

Time Out
by Carol Sandford

"He loves me, he loves me not...I wonder if he really does, what do you think Bev, do you think Will loves me, I mean, REALLY loves me?"

Deanna lay on her side in the rich green grass plucking the individual petals off a tiny, delicate daisy. Propped up on her elbow, she lost herself as she pondered the question. A while ago, she would never have asked such an idiotic question, of course Will loved her, when had he NOT loved her?

But now...now she lay here, soaking up the sun, the peace, and the tranquillity, asking her companion that inane question. The furrows across her brow barely removed the darker woman's prettiness, her dark eyes cloudy with an inner worry that even she had to admit, had no right to be there.

The red-head lay flat on her back, basking in the sun's warmth, her arm slung casually across her eyes, effectively blocking out the world, its worries and everything else that cared to come along.

Deanna watched the knowing grin spread across Beverly Crusher's face, and if she could have seen her eyes they too would have been alive with mirth. Deanna poked her in the ribs with one long finger nail, causing Beverly to yelp with pain following on with a chuckle.

"Oh Deanna, only you would ask a daft question like that, of course Will Riker loves you. Just because you've been married an eternity, and just because he adores your daughter as much as he obviously adores you, I mean how many men still moon over their wives looking like a love sick puppy, complete with a lolling tongue I might add..OW!!"

The sharp slap flew from nowhere, along with an indignant screech,

"Beverly!, Will's tongue does not loll, well, not in public anyway."

The two women fell back into the lush grass laughing like a pair of adolescent schoolgirls. The sound of their happy giggles bounced around the idyllic scene spread out within the holosuite's invisible walls. This was their time, a time to catch up, put life back in order and emerge without a care in the world, back into the soft, welcoming embraces of their loved ones hearts.

A time to look forward, and to look back, with wonder and fond rememberances. A time to rid insecurities and doubts, a time to be themselves, in any format that they chose to be, whether it be a mum or a wife, doctor or counselor, and if they did nothing or something, this time was their time and heaven help anyone who dared intrude.

But best of all, is when they step through the doors after they have put everything to right, leaving that world behind for another day, is walking into the arms of the two people who always met them with arms open wide and a smile even wider, Beverly's long awaited man of her dreams, Jean-Luc and Deanna's eternal love, Will...Her Imzadi.