

## Things Are Getting a Little Episodic

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## Things Are Getting a Little Episodic

by [spacedogfromspace](#)

### Summary

Christine has lived through the same day fifty-six times. Her only respite from the monotony is her dates with Nyota.

### Notes

My entry for Day 6 of Star Trek Femslash Week 2023.

Prompt: Time loops.

Christine Chapel woke at a light rumble from somewhere deep within the ship. She didn't have to look at her clock to know that it was 07:02. Staring at the ceiling for a minute, she mentally prepared herself for another day, then dragged herself out of bed.

Her shift in sickbay began at 07:30, but she wasn't in a rush. She didn't need much time to prepare for the day. Her routine was efficient. A sonic shower, the donning of her uniform, and running a brush through her hair didn't take long, and left her ample time to stop by the mess to pick up a couple of muffins and a mug of coffee to eat on the way down to sickbay.

"Good morning, Mr Sulu," she said as she stood before the display of muffins. She didn't see him, and he hadn't spoken - yet - but she knew that he was behind her, about to greet her.

"So the rumours are true," Sulu said as he stepped up alongside her. "You really *do* have eyes on the back of your head."

Christine gave him a tired smile. "That I do," she said. "So you'd better keep out of trouble."

"Aye aye, Captain," he answered with a mock salute, then set his attention to perusing his breakfast options.

Grimacing inwardly, Christine scolded herself. While she was very bored of following the script, jumping ahead in it or reading out someone else's lines was a good way to raise questions. And she was far too tired to answer those kinds of questions. Promising herself to stick to the script today, she picked a selection of muffins, dropping all but one into a bag, and poured herself a mug of strong coffee before setting off to sickbay.

As she walked into sickbay, she brushed the crumbs of her first muffin off her uniform and took a long pull from her mug. She closed her eyes and sighed, imagining the caffeine spreading through her system to give her the willpower to get through another day. Then she opened her eyes, let out a huff, and got to work.

She knew she still had plenty of time to do some prep work before any patients showed up. She drifted around sickbay, preparing a hypo-spray to alleviate Ensign Lanas' migraine, charged a dermal regenerator for when Lieutenant Riley came in with a nasty laceration on his arm, and set about preparing the different treatments she would give out to those who came in with various minor ailments.

On any other day, this preparation would be impossible. She would just have to react to whatever illnesses and injuries walked in, *when* the walked in. But today was different. She knew *exactly* who would be coming for help and what they needed because this was the fifty-sixth time she had lived through this day.

Or at least, she *thought* it was the fifty-sixth time she had lived through this day. It was hard to keep track of how many days had passed when the stardate never changed and the same things happened in every cycle with only small variation. She couldn't even keep a tally of how many cycles had passed, or keep a personal log recording them, because anything she did was reset again the moment she woke up at 07:02.

The first weeks of repeating the same day over and over had been the worst. Trying to convince her friends that everyone was in a time loop was difficult. Having to convince them all again the next day, and the next day, and the next, was even worse. Nobody but her could remember anything long enough to be any help in finding a solution. Eventually, she stopped trying, and kept the whole 'time loop' thing to herself.

After nearly sixty cycles of this single day aboard the *Enterprise*, Christine was surprised that she hadn't gone mad yet. The worst she was at mentally was in those first cycles. After that, each day got a little easier as she adapted to and accepted her predicament. That wasn't to say she wasn't bored, however. With the same people coming into sickbay with the same ailments every single day, her job was getting quite monotonous. But she made it through each and every identical shift, looking forward to the one part of her day that saw variation.

During her lunch break, she flipped open her communicator the second before it pinged with a new message:

*What's the plan for today?*

Christine smiled. *This* was what was keeping her from dying of boredom. She thought for a moment, her mind flicking through a list of activities that would shake things up a bit. Making a decision, she sent back an answer:

*How about racketball? There's a court in rec room 3.*

Shortly after she got a message agreeing to her suggestion. Christine smiled and put her communicator back in her pocket. As far as days went, this was a pretty good one to have to relive over and over again.

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Waving to the relief nurse at the end of her shift, Christine trotted out of sickbay. She knew that if she hustled just a little bit she'd be able to change out of her work clothes and freshen up a bit without being late. In her quarters, she stripped out of her scrubs and took a sonic shower, washing the sterile hospital smell from her skin and hair. She paused briefly to ponder what to wear, and decided on a black track suit with white accents. It looked flattering on her, and was suitable for physical activity. Running a brush through her hair and putting it into a neat but stubby ponytail, she left her quarters and headed to rec room 3.

Stepping through the rec room doors, Christine checked the time. 16:00 on the dot. Perfect. She headed towards the racketball court and smiled at the familiar face waiting for her.

"Hi," Nyota said, mirroring Christine's smile. She reached out to hug Christine and kissed her on the cheek. "How was work?"

Christine grinned. "Same as always," she said cheekily. She knew it was an inside joke that not even Nyota would be able to understand, but it still felt good to make light of her situation. "Anything stupid happen on the bridge today?"

Nyota rolled her eyes and let out an exaggerated sigh. Christine smiled. She knew the tirade Nyota was about to go on by heart, but she never failed to be amused by her girlfriend's rants over the petty offences made by her co-workers.

She listened to Nyota vent her frustrations about Captain Kirk's incessant mouth breathing, Doctor McCoy's habit of showing up on the bridge seemingly just to annoy everyone, and that stupid white noise she still hadn't figured out how to filter out of her earpiece. Christine nodded along, listening intently, and making the appropriate comments.

"Come on, let's play some racketball. You can pretend the wall is our bosses," Christine said when Nyota was finished.

"Is it normal to be this annoyed by my superior officers?" Nyota asked, suddenly becoming aware that her frustration might be disproportional to the offences she was frustrated at.

Christine steered her by the shoulders towards the court. "It's been a quiet week on the bridge. You're just annoyed because you're bored out of your mind and looking for something to take it out on."

"I'm being petty."

"You're allowed to be petty," Christine assured her. "You'll feel better after bashing a ball into a wall a bunch of times."

Nyota smiled guiltily. "I've never played racketball before," she admitted.

"Me neither," Christine shrugged. "It'll be a learning experience for us both."

They made their way onto the court, gearing up with rackets and protective eye-wear.

"What do all the lines mean?" Nyota asked as they stood surveying the court, which had a variety of painted lines along the walls and floor.

"No idea," Christine answered.

For a start, they passed the ball back and forth, bouncing it off the wall and floor between them. They didn't hit very hard, so the ball didn't move very fast, but even so, it took all their concentration and effort not to miss. After spending some time getting a feel for it, they took a breather and used the opportunity to search up the rules in the ship's database.

"I think we're getting the hang of this," Nyota said, hitting the ball back to the wall where it landed in bounds before reflecting back for Christine to lunge to hit before it made a second bounce on the floor. "We should do this more often. After a few sessions we'll be good enough to play at speed!"

"Yeah," Christine said, but only halfheartedly. She was smiling, but it was tired, and sad. She would *love* to do this more often. Nothing was keeping them from doing it. Except that each time they stepped onto the court, Nyota would be relearning the game from square one. For the first time in a long while, her evening with Nyota couldn't make Christine forget about the loop she was stuck in.

Nyota picked up on Christine's sudden change in demeanour, letting the ball bounce past her as she turned to give Christine a look of concern.

"What's wrong?" She asked, concern writ across her face.

"It's nothing," Christine lied, crossing her arms across her chest, hugging herself in an effort to keep her composure. She felt bad about lying. She wanted to talk to Nyota about what was bothering her, but... how could she ever explain it? And if she did, Nyota would forget it all by the next day, and her isolation would begin all over again.

Nyota stepped up to Christine and grasped her gently by the shoulders. "No," she said gently. "Something's wrong. Tell me. Maybe I can help."

Christine gave her a weak smile. "It's nothing, really," she said, trying to brush it off. Then she realized she didn't have to explain the whole time loop to talk about her frustrations. "Just... it's work. I didn't think being a nurse could get so monotonous, but, well, things are getting a little episodic. Same kind of stuff day in and day out."

"Well," Nyota said, finding a silver lining as she always did. "If you're bored at work, at least that means nothing terrible is happening."

Christine smiled sadly, thinking about how she woke up at the same time every day from the same engine noise, the same breakfast selection in the mess, the same small talk with Sulu, and how every day blended into the next. "It's not just the work," she said distractedly, wishing she could explain. But it was just too much effort to explain it to someone whose memory would be erased again the next morning.

"Oh," Nyota said, looking surprised, then hurt, then just sad. Christine didn't understand why until she said "It's me, isn't it?"

"What?" Christine asked, briefly jolted out of her melancholy. "What do you mean?"

Nyota bit her lip and couldn't meet Christine's eyes. "I mean that I'm boring you, aren't I? It's not just your job driving you crazy from the monotony, it's me too?"

Christine shook her head, appalled. She took Nyota by the shoulders and coaxed her into looking her in the eye. "Nyota, this time I spend with you is the only variety I get in my day. It's literally the only thing keeping me from going completely off my rocker," she said in her most serious of tones.

Nyota slowly relaxed. "Is work *really* that bad?" She asked once she was convinced that their relationship wasn't part of the problem.

"It's just been a little rough lately," Christine assured her.

Nyota smiled sympathetically and gave her a hug. "It'll get better soon," she said. "Tomorrow's another day."

Christine hugged her back, tightly. "I hope so," she said, knowing what Nyota said wasn't true. But even if tomorrow wasn't another day, she took solace in knowing that during her daily time with Nyota, she could escape the time loop, even if just for a little while.

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