

to fend the darkness at the end

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Summary

From the ground up the ship looked as battered and bruised as Kathryn felt, even when she frequently helped with the repairs she did so before leaving the ship to sit on the stump of a felled tree, needing to be alone in the stillness that the few hours of respite the early hours before the dawn offered her.

Notes

Spoiler for Equinox, set post ep. Written for the sunrise prompt on my [getyourwordsout build a bingo](#) and [genprompt_bingo](#) prompt the early hours before the dawn. Title is from Bought It by Middle Kids. Thanks to Tamara for doing beta for me.

Setting Voyager down on a planet with a trinary star system had been the only viable option of several presented to the crew to make all of the repairs that were needed after their run in with The Equinox.

From the ground up the ship looked as battered and bruised as Kathryn felt, even when she frequently helped with the repairs she did so before leaving the ship to sit on the stump of a felled tree, needing to be alone in the stillness that the few hours of respite the early hours before the dawn offered her.

"You're out here again," B'Elanna softly aid approaching Kathryn who looked lost in thought, sitting on the stump of a felled tree, the same place she'd come every night after pulling a double shift in engineering.

Holding a padd but not really looking at the information on the device, her mind was all over the place. Chakotay hadn't accepted any of her many attempts at an apology and the doctor had refused to alter her medication to a lower dose.

Looking to the direction of the voice disturbing her solitude, "I had to get off the ship."

B'Elanna nodded, suddenly understanding why Kathryn was isolating herself in a new way. "Repairs are almost done. We should be able to launch tomorrow afternoon once we've done the final checks."

She sat beside her on the stump, taking in the three moons of their temporary home and for a few more hours effective hiding place.

"Shouldn't you be sleeping?" Kathryn asked, "You started at five am," she added, suddenly feeling awkward to be reprimanding B'Elanna for doing the same thing that she was and to be caught wallowing in her self-inflicted misery by her friend.

"I could ask you the same thing. You've done just as much work as I have." B'Elanna sighed. "How are things?" mentally kicking herself at the way the words came out.

Kathryn let out a low chuckle. "Same shit. Different planet," she deadpanned.

Sitting in silence for a short time B'Elanna looked up at the multiple hues of purple and blue of the sky that signalled the sunrise and the start of another long day. "Now I get it," she offered.

"Huh?"

“Why come out here during the night, the sunrise here is beautiful. Does it remind you of somewhere else?” she asked, knowing that she was overstepping a carefully erected boundary. They had built a friendship over the last five years but there was still topics that were off limits between them.

Kathryn shook her head, while the colours reminded her of the sunsets on another planet and another life several thousand light years away, she found that she liked the rhythmic predictability of seeing the same colours brighten the alien sky at the same time everyday.

“It doesn’t” she easily lied. “The colours are the same every morning and I guess I found that comforting in a way that I didn’t know I needed.”

“Makes sense,” B’Elanna said not wanting to show that she’d picked up the Captain’s obvious lies and knew that she was an ineffective replacement for Chakotay but that was something that would take time for them to work out by themselves away from the pressures of command.

“Was there something you needed?” Kathryn asked, beginning to feel anxious that B’Elanna had an ulterior motive for joining her off the ship.

B’Elanna shook her head. “I just came out to see how you’re doing.”

“I appreciate it.” Kathryn flashed a slight smile. “I’ll see you in engineering shortly.”

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