

## Women at Warp Episode 136: Picard Season 1

SUE:

Hi and welcome to Women at Warp: A Roddenberry Star Trek podcast. 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 Sue and thanks for tuning in. With me today is crewmember Jarrah.

JARRAH:

Make it so!

SUE:

And our guest Jamala!

JAMALA:

Hi.

JARRAH:

Yeah. So Jamala, and I, and Grace first met in 2014 at GeekGirlCon when we put on some *super* awesome panels and I am very excited to have them here on the show today. They're an awesome Star Trek fan and will be great to talk about Picard.

JAMALA:

Thank you Jarrah.

JARRAH:

Jamala, do you want to talk a little bit about how you first got interested in Star Trek?

JAMALA:

Yeah sure. I mean you know, I'm a 70s kid so it was always on in the background on television right? Like the original series was, always, and you just grow up hearing those Star Trek sounds and- which is funny to me because walking through my house today my mom was in the other room, my elderly retired mother who lives with me, and she's she's watching all the reruns right now. So whenever she's watching a Star Trek rerun I can totally hear it in the background. But the first time I actually knew I was an actual *fan* of Star Trek was Best of Both Worlds. And here's the reason why: I was- I think the year that it aired was the summer of 1990, I believe. And just to let you know how old I am that was when I graduated from high school. So I saw the first half of Best of Both Worlds and then I was going to be leaving Seattle for the first time ever to go live in another state. And I was freaked out that I wasn't gonna be able to see the second half of the show. *\*laughs\** So I was like "What if they don't have Star Trek in Rochester? *\*crew laughs\** Oh my God!" You know, this was before the internet, before YouTube, before all that stuff. So yeah. And that was when I really knew that I was a *fan* and not just- it wasn't just a show that I was watching. So I later found some folks at the school that I was attending at the

time. That's also where I had my first Star Trek convention was in Rochester New York of all places.

JARRAH:

I can imagine being terrified about feeling like you were moving somewhere Star Trek didn't exist.

JAMALA:

I mean besides California, which is where I'm originally from, I hadn't done a lot of traveling. It was just scary. I didn't know how it really worked, you know what stations carried it, what was going on. So I was just afraid I wasn't going to get to see it anymore and I didn't realize how hard that was going to \*laughs\* hit me until it actually hit me. But yeah I found a crew, found a room, a TV room to watch it with other Trek fans. So that's how I found my people in the first place. When I was in a completely unknown place. It was a lot of fun.

SUE:

So this episode we are going to be talking about the first season of Star Trek Picard, but first we have a little bit of housekeeping to do. As usual we remind you that our show is made possible by our patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron you can do so for as little as one dollar per month and get some awesome rewards from thanks on social media up to silly watch along commentaries. Just last week we opened up our watchalong to *all* of our patrons, and not just some of the upper tiers and had a great time. And what did we watch? \*laughs\* Oh, A Piece Of The Action! So much fun to hang out with everybody and have a little fun when so many of us are self isolating. So if you'd like to join us on Patreon you can do so by visiting [Pateon.com/womenatwarp](https://www.patreon.com/womenatwarp). This episode in particular is also supported by Text Expander and we will be talking about them a little bit more later. You can also support us by leaving a rating or review on Apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. Now, *upcoming* our next episode is also going to be Star Trek Picard related and we're going to be talking about the Picard novel by Una McCormack, The Last Best Hope.

JARRAH:

Yeah. So you can join our Book Club discussion at [Goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/1234567890) by searching Women at Warp under the groups, and we've already had some really great listener comments so far and I hope you can join us reading the book and join us for the discussion in a couple weeks.

SUE:

We'd also like to remind you that Women at Warp does have a blog. So if you are interested in writing a piece for the blog, Star Trek related of course, you can check that out at our website [WomenatWarp.com](https://www.womenatwarp.com). And in this time where finances might be low for people we can say that we are able to provide a stipend for our writers. It's a small one but thanks to our patrons we make sure that we do pay all of our writers. Anything I missed?

JARRAH:

No, I think that pretty much covers it.

SUE:

Fantastic. So Picard Season 1.

JARRAH:

SPOILERS!

SUE:

\*laughing\* SPOILERS for sure. Red alert.

JARRAH:

We are not going to talk about this for 45 minutes to an hour without giving you some spoilers.

SUE:

Let's just say that the list of things we have, that we all want to talk about is very long. \*Jarrah laughs\* Let's start overall. What were our big takeaways? What are our thoughts at the end of the season?

JARRAH:

OK, so maybe I will just start by setting up the context for where we were when the season started. Because there was a lot of anticipation and I think that, you know, it's a bit different than when Discovery started, where I know that we were very wary of things and we were still wary. But there was also- there's watching these shows in the age of social media is such an interesting experience where you're also kind of afraid of like "am I going to be on the off side of the fan reaction and end up getting trolled like non-stop?" And I think that I was cautiously optimistic going in. I had a pretty strongly favorable reaction to the first three episodes and then more nuanced up and downs as the rest of the season progressed. Overall a pretty positive takeaway but I also felt much more comfortable by the end of it expressing that nuanced opinion and I'm really grateful to the people in the corners of the Internet that were able to kind of navigate that respectful dialogue. It was not *everyone*, and regardless of- for our listeners whether you were like "I loved everything about the show" or you was really horribly disappointed, your individual responses is valid as long as it's not, you know, just fist banging a table and saying that Seven wasn't supposed to be queer. So Yeah.

JAMALA:

I loved the show overall. I'll just say that right up front. I think it's interesting the comment you made about watching Star Trek in the age of social media is a completely different experience from you know back in the day when Deep Space Nine, and TNG, and Voyager were all on television but we weren't so hyper connected about everybody giving their own opinion about \*laughs\* exactly what should or should not have happened. I loved the show. I love *looking* at the show. It's amazing just seeing all of the things that they've done for the special effects and

everything you look at on screen is completely out of this world. And I found it interestingly complicated, you know mixing mythology with sort of the way that that one character described it as *news*. As someone who has actually been a journalist I thought that was kind of interesting and a bit funny, you know, because news is something you're supposed to *know* you know every day, what's the thing that you supposed to know that's going to help you get through the rest of your day of the rest of your week. And so if news is like "An A.I. is coming to eat us all up and we'll all going to die." I mean that's pretty, I don't know, that was pretty overall scary and an interesting direction that they went in with the whole premise of what a AI is going to mean to human beings when we get to that point in time in the first place. So that was the storytelling I thought was really fascinating and interesting. You know I have my ideas about particular characters but I can save that for when you get into you know more detailed stuff but overall huge huge fan of what they accomplished this season. So I was pretty happy.

SUE:

So I think it's probably safe to say that among the people on this episode \*laughs\* and our crew that I was perhaps the person with the most anxiety going into this series. It's a weird thing to try to explain and it almost sometimes feels silly when I try but next gen was such a formative show for me and these characters meant so much to me growing up that I really took to heart, I guess, the ending that we'd gotten in All Good Things. I know we had four movies afterwards but I look at All Good Things as the ending for this crew because I don't want to necessarily talk about those movies. And it showed us our main character is continuing to go on and explore the galaxy together. They were all still together and I was nervous that coming back to them however many years later would harm that idea in some way. That it wouldn't be the happy ending I wanted it to be. And I'm not talking necessarily from the shipper perspective although I am biased in that direction as well \*laughs\*. But I don't know, I was just very very nervous that the thing I held so dear wouldn't- like some of the impact would be taken away. Yet those stories still exist. Those seven years of next gen are still there. I can watch them anytime I want. It made me nervous for these characters that I felt helped form who I am. I sound very odd I know but I am still, I think, processing what I think of the story of this season. I'm not sure yet. I think it's very well-made. I think it's *beautiful*, I think it definitely has some blind spots, which we're going to talk about. But I mean they made a show that kept me coming back not only because I was recapping it, but at the same time at this point in my life I have so much like sci fi background that I didn't have 25-30 years ago when I was first watching Next Gen that I feel like it was also kind of predictable. Like I saw that first trailer or maybe it was the second trailer at New York Comic Con and I left that panel feeling like I knew what the entire season story was going to be. And I was pretty darn close. So..

JARRAH:

Yeah it's a pretty dense series which is why we have so many themes to talk about. But I think that when you actually sort of lay out the developments of the major plot threads that it actually is fairly linear. I think a lot of the density has to do with you know trying to insert dramatic irony and flashbacks and just lay it out in a way that is maybe more narratively interesting. But I would agree I think it's a really well-made show and certainly you know we had some listener

comments from other folks. I will say Krista who said "I've had the same question all season where the heck is Beverly and why is her name not even mentioned? Like not even once."

SUE:

It's like they were going out of their way to not say her name.

JARRAH:

Yeah like they even say Worf and Geordi, and in the novel as well you see Worf and Geordi and actually you do see Beverly briefly. But I was- we'll say like going into it I understood that Patrick Stewart didn't want this to be a TNG reunion show. But I was sad about it and kind of wished it was. But I am grateful for what the show was separate from that. And I think it was a valuable thing to put it into the world on its own.

SUE:

The idea that this is not a Next Gen reunion: OK fine. But you're bringing back for this series the first serious four out of the seven characters they're all white. You're leaving out the two people of color and one of the women and the women you're including is because she's married to one of the male characters. And she didn't even get equal credit status. That frustrated me. There was also one of the producers, I believe it was Heather Caden, said that "They only wanted to bring back characters whose stories were important to Picard's." And it was just the phrasing of that that really rubbed me the wrong way. Anyway we don't need to get into that right now.

JARRAH:

But I think certainly that's a fair representation of a group offense and that it bothered some people more than others and it's, you know, it's very clear that this was never going to be that like TNG part two. Star Trek: The Next Generation: the next generation.

SUE:

\*laughs\* The *Next* Next generation.

JARRAH:

But it doesn't mean that we can't be sad *imagining* that it could have been. But like, is that I still loved it.

SUE:

It's one of those things where- that's what I mean by blind spots. Look I don't think it was intentional that Star Trek or that the writers left out two black men and a woman. I think it just happened that way because of the characters they wanted to use. And I think that happened a *lot* throughout this series that they were just blind spots that people didn't even think and realized were problematic until maybe some fans pointed them out.

JAMALA:

And I think that has something to do with writers focusing way more on the story than the actual premise of what Star Trek is, which is to sort of, I don't know, be this really amazing representation of what we can be as humanity if we're inclusive and we're diverse and we're all working together in a future that's a lot better than the one- then our present. You know what I'm saying? So I mean, you have to care about it enough to want to really put it in the story in that way. And you know from what I see of interviews and looking at what people are saying on Twitter and whatnot it's just not a part- it's not in the forefront of their brain. So- and I'm not excusing that in any way shape or form. I'm just saying it's usually what happens when you have, you know, a lot of white people in charge of telling the story, putting it to screen, and putting it out there in the first place.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And I think maybe in this case you may have had a feeling, I'm sure not deliberate, but a feeling that like "well you put in place a diverse cast and the rest just falls into place." But that actually isn't true. And certainly we've seen bumps in Discovery as well, but I think Discovery has tried to be more explicit about what they're trying to depict in terms of challenging representation and in terms of gender and race and queer identity and Picard maybe just put that a bit on the backseat.

JAMALA:

Very well said.

SUE:

So anybody have any favorite new characters?

JAMALA:

Two characters that are kind of my favorite: Raffi. I enjoy Raffi. It's complicated how they were sort of portraying this character who was very much a functioning addict, you know of sorts, and she had a lot of a lot of baggage. A lot of things that she needed to work through but she was also incredibly smart and incredibly inventive. You know, she could be motherly when she wanted to, she could be your best friend when she wanted to. And I just- I appreciated that sort of, I guess I don't want to- I don't know if I want to call it wholeness because we only got to see a few sides of her, but I appreciated a lot of those sort of what you probably would have thought of back in the 90s as being portrayed in Star Trek as negative. Now everybody's got their flaws. \*laughs\* To some degree or another. But hers just stood out that much more because she had you know her little thing that she was taken off of. And then I want to just give a shout out to space Legolas. I mean \*crew laughs\* I needed some *more* flips. I know his name isn't space Legolas but Elnor which sounds just as Lord of the Rings as everything else \*laughs\* but yeah I really enjoyed him and I thought that they did a good job using just enough of him but maybe almost maybe a little too little? Like I would watch a spin off with Seven and him on a Fenris Rangers mission in a hot flat second because I really enjoyed his presence. You know I enjoyed that whole idea of being so honest \*laughs\* there's nothing else you can say but what you

actually think, you know? So yeah I mean besides Picard because Picard is my space Dad. You know I grew up with Next Generation. I love TNG and that's been my sort of original crew my entire life. So watching them spin off and everything has been an amazing and fun journey. But as far as new characters go Those were my two favorite characters.

JARRAH:

I really love Raffi. I like Elnore too. I think the way he was used was a little up and down. Like he got separated from the group really early and then kind of reunited at the end. But it's kind of awkward but I love the scenes that he's in. I will name two smaller characters. One is Laris the cool ex Tal'shiar lady at the beginning slash Irish Romulan housekeeper.

SUE:

She's the *best*.

JARRAH:

I wish we had gotten to see more of her. But I think she's super awesome. And then Kestra Troi Riker was very endearing, and I think a pretty well written teen tween character and I will fight to defend her.

JAMALA:

I'm with you on that. I will fight to defend her too. I thought she was a great character.

SUE:

I absolutely loved Laris as well. I wish she had forced her way to go with them. She would have been amazing. I also really was intrigued by Rhonda and wanted to know a lot more about her which, I mean, I'm sad we didn't get to learn more about her and her history and her story. All right. So, we started talking about this a little bit but Picard and the idea of Star Trek. There are a lot of- there's a lot of talk online, on social media about "Is this a positive vision of the future?"

JARRAH:

"Is this even really Star Trek." guys?

SUE:

"Can we have a positive message in a show that has characters going through a difficult time?" Because I think that's that's where we are in Picard, I also think that's where we are in Discovery.

JARRAH:

I think at the end of the day we got several positive messages. We got a message about how our meaning as humanity is defined by mortality, and the need to acknowledge that moments are precious. We got a message about tolerance, sometimes slightly muddled at times like by evil demon seductress synth in the second last episode? Or you know, just maybe you lost sight of. and about how like shutting down scientific research is bad and we should strive for more

scientific knowledge. And so yeah, I think at the end we did, although I really wasn't sure like around the Nepenthe, episode 7 or whenever that was the Troi- Riker episode. I was feeling really freaking bleak about things and I felt like the show was giving me a lot more anxiety about the world than- normally I would go to Star Trek for comfort but it turned around.

SUE:

Is that because of the way we tell stories now on TV? Do you think? I feel like we've talked about this a little bit with Discovery. But like, when Next Gen was airing you got a story in one maybe two episodes. Right? So you had your uplifting "everything is solved we're all back to normal now" at the end of your forty two minutes. And now it takes 10 episodes sometimes to get that resolution.

JARRAH:

Yeah. This felt to me like, you could plot the narrative very clearly on like, do you remember when you were in high school English and you had to learn like the Shakespearean comedy versus tragedy with like the pyramid that's like inverted? And this was 10 episodes and it was like two episodes that you're on this stage and then two episodes you're the next stage on the pyramid. And it felt like around *that* point was like "Everything is terrible and you don't think you can turn it around" and then it gradually pulls back up out of the hole. So it felt like a very classical narrative structure to me. And it was maybe benefited by being created by a novelist who could kind of plan it out that way.

SUE:

So what about Starfleet? and that Starfleet is once again making bad decisions is and/or is corrupt or has a problem or has been infiltrated. I've seen a lot of complaints about this too, but like in my mind when *hasn't* Starfleet been corrupt? When *hasn't* the crew of the Enterprise had to say "Command is doing stuff wrong" you know?

JARRAH:

Well I think, a couple of things. So first of all there's been a lot of discussion and one of the interesting things about Star Trek in the age of social media is that, at least in this case Michael Chabon the show runner, has been super super engaged with fans particularly on Instagram and I- the downside is that I haven't been able to read every single thing that he's written, answering fans questions, because there's *so much* of it. Like you know, one hundred and fifty answers every week. But he's talked about how your reaction to the show will change based on whether you think Star Trek was always supposed to be about the present or about the future. Like is it supposed to be a positive vision of the future or is it supposed to be like a mirror for our present? And I think maybe a bit of both. Maybe it's not never been one or the other? But certainly there was a lot of effort put into making it mirror our present. And I appreciated that this really felt- like the things we were seeing in Starfleet mirrored the crisis of confidence that we have in many of our own institutions.

JAMALA:

Yeah I always felt like Starfleet was a place where you could make what you wanted of it for the most part. If it's supposed to be as big and as vast as it is with so many leaders involved and, you know, I guess I did see this particular iteration of Star Trek being very much representative of the disappointment that some of us feel about our current administration and the kinds of messages and wording and just, I don't know, it's hard for me to grasp thinking of the *whole* of Star Trek. And when I say the whole Star Trek I guess I mean the whole of the Federation leadership or Starfleet leadership to that degree as being completely corrupt. I feel it maybe was probably kept at the top. Not everybody has the same ideas about what Starfleet does and I think, you know, thinking back to Trek, and especially TNG, the way that Picard was literally like this governor of a floating city, you know, he was kind of mostly where the decisions ended. You know, he got to use his own idea of what he believed in what Starfleet represented and apply that to all the different places that he was. But different captains had different ways of doing that and different captains and admirals had different ways of interpreting the orders that they were given and whether or not they were going to follow those orders or not. So I don't know. I just- I feel like it's a lot more complicated than saying you know "Starfleets now corrupt!" I just think it has to do with different people interacting, and acting, and making decisions about what's going on in that particular universe in different ways.

SUE:

Right. And I think the thing about the question of like "Is Starfleet corrupt?" We certainly know it was infiltrated right? By Oh. But the idea of the Federation banning synthetic life. I don't think that that was corruption so much as that's reactionary. That's fear.

JARRAH:

Yeah. Yeah it was fear. It was definitely fear and I think Picard even gave a really nice speech, what was that episode six or seven, something about you know "We can't give into fear" as a way to sort of illustrate that point. And I definitely see where that's coming from. And it was odd to me to make that decision in the first place for them to cut off all scientific research around A.I. and/or positronic you know Android type research in the first place. That did seem uncharacteristic for me. But I didn't, you know, I didn't think about it one way or another. I just thought it was an interesting choice.

JARRAH:

Yeah I think that for me one of the the biggest, I guess, holes in the season as a whole though was that I don't think that they handled Oh's infiltration of Starfleet particularly well or it just felt like they didn't have enough time to really use it properly because we see her at the beginning and she's the head of Starfleet Security. But the *only* thing we see her do is influence Narissa who's already a Romulan agent. So she could have done that just staying on Romulus and then tricking Jurati and possibly brainwashing her. And even then it all it really- like it doesn't actually stop them from- like she kills Maddox but after Maddox has already said where the planet is. So it doesn't stop them from getting to the planet it lets them track them for a brief period of time. But I feel like you didn't have to be the head of Starfleet Security to make that happen. So how

did she actually infiltrate and why was she not, you know, using her power in this commanding position to like mess with some officers?

SUE:

Well they tell us that she infiltrated early on and rose through the ranks. Right? In one of their long pieces of exposition.

JARRAH:

Yeah but you never learn like, how they found out about her. You just kind of like “Yeah we're coming it's OK. We all realized it was wrong. \*Jamala laughs\* We're coming now. It's all good.” And I feel like we never got to see the consequences of like maybe some of the insidious ideas she had been promoting.

SUE:

I think they do also tell us that she was the one behind the attack on Mars and the synth ban.

JARRAH:

Yes. Well is it actually explicit?

SUE:

I think so.

JARRAH:

I mean I think it's pretty clearly implied, but I still feel like it is not- It's too easily resolved and not clearly- like there's no scene of her, you know, escaping Starfleet and going to lead that fleet. We don't actually know how that happens.

SUE:

Right. She just appears \*laughs\* on the Warbirds. In leather, sure.

JAMALA:

I'm curious though. Jarrah, was that you that mentioned that Oh tricked Jurati?

JARRAH:

Yes.

JAMALA:

And that is, that is a fact?

JARRAH:

Well so this is an interesting point.

JAMALA:

See, because I was going to say I didn't believe that she did trick Jurati and that she just gave whatever point of view that they thought was going to become the big destruction.

SUE:

Yeah, I think Oh *believes* what she's telling Jurati.

JARRAH:

Yeah. No, that's that's fair. I meant more that what she told Jurati isn't actually the truth, but she believes it to be the truth. And then you know, it's also debatable whether you think that like, I personally didn't buy the fast reaction that Jurati had. I know we're supposed to think it's a mind meld that really influences her and then this justifies everything she does going forward and that's why everyone forgives her at the end. But I know that I was not the only one that struggled a little bit to accept that.

JAMALA:

I did struggle to accept, you know, Jurati being forgiven and I was surprised that she didn't get killed off this season frankly. But it may have been that people just really liked her. I have no idea but, I mean this is just my own kind of thinking about it. But if Oh could have done anything it may have been to implant some kind of suggestion that this is what she should be doing in order to stop what is going to happen.

SUE:

Yeah. I don't feel like we know Jurati to be honest with you.

JAMALA:

Yeah! And we don't know Oh either, you know? We don't know a lot of these characters very well.

SUE:

Even though we spent almost the whole season with Jurati in our main cast she was never, almost never, not under the influence of someone else. Right? She was under O's influence, and then she was pretending to go along with the synths, and she was pretending to do all these other things, or she was lying. I only the very first time we meet her when Picard goes to the Daystrom institute can we assume that *that* is what she is actually like.

JARRAH:

I would like to talk about Jurati a little bit more. I think when it first started out I also thought she would be like a Barclay or a Tilly kind of character and I was super into this. Because everyone else was super haunted and I thought that that would be nice to have this more kind of classic Trek-ian character of like "I'm just super into science and also slightly awkward" \*crew laughs\* but then it almost very quickly turned out that she is super haunted too and then she kills Maddox and I know Sue has some thoughts on the Maddox Jurati relationship that I also share.

SUE:

\*supremely grossed out/like grosswrap supreme\* Oh it's so gross. \*uncomfortable laughter\*

JARRAH:

And then the whole thing with Rios and I think Alison Pill did a really good job with a very challenging part because it is a kind of leans in a bunch of different directions. But I also found the scene or the episode where she injects herself with the thing to disable the tracker- but it also is kind of a self harm moment and even in the next episode, because at first I thought she's killing herself, like I didn't know what she was doing. And then in the next episode it says or she says that she thought that she might as well just die. And to me like that was horribly shocking and I really disliked that moment. And I think that was maybe even- OK it was not the same episode that they killed Hugh was it? Yes it was! Because that was the episode I was like "OK guys this is too much for me." and I really found like those two things, just to me, over the line. I know people have different lines and for some it was lcheb, some people probably never crossed their lines. But those were two moments that to me were just like more than I felt that I could handle and that were actually necessary. I thought that it was just kind of cruel.

JAMALA:

As just an aside, because you brought up lcheb Jarrah, I will say I was one of those people who was really super disappointed that he went out like that and so quickly. And then I started thinking "Wow they actually froze a *male* character in order for a *female* character to have a foundation of hurt and betrayal and a reason to go off and do the things that she was doing." And I was like "OK I can get on board with *that*." but I still really was kind of disappointed that he was taken out.

JARRAH:

Yeah that is super interesting. I mean they basically did say "yeah we basically fridged him" and they didn't use those words but that was the justification for that level of graphic violence that "We needed to show how traumatizing this was to Seven in a very short period of time." And then that's the excuse for fridging a lot of women characters in the past. So I don't know, to me because it didn't have quite that baggage, it didn't bother me in that way. But I can definitely understand why it was bothersome for others.

SUE:

Jumping back really quickly to Jurati and Maddox. There's clearly a rather large age difference in that relationship. \*Jamala laughs\* But we find out in the novel that he was actually her professor. So this is also teacher student. And just feels *real* gross to me. \*laughs uncomfortably\* And like the power dynamic is off the- I mean we'll talk about this more next time but their relationship in the book it just is very uncomfortable to me when I read it. Then of course she murders him and then sleeps with Rios to, what did she say? Like fill the hole in her \*laughs\* for a couple of hours or something.?

JARRAH:

This is a quote from Chabon, and it's in the context of a discussion about sexuality and queer identity. And we'll get more into that part later, but he's saying that "For Jurati it's actually not about sex at all, or sexuality. It's about her devastation, her isolation, her guilt. She's self medicating essentially with sex. It's not there to say 'hi here's two characters and they're heterosexual.' It's there to say 'here's an effed up person reaching out to the person that with a limited range of candidates, not only does she find the most attractive but objectively speaking he's incredibly gorgeous and he's not wearing a shirt.'" So...many things to quibble with. But I will say like on the thing with her and Rios, so I like Rios a lot as a character. If I had to like list more people in my favorite new characters, I think Rios was pretty darn cool and I love the multiple E.M.H.s or like the different holograms. Like the one where Raffi pulls all the holograms together is one of my favorite scenes. But the way \*sighs\* I think it moved pretty quickly. But then what I actually found worse about it is then by the end it's like they're boyfriend and girlfriend now? Like they're kissing all the time even though so much has happened and so it's moved past that "We're just gonna make a mistake right now" moment and now it's they're basically going out and I really dislike the scene where Sutra is about to do the mind meld and Rios is like "Hang on. Hang on. I am her boyfriend and must protect her." Ugh.

JAMALA:

Interesting.

SUE:

And these are both mind melds, I would argue, that neither is consensual.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I mean I think the Sutra one slightly more so because she had that moment where Rios intervened and she could have used that as an out, but she has so much guilt and kind of trauma that I don't think, you know, she probably would have felt like she could assert herself. And to me it was weird that Sutra *could* even mindmeld.

JAMALA:

Yeah that was what I was gonna say, because I didn't understand how that could actually work if Sutra was an android you know similar to Data's make make up but I guess a bit you know afterwards, obviously, and I would yeah I was very confused by that whole thing like how in the world would this person be able to mind meld in the first place? So I just kind of left it at that and didn't think too much more about it.

JARRAH:

Yeah, she could easily have just like, put some little device on her head and extracted the memory engrams or something? And then like you know, that would have been to me more believable.

SUE:

Maybe it's not so much a mind meld as a neural interface?

JAMALA:

Mm hmm. Which I still don't understand, positronic versus a human organic brain that you know?

JARRAH:

So I don't know. Jurati was a character that I really really wanted like. I thought she was going to be my favorite character. I still have some issues. I think I like who I imagine she could have become but I find her relationships very problematic and it makes it hard for me to be super enthusiastic. I like when she's sciencing by herself, I don't so much like when she's doing things that are about Maddox or Rios or when Soong is like "You should feel horribly guilty because you extinguished this bright light that was my egomaniacal bro scientist bud!" \*crew laughs\* like it's basically these like these two like white guy scientists who think that they are the most important people in the galaxy and then Soong is like "Yes my friend was totally the second most important person next to me, and you little lady should feel really sorry!" Ugh. I dunno.

JAMALA:

If you want to talk about it mirroring our current reality that's definitely a mirror of our current reality. And I think that's the whole point of Star Trek is that you can't arrive at a really great decision or one of the best decisions that you can get unless you have the minds of so many different people contributing to that conundrum or that problem or whatever it is, and that's what let me down. That's what it lets me down a bit in Picard. Overall I would say. And just being able to see different people with different abilities with different backgrounds and different ethnicities and different cultural identities coming together to talk about and/or solve a problem in a way that works best for everyone. And I'm just I'm tired of the representation of the few, that you know the white male majority.

SUE:

So I think that might take us into another one of our points, which is racism and colorism in the show. We had several people point out, especially on Twitter, that almost every single person of color was killed on the show. Someone else pointed out that the majority of the synthetics if not all of them were light skinned or presented white. And if that is their ideal society that is a little disconcerting certainly.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And also we had a comment on Twitter that was about specifically in the first few episodes that there were two very violent deaths of black men. Dahj's boyfriend and the Romulan Senator that is beheaded. Again maybe an example of like you just thought you were doing diverse casting and probably didn't deliberately put that there, but when it happens it can be pretty disturbing.

SUE:

Well I'm- I know they're different writers rooms and different shows but I'm starting not to buy that anymore. Because this happened in Discovery season one, and there was an outcry about it and that is the explanation we got "It just happened that way." "This is the casting we did" almost like a "We didn't realize."

JARRAH:

I particularly don't buy it when these are basically background characters, like they're not principal characters. So you could have thought *harder*. Yeah like it would have been very very easy to switch.

JAMALA:

Mm hmm.

SUE:

In both cases those two characters who meet a violent end appear and are killed in the same episode.

JAMALA:

Mm hmm. Yeah I definitely noticed Dahj's boyfriend being offed pretty quickly. I didn't feel too good about that. My guess is somebody would use the excuse that "hey it's an alien. It's not really a quote unquote black person" but anyone who is, you know, of a different ethnicity and or within any of these alien species, any of these alien you know folks that they bring onto this show there it mirrors what we would expect in the human species. I think and so it's very difficult to not see things like that. Interestingly enough I found kind of annoying, to me, was that the second episode where Picard actually did the interview with the so-called journalist woman who was asking him about why he left Starfleet and what was wrong with Starfleet. I thought that was pretty interesting. And it felt *\*sighs\** like I wanted more. I mean it's hard because you had certain people coming in representing these characters that are there for *one thing* you know what I'm saying? Like that guy was there to be Dahj's boyfriend for two minutes. That woman was there to play a journalist for two minutes and you know some of these other background characters were there specifically to pick a fight with Picard or do something else. And so that was their function. And now they're gone applying diversity to those roles to me doesn't make a whole *\*deep sigh\** It's something that doesn't make a whole lot of sense. I- I see what they're trying to do, but at the same time what really matters is when you have very diverse characters in lead roles and how we can see them portrayed as whole beings and not just *pieces* of a plot that need to be executed.

SUE:

Totally. It certainly, I think, makes the world feel more real if the diversity extends to your background characters. But it doesn't do a whole ton of good if that's not reflected in your main cast as well.

JARRAH:

I think you can get into, you know, “well what would the solutions be?” And you know certainly I'm not saying “don't ever kill anyone off” or “only kill off white characters” or like you know “keep a checklist and make sure it's proportional the population” like you have to be doing good storytelling. But you should be able to justify your reasons for doing things. You shouldn't end up with these patterns all the time where it's mostly people of color getting killed. And what I think, to me, was just a bit of a sign of a blind spot is, you know, we talked about this argument that Picard is supposed to mirror today's society and in many ways it does. There's really strong themes about xenophobia, and fear of refugees, Islamophobia in terms of the synth attack on Mars, you have messages about corruption and about trusting our institutions and messages about tolerance and about you know the potential dangers of A.I. but the importance of scientific research. But then what is really just like *falls out* is there's really no attention to like privilege and, with the exception of Riker and Troi lecturing Picard in Nepenthe which is some of my favorite parts of the whole season, that nearly no one points out how *super* lucky Picard is.

JAMALA:

Oh! Raffi does. Yeah I was going to say she really- she brought it up and out.

JARRAH:

Yeah. But then in Michael Chabon says that “Raffi's situation is largely self-inflicted and her reproach of Picard for his quote fine chateau is self-pity. Not even the federation can help people who aren't ready or looking for help.” And you know like I said, I haven't read everything he said and that was back on Episode 3. So it's possible he's rethought that a bit since, but that was around this discussion about “Why does Raffi basically live in a trailer and he lives in a chateau?” And when you look at today's society like, there's some pretty clear reasons like, pretty clear manifestation of privilege there if you were going to make an analogy there. But Chabon sees this more as a result of Raffi making individual bad decisions which is also linked to her addiction. And I feel like that is, given that I think they thought very carefully about most of the other social messages, to me that's really disappointing that they kind of fall back on these what I see as outdated excuses for inequality, and as well as outdated explanations for addiction, as like as a personal character flaw vs. a health problem and one that has social determinants.

SUE:

There's so much that could be there, and I think a lot that isn't with that situation with Raffi. We don't really see her struggle. We see her, you know, smoking on her vape. Then a few episodes later she tells her son she's clean. And then we see her fall back into it again into drug and alcohol abuse. But we don't see her, really deal with it ever, if that makes any sense.

JARRAH:

Yeah. She cries and Rios hangs out with her and then she's better.

SUE:

Right. Meanwhile while this is happening, Picard is basically exploiting her and her connections to get what he wants and then they just let her go back to her room and continue to get drunk and nobody is trying to help her at all.

JARRAH:

Yeah. To be clear I would not want Picard to intervene in like an authoritarian way in this situation.

SUE:

No. He's supposed to be her friend.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And he also doesn't know best, as they point out very accurately regarding Soji in Nepenthe. But I think you know one thing they could have potentially explored was using the EMH in a healthcare role which could have potentially been interesting. But I think as it was it was just not a very new way of telling an addiction narrative and it's one that I think does a disservice to people who actually struggle with addiction in our world today.

JAMALA:

In fairness to Picard specifically I think that- when I say Picard I mean the character and not the show, but you know one of the things that they brought him through or one of the journeys that he was taking was kind of how to shed this authoritative figure that he is so well known to be and to take on a role of friend and or mentor or father or basically just closer connections to the people that he used to being in command of. And I think that was something that he finally obviously came to terms with at the end of the show. You know he's telling Data that he loves him, he's telling Raffi, and Ramdha says she loves him. So you know, whether or not he was there to help Raffi in her, I want to say lowest hour, or not I mean clearly there was a lot going on and a lot to be paying attention to. I also feel like people kind of looked at it like "Well she's an adult. She can deal with this the way she wants to deal with it because I think that that's the way in which the character was kind of going in the first place." But it was clear she, when they first met, that she was very unhappy with him not coming to say "Hi" or help her out at all or just to reminisce. And that she would have welcomed that quite a bit. But I think that was part of Picard's learning curve in terms of what it really means to have a family. I mean even in the very beginning with the awesome ex Tal'Shiar folks that he was living with at the chateau. I wasn't quite clear what their relationship was for a bit except for them kind of acting like servants in a way. Do you know what I'm saying? Like if they were more or less a family I didn't really see it that way so much as they were caretakers of this huge villa that he was living on.

JARRAH:

Yeah I think they're housekeeper slash bodyguards.

JAMALA:

Yeah. And so I mean his way of dealing with people had to change and his way of dealing with relationships had to change. And I think that's part of the complicated aspect of telling the kind of story that they're telling in Star Trek today versus the kinds of Star Trek stories that we got in the past.

SUE:

We're going to keep talking. This might be a super long episode but Jarrah, Do you want to tell people about Text Expander?

JARRAH:

Yes. So we're pretty excited to have this episode be supported by Text Expander. I've just started using their product, their app and their extension, and I can see some ways that it's going to be super useful. So basically the way that it works is if you type something more than three times then you can make it a snippet and let text Expander type it for you. So things like your address, or you know a message to someone telling them you're gonna be late for a meeting, or in our case "Shut up Wesley" \*Sue laughs\* is 100 percent a snippet that is already pre-programmed if you download the Star Trek quotes pack, or you can make it say really any other of your favorite STAR TREK quotes.

SUE:

Like "Women at Warp: A Roddenberry Star Trek podcast."

JARRAH:

Exactly!

SUE:

Or "Now available in the podcast feed."

JARRAH:

Yeah. Yeah exactly! You can program entire, you know, responses to email questions that you commonly get. There is also a thing that handles correcting common errors in other languages. So for me I also work in French and there's one that is pre available for you to use a pack of snippets that will correct your French accents. So super handy! And it's available for Mac OS, Windows, Chrome, iPhone, and iPod. So I'm interested in seeing how it's going to be moving forward and maybe checking out some of the webinars that they have on the Text Expander website. And if you'd like to try Text Expander, show listeners get 20 percent off their first year. visit [textexpander.com/podcast](http://textexpander.com/podcast) to learn more about Text Expander and select Women at Warp from the drop-down menu so that they know who sent you. So again that's [Textexpander.com/podcast](http://Textexpander.com/podcast) to learn more about Text Expander and select Women at Warp from the dropdown list. And as I mentioned show listeners will get 20 percent off their first year of using the service.

SUE:

So let's get back into Picard. There is- there are a few big things still on this list. But I want to talk about some queer stuff. \*crew laughs\* Yes. Well there's so much for so little. I really love Seven as a queer character. I think this makes a lot of sense for her. A lot of people have been pointing out that Seven, as we see her on Voyager, is basically an adolescent right? When she's learning about herself and learning to be human. So it makes complete sense that she has grown and expanded her idea of herself since that time. But at the same time it annoys me that nothing is fully made explicit. Right? There are definitely people who watch the show including, like, people who update memory Alpha who think Seven and B'Pol were good friends. \*Jamala laughs intensely\* No joke there. \*laughs\* There is also the really quick moment with Raffi at the end of the finale where they're just gazing into each other's eyes and holding hands. I *love* it. I love the idea of Seven and Raffi together. *However* did they even talk to each other much this entire series? Not really. And when they did it wasn't it kind of contentious in Stardust City Rag? That's the only time I really remember it happening, so was that moment earned? Because it felt tacked-on to me. Also according to another interview with Chabon, Raffi had a previous romantic relationship with the captain who she calls for help, Emmy. But how were we supposed to- are we supposed to infer that? So like I mean I love the idea that both characters are queer but is it representation if it's only implied?

JAMALA:

I will just say I love Seven being queer. I love it and it just made total sense to me when I kind of saw the whole show I didn't- and I only picked it up, you know, when they got to the whatever it was Free Cloud.

JARRAH:

So after Stardust City Rag, which is the episode with B'Pol, I was totally "I'm high-fiving a million angels! Seven is queer! This is awesome!" I was super happy even though it was such a small moment. I actually think Seven was, just side note, my favorite part of this entire season. Everything Seven did, regardless of these two tiny moments, was also just awesome. Her being the Borg Queen. And being connected to the cube. That was such a great scene. Getting a big Elnore hug. I'm super into this Seven I think. It goes so much- it really fulfills some of the potential and does, you know, move her beyond being that adolescent character who was very influenced by everyone around her. Yeah. So I was super happy about it. And then there was some question about whether it was intentional or not. And at the time Chabon said it wasn't. But then later he said "Well it kind of was" and in *Variety* he said "Well, the way that people's identity is constructed with sexuality as a component of it, in my experience, it emerges in a much more organic [way], and not like wearing a t-shirt that says, you know, Queer Power — or the equivalent in the 24th century. We get to know these characters the way we get to know real people. It emerges in conversation when it would emerge in conversation." And I see what he's saying there. In real life people don't normally outside of like pride parades or like very safe spaces walk down the street broadcasting their sexual orientation. *But* I feel like it's not that far removed from when the creators of TNG were saying "Well we can't have people holding hands in the background of ten forward that are same sex because that would be tokenizing" and you

know and using it kind of as an excuse. And you know and to their credit the the interviewer says "Well you know but look at Discovery and surely you should understand why people would find it significant to have it reinforced that this is actually how it was intended because otherwise the fans who object to it can just point to that and say 'Well it's not true. It's not canon.' And if the show doesn't put the emphasis behind it then it's like it just kind of gives them deniability and that's unfortunate." And then that was when he went into the comment about Jurati and Rios and how that wasn't about heterosexuality. But the thing is like heteronormativity is about how actually heterosexuality is about heterosexuality, and when you depict it people see that as normal. And it's not just Jurati and Rios in here you have Soji and Narek, you have grossly Narissa and Narek \*Jamala shudders\* Another issue you have also Dhaj and her boyfriend. So you have *several* examples of heterosexuality throughout this season and then you just get these couple of tiny glimpses of queerness. And to me that's not really enough. That said I am super here for it and they've promised this will be explored in Season 2. So I am ready. Bring it on.

SUE:

Yeah. I'm not wanting characters to show up and say "Hi my name is Seven of Nine. I'm an ex-borg and I'm queer now." \*crew laughs\* *But* I also want it to be something that can't be denied when her relationship has become part of the story, which in Bjayzl's case, presumably in Raffi's case, it will be. Right? And if in explaining to the rest of the group that she previously knew Bjayzl and she said "We were together" or "We were lovers" or "We were whatever" it takes away that question it takes away that deniability. And that's why I'm frustrated.

JAMALA:

That makes absolute sense. And I mean going back to what I said before about, you know, people of color being killed in the background as you know fodder or what have you. The same thing with making sort of gestures and/or a handhold or something to that effect in the background. That doesn't necessarily explain completely that that person is queer can be just as offhandedly dismissive.

SUE:

It's like modern day queer coding.

JARRAH:

I think what makes it better than Star Wars, I will say, is that it's significant characters. So you know even though it could be "blink and you'll miss it" in both cases Seven is a character with a massive importance in the franchise. And I think it is a bit of an awesome risk to take her there and I hope that they do it more justice in Season 2. And like I said I'm excited about it.

JAMALA:

Yeah. And just as an aside, I'm usually pretty on board with the names that they give people but Bjayzl? \*crew laughs\* Really? I just- I don't know. I had some issues with that but that's OK. It's ok.

JARRAH:

"We just killed her off so we never have to hear that name again."

JAMALA:

Yeah. And just to poke at your statement about Narek and sister. Yeah, I noticed *that* too. And I was- I don't know. I think I've had my fair share of you know complicated emo boys for now as big characters in shows and movies that I've been watching. So I was- Yeah I was over that.

JARRAH:

"The Romu-Lannisters." \*crew laughs with Jamala totally losing it\* As they were termed.

JAMALA:

That's a good one!

JARRAH:

I did not come up with that. But I saw it's going around on Twitter and I liked it. But actually this segues pretty well into another topic that it was requested that we talk about by Christian Janeway on Twitter about feeling like women's sexuality was presented as something that was dangerous and in need of punishment, pointing to Bjayzl as one example. That she's a pretty kind of awful mercenary. And then Seven kills her. There's Agnes who sleeps with a guy, and then kills them, and then sleeps with another guy. Sutra I think, would be the best example of this because she's like basically a walking demon seductress trope like you can see the minute that she walks in "Ohh sexy synth therefore it must be evil" and Dahj's boyfriend also gets killed right at the beginning and then Dahj gets killed and they're kind of flirty and stuff. So that's another area where you do kind of see a bit of a pattern that we are familiar with for media. I think it is just maybe something that warrants a bit more attention in future.

JAMALA:

This is true I was going to say that you know in the case of Jurati at least she didn't die. So it wasn't like she was punished for her sexuality. But she also technically wasn't punished for killing Maddox either, in the way that we consider punishment to be, you know, getting confined to a small space or either, you know, getting some kind of noble death in the end but you know still not being able to continue on because they did such a horrendous act.

JARRAH:

Or even just having Picard give that really judge-y look. \*Jamala laughs\* She didn't even get a really judge-y Picard look.

SPEAKER: F6

I was- what's interesting to me is I was a little bit distracted by Sutra actually being sort of portrayed as evil. Like it was clear to me from the moment she was introduced that she was not good news and something was going to happen that she was going to more or less, you know,

turn to the side that we didn't want the outcome to be. You know what I'm saying? And I was just thinking of that and like, I'm thinking of it within the construct of the story that Android's looking less human seemed to be a bit more evil than the androids that looked *more* human. And so that's what kind of got me. I was- not that I didn't notice she was sexy because she was very sexy but I- my mind just went in a different direction with that I suppose.

SUE:

We also had a comment about motherhood being punished in a way. I'm going to read this from this tweet we received "Seven loses a son quote unquote. Raffi loses a son. Deanna talks about the loss of her son in order to connect with Soji. This isn't parallels. It's writing that punishes motherhood in a way we haven't seen for fatherhood."

JARRAH:

Yeah. This was interesting. I hadn't thought about it, but I think when you do have three examples in 10 episodes that's a pattern. And it is really interesting to me, I mean Riker has also lost a child but he's not the face of it in the way that Deanna is. And I mean have to massively shout-out Marina Sirtis for that episode. That is honestly, I think, the best material she's ever been given as Troi and she really executed it really really well. So yeah, I do think it's a pattern that is again worth taking note of and trying to see if this becomes a thing. I think in the past we've definitely seen issues around fatherhood in terms of like, characters like Riker with daddy issues a lot in Star Trek and that didn't show up as much this time. But we also see Jurati framed as a mother to these synths, although I kind of like when she's like "I'm not their mother asshole." \*Jamala laughs\*

JAMALA:

Yeah. You know I've thought that that's an interesting way to see it. One of the things that I noticed when I went back and sort of did some re-watching of TNG episodes was how I didn't notice it before but I kind of noticed a pattern of stories that involved kids on the Enterprise who'd lost parents who were in Starfleet based on, you know, Starfleet missions that went bad and kids who had to deal with the loss of a parent and how that affected their ability to, you know, go on with their life and live on the Enterprise et cetera et cetera. So whether or not the sort of *motherhood* pattern of mothers losing their children is meant to be punishing I don't think that that's what it's meant to be so much as maybe exploring what it's like to be a mother who has lost a child. So that's my take on it because I didn't particularly notice it being a pattern of punishment so much as it being something that was looked at to be explored through several different characters who had had that happen to them. That's just how I saw it.

JARRAH:

I mean I'd think there's maybe something to the difference in how they present fatherhood through Data and Soong and Maddox which is like an inventor kind of figure vs. like "A mother would die for her children."

SUE:

Yeah. I think that was also brought up on one of our social media channels, I forget which one at this point, the difference between paternity and fatherhood. Because they keep referring to Dahj and Soji as Data's daughters, which like okay but also no. I mean like he- because of his positronic brain they are able to exist. Yes. But he didn't actually create them. There is a question of whether, you know, he willingly gave that positronic neuron. Right? So did he even consent to their creation. Is he anything really more than a sperm donor? Honestly?

JARRAH:

Excellent point.

JAMALA:

\*chuckling\* That is an excellent point. I didn't think of it that way, but yeah.

SUE:

Like, he had nothing to do with their creation. He had nothing to do with Capellious or the synths that Maddox or the other Soong built. \*pause\* Alton that's his name.

JARRAH:

Yeah. Did the other synths get to go hang out with dead Data or was it just Picard? \*Sue laughs\* Like was dead data only accessible to Picard? That was the impression I got. But why?

JAMALA:

But why? Because Picard maybe was the first person ever to have his conscious-ness? If that's the way to put it?

SUE:

They did it to Joanna, Data's mother. So they have done it before but only Noonien Soong had previously been able to accomplish it. I believe.

JAMALA:

Right. And she also did not know that she was an android. So there was that.

JARRAH:

It would have been super weird for her to hang out with her dead son. \*crew laughs\* Who wasn't dead yet.

JAMALA:

Speaking of dead son, this is my total ignorance, was this other Soong person Alton Soong. Was he ever mentioned before Picard ever? Because I honestly don't remember. So they did a sort of a Palpatine right?

SUE:

\*laughs\* Yeah. "Somehow"

JAMALA:

When did he have the time to have this kid? Who Data in Picard's mind obviously knew about. Yeah that was interesting I found.

JARRAH:

Yeah. He's clearly like the least impressive Soong that we never heard about him before. \*crew laughs\* Like, Noonien Soong is just like "Oh yeah my *genius* kid over there" and like Alton Soongs like just waving in the background. And Soong looks back at the audience and rolls his eyes.

JAMALA:

There's nothing saying that he is a real human being except for him, anyway right? He could also be another android who doesn't know he's an android as far as we all know right?

SUE:

A lot of people thought he was gonna be a Lore. \*Jamala groans\* I'm really glad he wasn't Lore.

JARRAH:

I did think that the Data death was nice and touching and a nice way of rectifying Nemesis a bit.

SUE:

So yeah I think that's actually our last really big topic on this list is the theme of mortality.

JAMALA:

And how to reconcile with that.

SUE:

Well yeah this idea that that Data's saying you know "What makes it special is that it ends" right? Which I think was kind of a beautiful moment, and then is immediately followed by Picard being transferred into a synthetic body. Or I guess it's an organic body but with the synthetic brain *something* downloaded into the Golem. \*laughs\*

JAMALA:

Essentially making him the thing that he fought for this entire season.

SUE:

Right. Yeah, that's true. But even though they give him approximately the same number of years as he would have had without his brain defect quote unquote. Does that undercut the message that they just served us about mortality?

JARRAH:

Well Rebecca on Twitter was also asking whether it undermines what previous Trek has told us about the value of living with a disease or a disability. That like, if now you can just put anyone in a perfect synth body that will just live a programmed number of years or maybe like randomly determined number of years. It's challenging. It's very challenging. Like I don't know how I feel about it. I feel like it does sort of undermine it- if you know like Picard lived a really really amazing life and like if he was a real person who had done all those things and he died at that point he would be recognized for a lot of really incredible work. So why is like him getting another few years more necessary than anyone else?

SUE:

I feel like from a storytelling point of view the writers are looking at a character with an established defect in his parietal lobe that could lead to any number of issues, not just rheumatic syndrome, because they never did point out what it was he was dealing with and an artificial heart. So you've got two major health issues in a ninety four year old character and it in some ways feels like this was a way to eliminate them both for however much longer they're going to be running this story.

JAMALA:

Which can't be much longer.

SUE:

I think- I feel like the rumor is three seasons.

JARRAH:

Yeah. It's basically been renewed already for three seasons. But I feel like one of the downsides is I think they could have taken the brain defect as something that was non-terminal and degenerative and could have had a really interesting exploration of that throughout three seasons.

SUE:

Yeah. It went real quick.

JARRAH:

And as it was there was a bit of like, deus ex machina and like "we set up a problem and then we made it terminal for the feelings, and now we have to resolve it. Oh here's a Golem by the way, probably none of you noticed that." So it was a little bit predictable but I mean it was still - there's still a lot of really powerful moments born of those scenes. I really love the scene where Raffi tells Picard she loves him, you know, in what I felt was a very platonic mentoring like love of her and respect for her mentor way that I really valued.

JAMALA:

Yeah me too. Absolutely.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I'm sure that on re-watch I will think of more things to say because it is such a dense show. Just in terms of you know all of the allusions, and easter eggs, like the Kzinti mention, and things like that. There's a lot of things that are referencing like the signs in the ads in Stardust City Rag. You know there's so many references. One thing else, a minor thing that bugged me was when Riker shows up at the end, which I was fine with. Whatever that's fine. but he makes that comment it's like "what was I going to do? Like hang out in the woods and make pizza all day?" And this drove me nuts. It reminded me of when people give dads credit for quote babysitting their own kids, or like you know "Oh well yeah. You can't expect a guy like Riker to just like sit still and clean house." And I know it's supposed to be a joke and he obviously was totally enjoying himself making pizza, but it did just kind of remind- like it kind of felt like or reinforced that. Meanwhile Troi's home, taking care of the kid.

JAMALA:

Yeah. And I I agree with you on that Jarrah. I remember hearing that comment and thinking "Wow you just undermined everything that I saw in that episode that I thought was really cool" about him being the cook and Marinas character going off, and being the person who was able to understand everything that was going on, and helping people and whatnot. But besides that one thing, that whole "Riker arriving to the rescue" at the very end, my 12 year old self *loved* seeing all those ships arrive. \*crew laughs\* It was just like, now I would love to see what they can do with huge armadas of ships that they obviously- and I and in my Trek head I'm thinking "Well that must be because of what happened with the Dominion War and now they had to like-"

SUE:

Rebuild the fleet.

JAMALA:

and what kind of fleet have we, you know, created at this point and these ships. They all seemed really really you know incredibly technologically superior but it also reminded me of the darkness in, at least in the picture where we saw Riker sitting, of that Yesterday's Enterprise like Enterprise bridge versus the regular TNG bridge which was brightly lit and everybody you can see everyone. But it felt a little darker, it felt a little like "Maybe this isn't the Federation that we, you know, this isn't the Federation that we always knew." And there's a difference about it that I would love to explore within the context of Starfleet.

SUE:

Yeah I just want to mention a couple things that I really loved, one of which was Picard's time on the cube with Hugh. I think for so long that character has separated himself from the borg. Like he was a victim, and the Borg are monsters. But like it seems, for the first time, is really realizing that all of the drones are victims of the Borg and that little scene where he was like "Imagine that. Jean-Luc Picard advocating for former Borg" and you just kind of see a change in his face. And it was really great. I love that scene a whole lot. I love Rios, and I love that we are not seeing a homogenized culture for Earth at this point in Star Trek. I have seen some concern

from fans that like they were homogenizing Latin culture. I can't really speak to that, because that is not my culture, but that I think that a character is maintaining a culture that is not just *Earth* culture but is a specific culture from Earth is great to see in Star Trek. I also really love that Elnor, a young male warrior is the one who abides by the way of absolute candour and that we see him openly sobbing at the end of the finale, because I don't think that is something that we see enough from young men on TV.

JAMALA:

Yeah. And I was going to say about that particular scene, it went from Raffi being sort of in the mother position to both of them just openly sobbing and just holding on to each other. So I actually really, and I won't say enjoyed that scene, but it did really hit the feels. Watching a lot of the emotions that were playing out during that scene. Who doesn't love space flowers? Come on! I mean those space flowers were totally awesome.

SUE:

Hopes, dreams, thoughts, things we want to see in season 2? Just to wrap up the discussion?

JARRAH:

More awesome queer Seven and Raffi. Make me believe it. I believe you can.

SUE:

Seconded.

JAMALA:

And thirded.

SUE:

Yeah I'd love to see the rest of our Next Gen cast, just to like even it out for everybody, honestly. And maybe this is like the controversial opinion, but can we get away from the A.I. stories? Can we tell a different story that is not about artificial intelligence, or synthetic life, or positronic networks, and do something new and different?

JARRAH:

We will see.

SUE:

I hope so.

JAMALA:

I'm hoping to be hit with something new and fun and different. But so far I've been really happy with what has been coming out of these, you know, the writers and the show in general. Interestingly enough I loved all the episodes with Romulans way back in the day. I think it was fascinating to see what happened to the Romulans and you know how they've evolved into this

time because hey! Who knew they had a whole sect of warrior Romulan nuns? Can we get more of them? We see more of what they used to do? I would love more of the Qowat Milat. That's definitely one area I'd love to go into a little bit more, but just as a fan of Klingons I just want to know what's what's up with the Klingons. You know this 18 or 20 years later, what's their role in all the things that have been going on? What's the galactic political landscape like? Since we were mostly on the outskirts of what was happening during Picard, I would love to see just where things really stand and how messed up is Starfleet? If it is messed up from the point of view of Picard, you know, so I guess we'll either see or we won't see. But I actually enjoyed sort of the exploration of what's going on. More or less outside of what's happening in the federation. In this particular season.

SUE:

The one thing we know we'll see is Guinan.

JAMALA:

Oh yes. I don't understand why they didn't show her this time, but I need some Guinan so I'm extremely excited to see Whoopi come back as Guinan next season.

SUE:

All right. So I think that wraps it up for us today, we probably didn't touch on everything that there is but we talked about a lot. So Jamala, if people want to find you on the interwebs is there somewhere to follow you on Twitter?

JAMALA:

Yes I have a Twitter handle. It is @ J A M the letter N H E N jammin' hen. Just think of a dancing hen or something.

SUE:

And Jarrah?

JARRAH:

You can find me on Twitter @J A R R A H Penguin.

SUE:

And I'm Sue. You can find me on Twitter @Spaltor. That's S P A L T O R. To learn more about our show or connect with us you can visit [Womenatwarp.com](http://Womenatwarp.com), or find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram @womenatwarp. You can also send us an email at [Crew@womenatwarp.Com](mailto:Crew@womenatwarp.Com). And for more from the Roddenberry podcast network, including the new Roddenberry Podcast Network Master feed, visit [podcasts.Roddenberry.com](http://podcasts.Roddenberry.com). Thanks so much for listening!