

from the dust of stars

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by [lilly_c](#)

Summary

“So...” Kathryn sighed unable to think of what to say, the last few days had been difficult for everyone on board.

Notes

Spoiler for Cathexis, post-ep missing scene. Written for the fan_flashworks prompt blanket, know prompt on my summer mini challenge [table](#), fluffbingo prompt picnic in the park and genprompt_bingo prompt conversation. Title is from Don't Wanna Grow Up Anymore by Bob Evans. Thanks to Tamara for doing beta.

Kathryn followed The Doctor into his office to discuss what Chakotay needed before he could return to duty. “He needs to take it easy for a few days and rest. I recommend at least a week off.”

“I’ll see what I can do.” Kathryn paused, shaking her head. “The duty rosters are his job and he has developed a system that makes no sense to me.”

“That’s work!” The Doctor sighed. “At least offer him some time off to recover.” He had that feeling that most of the recommendations he was going to make would be ignored by the command team.

They walked back towards the biobed where Chakotay was sitting, swinging his legs against the side of it. “You are free to leave, Commander. Try to rest.”

Chakotay got down from the biobed, taking a moment to allow the slight dizziness he felt from the movement to subside. “I will rest,” he assured The Doctor before he and Kathryn left sickbay together to go to deck three.

They reached Chakotay’s quarters both hesitating to make a move.

“So...” Kathryn sighed unable to think of what to say, the last few days had been difficult for everyone on board. “When you’re up to it, the duty rosters need to be done.”

“What are your plans?” he asked, optimistic that a neutral question could potentially diffuse the hesitation between them and that they could at least start to spend some time together off duty.

“I’ve booked holodeck two for this evening. What about you?”

“All I’m doing is having a shower and catching up on some reading. Maybe those duty rosters.”

Kathryn glanced at him only now noticing how weary he looked after his ordeal at the hands of the Komar. “Would you like to join me on the holodeck?” she asked, hopeful that he’d accept her offer.

Chakotay tugged at his ear out of habit. “What time?”

“Say 18:00”

“I’ll be there. Do I need to bring anything?”

“A blanket and dress casual.”

Chakotay entered the override code to his door curious to why he’d need a blanket on the holodeck while Kathryn walked the short distance to hers with a light spring in her step.

~

Chakotay was waiting for Kathryn outside the holodeck. He opted for grey trousers and a blue shirt leaving a couple of the top buttons opened. He smiled when he noticed that it was the first time he was seeing her with her hair loose, she approached wearing white jeans and a pink shirt, carrying a picnic basket.

Holding up the blanket for her approval, he asked, “Will this be big enough?”

“It should be. Are you ready?”

Once they were inside Chakotay took in the surroundings of the San Francisco park Kathryn had chosen for their first off duty meeting away from the rest of the crew.

Laying the blanket on the grass, Kathryn put the picnic basket down before taking her own space. “The Doctor said to give you a week off but scans show that we’ll be entering another hostile area within the next three days. None of the M-Class planets in the next sector are hospitable so we won’t be able to take shore leave.

Chakotay nodded finding her rambling to be endearing. “Cap... Kathryn?” he spoke, hoping he wasn’t being overly familiar by calling her by her name instead of her rank especially as she hasn’t confirmed if he could do that yet. “What is all of this?”

“Oh right, sorry.” Kathryn’s cheeks lightly flushed. “As it’ll be a while before we can get off the ship again, I thought that we could have shore leave right here on the holodeck.

He checked the surroundings once more before opening the picnic basket. “Where is this?” he asked, “It looks familiar but I can’t quite place it,” taking a couple of spring rolls from a container.

“Mountain Lake Park. It’s close enough to my house that I bring Mollie here all the time.”

~

Kathryn retrieved more food from the basket, a bottle opener and two small bottles of lager. “Everything is vegetarian. I asked B’Elanna what you liked and she gave me a list with several options to choose from.”

Chakotay smiled at the gesture realising that Kathryn was also making an effort to bridge the slight gap that still remained between them. “You could have included something with meat or fish.”

Kathryn shook her head, slightly smiling as if she had a secret to spill. “I actually like a lot of vegetarian food, I never found a way to stick with it.”

“That’s understandable, it isn’t for everyone. I’m vegetarian because I believe that animals are friends not food.”

“Did you have any pets?” Kathryn asked.

“Not really. The animals on my colony roamed freely.”

“Have you always had a dog?”

Kathryn smiled for the way the conversation was heading towards safe topics. “Yes. I did have a few months without a dog when I was ill.”

Chakotay frowned, there had been no mention of an illness in his intelligence files on her and her crew. “What was wrong?” he asked, hoping he wasn’t overstepping an invisible boundary.

Time remaining: four minutes came the announcement from the computer.

Kathryn felt relieved that they were almost out of time and she didn’t have to talk about one of the worst events of her life just yet or want someone else to know how awful the aftermath of it was. She started packing away the leftover food into the picnic basket before standing to retrieve the blanket.

Exiting the holodeck together they made their way back to deck three. “Could we do this again?” Chakotay asked as they stepped off the turbolift.

“I’d like that,” Kathryn paused, “Maybe we could have dinner once a week in the mess hall to discuss ships business.”

Chakotay kept his expression neutral secretly preferring to have these weekly dinners somewhere private. “I’d love to.”

Kathryn stopped at her door. “Rest up and I’ll see you in a few days.”

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