

Quiet.

Everything was quiet. Dark. Still.

The Zeltron could hear her own heartbeat in her ear, pressed to the pillow, with the other woman's arm draped awkwardly over the other ear and across her face. Her lips curled slightly in a smile, nursing the feel of her fiancée's skin on her cheek, enjoying the silliness of her splayed sleeping posture.

This was nice. This was a proper vacation. No violence, no drama, no Clan or House Summit. Just quiet.

To be sure, the start of their foray at the Atolli resort had been pleasant, save for the bits of drama. They stayed away from the more irksome personalities and still managed to cause some trouble with those that were less so. They learned how to surf, had some alone time, even got to hang out with Leeadra and some of the other pertinent personalities in their lives. Leeadra alone was a welcome change of pace to the faces they were so regularly accustomed to.

Qyreia nibbled at her lover's arm playfully, watching the pale woman stir but not wake, causing a burst of suppressed chuckles the Zeltron was hardly able to suppress. Even when she did it again and Keira unconsciously slapped the red woman's face as if she were a mosquito.

It felt odd to appreciate such little things all of a sudden. Did she not appreciate it before?

*Maybe I just never noticed until now.*

She watched Keira sleep; watched the slight part of her lips as she breathed just shy of snoring; watched how her eyelids fluttered at every turn of her dream. It was a good one at least. She could tell. After so long together, it was easy to pick up on her emotional state, to say nothing for more mundane audiovisual cues like the position of her brows and the pace of her breathing. All those times she stayed awake too long worrying about everything, Qyreia spent a lot of time watching the half-Umbaran.

Especially after the breakup with Xenna.

And again after the last big fight with the Collective.

And now again after the failed vacation.

Their days were simple right now. While no one had *authorized* it, per se, there was a general consensus among the ranks that now was not the time to be barrelling into any more action. Everyone was at home — whatever that constituted as for each individual — left relatively to their own devices, if even for a brief interlude. Leeadra came by once

or twice, and Ruka called every so often after their harsh discussion at the hospital, but that was it. Everything else was... quiet.

Once Keira woke, their routine would start. The Force user would make breakfast, and they'd listen to music while they talked about the dreams they'd had, or what they wanted for dinner, or if they should go out for a walk or stay inside all day. Then they might shower; or frack; or frack then shower, or vice versa. Then some reading, cuddling, holos, or any combination.

And so on and so forth through the day, one after the other.

It was comfortable. Quiet. Almost sickeningly so.

Because once it was over, it meant another long stretch of suffering before they could be quiet and comfortable again.