

THE LAST STAR

Intermission ~ Daybreak Frontline

“Avi! Avi...” - Luna sobbed quietly, her face buried in her arms as she lay on Avi's chest. This sight was the first thing Avi experienced after waking up.

Disoriented, Avi looked around and noticed that she was back on the ship. -
“Luna?”

Luna's cries got quieter, and she lifted her head, staring at Avi's bloodstained cheeks. Her face tensed all at once, and she burst into silent tears, then wrapped her arms around Avi's neck.

“Ouch... ouch! Careful!” - Avi shouted, and Luna let her go.

“Sorry...” - Luna said, wiping her eyes.

“Don't apologize, you don't have to.”

“I'm sorry... I left you by yourself.”

“No, Luna. I'm sorry. You were right, we shouldn't have gone there.”

“Avi, no... It's because I wanted to go alone. It's my fault... You protected me. Alone... I would... I would...” - More tears trickled down Luna's neck.

“Don't blame yourself, that thing... it set up a trap for you.”

“A trap?” - Luna's eyes widened in shock.

“Ye, it...” - Avi sat up, moaning in pain. - “...waited until you entered the archive, ignored me completely, and attacked it.”

“But it was an anomaly, not an intelligent being.”

“I don't know anything about anomalies, I'm just saying what happened. Besides that, did you find anything that could explain all that?”

“Nothing about the creators. There was only medical video data about biological lifeforms, so that's how I patched you up. Just... your arm...”

Avi looked at her arm, it only needed time. - “A few weeks and I'll be as good as new.”

Luna wiped her eyes again, her lips were trembling. - “It's good to hear.”

Avi leaned in, wrapping her healthy arm around Luna. - “Everything is okay now.”

Luna calmed down and snuggled into Avi. It lasted two minutes, then Luna let Avi go, asking. - “You must be tired and hungry, I'll make something to eat.”

Avi recalled the taste of the brown slush. She stood up immediately and laughed nervously. - “Haha... there is absolutely no need, Luna. See? I'm all fine! Let's me take care of the dinner...”

“...but...”

“No buts!” - Avi, with her teeth clenched, ignored the pain in her legs. - “Avi... is all in one piece and healthy, and she'll whip up something really yummy for us!”

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“...you should...”

“Luna...” - Avi laid her hand on Luna's shoulder and looked her deep in the eyes. “...please. Really, I'm fine.”

Luna scanned Avi from head to toe and muttered quietly. - “Okay.” - Then moved to the recreational room.

“Crisis averted.” - Avi sighed, then grabbed her back and walked to the kitchen. - “Ouch... ouch...”

“Heeeeeere youuuuu gooooo.” - Avi approached with a tray, carrying two fruit shakes and a plate full of slices of new fruits.

Luna picked up her drink and the plate, thanked Avi, then put her meal on the table and turned TV on.

“What are we watching today?” - Avi asked as she sat down on the couch.

“When I was in the archives, I downloaded everything I could, including a full database of videos.”

“Impossible!” - Avi gasped in surprise, then shouted with starry eyes. - “How many videos are there!?”

“Altogether, sixty-three thousand and two hundred thirty-eight films and series.”

Avi's jaw dropped. - “We'll never watch everything!”

“If we were watching without any breaks, it would take us ten years.” - Luna calculated. - “What do you want to start with?”

“History series!”

“Okay... then let's start from the very beginning, boiling oceans from which life first arose...”

When the video started, Avi realized that the beginning of life was no different than the one on Earth, so she was slightly bored. However, seeing that Luna is glued to the screen, she didn't bother her, and fifteen minutes later, when the shifting images started showing tube-like ocean creatures, Avi was fascinated. She sank into the couch and in a few hours, in amazement, was watching the skies dominated by a variety of colorful, bird-like, early humanoids. They watched until very late and Avi fell asleep in front of the TV.

Avi woke up, covered with a blanket. The fruit plates, glasses, and Luna were gone. Still sleepy, Avi shifted along the couch and sat in the corner, staring at the room. Thinking about yesterday's events, she looked at her stiff arm, then

stood up and walked to the hallway, looking for Luna. She found her at the bridge, in her spherical form, over the star map.

“Good morning, Luna, what are you working on?” - Avi asked as she adjusted her hair.

“Good morning, when you were asleep, I allowed myself to restructure one of the rooms. I'm almost done.”

“Oh, a nice surprise. What did you create?”

“A medical center.”

Avi was silent. She understood the practicality of the new room, but she still didn't accept the implications.

“Your shell might require maintenance, so I had to make sure to have access to all the required tools.”

“Luna.”

“Yes?”

“You're worrying too much.”

“I just want to be prepared. In a case... you still want to continue our journey.”

Avi averted her eyes. - “Do you think we should?”

“I... I don't know anymore.”

“All our landings ended in catastrophe.”

Luna didn't answer.

Avi sat in the chair and looked at the stars. - “I never told you... but that thing that attacked me, it resembled the statues of your creators.”

Luna analyzed these words carefully. - "...so, they truly had been here."

"Do you want to find them?"

"I don't care, not anymore."

"I can understand."

"...and you, do you want to find them?"

"I don't know. I'm scared... but I wouldn't want to abandon my dreams due to fear. I... just want to discover a single place with a friendly life."

"So, you want to continue our journey?"

Avi raised her gaze and looked at the next star's yellow light. - "Yes."

"The ship is ready, all it takes is one word."

Avi turned to Luna and, with determination, shouted - "Let's go!"