom and I tested this too many times to count," Harry replied.

"Twenty three," Tom said a little too smugly.

Harry didn't humour him with even a glance. "Yes we can do this."

B'Elanna stared at him once more, "no you cannot. Your responses would be too slow to not only calculate the course corrections at an efficient speed but send them to the helm in time as well."

Her comments made most of the room tense up. Kathryn though responded with another eye roll. "I suppose you can do better?"

"Yes," B'Elanna replied.

Jessie scowled at her, "and once again, Miss Know It All sticks the blunt knife in."

B'Elanna's eyebrow flickered, "excuse me?"

An irritated groan escaped from Kathryn, far louder than she intended. "Fine, you're on the team." She made her way toward the exit, only stopping to whisper at the other volunteer. "Take a phaser with you."

He waited for her to be gone completely before responding, "I don't think I'll need it." He then caught B'Elanna's eye, still as blank and cold as it had been for the last few months.

The rest of the room began to file out as well. Despite having a plan, the mood seemed far more tense than it did earlier.

"The idea is fine, but there's too many margins for error. The odds are high that we'll end up in bits before noon."

"We're on a tight schedule as it is. If we don't launch tomorrow, we could lose..."

"We're no good dead. We'll find another way."

Chakotay sighed. "Yes and something will be wrong with that method too. I'm sensing a pattern," he said with a bitter laugh.

Kathryn stared toward him with a frown. "I thought you'd be on my side with this. You've never been one to take the risky chances." Her eyes narrowed, "do you disagree with me on principle?"

"You're not the only one thinking that the shuttle plan is a dangerous way to accomplish this," Chakotay said, dodging her last question. "It must be if you're not fully on board with it."

His remark seemed to make her flinch, which he instantly regretted. "Nearly four years ago I destroyed the Caretaker's array to protect the Ocampa. My decision stranded this crew in the Delta Quadrant. I'm not going to make the order again."

Chakotay's face drained a little, a rotten feeling built up in his chest. "This is an entirely different situation."

"You're right," Kathryn said coldly. "I either allow this flight to go ahead and it destroys us. Or I shut it down, denying them another chance at getting home."

"Then we'll think of a third option," Chakotay said with a forced smile. "Isn't that what you would do normally?"

Kathryn reached for the glass of wine in front of her, but she didn't take a sip from it. She stared thoughtfully at the Commander while the food on the table continued to get cold. "All we have to do is find it."

Finally a smile appeared on her face, which inspired Chakotay to do the same. She left the PADD still in her hand on the table as she rose from her chair to serve their meal. "I hope you like this, I slaved over a hot replicator for minutes."

"No pressure then," Chakotay laughed.

Hours passed, the PADD and the dangers of the slipstream flight were intentionally forgotten. Even once the night was over it remained so, abandoned on the table. Left to slowly freeze in its grave, buried in layers of frost.

"Fifteen years?" the Doctor stammered. His eyes wide in shock as his head snapped to beside him. Standing there still in her winter gear, B'Elanna tried to hide her impatience. She firmly held her tongue, his shock was more than understandable. Instead she gestured to who he originally was focused on; the younger girl sitting in a chair, resting her injured leg on top of the other.

He seemed apologetic before turning back to the girl and her swollen ankle. It didn't take long to fix it. "Where are we?" he asked, dejected.

Satisfied that her team mate was now all right, B'Elanna lowered her hood first before taking her large jacket off. The Doctor then realised her fifteen years comment wasn't a horrible prank. A few faint wrinkle lines by her eyes and cheeks, her hair a little thinner than it used to be.

"We're a few parsecs outside the Alpha Quadrant, orbiting a Class L world," she answered him.

The Doctor was about to ask another question when he heard approaching footsteps. "AKA Planet Hell," a voice familiar to him said bitterly.

"Mr Kim?" the Doctor said, turning his gaze toward the new arrival. He was surprised to see how much more he had aged compared to B'Elanna. Black bags under his eyes, his face hollow and tighter. His normally slick black hair had turned silver, messy and unkempt, as well as shoulder length. A still young man in his forties, time hadn't been kind to him.

"Harry, really?" B'Elanna scolded him.

"The crew?" the Doctor was afraid to ask.

"Except for us... dead," Harry replied.

The Doctor's face fell, even if he was expecting that answer. B'Elanna looked at him sympathetically, all while removing her gloves. "It looks like Voyager tried to make an emergency landing here. Judging from the damage, they were unable to slow their descent." She lowered her voice while her eyes momentarily hovered to the unknown girl. "They were killed, instantly."

"You've been buried inside a glacier ever since," Harry said.

The Doctor paced forward, "you two were here, on the Delta Flyer, ahead of Voyager. You made it home."

"Oh yeah, all the way back to Earth. Too bad it took killing everyone else to do it, but life goes on right," Harry snarled, his voice raising to a near shout.

The Doctor flinched, if anyone was going to shout at him, he'd expect it to be B'Elanna, not the usually calm Harry Kim. Right on cue B'Elanna shot the man a dangerous glare, telling him to shut up or else.

"Starfleet took their time finding us," the Doctor said.

The glare wasn't very effective. "Starfleet," Harry scoffed. "They gave up their search for Voyager nine years ago. We found you, not them."

"Oh," the Doctor sighed uncomfortably. "Well, I... thank you. If you hadn't, I'd have stayed in that freezer forever." He didn't think he was capable of it but he shuddered anyway at the thought.

"I'm sorry, but that's not the only reason why we're here," B'Elanna said carefully while making her way over to the cage, where some folded clothing lay. "There's a way to fix this."

As they expected, the Doctor looked flummoxed. Harry waited for B'Elanna to pass by him to sit inside the cage. Then he walked over to the hologram, gesturing for him to turn his back on her as well.

"You remember, Doc? I was in charge of giving Voyager the phase corrections so they could stay within the slipstream threshold," he said.

"It didn't work?" the Doctor guessed.

Harry laughed bitterly, making awkward eye contact with the young woman only now getting up from her seat. "I gave them the wrong ones. Boom," he whispered angrily. "Out they fell and into the hellhole we call the planet below. Well done Harry, have a promotion."

The Doctor's eyebrow shot up, twitching slightly. This wasn't the Harry Kim he used to know.

"Would you stop calling it that," the girl interrupted as she passed by. She directed a scowl at the bitter Lieutenant. "Hell doesn't freeze," she muttered upon reaching the cage.

"It doesn't matter," Harry said. "We're going to send them the correct phase corrections."

"Um, surely it's a bit late for that," the Doctor said, confused and secretly hoping that he had misunderstood the situation entirely.

"We can send the message to Voyager through time, to before the accident," B'Elanna explained, now in more casual gear than before. She stood up to approach the two men.

"Better tardy than dead," Harry commented.

The Doctor darted his head between the two, "you're going to interfere in the past? How?"

B'Elanna thought it would be better to show him. She walked over to key in a few commands at one computer. Underneath it a large panel floated down, revealing what looked like a biobed on the inside of it. Not only that, but the frozen Seven of Nine they found on the Bridge. The Doctor recoiled in horror at seeing her.

"Every Borg drone has a transceiver implant in their brain, so the hive can keep them all linked together," B'Elanna explained.

"Yes I know, it's the interplexing beacon," the Doctor replied.

"We want you to extract it, we need the translink frequency," B'Elanna said.

The Doctor hesitated slightly, unable to take his eyes off his old friend. "If you recall, it was damaged when she was disconnected. Might I suggest another..."

Harry groaned impatiently but not with the Doctor. "I told you we should've picked Jessie."

B'Elanna rolled her eyes, "hers was misfiring, the other choice was broken. This was the correct choice."

"You never liked Seven. Admit it, it was an excuse to cut her up," Harry muttered.

The Doctor felt even more disturbed than before, which he didn't think was possible. "I would've suggested Miss Rex also. Her connection to the Borg wasn't disrupted because of her interplexing beacon. It was working perfectly. Mr Taylor's might have done too, his connection was only one way and that's all you need, right?"

"Oh for... I'll just go grab both of them, shall I? Just in case," Harry snapped, stomping off before anyone could say anything. Fortunately the girl was finished changing when he reached the cage. She hurried out of his warpath.

The Doctor looked to B'Elanna, hoping she'd go after him. She merely smiled and shrugged. "It's not only that. The Borg we pick will receive the corrections and would have to act quickly. Two of our choices were on the Bridge, so that narrowed our options down." She sighed while looking in Harry's direction while he put on his snow boots. "This has to go right. We can't screw up again."

"Aren't you going to stop him?" the Doctor decided to ask.

B'Elanna shook her head, "he won't. He knows I'm right. We need to go back to recover the sensor logs. Besides we only know where one of them are, and he knows better than to waste time hunting down transceiver number three."

"This feels... ghoulish, and I didn't even know them," the girl said as she approached them.

The Doctor agreed, nodding a little too enthusiastically. B'Elanna instantly felt a little guilty, "I'm sorry. It's easier to refer to them as objects. Calling any of them, even her..." she said, glancing at Seven's corpse, "by name reminds me..."

"I know mom, I'm sorry too," the girl said with a smile.

The Doctor's eyes flew wide open as he looked at them one at a time, "mom?"

"Oh sorry, Doc. I forgot all about introductions," B'Elanna chuckled. "This is Miral, my daughter."

The Doctor's face was a picture of shock and confusion, "really?"

The girl gave him a warm smile. "Nice to meet you, Doc. You're famous back home."

"Of course," the Doctor said, temporarily distracted from the horror around him.

"You seem a little shocked, and not in the way I imagined," B'Elanna said.

"No. I just expected the third member of your party to be someone we don't know, like a new love interest," the Doctor said.

B'Elanna smiled back at him. "Ohno. We know better than to piss off the shippers."

"Good. It would be a kick in the teeth if you had a nice scene between the two, then bring in some nobody to render the scene completely meaningless," the Doctor commented.

"I like the way in both these scenarios, I'm never considered so that's not a problem, but whatever," Harry hissed, now completely in the snow gear. "You should get back on topic before Janeway rolls out of her snowy grave." With that in the air, he disappeared back into the cockpit.

The Doctor's eyes widened, "he's... blunt, isn't he?"

"That's putting it mildly," B'Elanna sighed.

"I'm curious. How will this translink frequency help you have a chat in the past?" the Doctor questioned.

B'Elanna smiled wryly at him as she revealed a small metal box from nearby. Inside it a tiny computer chip. "This was discovered in Borg wreckage in the Beta Quadrant. A temporal transmitter."

"I don't even know where to begin with that," the Doctor muttered.

"We stole it right out of the lab," Miral said a little too proudly.

"That'll do," the Doctor sighed to himself.

B'Elanna chuckled, "we haven't got time to talk anymore about this. We need to get started."

"Really? It sounds like time is the only thing you do have," the Doctor quipped.

Harry hurried back inside and leapt down the couple of steps. "We've got company. A Federation vessel is coming our way. I'd say we've got six hours until they spot us."

"Um, so?" the Doctor said. Then it hit him. He felt like he had worn out his dismay and shock, he only felt annoyed. "You're fugitives."

"Galaxy's most wanted," Harry smirked.

Miral giggled, "there he goes again. Badass Kim, shoot first ask no questions later. Be afraid Doc, he may scold you."

Harry scowled in her direction while B'Elanna smiled a little sadly. "We're wanted for stealing a shuttle from under their noses. High treason. Conspiracy to violate the temporal prime directive."

"Who isn't these days?" Miral teased him.

Harry looked towards B'Elanna with a similar expression to her. "Sometimes it feels like he's still here," he said to her quietly.

B'Elanna's smile warmed up slightly. "I'll do it, Starfleet. You don't want to go back, trust me."

"You haven't called me that in years," Harry grimaced. "You don't need to baby me." The look he received told him he would not be able to talk her out of it. She passed by him to take his place in the cockpit. "We should get started," he said in a gruff voice.

The Doctor cast a wary glance toward the young girl still with them. He then found himself looking at Seven's body again. "Perhaps, she shouldn't be here."

"You're right. Miral, keep an eye on that ship while your mother's gone," Harry said.

Miral's eyes narrowed slightly, "but I don't think..."

"I wasn't asking," Harry snapped.

"I didn't want to see the autopsy anyway. Chill out," Miral said calmly to the Doctor's surprise. She followed her mother with a smile on her face, "have fun with cranky pants, Doc."

Harry sighed impatiently, "that girl, this is why I'm grey."

The Doctor had to laugh, if only briefly, "I didn't think she would bother you so. She's exactly like..."

"Tom, yeah," Harry said, his anger fading away to melancholy. "She got the *best* of both worlds. B'Elanna's stubbornness and intelligence, Tom's humour and pain in the ass-ness."

"Here I was thinking that was the same thing," the Doctor said. He felt bad for it, knowing the helmsman's fate. He cleared his throat to cover his uneasiness. "Translink frequency," he said while grabbing a tricorder.

Harry watched him, his face gave away nothing about his inner thoughts fighting with each other.

Miral stood behind her mother sitting at the helm, her arm leaned against the back. "I thought so, you weren't going to go back," she said.

B'Elanna briefly glanced over her shoulder, "no. I left a transmitter on the bridge so we could easily find it and transport to and from it. It should be easy to tap into the sensor logs from here."

"Mom," Miral said softly.

The tone she knew all too well. The console provided a distraction. "There's an active file here, it could be useful." B'Elanna pressed a command to open it.

Instead of text or visual data, a voice spoke from the computer. A one she hadn't heard in ages and was disturbed to find that she missed. "*Should our... luck continue... whatever happens... 's fault.*"

It didn't end there, another voice followed which punched her in the gut. "*Hey!*"

Miral watched as her mother's face turned ghostly pale. She was already worried about her before, so it didn't help. "What?"

B'Elanna forced a smile onto her face so she could look up at her. "Janeway, I told you she was quite the character."

"Yeah, that's not..." Miral said, not buying the words or the smile.

"It doesn't matter. In a few hours we won't remember any of this. Everything will be undone, fixed to the way it should've been," B'Elanna said while getting right back to work.

Miral glanced down at her feet glumly, "that was him, wasn't it? Dad."

B'Elanna shifted her position in the chair so she could face her without twisting her neck. She reached out to take the hand resting nearby. "We can still stop this." Miral's attention snapped back up in surprise. "I've put too much pressure on you. I only decided to help Harry so you could meet your father. But, what we're doing will have a huge effect on history. By making it all about Tom, I've put a horrible burden on you."

"Mom, that's silly. I know you're not doing this just to save dad. It's for all of them," Miral said, followed by the bright smile she inherited from her dad. "I know you miss them, and you blame yourself for what happened."

That smile turned a little cheeky, another Tom trait she had. "Besides if you were doing this only for me, I'd lock you and Grumpy in that cage and fly you straight to granddad's for one of his Prime Directive snoozefests."

"Ohno, anything but that," B'Elanna groaned but in good humour. She laughed meekly, "the truth is, I'm scared of losing you."

The cheeky element of the smile faded, her eyes glistened. "I'll still be there. The difference is, you'll be happier, and I'll know the dad I've heard so much about. No need to be all regretty and melodramatic, okay?"

B'Elanna shook her head, trying badly to stop smiling at the young girl. "You two together are going to drive me bonkers. I dunno if I want to go through with this."

Miral giggled, she maneuvered herself around the chair so she could give her mother a much needed hug. "Do you really want to listen to Harry whine about it for another fifteen years? I think you've punished yourself enough," she whispered.

"You're right. No more running and hiding from the past, moping about it solves nothing," B'Elanna said.

"Hello Harry."

The Doctor looked up from his work, curious as to why the man was talking to himself. As soon as he did he noticed Harry standing in front of a screen on the wall. That was what he was talking to.

"I don't have much time, so listen. Fifteen years I screwed up, hugely. B'Elanna and I were the only survivors of that mistake," he continued. "If you're watching this though, it never happened. What's the point in telling you this then?" He shrugged despondently. "I thought I could solve everything. I wanted respect from my peers. I was tired of being young green Ensign Eager. And, I was impatient. I wanted to go home *now*."

"What I want you to learn from this is *know your limits*. I got home at great cost. Ironically, I spent my life since then wishing I was back where you are, replaying the moment over and over, trying to fix it. Earth will still be there whenever you return. For now, Voyager is your home. Its crew are your family." Harry tried to warm up his expression for the final pitch, it only gave him an awkward smile, "don't make the same mistake I did. You've got a second chance, you owe me."

He leaned forward to switch off the panel he was directing his speech to. The Doctor watched him as he returned to their work area.

"Was that what I thought it was?" the Doctor questioned carefully. All while keeping his full attention on his work. It was easier to pretend that the item in his hand was a piece of Borg technology only, not what remained of Seven of Nine. He still couldn't wrap his matrix around what was happening.

"How's it coming?" Harry asked, dodging the hologram's question.

"There's no damage, but I'll still need an isoprobe," the Doctor replied. Harry nodded, then he rummaged around a tool box. "You do realise that what we're doing here is far bigger than piloting the Flyer ahead during the slipstream."

Harry only gave him a slight grunt as he handed the object the Doctor was after to him.

"You're still being impatient, trying to fix everything. Nothing's changed but the scale," the Doctor continued anyway.

"It's too late for me to change. Him though..." Harry muttered. "Once we do this, he'll follow a different path."

"This isn't just about you though. Countless people are going to be affected by this. Fifteen years of history will be changed," the Doctor argued.

Harry stared at him intensely, "so we should leave them there, buried and forgotten under the snow?"

"You don't know what will happen when you meddle with time," the Doctor said desperately. "You could make things worse. Have you ever considered that your interference in time is what causes the accident? A closed loop as it were."

"It won't. I didn't cook this up yesterday. I've done my homework," Harry barked. "This timeline only exists because of the error I made. I can't make it any worse than it is now. The crew trusted me, I failed them. I won't give up until I correct that."

The Doctor struggled to think of a counter argument, luckily the comm was on his side. "*Harry,*" B'Elanna's voice rang around the room. "*They've found us. A Galaxy class ship is on its way.*"

Harry only rolled his eyes, "of course it is. They don't seem to have anything else."

"*I'll tell them to come back with a more original class, shall I? Might buy us some time,*" B'Elanna's voice said with obvious sarcasm.

"Well, it can't hurt," Harry muttered in a similar tone. He fixed a firm stare at the Doctor. "How long until you get the translink frequency?" The other man hesitated for a moment. Harry relaxed his shoulders a little, "if you're having doubts about this, I'll get the frequency and time on my own. If you don't want to live with the burden, I'll understand."

A small smile formed on the Doctor's face. Every interaction he had with this man felt like he was talking to an imposter. Only now he saw any resemblance to Harry Kim. He thought about it carefully before answering. "I already have the translink frequency. It'd be a lot quicker if I gave you that while I look for your time code."

Harry smirked, he slapped the hologram hard on the shoulder in approval. It managed to make him wince.

The shuttle flew into open space, a Federation ship followed closely. On its bridge, the Captain sat down in her chair to make a log.

Captain's Log Stardate 52443.6: This should be my final log in the Delta Quadrant. In other news a pig flew by my window this morning, and Seven started wearing clothes. If this is my final entry, I'd like to say for the record it was probably her fault.

"What?" Seven raised an eyebrow.

"Take it like a doll," Kathryn hissed. She stared at the viewscreen, which showed the shuttle crew. "We're ready, are you?"

Young Harry looked a little nervous, he grinned to cover it up. "Raring to go, ma'am."

Kathryn nodded. "To all hands, this is the Captain. Take your stations, secure all systems, and standby for the jump to slipstream."

"I've established the telemetry link between the two vessels," young B'Elanna said calmly, with a stony face. The viewscreen switched to view the outside of the shuttle instead.

"Engage," Kathryn said. She crossed her legs while firmly gripping her arm rests.

The Delta Flyer picked up its speed as the huge Galaxy class starship loomed in.

The older B'Elanna growled at the helm controls, while her daughter tapped at one of the other stations behind her. "They're closing in, two hundred thousand kilometres. You know, just a crazy suggestion, but maybe we could try some evasive maneuvers," Miral said.

"For the last time, you're too young to fly," B'Elanna snapped over her shoulder.

Miral pouted, eyes rolling slightly. "That's never stopped me before."

B'Elanna sighed, her hand slammed onto another part of her station. "Harry, how are we doing?"

Back in the lower section of the Flyer, Harry and the Doctor were nose deep in their work. Harry with his tricorder, and the Doctor unfortunately still staring into part of Seven's skull brandishing a probe.

"The Borg transmitter's online. The translink frequency's locked onto Voyager's position, but I'm still waiting for the Doc to give us Seven's time of death," Harry answered.

"Pick up the pace, our friends will be in range in a matter of minutes," B'Elanna's voice said irritably.

"Guilt tripping me won't help," the Doctor snapped back.

Naturally B'Elanna didn't take the remark well, she clenched her fists against the computer to calm herself.

"We're being hailed. Should I answer them?" Miral asked.

B'Elanna was about to tell her off for asking a stupid question. Only she realised it wasn't as she opened her mouth. She glanced over her shoulder. "It'll give us a few extra minutes. Do it."

Miral nodded, then opened a channel.

B'Elanna looked to a small monitor next to the helm. She was surprised when the screen changed to the Bridge of the ship, that she recognised the person in the Captain's chair. It was a little unnerving, but she tried to hide it.

"Oh shi..." she instead blurted out.

"This is Captain Troi of the Starship Challenger. We know what you're trying to do, and..." the Captain interrupted softly.

"God, get that thing out of here. We already have one crashed ship on that planet. We don't need another," B'Elanna stuttered.

The older grey haired Deanna Troi narrowed her eyes at her, "it's been nearly twenty years. Enough with the Enterprise crash jokes."

B'Elanna shook her head, smiling politely. "Oh don't worry, it was no joke."

Troi seemed calmer, she even smiled a little. It rattled B'Elanna more than she liked. "You are merely trying to throw me off, to stall. It won't work. Shut down those impulse engines, drop your shields, and we can talk about this face to face."

"Sorry, we kinda need those things," B'Elanna said.

"You must understand. We're not going to let you alter the timeline. The Council has made you an offer. Hand over the transmitter and your shuttle, and all of your charges will be dropped," Troi said.

"Or we could continue with what we're doing and they won't exist at all," B'Elanna said with a wry smile.

Troi stared back at her firmly, "if you do, I'm under orders to stop you by any means necessary. I'm sorry."

"So am I," B'Elanna said honestly.

With a disappointed look on her face, Captain Troi signalled for the comm to close. Then she was gone. The Flyer shook immediately afterwards.

"They're going for our power systems," Miral reported.

"We're not going out without a fight, shields up, ready weapons," B'Elanna said.

Miral clutched her station as the Flyer shook a second time, she continued to shake herself once it stopped. "That's a Galaxy class starship, mom. What are you going to do, hack their shield frequencies?"

"Well then we could always beam their Captain into the pilot's chair," B'Elanna joked to try and calm her daughter down. It only worked for a moment, the girl meekly smiled. "It'll be all right. It's not going to matter soon."

The shuttle kept going ahead, only the much smaller Voyager flew behind them. Both of them began to glow.

"Slipstream velocity in four, three, two..." Tom said through the tremors.

Both vessels shot forward in a blur of blue.

Another rumble made the lights in the back of the Flyer flicker and lower. Older Harry glowered as he tapped one of the few remaining working panels. "I don't mean to back seat drive here, but emergency power is there for a reason."

The Doctor cringed slightly when he overheard both Torres women mutter dangerously over the comm. The lights coming back was a small relief.

"Thank you!" Harry grunted. His teammate wasn't sure if it was sincere or sarcastic. "Doc, where is that time code?"

"It's getting slower to get the more you pester me," the Doctor grumbled back.

"Phase variance is flaring up," James reported from Opps. Kathryn's attention snapped straight to him. "Point one, make that two."

Kathryn stared ahead of her towards the helm. "Well?"

"Nothing yet," was the response.

"Three," James continued.

"We're running out of time here, we need those corrections or the drive will have to be shut down," Kathryn said quickly.

Inside the shuttle her voice only heightened the stress levels for one of the occupants. Harry breathed in to calm himself as he looked back over his shoulder towards B'Elanna working rapidly.

"Spatial gradients. Compensate. Stabilise deflector," she said, he assumed more for his benefit than hers. She didn't look up and she didn't seem perturbed at all at the pressure.

"Threshold is fluctuating," Harry started to really panic.

B'Elanna still didn't rise to the bait. She calmly reported, "transferring phase corrections to helm."

Harry looked down to see for himself. The relief allowed him to breathe again.

Voyager's helm also confirmed the corrections had been received. "Got it."

James nodded as the ship tremors lessened, "phase variance is going down."

"Shields are holding," Tuvok reported.

Kathryn didn't relax, they had a long way to go yet. Yet her hands loosened their hold on the armrests. The ground beneath her shook so hard they were pushed up into the air, along with the rest of her for a fraction of a second.

"Nope, it's going back up. Point three and rising," James said as he was forced by another tremor to hold onto the station. Everyone else had to do something similar. "Point four."

"What's happening over there? The phase variance was only stalled for a second," Kathryn asked the shuttle crew.

Harry's panicked voice spoke up first, *"I'm not sure, Captain. The corrections should've worked."*

"Standby. I may need to compensate for the shuttle's position relative..." B'Elanna's voice said, still strangely calm. Static tried to interrupt her as she continued to speak, *"drive... corrections."*

A slight blip told everyone the same thing. Tuvok confirmed it for them, "we've lost our comm link."

"The telemetry link?" Kathryn questioned sharply.

She saw a head shake from the helmsman. The grim reply came next, "it has gone too. Slipstream is destabilising."

Kathryn leaned forward, almost sitting on the edge of her seat while gripping the rests tightly. "Shut it down!"

"The quantum matrix is overloading," Jessie reported from the Engineering station. Like most of the bridge now, she was trembling on her own accord, with nervous sweat building on her forehead.

"Helm control is down," was the next words nobody wanted to hear.

The Doctor grinned mostly in relief, he quickly crouched down in front of the older Harry. "I have it. Seven's cybernetic systems were terminated on Stardate 52443.6. Borg time index; 9.47258."

Harry nodded while he typed in the many numbers. The Doctor watched him intently, his eyes widened at the last few.

"You've entered in 9.43," he stammered.

A half hearted, "uh huh," was all he got.

"That's less than four minutes before Voyager was destroyed. That's a little close, isn't it?" the Doctor said in a panic.

Harry continued working as if he never said anything. "That's the point, Doc." The hologram didn't feel reassured by the answer.

Harry hurried over to the wall computer to continue his work. "Now to upload the new phase corrections." Once he was done he dropped back onto his knees in his previous position, armed with a narrow stylus shaped tool. "It's when I failed fifteen years ago. Today, I fix my mistake."

A few careful taps brought the transmitter to life. It whirred and started to flash.

Seven slowly looked up from her station, frowning slightly. "I'm receiving a transmission."

Tom pulled a similar face, he glanced in her direction. "The comm line is down, how?"

"The signal is coming through one of my cranial implants," Seven answered, though she was as confused as he was. "It contains a new set of phase corrections."

"I'm game if you are," Tom said quickly while wiping sweat from his brow. The thought occurred to him that she wouldn't know what he meant. "I'll try them, it's better than death."

Seven nodded, she tapped them in as quickly as possible. Tom did as well when he received them.

His face drained as soon as he did. "Oh god, we're doomed."

Young Harry couldn't believe his eyes as he stared toward the shimmering streaks of blue through the windows. He stumbled forward toward the helm in a panic, his forehead sweating briskly.

"Voyager's back in normal space," B'Elanna said, her voice uninterested. From what he could see, she was doing little more than watching the helm controls.

Harry's eyes widened in horror. He ran forward to tamper with them. "Alter our slipstream course! We've got to go back." At the last second she grabbed his wrist harshly.

"No," she warned him in her blank tone of voice that was normal for her lately. "We don't have a slipstream drive. We can't control our course. We try to enter normal space prematurely we'll be ripped apart. We have to ride the wave until the end."

"What are you saying?" Harry stuttered fearfully. He tried again with another arm. This time she blocked him by moving herself in his way. "We've got to go back for them!"

The grip she had on his arm tightened until he made a painful wheeze. Then she looked him in the eye. For the first time in months he saw some feeling in there. Guilt or sadness. He wasn't sure which. "I'm sorry," she whispered while finally letting go of his arm.

Harry stumbled backward a few steps. His legs weakened and so he stumbled into a sitting position. Tears overwhelmed his confused eyes.

The older Harry glanced up, his face turning a sickly shade of white. The Doctor looked on with worry.

"We're still here," Harry stammered with grief stricken panic.

"Mr Kim?" the Doctor said softly.

"Why are we still here? That should've fixed it," Harry's voice cracked.

He looked around with his eyes wide in terror, unaware that his panic was being displayed on a computer screen. Also unaware that he was being watched by someone greatly amused by his plight.

The watcher turned his chair around to face a large glass window. On the other side young Harry lay on one of two biobeds. At the head of them two large mechanical tendrils had attached themselves to their occupants foreheads.

On the neighbouring screen playing behind the man, older B'Elanna closed her eyes, trying badly not to scowl. Meanwhile the other body on the second bed also scowled the exact same way.

"Oh, why indeed," a computerised and deep voice cackled obnoxiously.

Kathryn's eyebrow shot straight up. So did the tension on the Bridge. "What do you mean we've lost the slipstream?" she asked in such a chilly voice, it froze the air in front of her.

Chakotay laughed nervously, secretly wishing he was on the shuttle instead of at the helm. "The quantum drive just went offline, I don't know why. We've returned to impulse."

"Comm system is back," James said.

"Hail them," Kathryn snapped in his direction. He shrugged and did as he was told.

Kathryn focused on the viewscreen as it showed the rear of a regular shuttle directly in front of them. It was only there for a second, immediately replaced by the cramped interior of it. Half of the occupants cringed and looked down to avoid the death glare wrath.

"I told you. Doomed," he squeaked.

"Remind me. What was your answer when I asked if you could do any better?" Kathryn hissed at them. She made her eyes bug out and made her voice as boring as possible, "yes I can, Captain. I am perfect and everyone else is stupider than me."

The shuttle crewmember who wasn't busy metaphorically, hopefully, peeing their pants, merely raised her metal eyebrow curiously. "I did not say anything like that."

"Actually you did. You said I was too slow to do this," James said.

Seven avoided looking in his direction, keeping her firm stare towards Kathryn. "I received phase corrections through my cranial implants. Those were the corrections that shut down the drive. Only someone with an interplexing beacon could have done that."

"Did she..." James stuttered while laughing slightly. "Did she still find a way to blame me after stealing my job on the shuttle?"

Jessie bit her bottom lip to avoid either laughing with him or sniping something at the drone. "Seems that way, or she's blaming me."

"You did not work on this problem and have no expertise," Seven said to her.

"Oh really?" Jessie smiled in a dark way.

Tom meanwhile ducked under the shuttle's helm to avoid not one, but two angry and very dangerous women. Chakotay had hunched down as well.

"So let me get this straight. You mucked up, twice, and none of it is your fault?" Kathryn asked. Even Seven was starting to get nervous from the stare she was getting. "Oh Seven, what are we going to do with you?"

"I'm telling the truth, Captain. I will admit to the first error, however..." Seven said in a flustered voice.

"Oh god, shhhhh. Don't engage," Tom whispered at her.

"Ohno, this is my fault. Only a month ago you were crying about not wanting to go to Earth. You said you had a change of heart," Kathryn muttered. "How convenient that the corrections are only in your head..."

Seven shook her head stubbornly, "this wasn't sabotage. I can prove that the corrections were sent to me by someone." She said the last word in a particular direction. Her target was still laughing quietly to himself. "I will."

"What's the big deal anyway? Yeah we're still lost, but we're not dead," James said once he stopped.

"Indeed," Tuvok agreed. Most of the Bridge did, but quietly as they didn't dare say anything while smoke still rose from the Captain.

"All right, prove it. But I dunno why someone would go to all that trouble," Kathryn said still with a suspicious tone of voice.

"Status?" a Human woman questioned.

A younger man looked up from his extremely advanced computer station to address her. "Time infiltration was successful, Captain. The Timeless incident has been erased."

The woman grimaced, "is that what we're calling it?"

The man shrugged with little care, "considering what would happen if we let it take place, I'd say it's appropriate."

"Hmm true. It's nice to get one right," the Captain said. As if on cue, stations began to complain. She responded with a heavy sigh. "What now?"

Another woman responded to her station's cries by swiping the air, when she did a holographic work panel faded in front of her fingertips. "Temporal error twenty three; paradox level two."

The first officer winced, "that sounds bad."

The Captain rolled her eyes in his direction, "you don't even know what paradox means."

"Yes I do, it's bad," he sniggered, hopefully teasing her.

"Can we get a little more information than that, Lieutenant?" the Captain said toward the woman.

The Lieutenant scanned her physical and holographic stations with a panicked expression. She grit her teeth, making a hissing sound when she inhaled. "A few glitches in our calcs. The Delta Flyer's disappearance. Kim himself..."

"On it," the first man said. He worked furiously while the Captain watched with interest. Once he was done, he gestured proudly at the screen.

"What is this? Is this the best you could do?" she asked distastefully.

The man didn't take that kindly, he pouted huffily. "What do you want? It's better than the alternative. That, I couldn't even measure."

"You better be right. This isn't something that will go unnoticed," the Captain said. Her eyes fell once again on his so called work. A whole area of space, thousands of lightyears filled with piercing black temporal anomalies, creating the illusion of a massive void. The better alternative. She knew he was right. She'd seen for herself how much worse it could be.

Captains Log Supplemental: According to our Astrometrics data, our first slipstream trip has taken us the ten thousand light years we were aiming for. However, the early exit has delayed our rescue mission of the Delta Flyer by quite a huge margin. Unfortunately it'll be sometime before we can safely use this technology again.

Kathryn leaned over Opps a little too closely to its current user while she stared intensely at the data. James made a point to take a large step away from her. On her other side Chakotay noticed this and shook his head with a small smile.

"Another minute," Kathryn tutted once she was finished. She stood up straight, eyeing the two men on either side of her briefly. "One damn minute and we'd be there."

Chakotay's smile turned sympathetic. "We don't know for sure when they dropped out of the slipstream corridor. We may still find them." He turned his attention to James. "Run a long range sensor scan. They'll already have a month head start, and if I were Harry or B'Elanna, I'd go back in the direction I came."

"If you were B'Elanna, you wouldn't have stolen the Flyer for a slipstream joyride, right? So we wouldn't be worrying about a rescue at all," James said.

Chakotay rolled his eyes, "can we do this without any comment from you?"

"No," James replied honestly.

"The sooner we get Harry back," Chakotay muttered to himself. Of course he was still heard.

"He's right, in a way. We don't know what B'Elanna was thinking, and I doubt Harry would have much sway over her. Physically or otherwise," Kathryn said.

"That doesn't help us though. That would mean that as soon as the Dauntless lost track of it, they could've gone in any direction. I'd like to have something to aim for," Chakotay said.

Kathryn groaned, her hand angrily gestured to the panel she'd been looking at. On it a basic stargate showing merely a line going through it. "Yes, something that's about five months away. No time like the present."

"If we're wrong, we'll lose them for good," Chakotay said.

"Okay, so let me get this straight," Jessie butted in from afar. "Vengeful alien guy with a slipstream ship is pissed because the Borg assimilated his homeworld. So he thinks the best revenge is to kidnap Janeway and go for a few thousand light year spin around the block."

Kathryn sent her a stare that hinted for her to be quiet.

Of course she didn't *listen* to that. "I'm just saying, looking for a tiny shuttle that fell out of a slipstream corridor during a flight like that, a month ago. Finding a well cooked ingredient in Neelix's dishes would be easier."

"We know where they were and I don't care what A-Idiot was doing when this happened. All I care about is retrieving the Delta Flyer and why B'Elanna took it out for a *slipstream joyride*," Kathryn said, casting a brief glance in James' direction for the last two words.

Tom's head dipped down so far his chin was touching his chest. He had been wondering the same thing for weeks, all while battling the regret he had for asking for Harry's help with the Flyer on the day of the theft. "Me too."

"That's still priority, but there's more to this than what we know. Arturis' bizarre flight path might be related to how our probe got into his ship," Chakotay suggested.

Kathryn's resulting glare made him wither and back off a little. "Oh, don't tell me you believe that pissant's lies about a *oooh spooky shadowy* figure."

"It makes more sense than your drunk driving theory last week," Chakotay said with a cover smile. "It's not so ridiculous. We were already aware of a Boss character with some sort of in for us, wasn't that what Arturis called him?"

"It doesn't change anything. The Delta Flyer was thrown from the Dauntless' tail during his second turn around. That's what its sensors said. But that's still hundreds of lightyears ahead, and I'd like to hope we'll run into each other along the way," Kathryn said. "Now, are we done with the expositionese?"

"The what?" James frowned.

"It's been a month and we're still trying to figure out what happened last time. Give me a break," Kathryn snapped, then she stomped off leaving him even more confused.

The turbolift doors opened, allowing the Doctor and Seven to step onto the Bridge. Kathryn stopped a little ways in front of them, folding her arms tightly, drumming a PADD against one.

"I've finished my analysis of Seven's cranial implant," the Doctor said. He didn't wait for anyone to ask. "There was a Starfleet security code attached to the transmission. What's interesting is that it seemed to belong to Mr Kim."

The whole bridge stared at him with similar confused expressions. Tuvok even managed one.

"Harry?" Tom's interest was piqued. He hurried over to join them. "Does it leave any clues as to where he and B'Elanna are?"

"Down, heel!" Kathryn spat at him and pointed.

Tom's jaw dropped, "hey, I'm not a dog."

"No you're right. Dogs are smart, and cute, and obedient," Kathryn rolled her eyes.

The Doctor smirked briefly before continuing his report. "The transmission had a temporal displacement. It came from the future."

"Ohno. Time travel," Kathryn groaned while rubbing her forehead.

"Harry, he's nearby and he stopped us here for that reason. Who else would think to do something like this?" Tom said a little too eagerly.

Kathryn turned around to bop him on the nose with the PADD she was holding. She turned back to face the Doctor and Seven with a calm face as if nothing happened, while Tom scampered off to the helm rubbing his sore nose. "Past, future, how long?"

"We haven't been able to determine that yet. The results are inconsistent," the Doctor answered. "Including the owner of the security code."

"Of course it is. Take the whole thing apart, examine it molecule by molecule if you have to. I want to know who did this and more importantly, why," Kathryn ordered.

"We have already done so, Captain," Seven said.

Kathryn smirked slightly, "oh, it didn't take long to put your pretty little head back together. I'm impressed Doc."

Seven stared at her with even wider eyes than usual. The Doctor's did the same, while everyone else shifted around uncomfortably. Jessie broke the uncomfortable silence by giggling a little too loudly.

"She got it," Kathryn said with a sly smile.

James quietly laughed too, "we all got it, that's not everyone's problem."

"Oh boohoo. Excuse me, let me tip toe around you delicate flowers. I'm way overdue," Kathryn said as she made her way to the Ready Room. She passed the Doctor, Seven and Tuvok on route, so she made a point to put on a pet lip as she stared at them.

Chakotay sighed in relief once she was gone. "All right Tom, follow Arturis' flight path, warp nine. We may as well get this four, five month rescue mission started."

Tom nodded, he got straight to work. Just as he was about to enter the final command his eyes almost bugged out. "Oh, literally take the whole cranial thing apart. That's dark."

Jessie stepped into the turbolift, yawning from the very long and odd day they all had. The doors were about to close when they shot open again for someone else. She was more than a little surprised to see it was James. Lately he'd wait for her to go before leaving himself. The small smile on his face was another surprise.

"James, is something wrong?" she asked carefully.

"No, I just want to give you the longest overdue apology anyone has ever done," James replied. He sighed as if he was annoyed with himself. "I'm sorry."

Jessie stared at him, puzzled, "what, why?"

"How I acted, or rather overreacted. I don't even know why. I was embarrassed, it makes me cringe thinking about it. You had every right to be upset with me, so I kept my distance," James said.

"But I wasn't. I was more angry at myself," Jessie said, laughing awkwardly.

James joined in with her, shaking his head. "What a pair."

"Yeah," Jessie said, nodding.

"Still, I'm sorry for... everything. Throwing a tantrum, hiding from you," James said, his smile fading away, looking far too sorry for himself.

Jessie tried not to laugh at his expression. "Well, at least you owned up to it. But why now?"

James realised what she was laughing at, he tried not to look so pathetic to her and bring his smile back. "I really didn't want us to be on bad terms today."

"Oh," Jessie said, suddenly feeling awkward. "It's no big deal, you know."

"Yes it is. I wasn't going to forget your birthday," James said. "I already got you something, but I dunno if you'll like it."

"I told you, it's not..." Jessie said until she realised what he said. "Oh?" He leaned down to kiss her on the cheek, which flushed a bright red. "What was that for?"

"Now we're even," James said.

Jessie pretended to scowl at him. "Uh huh. You wish," she teased.

"Okay, that's why you get actual presents," James sniggered.

"Now you're talking," Jessie smirked back.

The darkness of the room was rudely violated by the light from an opening door. The shadowed figure had been currently sniggering at the sight of older Harry shouting in despair at the Doctor on one screen.

"Sir?" the intruder also had a voice.

"Do you mind? I'm getting some quality emo watching time here," the computerised voice complained.

The intruder smiled as if he said something else. "No sir, I don't. Thank you." They had the audacity to sit down next to him. At least the door closed, giving the room its dark edge again.

"Ugh, you better have some good news," the deepened voice grumbled.

"Yes, I do," the intruder chirpily said. "Voyager took the bait. They're on their way."

The computerised voice chuckled menacingly. "Excellent. How long before they reach us?"

"I er... don't know. Their super fast drive conked out a few hundred years away," the intruder stuttered.

The shadow figure sat in silence for a few seconds, then he groaned into his hand. "Slipstream. Light years."

"Wow, you're so smart Boss," the intruder said nervously.

"It's no feat to be smarter than you, but yes, yes I am," the computerised voice said. "They'll be a little late, but not to worry. It just gives me time to play with my new toys for a bit longer."

As he expected, the toys part of his comment confused the intruder into silence. He took the opportunity to watch his two screens once more. On both the Delta Flyer exploded, a white flash enveloped it afterwards. The text '*Reset Program?*' flashed across the screen.

The Boss chuckled darkly as he glanced at the intruder. "What do you think? Should we send Harry Kimmy to Voyager this time? I hear ice skating around the people you killed is good for the soul."

"Um, heh, yeah sure," the intruder laughed uncomfortably. They rose from the chair and backed off for the exit. Since they couldn't see it, they bumped into the edge of the computer. "Ow, excuse me sir."

The Boss grunted a little when they left him in peace. He tapped away at the computer. Once he was done he got up to walk to the glass wall in the room, staring intently at his two prisoners lying on the beds on the other side.

"This is already getting boring. But without Janeway, you'll have to do for the time being." He chuckled to himself. "Oh, what fun I'd have with..." He collided knee first into the small table he forgot was there. The pain forced him to bite his lip for a few seconds.

"This secret identity thing is a bitch," he groaned. Then he reluctantly turned the lights on.

Kathryn squinted at the bizarre sight now displayed on the viewscreen. Everyone else were just as confused at the distorted, blurry and moving starfield ahead of them. It was beginning to make some feel a little motion sick.

"Oh, what fresh hell is this?" Kathryn snarled after repressing a gag herself.

No one had an answer for her.

THE END