

Women at Warp Episode 56: Women in Security

[Women At Warp theme]

Andi: Hi and welcome to Women at Warp. Join us as our crew of four-women *Star Trek* fans boldly go on our biweekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name is Andi and thanks for tuning in. Today, I am joined by Sue.

Sue: Hi, everybody.

Andi: And also, our special guest, Sabriel.

Sabriel: Hi everyone.

Sue: Why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself and your history with *Star Trek*?

Sabriel: Sure. Let's see. I've been watching *Star Trek* since I was-- *TNG*, and I think I was about five when I first saw it. And actually, I hated it because the first episode I saw was the one where Worf was on the holodeck fighting some scary yellow monster. [laughter] And I just saw the episode recently, I can't recall which one, but it was a very-- First season, maybe second season. So, maybe I was six, whatever. And nope, nope, out of there. Months later, I remember watching-- My parents were watching some space show. I like space, kind of, so I started watching. I didn't realize it was the same show. And at that point, I fell in love with it. I have been ever since. I make sure to catch every single thing immediately. All the news, all the shows, all the cool things. I even played the *Star Trek* card game for years and, oh, *Star Trek* is my life. [laughs] It sure feels like it anyway.

Andi: *Star Trek* card game, that's a deep cut. I didn't know there was a card game.

Sabriel: Oh, yeah, there's even two editions of it.

Andi: Oh, wow.

Sue: It operated a little bit *Magic*, right?

Sabriel: Vaguely.

Sue: In the sense that you had different points and decks and different characters were better against other characters. I didn't play *Magic* that often. I'll just make that clear.

Sabriel: A very short version of it. In the first edition, your goal is to get 100 points by completing missions. And you had a crew, so you could have a Federation crew, you could have Romulan, Klingon, all most major factions out there in the world. And then around 2000, they're like, "Okay, this game has gotten too huge and convoluted. So, we're going to make a streamed-down version," and so that one still goes. And they still go to this day even though the company that made them closed 10 years ago. The fans actually keep it going.

Andi: We'll have to do, because we've been working through a series on fandom, different aspects of fandom and we're definitely going to be doing a gaming one which would be-- We had been thinking more along the lines of the video games, like *Star Trek Online* and *Timelines* and stuff. But I didn't realize there was quite so intense of a *Star Trek* card game, although obviously I should have expected that. That makes perfect sense for *Star Trek*. [laughs]

Sue: Anything that's collectible makes perfect sense for *Star Trek*.

Andi: Yeah. Pretty much. Pretty much.

Sabriel: So, in short, I'm a huge *Star Trek* fan. [laughs]

Andi: Well, we're glad to have you here. Thanks for coming.

Sabriel: Yeah, thank you for having me.

Andi: Yeah. Well, today, we're going to be talking about women in security, but first we have some housekeeping.

Sue: As usual, we want to remind you about our patreon.com/womenatwarp. And if you'd like to support the show monetarily, you can do so for as little as a dollar a month. And every little bit helps keep us going and keep bringing you more and more *Star Trek* content. And speaking of content, we also have our blog. It's still going strong and we are getting more and more submissions every day. So many, it's--

Andi: Sue's a little overwhelmed.

Sue: Well, no. Not quite overwhelming, but we've got content lined up with our current schedule of one original post a week through October-ish. [Andi laughs] There's been a lot and it's awesome. But if you'd like to see some of that content sooner, our next Patreon goal is that if we make it to \$650 a month, we're currently as of this recording at \$544, but if we make our next goal, we'll be able to publish two original posts a week. And that is because we pay all of our contributors. We provide an honorarium and that's really important for us to make sure that people are compensated for their work. So, if you'd like to support us, again, that's patreon.com/womenatwarp.

Andi: Alrighty, sounds good. So, we are going to be talking about women in security today, which I think is a pretty interesting topic. We don't actually have a whole lot of security women, but the ones we do have, some of them are very interesting and some of them are extremely well written and there's, I think a lot to talk about the ideas of femininity and what is proper for femininity to do in a job scenario and how gendered some of these roles end up being on the Enterprise and elsewhere in *Star Trek*. So, thank you very much for suggesting the topic, Sabriel. I think it's a deep one.

Sabriel: Oh, yeah, yeah. It's an interesting-- I came up with it, one day, I was watching *The Animated Series*, and there was an episode where all the men-- Oh, it's called *The Lorelei Signal*, and all the men had been mind-controlled by basically the equivalent of sirens from the old Greek mythology. [Andi laughs] And all that was left is women on the ship. And all of a sudden, "Oh, there's women in security you never saw. You don't really think about it, but you don't really see it. Wow." So, I started investigating women in security other roles, obviously there's Tasha Yar, but it's not as common as you think or may think.

Andi: Yeah, we tend to see women in medical. That's where I feel we see the bulk of our women. It just feels like the background characters, when you're talking about background, I'm not even talking about major characters. You are more likely to see women in medical, I feel. Does that seem accurate?

Sabriel: Oh, absolutely. They're in the sciences or medical-

Sue: Yeah.

Sabriel: -usually. Once in a while, someone be at the con, and once in a while they allow someone, actually be captain, like Janeway. [laughter]

Sue: If we go chronologically by air date, which I think is our usual order, [chuckles] you're definitely not going to see any in *TOS*.

Andi: Yeah, we have yeomen, like background characters.

Sue: Yeoman and nurses, basically. But *The Animated Series* really changes it up with that episode, *The Lorelei Signal*, which gets pointed to a lot, I think, when we talk about this sort of thing. And we also get Anne Nored in *The Survivor*.

Andi: Which is one of my favorite episodes. Okay, you guys, first of all, I will stand all day for *The Animated Series*, which is amazing, and you should be watching it. Don't listen to what anybody else says about *The Animated Series*. Listen to me, enjoy it. Okay, so *The Survivor* is basically an episode where this guy comes back onto the Enterprise and is like, "Hey, I'm an explorer that got lost long time ago." And everyone's like, "Cool, man, we thought you were dead." And he's like, "Nope, I'm not dead at all. I'm also not suspicious in any way. Also, I think that my fiancé is here somewhere. Can I see her?"

And it turns out he's not the guy. He's not the explorer. He's actually a tentacle alien that can change his face. And he's a Romulan spy, and he just wanders around the Enterprise knocking people out. And one of my favorite moments is when he cradles Kirk so gently in his arms and tucks him into bed because he's actually a good guy. And by the end of the episode, he's convinced that he doesn't have to be a Romulan spy. He can live a full and happy life without being a spy. It's a wonderful episode. And his fiancé is played by Nichelle Nichols. Her name is Anne Nored, and she is a trip, man, a trip.

Sue: [laughs] Well, she doesn't really have a ton to do in that episode except be in love with the tentacle monster.

Andi: Okay. Come on, man. She just wanders around, she's like, "Oh, God, I have a phaser and my fiancé is actually a tentacle monster. And I should probably phaser him, but I can't. I can't."

Sue: Okay, but in the recent book, the one of the ones celebrating the 50th anniversary, the novel, *The Face of the Unknown*, we get a lot more background on her as she's new on the ship and learning the role of security and is actually a fully rounded character in that book.

Andi: See, I love the books.

Sue: I love it especially when they are set between *The Original Series* and *The Animated Series* and we get this background on these characters that are like one-offs for half an hour.

Andi: I just love that somebody was like, "You know who we should write a book about? Anne Nored." I love *Star Trek*. I love Trekkies.

Sue: Well, it's not really about her, but. [laughs]

Andi: When I was blessed to be a guest on Aaron show, *Saturday Morning Trek* and we talked about this episode, you can check it out. I think we called it, "There's always money in the banana yellow suit," or something. I don't know. We did something like [laughs] that because the tentacle monster is always wearing this amazing yellow suit. And I got a chance to unveil my awesome Anne Nored impression. Basically just, "Oh, gosh, sir, I can't possibly shoot him." It's a lot of fun. I love this episode, guys, watch it.

Sabriel: Your impression there was basically any woman on *Star Trek* before 1975.

Andi: That's true, that's true. Especially *The Animated Series* because they're trying so hard to make it not obvious that all the voices were Nichelle Nichols and Majel Barrett.

Sue: But then at the end, they just gave up.

Andi: Yeah. Eventually they were just, "Eh, whatever. People love it anyway." At least, I loved it anyway.

Sue: And actually, the other episode we were talking about, *The Lorelei Signal* is the one I was on *Saturday Morning Trek* about.

Andi: Okay-

Sabriel: So, we got this covered. [laughs]

Andi: -Sue and I are experts on *The Animated Series* clearly.

Sue: The best thing about *The Animated Series* is that they took full *TOS*, hourlong plots and just smashed them into about 28 minutes.

Andi: And then, colored them like they were on LSD. [laughter]

Sabriel: Yep.

Andi: So good.

Sabriel: So great. [laughs]

Andi: The thing though that makes me frustrated with Anne Nored in this episode, even though I love it, is that she can't possibly do her job, apparently. And that frustrates me because I feel like we see that a lot in *Star Trek* where we have women who are being overcome by their emotions and then can't do their job. We see that ton in *TOS* where we have all of these women Starfleet officers who are suddenly overcome with their love for this random villain of the week. That drives me nuts.

Sabriel: Hell, that still happens to this day. I was just watching *Voyager* yesterday and it even happened to Harry Kim, but. [laughter]

Andi: Poor Harry.

Sue: Yeah, but at least in *Voyager*, it's equal opportunity maybe.

Sabriel: That's true. That's true. But no, really, though-- Yeah, women were often regarded as the ones who, "Oh, I'm just so overcome with emotions that I can't focus on my one, two thing. Oh." And it's frustrating. It's like you have no depth for these characters at all.

Andi: Actually, now that I think about it, in the *Into Darkness*, Uhura has a moment like that where she's, "I know we're on this super intense mission, but I really feel I have to talk to my boyfriend now."

Sabriel: Oh, yeah. Oh, that pissed me off.

Andi: Yeah. And I think actually you've kind of hit on the issue we have with women in security anyway, and why they're not very commonly portrayed either here or in command is because it's perceived that women can't overcome their emotions when they're in stressful situations. And here to tell you we can, you heard it here first.

Sabriel: We do it all the time. [laughs]

Sue: Looking at our list of characters, the interesting thing to me about the ones for *TNG* and *DS9* that we're about to go through is that they all sort of have this traumatic past. So, they all have this quality of being "damaged" and maybe a little bit angry.

Andi: Yeah, it's interesting.

Sue: So, we're definitely stereotyping here.

Andi: Mm-hmm.

Sabriel: I had noticed that. You're absolutely right.

Andi: Yeah. So, speaking of *TNG*, do you want-- Shall we start with the big one? Tasha Yar?

Sue: Tasha Yar.

Andi: Tasha Yar. Oh, Tasha, I love you, but no, [sighs] not well served, I do not think.

Sue: Oh, absolutely not. And Denise Crosby has made it clear over and over again that she left this show in the first season, not only because of issues with sexism behind the set, like backstage, I don't know, what do you call it? Off camera, that's the word. [laughs] Sorry, I work in theater, sometimes the language doesn't change in my head right away.

Sabriel: It still works. It's still a stage.

Sue: But that she was miserable, and she didn't want to spend the next six years wearing the same uniform, standing in the same position on the bridge and saying, "Aye, aye, Captain." Which I get because they didn't really give her much to do and when they did, *Code of Honor*, it was super, super racist and super, super sexist.

Andi: Yeah. Or I can never remember which one--? I always get *TOS* and *TNG* episodes mixed up.

Sabriel: You're talking about *The Naked Now*? [crosstalk]

Andi: *The Naked Now* or *The Naked Time*, I don't know which one in the *TNG*--

Sabriel: It's *Now*.

Andi: Okay.

Sue: *The Naked Now* is *TNG*.

Andi: *The Naked Now*, where I don't even know what to say about that episode. It makes me really sad.

Sabriel: She can't control herself in front of Data.

Sue: But then, I never get to be feminine. You have such pretty clothes.

Sabriel: Ugh.

Andi: Yeah. And the thing is, I actually think that could be an interesting character development moment where you have a woman that feels she's forced to be masculine and wants to explore her feminine side. I think that could work. But the way that they did it was more like-- I don't even know. It's just super stereotypical. And also, like, all women secretly want to play dress up, and that's frustrating.

Sabriel: Oh, absolutely. If they were able to expand upon that, her whole motif was, she's struggling to be in this role because she wants to be feminine or something like that, it'll be different. But no, it's just a one-off. She's doing this because of some-- Oh, is it virus or whatever?

Andi: Yeah. Who knows? Some [unintelligible 00:15:14] shenanigans.

Sabriel: Exactly. Well, that just cheapens it.

Andi: Yeah.

Sue: Yeah.

Andi: And it actually brings up an interesting point that we got on our Facebook which--Marina Sirtis and Denise Crosby were originally cast to be the opposite roles. So, Chris said, "I think it's fairly well known that Crosby and Sirtis had originally been cast with the opposite roles from the ones they eventually filmed. And Crosby certainly gave the Yar character a tough, athletic demeanor that worked well for a security officer. But if that casting switch had never been made, what would've a Sirtis version of Yar been like? Would she have seemed quite as much of a natural fit for security? And would it have been so bad if she hadn't? I find it hard to imagine her in any role other than Troi now."

So, I think that it's interesting that they directly pit the femininity of Troi against the perceived masculinity of Yar in that scene. And I don't know, it's super interesting. I think it could have been really cool to have someone as feminine as Marina Sirtis or stereotypically feminine as Marina Sirtis playing a security officer. I think that could have been very interesting, to be honest. And then, have someone with Denise Crosby's energy be essentially a psychologist.

Sue: I think it would definitely depend on how they were written and directed because part of the reason that they might have wanted a stereotypically feminine person in a security role is so that she wouldn't be threatening to the audience, which would be the wrong reason, rather than trying to turn things on their head. And seeing as this was still the late 1980s, I'm guessing that it was the wrong reason.

Andi: Yeah, true. Oh, what might have been. What might have been. It reminds me of the *Dark Mirror*, which is the Mirror Universe book that Diane Duane wrote for *TNG*, where actually, Troi is the Mirror Universe's security officer, essentially, but she's basically a torturer and super, super evil, but everyone is terrified of her. And she just kind of rolls around the Enterprise, enforcing loyalty. She's still Troi, but she is scary. I would have loved to see that version, only for good, on *TNG*, that would have been amazing. But let's face it, they couldn't even pull off what they pulled off in the first season with Yar. So, I don't know if it would have worked.

Sue: Yeah. And just to-- I know I'm being a little bit down on early *TNG* now, but Marina Sirtis has also said that not once in the first few years of *TNG*, did she ever get an acting

note. When she got a call from the higher-ups, it was about, "Did you change your hair or did you get the new shade of lipstick we picked out for you?"

Sabriel: She was there to be the dress-up doll.

Andi: I think she called herself a potted plant on the bridge once which, ouch, man.

Sabriel: Yeah, well, it's unfortunate, like the characters. Data had his thing. He wants to be human. Geordi was-- I don't think he even had much of a thing other than he was the pilot. I don't know if he had a shtick.

Sue: Which is why they moved him to engineering.

Sabriel: To actually give him something. Yeah, but they were just so-- Back in those early days of *TNG*, they didn't have a huge plan for a lot of people. They just had, "Let's have this diverse cast of characters, yay, but we have no plan for them."

Sue: But in the half season we had Yar, we actually did get a lot of background.

Andi: It's just terrible background.

Sue: Even though it was terrible and upsetting all the time.

Sabriel: But she didn't really have a goal she was seeming to be working for, like Data did, and so that really worked for his character. She didn't seem to have any aspirations. She was just, "Let's have a story about Tasha this time. Let's have a story about this." And I think it was just really to serve her and all the characters to have more of an aspiration. That's more of a critique on *Star Trek* as a whole than the topic. [laughs]

Andi: Man, when I'm thinking of going back to *Code of Honor* a little bit, it's actually weirdly flattering of Tasha Yar in some ways. I mean, it ends up being horrible, but they're like, she's so beautiful and strong that she catches the eye of this dude on this planet. But they make it just so icky that you kind of forget that Yar is super competent, and that's why she's impressive. And that makes me sad because we didn't get to see her be super competent very often.

Sue: And as soon as she's captured, I guess, she stops being super competent.

Andi: Man, they could fix so many problems with their female characters on *Star Trek* if they just let them be competent. Even with *The Survivor*, imagine how much more interesting it would have been if Anne Nored had phasered the crap out of her tentacle fiancé monster and then had a conversation with him in jail. You can still have that story and have her do her job, [Sue laughs] and it would have made her a much more interesting character. I've decided that's the main thing I want from *Discovery*, is to have all the characters be competent.

Sue: And I feel that happens at the end of *TNG*. If I want to watch professional people being good at their jobs, I watch season 5, 6, or 7 of *Next Gen*.

Andi: Look how amazing Troi got as soon as they let her be competent and put her in a uniform.

Sabriel: Yep. Once Captain Jellico comes and forces her to wear her uniform [Andi laughs], she all of a sudden knows how to do her job, she's professional, and how she wants to be an officer.

Andi: I think the second time they tried to portray a woman in security, they did a much better job, which is kind of depressing because they did it all within one episode instead of half of a season and that's Sito Jaxa from *Lower Decks*. So, we do get some background of Sito Jaxa in *The First Duty* where she was involved in Wesley Crusher's shenanigans at Starfleet Academy. But for the most part, we have *Lower Decks* for her. And we did an episode on *Lower Decks* for Women at Warp. So, if you want to check out more of our thoughts about that episode, you can check that out. But just in general, I think that this is pretty much the high point for women in security on *Star Trek*, which is kind of depressing considering she only gets two episodes.

Sue: Yeah, but they never interestingly call her a security officer. They refer to her as tactical throughout the episode.

Andi: Yeah, but she's under Worf.

Sue: Right. So, there's-- There's this weird semantic thing happening in *Star Trek*, where is it security or is it tactical? And which word do we use in this situation? But I would think also, so far, she is the most feminine of the characters that we do see in security, but still has the gumption, the guts to stand up for herself and say, "You know that? This isn't fair," and actually gets rewarded for that.

Sabriel: She's one of the few characters who stands up to Captain Picard.

Andi: Yes. And rightly.

Sabriel: Yes.

Andi: I really love her, and I really love what they did with her, and I really would have loved to see her again. Although I do kind of the way that they left it with her, again, doing her job and doing it well.

Sabriel: I wish we would have had more with her.

Andi: Yeah.

Sabriel: I mean, I understand her arc, and she died there. Spoilers.

Andi: Spoilers. [laughter]

Sabriel: But I wish we could have had more of her. If she could have been on there for a few episodes before this whole episode about her.

Andi: Yeah, that could have been cool. Just give her a couple of moments here or there and-

Sue: Little background. Yeah.

Andi: -kind of as a character, she would have been an excellent recurring character. And I think she would have done well on *DS9* myself.

Sue: But I also-- I get it. I get that the impact is lessened if she does come back.

Andi: Yeah. [sighs]

Sabriel: Yeah. Which makes it so if she would have had a recurring role for a few episodes, I think, yeah. It would have been way better and would have hurt even more to see this person we come to know and love all of a sudden is killed in action.

Andi: Yeah. But I think she's a good example of you don't have to be masculine to be "strong" or tough. That doesn't-- And I think this goes all the way back to what we were talking about earlier about the gendered nature of some of these jobs and how writers and creators have such trouble with figuring out how to balance those ideas of gender when it comes to jobs. And occasionally, they get it right and I feel like they really struggle with this.

You have all of these women on the Enterprise in nurturing roles rather than, I don't know, this kind of powerful security-type role. And even when we're talking about the background, whenever you've got somebody, "Call security," you've got a whole load of dudes running around.

Sabriel: Mm-hmm. Almost always. Once in a blue moon, it seemed it had someone nearby the set and they're like, "Hey, we need you to get in this gold uniform." [laughter] Along those lines, something I'm noticing about our list of people in security or security like roles, in *TNG* and *DS9*, almost all of them are Bajoran.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Sabriel: They're all Bajoran women.

Andi: Yeah. We're about to bring up Ro, who is a security officer in the books. Not when she was on *TNG*, but later on in the books. And I think that she's a good example of the type of balance that is found when you have kind of a tough woman. I feel like Ro is Tasha Yar 2.0, only done well in a lot of ways.

Sabriel: Yeah.

Andi: And then, we also have Kira from *DS9* on our list to talk about. Even though she's not technically security, she fulfills that role as the first officer on *DS9*. She's often the one that's making decisions for the security of *DS9*. She works really closely with Odo in that regard as well. And they're all Bajoran, you're right.

Sabriel: Yeah. Because we have these troubled pasts of being in the occupation and now, they're all--

Andi: Tough and angry.

Sabriel: Tough and angry, yes. [laughter] And you can actually go a different route where Ro and Kira started out as the same person.

Andi: Yes. They had this idea to bring Ro back over to *DS9* which, again, could have been awesome, but then we wouldn't have Nana. So, I'm fine with the way that things fell out. But yeah, I mean, you can definitely see the roots of Ro in Kira.

Sue: Right. And just to jump back a little bit, as things change from early *TNG* to late *TNG*, as things improved for the representation of women in these traditionally masculine roles, if you want to put it that way, there were still things going on behind the scenes because when they decided to make Jadzia a Trill, they changed the makeup from the host so that she would still be a pretty woman and not somebody with a bunch of weird, forehead makeup.

Andi: Like, anybody could make Terry Farrell not a pretty woman, like that is even possible.

Sue: There are still these decisions being made to keep the women attractive and to keep them appealing to the audience and this fear that if you take that femininity away, that people, your viewing audience isn't going to be interested or they're going to be even turned off by these decisions.

Andi: Yeah. You can have men be all variety of attractive and body type and all that sort of thing, but you've got to keep the women sexy always. You can have Kira be a total badass, but you still have to have Nana Visitor's face and be gorgeous and deadly. So, I don't know, I think this is also something I'd love to see for *Discovery*. I'd love to see some more diversity in not only body type, but just like-- I think Grace put it as, "I want to see some ugly aliens." [laughter] I would love that too. I would love to just see women that don't look like traditionally feminine earth women, like--

Sabriel: Let's get a female Tellarite.

Andi: Exactly, exactly. [laughs] And I just think that could be interesting.

Sue: But also, in the relaunch with *TNG* shared continuity books, you've got-- Because Worf is off on *DS9*, I hope you got to that part, Andi. [laughs]

Andi: I haven't gotten to that part, but I know that it's coming.

Sue: I said it without even thinking. [laughs]

Andi: It's hard to miss all of the promo pictures where Worf is just hanging out and I'm like, "Oh, Worf's on *DS9*, I guess, okay."

Sue: But in *TNG* relaunch books, there are several more women in these high-power roles on the Enterprise E, I guess, including Chief of Security. So, you've got that going as well. And yeah, Ro, in these books, goes into security and ends up coming up the ranks even more. And I will definitely try not to spoil that. [laughter]

Sabriel: No, but it's a shame that you have to go to resort to the books to get them into powerful positions which, yay, I'm very glad of for it. But it's sad that it can't be on screen.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Andi: It seems like they have so much more freedom to be progressive in the books.

Sue: Definitely.

Andi: Yeah. It's not even just women. It's queer people too.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Andi: I wish we had the same freedom on network television as we do in the books.

Sabriel: Well, hopefully, *Discovery* will change this.

Andi: I hope so too. And I have hope. Kind of the way that the creators have been talking about *Discovery* makes me have hope. Especially when Bryan Fuller was involved, and I'll cry about that later, not on this episode, but kind of the way they've talked about their visions of the future that they want to portray has been very inspiring. So, I'm hoping that we'll get that. But it's so much more fraught when you're trying to launch a series and you're hoping

not to, I guess, offend people or turn people off to your show. But, really, the bones of *Star Trek* is super progressive. So, I guess, knock on wood.

Sabriel: Yeah. Yeah.

Sue: So, yeah, Kira feels very security-esque to me. She has a lot of the qualities that we saw in Yar and Worf while on the bridge. And Odo, even though he is our actual security officer for *Deep Space 9*, is mostly harassing Quark.

Andi: He's more like a police officer.

Sue: Yeah, absolutely.

Andi: Constable.

Sabriel: Mm-hmm. Yeah, he is a constable. While he is technically security on the station, he's not always the greatest at his job to be assigned security. So much goes on *DS9* that should have been caught.

Sue: It feels like he's in charge of internal law abiding, whereas Kira would be in charge of the actual security of the station like threats from the outside.

Andi: Yeah, I remember-- I want to say it's-- What's the episode where very early in *DS9* where the Cardassians are like-- Is that even the pilot where they kind of come attack *DS9*, kind of, and she's like, "Stand down," and she doesn't budge an inch. I feel like that's super early in *DS9*. I remember seeing that and just being so blown away with how uncompromisingly tough she was, and I loved it. And that's what makes me think of, I know she's not a security officer, but when I'm thinking security officers on *DS9*, my mind is immediately going to Kira and not Odo. Which, sorry, Odo, I love when he solves mysteries, but I feel like she's the one that's the red alert person. And I feel like the first officer always has that kind of security quality to them too, because Riker had that too, where I feel like that was one of their main jobs.

Sue: I don't get a security feeling from Riker at all. [laughs]

Sabriel: Not the same way.

Sue: He bellows red alert a lot, but like--

Andi: No one yells red alert like Riker, Sue, let's be real. [laughter]

Sabriel: Put his leg up on the chair and say, "Red alert."

Andi: "Red alert. Shields up." It's so perfect. Anyways. I guess if we're just calling it red alert, then yeah, that's not security. But still, I enjoy that aspect of Kira very much.

Sabriel: She goes in there and gets things done kind of in a different way.

Andi: Yeah.

Sabriel: That definitely feels she's like, "I got this."

Andi: Yeah. She's also not as by the book as Riker.

Sabriel: Also true, because, well, her book is different.

Andi: Yeah, that's true. And that's another thing, is Kira is not a Starfleet officer.

Sabriel: Yeah. She's another troubled woman from the occupation of the Bajoran who is tough as nails and is not going to take crap from anyone.

Andi: Yeah. But that makes me think, is there a difference between Starfleet security officers and other security officers? See, this is now making me think of, what are you learning in the Academy at Starfleet when it comes to security? Because first of all, the security officers on the Enterprise going all the way back to *TOS* are laughably bad. Do you remember the episode, *Assignment: Earth*, where they get taken out by the tiny black cat?

Sue: [laughs]

Sabriel: Oh, my God, yes.

Andi: [laughs]

Sabriel: And always go, two guards. Make sure your weapons are not drawn and so that the person you're escorting can turn around and easily dispatch you.

Andi: [laughs] It's kind of hilariously bad how the security officers are when it comes to Starfleet. So, maybe the reason that Kira is so effective is she didn't go to Starfleet Academy, [laughter] where they taught them all these really bad habits to get into like, "Security, get ready," and they're all like "Okay," and then they run at someone and get punched in the face.

Sabriel: Well, as I've talked to a mutual friend, Char, before, Starfleet and Federation-- Starfleet's all about science, they have no idea how to do all the security stuff, we're scientists. And so, maybe they don't know how to train security officers because they don't think about it.

Andi: Well, if you think about *TOS*, Spock was an excellent fighter. Kirk was an excellent fighter. The security officers were pathetically bad flailers. They're like, "Argh" and then their arms would just wave and then they'd fall. [laughs] I feel like basic martial arts would probably be something that you'd want your security officers to know, but have we ever seen a security officer land a punch successfully?

Sue: Yar.

Andi: Yeah, but she's like-- I'm talking about these background guys.

Sabriel: Extras.

Sue: Yeah, no.

Andi: They're basically there to get knocked out repeatedly.

Sue: Yeah, to show how menacing our enemy is.

Sabriel: That's right. They're always very tough.

Andi: And they're always guarding doors and not noticing somebody sneaking in them.

Sabriel: Yeah, well, they're facing the wrong way. They never actually face the door.

Andi: God, I don't know why I never really noticed this before, but every time I'm trying to think of those background security officers, they're always super incompetent. So, maybe we shouldn't be complaining about the competency of the women security officers because, actually, at least Anne Nored noticed their fiancé was a tentacle monster. That's better than a lot of these other guys. Oh, man, for anything but science apparently, or flying, piloting.

Sue: But speaking of background characters though, like making this list, there aren't even women as background security characters.

Andi: Yeah.

Sabriel: Very rare.

Sue: We tried.

Andi: We made lists, guys, and there's not very many.

Sabriel: You could find the occasional episode where there is one, but they're not a named role at all. No one says like, "Johnson, over here," and she doesn't go "Aye, sir."

Sue: Not even that.

Andi: And I don't know, I just would love to have some background characters be women. Like, have the silly person guarding the door looking the wrong way, be a woman. That's all I'm asking. [laughs]

Sue: Mm-hmm. And we're just thinking about, moving on to *Voyager*, but are there any women in security on *Voyager*? Did they all die when the Caretaker threw them across the universe?

Andi: The medical department and all of the female security officers just got wiped out. [laughs]

Sue: It was very selective.

Andi: Oh, man.

Sue: But, I mean, my gut reaction when you're like women in security *Voyager* go, I'm like Seska. And is that because she's Bajoran? Now I'm wondering.

Sabriel: Part Bajoran, part Cardassian? Spoilers.

Andi: I got that far. Woo. [laughter]

Sabriel: But no, she was in engineering with [unintelligible 0:37:45].

Sue: Yeah, she definitely was an engineer.

Andi: I think it's because she's a spy.

Sue: Maybe.

Andi: Maybe we could call her Cardassian Security, [laughter] which is actually an interesting point. Like, we've been focusing on Starfleet, but I can't think of very many

women in, say, Cardassian security either. Most of the spy type people are men except for Seska. Oh, as far as I've seen so far, to be fair.

Sabriel: Yeah. We had the judge woman Cardassian.

Andi: Yeah, I remember her.

Sabriel: Garak's grandma. Was it Neela? No, someone else. There are very few women in science in Cardassian science. And maybe a random Gul or something?

Andi: Yeah, it definitely seems they're pretty heavily weighted in the security and tactical and warmongering side, military aspect to men. And I do remember seeing the Cardassian-- Oh, I guess when they had that episode where the scientists came from Cardassia, they had a person there that was posing as a scientist, but was actually a spy, now that I think about it. But again, is spying really security? I don't know.

Sabriel: In one sense, but it's not the security role of *Star Trek*.

Andi: Yeah, true.

Sue: It's a tactical role, for sure.

Andi: Yeah.

Sue: But it is not a security officer.

Andi: Can I just say that one of the most annoying things about Seska is, again, her competency? I'm just super frustrated with female villains especially being super, super incompetent. I remember when I started suspecting her, I feel she might even be innocent because it's so obvious she's not. Like, it has to be a fake out, right? But it wasn't and I was just really frustrated with that. I was like, "Garak would be shaking his head at this. This is bad."

Sabriel: And then she fell into the role of, "Oh, I love Chakotay so much. I have to do all these things that can't stop thinking about him."

Andi: Yep. Goodness, Chakotay, really? Okay, sorry. That was mean.

Sabriel: [laughs]

Andi: I like Chakotay. They just don't give him enough to do for me to love him yet. And I'm hoping that changes.

Sue: I am happy that he realized that he was clueless when he was, "Was everybody on my ship a spy?"

Sabriel: Oh, I love that scene. "Was anyone working for me?"

Andi: No. No, Chakotay. No.

Sabriel: How far are you into *Voyager*?

Andi: I have finished the first season.

Sabriel: Okay.

Andi: So, hopefully-

Sabriel: I won't give you spoilers.

Andi: -get farther soon, but--

Sue: The thing is that the crew complement doesn't change much. [laughs]

Sabriel: No, it doesn't. For a very small crew, you don't see much.

Andi: Change over?

Sabriel: No, you don't see changeover.

Sue: Where are they going to transfer? [laughter]

Sabriel: True.

Andi: It's true. I mean, that's part of the problem for the Maquis too, is they're like, "Well, where are we going to go?" Even if we hate Janeway and even if we hate Tuvok-- I love that episode where Tuvok makes him run laps everywhere. Even if we hate it, where are we going to go?

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Andi: So, I don't know. They're kind of trapped. Poor people. Maybe they should have trained Kes to be a security officer as well as the medical.

Sabriel: Oh, that would be great.

Andi: I would love to see Kes karate chop some dudes, that would have been awesome.

Sue: [laughs]

Sabriel: Instead of being the weakling again who often thinks about love. Eventually, they wrote that up. Spoilers, she isn't focused on love later.

Andi: Especially, since her love is Neelix.

Sabriel: Aww.

Andi: But anyway. I think that could have been cool. They're like well, we lost all of our medical division and we lost all our female security officers, so let's make Kes into our doctor karate chopper. I would have been super--

Sue: Our security [crosstalk]

Andi: I would have been super into that. That would have been cool.

Sabriel: To later *Voyager* even though it's not the Seven, she's not much of a security-- She is tough as nails. She kind of has that aspect of her where she can do anything, but she doesn't-- She also does not go into the security role.

Sue: Yeah, I was thinking the same thing. Like, she might occasionally play that part, but definitely doesn't have that role as a standard part of her character.

Sabriel: And so, yeah, this series about women being more in power still keeps that power to-- It limits the power.

Andi: Yeah. And Janeway is obviously in command, which is the other area where women are underrepresented in *Star Trek*. And so far, I think they did a pretty good job. But I've only seen the first season, so I don't know about overall. But I do that for the most part, they give Janeway a much more logical, science-based background, which I think is really cool for a captain and kind of avoids some of those issues that we've been seeing with, "Women are too emotional. They can't be captains. They can't be security officers and see their tentacle fiancé monster and go, 'Oh, no.'"

Sue: [laughs]

Sabriel: I think overall, you'll be pretty pleased with her.

Andi: I'm glad. So far, I am. She's amazing.

Sabriel: Other than some decisions. She'll make the occasional decision that makes you go, "What?" But overall.

Sue: Yeah.

Andi: That's good. We have some *Enterprise* people on this list who I have no idea who any of them are because I haven't seen *Enterprise* yet.

Sabriel: Okay, goodness. Well, okay, so *Enterprise* falls into the same problem where for the first two seasons, there's no women in security. No, there's nothing. But season 3, they are given a military attach-- detachment?

Sue: Detachment, yeah.

Sabriel: A detachment where there are mixed gender, basically commandos.

Andi: I like commandos.

Sabriel: Yeah. And so tough as nails, they're like, "Our security isn't up to the job of being security because they're trained by Starfleet. [Andi laughs] So, let's get these non-Starfleet military people on the ship." And yeah, they have mixed gender all the time and it's actually pretty damn awesome. It's like this is a crew of elite squads, there are men and there are women and it's cool. They even have names, a lot of them.

Andi: Oh, whoa. Whoa.

Sabriel: Yeah, even if they're only in one or two episodes, they have names, which is above and beyond normal for *Star Trek*. And they don't really follow them too much in their personal lives. But once in a while, they'll be training or they'll be on a mission.

Sue: And they're mostly there either to cause conflict or be a love interest or both.

Sabriel: Yeah.

Sue: But they're there.

Sabriel: But they're there and they're named and-

Andi: They exist.

Sabriel: -when they're doing their job, the MACO are actually quite competent, unlike normal Starfleet security.

Andi: So, you don't think that these people would be taken out by a tiny cat?

Sabriel: Well, not usually. [laughter]

Sue: Look, tiny black cats can be dangerous, okay?

Sabriel: They are.

Andi: Believe me, as someone who is constantly surrounded by tiny black cats, I know. But that's still the funniest thing I've ever seen on *Star Trek*, and that's saying something.

Sabriel: Overall, they did-- They're pretty competent. They can do their job. I'm sure you'll find one or two-- Someone in comments will make one or two, "This MACO totally got the crap kicked out of them by a small child," or something, [laughter] but overall, they're pretty awesome.

Andi: We always welcome comments. Feel free to explain why Starfleet Security is actually the most competent in the galaxy.

Sabriel: I would love to see this reasoning.

Andi: Yes, absolutely.

Sue: Do we want to mention Talas?

Sabriel: Yes. Oh, I love Andorians. I loved her.

Sue: Talas was Andorian and a lieutenant under Shran, who was also his lover. Ooh, of course. And died in the line of duty. Again, of course, because all of our women in security have died. Yeah, that's all I got.

Sabriel: I have a crush on her. She's awesome. I loved her character when she was on there. I don't have much to say about her, but she was the Andorian Security, which later becomes Starfleet Security, but when she wasn't dead. Yeah, she's an example of someone being competent at their job, being awesome. And then, I think about-- Actually, something we kind of missed, but we've kind of been talking about Starfleet Security, more or less, we didn't talk about Klingons. And there aren't many, but there are a few female warriors, but they're not security.

Sue: It's hard to-- When we're dealing with the alien that we're talking to this week, it's kind of hard to identify who on that bridge through that viewscreen is their security officer. So, unless there is some reason to know it, how would we?

Andi: The first person I think of is that bodybuilder woman from, what is it? *Star Trek VI*? The one that Chekhov and Sulu are, "Hey. Hey, woman with muscles." She's the first person that comes to mind when I think of a Klingon security officer. But obviously, we don't know a whole lot about how that ship was organized.

Sabriel: Oh, she was also apparently first officer.

Andi: See? That first officer thing.

Sue: But with Talas, I think she was great, but they also made her Shran's lover. And they also made a point of saying how Andorian females are known for their sexual aggressiveness. So, she can't just be a well-rounded woman in security for another species. She also has to be sexually aggressive and the lover of one of our, not main characters, but main recurring characters. And it's just, why?

Andi: You know what I wouldn't mind? An asexual security officer. Woo-hoo.

Sabriel: Yeah, that'd be great. Or it could have been Andorian as well even. They have, what, four genders?

Sue: Yes, they have four genders, and all are required for procreation.

Andi: I haven't seen much of the Andorian's yet because they're only very briefly in *TOS*.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Sabriel: Yeah, it's a shame. But when you get to *Enterprise*, you'll see them more. They're one of my favorite races in all of *Star Trek* and they actually flesh them out a bunch.

Andi: We have *Star Trek Beyond* in here.

Sabriel: Oh, yeah, *Star Trek Beyond*. I only noticed this because in *Star Trek Beyond* in the background when the ship was under attack, I won't go into spoilers if someone hasn't seen it-

Andi: Which you should see it because it's a good movie.

Sabriel: Yeah, they did an awesome job. They made up for *Into Darkness*, in my opinion. But in the background, no one has a speaking role again. It's mixed gender of men and women, but they're in the background getting the crap kicked out of them, and they're obviously security. So, I thought that was cool.

Andi: Yeah, equal opportunity crap kicked out of them.

Sabriel: [laughter] And then in *Star Trek Continues* actually makes up for the *TOS* problem. It's not canon, but they have a number of women in security role as well.

Andi: That's nice. One thing that I about fan works is we can fix some of these things. If I ever end up writing *Star Trek* fic, maybe I'll make an OC that is an awesome asexual security officer.

Sabriel: Make a ship that's mostly women and one or two men on the crew.

Sue: Right? [laughter]

Andi: There you go.

Sabriel: See how they like it.

Andi: [laughs] I have a feeling they won't like it. [laughter]

Sue: But that's the thing when we keep-- I feel it's a recurring theme here on *Women at Warp* that we say, "It's done so much better in the books."

Sabriel: [laughter] It's true.

Sue: But it's true. [laughs]

Andi: Yeah. One thing I like about-- We just read the *Legacies* trilogy. That's something that they did really well is have a lot of women background characters, like randomly you'd have women background characters. They had a background trans character, just sprinkled there here and there, just letting us know, "Hey, women exist."

Sabriel: People like you exist in this future.

Andi: Exactly.

Sabriel: And we're going to tell you about them.

Andi: And I appreciate that.

Sue: In *The Face of the Unknown*, which I mentioned earlier and reviewed for the blog, there is an alien who even calls out the gender disparity on the Enterprise. And you get Kirk's reaction, which is initially to be defensive. And then, you see his little not-- Well, the italicized thought of, "No, this alien is right. Even though other ships might be better, the Enterprise could do better with gender equality too."

Sabriel: Yeah.

Sue: It's like way to go.

Andi: I love Kirk. I feel Kirk would be the kind of person that if you were, "Hey, man, you don't have enough women." He'd be, "No, man, look arou-- Oh [laughter] you are totally right. Let me fix that." I feel he would be like that. That seems very in character to me.

Sabriel: I think so.

Andi: He's a thoughtful dude. It's actually one thing that I'm not super happy with the new movies. I feel they kind of stripped that quality away from him. But *TOS* Kirk is definitely a very thoughtful person.

Sabriel: And maybe all that thoughtfulness happens off screen in the movie universe in the Kelvin universe.

Sue: Yeah.

Andi: In between his threesomes with Caitians.

Sabriel: Yep. [laughter]

Sue: But we do have some Facebook comments to get to. [laughter]

Andi: I like that. That's seamless transition. [laughter]

Sue: That's what I'm here for. So, I want to read this one. Roy wrote, "Honestly with on-screen *Trek*, I think they largely failed miserably. The sample pool is woefully small, especially if you only consider those characters with significant speaking parts. The one from *The Animated Series* comes off to me as very tropey. And in many ways, her plotline feels a rehash of *What Little Girls Are Made Of*. Yar, while possessed of potential, did not have enough time to develop into a character of substance. Although I think most agree that yesterday's Enterprise went a long way towards showing us what she ultimately could have become. As for Sito, while she's great, she's also dead. Where are the other women in security officers? It would have been nice, perhaps, if they'd given Tuvok a deputy chief who was a woman, someone who was not afraid to speak up when she disagreed with him."

Andi: I cannot find the lie.

Sabriel: No. No. And again, if we would have had more characters who had reoccurring roles, we could have fleshed out the main characters as well as given some insight into the crew, and could have really made something of these people.

Andi: Yeah, I have to agree with that comment.

Sabriel: A lot of other TV shows, maybe because it just wasn't common at the time to have reoccurring characters who were killed off or just left the show. I mean, sure, it happened, but it just wasn't a common thing in television back then, as opposed to nowadays, where it is more frequent because television has just changed.

Andi: Yes. The nature of television has changed a lot since *TOS* especially. But even the late 1980s, early 1990s, television has changed. We have a lot more of arced storytelling. Because we've got binge watching now, so they have more of an opportunity to tell extremely complex arced stories in today's television that they had even when we had *DS9*, *Voyager* timeframe.

Sue: The really interesting thing, I don't know if this was ever in any of their contracts, but when you're watching *The Next Generation*, everyone who was in that opening credits, I think with the exception of maybe two episodes, has at least one line in the episode. It can be a totally Worf-focused Klingon super episode. And you will get at least one like boardroom scene where everybody else has at least one line.

Sabriel: Yeah, almost always.

Sue: Right.

Andi: Yeah. Except for the first season, we have a couple of missing Troi episodes. But for the most part, they do a good job of keeping it pretty-

Sue: Everybody has at least one thing to say, almost always. And we look at TV now and there are entire episodes where you've only got one of your main characters in it. The entire way we watch television and the way we create television has totally changed in the last 30 years.

Andi: To be honest, I think the way that it's changed is for the better.

Sue: Oh, I agree.

Andi: So, I'm hoping that-- Again, we keep going back to hopes for *Discovery* but, oh, this poor show, it can never live up to what we want from it.

Sabriel: I know, I know, right?

Andi: Oh, wow. I don't know how I'd feel if I was making *Discovery*. But this is something that they can capitalize on and hopefully they do, especially since they are going to be a streaming show.

Sabriel: This is true. Heck, you could have almost an entire show about how *Star Trek* kind of helps shaped the arced storytelling because *DS9* was one of the first shows that really did that, at least in the *Star Trek* Universe.

Andi: Mm-hmm.

Sabriel: And then *Voyager* kind of forgot it and then *Enterprise* brought it back. And there are a few recurring characters that help the main characters be who they are.

Sue: Especially the last two seasons of *Enterprise*, there were a lot of arced stories and there are a lot of recurring characters.

Sabriel: You've got Tran, you've got-- Oh god, I'm drawing a complete blank on-- Soval. And then in the first season or two, there was Crewman Cutler, who sadly passed away in real life. And so, she wasn't on the show anymore, but I loved her. She was so cute and fun. And, yay, recurring characters who aren't the main characters, I guess, that's a short version because they can really flesh out the show.

Andi: I mean, in *TNG*, Ro was only in, what, eight episodes or something.

Sue: Something like that, yeah.

Andi: And she still had a huge presence. Garak has a huge presence on *DS9*, even though he's not actually in all that many episodes.

Sue: Which is shocking.

Andi: Yep.

Sue: Somebody at some point, we were talking about Garak and somebody brought up that number and I'm like "You're kidding. No." [laughs]

Andi: Because he feels he's such a part of that show.

Sue: Yeah, absolutely.

Andi: That's both the mark of a good character and an example of how you can have them have a huge footprint without all that much screentime. So, things to think about for the future. Have a security officer that can defeat a cat.

Sabriel: [laughs] I'd give women more speaking roles. It would be great too.

Andi: Named women with speaking roles and competency. It's really a minimal list, let's be real.

Sabriel: Yeah. It's not asking for much.

Andi: Yeah.

Sabriel: I don't know why this is so difficult.

Andi: I don't either, to be honest, but.

Sabriel: But maybe it's just because it's a sign of the time. It's time.

Andi: Yeah.

Sabriel: That's a big part of it.

Andi: Well, is there anything else we want to add about women in security on *Star Trek*?

Well, thanks so much for joining us, Sabriel. This was lovely. Thank you for suggesting the topic and then coming and speaking with us on it.

Sabriel: Thank you so much for having me. We could have gone for a few more hours. I love talking about *Star Trek*. [laughter] I don't know if anyone else would have enjoyed that.

Andi: So, where can people find you elsewhere on the internet if they want to track you down and talk more about *Star Trek* with you?

Sabriel: Oh, yeah. The easiest way to find me is go to my website, *sabriel.me*, and you can see all my socials. I am very active on Twitter. I talk a lot about *Overwatch*.

Andi: Yes. That's how we met.

Sabriel: Yes, but I also love *Star Trek* and often will talk about episodes that I'm watching on *Star Trek*. So, follow me there. Just go to *sabriel.me* and find me on the internet through there.

Andi: All right, great. And, Sue, where can people find you?

Sue: You can find me on Twitter *@spaltor*.

Andi: And the easiest place to find me is also on Twitter where I'm at *@firsttimetrek*. You can also reach out to our show. We have our website, *womenatwarp.com*. You can find us on Facebook *@womenatwarp*. And you can email us at *crew@womenatwarp.com*. Thanks so much for listening.

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