

Women at Warp Episode 257: The Great Tuvix Debate

[Women at Warp theme]

Sue: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp, a *Star Trek* Podcast. Join us on our 10-year mission to explore intersectional diversity in infinite combinations. My name is Sue, and thanks for tuning in. I will be your debate moderator today, because it's a requirement that all *Star Trek* podcasts eventually dive into the great *Tuvix* debate. Representing Team Tuvix today is Grace.

Grace: What's up, everybody.

Sue: And representing Team Janeway, we have Kennedy.

Kennedy: Hello.

Sue: [laughs]

Kennedy: It's my lawyer voice. Hello.

Sue: I toyed with making this an actual debate structure, but that was too much work. So, that's pretty much the end of that bit. [laughs]

Grace: Every now and then we can stop though and, say, "Well, do we need to take five-minute debate break as per the out rules outlined in standards and practices of debate teams of the North American area?"-

Sue: Oh, my goodness.

Grace: -or something like that.

Sue: Yeah, I actually did look up like high school debate rules, and my ADHD couldn't handle it.

[laughter]

Kennedy: If we were still doing panels, it would be an excellent one. but-

Grace: Oh, absolutely.

Kennedy: -no one's got time for that.

[laughter]

Grace: Who's got the time and energy for panels these days, I ask you.

Sue: Before we start fighting with each other, we have our standard housekeeping to do. For almost our entire 10-year run, our show has been made possible by our patrons on Patreon. Though the show will be wrapping at the end of the month, our Patreon will remain active through the end of the year. And anything that comes in will be put towards our closed down costs. That includes things like our big old episode transcription backlog. We want to try to get through all of it, if we can, before the end of the year. So, that is available to or accessible, I should say, to even more people.

While most rewards will also be ending with the show, anyone at the Warp 5- tier or higher any month through the end of the year will receive our mission patch while supplies last. And that is in production now. So, to contribute or to find out more, visit patreon.com/womenatwarp. If you're looking for some podcast merch, our TeePublic store will also be available to the end of the year. Recently added designs include our intersectional diversity IDIC tagline in the IDIC shape, as well as our mission patch design. So, you can find those at teepublic.com/stores/womenatwarp. So, *Tuvix*.

Grace: *Tuvix*, indeed.

Kennedy: Who?

Grace: [laughs] I don't know her.

Kennedy: I don't know them.

Grace: Mm-mm. Mm-mm.

Kennedy: Continue. I'm going to let people say what they got to say first.

Sue: *Star Trek: Voyager* Season II, episode, I believe it's 24.

Grace: It's amazing that this episode happened so relatively early on in *Voyager*.

Kennedy: Oh, my gosh. Seriously, what a heavy complex plot to get into in your second season. So risky, so bold, so groundbreaking before everybody was sold on *Voyager*, because the jury was still out. Yes, you got a new season, but do you-- or is this really the time to be asking these types of questions, posing these types of complications?

Sue: Well, *The Measure of a Man* was a Season 2 episode. It is a Season 2 episode.

Grace: Oh.

Kennedy: Oh, good point.

Sue: Is this *Voyager's Measure of a Man*?

Grace: Oh, shit. It might be. [laughs]

Kennedy: A 100%. A 100%. No doubt about it. Except it's infinitely more polarizing, because people other than me like Data. So, they're invested in this character and him being treated like a sentient being that he is. So, it's slightly different. There's a lot more bias in *Measure of a Man* than there is here in *Tuvix*. But comparable, for sure.

Sue: So, I found it interesting in looking into everything I could about this episode that as originally conceived in the script, *Tuvix* was going to want to be split up. It wasn't going to be a dilemma to begin with. I guess it was Michael Pillar who posed the question of basically, "Well, what if he doesn't want to die?" whichever language we're using at this point.

Grace: That makes for a much more interesting story for one thing and then, also gets into the philosophical stuff that we have at the end of the episode of, "Okay. So, is it killing Tuvix or is it killing Tuvok and Neelix?"

Sue: Yeah, and Ken Biller also said in the same interview that they really wanted to dramatize Janeway's dilemma. But I would say I don't think that comes across, at least it doesn't to me.

Kennedy: Ooh, it did to me.

Sue: See, I feel like she has made up her mind from the beginning and we don't really see her stressing out too much about it, but maybe it's because I lean Team Tuvix.

Kennedy: Yeah, I think so.

[laughter]

Kennedy: Because this was definitely like, "Oh, this is tough." She even said to her to ex, "Oh if this had happened immediately, I wouldn't even be thinking about it."

Sue: But why? Why does that matter?

Kennedy: Apparently, it does. I don't know, I'm not her.

Grace: Because she got to know Tuvok as an individual with their own thoughts and dreams and feelings.

Kennedy: I will say this. At the risk of stopping the argument before it begins,

[laughter]

Kennedy: -the fact that I always perceive this episode not to be a measure of how to quantify life and when is life-life, when are lived experiences valid. But more so to put Janeway, a captain, in an impossible position. This can be *Voyager's Measure of a Man*. I can see that, but it is definitively their Kobayashi Maru, because what was she supposed to do? This is a tough situation every single way around.

It was always my impression that the focus of this episode in particular was to illustrate that she's still going to have to have these types of obstacles, these types of ethical dilemmas to encounter while trying to get everybody back from the ass crack of the galaxy, and not get swept up by the phage and the Vidiians, because they were all the way out there at that point, they were still dealing with Vidiians and shit.

So, not only do these external factors influencing your ability to get home, not even your desire to get home, your ability to get home, but now you also have the immediate captain problems as well that you have to take under consideration. So, we will never know what Tuvix would have been like as a character, as a crew member. We just won't.

We can say, of course, because the rest of the story has gone out that Tuvok and Neelix as individuals were indispensable, they were invaluable to that crew, especially Neelix's knowledge of that area, just to get them to the places that they could. I don't know that Tuvix would have been able to help that crew get all the way home. So, is this a story about whether or not this non-consensual being happens, or is this a story about what a measure of a captain is when they have these tough decisions in front of them?

Grace: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, [Sue laughs] I posit to you that none of us is a consensual being. None of us chose to be here, to be created the way we were.

Sue: That sure as hell true.

Grace: I know. Right.

Kennedy: Certainly, but our parent for the most part, right? Very big generalization here. There was usually some type of consent from the parents. I say usually, because unfortunately, that's not always the case.

Grace and Sue: Mm-hmm.

Kennedy: But in the instances where it is an intentional act between two people who chose to do it, two adults, two consenting adults, that you as an individual might not have had the choice to be born or in any way, but your parents made the decision in one way or the other.

Sue: No. We're starting to get into why this episode is so meaty, because I think the intention from the writer's room was just to tell an interesting story that made people question and not be sure what the right answer was. But because of what it is, you extrapolate out into so many other things, like bodily autonomy and personhood and the rights of the individual and consent.

There are readings of this episode that make it an abortion allegory, make it anti-miscegenation allegory, that even make it a trans-allegory in some ways. There's a Reddit thread I can link to in our show notes that the title is, "As a trans person, the episode Tuvix depicts a type of reaction to transition that I am particularly insecure about." There are all these different readings that come from this episode.

Kennedy: When people transition, they do it on purpose.

Grace: Yeah. That is a choice on their part. Yeah.

Kennedy: There's a great deal of planning, and paperwork [chuckles] and all types of decisions that an individual needs to make in order to realize themselves fully. And that was not the case here.

Sue: Right. No, I should explain more. That Reddit thread is about the reaction to the transition.

Grace: Yeah.

Kennedy: I understand that. I can only imagine, but at the same time, is it still applicable because this transition was not done consensually.

Grace: This was less of a technical transition and more of a physical reaction to something that happened.

Kennedy: Right.

Sue: Right.

Kennedy: So, I can understand how this can be representative of a trans experience a 110%. Well, no, 98%, because the remaining 2% is the fact that this individual chose to do it, whereas Tuvok and Neelix. I know for a fact, Tuvok's, if he was going to be blended with anybody, it would sure as shit not be Neelix.

Grace: Oh, hell no. Oh, God, no.

Kennedy: So, I think that's a bigger thing that where no one's really addressing either.

Sue: I just want to clarify that the reaction in this thread is the reaction of the rest of the crew to Tuvix.

Kennedy: Correct.

Grace: And you can definitely see where that's coming from, especially with the reactions of the different crew members and Kes being like, "I don't know how to deal with this right now. I need to process this." Tuvix wanting to respect that, but also wanting to have this important person back in their life.

Sue: Okay. So, this is a phrase that I never thought I would say, but here we go, "Regardless of consent,-

Kennedy: [gags]

Grace: Oh, boy.

Sue: [Grace laughs] -the instant that Tuvix exists, he has bodily autonomy.

Grace: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Sue: And Neelix and Tuvok are gone."

Kennedy: See, this now parallels an abortion allegory, because at what point is an individual, an individual? I would argue that a person isn't a person until they're out the womb, that usually, in human terms, requires at most nine months of gestation before a person can be a person.

Sue: Right. This is why the parallel is not really a parallel.

Grace: The fun and the curse of sci-fi is that there's so many different parallels you can draw from a sci-fi plot.

Sue: Because a fetus is using someone else's body, but that person, more often than not, has the ability to express their own desires.

Kennedy: Correct. Unless they live in a red state.

Grace: Yeah.

Sue: Correct.

Kennedy: Which I can make the joke now, because I'm in Pennsylvania and we switched, unfortunately. So, before everybody gets their panties in a bunch, relax, [laughs] I'm on your side.

Sue: In the Tuvix instance, we can't get the individual opinions or desires of either Tuvok or Neelix. We can assume them, but we can't get them definitively.

Kennedy: And especially because Tuvix is the filter. He claims to say, "Oh, I have their thoughts, I have their memories, I have their experiences, I have their relationships within me. Yet, I am a different person. Fine, I can understand the concept and accept the concept

of duplicity--" Not duplicity. You know what I'm saying? Like, "Having a multifaceted perception of self. I understand that."

But at the same ding dang time, if you are trying to assert that you are your own person, why is your biggest thing socially trying to rekindle relationships that these two other people had with these crew members? I get it. It's a small crew. You only have so many people you can be friendly with, but at the same time, his next step should not have been trying to get with Kes. That's weird. That's emotional manipulation.

Grace: That was weird.

Kennedy: That's emotional manipulation, because he was saying all the right things in all the right ways. He utilized a Talaxian's charisma to access a Vulcan's logic. If this was a space problem, an anomaly or some stuff that they had to put some math together real fast, I get that. There was even an example of that on the Bridge, where he was up there at 4 o'clock in the morning rerouting whatever, and figured it out, even though Tuvok said he couldn't. Cool.

But when you're sitting there using these collective shared experiences to try and emotionally manipulate somebody who you claim to care about, that's when shit gets weird. He not only did it to Kes, he did it to Janeway as well.

Grace: Part of feels really egregious with Kes also, is that he uses her accompanying lifespan against her. He's like, "It could take years to fix this. And by then, you could be gone." And it's like, [onomatopoeia]

Sue: So creepy.

Kennedy: The most egregious part about that, Grace, is that Tuvok's and Tuvok's. Jesus Christ. Tuvok, neither Tuvok nor Neelix would ever fricking do that to Kes.

Grace: No. This was a creation of Tuvix right there.

Kennedy: A 100%. Because Neelix, lest I remind everybody who tries to label him as a pedophile, no friend, because this man not only liberated her from her oppressive ass society, but he took her to space, showed her the freaking galaxy, made sure she got an education. And when she leveled up, he said, "Bye, boo. I wish you the best." Not stay here and make me company.

So, Neelix would never try to manipulate Kes emotionally. Neelix would be like, "Hey, whatever you want to do, I support you." Tuvok didn't have any type of emotional romantic connections with Kes. In fact, Tuvok had a whole ass family. So, what are we doing here? If the sum is greater than the parts, and this is how this individual chooses to conduct himself, with all of the lived experiences of these two great beings contributing to half of his-- well, whatever percentage because the flower is the one that's responsible for all this. You know what I'm saying?

Grace: The flower is their mommy now.

Sue: It's 300% DNA, because supposedly, all of it from all of them is there.

Kennedy: Right. So, like--

Grace: That's a lot of DNA.

Kennedy: I understand. [Grace laughs] I would have been Team Tuvix, if it had been the previous scenario that was described by the writers. He decides to dissolve himself and return to the two parent individuals. I'll say that would have been different. That would have been tough. I would have had a lot more empathy for him. I'd have been a lot more pissed at Janeway like, "What the hell's the matter with you? Why would you make him do that? This is why nobody want--" You know what I'm saying?

But the fact that he used duplicitous reasoning to try and exploit and manipulate the relationships around him that Tuvok and Neelix had as individuals is indicative of behaviors that are not only anti-social, but also dangerous in a situation where you are thousands, hundreds, billions of light years away from the house and no resources, no backup, nothing, and there's only a hundred people on the ship and we've got limited resources.

So, if you decide to escalate these anti-social behaviors, and it switch from lying and manipulating with no real regard for a person's emotional state to lashing out acts of violence, physical danger, do we really take that risk? Do we want to take this risk with somebody who's already exhibited that they have, not only the capacity to move this way but they are more than willing to move this way?

Grace: I have a very dumb thought. Not to take down what you had to say just now, because that was very well put. But I just keep thinking back to the fact that I really do agree with what you guys said about how there was no correct answer at the end of the day for Janeway. No matter what she did, someone was going to be upset about it. And there was levels of in the right in both camps on it.

But there's part of me that just can't help but wonder, was a deciding factor for Janeway the fact that she didn't want to possibly get back to Earth and explain to Tuvok's wife, "Yeah, he melted into another guy and they're another dude now. Bye."

Kennedy: Yeah.

Grace: [unintelligible [00:18:52] way back.

Kennedy: She didn't want to do that to Kes immediately. T'Pol is a tomorrow problem. That's a future problem. Kes is an immediate problem in your face, in your quarters at 11 o'clock at night. You got your good bathrobe on and everything.

Grace: She's got that silky pink negligee thing going on. And I love that for her.

Sue: So, let me present you with another scenario, one that I am straight up stealing from Steve Shives at Trek, actually. [laughs] So, bear with me. It's not this situation. Nobody merged into anybody else and whatever. But let's say, Tuvok and Neelix have been captured by the Kazon. And along the way, the ship has picked up this other random guy who is not-- Like, everybody exists all at once. And the Kazon say, "Well, if you give us third random guy so we can kill him, we'll give you Tuvok and Neelix back." Does this change the scenario?

Kennedy: Yeah, immeasurably. Janeway is going to go in there, and figure out a way to get her people back and not hand over this man-- [crosstalk]

Grace: The episode would have definitely ended differently. Yeah. [Sue laughs]

Kennedy: Let's be real. This bitch hacked the Borg, twice. You think she's scared of some Kazon? I feel like I understand where the parallel-- [crosstalk]

Sue: For this thought experiment, that is not an option. [laughs]

Grace: Congratulations. We somehow made the trolley problem even more convoluted.

[laughter]

Grace: We've done it.

Kennedy: I'm just saying like, context is important. Context isn't just for kings.

Grace: Silly rabbit. Context is for kings.

Kennedy: Oh, my gosh.

Sue: So, I have to also point out another, I guess, additional resource from Bright Lights Film, an article titled "Tuvix" and the Warped Humanities, recommended to us by another guest on the podcast that points out a lot of the racial undertones in this episode about how Tuvix is framed as almost preying on Kes at some times, how this happened to the one black main character on the bridge, how he is being executed essentially for not committing a single crime, how a white woman is ordering a black man to death just because she says so.

Kennedy: So, here's the issue that I had with that. I had to preface by saying, I had a visceral reaction to reading this in the notes. My problem with this position, is that to follow that logic, Tuvix is now half black.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Kennedy: So, are we valuing the life of a half black person more than the life of the only black person? Then it starts getting into blood quantum, and that is never a good conversation to have. If we're going to quantify the importance of preserving life that it needs to be the importance of-- I understand the optics look weird and I agree that the optics aren't great, but this uncomfortable position that we're all struggling with the captain's decision would have been just as complicated if this was on *Deep Space Nine*. It wouldn't have been complicated for the same reasons, but it still would have been a tough decision for Sisko to make. It would be a tough decision for Picard to make, be a tough decision for Archer to make.

So, yes, the optics look shitty. The fact that the only black person on this ship is being hauled off in irons essentially. But at the same time, when we start going that route, I don't want to say that we are looking for reasons to be angry, because I don't believe that to be true. I will say that it teeters on the border of whataboutism, which has the possibility of distracting from the actual problem.

I remember specifically when this episode aired, how that particular point of view was the topic of discussion and immediate people that I had to talk about *Star Trek* with. So, I definitely see that and agree with it on a surface level. But if we're going to quantify one level of blackness against the other, that's something I'm not cool with.

Sue: Yeah. No, I don't think that is the intention of this.

Kennedy: I know. I'm sure it isn't, but it's part that's the other half of the sentence, right? It's like the phrase, "The customer is always right. We only use the customer is always right," but the full sentence is "The customer is always right in matter of taste." That means I'm not supposed to give you shit for liking something ugly. That doesn't mean I have to take your shit when you want to act ugly. Another phrase, "Blood is thicker than water." It's the blood of the covenant is thicker than water of whatever the rest of that sentence is.

Sue: Water of the womb.

Grace: Water of the womb, I think.

Kennedy: You see what I'm saying? So, when you finish the rest of that sentence, contextually, it changes. I understand that that was not the intention of this question, and I'm sure this person did not want to take it here, but I'm saying that this is the neck-- If you're going to open this door, this is what that room looks like.

Sue: Right. Well, this article, it's quite long, but I think fascinating. It does point out that essentially Tuvix becomes a mixed character, but also asks the question, would Kes be reacting the same way, and freaked out by his advances if he were white and not mixed or not black?

Kennedy: Well, in this case, that's not quite possible, because Neelix isn't white. Neelix is a Talaxian. If we're being really, really real about it, Tuvok isn't black. He's a Vulcan. So, yes, I get it, I get it. This is the rest of the problem, if we look at it from that perspective, because I can't-- There's in quantifiable amounts of times where in American history alone, people with mixed race heritage are valued higher than people who aren't. And if we're going to take it there, then we need to take it all the way there as well. That's not a pool you can just put your toe in. You have to get in it.

So, it's an uncomfortable position to think about. I'm glad that article exists. But I just want folks to know, like, that's the other end of this conversation. I'm not opposed to having that conversation certainly, but I feel like a lot of people want to take those types of positions on things, not necessarily to be incendiary intentionally, but without considering the fact that the rest of that conversation is something that they may or may not be prepared to have.

Grace: Yeah. That's an absolutely fair response, I think.

Sue: I worry that I am not conveying this article correctly.

Kennedy: No, no, I understand what you're saying.

Sue: Okay.

Kennedy: I truly am. I hope that everyone who hears this understands, not only what you're trying to say but understands that I understand what you're trying to say as well. I'm saying that like, on the surface, those conversations are important. But the entire conversation is important as well.

Grace: It's true. It's definitely one of those-- Even as a theoretical talking about so many aspects of this episode, you can't just slim it down and talk about a portion of the implication, because there's a bigger implication behind it that you would need to talk about and address. I think that's, again, another one of the gifts and issues of sci-fi is there's so many ways--

When something is so widely interpretable, there's a lot of different ways to take it. Unfortunately, that can be taken to places that aren't very good. Not to say that is necessarily a bad take across the board, but there are places that can be taken that you do not need to go to or that are uncomfortable. Yeah.

Kennedy: Yeah. If it's something that you're unfamiliar with, if you're going to have the rest of that conversation to your point, Grace, and it's something that you might not be comfortable with, be mindful of that.

Grace and Sue: Mm-hmm.

Kennedy: Obviously, this goes to any kind of argument one would try to make and support in a discussion *Star Trek* or nah. But particularly, if we're going to get into the nuanced sociological implications of depictions of mixed and race people's life being questioned as to being more valuable than others, that's surface level, yeah, have the conversation. But if you're not prepared to have the entire conversation, I feel like that I can't-- That's something that an individual needs to reconcile with on their own. Like, you need to either do the work, do the research, sit with yourself, think about why you come to certain decisions for whatever reasons. That's something I feel like is a lot more catered and curated experience.

But I don't want people to think that I don't want folks to have this conversation, because it is super important to have. But just like everything else that came up in workplaces in 2020 surrounding diversity, equity and inclusion, like, yeah, it's great that you have marginalized people working in this office. But if you're not understanding how your actions are inherently racist, or bigoted or whatever the case may be, then is this really the place where this person needs to be? Have you created a safe place for this person to thrive? I feel like that's the same kind of thing here.

I see what the point of the article was, Sue, and I just want to be clear that I'm not disagreeing with that observation, because I definitely made it as well. I'm just saying it's a bigger conversation than a couple sentences.

Sue: Oh, a 100%.

Grace: The problem is so much wider and more complicated and nuanced conversations can't really be had in a single article about a single episode of *Star Trek*. There isn't really the space there for that unfortunately.

Sue: Right. Yeah.

Kennedy: But also, this is the purpose of episodes like this, is to have conversations like this. Dang, how do we set up a debate and still end up agreeing with each other? [laughs]

Grace: I've got some bullshit to pull out later. Don't worry.

[laughter]

Grace: I have surprise witness after surprise witness.

Kennedy: Oh, my gosh.

Sue: [laughs]

Grace: I am going to befuddle the jury. And if William Shatner taught me anything, it's just come out in front of a jury and repeat your own name many, many times until they find it charming.

Sue: The jury is my cats. [laughs]

Grace: I need you to hold up your cat to the computer for just a second, so I can get this out of the way. Just hold your cat up right now.

Sue: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Grace: Denny Crane. [Sue [laughs] Denny Crane. I will now have an Emmy in the mail for playing a lawyer.

Sue: Let's talk about the decision-making process in this episode. Look, there's a lot. Kes at least admits to Janeway that she's being selfish in her want to have Neelix back.

Grace: Yeah.

Sue: I actually very much appreciate that, because she's like, "I know it sounds bad, but it's the truth."

Grace: Yeah. We get a lot of Kes having to be-- Because this probably a weird experience for Kes to say the very least, but we do really got to get to see her as one of the major-- What's the word I'm trying to look for here? One of the major frames through which we see this whole thing happen is how it's affecting Kes specifically, both as someone who's close to Neelix's romantic partner and has this respect and camaraderie with Tuvok and just her being like, "I don't know how to deal with this."

On one hand, that's sad to see. On the other hand though, she's also in an impossible situation, like Janeway, because these are people that she cares about. And though this is a new third person who is friends with her, and she seems to be getting along with and all that, there's still the fact that it's not these two previous people she had as a support element in her life.

Kennedy: See, that's what I'm saying. Is it her being selfish or is it her being realistic? Because she knows that her mandem and her homie didn't consent to this.

Grace: I think it's genuinely her having to be the emotional load bearer in this situation in a way that I feel like Kes has to do for a lot of guy characters throughout the run of *Voyager*. And just her having to be the one to take the emotional brunt for everybody's feelings, like, not in an outbursty kind of way, but sometimes in a, "Oh, Kes, you're the only one who understands. I'm going to vent at you. This is so not part of your job. You are not a trained and licensed healthcare professional. You're literally the first aid girl in the doctor's office. You are the lady in the principal's office who hands out Band-Aid's and lollipops, and we are putting all this emotional shit on you."

Kennedy: Not to mention you just got here. [laughs]

Sue: It's been two years.

Kennedy: No, I'm talking about lived experience.

Grace: She is a child.

Kennedy: She's not. No, she's not a child. She's an adult. She's just--

Grace: An adult with limited learned experience.

Kennedy: Yes, precisely that.

Grace: So, the amount of pressure that she is already under with all of that and then this on top of it, I can absolutely understand that, she was like, "I can't really deal with this right now."

Kennedy: Yeah. And honestly, she should not have been put in that position. I agree with Janeway on that. If he was truly trying to discern himself as an individual, independent from these two-parent people, then he should have never tried to talk to Kes. Here's why I get so adamant about this is, because Janeway had a relationship with Tuvok and Kes had a relationship with Neelix. Different types of relationships, but intense relationships, just the same.

Sue: mm-hmm.

Kennedy: Tuvix did not try to emotionally manipulate Janeway the entire time he was there.

Grace: Well, he knew she could outrank him and shut that shit down as soon as she needed to.

Kennedy: Right. Only at the last moment, when he was pleading for his life, which was difficult to watch, honestly.

Grace: Yeah.

Kennedy: But he worked on Kes. He tries to say he gives her space or whatever, but he really leaned into her at first. He literally love bombed her. Literally love bombed her.

Grace: He love bombed her and then he pity bombed her. He comes to her alone, not with other people in this situation to beg his life from her. A person who has so little actual influence over this situation, that in itself is pretty manipulative to try and put a person who's not in a position and has specifically tried to say, "I'm not the person to make this call," and then to say, "Can't you just put in a good word for me?" That's pretty messed up.

Kennedy: Yeah. That type of lying, and manipulation, and complete and utter disregard for the emotional wellbeing of your crewmates is what landed-- Oh, geez, what's Brad Dourif's character? The Betazoid. The murderous Betazoid.

Grace: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kennedy: That's why he was in the brig.

Grace: That's why he was in the brig. Yeah.

Kennedy: No, he wasn't even in the brig. He was confined to quarters for a season and a half, because nobody could deal with his anti-social, narcissistic, manipulative, violent behavior. So, you going to go to Kes, the literal youngest out of all of us, and try to appeal to her? It's violent. It's violent.

Grace: If not violent, then definitely manipulative in a way that's not cool. And on one hand, I can totally see desperation makes you do stupid shit.

Kennedy: Sure. But if you were really trying to make your case-- I'm an individual person. I'm a whole different person. "Leave her alone. She's too young for you."

Grace: If you are an individual, then maybe not pick someone that both of the people you are made from are emotionally invested in the welfare of--

Kennedy: Period.

Grace: Make some new friends. See what happens. Show us you're a new man. Don't tell us.

Kennedy: There are literally 147 other people you could be friends with.

Grace: Wouldn't it have been great if this episode had just had a whole montage of Tuvix making friends with, and hanging out with people like we were super rarely see and just being like, "Oh, yeah, I've opened up to a whole new group of friends. I don't know why I'm just hanging out with the bridge crew so often." Weird, right?

Kennedy: I'll see that, Grace. I'll see him like a montage of him, but chumming up with everybody, only for them to-- The plot twist is that when he leaves, everybody's like, "Oh, God, I can't wait for Tuvok to come back." I never thought I'd [Sue laughs] miss Tuvok. But holy shit, this dude is annoying." That would have been so good.

Grace: So, the opening scene that we get for the episode is just Tuvok trying to deal with Neelix and his intense over gregarious theater kid energy.

Kennedy: And just disregard for Tuvok's culture.

Grace: And like him just being like, "Okay, can you dial it back?" And him going, "No, I'm going to dial it up just because of that."

Kennedy: "What? I'm annoying? Here's a funeral dirge." Like, "What?"

Grace: "I am going to have a fun time singing a thing that your culture associates with grief. Da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da. Pick flowers with me, Mr. Vulcan." We talk about Mr. Vulcan also. That's racist.

Sue: He does call him Mr. Tuvok, a second later.

Grace: He keeps calling him Mr. Vulcan. There's no one else on the crew who he does that with. He doesn't call B'Elanna, Ms. Klingon or anything like that.

Sue: That's true.

Kennedy: I do feel that there's like some interesting-- It's the typical force Vulcans to be more likable trope in *Star Trek*. And this is a thing. Now that we're talking about Neelix's behavior in the beginning of this episode, Tuvix is particularly dangerous, in my opinion, because he utilizes a Talaxian's gregariousness, charisma, charming, personable personness with the calculating logic of an experienced old Vulcan tactical officer.

Sue: He's an INTJ. No, he's an ENTJ.

Kennedy: I never understood those personality things. What does that mean?

Grace: It's like star signs for people who went to college, if I'm correctly understanding it.

Sue: Yes [laughs]

Kennedy: Holy smokes.

Sue: What is it? Extrovert, intuitive, thinking, judging.

Grace: What I'm saying is, if you don't like Tuvix, you can at least respect the fact that he is having to internally have the battle between his inner Tuvok and his inner, "Oh, this is so cringe at all times," if I may say that. It's just like, okay, so he's really not going to stop every 10 minutes and go, "Oh, God, that thing I did two days ago was really annoying. [Sue laughs] Oh, shit, Neelix thought that was cute? Argh."

Kennedy: Yeah. Tuvix does not have self-awareness. Not as much as he thinks he does.

Sue: Or, at least not anxiety. So, Tuvix, a 100%, yes, manipulates Kes. Agreed. We're all agreed on that. I'm not sure. I think he does manipulate Janeway, but he does it differently because he knows her. He's not trying to pull on her heartstrings. He's trying to ingratiate himself to her.

Grace: Which someone who has been Tuvok knows how to do.

Sue: He says, "Let me back on the bridge." He says, "Let me into the staff meeting. Let me solve your problems." He's the one who figures out exactly how the flower, the orchid merged them.

Grace: In a really ridiculous way by yelling out sex in a meeting.

Sue: Like you do. I definitely do that all the time.

Grace: Who among us hasn't?

Kennedy: Neelix goofy ass wouldn't even do that. "What are you doing, dawg?" Like, "Stop talking."

Sue: He fixes something overnight that Tuvok thought would take 10 days to do. He is cooking and he's doing tactical work. He's manipulating Janeway in the way that you manipulate a scientist, not emotionally, but with work.

Grace: What if Tuvix like with access to Tuvok's thoughts and memories, was fully aware-- Oh, Tuvok just wanted buffer time on this project. He could have [Sue laughs] done it in two hours, but priorities. He had to delegate shit. So, now I'm going to come out the hero and Tuvix saved the day.

Kennedy: Yeah. To both your point, Grace, and your point, Sue, him "improving the crepes by making them less." What? Neelix didn't tell you to do that? You know what I'm saying? If we're still sticking to the thing, the position that Tuvok is, in fact black. I know he likes spicy food. I know [Sue laughs] his plomeek soup is extra spicy. So please, what are you trying to do, except love bomb with an equation instead of--

Sue: Right.

Grace: There are many different ways to love bomb, and that's one of the things that Tuvix shows us.

Sue: So, decision-making process. We're still there, I swear.

[laughter]

Sue: There's a scene with Janeway and Chakotay, I believe, where they're talking-- We brought it up earlier, where she says, "If we had a way to separate him right away, I wouldn't have thought twice about it." She literally has the line, "At what point did he become an

individual and not a transporter accident?" which hit me in an upsetting way that I was not expecting.

Kennedy: It also proves to the humanity of Janeway that she's not just making this decision all willy-nilly, you know?

Sue: But why does the length of time matter? Why does it matter if he has existed for a minute, or a day or several weeks?

Grace: Because once you've been forced to actually see someone as an individual and think of them as a person rather than the outcome of some upsetting event, you're going to be having a harder time thinking of them as something that you can get rid of or someone whose presence will be missed.

Sue: So, maybe this is also *Voyager's I, Borg*, is what you're saying?

Grace: I'm being really morbid and thinking to *The Silence of the Lambs*, where [Sue laughs] they realize when they see the senator talking to Buffalo Bill on the news, that she's going out of her way to use Kathryn's first name as much as possible to make it, so that it's harder and harder for him to see her as an object, the more he hears her name. That was your Grace's morbid moment for the episode right there.

Kennedy: I feel like the length of time matters in science, because as a scientist, she understands that not everything is going to yield immediate results, especially if they have to think tank their way into a solution in the first place. So, I feel like they weren't thinking of him as an individual at that point, because they were still under the impression that they could reverse the effects. I don't want to say fix it, but reverse the effects of what's going on.

Grace: The more time he is there is the more time he is able to mingle among the crew and make himself seen as an individual also. So, more time to charm people with his Talaxian ways and mushroom crepes evidently.

Kennedy: Yeah. But not only that, it makes me think of a conversation that I had with a friend of the show, Michele, Dr. Foss. We were talking about the importance of Michael Burnham and how where is academia on this, where are the papers? She said in that moment, "It takes time. They're coming. But academia takes a little bit longer to produce those type of results when it comes to data."

So, I took that to mean that it wasn't necessarily her placing value on his life at a certain point of it. It was more of, "I'm not going to get attached--" I'm going to try not to get attached anyway, because it happened regardless. "I'm going to try not to get attached while we try to figure this out. If there is a solution." They were keeping an open mind in the event that *Tuvix* was going to be stuck with them for a little bit.

So, yes, at what point does he stop being a teleporter accident and start being an individual? I say all this from the position that I'm in, the strength that I can say it, because I don't have to make that decision. I'm not in the Delta Quadrant trying to get home.

Grace: Every day, we can all wake up and be thankful. Thank God, I'm not in the Delta Quadrant. [sue chuckles]

Kennedy: You know what though? The way America's fascism is setting itself up, I don't know. Maybe I would hang out with some Kazon real fast. Who knows?

Grace: Just to show the Kazon what I can do out there in deep space, you know?

Sue: So, can we say that the length of time Tuvix is around does not change the morality of the decision, but it does change the ease with which that decision is made?

Kennedy: Yeah, I can agree to that.

Grace: Yeah, definitely. I think it also definitely would change-- Like I was saying, I think that would change everyone's comfort level with it a lot more. Like, "Oh, for a minute there, Tuvok and Neelix were a different person." And now, it's been a couple weeks, and I'm like, "Oh, no. Shit. Now I know this, I've met this Tuvix guy."

Sue: It takes away that distance.

Grace: Exactly. Yeah.

Kennedy: I'm going to tell you right now, Tom Paris never fricking liked him.

[laughter]

Kennedy: With Tuvix, he looked at me in his face and was like, "Sorry, dawg." [chuckles]

Sue: Yes. Okay, so, Janeway makes her decision. She comes onto the bridge, she calls security, she's like, "Take this guy out of here." Nobody says a word. Nobody stops her, nobody fights, except Tuvix, of course, except for the Doctor. And the Doctor's like, "Medically, this is not ethical." And she's like, "All right, step aside and I'll do it." And he's like, "Okay." [laughs]

Grace: "I'm not going to stop you. Okay. I'm going to just give you angry shake of the head and a wag of the finger and say, 'I disapprove, but I will do nothing to stop you.'"

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Kennedy: Harry Kim literally handed her the murder weapon.

Sue: Yeah.

Grace: [laughs]

Kennedy: He handed her the gun, she put the bullets in herself remotely.

Sue: I've always wished that the doctor either put up more of a fight or that Janeway's reaction was, "Okay. Computer, deactivate medical hologram."

Grace: I think that's part of why he stands up for Tuvix also is because he knows that he could theoretically, if they're saying, "Hey, this isn't actually the way things are supposed to be status quo." They could very easily be like, "Oh, can we reset our back talky emergency medical hologram to factory settings or something?" if they wanted.

Kennedy: Yeah, about to say, to Janeway's credit, she did not go on a tirade. "Deactivate him. Confine everybody to quarters. I said what I said. I'll do it again. Anybody that has a problem can hit this airlock."

Sue: That's because everybody was already so afraid of her that nobody said a word, except for somebody she couldn't kill, because he's a hologram. He is the factory settings.

Grace: We're saying all this Janeway would shoot someone or push him out the airlock if they did say no to her.

Sue: You've seen her with that phaser rifle.

Grace: Okay, that's fair.

Sue: [laughs]

Kennedy: What were they going to do? Mutiny? Put her in-- [crosstalk]

Sue: Yeah.

Grace: Yeah. They're going to mutiny all the way back to Earth. Or, is that what they're going to do?

Kennedy: Listen, I don't know if you know anything about Sister Kathy, but Sister Kathy don't give a good John Brown about your brig, about your Borg, any of that.

Grace: She's just going to turn around all them be like, "Oh, what, you're going to find a new captain?"

Kennedy: Like, "What you going to let this Marquis dude do it?" That is a super important question to ask. Like, no one was going to say anything. I feel like everybody secretly hated Tuvix. I'm going to say it that way. Because the fact that Tom looked him in his face and was like, "Nah, dawg, you got to go." He didn't look ashamed. He didn't look away. He didn't spin around like, "Oh, what is this, so I have to correct this course." He looked him right in his face, in his eyeballs like, "Sorry, man, your crepes suck."

Grace: Thomas Eugene Paris looked into that transporter accident hybrid's very soul and said, "Eh."

Kennedy: I miss the, "Your crepes suck. Your crepes are awful."

Grace: Look, I know Neelix was kind of a romantic rival for me, and Tuvok was kind of a hard ass, but--

Sue: Right. That's my question. Was Tom still into Kes at this point or had he moved on? I don't remember.

Kennedy: At that point, Tom was for the streets.

[laughter]

Grace: Disagree, because we clearly have a scene where he's picking flowers with B'Elanna.

Kennedy: It was solid foreshadowing as well, because he was real, flirty, dirty down on the planet. And she was like, "Whatever, boy. Bye."

Grace: He's like, "I got you a fancy flower."

Kennedy: He said, "Yeah. Yeah. Sure. Sure. Torres to engineering room three."

Grace: Can we also talk about the fact that they were planning to supplement their diet with orchids? They were talking at the beginning of the episode, like, they're getting a protein filled flour to add to our foodstuffs. And it's like, they're going to eat an orchid, the hardest to grow flower that people lose their shit trying to make sprout, a single bud, and you're going to supplement your foodstuffs with that?

Sue: That are just growing wildly on this random planet.

Grace: How many flowers are you going to pick? Are you going to accidentally deforest this planet of its, I don't know, valuable orchid supply?

Kennedy: Mm. Are you going to destabilize this fragile ecosystem because you want to eat?

Grace: Are you Tuvoxing this entire planet?

Sue: Those aren't the ethical questions we're dealing with today. [laughs]

Grace: But what it immediately got me thinking about, and this is a weird outcropping conversation to go on, but it made me think of the Lotus Eaters from *The Odyssey*. Another story famously about a crew stranded far from home trying to do whatever they can to get home through the leadership of an intrepid leader and a lot of mysterious bullshit.

But the story in the Lotus Eaters in *The Odyssey* is they find an island, there's these lovely lotuses, they eat them and they go, "Eh, do we really need to go anywhere. Let's just chill. Let's just hang out." which is funny, because this episode wherein the orchid is, in a way, consumed by Neelix and Tuvok, it takes every conversation of the fandom and completely derails it from going home, because we're all talking about, was this murder, was Janeway totally justified?

Kennedy: I think it's both.

Sue: Both can be true, but we're not there yet.

Kennedy: Okay. All right. [Sue laughs]

Grace: The orchid eaters are the Lotus Eaters of *Star Trek* fandom and can derail any conversation. That's something I appreciate about this episode. [laughs]

Sue: All of these discussions, all of these questions, all of my issues with the Doctor not standing up more, nothing annoys me more in this episode than the fact that it's never brought up again.

Grace: No. That's definitely one of those-- It's top of my list of things that you feel like should have had at least a one or two off. "We've been through some stuff. Remember that time we were merged into one person?" kind of thing, and then just, "Nah, that would mean having to keep track of this tangled web weave story wise."

Sue: Well, they make it such a point of saying that Tuvix has the memories of both Tuvok and Neelix.

Grace: Would that mean that once they're split, now Tuvok has a bunch of Neelix memories and vice versa?

Sue: Right. Do they retain those as separate individuals?

Grace: And if so, does that mean that anytime Tuvok is taking attitude with Neelix, Neelix can be like, "Hey, remember that time in the third grade when you wet your pants in front of the entire class?" Remember that shit? Because I do.

Sue: But not only do they have each other's memories, do they have the same memories of when they were Tuvix of the weeks they spent as Tuvix?

Grace: Oh, no. Neelix has memories of making love to Tuvok's beautiful wife.

Kennedy: No. Oh, God. I would say that they probably do have memories of Tuvix's experiences. I say that because of the way Tuvok looked at Kathryn. He didn't look at her like, "Oh, this is a captain doing what captains need to do." He looked at her like, "Oh, shit, my friend is going to be chopped up on the heels of this. I don't know when the appropriate amount of time should pass before I talk to her. Should I talk--" He looked uncertain. And how often do we see Tuvok looking directionless?

Sue: Right.

Grace: It is very rare. And that's a part of why this really should we saw follow up to, because this was just a run of the-- Not run of the mill. This was just a Tuesday for Neelix and his weird sci-fi shenanigans that keep happening to him. But for Tuvok, this probably was a big life altering experience that was probably pretty painful.

Sue: Well, that's the thing. They would have memories of his panic and his fear when he realized that he was basically going to be murdered. Do they have regrets or guilt about that? This is something that is going to impact them theoretically for the rest of their lives. And it's literally never mentioned again.

Kennedy: I feel like this is one of those situations where military-esque scientific armadas are briefed about in the Academy, where there might be missions, there might be moments, where you as a crew decide never to speak of it again. [Sue laughs]

Grace: Yeah.

Kennedy: We encourage you to utilize the ship counselor. At the very least, get in touch with Starfleet Command, so we could connect you with a therapist to help you psychologically recover from this.

Grace: There's a 31 Section for low key therapists in Starfleet for whoever needs them.

Kennedy: It's the Section 31 therapists.

Grace: Yes.

Kennedy: It's theirs. They're in house.

Sue: Or, is it *Discovery* being erased from the history books when they jump forward in time?

Grace: It raises so many questions, doesn't it?

Kennedy: I feel like both Tuvok and Neelix decided individually and perhaps silently, collectively, that "We weren't going to talk about this, because it brings up too many uncomfortable feelings and I don't want to feel guilty about living my life that was mine to begin with."

Grace: He got Armin Tamzarian. They were like, "You're not Principle Skinner." And they're like, "Yes, I am now. Let us never pretend it was otherwise."

Kennedy: On another level, right? Like, on a different instance rather, I should say. And granted, this was towards the end of the series, so the likelihood of them revisiting it is very small, but that de-evolution episode where--

Grace: That should have been brought up again too.

Kennedy: Where Troi turns into an amphibian, and Riker turns into an ape and Worf turns into a crustacean, which I feel somehow-- no, which I feel definitely informed the creative decisions to make the Klingons look the way they did in *Discovery*, because hello, they have crustacean origins, but I digress.

Grace: But you know why they did it, right? You know why they did it right though, right? Because Worf is crabby?

Sue: Ay.

[laughter]

Grace: Very serious conversation here.

Kennedy: They never, ever, ever brought that up again. Troi was never like "Ayo, Worf. Remember that time you bit me on my face?"

Sue: [laughs] That was hot.

Kennedy: That was weird, right?

Grace: They could have even one off and like, "Hey Barclay, remember that time you got a disease named after you?"

Kennedy: Right. "Hey Barclay, how are you part spider?"

Grace: "Are you okay, bro?"

Kennedy: Barclay never brought it up again. I feel like there are certain-- There's tears of trauma.

Grace: He had a great, great, great grandfather, a Mr. Peter Parker, that was not talked about in the family much. But those genetics are there, and dormant and just waiting to Spidey sense back to life.

Kennedy: Clearly. When the Academy preps you on all of the traumatic experiences you may or may not encounter in space, [chuckles] this one's probably a tier. You may or may not experience some life changing event with your crew, and you all may or may not choose to never speak of it again. This is normal and happens often. End of chapter. [Sue laughs] I feel like nonconsensual splicing [chuckles] should be a chapter on the Captain's track.

Sue: [laughs]

Grace: Hey everybody, this is Women at Warp here. We just want to say for the record, non-consensual gene splicing, that's not cool.

Sue: The more you know-

Kennedy: Just say no.

Sue: -people splicing.

Grace: People splicing. Don't do it.

Sue: Wait. Non-consensual people splicing would be splitting Tuvix into Tuvok and Neelix, because she does not consent.

Kennedy: Thank you, Grace. I appreciate your assistance on this matter. [laughs]

Sue: Did I just win the debate that I'm not?

Kennedy: You won it for me. Thank you. Thank you. [laughs] I rest my case. [laughs]

Sue: No. But that means that Tuvix shouldn't be killed, because he does not consent to being split apart.

Grace: [laughs]

Kennedy: Yeah. But if his two-parent people didn't give consent for him to exist in the first place, at what point does he-- [crosstalk]

Sue: But they're not here anymore.

Kennedy: Are they? They're-- [crosstalk]

Sue: They're dead, essentially.

Kennedy: No, they're both there at the same time, simultaneously.

Sue: No, they're not. He does not have two minds. He has his own individual consciousness that is neither one nor the other.

Grace: I'm not even two people spliced together and I can't be of a single mind. I'm of two minds at all times, so I call bullshit on that. Are you telling me that this guy was mixed from the world's most straight necked Vulcan and the world's most party wild gay from Talaxia, and that there's no mixed feelings whatsoever? I refuse to believe that.

Sue: Clearly, we could talk this in circles forever.

Grace: We already have. That's the beauty of Tuvix.

Sue: What we're going to do now is we're going to take turns. Kennedy's going to go first and tell us why Janeway was right. And then, Grace is going to go and tell us why Tuvix was right. Don't interrupt each other. Closing statements.

Grace: Me? Never.

Sue: Kennedy, go.

Kennedy: I would have a lot more stake in the argument that Tuvix has a right to exist if he didn't conduct himself the way he did. Because I agree with everybody's position on it was murder. He was a sentient being who expressed the right to live, and the Doctor seconded this by not wanting to participate in his demise as well.

However, the way he conducted himself, I am particularly vigilant about violent, anti-social behaviors. And to differentiate between someone who has anti-social behavioral disorder. That's a condition. It's a lot different from someone who exhibits the behaviors. If he wasn't exhibiting dangerous, potentially violent, anti-social behaviors, emotionally manipulating his crew around him, I would have made an argument for his existence, a 110%. But he caught Kes in a vulnerable position and preyed on her. He caught Janeway in a vulnerable position and preyed on her.

We all have the capacity to do awful things. But for someone to act upon it is the discerning factor for me. So, the lives of the many outweigh the needs of the few, a 110% in this, in general, but also in this, because now we've lost these two individual people and what they mean to the people in their lives.

Finally, male captains in this franchise do wild shit all the time. They are lauded, nay, celebrated for their audacity for having the courage to make a tough call. When Janeway makes tough decisions, when Burnham makes tough decisions, hell, when Freeman made a tough decision, when Rachel Garrett made a tough decision on the Enterprise C, all of a sudden, their credentials and their qualifications to hold this position are being challenged, being questioned. But when Sisko blew up an entire Romulan ship just because, and then made a log about it to confess and then said he could live with it, that was an amazing episode.

So, everybody's point of view is valid. I particularly want to stress that Tuvix's right to exist is valid. However, if your existence is contingent upon doing violent and potentially dangerous things to a small group of people in an already perilous situation, you got to go. You got to go computer energized. Thank you for your time.

Sue: Grace?

Grace: Listeners of the jury, my opponent here has given some compelling arguments, most of which I genuinely agree with. Was Tuvix a good guy? Nah, he was kind of a jerk. He emotionally manipulated his way to trying to keep his ass safe, as it were. And was this a situation definitely where the Enterprise needed a fully trained and competent security officer and their Talaxian guide who knew the local area? Yeah, they needed both of those. They needed to be able to have two separate people focused on those two separate things, instead of having one guy half-assing it in both directions, even if he was every now and then getting something good done.

What I posit to you though, is that it wasn't a matter of Janeway being in the wrong. I'm just saying, there was another option that I don't think anyone really even stopped to think about. And that is, I present to you, members of the court, the transporter clone conundrum. Could they have not simply recreated a transporter accident of a different nature? They established they couldn't do this one again and created a second Tuvix, which they left be, and another one which they took apart allowing everyone to have their beloved crew members back.

I genuinely agree with what Kennedy says in that I think this crew didn't want that. They just didn't care enough to find a way to make Tuvix continue. They said, "We could probably rethink this, like how many decades old sci-fi franchise? We can totally bullshit our way into this. But nah, at the end of the day, it's the status quo that's the most important part." And

going back to the main framing of the show and having those same two guys names in the credits at the beginning.

Now, we hear very often that some things done are just not the Starfleet way. But in this episode, we establish sometimes that dragging a man begging for his own life to a medical chamber to possibly have his existence terminated isn't not the Starfleet way, which isn't great, but that's how TV writing goes sometimes.

Now, that's not a perfect answer, but that's the one I got. What I'm saying is I feel like had the writers wanted to, they could have saved Tuvix, which I know is a really obvious like, well, yeah, if they wanted to end it differently, they could have. But this is just another case of, this was an interesting character made together of other characters. And could we have seen a bunch of interesting stuff from them? Yeah. But at the end of the day, we don't, because the show is what it is, and what it has is this specific set of characters.

Sue: Ultimately, it is Ethan Phillips and Tim Russ who had the contracts.

Grace: Exactly.

Sue: [laughs]

Kennedy: Right. That is no tea, no shade when it comes to Tom Wright, because he was exceptional.

Grace: He did a terrific job. I'm amazed that they were able to find a guy who looked so much-- like prosthetics aside, that had such a good halfway point look to him. That was really stellar casting there.

Kennedy: It was the inflection for me. It was the way he would switch his voice and cadences between Neelix's perspective and Tuvok's perspective as well. Just for standalone performance in a nonrepeating role. [chuckles] Are there categories for that? Are there awards for that? Because holy smokes.

Grace: Yeah. And would it have been interesting to see in another world, like an offshoot where they did go forward with Tuvix as a crew member? Yeah, that would be very interesting. But that's not the show we're watching unfortunately.

Kennedy: I don't know that Tuvix would have been a good person.

Grace: I never said a good person. I said an interesting person to watch.

Kennedy: Obviously, I don't know for sure and well, none of us will ever know definitively.

Grace: Sure, someone has written a fanfic.

Kennedy: Sure. But there's a fine line between pleading for your life and being manipulative.

Sue: Well, we can see and recognize some of these behaviors as viewers of this episode. But as far as we know, it is never pointed out to Tuvix that he is behaving inappropriately.

Kennedy: No.

Sue: All we see is that Kes is uncomfortable.

Kennedy: Sure.

Grace: The most we get really is at the very end, after he's realized no one is going to stand up for him, he addresses the whole room and is like, "You're all going to have to live with this for the rest of your lives. And I forgive you for that." You have to ask yourself, was that an act of emotional manipulation too?

Kennedy: For sure.

Sue: But he's also only been alive as Tuvix for about two weeks.

Grace: After that, there's the long trailing shot of Janeway and co leading him down the hallway to the medical lab. It's a kind of meandering shot with Janeway, giving him side eye. I kept thinking, as I rewatched, "Shit. Is he going to attack her? Is that going to have [Sue laughs] been his final, 'Oops, I was actually an asshole moment.?'"

Sue: But we don't know, because nobody ever wrote it, whether if he had survived, if he had stayed on that ship further, if he would have addressed this behavior, if he would have gotten over Kes, if anybody would have said, "Hey, you really need to chill out," if he would have, I don't know, written a therapist, holodeck program.

Kennedy: Mm-hmm.

Sue: Who knows?

Grace: He and Brad Dourif could have been accountabilibuddies together.

Kennedy: Accountabilibuddies. I love that.

Grace: They could have been each other's sponsor-

Kennedy: Oh, my gosh.

Grace: -for being in lockdown on the trip home.

Kennedy: Here's my response to that position, Sue. We don't know, because it wasn't written how he would have conducted himself certainly. All we can judge him on is what we've seen. I think the truly frightening part about Tuvix and the way he's chosen to conduct himself is the fact that he's using-- I don't want to say the worst parts, but the more difficult parts of each individual to his advantage.

He's using Tuvok's supreme intellectual and logic to solve the problem that he perceives. He uses Neelix's charisma to execute that solution. To put it this way, to utilize that logic to put that to use. And that is something that through all of their emotional training, a Vulcan wouldn't do unless they're intentionally a scumbag. I'm thinking about the Vulcan in *Picard*, who's an excellent character, by the way. [laughs]

Vulcans have gone through enough emotional, psychological training to know, "Yes, I have the ability to manipulate this entire room into doing whatever the freak I want. But logically, I'm not going to do it, because I have more discipline."

Grace: Because that wouldn't be cool, bro.

Kennedy: Yeah, they have more emotional-- even though they're reckless with emotions. And in terms of how other people's emotions are. They are more disciplined than that to allow-- [sighs] Tuvix is like someone having a Maserati, and you're going to have the keys

and you're going to have the valet take them to wherever that is. Your valet is two weeks old and might physically be an adult, physically capable to actually move this vehicle and drive it correctly, but has the emotional responsibility of somebody who's two weeks old. He's going to do whatever he wants with it. He's going to try to do pull wheelies and shit in the middle of the street and not get caught, you know?

Grace: Your valet is Emma Stone in *Poor Things* and your car is not insured.

Kennedy: Okay. So, with great power-- Speaking of *Spider man*, speaking of Peter Parker, "With great power comes great responsibility." And Tuvix did not show us that he had the emotional responsibility to make the correct decisions.

Sue: It is a little bit concerning that Janeway just lets him take over tactical so quickly.

Kennedy: At first, she was like, "Mm. I don't know."

Sue: And then, he was like, "You're pretty." [laughs]

Kennedy: "I don't really know you. [laughs] "But Kes I love you, okay? I don't know you."

Grace: "But Kes I love you." Yeah, I get that reaction a lot.

Kennedy: Yeah, that seems to be theme.

Grace: That doesn't make you special.

Kennedy: Seriously, get in line. Take a number.

Sue: Actually, I'm impressed that they had Kes' reaction to that statement be, "I don't know you." Because that feels very unvoyager. [laughs]

Kennedy: Yeah.

Grace: That's what I say to the majority of the guys who tell me I'm attractive. [laughs]

Sue: So, *Tuvix*.

Grace: It's amazing how an episode about bringing two people together can pull people apart. So, you see--

[laughter]

Sue: We're talking about the power of a single appearance on *Star Trek*. We're the cause of heated debates for 30 years.

Kennedy: 30 years.

Grace: [Sue laughs] And probably 30 more.

Kennedy: Unreal. I also think it's interesting that this is a debate, and Grace and I still found ways to agree with each other. [laughs]

Grace: I can't help it if you're very level headed and have fair things to say.

Kennedy: I can't help it that you are advocating for a life that's valid.

[laughter]

Sue: Facts are facts. And the fact is that Janeway murdered Tuvix. The question is whether she should or shouldn't have. [laughs]

Grace: It wasn't a perfect situation, but it's what happened.

Kennedy: Absolutely. Because she didn't want to deal with T'Pol when they got back.

Grace: No. No. Do you want to be the one to look Tuvok's adorable little children in the eyes and say, "This is your new sort of dad."

Kennedy: Oh, well, they're adults at that point.

Grace: Oh, yeah. They're adult adorable little Vulcan eyes.

Kennedy: You don't want to look those cute little Vulcan grandbabies of his in his face and say, "Sorry, kid."

Grace: "Your pop makes different crepes now."

Kennedy: "Sorry, kid. His crepes are better." They like, "What?"

Sue: [laughs]

Grace: "You don't understand, kids. He's really good at science, so he traded your grandpa in."

Kennedy: Right. I also want to remind the jury that later on, Kathryn Janeway demonstrates that she is willing to move heaven and several types of Earth to get Tuvok back.

Grace: True. Absolutely true.

Kennedy: So, you know--

Grace: There's is a bond that cannot be broken.

Sue: And that is the crux of the issue. [laughs] All right. So, on that note, that is maybe not all the time we have for the day, but all the time we're going to spend on this topic for the day. [laughs]

Kennedy: Yeah. Sure. For sure.

Grace: That's what we got.

Kennedy: Fight amongst yourselves, I suppose. [laughs]

Grace: Like it or leave it.

Sue: Grace, is there anywhere you want to direct people, or anything you want to promote or shoutout or--

Grace: You can find me across the internet under the name BonecrusherJenk. I've been doing art streams with cartoonist, Kel McDonald, every now and then. But I'm just out there, except no substitutes.

Sue: And Kennedy?

Kennedy: You can reach me at *kennedy@womenatwarp.com*. Pew-pew.

Sue: Pew-pew-pew-pew. Fab. And I'm Sue. I recently joined BlueSky, so I'm there now.

Grace: Oh, yeah. I'm there too.

Sue: *@spaltor.bsky.social*? Is that what it is? I don't know. It's the same username I had on Twitter, which is the only dead name I'll ever use. It's Twitter.

Kennedy: [laughs]

Grace: I feel like we're all obligated to use that one.

Sue: Right.

Grace: Yeah.

Kennedy: Yeah. If you're going to sit here and politically advocate for the literal erasure of an entire group of people, several groups of people, I'm going to dead name your shit.

Grace: We're going to dead name your product, left and right.

Kennedy: Period. You're welcome, because nobody-- [crosstalk]

Grace: We will do it with joy.

Sue: Oh. We're getting feisty with two episodes left, huh?

Kennedy: You know what?

Grace: I don't know if you've noticed, but we've got some feelings these days. [Sue laughs]

Kennedy: This is what happens when you abuse the podcasters in your digital neighborhood. [laughs]

Grace: Yes, this is what happens.

Kennedy: We all get fed up with your shit and tell you how we actually feel. That's not true, because we have told you how we actually feel.

Sue: This whole time.

Kennedy: We tell you the rest. We talked about the rest of conversations earlier. This is the rest of those sentences. [laughs]

Sue: All right. 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, because we're still on Meta, *@womenatwarp*. Thanks so much for listening.

[Women at Warp theme]

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