

the cosmic view will suffice

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Summary

Gently tugging on his ear as they began their task, Chakotay said, "I need to talk to you about something important and I need your discretion at all times."

Notes

Spoiler for The Chute with references to Resolutions, Basics and Flashback. Missing scene taking place after the briefing room scene. Ties in with [all those things are light years away {revised version}](#), off-screen flashback scenes are in italics. The title is from Long Long Way by Boy & Bear. Thanks to Tamara for doing beta for me.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Once outside the briefing room, Chakotay hesitated for a moment. "Have you seen Kathryn lately?"

"In engineering?" B'Elanna asked, trying not to smile at Chakotay using the Captain's name. "We did have a lot of repairs to make after the Kazon stole Voyager from us and there was no way I would have been able to do them without her help.

"Socially."

B'Elanna shook her head, "No, not since you were bitten those bugs on..." she stopped, uncertain if she should finish her sentence. When Chakotay silently gave permission for her to continue. "I waited outside the transporter room to give you both privacy. I've never seen either of you look so devastated, so hopeless and I didn't want just anyone intruding on that.

Rematerialising on the transporter pad was a disconcerting experience for Kathryn and Chakotay having not used one for so long.

Kathryn was about to step off the pad when he grabbed her wrist, pulling her back towards him before he glanced at B'Elanna and Jarvis, silently giving them permission to leave and give them privacy before they were ready to make their way to the bridge for the first time in several months.

He knew that B'Elanna would be outside guarding the door ensuring maximum privacy for them and probably breaking noses too give half a chance.

When the doors closed, Chakotay placed his hand on her waist the same moment she placed hers on his chest "Can we go back?" she asked into the material of his uniform, her voice heavy with dissatisfaction.

He softly kissed her hair. "I think we're still needed here," not quite able to add, "But I wish we weren't."

"I wish we weren't," Kathryn admitted sombrely, as though she had understood his own unspoken thought. "I'm not sure that I can be the Captain again and I'm also sure that I can't be whatever the crew needs me to be because I don't really have a way to separate the professional from the personal any more."

Tilting her chin to get her to look at him, he carefully took in her devastated expression that matched his own as he carefully started wiping her tears away. "It'll take time, Kathryn, but we'll get through this together and we'll find a way to be strong for the crew, while resetting those boundaries that made our command so effective the first time."

"I'll help you with the sensor readings," Chakotay said to B'Elanna as they exited the turbolift nearest to engineering.

"It's a task that doesn't take two senior staff." B'Elanna replied unable to keep the scowl from her voice.

Gently tugging on his ear as they began their task, Chakotay said, "I need to talk to you about something important and I need your discretion at all times."

B'Elanna barely glanced at him as she read through the data. "You wanted to talk old man."

Sam and B'Elanna were already on watch at the caves entrance while Harry took a turn with the baby until it was his time to go out on watch. Kathryn stood to leave the caves to take watch with them when Chakotay lightly tapped her ankle. "Where are you going?"

"To keep watch with Sam and B'Elanna," she replied as though it was the least obvious thing in the world that she could be doing considering they were currently stranded on a freezing cold planet with minimal provisions and no way of knowing if this was going to be the new home for them and the crew they'd only just returned to.

"Our watch is later on, sit down and rest. You look exhausted and I can make it an order if I have to."

Kathryn playfully rolled her eyes at him for trying to be bossy, fortunately for him, he had a point, she felt the exhaustion deep in her bones. "What if Tom doesn't succeed?" she lowly said, sitting beside him on the cold ground trying not to shiver at the planets frigid nighttime temperatures.

Chakotay repositioned his legs, tapping the gap for her to sit in-between his legs so that he could comfort her the way he had many a night on New Earth when he would comb her hair after her bath and plait it. Some nights they ended up frantically making love on the floor of their shelter, here they had to settle for talking and platonically taking comfort from each other.

"He'll come through for us," he said with enough conviction that he hoped she could take some of his faith to get through the night.

Settling into the familiar position, Chakotay's hands rested on Kathryn's stomach, and she placed her hands on top of his, grateful for the additional warmth of their position. "You're right but you know how I am with my gut feelings about things." A low chuckle vibrated against her back from his chest.

Boots began to scrape against the floor, echoing throughout the caves, signalling that the first watch had ended, and the next watch had already taken over.

"I miss this," she said. "We barely had any time to be together when we got back with one thing after another and then been unceremoniously dumped here by the fucking Kazon.

"When we get back to the ship and every repair has been made. Me and you are going to take a long weekend off and we're not leaving bed unless we really have to."

Twisting slightly, she kissed his chin. "Stubble. Sexy," she teased. "I like the sound of this weekend of ours. Do I get any input?"

"Of course," he easily replied. "Now how about a nap? Our watch is next, and it'll be another long day tomorrow.

Suddenly unsure of how to say the sentence out loud, he very quickly and quietly said, "Kathryn and I are in a relationship."

"Hmm," was B'Elanna's response.

Touching her elbow to get her to stop looking at the sensor readings for a moment, "That's it?" he asked trying not to sound indignant to her non-committal response to the disclosure of something that was important to him.

Slightly smiling at him. "I'm happy for you both but I have to say that I suspected that there was something between you for a while."

"We were discrete, at least I thought we were." Chakotay swallowed. "When did you begin to suspect?"

"On the planet that the Kazon dumped us on. Sam and I were coming back from our watch, and we saw how at ease you and the captain looked sitting like that, but it was when one of you mentioned taking a weekend off and staying in bed that was it for me."

"How did you hear us talking?" he challenged even though he already knew what her answer would be.

Trying not to laugh at him, she said, "Even in caves, whispers can echo."

Shaking his head. "Damn, I'll have to remember that for the next time we have to shelter in a cave.," he was about to leave when B'Elanna spoke.

"How is the captain feeling? I was in sickbay doing my weekly maintenance on The Doctor when you both transported in."

"Better." Chakotay smiled at her concern. "Kathryn had some unpleasant after effects from the mind meld and virus. It was touch and go for a while but she's almost back to normal now."

"I'm glad that you were with her. I'm also glad that you both seem happy, just don't ruin it."

Chakotay let out a low laugh. "I won't."

End Notes

Final edits were done at work during night shift last night so if you spot any ridiculous goofs let me know :)

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