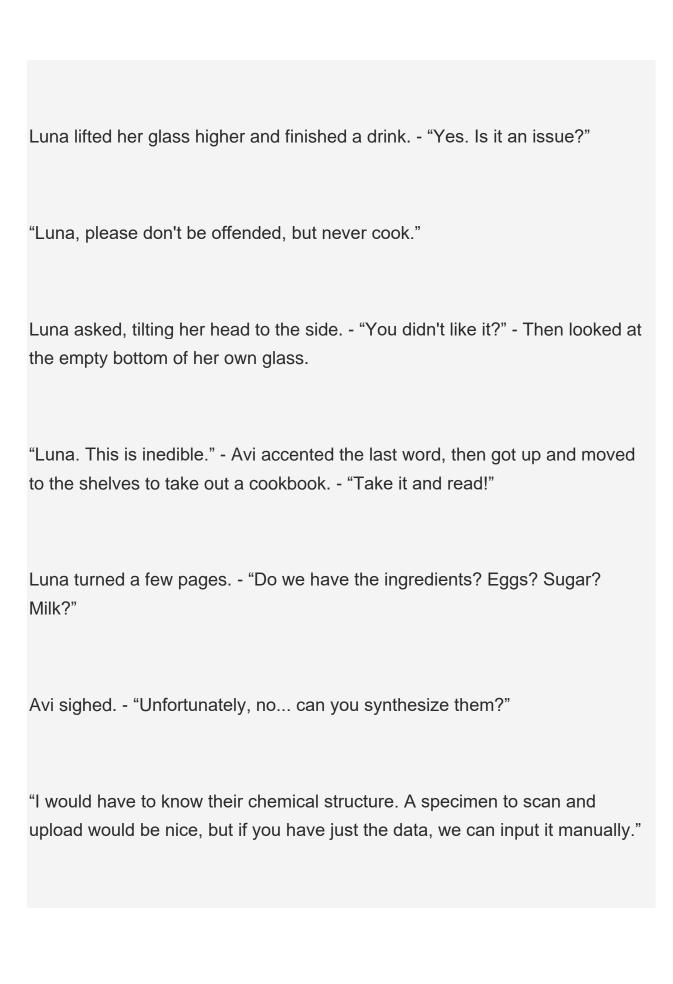
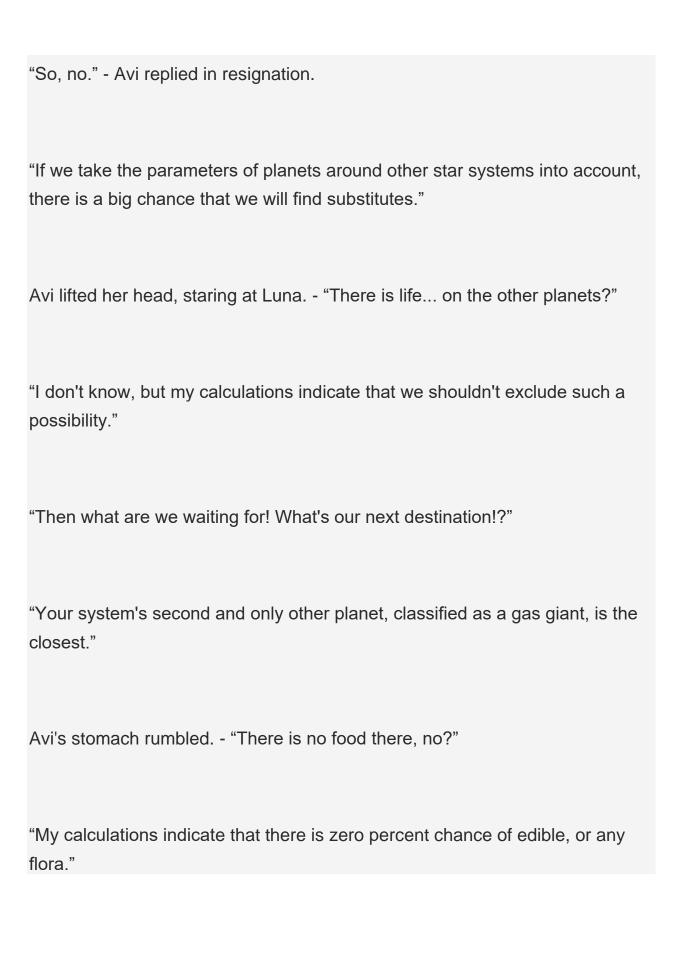
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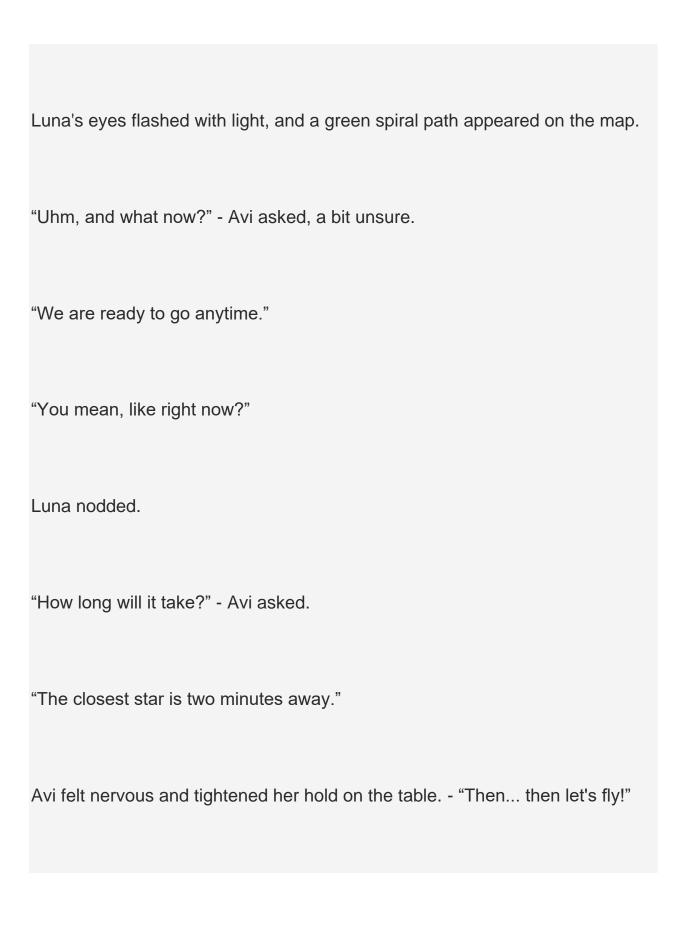
For the rest of the evening, Avi and Luna continued repairs and installed new spaceship modules.
Avi, exhausted, dropped onto the sofa in the garage "I'm thirsty and hungry."
"Leave it to me." - Luna requested, still standing on the ladder and fixing cables under the ceiling.
"You can cook?"
"No, but I'll happily learn. At the same time, we can test our food synthesizer and a kitchen robot."
"Do you need help?"

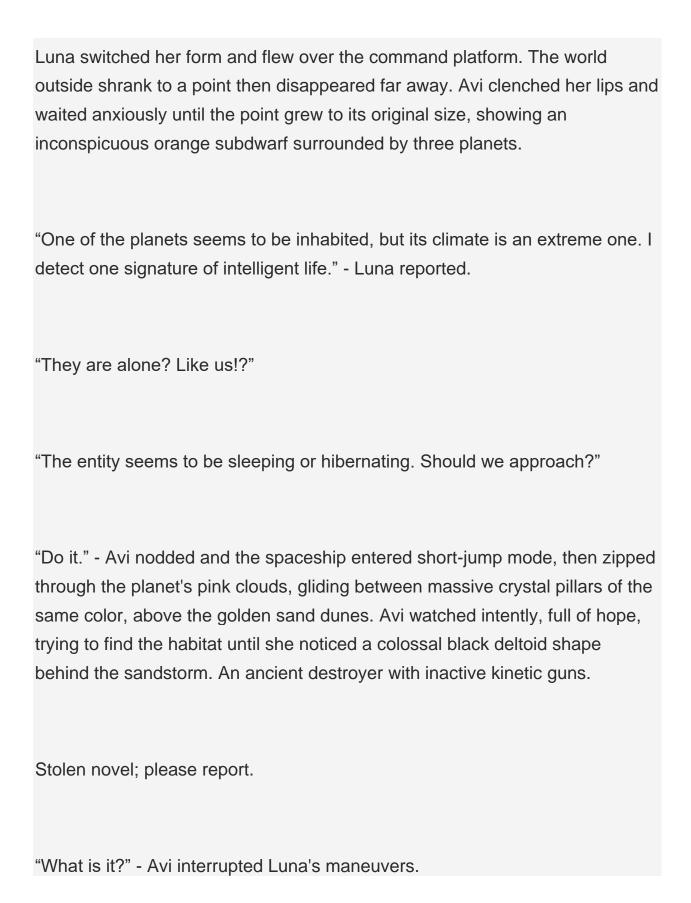
"There is no need, you know perfectly well that I can handle it." Avi couldn't wait. What delicious meal will Luna serve her? Barely five minutes had passed, and Luna was already walking back with two tall glasses filled to the brim. "You wanted to eat and drink, so I took care of both your needs simultaneously." "Ohh..." - Avi examined the brown slush and was doubtful, but when she noticed how Luna was happily drinking, her face smiling and tinted, she gained more confidence, but after barely a sip, her face contorted. - "Luna... what did you add in there?" "A bit of everything. I uploaded strawberries, potatoes, eggplant, and apples to the database, then synthesized more of them, then I spiced it up with cinnamon, pepper, and salt. I wanted to try everything at once. Variety is the mind's paradise." "Potatoes? Raw?"

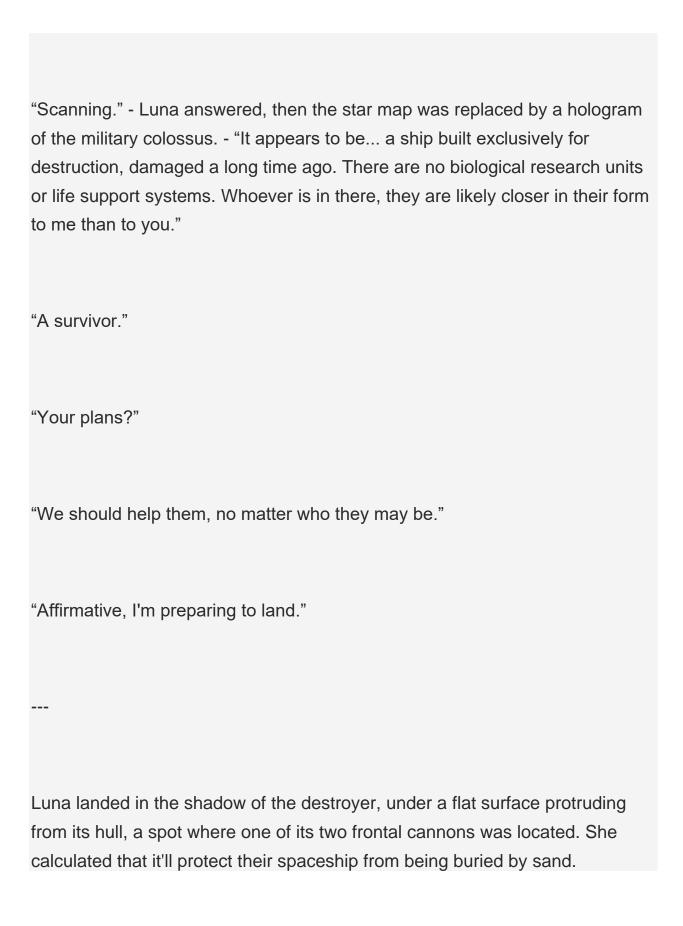


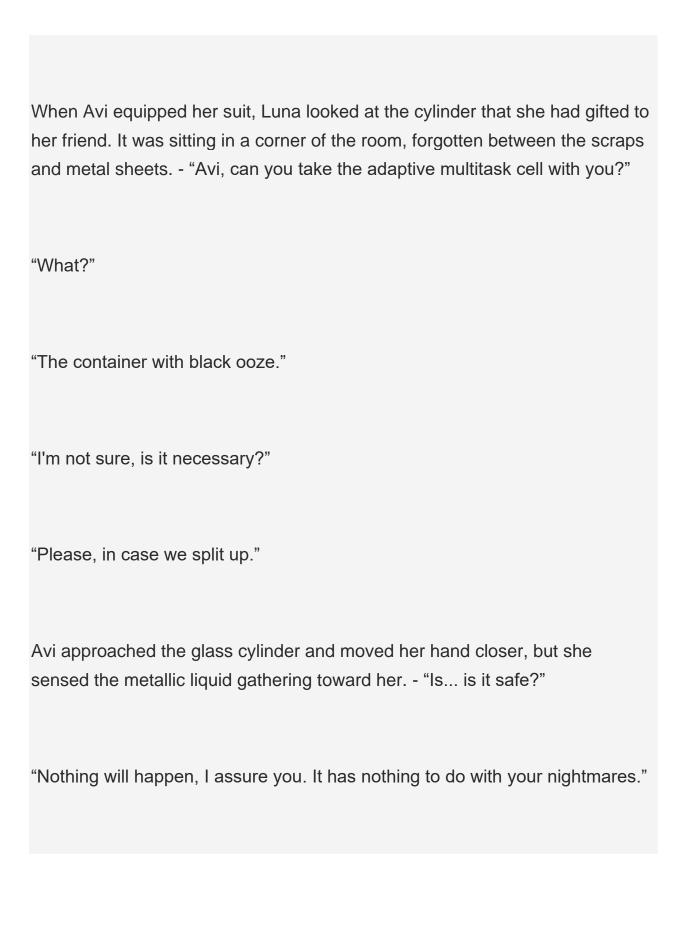


"To the bridge!" - Avi pointed with her finger, but her stomach was loud again "but first, I need to eat something."
In front of Avi and Luna, above the table with a glass of water and raspberries, a map of the universe emerged. Fifty-two stars were shining with pale red, the
closest ones surrounded by two to four planets.
Avi leaned on the table with her hands, then brought her face near the
hologram. Narrowing her eyes, she studied every system, unsure where to fly first.
"Luna, suggestions?"
"It's not important in the long run, but if we want to save time, I can calculate the shortest route across all the stars."
"Do it!"









"Sometimes I feel like you want to serve me a shock therapy." - Avi grabbed the belt and put the cell on her back. She could feel the liquid moving and shuddered a bit. "Thank you." - Luna said, seeing that Avi slowly gets accustomed to the device that was created for her own protection. When the girls exited the spaceship, they were hit by a strong wind and clouds of dust. Avi hastily climbed up the dune that led to a triangular section of the destroyer, where the sandstorm didn't reach. Next to it was a large hole, which suggested that the ship was struck by a huge missile a long time ago. Avi peeked inside. Torn cables obstructed the path to the hole on the other side, which was likely a few miles away, buried in sand. She cautiously walked over the jagged iron edges and entered the deck. She was now surrounded by sleeping machinery and piles of missiles. "Where is our sleeping beauty?" "Higher, on the bridge."

Avi slipped cautiously through the narrow passageways, then climbed cannon barrels, while Luna illuminated her path with a dim light. After about a mile of walking through the tough terrain, Avi hauled herself into a huge hall filled with mobile weaponry. Wherever she looked, there were battle droids slotted into walls, their armors made from black steel and their arms replaced with rotatory miniguns with a crystal triple barrel. Heavy tanks and mechs also rested in the distance, their weapons masterfully crafted from a crimson quartz, similar to droids' guns. The biggest machines were stationed at the center – black spheres with barbed, metal tentacles.

"There are thousands of them. Are they all robots?" - Avi whispered to Luna.

"It appears so." - Luna replied. - "They don't look dangerous, the strength of their total firepower is under the threshold of our shields' durability."

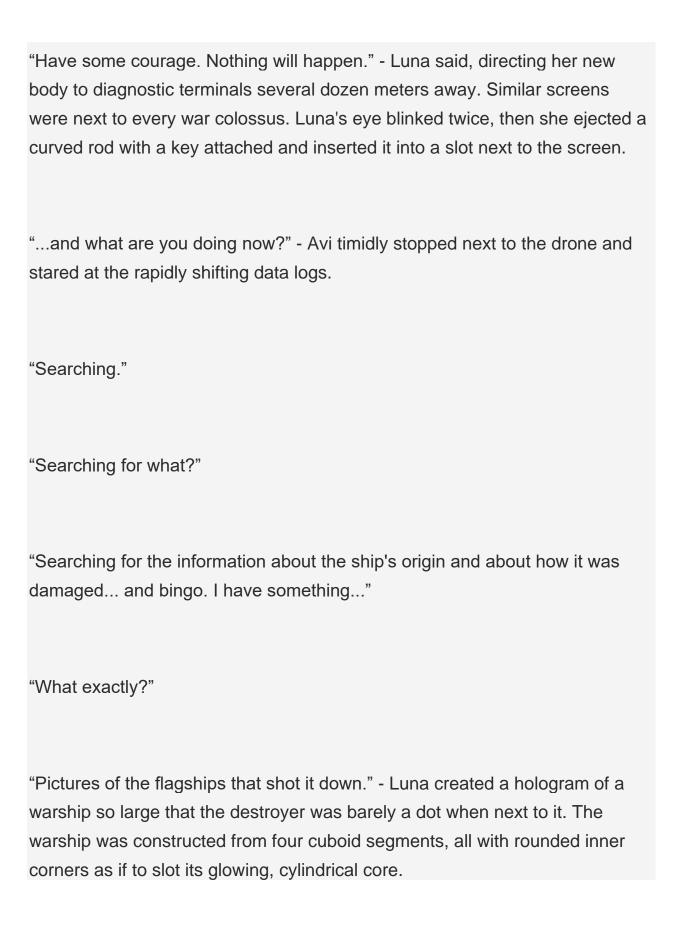
"...but ...they could overwhelm us just with the numbers alone!"

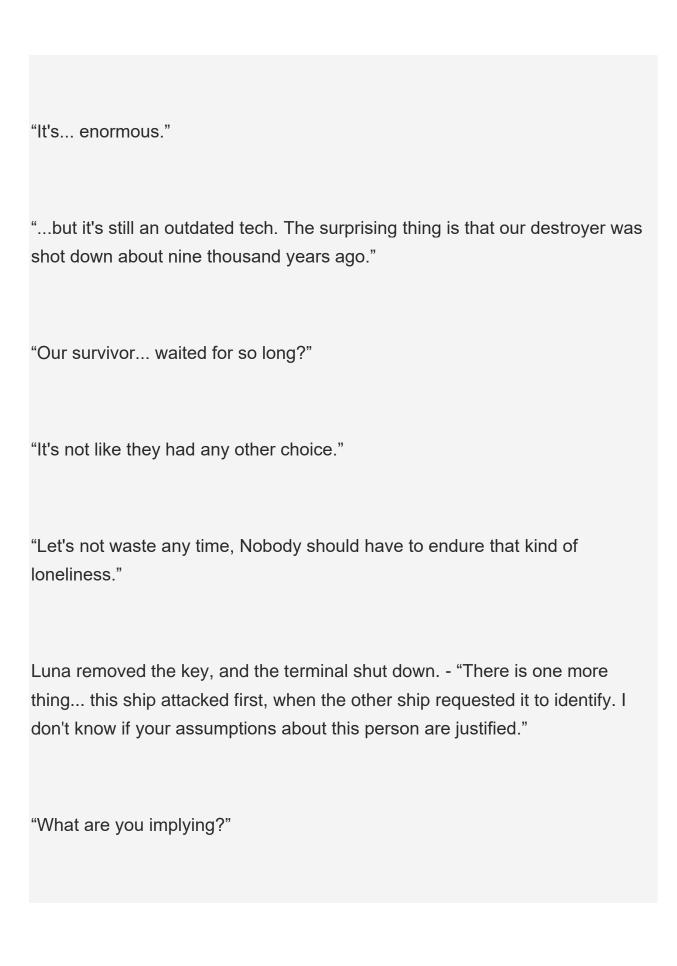
"No worries. My defensive systems can counteract it... and by the way, most of these robots are inactive."

Despite this, Avi felt uneasy. Not only due to the vastness of space, but also because of the robotic red lamps that flickered with red light, like the machines were ready to wake up at any moment. It sent shivers down her spine. Afar,

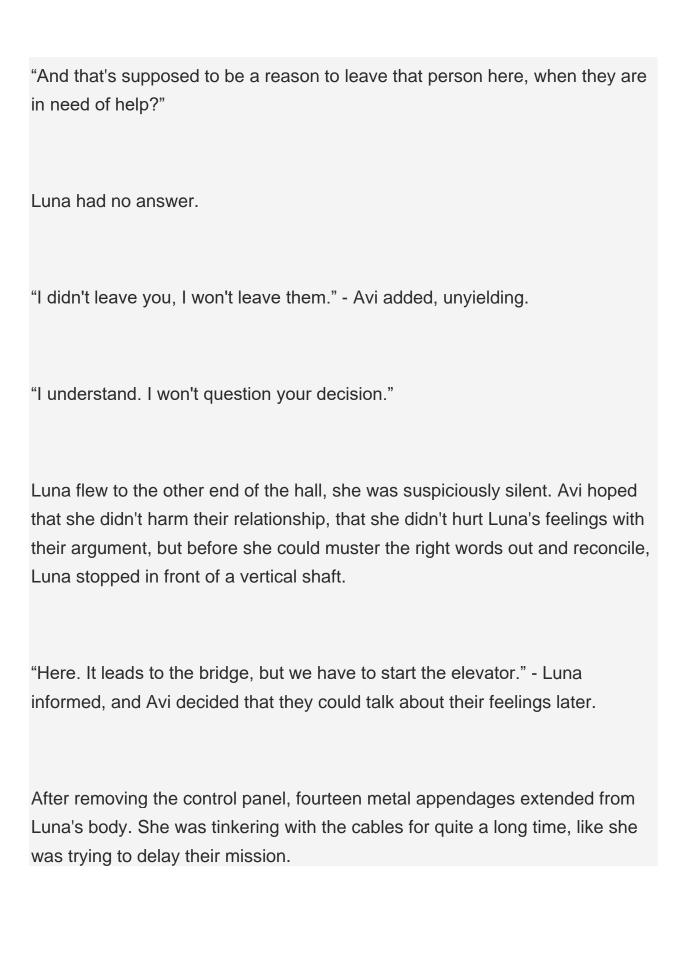
there also was the ominous creaking of the ship's metal, lifted and tossed by the hurricane outside. When Avi walked in the shadows of huge spikes connected to even bigger chains, she noticed a large emblem with an inscription. - "Honor in servitude." She approached the machine and noticed a single shadow cast by a lone repair drone. It was welding the cables next to a removed steel panel. At the beginning, Avi wanted to ignore it, but the drone stopped its activity and stared at the girl with its red cameras. Avi stopped and whispered to Luna. - "You said that they were inactive." "I said, most of them." - Luna whispered back. "What should we do?" "A moment, please." - Luna flew to the robot, and its red pupil dilated inquisitively. Luna's light twinkled, then disappeared inside the robot, who now had a white afterglow. - "Okay, I'm in."







"I'm worried about the lack of data about the origin of the survivor. About who they were and what their goal was. There are no journals or scientific data, there is only a pure analysis of combat capabilities. I can't even tell if the ship ever stopped anywhere, and I think it's on purpose."
"It sounds like their kind doesn't want to be found."
"To me, it looks like they only know war. This ship is just a scout that failed its mission."
"Do you think that we should save our survivor? So much time has passed, you should already know that wars don't last that long!"
"I don't know the nature of conflict. I'm mostly worried about you."
"There is no danger as long as you're with me, that's what you said."
"I just want to be sure of that."





"Luna..." - Avi felt guilty. - "...don't get me wrong, I understand that you care about me a lot, but I want to make my own choices and you should do the same."

"I made my choice already, a long time ago." - Luna replied. - "Go, and return safe."

"I will, it's just a crashed ship. Nothing to be worried about, right?" - Avi smiled weakly to comfort Luna, who didn't delay it anymore and just started the elevator.