

Losing games in the family court.

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1700) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1700>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: Lower Decks
Relationship:	Beckett Mariner & Carol Freeman
Character:	Carol Freeman , Beckett Mariner
Additional Tags:	Weekly Challenge: Playing Games , Family Dynamics , Pre-Series
Language:	English
Series:	Part 8 of Discord Short Story Challenges
Collections:	Weekly Writing Challenges
Stats:	Published: 2024-07-27 Words: 553 Chapters: 1/1

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by [CandyCurlsofMaddness](#)

Summary

A snapshot of Beckett's and Carol's relationship before she serves on the *USS Cerritos*.

Notes

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

"Mariner, that's enough." Carol rubs at her head in exhaustion, "I didn't even know you'd applied for an early posting."

They're having lunch, a new restaurant on a random space station. Despite her best efforts, the tension between them ratchets higher with every word from either of them.

"Then who kept deleting my applications, huh?" Becket is up in her face, waving her half-forgotten steak knife angrily.

Carol takes a deep breath. Years ago, she and Alonzo decided that appearing as a united front in the face of their daughter's erratic behaviour was important... more important than the truth, it turns out. The consequence of this stares her in the face, as Becket collects more steam, ready to run off half-cocked.

"Becket, the first I heard of your new posting was when I received the missing in action notice from DS9!" She is louder than she wants to be in public, but all she really wants is to hold off the tears hiding behind her eyes. She can't bear to cry, not in front of Beckett.

"Oh." Becket's is silent, randomly opening and closing her mouth as if on the verge of speaking... "Umm, I *really* thought you knew." Her guilt is clear, painted across her face in a painfully similar way to Carol's own reflection in the mirror.

"-Like, I definitely would've sent you a message about living on DS9 and stuff-"

"But you still would have applied!" Carol can hear her voice crack, and part of her hates it. Her weakness in remembrance of the fear that still gripes her heart. "And, regardless, you would have been accepted... Because Becket, you were the perfect candidate, and if it hadn't been for Sito...."

Becket laughs. There's nothing comforting in the sound. Slowly lowers the steak knife she'd been wielding for their entire conversation.

"So... Dad?"

"Yes." Carol grimaces, offering Zo a silent apology. He hadn't wanted Becket to know the truth. *'But I'm sick of being the bad cop.'* Feeling awkward, and ever so slightly guilty, Carol goes on, "Your father, he uh, confessed what he'd done once I got the notice. I was *pretty* angry... with both of you actually."

"-You couldn't just expect me to stand by while my entire class signed up. We were at war!"

"I know. I know. Can we just try not to fight for a change?" Carol smiles sadly at her daughter, still so headstrong, so determined to do everything on her own. "Not everything has to be a challenge."

"If we're playing games, you and Dad set the board, not me." Beckett glares, suddenly sullen but resigned to her apparent fate.

"Beckett, lets just try and enjoy lunch. Please?"

Luckily Becket just sighs and slumps against her seat. “Look, I only changed my last name to hide the application from, well, I thought it was you. But, yeah. I didn’t mean what I said about not wanting to be your daughter.”

"And I... I appreciate that, but-"

Maybe Carol is too slow on the uptake, maybe Mariner is still holding grudges, because even a simple phase is enough to set her off again.

"Well if that's all I get, I'll be going now."

"Beckett, wai-"

"Zo has the next move." Beckett glares, slamming her chair against the table. "Be sure to let him know."

End Notes

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