

Women at Warp Episode 236: Native Perspectives on the Maquis

[Women at Warp theme]

Grace: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp: A Star Trek Podcast. Join us on our continuing mission to explore intersectional diversity in infinite combinations. My name is Grace, and thanks for tuning in. With me we have two special guests. We have Alina.

Alina: Hey, everybody.

Grace: And we have Etawi.

Etawi: Hi.

Grace: Now, before we get started on our main topic, we've got a little bit of housekeeping. As usual, our show is made possible by our wonderful patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron, you can do so for as little as \$1 a month and get amazing rewards, from thanks on social media to our quality watchalong commentaries. Visit www.patreon.com/womenatwarp. This episode is actually brought to you by way of patron suggestion, so we'll get into that a little more later. If you're looking for some podcast merch, we got it. If you are sad that you do not have decoration for the [unintelligible [00:01:05] that is your torso, we got you. We got TeePublic Store. We've got so many designs new ones being added all the time. And so much more than shirts. We've got mugs, we've got wall hangings. We've got, I don't know, maybe a decal to wrap around your car. Get into it. Find out what they got to offer. You can check it out at teepublic.com/store/womenatwarp.

And that's all we've got for our housekeeping for now. So, now's the fun part where we get to get in and talk a little bit to our guests and you get to find out their whole deal. Alina, we had you on fairly recently, but for anyone who didn't hear, would you like to give us a little rundown about yourself?

Alina: Yeah. Tânsi, everybody, I'm Alina Pete. And I am Nehiyaw or Cree from Little Pine First Nations in Saskatchewan. I am a cartoonist writer. I write primarily *Cyberpunk* and sci-fi and have many, many opinions about both, especially their depiction of native people. You might know me from my long running webcomic *Weregeek*, which you can find online at weregreek.com.

Grace: I am sorry, where can we find *Weregeek*? [crosstalk]

Alina: At weregreek.com, like werewolf. [laughs]

Grace: I had to make the terrible joke. I am so sorry.

Alina: Extremely radio voice.

Grace: Very much so. That's part of the fun of being a guest on a podcast. You get to flex that voice as much or as little as you want.

Alina: Awesome. Yeah. What am I up to lately? A bunch of writing, doing some comics.

Grace: Good stuff. And Etawi, you are a very special guest, because as a patron, this episode was suggested by you, but please tell us a little more about you.

Etawi: Kk^wey, everyone, my name is Etawi. I'm Panawáhpskewi, which our homelands are the Dawnland, which is Maine and Southeastern Canada area. It's very exciting to talk about

the Maquis because anytime I talk about the Maquis with anyone who's not native, they're like, "Wow, I never thought about it that way." [Grace laughs] So, I'm excited to be here.

Grace: Always fun to get to usher in an eye-opening experience for someone, right?

Etawi: Hmm. Yes. Except sometimes I don't want to but-- [crosstalk]

Grace: Yeah, sometimes you don't have that energy. Yeah.

Etawi: Right.

Grace: All right. Anything more you'd like to tell us about yourself before we start?

Etawi: I have a really cool "why I'm into *Star Trek*" story.

Grace: Oh, please yeah.

Etawi: If that's appropriate--[crosstalk]

Grace: Absolutely.

Etawi: I feel very fortunate because I was born into a *Star Trek* family. Both of my parents were *TOS* fans when they were young. And then when *Encounter at Farpoint* aired in 1987, I was a year old and my parents started date night because they didn't have a lot of money and they were young parents. And every week they would make pizza and watch the *Next Generation*. And when I got a little older, I would sneak and watch because I wasn't supposed to. It was like I was supposed to be in bed or whatever, but I would sneak and watch *TNG*. And after a while, they caught on that I was like, doing that. [Grace laughs] And when *Voyager* aired, when I was eight years old and my dad was like, invited me to sit on his lap and watch *Voyager* together.

Grace: Aww.

Etawi: It became the daddy-daughter bonding.

Grace: Oh, that's amazing.

Etawi: And then it was the same with *DS9* and growing up with that. And then *Star Trek*, unfortunately, being mixed race and a nerd and smart and liking *Star Trek*, that's a recipe to be bullied. So, it became a quieter part of myself. But in 2020, I posted an Instagram post that acquaintance of mine saw and he went, and he made an obscure Vic Fontaine joke.

Grace: Oh, my gosh.

Etawi: I was like, "Oh, hold up." And he's kind of cute, my friend who made that post.

Grace: Oh, my gosh.

Etawi: Before we got vaccinated, he invited me over and was like, "Why don't we sit 6ft apart in the yard and watch *Deep Space Nine* together?" And we did, and we did every Wednesday.

Grace: Quel romantique.

Etawi: [laughs] And we've done it every Wednesday. And I'm happy to report to everyone on New Years, just a few months ago, we got married.

Grace: Oh, my God. Congrats.

Etawi: And we had a *Star Trek* wedding.

Grace: That's so cool.

Etawi: He came up the aisle to me, to the *Deep Space Nine* theme song. And our wedding song was Vic Fontaine.

Grace: Oh, my God. I love that so much.

Etawi: We dressed all in red and I wore traditional regalia, but the red part had nothing to do with traditionist. [Grace laughs] Everything we want it to look like Worf and Jadzia.

Alina: Oh, my God. That's amazing.

Grace: Oh, my Gosh.

Etawi: That's my *Star Trek* story. And he's very excited that I'm here doing this.

Grace: Okay. So, no one listening can question your Trek credibility here.

Etawi: No one.

Grace: Like, not even a little.

Etawi: We got those photos from that wedding.

Grace: Yeah. [Etawi laughs] Photographic evidence. Trek cred is in full force here.

Etawi: We're a *Deep Space Nine* love story.

Grace: Aww. I Deep Space love it.

Etawi: Yay.

Grace: This original patron suggestion that we got from you, we had a couple ideas, but you also had a comment in your message. If I can read that out here, because this was definitely a, "Oh, we got to do that" moment reading your email. You said, "One area where I feel no shortage of talking on is the Maquis through a native American perspective. Because as much as I love *Star Trek*, if I was in the *Star Trek* universe, I'd be out there stealing replicators from *DS9* and burning my Starfleet uniform too after that DMZ BS."

Etawi: Yes. Absolutely.

Grace: Yeah. And there was a second quote here. "The Federation is so guilty of erasing culture and taking resources and homogenizing the universe much like what native people have and continue to face today." And we really wanted to hear you get a chance touch on that some more.

Etawi: Yeah. I think my first sentence I got to say here is, I don't think the Maquis did anything wrong.

Alina: [laughs] Nope.

Etawi: There's that.

Grace: Good we established that right out the gate because now we can go full force on being like, okay, which characters deserve better? And how come they are all Maquis characters?

Etawi: Yeah, they are. [Grace laughs] I think if we can just jump right into it. I think one of the main problems with the Maquis is that they're written poorly.

Grace: Oh, God, yes. [laughs] A big minor problem there.

Etawi: Yeah. I don't think anybody, especially in the 90s was writing from a place with intimate experience of being a displaced person, no matter what their background is, which also makes me sad because Europeans living in America, you're displaced too. A lot of you all don't realize.

Alina: It's especially sad too, because they had originally earmarked wanting to have a native character because they'd seen what [unintelligible [00:07:50] did for African Americans. And they're like, "Natives are oppressed people. We should have some of them in *Star Trek*," and be like, they're still there. They still exist in the future and they're powerful. They're in command of things. And that's where we got Chakotay, very well intentioned, but, oof.

Grace: Ooh. Intend in one hand, follow through with the other.

Alina: Yes.

Etawi: Yeah. I'm sorry. And the whole all the millions of thoughts of Chakotay just went right and smashed together in my head about the problematic. But all the problems with that and him in general.

Grace: And I'm sure we've got at least one listener who has lived in a cave all their life, but is going, "Well, what's wrong with Chakotay?" [Alina laughs] So, why don't we start there?

Etawi: First problem being the actor who plays Chakotay is not native.

Alina: Uh-huh.

Etawi: So that's a problem.

Alina: And that's a big problem. The cultural consultant, they got in to say, "Hey, we're not native writers, so maybe we should have a consultant on this. We don't get it wrong," was not native either. He was selling himself as a native guy, Jamake Highwater. [laughs]

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: And if I'm remembering correctly, apparently multiple native activists tried, when this was in the Hollywood press of what was going on tried to be like, "Hey, don't talk to that guy." And they were like, "No, no. He's like a guy, we can consult. It's good. It's fine. Don't worry about it."

Alina: Absolutely.

Grace: Yeah.

Alina: He's like-

Grace: Yeah. So, they had warnings.

Alina: -the earliest of the pretendians.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Pretendians were a problem in *Star Trek* itself, where the traveller pretends to be native at the end of TNG.

Alina: Oh, absolutely.

Grace: Oh, yes. Let's talk about that if we can.

Alina: Literally a white alien.

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: [laughs] Just pretend to be a native chief. Oh, boy. Let's unpack that.

Etawi: And giving the sacred knowledge to a young white boy.

Alina: Uh-huh.

Grace: Wesley Crusher gets to be a white savior too.

Etawi: Yay. Yeah. So, that's quite problematic. If you've been living in a cave and don't know about Chakotay, these are problems with Chakotay.

Alina: And not even all of them. That's just scratching the surface. We'll get into it, I'm sure.

Etawi: Yeah. You folks did a great episode about the season ender of the end of Season 1 of *Voyager*. And when re-watching it, preparing for this podcast-- gosh, I always skipped that episode, and I was remembering why because they're painting the Maquis in that episode as dirty, uncivilized, undisciplined, all these bad--

Grace: I was thinking that as well. We get a point where Chakotay is-- they're like, "We shouldn't have to follow Starfleet." And Chakotay exerts his power over them by slugging them. And it's like, oh--

Alina: That's right.

Grace: So, that's where your leadership is going in this situation.

Alina: This is where he's like, "I'm going to do this the Maqui way." And they just throw a guy out of a chair.

Grace: Yeah, yeah. Basically.

Alina: Hmm. That's a problem.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Right. Yeah, that's a problem.

Grace: And having the contrast to that be Tuvok, who's still super stoic and logical. It feels there's something being said there.

Etawi: Yeah. A proximity to Federationist, dare I say Whiteness with a capital W is good. And anything farther away from that is bad and dirty.

Alina: Would you go so far as to say savagery?

Grace: [gasps]

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: [laughs] My goodness.

Etawi: So, yeah, it was funny because a lot of these episodes to rewatch are ones that I skip all the time because true warning for the native people.

Alina: Same.

Etawi: I couldn't even watch that Wesley Crusher one, I was done and I'm like, "I can't do it."

Grace: Oh, my Goodness.

Alina: The thing is when I first saw the Dorvan V episode, which was *TNG*, not *Deep Space Nine* or *Voyager*, I was so excited because I was just a little kid. It was coming up on reruns on the *TNG* channel. Much like you, I would sneak out of bed to watch it because it was on late. But that was one my mom let me stay up and watch because I was like, "Mom, mom there's, like, native people in space. This is so cool. Oh, my God." And then she came and she was watching it and she was seeing a lot of actors who maybe didn't look particularly native. Maybe they were just dark-skinned people in wigs. This is like weird pan-Indian planet where it was very unclear what was going on, but also the Federation were coming in to try and remove them from their land.

Grace: Ooh.

Alina: Which, you know, that's a whole thing.

Grace: Speaking of the concept of a single pan-Indian homogenized all natives are one culture now culture. We could talk about Chakotay with that a little bit. As I understand, they just mish-mashed a bunch of different native traditions together with him, from different cultures. He's a collage of different, oh, this would be an interesting or visually interesting thing for us to have him do situation.

Etawi: Yeah. And the reason that's harmful is because folks who don't know another native person never hung out with native culture or anything, this is going to be their idea of how all native people are, and it's not true. And those harmful stereotypes end up harming us as native people. Absolutely. I mean, I cannot tell you the number of times somebody's asked me to give them a spirit animal. I'm like, "That's really offensive."

Alina: Really?

Etawi: “And no.” Oh, yeah.

Alina: Literally [crosstalk] the whole Chakotay episode about that.

Grace: Yeah.

Alina: Where to find Janeway spirit animal.

Grace: Right. That's not a thing, Janeway can just do on her own time.

Alina: Uh-huh.

Etawi: Yeah. So, anybody listening to this, take this way, don't ask native people for that, please. I mean, I'm just one native person. I don't represent all native people, but that's my PSA for the day.

Alina: I think we're all behind you, though.

[laughter]

Etawi: Thanks.

Alina: Not also speak for all native people but come on.

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: Also, what so gets me about Chakotay is originally they were like just like, “Native. What's that? I don't know. I've seen westerns.”

Grace: That's their entry point. That ain't good.

Alina: Yeah, basically. So, they were well, pans plain, right? So, horses and cowboys and out in the plains, that's all native culture, right? And then later, once they started getting some pushback about the actor, they're like, “Well, he's kind of, you know, maybe-- maybe let's make it more south American, so it's a less dicey for here in the States.” And then they came up with the whole weird rubber tree people thing where it's like native culture didn't actually continue on into the future very much, but it's all come from the ancestors. There was no cultural direction for any of it.

Etawi: No, not at all. Another part of the problem is them not having the understanding that that's harmful and not listening to all the native people who are saying, “Hi, this is harmful.” And Chakotay, I've always been bummed that even though he's this pan indigenized dude, but like, “Let him grow his hair out.”

Alina: Oh, my God. Yes.

Etawi: Gosh, that's always bothered me.

Alina: I so wonder to like Chakotay--

Grace: They're always so weird about what cultural representations you can have, with your bridge uniform and all that, but there are dudes with long hair.

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: I feel like that's a thing we've seen.

Etawi: I wanted to talk about Captain Ben Maxwell, if we could.

Grace: Yes, please.

Etawi: Because I really feel like when I was going deep in myself, I'm like, "Where's the Federation go wrong in what we can see of the episodes?" I really thought it began in that episode, which was Season 4, Episode 12, *The Wounded*, that one where Picard has to come in and negotiate this stuff with the Cardassians. And Ben went across the lines and blew up, not a station, but a science area and are there guns happening? And Picard has got to smooth it all out. And what I think where it all went wrong set the stage up for the Maquis and this horrible thing happening was that *Picard* in that episode from an admiral, his name was Hayden, said, "Picard, you need to preserve the peace, no matter the cost." And that is an order nobody should ever give. That sets the whole stage up for the Maquis.

We need to preserve the peace with the Cardassians and we don't give an F about the Maquis. We don't give an F about these people. Their land can go away. We can kill them, whatever. We must preserve the peace with this other powerful force of the Cardassians.

Grace: That also sets the stage for this really big running theme in *DS9* of, are you able to call yourself a peacekeeper if your idea of keeping the peace was staying back while people were being taken advantage of, while there was essentially an occupying force, possibly committing genocide against a bunch of people? Can you say you're a peacekeeper if you're not doing anything about that?

Etawi: Exactly. The Federation has blood on their hands in a lot of different areas in this *Picard*.

Grace: Oh, yeah.

Alina: It's especially bad when you take a look at it through that native lens because in the *Journey's End* episode where it's like, "Hey, so the Federation have come here. They've got to clear this planet of native people." We know from other episodes that they're still native people back on Earth, but this is a group that has been displaced from Earth and chosen to come here and settle because they have a spiritual link with the planet. There's problems with that, but let's just assume that this is important to their culture. Yeah, they've only been there 20 years, but this land is special to them. The Federation has decided, *carte blanche*, that, "Hey, you're within the zone that the Cardassians are climbing, so you got to move." And they absolutely don't want to, especially when you realize that they're native and they've got the stories of being displaced from their land back on Earth.

Grace: Which by the way, *Picard* crew, all these white people, you want to say anything about that you want to acknowledge a little bit?

Etawi: Mm-hmm.

Alina: Also, the face of colonization, the most British French guy--

Grace: I know, right?

Etawi: Yeah. And, it gets a bee in my bonnet, as I would say to my stepdaughter as I try not to cuss. The late-- what is it? The first duty when Picard is dressing down Wesley for that and he's like, "The first duty is to the truth." Like, BS, Picard, you knew the truth backing the *Wounded*. You knew that those Cardassians were putting weapons over there." And later on,

in *DS9*, we know that the Cardassians either Dukat or the government is funneling weapons into the Demil and the Federation is doing nothing about it. We know the truth. Bullshit, Picard. I'm calling bullshit where you're going like, "The first duty is to the truth, to Wesley, but you're not practicing what you preach."

Grace: Nah, man. You're really picking and choosing which truths you adhere to here.

Alina: Exactly.

Etawi: And I'm jumping around a little bit, but I'm sad about what happens to Ro in Picard.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Like that she went back to the Federation.

Grace: I really liked that initial journey of her being, "Okay, I'm going to step outside my comfort zone. I'm going to try this Federation thing." Oh, they treat me like crap. No, I'm going to persevere." "Oh, no, wait, this sucks. I'm joining the Maquis." [laughs]

Etawi: Yep.

Grace: And life is that for her.

Alina: I like her come back and be like, "Well, I rejoined anyway," womp-womp. So sad.

Etawi: Yeah. And then having this all out with Picard scene of their forgiveness that they needed to have between the two of them, but at the same time, I'm like, "Come on, Ro. Why did you come crawling through the Federation again?"

Alina: I could have had that scene without her being part of the Federation.

Grace: Yeah, absolutely. They could have just made personal piece.

Etawi: Yeah. And that would have been really powerful too.

Alina: Maybe more powerful, because it would mean that there was still that distance between them. They weren't working for the same cause, but they were still friends.

Grace: It would have meant there was respect there, and that goes a long way.

Etawi: Yeah. Which I think I don't want to speak for all native people, but anytime we have friends who are white people or spouse, like mine, it's like, "Hmm, yep." There's this thing between us of history, but there's still love.

Grace: Yeah.

Alina: Yeah, absolutely.

Etawi: Yeah. My spouse, my husband is very good, when I start running around the house yelling Klingon ma-ta-ja.

Alina: [laughs]

Etawi: He knows. He bought me a bat'leth.

Alina: Aww.

Etawi: So, he also encouraged this behavior. He's not native, so I start screaming, "Remain Klingon." And he's like, "Yeah, please do."

Grace: All right. [laughs] By all means, yes. Remain as Klingon as you need to be.

Etawi: [laughs] Yes. I love that first scene of disco so much for that. [laughs]

Grace: It's a solid opener too. Let's just be real. So, speaking of introductions and openings, can I jump over to *Voyager* again for a little bit?

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: Because I had this realization while I was re-watching *Caretaker*, watching through it and being like, "Okay, this is probably for people who were one off viewers with other shows and didn't keep up as much with the whole Maquis storyline." This episode could be an introduction to the Maquis for some people. They even have that crawl at the beginning being like, "Here's what the Maquis are, in case you didn't know." And then part of that episode involves them getting abducted by aliens and taken to this really weirdly southern Americana environment that's all-white people. I feel there's something being kinder to be said there. And I know that initially the script called for it to be some Polynesia Island thing, and then they changed it to, "No, it's going to be the whitest white people whiting, whoever did white." [laughs]

Alina: Oh, dear.

Etawi: Chakotay's ship, what was it called the Val Jean? Did they have that same hallucination of the whitest white--?

Grace: That's what you wonder. We only see the *Voyager* crew's perspective on it, don't we?

Alina: Yeah, I think so. Yeah. Like, I had already seen a bunch of *DS9* stuff when that episode happened. I'm trying to think of how you would see the Maquis portrayed if you had none of that other context because it was really different.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Yeah. I did a watch party in preparation for this where I invited two friends over, they're a couple. One of them, she had seen some *Star Trek* and her partner, she has never seen any *Star Trek*. So, this was like, I'm slowly introducing some episodes to her. And it was interesting getting their perspective because the friend who'd never seen any *Star Trek* was like, "Oh, this is the Maquis the total bad guys."

Alina: Right.

Grace: That's how they set it up.

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: And they took the curse off the Maquis when they brought in Calvin Hudson because he was Sisko's friend. He was very, very sympathetic. They were like buds. They and their wives went out.

Grace: They went out and wore lederhosen together.

Etawi: They did.

Alina: Exactly. And it inclined the audience to be sympathetic to the words the Maquis. Whereas I think if you just saw the caretaker, you're like, "Who are these jerks?"

Etawi: In general, *DS9* does such a better job of holding multiple views of the same thing and that all being okay and also could have done a lot better with the Maquis.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: I love that I wrote it down, the whole quote of his friend when he's talking about Bill Samuels. Bill Samuels was a farmer, and he's just totally telling Sisko, do you even land, bro? Like, you [crosstalk] land, did you not get it? [laughs]

Grace: Yeah. Do you even emotionally connect to the land you walk on?

Etawi: Yeah. No, you've been in space too long, dude. You don't know where the sun is at each time of the day and why that's important for what plant or how to move. Maybe people out there who have never had a garden don't understand that it takes years to build a relationship with land and plants and know what they need and us giving. My garden outside, I have some plants I got to drag from one side of my tiny backyard to the other, so they get enough light, and it has taken time to learn that. Time to learn what the soil needs and what you need to put back into it.

Grace: Yeah. At the risk of oversimplifying, farmers almanacs, they aren't written overnight.

Etawi: Exactly. So just to be anyone who's like, "Well, just move." Like, "No, no. You don't even [unintelligible [00:23:42], bruh. Shut up."

Alina: Exactly.

Etawi: You don't know. [laughs]

Alina: Well, and that's where that's where it comes down to it. So, these people have been here for 20 years since some people are like, "Well, that's not very long. Just pick up and move somewhere else." Then you are like no [crosstalk] everything

Grace: But don't you love it when people start every statement with "just," and then finish it up with the hardest possible thing you could do?

Etawi: Exactly.

Alina: Why are the Maquis even fighting? Why didn't they just leave?

Etawi: I mean, that's really where people need to put their minds. It's like, "I'm going to come into your house and say, "Get out now, and all this stuff is mine. Just leave. Just leave. It's fine." No, it's not. Come on. [chuckles]

Grace: No, just, just deal with it. I now own all of your worldly goods and possessions and artifacts of the life and family you've built over the years.

Alina: Yeah, exactly. It was important enough to them that they were like, "You know what? I'm going to take my chances with the fascist space lizards, actually."

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: My gosh. If they were that invested, they're like, "No, we'll take our chances," you got to be like, "Okay, okay. If it means that much to you."

Etawi: Was it Michael Eddington who was like, "How dare we leave paradise?"

Alina: Yes. We're really mad at is that we turned our backs on Starfleet.

Etawi: Exactly.

Grace: Yeah. I mean, he's not wrong to a degree, but also Eddington is Eddington.

Alina: Yeah.

Etawi: Eddington's absolutely a white savior.

Grace: He thinks he is. He's a lot more of a savior than he actually is. And that's his undoing, which is funny and ironic. He's still a douche but--.

Alina: Yeah, between Calvin Hudson, friendly American name.

Grace: Cal.

Alina: We're going to get behind this guy and Eddington. Sinister bad guy.

Grace: Yeah, [laughs] this guy is on *Star Trek* with a receding hairline. Oh, he's a bad guy.

Etawi: Mm-hmm.

Grace: He's a bad guy.

[laughter]

Alina: Speaking of white saviors, should we talk about Tom Riker?

Grace: Absolutely.

Etawi: Yes.

[laughter]

Alina: So, the Maquis are not doing super great in their war. It's been tough. There's been a lot of swapping of black-market goods from the Cardassians, getting their weapons lined up, and they've managed to get some shipments, the Maquis have managed to get some shipments from the Federation side all through black market means. And they're just running around in shuttles zapping each other with very small weapons. That's where the war was. And then Tom Riker comes in and steals [chuckles] a big starship. [laughs]

Grace: Friggin Tom Riker.

Etawi: Tom Riker.

Alina: Tom Riker. And then the war starts going the Maquis way because suddenly they have some serious firepower. And I get it. I get that they are giving a beloved character from

TNG, a transporter clone version thereof, but a beloved character, a big role in the Maquis war. But it's also worth noting that he is a big, strong white guy coming in to save the day.

Etawi: Yeah. They didn't necessarily need that, Tom Riker.

Grace: If we made a list of all of the times *Star Trek* has had a big, strong white guy come into-- for example, let's say, any alien skirmish, to be like, "No, I am taking charge of this now," it would be a substantial list.

Alina: "Because I am correct."

Grace: Yeah, it would be a substantial list.

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: [crosstalk] -from a native point of view. So, you've got the Maquis aren't generally defined as any particular cultural group. There are a whole bunch of different people spread around a bunch of different planets. Some of them are farmers. Some of them have little cities. And then Dorvan V seems to be just a bunch of pueblo huts, [laughs] just an entire pueblo settlement for no reason. And it's never specifically said which native settled planet in the demilitarized zone that Chakotay is from and was born on. But come on, it was Dorvan V, unless there are other native planets out there.

Grace: That'd be so cool if they took the time to be like, "Oh, yes, this is the culture that this group took, and this is the planet that this took group. And they have a whole planet."

Alina: Mm-hmm.

Grace: Tell us all about them and how their society has evolved without colonial interference.

Alina: Exactly.

Etawi: I want to go there.

Grace: I want to know they're out there.

Alina: Specifically, what was so bad about living under the Federation that they left Earth, which part of native culture is this relationship with the Earth specifically. So, it would have to get pretty bad in this utopia for entire groups of native people to be like, "You know what? I'm out of here. Bye."

Etawi: Well, I would say my ancestral homes being inaccessible to me and becoming a giant mini mall, that's good reason for me to go, because that's what's happened.

Grace: Oh, no kidding.

Alina: Yeah.

Etawi: Yeah. My homelands is all where white people go to vacation, so.

Alina: Oh, no.

Grace: Extra fun, spicy levels of bitterness that you get to have there.

Etawi: Yeah. And I know I'm not alone in that.

Grace: To say the least.

Etawi: One it's like, hmm, one time I had somebody because plants are my thing and I do a lot of work and plants and food sovereignty work in my local area, which is a lot of-- I live in a city where a lot of native Americans from all over have come and lived and I work on a lot of food sovereignty projects. And a non-native person asked me, "Well, why can't you just go out and practice your ways of food and stuff?" And I'm like, "Are you kidding me? It's because your third home mansion is on my land. Can I go hunting in your backyard? No."

Alina: And even when it isn't, like, I come from my grandma's reserve is causes in Southern Saskatchewan, and it's got farmland, it's got place to graze cattle and stuff, but it is also downriver from Regina, and so [unintelligible [00:29:24], but there is a dam that has blocked up the lake so that the colonial people around the lake can have a nice lake in the summertime, but it means that our water supply is screwed up. So, you couldn't drink the water for years and years and years and years until we used our own banned funds to build a water processing plant, which also serves the people at the resorts. So, we benefited everyone around us, but it was so that we could drink our own water.

Etawi: Yeah. Good Lord.

Grace: Now we got to think about that. But on a Federation level of screw-upery.

Etawi: Right.

Alina: Absolutely.

Etawi: The Federation isn't giving me any impression that in the future I have access to my homeland and territory in a way that is culturally appropriate to me, where I can forage and hunt and move with the seasons. So, sounds like maybe finding another planet that I feel connected to seems like a good idea where I could go do that.

Grace: Mm-hmm.

Alina: Exactly. Especially if there are animals that were really important to your culture that you could bring with you and reintroduce. I don't imagine in the big megacities of the Starfleet future, there's room for millions and millions of bison to roam anywhere.

Etawi: Oh, my gosh, I want space deer.

Alina: [crosstalk] -farming a planet. Exactly. You could maybe bring and reintroduce some species.

Etawi: Oh, yes. Space deer.

Grace: Okay. I'm just imagining a version of the Voyage home where it's like the orcas and-

Alina: Yes.

Grace: -the annual return of the orcas, but in space, and that sounds awesome.

Alina: And how much more likely would that mean that you would never want to leave that planet again?

Grace: Yeah. Absolutely.

Alina: Unless we brought this, we re-established it. We have our way of life. We've built it up for 20 years. We are not leaving. Get out of here.

Etawi: I'd be burning my uniform and stealing replicator.

Alina: Absolutely.

Etawi: Absolutely. To protect me and my space deer.

[chuckles]

Alina: So, if Chakotay is from Dorvan V, he's got that as his background. He grew up on this planet where they were practicing as traditional ways of life as they could or whatever future-y, culturally appropriate versions thereof, because I'm sure it would have changed in many, many years, [laughs] a couple centuries. But his write up says that he didn't grow up in the culture. And I'm like, "Well, that's just an oversight on the writer's part, because if he's growing up on this planet, clearly, he was immersed in the culture."

Etawi: Isn't there-- there's an episode of him and his dad, and they're going out on a trip, and it's a flashback, and he's a teenager and he's like, "Nah, I don't want to be doing this," but his dad's trying to?

Alina: Yeah. Trying to make him be involved in the culture, which, fine, not everyone's going to be at the same level of wanting to be super culturally involved, but it would have seeped in just growing up in that environment.

Etawi: Oh, yeah.

Grace: There would have been a little bit of cultural osmosis there at least.

Alina: Absolutely. It's the culture that you grew up in. Even if you're not super into the ceremonial side of things, you're still going to think differently than someone who grew up in Starfleet Earth.

Etawi: Yeah, absolutely. [sighs]

Grace: Oh, Chakotay.

Etawi: That was a Chakotay sigh.

Alina: [laughs] A Chakotay sized sigh.

Etawi: Oh, gosh.

Alina: I wanted so badly to like Chakotay.

Etawi: Me too.

Alina: When I got into *Voyager*, I was like, "Man, this is awesome. We got a lady captain. We got a native guy as the first officer. I'm going to love him. He's going to be amazing." And then I was like, "Eh. This guy sucks actually."

[chuckles]

Etawi: When I was a kid, part of it for me is, my dad's Irish and my mom's native, so watching Janeway, Irish, Chakotay native, I was like, "It's my parents."

Alina: Oh, my God. Oh, yeah.

Etawi: And so, my sibling and I, we built a *Voyager* ship out of a utility cart, and we would [crosstalk] family.

Alina: Oh, my gosh. That's awesome.

Grace: You keep just bringing us more and more precious stories.

Etawi: I know.

Alina: Oh yeah. Oh, my God. That's so cute.

Etawi: It absolutely helped me in being mixed race and always struggling with, like, "I'm not enough this. I'm not enough this, I'm too much this, I'm too much this." I don't know. I could see myself, for the good of it, through Janeway and Chakotay be like, there's a place for all parts of me in the future. I don't want to give Chakotay too many bones, but the idea, like, "Oh, yeah, native people can be in space, and Captain Janeway is a badass lady who's not just a sex object." That's great.

Grace: And, I mean, credit to the writers, they knew that they should probably put the native character in a position of power, and having him be the balance to Janeway was actually smart.

Etawi: And in a way, I don't know if they were consulted on this culturally, but in mine, not every native culture by any means, are matriarchal, where the women are the leaders and the end-all be-all says all, where the men are more of the protectors. So, having him as not a captain, but right behind Janeway, made sense in a matriarchal way, though they're not practicing consensus by or not consensus, it's definitely a hierarchy in a way that is not reflected in my culture anyways. But that men being deferring to the female elder is accurate in that way.

Grace: Mm-hmm.

Etawi: Though, the hierarchy of Starfleet just needs to be abolished. But I'm not really into hierarchies in general, so. [laughs]

Grace: It's a good idea. Not being into them. I mean, not hierarchies being a good idea. So, can we take a minute to talk about B'Elanna as a representative of the Maquis and because when we are introduced to the Maquis in *Voyager*, she is the angriest of the angry Maquis. And so much of her characterization and backstory is based around, if I can borrow a phrase from a past guest, we have this tragic mixed-race heritage background that she has. But what do we think of B'Elanna as a member of the Maquis and as a representative of what the Maquis is in general?

Etawi: I love B'Elanna, but I think she's a good example of getting colonized. [laughs]

Grace: Yep.

Alina: Yes. Oh, my God.

Etawi: The more colonized she gets, the more palatable she becomes. And that's seen as a good thing, but I don't necessarily see it as a good thing.

Alina: I saw somebody talking about Worf specifically, and they were like, so he was one of the first Klingons to come into Starfleet and they were like, "We're just going to stick you in as a security officer because you guys like fighting and all that I've heard," which is racist.

Etawi: Racist.

Alina: And I think B'Elanna gets a lot of that too.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: We see a couple times them talking about the Maquis and I'm thinking about Lon Suder and them being like, "Oh, he loved to kill people. So, the Maquis was just a natural space for him." It's like, "What? This guy's a serial killer and you stuck him in [unintelligible [00:36:29]]."

Alina: Yeah.

Grace: That's just messed up.

Alina: Yeah. B'Elanna anger comes both from-- they're writing her as a Klingon, and Klingons are angry and like to fight. And the Maquis are also these dangerous, savage freedom fighters. They're always angry about everything. We don't know why. Hmm. It had nothing to do with us.

Etawi: Maybe there's a legit reason to be angry.

[laughter]

Grace: All these grievances are starting to pile up, and it's getting harder to argue that we're the good guys here.

Alina: No, it's kids who are wrong.

Grace: Exactly. [laughs] No, it's the Maquis who are incorrect.

[laughter]

Etawi: Yeah, it was one of the other Maquis. His name's Dalby, I think.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: When he's just like, "We just aren't Starfleet material." And I'm yelling at the screen, I'm like, "That's not a bad thing, Dalby." The same for B'Elanna. I'm like, "You're different-- Oh, wait a second. Here we go *Star Trek*, the differences in us make us stronger."

Grace: And Dalby's the one who gets punched out by Chakotay, yeah?

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: Yeah.

Etawi: I think yeah.

Alina: They do this weird thing where they're like, "Oh, all of the Starfleet people who went to go join the Maquis, they're all the weirdos, the misfits, the people who didn't join in," while also simultaneously, there's the ones who are so-- they're like, "This is morally wrong. I must give up my Starfleet uniform and go fight for these forces." So, it's like, "Okay, are they the weirdos who didn't fit in, or are they the noble ones who actually see through--" yeah?

Grace: Which is it, Voyager writers?

Etawi: And, dang, we, [chuckles] the Maquis need allies. Yeah, but also you got to know your role a bit. There's a good way to be an ally, and there's a bad way to be an ally, like Tom Riker.

Alina: Oh, my God. Can you imagine? Okay, so you're a Dorvan V person, you're native, you're really mad. Now, the Starfleet who has been like, "Hey, get off your own land." And you're like, "No, go hang. Get out of here." And they leave you alone. You're like, "Great. Everything's great." "But now we got these the Cardassians to deal with. Okay, time to take up arms. We're going to fight now. We're going to fight for our land, our ancestors did. Let's make a stand." And then you're fighting, you're doing okay, but it's rough. And then all these Starfleet officers start showing up out of nowhere and taking control of things because they're like, "Oh, well, we have more experience than you do, you peasants." [crosstalk]

Grace: "It's okay everyone, stand back. We're in control now."

Alina: Exactly. I would be pissed off.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: That reminds me of several real-world actions, some that were where certain individuals showed up and took up too much space and ate all the food and got in trouble with the cops. "Hey, that's not what we're asking you to do."

Alina: Yep. That is a common, common thing that happens.

Etawi: Yes, yes.

Grace: We're just playing through colonialist history's greatest hits here, aren't we?

Alina: Mm-hmm. [laughs] Jesus.

Grace: It's one of the things that they had at Standing Rock, where they had a crash course for all of the white allies who were coming in to help, because they were like, "We recognize that you're very well intentioned and that you are here to help, but also there's some basic knowledge that you need to know because we're not letting you ride in here and be white saviors, you need to chill."

Etawi: Right.

Alina: "And you need to let us be the leaders. All right?" And so, they do these, like little courses with the people coming in, and were like listen, "Here's the basics you need to know if you're going to stay in camp with us."

Grace: I just feel like that should be a basic entry level requirement for any and all liberal arts college educations right there. [laughs]

Etawi: Oh, my gosh.

Grace: The art of shutting up and letting someone else talk. [laughs] She said before she interrupted the guest for the fifth time.

[laughter]

Etawi: No, I mean, it's not something I think the dominant culture, the White with a capital W, Whiteness. Whiteness as a concept. I'm not saying necessarily as like a race, because whiteness, it's-- wow, I'm really fumbling on this.

Grace: Because there's white and then there's capital W White.

Etawi: And there is capital W White that all of us have certain levels of colonization and whiteness about us. But one key aspect of that is knowing how to listen and that not everything is about you and not everything is yours.

Alina: Right.

Etawi: And that's key to be telling the Thomas Rikers of the world. We're glad that you care but shut up and listen.

Grace: [laughs] Thanks, buddy. You're not the main character here. Get over that.

Alina: Yep.

Etawi: And you don't always have to be the main character.

[laughter]

Etawi: It's okay to be side. Side quest, side character, it's a good place. [crosstalk]

Alina: I think every Riker thinks he's the main character though. [laughs]

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: So, do we want to tackle the fall of the Maquis through a native lens because that's rough?

Etawi: That's rough.

Grace: That's rough. But it does feel necessary for the topic, doesn't it?

Alina: Yeah, oof, it sucks. It sucks a lot. And I think by that point, the writers had forgotten that they'd established because it was a *TNG* plot line. It wasn't one of their plotlines. They'd forgotten that there was an entire planet of natives involved in here, even though Chakotay was native and he's from there, maybe, it got weird. And so, when they were like, "Listen, we need to end this plotline. Just kill off all the Maquis." They didn't really think about what that would entail. So, now you're just writing in the genocide of an entire planet of native people. Maybe don't.

Etawi: Yeah, I don't think they thought that through very well.

Alina: I don't even think they remembered that plotline.

Grace: Yeah, no, probably not, considering it was an inherited plotline. And let's be honest, a lot of those tend to just go by the wayside.

Etawi: Which is forgetting that it's a planet with a bunch of native people on it and forgetting that and killing them off, it's so harmful. You forgot about us. Of course, you did.

Alina: Exactly. And it was *Voyager*, so they don't even have the excuse of, "Oh, it wasn't our series," like the [unintelligible [00:42:23] does. They were like, "This is Chakotay's planet. We could make a plot point of him dealing with the loss of his entire planet, or we could have an out and go, actually his people got away or something, and then not genocide [laughs] an entire ethnic group."

Grace: Wow, how convenient for the writers.

Alina: Right. But they didn't even think of that. And there's that episode where he finds out that most of the Maquis have been killed, and he's just like, "Oh, that sucks." Anyway, going about my day. And you're like, "Dude, that was your planet. You're from there. You were born there, man."

Grace: Why are you not having a full freak-out over this?

Alina: Absolutely.

Grace: Not to bring in *Enterprise*, but we get to see a whole season of Trip Tucker having incredible emotional trauma over his home state, getting lasered and his sister dying. And we can't even get an ounce of that for Chakotay and his entire people getting destroyed.

Etawi: And we get B'Elanna working it out in the holodeck, but then Chakotay is just like, deal with it.

Grace: Yeah.

Alina: Also, Chakotay makes her watch it. [laughs]

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: Oh, my God.

Alina: What the fuck, Chakotay.

Etawi: Really, really messed up.

Grace: They're kind of wrap it up with a bow on it for B'Elanna is have her go from one coping technique to another, less destructive coping technique, but still a coping technique.

Alina: Absolutely.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: There was no Betazeds on this ship. [laughs]

Grace: Unfortunately, there was. And he was in--

Alina: That's right.

Grace: He was in house arrest for the entire trip home before he died. [laughs]

Etawi: Before he died. Are there any "emotionally stable male Betazoids" in Star Trek? Because they all seem to be portrayed as men with emotions are just insane and bad.

Grace: It's an entire planet where 50% of the population is Morrissey.

Etawi: Yeah. Gosh.

[laughter]

Alina: Oh, no. What a nightmare.

Grace: So, all the women in their culture, fabulous. All the men, insufferable.

Etawi: Absolutely.

Alina: Oh, no. [laughs]

Etawi: The only thing I wrote in my notes about, "End of the Maquis," as I was like, "You can't kill an idea."

Alina: Oh, that's a good point. Yeah.

Grace: Absolutely.

Etawi: Hopefully, somewhere out there, the idea of the Maquis, though, I tried to find this *Lower Decks* next episode, but there's a moment where Mariner is being sassy at herself, and she's like, "Go join the Maquis." And I was like, "Oh, come on, Mariner. Come on. You better." I'd like that a--[crosstalk]

Alina: Isn't the context of that she's doing-- It's got this, like, go die in a fire energy.

Grace: Yeah,

Etawi: Yeah, it was. I can't remember the scene, and I spent an hour trying to find it last night because that was important instead of sleeping. She's all like, "Yeah, go die in a fire. Go join the Maquis. Meh." No.

[laughter]

Grace: You just know that there's going to be a point where they start the Maquis Mach II, like-- [crosstalk]

Alina: Also, the destruction of the Maquis would read-- the *Rise of the Maquis* too because any of the survivors would be like, "Yo, that was wrong. We need to right that wrong."

Etawi: Yeah.

Alina: We'll spend the rest of our lives trying to do that.

Grace: Yeah. And that's what I imagine a lot of people who were in the Maquis would actually reasonably want to do and not be like, "Well, I guess we're joining Starfleet now." The group was involved in this.

Alina: You had to become the biggest enemy of Starfleet. They abandoned you, you fought this war, they did not support you. You guys were being wiped out, and they didn't come in to do anything about it. You absolutely would never join Starfleet.

Grace: No, no.

Etawi: There's a lot of parallels here.

Alina: Cardassians were just Cardassianing, but Starfleet was the real enemy here.

Etawi: Yeah. To just sit back and watch it all happen and go, "Hmm."

Alina: "Not our problem."

Etawi: "Not our problem."

Grace: "We're peacekeepers, this isn't our problem."

Alina: Yes.

Etawi: Yes. Sounds a lot like a real-world empire.

Grace: Golly gee, real world parallels in my *Star Trek*. It never used to be this political.

[laughter]

Etawi: Yeah.

Grace: All right, before we finish it out for this episode, do we have any final thoughts or topics that we want touch on, or we will wake up in the middle of the night going, "Oh, no, I forgot it?"

Etawi: As I went over this and mulled this over and processed it ad nauseam with my partner, I kept coming back to a question for the Federation, and that's not a new question is any entity, any organization like the Federation, are they able to live by their morals while not actively working against their morals to do the thing? Meaning, like we say we are the peacekeepers of the world, but we actually do a lot of harm to uphold our own morals. Section 31, is that-- [crosstalk]

[chuckles]

Alina: Yeah.

Etawi: And that's a question for the Federation, but also any person organization out there. There's so many of those good intent organizations, non-profits, governments who say, "These are the good things we're going to do." But then when you're faced to it, can you actually live out your morals and practice them? So that's the food for thought.

Grace: That's a lot to digest.

Etawi: Yeah. Anna Mac here, right? Anyone want to come at me about that? Try me.

[laughter]

Grace: And what about you, Alina? Any final thoughts?

Alina: I think, for me, the anger that I carry over a lot of how that writing was just dropped informs how I approach writing sci-fi where I'm like, "Listen, I got to right these wrongs in my own fiction, or at least I'm aware of these problems within writing." So, if I'm just going to be like, "Well, you know what? I don't want to deal with that plot line anymore. I'm going to deal with it. I'm just going to get rid of it." It's now made me sit back and think, like, is that the best way to just toss this aside though? Am I going to be Maquing it? Let's approach this in a more thoughtful way, shall we?

Etawi: Yes.

Grace: And sometimes that's the best you can do when you find problems with the media that you either are engaged with or enjoy, you need to find a way to walk away from it having learned something. And I really appreciate that. That was a big part of what your Indigenerds segment was about. Check out Indigenerds everybody.

Alina: Yeah. Absolutely. I write a story in there called Dorvan V, and it's my thoughts about Dorvan V, just that episode specifically, not the further context of native people in *Star Trek*.

Grace: Well, while we're here, I want to thank you all so much for joining us today. I know this episode took a while for us to get rolling together, but thank you both, Etawi and Alina, so much for coming on and for sharing your thoughts with us. It means a lot.

Etawi: Of course. This is a lot of fun.

Grace: Yeah.

Etawi: Feels good to be in light company.

Alina: Yeah. Thank you so much for having us on. This has been a great discussion.

Grace: Anytime. That's about all we have for today. But, Etawi, where can people find more from you online?

Etawi: Oh, I have a *Star Trek* Instagram where I repost memes. [laughs]

Grace: Sounds good.

Alina: Amazing.

Etawi: And selfies of me at the cons. And my Instagram handle is @kehleyrdaughterofnone. All one word.

Grace: Nice.

Etawi: I can spell it out. [chuckles]

Grace: Yeah, we're Trekkies, we know how to spell K'Ehleyr.

Etawi: Yeah. If you don't know how to spell K'Ehleyr, then you can't find me and you're not a Trekker.

[laughter]

Grace: And, Alina, where can people find more from you online?

Alina: I am @alinapete on most social medias. You can also go to my website, alina-pete.com or you can check out my old webcomic at www.weregeek.com.

Grace: All right. And thank you again so much for joining us today. And thank you, listeners for joining us today. To learn more about our show or to contact us, visit womenatwarp.com, email us at crew@womenatwarp.com or find us on Facebook or Instagram @womenatwarp. Thank you so much for listening.

[Women at Warp theme]

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