



# Discovery

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## **Nebulon-B Frigate Venture Outside the Cocytus System Amongst Space, 35 ABY**

"They're gone?! Every single one of them!?" Alara shrieked as she stared at the burning system before her. Judecca had fallen. Ptolomea was gone. Grand Master Pravus destroyed the entire planet for his own amusement. The half-Sephi squirmed with trembling and anger at what had happened. Shocks of various emotions charged through her veins: sorrow, mourning, loss, anger, and fear. Her only family, her beloved pets, her boyfriend, her clan; they couldn't be gone.

"Alara... we've lost everything. They're all gone. Bale too." Zehsaa, Alara's dear friend and fellow mission accomplice, teared up at the inflamed spheres before them.

The Aedile wasn't one to hug anyone. Let alone cry and hug. However, this was a moment where she could think of nothing better to do. She grabbed onto her shipmate and sobbed loudly. She and Zehsaa fell to their knees and held to each other. They were the remaining survivors of Clan Scholae Palatinae. Everything else was lost.

Alara attempted to spit out some words through her blubbering: "What--... What are we going... What are we going to do?"

"If you are able to turn away now, ladies, I will set a course to leave this system. Who knows where Grand Master Pravus may be hiding." A valet droid interjected and approached them carefully.

"Oh!" Alara gasped, stood up, and lifted Zehsaa to her feet as well. "Zehsaa he's right. We need to move. One more goodbye."

With a nod, Zehsaa rubbed her damp eyes and took another look at the engulfed Cocytus System before her. Her whole body winced with heartfelt pain at the sight of it all. Alara blinked tightly and inhaled deeply before she herself gave one last glance as well. Her amber eyes watered once more at her home completely fallen to chaos.

"Time to go now?" The droid spoke from behind the pair once again.

"Yes. We need to go." Zehsaa spoke solemnly as she dried her orange face. The Togruta gave one last glance through the viewport and turned away.

Alara did the same and laid her hand on the droid before it left the room. "Would you be able to bring us a bottle of rum, and some food please?"

"Of course, Aedile Alara. Right away. Beforehand, I'll be sure a course is set to leave this system as well."

"Thank you, valet droid." Alara stumbled to remember the droid's name.

"It's Mario, sir." the droid stated.

"My apologies Mario. Your help and presence is very appreciated."

"Thank you, sir. I'll take my leave for now." The droid rhythmically stepped out of the bridge chamber.

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"Alara, doing alright?" Zehsaa came and sat next to Alara at the bar in the ship's smaller lounge area.

Alara's shoulders were slumped forward as she traced the rim of her glass that was half full with her favorite spiced rum. The half-Sephi smirked half-heartedly and shrugged with minimal effort. "Been a long day. How are you holdin' up?"

"I've been better," Zehsaa gave a slight chuckle. She sat next to her superior and waved at Mario to hand her another glass. "What's that, your 9th?"

"Yeah I'm around there somewhere." Alara admitted. "You?"

"Gettin' up there myself," her companion stated.

The Marauder changed the subject to that of more serious matter; "What are we going to do, Z? Where will you go?"

"I'm thinking of going to Shili. At least I know that Grand Master Pravus won't blow that up in my lifetime. And if he does, at least I'll go up in flame with my home this time." Zehsaa spoke without making eye contact, took a swig of her rum, and placed her glass back on the bar in front of her. "What about you?"

Alara's heart slightly fell at her friends words which caused her to hesitate for a moment. "I think I'll just explore the stars. That's what Jorm and Shadow would have wanted for me. I'll just see where I end up. Live in wildlife once again."

Zehsaa nodded and took another sip. She cleared her throat, spun slightly in her chair to face Alara, and dropped the news.

"Alara. I'm going to leave tonight. No point in putting off the inevitable. Will you be alright?"

Alara smiled thankfully to her friend and placed a hand on her shoulder. "I'm glad you want to check on me. I'll be alright knowing you'll be somewhere safe."

"You stay safe too, okay?" Zehsaa raised her hand to meet Alara's. With a nod, Alara gently pulled the Togruta closer to herself and gave her a hug.

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### **Unknown Planet**

#### **Unknown System, 35 ABY**

Alara stepped off the Fang Fighter's ramp and touched the unknown planet's surface for the first time. Her ship and droid had brought her here with no measure of coordinates or location knowledge whatsoever; just as she requested. She wasn't sure where in the universe she was, but she didn't care. Memories of her beloved sister and other lost friends and family haunted her dreams throughout the journey, but she still forced her eyes closed. She didn't want to see anything before landing on the planet. Now she would finally see where she was.

The grass and flora of the planet grew in hues of turquoise, while the ground itself was a light golden brown. The sky held a purple tone due to a trio of stars that shone in its atmosphere. Golden trunks held up various colored pink, purple, and turquoise leaves. Flowers were all around the half-Sephi's feet in similar shades. Though flowers found in the shade grew with a dark navy tone, and some even close to black. She found one particular navy-stemmed flower with scarlet and silver tints in its petals. She looked down at the flower and began to cry slightly.

*Oh Shadow... Your beauty is even found on distant planets. I miss you my dear sister. If only you had lived...*

She held the flower firmly in her hand and continued to explore the new land. The tectonic plate she had landed on seemed to be elevated where she was, so she decided to see what land was held below. She stepped down a small path she found and discovered it to be a cliff. Light lavender-colored water flowed down a waterfall to her left. Farther down into the valley directly ahead of her laid a small, rustic looking village. She couldn't tell exactly, but it looked to be as if the villagers there utilized primitive fashion in their architecture; with skins of animals draped around their houses. Curiosity showed itself by flicking Alara's perky ears back and forth. She had to meet the inhabitants of this lovely place. This curiosity ignited excitement in her veins as she searched for another path down the hillside. Every step on the

planet's surface seemed to charge the Sephi's spirit. It was as if the Force in the planet gave life to the planet and to Alara with every movement she made.

Once she finally made her way down the hillside, she was very careful to appear diplomatic and unchallenging. She carefully hid her dual sabers under her cloak she had draped over herself. She stepped into the camp. It seemed empty at first until figures began to emerge from their indeed leather-draped homes.

Alara couldn't help but gasp at the sight of it all: Sephis. Young and old alike. Male, female. Her hopes of there being any Sephis still alive other than those in the Brotherhood died along with the Cocytus System, but here they were. Each Sephi in its glory had long, braided hair, lavender or peach toned skin, jewels elaborately placed in their uniquely colored locks. Brunettes. Blondes. Redheads. Silver haired. Black haired. Beautifully colored eyes of all hues of the rainbow. They were all clothed with silks, fine satin, and shining leather. Each sharp chiseled Sephi before Alara made her overwhelmed at their beauty.

"You... exist?" Alara accidentally spoke out loud. "You're all so...lovely."

One middle-aged Sephi, appearing to be in the wardrobe of a chieftain or commander, stepped before her with a dagger at his side. "Are you of our kind?"

Alara nodded excitedly and pulled her golden strands of hair back from her own sharply pointed ears. "My father was of human descent, but my mother Crystal was a lavender skinned Sephi. I thought I might be the only one with similar blood to you left in this universe." Alara spoke sheepishly.

"Kin, this universe is a very big place. We can never be burnt out completely. What brings you to Oriscia?" The leader sheathed his weapon and stepped closer to the Aedile.

"My system perished, along with what was left of my family. I sought the stars to find a new home and managed to find my way here." Alara's extremely unusual excitement grew more at his calling her 'kin'.

"Well, in that case, you need to make your home with us at least for a time. I'll call upon the first Lady to assign you homestead." the chieftain waved his hand at a nearby white haired woman, also of middle age. This beautiful creature was wearing a lavender silk dress, silver headband, and barefeet. She smiled dearly at the Mystic which warmed Alara's heart deeply.

"Hello, Alara. Welcome to our village Rohendrin of Oriscia. Follow me to meet the others." the woman held out her hand as a sign of friendship.

"How did you know my name?" Alara's question fell off her lips with a smile as she took the hand in front of her.

**“It’s a bond we Sephi females share. We know all Sephi upon sight, half or full blood. Might have to train you into it, though. Come. Let’s get you a place to rest your head. You’ve had a long and sorrowful journey. The woman pulled her carefully around the houses and smiled. Without moving her lips, the woman spoke into Alara’s mind:**

**“You’re safe now. Don’t be afraid. We shall protect you and keep you.”**