

Inner Whispers
by Carol Sandford

She'd turned him away again.

Will watched her rigid back walk away from him and knew she was hiding her tears. What was he going to do to get her to see past him and past his outer shell. Past the point of friendship?

He needed her. Will Riker needed Beverly Crusher. Not Odan, nor his own aching, longing libido. ~He~ needed her, but she couldn't see past his face. Hell, she couldn't even look him straight in the eye, and he wished she would and then she would know.

He saw it in her eyes as she stood before him; Pain. The pain of wanting what was within him but not who was on the outside, but the outside was him, it always would be, no matter what. No matter how long he was going to be the holder of the being that she loved, it would still be her commanding officer. Her friend. A friend that needed her, but not in the way that she expected.

If only she knew. If only she knew that the needing wasn't all Odan. In the few miserable, agonising hours he had been the host, Will had seen a side of Beverly that he had never seen before, and he wanted her, almost as much as the being inside him.

He wondered if Odan had realised. God, he must be a fool if he didn't, it was written all over his face. It was in his touch when he reached out for her. and in his eyes for every one to see. His head was filled with nothing but her. His dreams tormented his soul, a soul that was being shared with another that wanted the same thing.

Will couldn't hide his traitorous mind, body and soul any more than it took his fevered body to struggle for breath for himself and Odan. Each painful breath was a constant reminder that he was fighting against an entity that hungered for the same thing as he.

Deanna had seen it. She had witnessed the hunger. She had felt it.

The hunger was raw and it was consuming him; the constant struggle to suppress his needs for Odans. The constant battle of Odans inner whispers trying valiantly to hold on to what was rightfully his. Odan was the one who was in love with Beverly Crusher. Odan was the one she wanted. Truly and desperately wanted.

Not him.

He was not enough for her to reach out, forget, and touch him. Nor was he enough for her to step beyond their friendship to put them both out of their misery. Not even enough to just ~try~ All he wanted was a little while, just long enough for him to see past Odan's and recognise what he was feeling for her.

Him. William Riker.

He had to try harder. He had to make her forget. Somehow Will had to get her to look into his eyes, just for a moment - an instant, just long enough for her to see, and feel, ~him~

Somehow.

Somehow Will had to reach out to her, touch and hang on, it was all he needed to do. For once he had touched her, he knew Beverly would be lost, not only to Odans heart, but to his too.