

Admiral Janeway utters a feint ‘Ohhhhh’.... and falls back as the Borg Queen attempts to assimilate her. At that precise moment the Queen sees and feels the immense threat to her and the Borg in the Borg Hub space. The Doctor’s bio-weapon carried within the Admiral’s physiology is passed into the Queen and is working faster with each fraction of a second. It is successful. The Queen knows it’s too late for her mechanical Borg reflexes to stop. She feels herself begin to disappear. The whole Borg Hub station begins to erupt with cascading explosions. At that very moment, faster than lightning, a powerful arc of blinding blue light engulfs half the hub bay wherein Janeway has fallen. Janeway re-materializes in perfect physical condition aboard her shuttle as it blasts toward the point of entry into the hub, past all the dead Borg cubes and vessels. A few seconds later, and billions of miles away, the shuttle throttles down to sub-light cruise speed. After a few minutes, Janeway begins to mumble some unintelligible sounds, slowly raising her head from the pilot chair head rest. “Computer... where am I?” “ In the Delta Quadrant, at the point of initiation of Voyager’s last recorded mission.”, the Computer answers. ‘Voyager... voyager’, she quickly realized. “Has Voyager been successful?” she asks as she braces for the reply. “Voyager was undamaged when last seen entering the portal to the Borg Hub passage to Earth, and the crew were unharmed.” Janeway sits motionless for a few moments. She breathes easier and deeper as she let’s the reality take hold. She got her crew home..... a second time.... without tragic loss of any of her dear crew this time. They have more time to get on with living now. She continues to enjoy the moment. She rises briskly and lightly, moving toward the replicator. “Coffee... black.” As she reaches for her

coffee, she catches a reflection of herself from the smooth pristine surface of the replicator. “What in the world...” she ponders out loud. “Please specify.” the computer responds. “Excuse me... no question.” Janeway reflexively replies. “Computer... mirror.” The computer produces a mirror from the wall in front of her. She sees Captain Janeway in the mirror; her younger version of Kathryn Janeway she met and worked with on the plan to get Voyager home. “Computer..... can you run a bio-scan on me?” “In progress...” the computer says, as the buzzing and beeping continue for a minute and then stops. “ All physiological systems are within acceptable parameters... with a slight elevation of blood pressure.” “Display external visual sensor data. Begin at the time my shuttle enters the Borg Hub portal.” Janeway watches intently as everything goes as she remembers. Suddenly, there is a brilliant, powerful arc of blue light engulfing half of the Queen’s Hub station. The shuttle warps out.... and she is here. She thinks, and maintains her grace and courage. It is a singular virtue, even for a Captain, trained to be such. She decides on the best question to ask the computer now. “Is my apparent age only that, or is it real.” “Your bio-patterns and physical profile match Captain Janeway at the time of Voyager’s mission against the Borg Queen, and logically resulted from beaming onto this shuttle.”

“Where did the power originate?”

“From the shuttle’s transporter and weapons’ component modules.”

“Both modules worked together?”

“Affirmative”

“Was there any outside power source involved, such as another ship, or power relay buoy?”

“Negative”

“Does it match any known type of transporter or weapon’s energy pattern in Star Fleet records.”

“Processing..... negative.”

“Speculation?”

“Processing..... the transporter and weapons systems aboard this shuttle were upgraded, rebuilt, and re-organized on Star Date 89098.4 by the Sumetran space dock engineers.”

“The Sumetrans. Yes, that must be it. That has to be the lead.” “Computer... well done.”

“Thank you Admiral.... or should I address you as Captain?” Janeway paused for a moment and smiled. “Captain will be fine.” “Acknowledged” the Computer replied. Janeway gets a refill on her coffee and sits down in the pilot’s chair, looking at the navigation reading. ‘Looks ok.’ she thought. She thought of Neelix, and set a course for the asteroid-planetoid system where Voyager said goodbye to him. Where he is now probably happily married. ‘Bless his heart, he would never forgive me if he knew I was still here and didn’t call on him.... and, I need him.’ she thought.

After 2 weeks at high warp she entered Neelix’s system. Hailing his ship’s preferred frequency, she calls ... “Captain Janeway to Neelix, can you read?” In a flash Neelix answers, “I can’t believe it, Captain..... is everything ok, Captain?” Neelix’s joy at seeing the Captain almost blotted out his rational concern for her not churning away for the alpha quadrant. “Neelix, I don’t want to intrude...

“Nonsense... intrude, wa’ll, wa’ll, you’re never any intrusion. So glad to see you. Meet me at these coordinates, now, ok?” “Aye, aye, sir.” Janeway chuckles. “Janeway out, see you in a minute.”

“Alright!” Neelix exclaims joyfully.

Neelix was overjoyed at seeing the Captain. The Captain filled him in on what had transpired shortly after they had said goodbye. “All that in just that short amount of time... I missed it all!” “You couldn’t have known... Voyager didn’t know.” she said. “So... you’re the Admiral ...you were the Admiral ... and now you’re another Captain right now, the same?” “That’s right.” Janeway affirmed. “If we hadn’t experienced so many unusual encounters, I wouldn’t believe it, but of course, I do.” They both sit in Neelix’s large cargo transport and simply enjoy catching up. Janeway looks around a bit. Neelix is beside himself. “Captain, come stay with us a few days and then I want to take you to this wonderful class M planet. It is like paradise. It has everything, and it is very much like Earth.” Janeway smiled and asked, “How far is it?” “Only 2 days at warp 5... can your shuttle match that without trouble?” Neelix asked. “Warp 8 tops, and no strain on the engines.” she replies confidently. Neelix became his same animated self, the one Janeway always loved so dearly. “Captain, I can’t wait for you to see planet Beta-5. If the Doctor was here, he would order you to go!” She flashed on the Doctor and grinned. “Neelix, you’re the best moral officer Star Fleet ever had.”

ONE YEAR LATER --- IN THE ALPHA QUADRANT

B'lanna and Seven of Nine fix their intense gaze on a monitor console screen, looking at the telemetry coming in from their first test of their own Hub passage to the Delta Quadrant. This was it. All the simulations, calculations, and construction was finished. Now, they were sending the first probe out and back through the dual passages. A year of intense work has led them to this moment. "So far so good." B'llena quietly narrates. "The telemetry indicates no anomalies or interference. The probe should be here within 45 seconds." Seven adds. They both look at the chronometer and B'llena resists the urge to holler 'Hoorah' prematurely. Seven is unusually animated. Seven has been becoming more "human" with each passing day since their arriving home. "They both raise up from the screen as the probe comes barreling out of the portal and throttles down to slow speed." "Success!" B'llena exclaims happily. "Indeed!" Seven joins in. B'llena hugs Seven happily and Seven hugs her just as hard. "Admiral Paris is going to be ecstatic. Tom will be too." B'llena gushed. Seven stood smiling. She seemed to be trying to understand what this means. She never had an experience like this. B'llena says, "This is what triumph is Seven, like when we made it back to earth." "I think I see it more clearly.... it is... a distinctly euphoric experience. This is what happy is... correct?" "Yes, Seven, that's right. This is happy!" Seven continued, "It is very similar to my feeling when Chakotay asked me to marry him and I said yes." "Right, now you're getting it Seven, now you are getting it. Let's inform Admiral Paris of the good news!" B'llena exclaimed. They shut down the systems at the

monitoring station at Science Space Station- Kirk-1, and spritely launch their shuttle on the short trip to earth. The station crew is now at a skeleton level. All the Star Fleet personnel remaining are security.

Admiral Kathryn Janeway relaxes in her dining room chair, enjoying a piping hot cup of black coffee. She slowly begins to smile as she looks up at her favorite framed photograph. On a class M planet, which the crew had found to surprise her for her birthday party during their second year in the Delta Quadrant, she and Ensign Kim had their arms locked around each other, sitting on a small stone wall. They were chuckling as the photo was snapped. Each had a wide purple ring around their mouth from eating a delicious fruit Neelix had discovered. Next to it hangs a photo taken during the ceremony upon being promoted to Admiral, while receiving Star Fleet's highest honor, the Medal of Valor. Still, the purple ring mouth photo is her all-time favorite. Her com channel sounds. "Starship Enterprise to Admiral Janeway." "Janeway here." "Admiral, we're all set to go." "Acknowledged, Captain, on my way." Admiral Janeway takes a shuttle car to Star Fleet Command Center, boards the shuttle craft waiting for her and heads for the newest and most sophisticated starship constructed to date. The USS Enterprise. Admiral Janeway is scheduled to attend a Federation ceremony to welcome their new member, the Delmans, from Tymar-4 and Tymar-5. The ceremony is on Tymar-4. It is 4 hours away at warp 5. Janeway arrives at the engineering dock. She walks briskly into the engineering main deck, where every engineering crewman stands at attention. "Admiral on deck." Yeoman Jones announces. "Welcome aboard, Admiral, it is an honor to have you." "The honor is all mine" she replies. Janeway had learned from Kirk's history to never leave space dock without all

capability. She had been over the checklist with Command Center about the new USS Enterprise's ready status for 3 weeks prior to its release for duty. Janeway was not on board when the Enterprise took its maiden voyage out and back. But she sure let them have it when they were set to leave without a tractor beam and full sensors. Engineering obliged, and waited till they were up to the mark. She arrives at the bridge shortly with the entourage of welcoming crewman. "Admiral on the bridge," First officer Stan announces. Captain Harry Kim announces to the bridge crew, and all crew members by intercom, "Welcome Admiral Janeway, my captain." Applause rings out over the intercom system and from the bridge. "Thank you, crew of the Enterprise, one and all." the Admiral responds. Captain Kim gestures to the captain's chair in deference to her rank. "She's all yours Captain Kim. As you were." "Aye Admiral," he quickly replies. "Still, Admiral, would you give the word?" "The word is given, Captain Kim, take us out." Applause rings out once again. The Enterprise leaves space dock, heading for Tymar-4.

Two days later, Academy instructors Chakotay and Tuvok are casually discussing curriculum strategies and philosophy in Star Fleet Headquarters' officer's dining hall. Tom, B'Ilana, and Seven of Nine, who is sitting next to her husband Chakotay, are engaged in a discussion about the possibilities of the Hub just finished. The Doctor and his wife take it all in, very much amused. The Doctor says, "The Captain... Admiral Janeway... should be back soon. They say the reception went smoothly." "She probably charmed them all." Chakotay added. Tom spoke up, "Star Fleet simply needs to put her in charge ---- the whole thing. And... they offered.... just last month, but she turned it down." "She's got the heart of an explorer and the mind of a commander and scientist." B'Ilana added. "We've all got more Captain Janeway stories than could ever be logged in our base computer!" Tom said and added, "I believe she doesn't want to get stuck behind a desk permanently, never having another opportunity at exploration and command of a ship." "That would seem very much the case." Tuvoc agreed.

Near the Cardassian border, a small Cardassian science vessel moves in low orbit around a planetoid and is running continual geological sensor scans. A Cardassian science officer looks over at the Chief, who is pilot.

“Chief, this looks good, it’s perfect for Sir there is some activity there is sensors are reading a weapons signature!”

“At us?”

“Unknown!”

A rocket-blast flashes off the planetoid surface, then 4 rocket pods warp out and disappear.

“Go to warp and pursue.”

The engineer, having only basic training on ship operations that are non-scientific, cringes, but follows the Pilot’s order. The Cardassian ship pursues at maximum warp 5. The rocket pods come in to view, as he matches the speed.

“They are at warp 3. Scan them.” the Pilot orders. The crewman scans the rocket pods.

“These are Cardassian sir. They do not match up with any known weapon in our data banks. But sensors detect Cardassian alloy and Cardassian resonance signatures for the payload. They must be ours sir, our intelligence has shown we are the only known world to use this alloy and this payload material. This prevents an enemy from commandeering them without much time and effort. Sir ... these weapons can devastate an entire planet.”

“They are on a direct course and trajectory to Earth.” the Pilot gravely announces, monitoring

his navigation sensors. They know they don't have much time to waste, they cannot afford to sit and allow this to take hold of them and paralyze them with shock.

"Raise Legate Guillamet", the Pilot orders, trying to hold himself together. The Pilot knows Cardassian weapons of the clandestine service have defense capabilities with the utmost resilience. The crewman works quickly, and as he reaches for the final switch to open the priority-1 channel.... "Chief, the Chancellor is hailing us."

"Put it on."

Legate Guillamet is obviously struggling to maintain his wits and his resources. He knows he is going to need every ounce of them. The Legate says, "Our base science station is monitoring the situation from your sensor relay transmission."

"We only have minimal weapons. Do you want me to try to destroy them?", the Pilot asks.

"We've decided to try... but we don't think it will be successful. We have agreed these weapons were built during our war with the Federation. We are in emergency session now. Our experts are in contact with each other, or they are present here. We have contacted the Federation

"

"Fire everything you've got." Legate Guillamet orders firmly.

"Fire all chambers, crewman."

"Firing sir.... away..." The Pilot fires 5 charges which are the Cardassian version of photon torpedos, which release in rapid sequence, timed to explode all together for maximum destructive force.

... a thunderous flash....

Nothing. No slowing down, nor any damage to the rocket pods.

“Maintain visual and maintain visual sensor transmission. Maintain relative position to the rocket pods.”

Legate Guillamet orders. Guillamet turns to his military commanders quickly and asks firmly, straining to hold back loud and angry language, “Do we know yet who made these weapons?”

The Legate could sense their hopelessness.

The First Military Consul could barely say it. He forced it out. “We believe they are connected to Tellerac, who was aboard the Victory, when the Federation destroyed it. These weapons are not detectable until deployed. A Tellerac standard. We believe.... we think he must have been preparing to launch an unauthorized attack on Earth with these weapons, and they survived Victory’s destruction and settled on the planetoid, close to where the Victory was lost. Tellerac acted alone. Only two other scientists worked with him, and they left Cardassia when the treaty was signed. They never trusted the Federation. We are trying to find these scientists but nobody on Cardassia so far has been able to give us any lead. These weapons were activated by the sensor sweeps of the geological survey.” Guillamet turns to face the Pilot, “ We are in communication with Star Fleet Command as we speak. We will try to keep you informed. Guillamet out.”

Lt. Sheri Uhura Jameson, the great, great, grand daughter of the legendary Nira Uhura, looked up from her communications station quickly.... “Priority 1 message coming in now sir, we have visual.”

“On screen,” Captain Kim responds. Admiral Janeway immediately snaps to from answering polite inquiries from the Yeoman on the bridge, as they sit in the guest area. Her ears are wide open as she looks at the front viewscreen. The Director of Star Fleet Command, Admiral Sanders, appears on full screen. “Captain Kim, an emergency situation has arisen, the Enterprise is in proximity to what the Cardassians claim to be an incident. Four rocket pod weapons of tremendous payload were activated accidentally upon a planetoid 20 minutes from your position. They are headed directly at Earth. We are transmitting the coordinates now.” A sequence of quick chirps is heard. “I have them sir.” “Captain Kim, the Independence is 5 light years from your position. It’s up to you. The Cardassians have only freighters and cargo ships in the area, they are heavily involved with an internal conflict on their opposite border. I’m sorry Captain Kim, we need you to track these weapons and run every analysis you can on them. We need to find a way to stop them. They are steady at warp 3. We have every available Federation Weapons specialist available for you. The Cardassian survey vessel said to have accidentally activated the weapons is shadowing the weapons. Let’s assume they are there to help us as they urgently insist. Our Federation experts believe they are being truthful and so do I. We are here standing by. Sanders out.”

“Helm, bring us to a safe distance. Lt. Jameson, hail the Cardassian survey ship.”

“Aye, Captain. On screen.”

“This is Captain Kim, greetings.”

“Thank you for helping, Captain, we sincerely apologize for this. We are at your service. I have only 5 crewman aboard, all engineers. I am Lt. Hamech, the Pilot.”

“Very well, let’s get to work. We have less than 2 hours to stop these weapons. Have you learned anything about them yet?”

“We hit them directly with simultaneous detonation of 5 Class 3 photon charges with no effect.”

Captain Kim pauses a moment, gathers courage, and replies, “Understood Lt. Hamech.”

Admiral Janeway is feeling great pride in Harry. He already is fairing much better than most Captains. She likes to think she has something to do with it, and she does.

“Sensors confirm the Cardassian Legate’s information concerning the alloy and the payload. They are Cardassian”, First officer Stan, a vulcan, reports from his station, adding, “Captain, even though the Cardassians know nothing of these weapons, and Star Fleet Command hasn’t discovered any mention of them among log records, maybe there is some mention in Star Fleet’s personal logs during the time of the Cardassian War.

“Outstanding Lt. Stan, search everything we have and relay that to Star Fleet command. “

As Captain Kim waits for the search results he is constantly monitoring sensor readings for any detail that is unusual, as are all the bridge and engineering crew aboard.

“Admiral Janeway.... we welcome any assistance you wish to give.”

“Thank you Harry.” Janeway moves to the station where the readout of the computer request will be transmitted first. Nothing at all is produced. Negative. Janeway searches quickly every compartment of her memory. She was in the Cardassian War. She remembers a short dinner conversation with a Bejoran Star Fleet Chief of Security during the first week of the War, discussing capabilities of the Cardassians that he personally knew about and suspected.

“Harry, hail Command, and ask them to locate and patch in Lt. Lacota Chemata.”

“Aye, sir.” Harry turns to Lt. Jameson, who already has it done. “Message sent, sir.”

After less than a minute, they have located and patched him in.

“Hello Enterprise, this is Lt. Chemata, how can I help?” Then they began to get a visual, and put it on the station where Janeway stood.

“Admiral Janeway, I’ve been brought up to speed. Would rather this not be such a critical circumstance.”

“As do I. Can you give us anything that will help us?” Janeway asked

“Admiral, if this is what I suspect, it may be unstoppable. These weapons can decimate Earth.”

The entire bridge falls gravely still and silent, waiting for what Lt. Chemata will say.

“Tellerac was an innovator... he thought if Earth won the conflict we would interfere and disrupt their empire and way of life. I believe, since he was aboard the Victory, destroyed during the early part of the fierce battle in that area where the Federation did heavy damage, he planned to strike at Earth. He feared Cardassia’s defeat was imminent. The only force that may stop them would be a tremendous matter-antimatter explosion. I don’t know anything more. The Enterprise may be able to do some damage with the new class of phasers. Antimatter torpedoes probably are not enough, but I recommend trying them.”

“Thank you, Lt.”

“Good luck, Enterprise. Admiral Janeway... Captain Kim... Lt. Chemata out.”

“All weapons at full charge.” Captain Kim announced “Aye sir, ready,” tactical officer Lt. Morris replied.

“Fire all phasers, continuous fire.” “Aye sir, firing,” Morris answers

The new phasers looked magnificent, tearing through space, appearing a yellowish-blue color.

“Cease fire.” Kim orders.

No difference, no damage. Kim observes, showing only more determination than before.

“Photon torpedos, sequence Spock-alpha.”

The photon torpedos light up the screen.

No damage. Janeway begins to suspect that antimatter torpedos, with their specific yield, will not be enough. She begins to prepare for what she must do. She knows Harry would object, but she ranks him. Janeway quickly moves toward the turbolift, saying, “Harry, I’ll be in

engineering. I have an idea to get more out of the antimatter torpedos.” Kim almost stops her, turning around, and decides not to. “Aye Admiral.” Twenty minutes later, Janeway calls from Engineering, “Harry, fire tube 1 first.” “Yes Admiral, Kim answers. “All set,” Janeway relays.

Kim orders, “Fire tube 1, antimatter torpedo.” “Aye sir, firing tube 1... torpedo away.” The antimatter torpedo explodes with tremendous force, holding everyone’s attention. Nothing.

“Harry, we have 3 more antimatter torpedos, correct?” “Affirmative.” Kim replies “The maximum Star Fleet allows by regulation.” Janeway discusses the adjustments and possibilities

for using the three remaining antimatter torpedos. “Those adjustments cannot be made in less than 2 hours, Admiral.”, Kim replies. “Has Command came up with anything, Harry?” “They are working, but nothing yet.” Kim answers. “Harry, for all we know, some of these weapons

may be set to go off on any place near Earth our science stations, our colony outposts?”

“Yes Admiral.” Kim replies. “How much time do we have exactly?” Janeway asks. “40 minutes

till Earth outpost Glenn-3.”, Kim answers. “Harry, inform Command we are going to fire all 3 antimatter torpedos simultaneously.” “Yes Admiral.” Harry quickly responds, carrying out the order. Janeway knows what she must be ready to do. There is no other way. “Standing by.” Janeway affirms. Janeway moves briskly to the shuttle bay in an innocuous way. She listens to the release of the torpedos. A flash of red light from the rocket-pods and the Enterprise antimatter torpedos are destroyed, with no effect at all. “They took out our torpedos with some type of phaser array, Admiral.” Janeway quickly commandeers her favorite shuttle, her customized shuttle, that she arranges to be loaded aboard any starship she travels in. Her shuttle core has a much larger quantity of antimatter, as large as the original Enterprise’s warp core. Kirk’s Enterprise warp core. The instant her shuttle leaves the bay portal she throws a switch on her console, and the Enterprise immediately breaks out of warp, as her shuttle goes to warp 3. “Kim to Admiral Janeway”... Suddenly, a brilliant light fills the entire screen. “Admiral Janeway..... oh no, oh no, no,” Captain Kim says very quietly. He sits silent and still in the Captain’s chair. He knows she’s gone. His bridge crew respects his feelings, as they realize the Admiral’s sacrifice. They all remain silent and still for more than a few moments, in the pervasive sadness.

..... “Captain Kim, the Cardassian weapons have been completely destroyed.”, Lt. Owens says quietly. Captain Kim took a few moments to respond. “Understood.” He didn’t smile. No crew member cheered or celebrated. Yes, Earth is safe, but the magnificent, beloved Admiral Janeway is now gone.

IN THE DELTA QUADRANT

“That one... that one looks like a butterfly...” Kathryn Janeway said, pointing to one of the white, fluffy clouds.

“Butterfly... what’s that?” asks Sean Kelly, a true human whom Captain Janeway had met 5 months ago on Beta-5, where they are now.

“They’re beautiful insects, they undergo metamorphosis.” Janeway explains as she bristles his hair.

Sean pulls her closer to him, as they lean against a huge “pashure” tree, similar to a large oak tree, with a reddish hue to the leaves. They are enjoying a beautiful picnic lunch, on a perfect day. “You’re my butterfly”, he says, and kisses her, moving his hands up over her shoulders to hold her beautiful face to his. He stands up and retrieves a small velvet box from his pocket. He kneels on one knee...

“Kathryn Janeway, I love you. Will you please marry me?”

Captain Kathryn Janeway, who beat the Borg and survived years in an unknown Delta Quadrant, struggles to find her voice through quiet tears. She stood up and they embrace and kiss.

“Yes...yes, yes.”, she vows quietly. She nuzzled her face to his, and held him as tight as she could. She looks at him and his eyes tear up as he smiles at her. They lose track of time the rest of the day. They enjoy lunch. They lean back against the tree by the river. They laugh, cry, and nap a bit too, on a beautiful blue blanket they spread on the lush green grass.

The following week, 2 days before the wedding, Neelix is visiting Kathryn and Sean on Beta-5. Kathryn took up residence there the day after Neelix brought her there the first time. Sean had been there a month before. They are enjoying dinner at the same Tom Paris-style french restaurant. Neelix asks Sean, “So you are a direct descendant of what we call the ‘37’s?” as Kathryn chuckles and grins. “Yes, indeed I have that distinction, Neelix.” Sean answers with a gleam in his eye. “With your particular experience fighting those aliens who originally abducted your descendants, it’s no wonder you and the Captain have so much in common. You both have that fighting spirit. The love of freedom.”, Neelix expounded. Kathryn and Sean reach out for each other and join hands while Neelix is speaking. “My wife said she never saw such a lovely couple.” Sean was fairly tall, slightly over six feet, with dark brown hair, dark eyes, very physical and coordinated, and powerfully built. The beautiful Captain is everything he ever dreamed of. Sean was particularly fond of Kathryn’s rich, full, gorgeous red hair. He’d never seen a redhead before, which made her even more attractive. Sean had spent most of his adult life fighting the aliens who abducted his ancestors. He had never really been in love before. Kathryn would not believe it at first, but she finally does now. Romance didn’t fit in with the life he had chosen to lead. Basically, Kathryn is from that mold also. They are crazy about each other.

“Well, I’ll say goodbye now, and I will see you two lovebirds at the wedding!” Kathryn and Sean stand and hug Neelix goodbye.

Vinson Shinabery

It is a brilliant Beta-5 day. Even by Beta-5 standards. Kathryn and Sean exit down the steps of the meditation hall. They had used Kathryn's com-badge translator to say their vows with the hall's curator, who performed the ceremony. Neelix's wife and friends had handkerchiefs raised to their eyes one and all. Neelix and his family tossed flower petals and rice over the bride and groom. Kathryn's full flowing dress and head garland had mesmerized the native cultures of Beta-5. Her beautiful white tress floats behind her down the steps as they rustle into the shuttle car waiting to take them to their shuttle plane, and then to the other side of the planet. They hadn't been there yet. They wave to Neelix, his family, and friends, as Kathryn blows a kiss.

The beach house rented for the week beckons from a small, tree lined bluff overlooking beach sand so white, and a sea so blue. they pause a while, with a gentle breeze rustling their wedding outfits.

Sean sweeps Kathryn up in his arms and carries her up the wooden stairs and through the doorthey hear singing, “Dum dum da dum, dum dum da dum...” and look up to see a crazy looking human male, about middle age, in alien clothes. Beside him are two mean looking humanoid aliens who seem so detached they are psychotic. But they seem aware, too aware to be crazy.

“Harrett, you!.....” Sean shouts angrily. “Who are they?” Kathryn quickly asks. “They’re part of the ‘37’s kidnappings,” Sean replies quickly. “That’s enough,” Harrett breaks in roughly, producing a hand phaser-type weapon, as the two aliens draw their weapons to bear on them. “You two will have plenty of time for a history lesson..... a long, long, time.” Harrett growled. “I’m not going anywhere. And you keep her out of this. If you want me, here I am. Let her go.” Sean says angrily. “I’m not going without you Sean.” she says. “How sweet.... very commendable,” Harrett says, laughing. Harrett stares angrily and hard at Sean for a few, long moments. “Today’s your lucky day, ladly,” and fires a stun burst at her point blank. Kathryn falls quickly to the floor, lifeless. “Only a stun...” Herrick says, and before he can finish what he’s saying Sean rushes him, “I’m gonna’ tear yo....” Herrick fires a stun and drops Sean in his tracks. Sean falls and they grab him quickly. “Alright, let’s go,” he orders, and they beam up to his ship in low orbit, leaving Kathryn where she lay. After a short time, Kathryn stirs. She taps

her com-badge under her collar. “Track all ships that have left this orbit, maintain tracking, beam me aboard.” Janeway is immediately beamed into her shuttle. She looks at the tracking. It has acquired the vessel at warp 3, heading to what appears to be a system which would have life. “Computer, pursue at warp 5, slow to scanning distance when approaching.”

“Acknowledged.” the Computer answers.

Janeway’s powerful shuttle easily catches up to the alien ship, which is close to the size of the smallest Star Fleet ships. A fraction of the size of an Intrepid or Galaxy class ship. But Janeway never underestimated an opponent. Her advanced technology could easily get a reading on the ships power and weapons capabilities.

“I knew I should have killed you..... you don’t have a chance Captain Janeway... yeah, we know who you are. This is your last chance to break off.” Herrick sneered.

Captain Janeway fires a short, precise, phaser burst at Herrick’s ship. Right on target. A direct hit on Herrick’s propulsion system. She slows to match their speed as they snap out of warp.

Janeway reaches to lock the transporter on Sean, as Herrick fires a full phaser-like energy spread at her shuttle. Janeway’s shuttle easily deflects the shot. “That’s enough!” Herrick shouts as he appears on Janeway’s communication screen. He and two of his men hold Herrick hostage at point blank phaser range. “Fire again and he dies.” Herrick growls. “You had your chance.

Now, beam yourself over no tricks..” “No, no!.... please, please Kathryn don’t do it.” Sean begs Kathryn as one alien strikes him with his fist, to quiet him. “Stop it!” she cries. Sean persists, and the alien strikes him hard enough to knock him out. “Alright, I’m coming over.”

Janeway quickly complies. Only now does Janeway know that her alien transport rescue beam

only works for imminent threat of death, or while it is in very close proximity to any threat. As Janeway materializes on board Herrick's ship, he orders the shuttle destroyed, but they cannot do it. Nothing works against her defenses. "Leave it ... let's go," Herrick snaps, the frustration telling in his voice. Herrick's ship resumes course at full impulse power. Engineering is working to get warp back after it took Janeway's phaser hit. The aliens on the bridge stare at Janeway's wedding outfit. She had tossed her head garland off in the shuttle. They start to mumble to themselves while still gawking at her. "Alright, the excitement's over let's get back on line!" Herrick orders them, as they get their mind back on their ship duties and their eyes off the beautiful Earth woman in the attractive white dress. "I suppose you want to know how Sean is. He'll be fine." Herrick blurted. "Why are you doing this?" Kathryn said flatly. "Payback, plain and simple. Sean just has to be a hero." Herrick replied. "And you..... you betrayed your fellow captives for a price, didn't you?.... what else could this all mean, you are obviously human." "Right, right. I tried to make a better life for myself. What else was there?" "Maybe help Sean when he could have used your help. He was successful, they're free," Janeway pointed out. "Yes ... and guess what, we have a few more planets just like that one that are still ours. How about that?" Herrick says jeering. "I guess that's where we're going, right? To one of the other captive planets?" she said holding back her growing anger. "You're really good ... yes you are. And yes we are going to one of our other planets where you and Sean will join the other worker bees who do exactly what they are told to do." Herrick added with relish. Janeway was out of cards. All she had left was a bluff. "You know how many races have become our allies here in the Delta Quadrant? We were here for seven years." This gave pause to the

overconfident Herrick. He paces a little, smoking what is something like tobacco, while mulling that over. He isn't so eager to quip at that thought. Janeway knows it will make him at least think. But it's a bluff. The closest ally she has is a thousand light years away. This makes her think of Neelix. She doesn't want Neelix to get caught up in this. She knows it is a possibility he will figure out something soon, but they will be too far gone for Neelix himself to pursue.

Neelix is happy. She wants him to stay happy.

“Where's Sean?”

“In confinement.”

“Let me see him.” Janeway urges, as Herrick lights another cigarette and begins to pace again.

“Alright you can join him. If you're lucky, you two may be able to live together as slaves.”

Herrick nods to the door and the two aliens on guard take her toward Sean's holding cell block.

The ship only has two levels. The holding cell is on the same deck as the bridge. The aliens take Janeway down the hall and turn right into a small, short corridor. They open the door and as the hydraulic hiss begins she sees Sean against the wall, barely conscious, his face battered. She flies into a rage. “You maniacs, you almost killed my husband!” She backhands one alien and floors him before he can pull the trigger on his phaser. She elbow strikes the alien on her left and knocks his phaser shot off line. He tries to balance himself to fire again and she knocks him out with a power punch to the mid-body. She reaches for the cell gate control panel on the wall and everything goes dark.

A week later Neelix is having a quick lunch in between cargo hauls between two moons, near his planetoid system. He has just informed his wife he will be on time for dinner, and speaks to his step children. It is a very nice, moderate size restaurant, similar to a 20th century truck stop.... circling a moon. "I think I'll have the Caterian turnips and Centerian boar steak!" Neelix says. "Great choice," the nice looking Centerian waitress with long legs, good for tips, approves. "I have what people from Earth call a craving." he adds. She smiles pleasantly and briskly walks to the counter to place the order. A Centerian cargo ship captain overhears Neelix, and presents himself.

"Pardon me, sir, I didn't mean to encroach." he says.

"Not at all, what can I do for you?" Neelix asks good-heartedly.

"You know the Earth people who they say came through here?"

"Yes, indeed, very well." Neelix said, becoming curious

"There is something going around about an Earth shuttle found drifting near Beta-5 recently, and a hotel reported the owners as missing under suspicious circumstances."

Neelix turns stiff with dread. Neelix pauses a moment, gathers himself, and asks, his voice unsteady, "Did anyone bring the shuttle in?"

"Yes, the shuttle was brought back to the same base it left from on Beta-5."

"Are they saying anything else at all about it?" Neelix asks, as sadness is falling on him like a ton of bricks.

“That’s all I’ve heard. I hope everything is alright.... hope I didn’t...” the Centerian says sincerely.

“.... Oh no, no, I want to thank you for telling me. Thank you.” Neelix says quietly, as he leaves the payment for the meal he ordered, plus a tip. He walks despondently to the shuttle port. He was always grateful for his Star Fleet com-badge with the universal translator. In times like this it was worth five bars of Latinum. He calls his wife to tell her what he has to do. Of course, she understands and approves.

“Go find them Neelix, please try to find them... be careful, call us later.” his wife says sweetly.

Four hours later Neelix is taking a shuttle to the Beta-5 shuttle port. Minutes later he is granted permission from the bay officer to take a look, which he is now doing, with one of the shuttle port’s security personnel. He sets foot inside the main hatch and he begins to sob quietly. “I’m sorry sir, what can I do to help?” the security officer offers as Neelix flexes down and picks up Kathryn’s head garland. “She is a lovely, dear friend. I’ve got to find out what’s going on. I just hope she is alive. I couldn’t bear to lose the Captain.” Neelix says sadly. Neelix sits in the pilot’s chair to call up data. As soon as he is settled, the view screen lights up with a visual. “Her shuttle is much more advanced than others.” Neelix tells the security officer. “It sure looks like it.” the officer affirms. “Here it is.” Neelix says, and comes to intense focus and attention; his body language changes, as he knows this might be a great help. “There it is that ship ... that’s where she was beamed to.” Neelix says, switching panels to look at the navigation log. “The Captain entered coordinates for what she thought was the destination for that ship.” Neelix adds. “That is an earthman, without a doubt.” Neelix says as he continues to

watch what happens. “This has to be connected to Sean, and the ‘37 planet” I see what’s going on. I know what this is all about!” Neelix exclaims. The officer doesn’t understand that, but he doesn’t interrupt. Neelix checks to make sure he didn’t miss something, then thanks the officer and they return to the shuttle dock. ‘If I was on Voyager, we’d get her back. If only Voyager’ Neelix thinks, then suddenly he remembers somethin’.....g about a communication network that reaches to the alpha quadrant similar to the Herotians, one-half light year from Beta-5. Neelix immediately heads up to his ship and sets course, hoping the rumor is true.

The rumor of the network is true, and Neelix charms his way to easy access to the space station network. Neelix tells the engineer he is trying to contact Earth, and the engineer knows what to do. “Star Fleet Command, you say colorful name, I like it.” the engineer pronounces. Neelix grins.

In the Alpha Quadrant, Bl’anna is talking to Tom in the dining hall at Star Fleet Command. “Lt. Torres”.... Admiral Sanders orders, “ please report to communications immediately.” “On my way.” Bl’anna answers without delay. “Admiral Sanders.... what’s going on?” Tom asks.

“You’re not in any trouble, are you?” Tom chuckles. “No, I have no idea,” she says smiling. “I’ll call you later,” she says, and strides to Communications.

“Neelix! how did you do this?” Bl’anna asks happily at seeing Neelix on the big screen. “It’s a network that is available one light year from my home.” Bl’anna can sense something is wrong and quickly asks, “Neelix ... is everything ok?” “With me ... yes, thank you ... but

Bl'anna something terrible has happened... the Captain has been kidnapped and I'm afraid for her life." "Neelix, the Captain was here, she made it." Before Bl'anna can tell Neelix the tragic news, he starts first. "I know Bl'anna... the Admiral was saved by an alien invention on her shuttle. The Sumetrans who repaired and rebuilt her shuttle systems didn't know it was there. It re-materialized her in an emergency beam out of the Borg's Hub Station as the younger, Captain Janeway. The Captain met someone on a nice class M planet and was doing so well. One of the humans from the '37 planet, who was a traitor, who helped the aliens abduct people from Earth, kidnapped them. She managed to enter some co-ordinates in her log that look like the direction they were taken. She was kidnapped on her wedding day. Her husband had been involved in the last decisive battles that gave the '37s their freedom. Bl'anna, the Captain told me that she thought the Voyager crew might be able to retrieve sensor data and build a type of hub like the Borg's." Bl'anna quickly replies, "Yes, we did it. Seven and I did it. But it's only been trial tested with a probe." "I know Voyager could find her and keep her out of danger, do you think...", Neelix began as Bl'anna responds, "Neelix, can you call on this network in 2 hours?" Neelix lit up, "You bet I will." "Call me in two hours, ok?" Bl'anna urged. "I will, see you then." Neelix fades out. Bl'anna leaves the communications control room determined to do what Voyager's crew always did. Protect and defend their own to the last man, and to the last.

Bl'anna hails Chakotay from the front entrance to his building, right off the grounds of the Academy.

There is too long of a hesitation no answer. In his living room, Chakotay thinks 'I told them I was taking 2 weeks off for vacation, the first vacation I've ever actually accepted.' He looks

away from the large framed photograph of the Captain and himself on Voyager's bridge, hanging in the middle of the wall. If it were not for Seven, he couldn't have handled her death. He couldn't shake off this heaviness. He was trying. He hadn't shaved nor did he care what he wore since her memorial service. Bl'anna knew him better than anyone, so she was picked to talk to him. Bl'anna chirped, then again quickly.

"Yes." Chakotay muttered.

"Chakotay, I need to talk to you." Bl'anna said.

"I'm ok, Bl'anna," he mumbled, barely audible

"Chakotay, please let me talk to you, you would want me to." she urged

"Come in." Chakotay said as the door hissed open, and Bl'anna walked through a short hallway to the

dining room. As she enters the archway, Chakotay leaves his chair and turns. Bl'anna never saw Chakotay like this, not even when the news of the Machi being wiped out was sent to them.

"Chakotay, Seven confided in me about how hard this is for you. She understands. We all do.

We all miss the Captain Chakotay, the Captain is alive in the Delta Quadrant, she was saved by an alien defense system she didn't know was insta" "Alive?" Chakotay straightened his

posture, and focused intently. 'That's the Chakotay I know', Bl'anna thinks. "Yes, Neelix contacted us by a network very much like the Herotian network. It's near a planet she was living on the past year.... since we made it back. She is in trouble, she met someone, and they were kidnapped. Neelix says it's the same people who were defeated on the '37 planet, one of them in particular. We're getting permission from Admiral Paris to go through the Hub, we've..." "I'll

be there shortly, tell everyone I'm in can we get Voyager?" Chakotay quickly added.

"Admiral Paris is working on it. You know he'll do it."

"I'll be there double time." Chakotay says as he walks up to Bl'anna and holds her by both

shoulders. "You said Captain, as if she were the younger Captain." "Oh yes.... Admiral

Janeway was re-materialized as the younger Captain Janeway, in every physical way. Chakotay

smiles. "Let's go get the Captain." They both smile and pat each other on the shoulder.

Admiral Paris is in emergency conference with the Voyager command crew. “I’ve contacted the essential requisite crew to run the ship. You’ve got 50 crewman to help you. Do you think that is enough, B’llana?” he says. Bl’anna replies, “Admiral, with the improvements we’ve made that is more than enough.” “I thought so. I had no trouble getting anyone to respond from the old crew. That makes us proud. Alright then, you are cleared.” the Admiral confirms. They all grin and look at each other. “Seven of Nine is going to remain here and monitor your passage away and back through the hubs.”, Admiral Paris noted. Communication chirps and Neelix is patched through to the conference room by communications. Before Neelix can speak, Bl’anna greets him, “We’re all here Neelix, are you ready?” Neelix replies happily, “ Here are the coordinates for Beta-5. I’m less than a half light year from there now. I’m going to maximum warp and will meet you there.” Captain Harry Kim speaks up, “The clock’s ticking, let’s go get the Captain.”

They file out of the meeting room to the shuttle craft to board Voyager on space dock. Minutes later Voyager is leaving space dock for the entrance to the Star Fleet hub to the Delta Quadrant. After beaming on to Science Space Station Kirk-1, Seven calls out “Ready here.” Captain Kim takes a short moment to address the bridge crew. “This hub has never been traveled by a ship and crew, only a probe. All simulations were perfect. If I didn’t have absolute confidence in Bl’anna and Seven, I wouldn’t risk this. We all know from experience the capabilities and skills they have. Thank you all for your bravery and loyalty helm, engage.” Voyager lights up to warp seven and before they have time to enjoy the ride, they emerge from the other end. It was

slightly less than one minute. “Fascinating.” Tuvoc announces first. “Unbelievable.” Tom adds in awe. Captain Kim is grinning and looking around to see everyone else’s reaction. “Can we raise Neelix yet, Bl’anna?” “Got him, and sending signal to Seven.... she’s got it.” “On screen” Kim orders quickly. In a flash, Neelix appears on the main bridge viewscreen. “I knew you could do it!... I knew it!” Neelix exclaims, overjoyed. “We could pick up Neelix and save an hour”, Chakotay says to Captain Kim. “Very well.... Neelix, we’re going to pick you up, maintain course and speed.” “Aye, Captain.” Neelix replies with relish.

Voyager caught up to Neelix and went to maximum warp, which was considerably faster with Voyager’s upgraded propulsion. Captain Kim is holding a constant strategy session on the bridge as they travel. “When we get close enough we need to interface with the Captain’s shuttle and get all we can. It may give us some extra clues about every possibility open to us.” Kim says. Neelix has relayed everything he saw on the shuttle’s log and video. “You say he held a phaser to Sean to force the Captain to surrender?”, Chakotay asks Neelix. “Yes, and there were two of those humanoids there with him. The same race that started the whole ‘37 planet.” “Well, if that’s the way he works, he may try to hold us off the same way. We need to make sure we can get a fix on them before they realize we’re there.” “Approaching Beta-5 Captain,” Tuvoc relayed. “I’ve got the Captain’s download... all of it’s coming in sir.” Bl’anna joined. “As Neelix said, the Captain entered co-ordinates.... yes it has to be this system,” Bl’anna says as she transfers the co-ordinates to Kim and Tom. “Three light years. Bl’anna, how long can we hold 9.9 with minimal risk?” Kim asks. “No problem with these engines sir.” Bl’anna

replies confidently. “Very well, let’s go to 9.9. How much time..”, Kim asks. “Three hours sir.” Bl’anna quickly adds.

The closer they get to the system the more information they have that let’s them make the best strategy to start their search. Tuvoc looks up from his monitor. Then Bl’anna also. “There is much heavier star traffic toward and away from the fourth planet.” Tuvoc relays. Bl’anna joins in, “The other planets don’t have as high a Class M criteria rating.” “We’ll search the fourth planet first, then.” Captain Kim affirms. “We’ll be there in under 20 minutes, sir.” Bl’anna relays. “Acknowledged ...

Commander Chakotay, Lt. Tuvoc we need to prepare to beam down several teams... we may have to eventually rely on them. We’ll try to scan from orbit first. Please see to outfitting and small arms.” “Aye, sir,” they answer as they promptly head for the turbo lift. Captain Kim looks at Neelix with a most grave expression. “You say the Captain always wore her Star Fleet com-badge.” “Yes,” Neelix replies, “I visited with her twice, for many days, and she never took it off. She knew her shuttle could always get a message from her if she needed, or could beam her on board if she needed.” Kim remarks, “Let’s hope she has been able to keep it on during this ordeal.”

Chakotay and Tuvoc have gathered the crewman selected for possible landing parties in Cargo Bay 1. “Alright everyone, there is no concern for the Prime Directive, the planet they are on is based on piracy and kidnapping. We don’t need to obey any of their laws or edicts.” Chakotay announces.

“We may not have to deploy, but if needed, we must act quickly.” Tuvoc adds. “Very well, men, stand by and be ready.” Tuvoc and Chakotay head back to the bridge.

“Drop us out of warp, go to full impulse power. Stabilize in high orbit, begin scanning, scan for Star Fleet signature. Lock in on Captain Janeway’s com-badge.” Kim orders. “Scanning.... this whole planet is humanoid... scanning I’ve got a signal, but it’s the Captain only.” Bl’anna announces.

“Can you get a lock?” Kim asks quickly. “Yes, I’ve got her, her lifesigns are not good.”

Bl’anna says, as her Klingon blood begins to boil. “Beam her up. Medical team to transporter room 2, emergency.” Kim orders.

Bl’anna snaps the lever on the console and the Captain is beamed to transporter room 2, barely conscious, and face down on the pad. The emergency team enters and attends her quickly. They carry her to sick bay. As the hypo- sprays and Star Fleet Meds take effect, The Doctor looks sadly down at her. “Alright, let’s get her electrolytes up and give me 2 ccs hydrocorticone.”

“How is she Doctor?” Kim asks by ship’s channel. “She’ll be alright, but she is in shock. I’ll let you know as soon as she comes out of it.” “Understood.” Kim replies. Quicker than expected, Captain Janeway opens her eyes and tries to raise up. “Sean, Sean..” she says half conscious.” -The Doctor presses her easily back down. “Take it easy, Captain.” “What, how...”, Janeway says in a weak voice. She knows what she’s seeing, the Doctor and Sick Bay, but she knows it can’t be true. She truly believes she is dying, and these images are the last thing she’ll ever see. The Doctor slowly tells her what is going on. It takes a few minutes but the Captain finally understands. She shows a slight smile, then just as soon, asks, “Did you get Sean?” The Doctor knows he shouldn’t but he tells her, “We’re searching right now.” “I think I know where he is, she says weakly. “They think he knows where Earth outposts are, in the outer

areas of the Alpha Quadrant. They don't believe that he doesn't know. They hurt me to try to make him talk. He's in the..." she tries to finish but slips away unconscious. The Doctor quickly shuffles everyone back. The Doctor hails Captain Kim and explains everything she said. "Bl'anna, do we have any indication of where their command centers might be?" Kim asks. "There are three central areas where the largest structures are." Bl'anna relays. "The Captain has been held in a cell. She can't know that much." Kim says. "She said she knows where he is.", Chakotay points out. "If we wait till the Captain has revived enough to explain, it may be too late... look what they did to her." Tuvoc points out. "We've got to do something, and fast.", Chakotay urges. "We wanted to avoid this, but we have to do it... we're going to hail their network.... Bl'anna, it is all we have." Kim says. "Hail them." Kim orders..... "I've got them, Captain." Bl'anna relays. They say nothing over the open channel. Captain Kim looks at Bl'anna, she says, "They can hear us, Captain." "This is Captain Kim, you're holding an Earth man against his will, as you are everyone else on this planet. Give us his co-ordinates, and we'll be on our way. A volley of the alien version of photon charges strike Voyager with no effect. "Target their main energy source in that area and fire photon torpedos." Voyager wipes out their power grid for 200 square miles. "Harry, now is the time to deploy, where those phasers came from." Chakotay urges. "Agreed, deploy." Kim orders. "Commander Chakotay to all teams, deploy." "Aye sir, Lt. Marshall answers. Immediately, teams beam down on foot and two shuttle crafts race to the area. In a short time, Lt. Marshall relays, "We think we've got him, sir... yes... we're going in." They have little resistance, and find Sean, the only human in the entire area, his life signs too weak to register. Lt. Marshall quickly commands, "Sick bay,

two to beam directly to sick bay.” Sean and Lt. Marshall materialize in Sick Bay close to Captain Janeway. The Doctor immediately goes to work. “I think I can save this man’s life. I’ve never seen such cruelty.” “Doctor report,” Kim orders. “I think I can bring him back, he’s close to death.”

Captain Kim clinches his jaw and grits his teeth. He does something he is trained not to do. But this race is as bad as the Videans. “Tom, on our way out, make a circle around this planet. Tuvoc, target each main power source with a single photon torpedo.” They comply, destroying the whole planet’s main power grid.

“Tom, take us to warp 9.9, let’s see if the return hub is as smooth a ride as the first one.”

“Yesir,” Tom answers. Neelix holds the Captain’s hand and says goodbye. A short while later they bid him farewell. They drop Neelix off and tell him they’ll come back to get him if he ever wants. They return home through the second hub in a flash. It is magnificent. They are all completely surprised how great it was. As they are returning to Earth Space Dock, Captain Janeway and Sean both begin to stir more and more. The Doctor, Chakotay, Tuvoc, Bl’anna, Seven, and Tom are all there smiling at the Captain. She looks at all of them very weakly, and tells them thank you, and she begins to cry as she looks across at Sean in the sick bay bed next to her, and he is alive, smiling at her. “Everyone, this is Sean... Sean... meet the finest bridge crew in Star Fleet. “Good to meet you all, I’ve heard all about you.” Captain Janeway looks at them curiously, “Hey everyone, who’s steering the ship?” “Captain Harry Kim, at your service, Captain, welcome aboard.” Kim replies on ship’s open channel.

“Welcome home.”

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