

Women at Warp Episode 178: Simply Kira-sistible

[Women at Warp theme]

Jarrah: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp, a Roddenberry *Star Trek* podcast. Join us on our continuing mission to explore intersectional diversity in infinite combinations. My name's Jarrah, and thanks for tuning in. With me today are Grace.

Grace: Hello.

Jarrah: And Sarah.

Sarah: Hi.

Jarrah: Before we get into our main topic, which is Kira, finally.

Sarah: Ooh.

Grace: My girl.

Jarrah: We have a little bit of housekeeping to do first. 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 a dollar per month and get awesome rewards, like thanks on social media, watch-along commentaries, and even customized loot boxes. Visit patreon.com/womenatwarp for more info.

And thanks so much to our patrons for picking all of our episode topics this month. One of the things that we did was, this is the month with three release dates in it, and all of our episodes have been picked by patron polls. So, this is very cool.

Another way you can support our show is you can visit our TeePublic store, with Women at Warp merchandise and other non-podcast-specific, but awesome *Trek* designs. That's at teepublic.com/stores/womenatwarp. Also, this episode is brought to you by TextExpander. And more about them later. Okay, Kira. So, it's Kira time.

Grace: It's Kira time. Those are the words we all wait to hear.

Jarrah: We almost went seven years without devoting a full episode to Kira, for various reasons. But I think none of us were surprised when this won the patron poll.

Grace: I honestly think part of that was us always being like, "No, when we do Kira, we're going to do Kira."

Jarrah: Exactly.

Grace: "We got to do her justice."

Sarah: [chuckles] I'm so glad you guys waited till I was here to do this one.

Grace: Yay.

Jarrah: I remember our very first Women at Warp episode, we talked about our favorite characters. We had a problem, because too many of us wanted to pick Kira.

[laughter]

Jarrah: So, yeah, it's about time. I'm very excited.

Grace: Oh my gosh. Kira. Kira, Kira, Kira.

Jarrah: Oh. So, as usual, when we do these character things, we usually talk a little bit about the background. I think pretty much everyone knows that originally the creators of *Deep Space Nine* were looking at bringing back Ro Laren for this kind of role, but Michelle Forbes wasn't interested in being a series regular, and so we ended up with a somewhat similar, but I would say importantly differentiated, character.

Grace: Similar to, but legally distinct from.

Jarrah: Yeah. Just because she's a Bajoran woman who has lived through some awful oppression and has some justifiable anger issues to work out. She does have some distinct differences. Like, she is very pro her faith.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Would not necessarily wear her earring on the wrong ear-

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: -as an act of rebellion. [Sarah chuckles] Even though she sometimes has challenges making change within the system, she does grapple with those issues, and sometimes breaks out of the system, and sometimes breaks back into the system. She obviously was never in Starfleet.

So, in the *Deep Space Nine* Bible, Kira is described as an outspoken critic of the provisional government. Having fought for freedom all her life, it has angered her to see the older leaders throw it away through their petty dissensions. She's been trying without success to reach the Kai herself to air her grievances, and it's possible that she was sent by the government simply to get her outspoken [chuckles] voice out of earshot, sent to *Deep Space Nine*.

Grace: Don't you love that idea that she ended up on *DS9* specifically, because she wanted to speak to the manager and they were like, "Oops, we misplaced you on a space station"?

Jarrah: Yup. And I guess that backfired rather quickly when the station became surprisingly important.

Sarah: [chuckles]

Grace: And she did get to speak to the manager. She got to speak to the Emissary.

Jarrah: Mm-hmm. And the Prophets.

Grace: And the Prophets. She got a lot of spiritual bang for her buck through [chuckles] the run of the show.

Jarrah: Kai Winn is just huddling over in a closet somewhere, just being like, "Grrrrr,-

[laughter]

Jarrah: -I deserved it more.” But yeah, the Bible says that at first Kira is not a supporter of the Federation. She prefers Bajor to remain independent of outside interests. As the representative of Bajorans on board the space station, she has no confidence in Sisko when he arrives. And that is very clear in the first episode.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: She also loathes the Cardassians. She committed atrocities against them in the name of freedom, some of which bother her. When others in the Bajoran underground begin a new wave of terrorism, she is forced into a moral quandary about tracking them down and bringing them to justice. Former terrorists consider her a turncoat. And the last point it says is she will come to respect and bond with Sisko, although they will continue to have different agendas as new issues arise.

Grace: Yeah. Most of that stayed pretty on-brand throughout the run of the show.

Jarrah: Well, for sure, in the first two seasons.

Grace: Oh yeah, definitely.

Jarrah: They really plumb all of those plot points. Her issues with the Federation, her issues with the provisional government, her issues with the Cardassians.

Grace: They had their Kira checklist right there, and they were just, “Done, done, done, done.”

Jarrah: [chuckles] What were both of yours first impressions of Kira when you first watched *Deep Space Nine*?

Sarah: She's a very different female character than we saw from Troi and Crusher in *TNG*. She's not in this caretaker role. I do feel like there's a pattern between Tasha Yar and her of people who have troubled pasts taking on the non-caretaker roles. You know what I mean?

Jarrah: Troubled past and short hair.

Sarah and Grace: Yeah.

Sarah: [chuckles]

Grace: There's an on/off switch of motherly caretaker and short hair, angry troubled past.

[laughter]

Jarrah: Well, her and Tasha, both come from childhoods of oppression and violence against their family and their people. So, there also is a similar theme there. When I started watching *Deep Space Nine*, I actually started around Season 3 or 4. Actually, I think it was 4. It was post-Worf. So, I missed the really early stuff, but I really liked Kira immediately. And in retrospect, glad I missed the Vedek Bareil stuff. [laughs]

Grace: Vedek toast.

[laughter]

Grace: Another notable thing about Kira that just ends up running is her having really boring love interests. Well, I'd like to give my first impression of Kira, real quick, and that was I liked

her immediately because she was a lady, but she was cranky. You don't usually get to see women being angry treated as being justifiably angry-- [crosstalk]

Jarrah: Yeah.

Grace: I loved that off the bat.

Jarrah: Yeah. In our episode on male allies, we talked about how Sisko works with Kira, and how it's cool to see him recognize her background of oppression, and that her feelings and the way that she conducts herself is justified, when you couldn't necessarily imagine Picard doing the same way. He'd just be like, "You're not a Starfleet officer."

Grace: [imitates Picard]

Jarrah: Yeah. [chuckles]

Grace: Let that go down in the record as my Picard impression right there.

[laughter]

Jarrah: And then, going back watching the premiere, I love her shutting down Bashir's frontier medicine line.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: It's just so great. [chuckles] She's just smashing things, and yelling, and telling Bashir to check his privilege. [chuckles]

Grace: Yeah. I also really appreciated about her that so much in *Star Trek*, because it's cool and because we, the audience, think it's really cool, and a lot of the characters are like, "Wow, what an amazing world we live in." And Kira's just like, "I'm stuck on this freaking spaceship. I don't want to be here. I don't want the Federation to be here." She's just got all the chips on her shoulder, which I think makes for an interesting character contrast to a lot of what we had seen so far.

Jarrah: Yeah. Everyone in Starfleet's just like, "My purpose is to expand my horizons." [chuckles]

Grace: And Kira says, "My purpose is to call out all this bullshit."

Jarrah: Yup. [laughs] Extremely relatable.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: I also like that she's a character who has to-- Right away, we see her connection to her religion and her relationship with Kai Opaka in the first season and her-- Like, everyone else, struggling to believe that Sisko's the Emissary. But I think the episode where Kai Opaka dies is a really powerful episode for Kira and Opaka, obviously.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah. Rest in peace to Camille Saviola, who played Opaka, who died just recently. Strong, first impressions.

Grace: Yeah, definitely.

Jarrah: Okay. I feel like we need to dig into-- Should we start with relationships?

Sarah: Yeah.

Grace: We might as well.

Jarrah: Why not? Chronologically, we start with Bareil, I think. [Sarah laughs]

Grace: Start with Bareil, but who can really tell?

Jarrah: Yeah. There's occasionally other people who hit on her and things like that. But I guess first real relationship. Bareil. Man, oh man, he's really dull. [Grace laughs] As much as I don't believe in celibacy of clergy in the world, I do question the idea of a priest or a spiritual leader sleeping with a parishioner and the power dynamics there.

Grace: Yeah, that's a little messed up.

Jarrah: Yeah. It's like sleeping with your therapist. [Grace gags] Like, he's in this role of a spiritual counselor to her.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: But then, he's just like, "But I'm also having sex dreams about you."

Grace: That's not a thing I would be comfortable to hear at all.

Sarah: Is this just a future thing, where Bashir sleeps with his patients and Bareil sleeps with his parishioners? [chuckles]

Grace: Have they managed a way to eradicate the uncomfortable sexual power dynamics? And if so, how?

Jarrah: Yeah. I do think that politically-- I mean, politically, he almost becomes the Kai, so he also has a lot of political power. She has power in terms of her occupation and--

Grace: And just being a badass.

Jarrah: Yeah. I'm inclined to just see it more as a 1990s writer oversight that people didn't have as well-developed ideas about consent.

Grace: 1990s? You had so much left to learn.

Jarrah: But I don't know, I would have been cool with it if they maybe hadn't had a hot priest, [laughs] or if they had played it like *Fleabag*. [laughs]

Grace: I mean, hot might be a strong word here. I worry that someday we're going to get Bareil's actor is going to hear an episode of the show and just being like, "Why are they so mean?"

Jarrah: [chuckles] I'm sorry, actor.

Grace: And we'll have to come to terms with our judgment of how boring he is. [chuckles]

Sarah: The character, not the actor.

Grace: The character, of course. Yes.

Jarrah: Yeah. It's really hard to make that character exciting, because the writing is all just like, "I'm super placid, but also horny."

[laughter]

Grace: Placid and horny is not a fun combo, you would think it is, writers.

Jarrah: But he doesn't have any interesting flaws.

Grace: Yes. Yes.

Jarrah: I don't know, I mean, they just really set him and Winn up to be like a good/evil dichotomy, and it makes him just seem a bit dull by comparison, I think.

Grace: Yeah. Well, also, when you've got your good/evil dichotomy and the evil is just so much more engaging and interesting than the good, you've kind of shot yourself in the foot there, haven't you?

Jarrah: Maybe he just could have been more of a jerk. Not like conspiring to kill people.

Grace: Everybody loves a jerk priest, right?

Jarrah: [laughs] Maybe he could just be secretly super egotistical or something. I don't know, I'm just trying to think of like, what is a flaw that they could have given him?

Grace: Just any personality would have been nice.

Jarrah: Yeah. And then, Kira could just realize that, like, "Mm. Mm. No."

Grace: Yeah, Kira had to be the load-bearing personality in that relationship.

Jarrah: Or, Kira was going to break up with him, but then he had his brain removed from his body and she's like, "Oh no."

Grace: "I can't break up with him now." [Jarrah laughs] Like, that episode of *Seinfeld*, she went to get some Jujubes on the way to the hospital. [Jarrah laughs] They've got space Jujubes, right?

Jarrah: Yeah. Jumja sticks are just giant Jujubes, right?

Grace: Yeah, sure, let's go with that.

Jarrah: Okay. Well, do we need to say anything more about Bareil or is that just like, "Yup, yup, pretty much"?

Sarah: Pretty much.

Grace: Pretty much. Bareil, we're sorry.

Jarrah: Followed by a much more fascinating character, only because it was a low bar.

Grace: [laughs] Took a running leap at that low bar there.

Jarrah: [laughs]

Grace: But yeah, Shakaar by contrast is a much more interesting character. I think it helps that we get to see them go through more in terms of a relationship, and him being there while more things happen to her and seeing her as a couple more with him, I think. Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah. I'll still say that, because-- So, I do think it's interesting, their resistance background and how they have this shift in roles from him seeing her as a little kid to seeing her as relationship potential. It's also potentially problematic, and they never really get into like, "Yeah, he used to see you as his kid."

Grace: Gross.

Jarrah: "Now, you're a woman now." But I think overall, it is helpful that he has a legend status behind him. We get to see that he is flawed. He's cantankerous. He'll fight for a cause just like she will, so they have things in common. But he is definitely a little bit more egotistical and selfless than Bareil was.

Grace: Yeah. He's more flawed and therefore more interesting.

Jarrah: Yup. Whatever ends up happening with him.

Grace: I know we're saying he's better than Bareil, but gun to my head, I couldn't tell ya right now. [chuckles] I'm completely spacing.

Jarrah: Well, yeah, because I was like-- I know that they broke up. I know that when she tells Odo that they're not really going to see each other anymore and Odo is like, "[gasps] Yes."

Garce: "I've got a chance."

Jarrah: But then, there's the whole end of the series, and I don't recall anyone being like, "Well, I called Shakaar up about what the heck's going on with Kai Winn," or whatever.

Grace: It feels really like they ran out of ideas for what to do with Shakaar and were just like, "Well, let's see if we can make this Kira-Odo thing happen," and he just got the brush-off in terms of storyline.

Jarrah: Yeah, he's just the head of the government, but it's something that he just-- He's so devoted to it.

Grace: But it's not worth bringing him back again, apparently. It's very important, but not [chuckles] interesting enough to bring in.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Sarah: I can remember his name, and I remember his face, and I remember nothing else about him.

Jarrah: Well, I remember him fighting with O'Brien in the episode, where she's in labor. [laughs]

Grace: That was pretty cool, him being a supportive partner and coming by while she's giving birth as a surrogate, that I thought was a pretty cool partner moment.

Jarrah: I like when him and O'Brien get yelled at for having this weird territorial fight over the body of the woman who's giving birth.

Grace: Yes.

Jarrah: Like, it's so gross when him and O'Brien are fighting about who's going to be the one looking at the baby coming out and--

[laughter]

Jarrah: But, yes, it is cool that he didn't blink an eye when she became a surrogate and was having [chuckles] a bit of an innuendo-laden relationship with Miles.

Grace: Oh, that was just a wacky plot line on many levels. And yes, that's my technical terminology for when you have a baby be transplanted into someone else's uterus. Wacky. [Jarrah chuckles] They were on a collision course with wackiness.

Jarrah: Yeah. I think that I would be interested-- We talked about it, I think, in our pregnancy and motherhood episode, and I know that there are different opinions on how Bajoran birthing is presented as this process where you just really have to relax, and it's like super peaceful.

Grace: It makes a lot more sense than the Scientology birth, where it's just as painful and intense, but you're just not allowed to outwardly express anything about it.

Jarrah: Mm-hmm. Well, and I do like that it shows-- I know that we had a debate about that part of it in our episode and not everyone agreed on it, but I do like that it shows an example of surrogacy, like, it's no big deal. Because it can be a big deal and I think that there's a very valid debates to have around commercial surrogacy, but I also know people that have chosen to be surrogates for parents who were, for example, denied adoption because of being same-sex couples, or who were biologically unable to give birth and have found it a complex but rewarding experience. And so, it is cool to show that as a valid form of parenting.

Grace: Yeah. It's always good to see more of that represented, and also, just to see pregnancy normalized in pop culture more is nice.

Jarrah: They didn't just make her wear a big coat for a whole season.

Grace: Yeah. Because surprise, some people get pregnant.

Sarah: Yeah. And she had the cutest maternity uniform.

Grace: Oh, it was so cute. It was adorable. [Sarah laughs] It was like she was wearing a little jumper smock.

Jarrah: Well, that really just leaves one more, which is Jake Sisko in that episode where they all get Bajoran drunk.

Grace: That was creepy. But also, [Jarrah laughs] what teenage boy would not crush on Major Kira at least once, I ask you.

Jarrah: But seriously, we've got Odo.

Grace: Odo's could. I feel like they had such an interesting platonic relationship that they didn't really need to go the romantic route. But at the same time, they did very deeply care for each other. So, there's that.

Jarrah: Yeah. We know that Nana Visitor certainly felt that she didn't want Kira and Odo to be a couple and would have preferred that to remain platonic. I think that is a very valid and important take. There is certainly an inclination in *Star Trek*, and at least was in other media that like, "Everyone has to be paired up in heterosexual couples at the end."

Grace: Yeah. You don't have to do that, guys. It's not a must, just saying on multiple levels.

Jarrah: That said, I'm definitely an Odo-Kira shipper.

Grace: Oh. [chuckles]

Sarah: [chuckles]

Jarrah: I think for me, it was that Odo is-- She changes herself. Odo supports her in that journey, but he loves her for who she is from the very beginning.

Grace: Yeah, and that's pretty sweet.

Jarrah: Yeah. So, he's not like Bareil, who's like, "You need to make peace with yourself,"] or whatever, and he will literally cover up her crimes.

[laughter]

Jarrah: But he also counsels her really well. I think she counsels him really well on many occasions about their jobs and their relationships. I am always drawn to ships where you have a woman character who is super powerful, and even to the point of being like, [Grace [laughs] "Maybe a bit aggressive." The male character is not threatened by that and just supports her for who she is.

Grace: That's always cool to see.

Jarrah: Yeah. Which is also why I used to-- my very first ship was Janeway-Chakotay. [chuckles]

Grace: No memories.

Jarrah: I just want to be a lady with a cause, and a little bit of a temper, and have someone make me a bathtub.

[laughter]

Grace: Do we think that Odo, given the chance, would make Kira a bathtub?

Sarah: Oh, absolutely.

Jarrah: I mean, he would be the bathtub.

Grace: Yeah. That's a little creepy, though. [Jarrah laughs] Not sure how I feel about that statement. [chuckles]

Jarrah: I think they missed that in a discussion in the kink episode.

Grace: Yeah, I don't think we touched on that one.

Jarrah: [chuckles] I know that the *His Way* episode, though, is a pretty controversial one among fans.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: It's the one where Odo is in Vic Fontaine's bar trying to train with hologram Kira.

Grace: Oh my gosh, seriously? The sad thing is, we don't get a lot of Vic. But when we do get him, we get a few really good Vic episodes. And this one, as a start, is just not a great one. And also, just as a concept, it's eye-rolling in the "Oh, character needs to get lessons in the ways of regular romance" for Odo. And it's like, "No, there's no right and wrong way to really do it if it works for you both." It just struck me as being very silly and not in the fun way, although I do love a good nightclub set.

Sarah: So, that's the one where they go on a date and he thinks she's a hologram?

Jarrah and Grace: Yeah.

Sarah: Okay. Yeah, that's weird.

Jarrah: I think that it says a bit more about Odo as a character, because ultimately, she doesn't care for the nightclub fantasy thing, like, when she comes as herself. Because he's like, "This is weird. This isn't Kira, basically." And then, he's like, "Okay, I'll make you a new hologram," which-- Our next episode is going to be on holograms and consent and holodecks and consent, so we can talk more about this.

Grace: Oh, we got a lot to say there.

Jarrah: But then, when she shows up, she's also like, "This is weird, I want to leave and just talk with you."

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: So, I like that ultimately Vic's plan doesn't even work. What Odo thinks he needs to know about romance isn't what he needs to know, he just needs to know how to have an open conversation.

Grace: Yeah. [Sarah chuckles] That's much more fair. But at the same time, you feel like he'd be aware of the fact that she had a weird incident, like, a while back of a guy trying to download her physical form into the holodeck without her permission. So, you'd hope he'd be a little more cool about that.

Jarrah: Yup.

Grace: I say again, you'd hope.

Jarrah: It's questionable.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Also, over this whole arc, Kira got an asymmetrical haircut and a catsuit.

Grace: Which both look great, but both definitely veer away from the original vision of her of being the angry "I don't have time for this, lady."

Jarrah: Yeah. She started with these big square shoulder pads and platform boots or low-heel boots, and her shoes just get higher and higher.

Grace: It's definitely debutch her somewhat.

Jarrah: Yup. Asymmetrical haircut's still a good start, but definitely trying to play up more femininity.

Grace: Yeah. And it feels like having her be in a very loving relationship might have been part of that. I couldn't help, but associate the two I think a little bit.

Jarrah: Yeah, for sure. She's also just more comfortable with herself, and her spirituality, and all of this stuff by that point. She's meditating more.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: It's like, "I'm okay to be a woman now. I can let down all those defenses." I don't know, I don't think that that anyone was thinking that necessarily, but that is the way that that mirrors her.

Grace: It's definitely an angle you can look at it from. Yeah.

Jarrah: Mm-hmm. Still, I loved the first time through watching *Deep Space Nine* when she is briefly made a commander in Starfleet for the purposes of the war, and goes and works with Damar, that's one of my favorite parts of her story in the war at the end, where she's just like, "I'm training you all to be in the Resistance, Cardassians." Super badass. [laughs]

Grace: Oh, the irony.

Jarrah: Yup.

Grace: She just gets to have such an interesting arc in so many ways, especially when it comes to how she relates to Cardassians and Cardassian characters, from them being the enemy to them being just the people she works with. Oh man, there's just so much to delve into on that, and I don't know where to begin. [chuckles]

Sarah: She has a healthy perspective. She's not like Miles, who's just straight-up racist.

Grace: That's true. Yeah.

Sarah: Through the show, you see her work through that and come full circle to where she's working with them at the end.

Grace: Yeah, it's true. She has rightfully so much to be angry about. I'm thinking about *Duet*, specifically, where we get that first-season episode about her finding a Cardassian who may or may not have been in charge of a Bajoran death camp, basically. That's one of the ones where you can draw the most clear parallel between Bajor and the Bajorans as an analogy for the Jews of World War II.

It's not a secret parallel, definitely. This one is very specifically a reference to a play about the Eichmann trials. But this one is just fascinating in that she gets to, as the victim, have

this ending that it doesn't wrap things up neatly, it isn't satisfying, but it is honest in sometimes how you have to walk away from what happened.

It was just such an interesting concept to see put into the context of an alien world. Especially when you're considering the fact that there's still very much this idea when you're talking about World War II and the media of World War II. For a long time, there was just completely no idea of Jews doing anything counteractive to being rounded up and put into camps.

That's part of why all us Jews lost our minds over *Inglourious Basterds*, because we were just played as the passive victims for so long. There's this just awful quote by author Roald Dahl that makes the rounds every now and then about him being like, "Well, it's not like they fought back or anything." It's like, "Yeah, we did. We had an underground. We were working our asses off to try to survive." And that gets played down so much, I think, because I think it makes a group so much more pitiable when you just cast them as people who had a bad thing happen to them, and not people who were actively trying to fight back and defend themselves, which is part of what makes the character of Kira so--

I know at least to me, interesting as analogy for that experience, the fact that she's a fighter. She is someone who has been fighting her entire life, and that is such a core part of her personality and of her growth as a person, and the parts of herself that she needs to come to terms with in terms of, "That fight is over. How do I marry these two aspects of myself, the part that I have learned to be fighting non-stop and the part of me that needs to make peace with what has happened." And that was a long rant there. [laughs]

Jarrah: No, super valid. I think that it's neat to see her be able to develop individual judgments about individual Cardassians over time and--

Grace: And *Duet* is such an important part of that.

Jarrah: Yeah, exactly. I feel like it's a turning point for her character, at first, because at first, she's just like, "They're all bad." And not giving the system a pass, recognizing that there were people who were not complicit in the system or who were opposing the system on Cardassia. She forms relationships with people like Tekeny Ghemor and-- With Ziyal, so she forms a weird relationship with Dukat, because they both care about Ziyal, with Damar even after he killed Ziyal.

Grace: Which is weird. They all just forget that he killed Ziyal, or they don't find out and the audience is just left going, "Hang on, hang on a minute."

Jarrah: I can't remember if they never address it again or if they just are really like-- It's simmering tension, because Garak is also part of that operation on Cardassia. But it certainly feels like Damar has to undergo a radical shift as well as a character to get to that point. So, it's neat that there are so many of these characters that have such big changes. Kira, I think, has one of the best character arcs over the seven seasons.

Grace: Yeah. And hers is definitely one of those character arcs that-- We love the characters. We're invested in all of them. But I think hers especially is one that you want to believe in in terms of not coming out the other side of a bad thing that has happened to you, but learning to take that and go forward, if that makes any sense. [chuckles]

Jarrah: Yeah. Well, we have a few more aspects of Kira to talk about, including her friendships on the station, as well as a couple of other key episodes. But before we get to that, wanted to tell you a little bit more about TextExpander.

It's exciting, because TextExpander just came out with version 7.0, which is now available for download. The latest update brings a fresh new experience that makes TextExpander easier to navigate, and it's something anyone and everyone can use, all wrapped up in a whole new streamlined look and feel, like the Defiant after it gets refit.

Grace: Ooh. Ooh, made it topical.

Jarrah: [chuckles] In this version, you'll discover a new interface like those glasses that they wear on the Defiant [Grace laughs] that let them target things. Just like that, TextExpander has a new interface that's easier to use, more responsive, and offers functional improvements to make TextExpander more interactive and engaging.

Grace: They haven't figured out the 3D hologram thing, so you can talk to an opposing character on the bridge of your ship yet, but we're assuming that's in version 8.0.

Jarrah: Yes. TextExpander 7.0 does include enhanced snippet suggestions, improved conflict management, better accessibility, and the edge you need to win the war against the Dominion. Check out what's new in TextExpander 7.0 by getting TextExpander today. Show listeners get 20% off their first year. Visit textexpander.com/podcast to learn more about TextExpander, and don't forget to let them know that Women at Warp sent you. That's textexpander.com/podcast.

So, back to our discussion. [Grace laughs] One thing I definitely don't want us to miss is talking a little bit about Kira's friendships, I guess, particularly her friendship with Dax, but open to other friendships you want to throw out here.

Grace: It feels like her ability to make the friendships that she does is such a signal of her growth as a character and sort of-- I don't want to say growing beyond being angry, but learning to make peace with the situation she is in, and even coming to care and love these people who she initially didn't even want to be around. And that's beautiful.

Jarrah: I very identify with the part of Kira that's like, "Oh, Jadzia, I don't want to go to a party."

[laughter]

Sarah: I did talk to Nana about their friendship once, and the thing she said was that she wishes that their friendship had gotten as much time as Miles and Julian's.

Jarrah: Yes.

Grace: We definitely touched on this on our friendships in *Trek* episode, that for some reason, guy friendships are just treated as being a lot more interesting than women friendships. I wonder why.

Jarrah: It's like, guy friendships, they get to do things that don't involve just talking about women in their lives.

Grace: Or, playing dress-up. Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Grace: Although, let's be real, Bashir and O'Brien play a lot of dress-up.

Jarrah: Yeah. But we only got to see Dax and Kira really like-- I think the Camelot thing was the only time we saw them.

Grace: I know, but it stands out so much to me.

[laughter]

Jarrah: I know.

Grace: "I don't normally dress like this."

Jarrah: I'm just saying I'm not opposed to dress-up, but even then, it was like Jadzia was into this being a romantic adventure-

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: -and a lot of the other friendship moments they have are about talking about men that they're interested in. But I will say that there are a couple of really great moments. There's one moment I know where-- I think it's in *Blood Oath*, where Dax asks Kira about killing someone, because she's thinking about killing the Albino. Kira talks to her about how, I guess, traumatic it was to have to kill people. And I think that's a really powerful moment in their friendship.

Sarah: Wait, so, they pass the Bechdel test by talking about murder?

Jarrah: Yup.

Sarah: Okay.

Grace: [laughs] That's on brand. That's really on brand for Kira. [Sarah laughs] Yeah, that sounds right.

Jarrah: Yeah. I think that one of the other-- This is back to a relationship moment, but I think that one of my biggest *Deep Space Nine* regrets, is that we never got to see any of the conversation that Odo and Kira have in the closet at Jadzia's bachelorette--

Sarah: Party.

Grace: That must have been amazing. Yeah.

Jarrah: Because it's after the whole thing where he almost gets Rom killed during the occupation, because he's sleeping with the female Changeling and forgets to execute this plan to take back the station.

Grace: Weird.

Jarrah: And they just hash it out in a closet at the bachelorette party, and then they come out, and they're like, "Wow, we talked all night, and it's all fine now." [chuckles] I know they didn't have time, but I'm just sad about it.

Grace: Yeah. I just hate how much the women's friendships are trivialized and just their interpersonal relationships are put on the back burner.

Jarrah: Yeah. I think we have got a lot more of that in at least *Discovery*.

Grace: Oh totally. Yeah.

Jarrah: So, it's changing, but for sure.

Grace: It had a long way to go.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: With Troi and Crusher and Kira and Dax, I think, we definitely had that problem.

Grace: Troi and Crusher and Kira and Dax, both get just random hanging-out times when they're dressed in funny outfits and talking about men.

Jarrah: Mm-hmm. [chuckles] Less calisthenics with Kira and Dax, though.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: So, I don't think we need to talk too much about Intendant Kira, but I would recommend that listeners go listen to our episode Ripped and Machiavellian on the Mirror Universe. We also talked about Intendant Kira in one of our episodes on women villains, that's a multiple-part series called the Baddest Women in the Universe. And we also talked about Intendant Kira recently in our kink episode.

Grace: So, we've talked about her a lot. Yeah.

Jarrah: A lot of Intendant Kira discussion. Although if there's any thoughts on how that affects Prime Kira.

Grace: Yeah. What does what we see Intendant Kira say about what the writers think about Prime Kira?

Jarrah: I don't know, I don't think that the writers think that Prime Kira is necessarily repressed.

Grace: I don't think she's as sexualized as some of the other female characters. So, the fact that we have hypersexual mirror version of her, I feel like says something.

Jarrah: I also don't get a strong impression that Prime Kira cares particularly about the existence of Intendant Kira. It's not like, "If I met my evil mirror twin, that would probably mess me up and I would be overthinking what that actually meant about me for a really long time." But Prime Kira just is like, "Ugh, who's this amoral [Sarah laughs] sex fiend?"

Grace: Kira's seen too much to be bothered by this, really, I think.

Jarrah: She's just over it already.

Grace: She's like, "Oh, great. This is happening now."

Jarrah: If I was Prime Kira, I might be like Sisko and be curious about what happened to the family members that I lost in the Prime Universe.

Sarah: I would be very curious, too. It's surprising that we-- considering how much the things that happened to Kira and her family are part of her backstory, that we don't see much more of that from Intendant Kira other than hyper-sexy lady.

Jarrah: Yeah. Well, even in the Prime Universe, it's really only *Wrongs Darker Than Death or Night*," where we actually meet and get them named and talked about a lot.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: But yeah, that's a powerful episode that I think deserves an entire episode analysis on it.

Grace: Oh, definitely. We'll add it to the list.

Jarrah: Yeah. But it is an interesting one to look at Kira's complicated relationship with her mother, who was absent for most of her childhood, and the feelings that she has about her, and abandonment, and collaboration, and all of this, even while knowing intellectually that there wasn't really a good choice.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: So, what did you all think about-- In the *Deep Space Nine* documentary as well as in the post-*Deep Space Nine* novels, they posit that Kira becomes Kai at some point. Thoughts?

Grace: I wasn't in for that. I liked Kira just being as being a religious person, but not having that be her defining trait, which is-- I think it's too easily done to have someone having a religion be made too big of a defining trait for them, when it can actively just be part of someone's life. It doesn't have to be their entire personality. But it also feels like it's possible there could be growth in that direction, but it feels like way more growth than we've seen Kira previously make. It feels like her putting aside a lot of things that the Kira we know and see prioritizes.

Jarrah: Yes.

Sarah: She is someone, though, who's always up to do the work that needs to be done.

Grace: That is true.

Sarah: I feel like a lot of the Starfleet people are there, because they have this abstract idea of doing good or using their gifts to do good, whereas Kira's like, "My planet needs me, I'm going to do the work."

Jarrah: Yeah, that's really true. But I feel like it is being a Kai really restricts your ability to have relationships with people and to like-- There's a certain type of appropriate relationship that you have as a Kai, I guess, unless you sleep with a Pah-wraith.

[laughter].

Grace: Also, she just strikes me as being too much of a wild card to be a religious leader.

Jarrah: Yeah. I just don't like the idea of her being more tied down. She's been serving her people since she was a child out of necessity. She's still serving her people, but she's also learning to have balance in her life, which is something I think a lot of people actually do struggle with this idea of taking care of yourself in order to take care of others. And to me,

taking on the role of Kai, it just feels really hard to reconcile that with the growth that she's been through in terms of learning to also just enjoy her own life more.

Sarah: But that could make such a good spinoff. It's like, *The Queen*, but the Kai.

[laughter]

Grace: Oh my gosh. They'd have to have a new cast every few seasons or so. [Sarah laughs] It could be a whole thing.

Jarra: Yeah, exactly. [laughs]

Sarah: I think it really says something that the whole series ends with her and Jake-

Jarra: Yes.

Sarah: -and that she's the one who's going to carry everything on. I think that's what that was saying.

Jarra: Well, and before she becomes the Kai in the novels, she just becomes the commander of the station, and then Ro is the security chief, and it's dope, and I'm super into it. I'm just like, "Please give me twice as many angry Bajoran ladies."

Grace: Yes.

Sarah: [laughs]

Grace: Just have Ro and Kira hang out and go on adventures or something. They could have a *Thelma & Louise* space road trip.

Jarra: Yeah. This is one of those things we always say, like, there's never any idea that like, "Oh, we have too many straight white guys on this show. So, why can't there be a thing where you could have two fighter Bajoran women?" No reason, you can't. Also, it's cool to put Kira in the other position of having someone who's anti-her authority.

Grace: Yeah. [laughs] She's like, "Yeah, I'm against authority, unless I'm the one in charge."

[laughter]

Jarra: Does anyone have any highlights from Kira's journey, moments that you found most powerful that we haven't talked about already?

Grace: Just the indignance in her voice when she has to do Allamaraine.

[laughter]

Grace: Just the incredible "I hate this" in her voice.

Jarra: Another one of my slight nitpicks is in *Badda-Bing, Badda-Bang*, that the only thing she gets to do is seduce Frankie Eyes. But her dresses look amazing.

Grace: She was a member of an underground resistance. She's got so much spy shit under her belt that she could have done. It's ridiculous.

Jarra: Yup. I mean, she sells it.

Grace: Yes.

Jarrah: The wardrobe sells it, and I love it. But I feel like she could have done more.

Grace: Definitely.

Jarrah: All the women in that show, actually.

Grace: [laughs] They all look amazing, but could have gotten to do a lot more.

Jarrah: Like, Kasidy's job is to cry and distract the guard, and Ezri's job is to be cute.

Grace: Yes.

Jarrah: Anywho.

Grace: We have opinions.

Jarrah: Digression.

Grace: Yeah. *Wrongs Darker Than Death or Night* just always comes back to me about how you can have complicated relationships as a character and not have those be the defining thing about you, but also just that sometimes you have a complicated relationship with someone who means a lot to you, who may or may not still be in your life, and sometimes you just have to sit with it and that there's not always going to be closure for that. That's not okay. But that's how it goes sometimes. And just seeing Kira deal with that is, it was important to me. Yeah.

Jarrah: What about you, Sarah? Do you have any Kira moments we haven't talked about?

Sarah: Well, speaking of complicated relationships, I do like her complicated relationship with Quark,-

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Oh yeah.

Sarah: -where he is a scoundrel and he also helps the Resistance. So, in her book, he's a good guy.

Jarrah: [chuckles] Yeah. I like how much grief she gives him, but ultimately, yeah, she understands that he can be useful, too.

Grace: Yeah.

Sarah: Or, what's the episode where, like, he's in serious trouble and she steps in and says, "No, the Bajoran government is protecting him for what he did for us"?

Grace: Ooh.

Sarah: Wasn't that the one where he sells arms or something?

Jarrah: Oh possibly. It's been a while since I saw that one. I also like that she has a bit of moments of maybe mentorship with Leeta.

Grace: Yeah, a little bit.

Jarrah: But the other episode I wanted to mention was *The Darkness and the Light*, which I think is like an interesting example of maybe a 1990s attempt to-- I don't know, she's basically kind of-- It's a bit of like an almost feminist horror retelling, kind of.

Grace: Yeah, a little bit. Yeah.

Jarrah: She's pregnant, and this killer is trying to kill her and all her Resistance friends, and she's pregnant and tied to a table in his house.

Grace: But not the baby. The baby takes precedence.

Jarrah: Yeah. It's because she's pregnant that she escapes, I think there's a lot you can dissect there, but it definitely feels like some of the cool things that were going on in the 1990s to try to rethink the way that we do horror in the female body.

Grace: Yeah. Yeah. There's a little bit of a *Rosemary's Baby* bent to it, don't you think?

Jarrah: Mm-hmm. Yeah, she manages to get out of it, not in spite of her pregnancy--
[crosstalk]

Grace: But because of it. Yeah.

Jarrah: Because of it, but also because of who she is and the fact that she's strong and smart. But also, that episode is hard to watch and a bit traumatic.

Grace: Yeah, it's an experience. [chuckles]

Jarrah: But there's so many good Kira moments, it's hard to pick. It's good that there's also many moments of her getting to have fun and go on cool missions and stuff. It wasn't all super dark.

Sarah: I'm glad I was watching someone like her in my formative years.

Grace: I'm glad I was watching someone like her during my college years when I really needed someone like that, I think. Someone who was representing that, "Yeah, you're going to get mad about stuff, and that's okay. It's how you live with that anger that's the really defining part."

Jarrah: Yeah. We definitely hear from a lot of people, and I think it's pretty common in the fandom to hear from particularly women who are like, "Kira showed me it was okay for a woman to be angry."

Grace: Yeah. Because women being angry is seen as just such a no-no in media, it feels like.

Jarrah: I feel like we would also be remiss if we didn't point out the point that Nana has made on a number of occasions, too, about the fact that Kira essentially was a terrorist in that--

Grace: Yeah. That would not have flown in modern television, especially not post-2001.

Jarrah: Yeah. I feel like maybe you could do it now that things are gritty and complex, but it wasn't something that was being done all the time. And being able to have what she went through, and what she did in order to survive and for the cause of her people recognized, but not being-- It wasn't glamorized how many people she killed. She did have regrets about it, I think, was important.

Sarah: I think it was really important to see her in action, because women being assertive in the workplace is still a very, very tricky thing today.

Grace: Oh absolutely.

Sarah: And she's just a wonderful role model, I think, in that aspect.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah, for sure.

Grace: Absolutely. We just love Kira. I don't know if you've picked that up.

Jarrah: Yeah. Yeah. Kira's so great.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Well, I'm glad we finally got to devote a whole hour to just saying nice things about Kira, [Grace laughs] and maybe throwing some shade at her ex-boyfriends. [Sarah chuckles]

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: yeah. I think it's hard to overstate how important she is to a lot of fans and in the fandom, and as a groundbreaking role for women in *Star Trek*.

Sarah: Yeah.

Jarrah: Well, if there's nothing further for today--

Grace: Bareil, if he was a flavor, he'd be mayonnaise.

[laughter]

Jarrah: [sighs] Yeah. [laughs] Well, so, that is about all the time that we have for today. Grace, where can people find you elsewhere on the internet?

Grace: You can mostly find me on Twitter, [@bonecrusherjank](#), and pondering the mysteries of whether I could rock either shoulder pads or an asymmetrical hairdo or both.

Jarrah: And Sarah?

Sarah: You can find me on Twitter, [@sarahmiyoko](#), S-A-R-A-H M as in Mary I-Y-O-K-O. And you can find my fanzine, *Star Trek Quarterly*, on Facebook.

Jarrah: And I'm Jarrah, and you can find me on Twitter at J-A-R-R-A-H Penguin, that's [@jarrahpenguin](#). And you can also find me in the Resistance.

To learn more about our show or to contact us, visit [womenatwarp.com](#). Or, find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, [@womenatwarp](#). You can also email us at

crew@womenatwarp.com. And for more Roddenberry podcasts, visit *podcast.rodtenberry.com*. Thanks so much for listening.

Grace: Jarrah, what are you resisting?

Jarrah: The Man?

Grace: Yeah.

[laughter]

[Women at Warp theme]

Announcer: This is a Roddenberry podcast. For more great podcasts, visit *podcast.rodtenberry.com*.

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