

PRESENT DAY

"Makkari, where's Kingo?"

"He le." She signs, offering no more explanation.

I frown, looking around for any signs of him and Karun as I walk into the main room once again.

"What do you mean he le?" I ask turning back to her.

She shrugs sadly. He wasn't going to get in the middle of it.

I sigh, shaking my head in disappointment. You could never expect much of Kingo.

I look back at Druig, watching as he scans the room at the remaining of us.

"Look," He starts, breaking the tense silence in the room. "If I'm gonna get myself killed going up against Ikaris, we're going to need a backup plan"

Phastos shrugs. "All of our powers, even if they're amplified by Aurora's energy, aren't enough to kill a Celestial, so..."

"Well, Sersi did turn a Deviant into a tree" I point out, looking at her. "It was amazing"

Phastos' eyebrows shoot up, his head turning sharply towards Sersi.

"I'm sorry and you never thought to tell me that?" He questions at her at the same time as Makkari.

I can't help but smile slightly. Even if we were in the middle of all this, even if there were chances that we didn't survive, I liked that I was beside the people I'd called my family my entire life.

The happy thought doesn't last though, drowned away by Ikaris and Sprite and whatever plan they might be plotting.

A word I'd learned while I was at the Amazon stuck by me, and I'd liked to use it to describe the feeling I was having at the moment.

Coraje! It didn't mean courage. Corajewas when the feeling of anger bubbled up to the bottom of your throat. When your insides twisted and you were so angry and resentful of something that your jaw tightened and you felt desperation in your chest.

That's what I felt. I could count with my hand the number of times I'd felt this way, because anger felt a lot, but anger and corajewere two very different things.

The first time I felt it was when I saw Druig for the first time.

The second was when Druig le me.

And the third was right now.

I couldn't really tell you what the exact translation to english was, but for me, it described everything I was feeling at the moment.

I resented the both of them for having taken away the opportunity for all of us to finally get back together and fight like the team we once had been.

I resented Sprite for everything she had done to keep Druig and me apart.

"We can't!" Sersi's shout pulls me back into reality. I turn to look at her, her gaze wild as she pants for breath. "We can't" Se repeats more silently this time.

"It's okay, Sersi" Druig finally speaks. He nods, turning to look at me in assurance. "We've got this"

I nod in agreement, a tight smile showing on my face.

"Yeah, it'll be fine. I'm sure my energy is enough to power all of you and Druig" I try to be convincing. Not only for them, but for myself.

She's quiet for a moment, looking at all of us with panic before pursing her lips and standing up from the couch, her face flashing with pain as she walks out of the room.

We stay silent for a moment, all of us taking in what just happened before I finally sigh.

"I'll be back in a moment" I mutter, flashing a look to Druig before walking out of the room and towards Sersi.

My steps echo against the walls as I enter the control room, taking in the emblems of all of us lined around the wall.

Sersi sits on the edge of the center, looking up at Arishem's statue, her face lit up by the dim white light coming from below it.

"You know" I begin, looking up at the statue of Arishem as I take a seat beside her. "I used to think humanity didn't have a chance to redeem itself" I begin, leaning back on my hands.

"I watched all that murder. All that chaos, and I thought, Why am I protecting them from something if they're going to end up killing themselves anyway?" I sigh out, still not turning to look at her. "-Is it a hopeless cause? Am I here for nothing? Because these people—these humans— they are going to be the death of themselves"

There's a beat of silence, the both of us staring up at the statue in silence.

"What changed your mind?" Sersi finally asks, turning to face me.

"You." I state. "And Druig" I tilt my head. "And the joy that these people had. The undying fidelity they had when they loved one another" I admit. "They protected their own. It was the most natural thing that they could do." I bite the inside of my cheek, smiling sadly at her.

"You have loved these people since the day we arrived. If someone here has to lead us, it's you, Sersi. Not Ikaris. God knows he's the last person here that has empathy for these people." My tone seeps with resentment.

She tilts her head down, her eyes shining with unshed tears.

I sigh a moment, picking myself up from the floor and holding out a hand to her.

"Come on. We have a planet to save, and Ajak chose you for a reason"

She looks at my hand for a moment.

And then I feel as her hand envelops mine tightly and she hoists herself up to her feet.

"Sersi!" Phastos' voice comes from the hallway, getting louder as he runs into the room. "We need you!" He shouts as he stops running, panting for breath.

"Phastos, I already told her that, there's no need" I answer, frowning at him.

He scowls, looking at me for a moment. "What?" He pants before brushing it off and turning to her again.

"The sphere inside you" He explains, motioning to her. "It creates a connection between you and Arishem. Maybe I can repurpose it to create a connection between Aurora and the rest of us. The sphere could be a channel for her energy and direct it towards all of us. This way we can shut everything down."

Sersi nods to his words, a new found determination lighting up her features.

I smile at her, my gaze flitting to Thena as she walks in. She nods, as if reading my mind, and I touch Sersi on the shoulder in silent support before I brush past them and towards the person I wanted to see before all of this went to shit.

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"You know, in the town in Africa I was volunteering at, they had this tradition. Every month the children of the village would make up a play. All by themselves. They would mount everything and come up with the story as well.

If it was sunny we would all gather outside to see it. If it was raining we would go to the main tent to watch. It didn't matter the weather, once a month they fought through all their problems and they put on their little play" I smile to myself as I walk further into the room, breaking the silence he's enveloped in.

He sits on top of one of the desks, looking at the design above us as it rotated soundlessly around.

I chuckle to myself at the memory, glad to have been witness to it.

"They were determined. They would fight and argue and throw tantrums over everything, but at the end of the day they put on the play and they did it perfectly—for a bunch of seven year olds that is—"

He smiles at my words, but I can see the confusion lacing his eyes.

Finally I turn to him.

"It amazed me because each and every time I thought; There's no way they're going to stop arguing to get it together. There were so many times the children would come to me crying because one of the others had been mean, or they'd stolen the role that they wanted. But each and every year I saw them put up their play, and each and every year I wondered; why can these children put apart their differences, why can they overcome their jealousy and their anger and unite as one,"

I take a moment to breathe "-and my own boyfriend chose to run when the first big fight occurred? Why did he decide to choose the easy way out when these children fought with tooth and nail for a fucking play"

The room stills at my words. I can hear him thinking. I can feel him looking at me, surprise radiating off him in waves. I know he wasn't expecting this.

Still staring into the design in front of us, I shake my head, pursing my lips.

"And it seems like a dumb comparison. Children versus a whole relationship, but at the moment it was all I could think." I sigh, finally turning to look at him.

His eyes are the brightest blue I've ever seen. Ice cold and yet filled with so much regret and guilt and a thousand unspoken words.

"Aurora—" He begins, voice hoarse as he stands up, but I hold out my hand and stop him mid sentence.

"I know it wasn't your fault, Druig. I know it was Sprite and I know that you loved me" I clear my throat, suddenly not being able to look at him. "But how could you think that I wouldn't want you? How would you just give up everything at the words of someone who knew nothing You said you spent hundreds of years loving me—and yet you failed to show me how much you actually meant it" It's not only myself I'm talking to, but myself. I had finally for so long to put my feelings into words, and it seemed I had finally been able to.

"It killed me to know you walked away so easily. I tried to look for you—I went to the village and asked for you the first three years you le me and was met with radio silence before I finally gave up." I finally meet his gaze, letting him see how much it had actually hurt me. "And you know what's the worst part? It was that even though you did me so wrong, I would still do it all over again in a heartbeat if it meant I had another chance with you. I would. I truly would" I let out a small breath, smiling sadly.

He closes the distance between us without a word, his gaze telling me so many things that I know he can't say. I feel the warmth of his hand as he grabs my chin, tilting it up so that I look at him.

"I'm so, so, sorry for what I put you through, Aurora" He begins so ly. "If I could take all that pain... if I could find a way to turn back time and make it all alright I would" He pauses. "But don't you ever doubt my love for you. Don't you ever think for a fucking second that I didn't think about you every single moment of those years we were apart."

He raises a hand to my face, brushing a stray strand of hair behind my ear.

"I would kill for you, Aurora. I would die for you. So don't you ever think that I don't love you"

I still at his words, my mind reeling with so many feelings, so many thoughts. I'm too surprised by his words I can barely speak.

My mouth opens and closes for a moment, and then I find my hand rising to cup his cheek.

"Druig, I—"

The door to the control room bursts open, jolting us out of our moment.

Phastos is running, sphere on his hand, Sersi and Thena close behind him.

He doesn't stop as he hears the design, rushing to work.

"It's happening, we need to get to work"

I hesitate for a moment, turning to look at Druig, so many things being left to said.

It seemed like we always got interrupted in important discussions.

I made a motion with my hand, telling him with my eyes that I would talk about everything once we were safe. Once it was over.

Right now though, I had two things on my mind that kept me from spiraling into myself, and their names were Ikaris and Sprite.

**a/n** alright so I just wanna explain a lil bit about Druig and Aurora's story. This entire plot is kinda based loosely on me and my ex. I started this story when we were broken up with a hope that writing it down would kinda ease my pain (And it did), but then we have broken up for good a while of being on and off. This story is kinda like my 'what if' but instead of being a total mess of a relationship, the characters actually talk things through and fight for each other.

BUT as much as I do love Aurora and Druig getting together, seeing this as Aurora's POV, it's fucking exhausting having to deal with someone that leaves and comes back when they want to, so, this is kinda inspired on what I would say to my ex if I ever saw him again, because leaving someone out to dry out of the blue and not giving them an explanation for why is the fucking worst and I wouldn't even wish that on my worst enemy.

so yeah if you read all this I love you and I hope your day is awesome, I just wanted to explain why a lot of everything was good aurora had a sudden 180 b/c at first you're only in full bliss that they finally took you back but then you realize that they actually hurt you a LOT, even if you end up forgiving them.