

The third part of prolonged stress due to uselessness is: crash.

Flyndt listens to him about the Dajorran system, her star, each of the planets and planetoids from Arconae Primus and Secundus on out to Eldar, Selen, Ereboros with her seven moons, one of which they currently occupy, and then the asteroid belt that houses Ol'Val. With significant amounts of fingerspelling and pauses for clarification or replacement of words — as well as some noting to teach the originally intended words — it is a time-consuming process.

While Flyndt cannot focus on it, it is something else to look at besides the people, something else to do.

But the number of facts Foxen knows about the star system does not last longer than the recovery, triage, and treatment of wounded from polluted frozen flaming wreckage of massive cruise liner ship. The manifest claimed some two thousand passengers, four hundred crew.

"How many?" Flint asks, because he knows Foxen will have been counting this whole time, will remember.

He knows there is nothing Foxen won't notice and remember, like it or not.

\*131,\* Foxen conveys. It is a small number. But such is reality.

Flint makes a *brrt*, and resumes pacing. Logical. He cares.

Foxen is given to pacing over the *one* he cares for too.

The purpose of the monitoring is not chiefly data collection, but assessment; he watches Siva. He knows enough about how their powers work to know now that healing is exhaustive. It is one of the few aspects of the Force that seems sensible to him. Energy cannot come from nowhere, and so it comes from the practitioner. It is like chemical transfer, conducting heat. Powder igniting under pressure in the chamber, spent in flame, an empty casing, a bullet flown.

He counts and he watches.

For every body that the various medics available address, they are judged, sorted, and categorized. The worst ones all go to the Chiss. And every time she lays her hands upon them, she becomes smaller and smaller.

He is waiting for when she breaks.

It comes, eventually. She stands to rise, but lists, and Foxen knows the lull of cervical spine that indicates lost consciousness even before the body can begin to topple.

He bolts, sprinting across steel at full speed. Flyndt hoots in sudden alarm behind him, and his talons clack running after.

But the Chiss is in his arm as he skids on one knee, and not applying maxilla/skull bones to deck plating. Mission: success.

He checks respirations/heartbeat. Both below baseline. Temperature also above baseline. She has pushed herself too far.

Typical.

Foxen stands, lifting her easily; she is tiny. The mind echoes memory of lifting Minnie, but much more energetic, kicking and laughing. Siva is limp and breathes shallowly, the barest pricks of sweat on her forehead.

Flyndt catches up.

*Help me?* he says, ignoring the other things: staff and turning away.

The Omwati grimaces at the sight, then nods, "Yes. Clean first, or? *Hoo.*" So together they carefully peel away the blood-soaked personal protective equipment. It is thrown in a labeled trash.

The corner of the hangar will not suffice. They interrogate and ensign until pointed to the Captain's cabin, which they promptly break and enter. Flyndt gathers water and clothes. Foxen sets her on the bed, then they dab off excess blood and lay cool — *not* cold — rag on her forehead. The lights are dimmed.

They share looks, and gesture brief plan, agreement. This is fine. They are warriors; they can stand sentry until she wakes. And anyone who interrupts will find knives.

O.K.? Flyndt asks him, and Foxen nods back, brushing their hands, soft breaths behind them.

O.K.