

It had been a long day.

Zuza settled into the pilot seat of her freighter, flicking a few switches and pushing buttons with half-lidded eyes. The ache of her ribs had returned with a vengeance, the snap of them from earlier was healed, but not the bruising that had spread because of it. The painkillers had done their job for the sake of the mission, but since the settling of adrenaline rushes and the hours that had passed, there was no relief. It certainly hadn't helped continuing to fight despite knowing the injury was still there and underlying. Ruka and Zig had both been putting pressure, but she had a job to do before that. She could rest later...

Her eyes fell closed for a moment, in defiance of that decision, leaning her forehead onto a propped up hand. A body could only take so much, and for a moment it slipped into an attempt at rest. And yet, suddenly there was Sage's tight grasp around her waist, shifting up and tightening, the wind of the speeder picking up and the noise and the smell of burning blood, all of it became more and more and more, until-

Crack.

He was just scared, that was all. It wasn't his fault. No. Sage hadn't meant to. He nearly died as well.

The sand shortened her breath, hot against her back, raw against the beared skin on her cheeks. Blood rose with each struggling of an exhale and half smothered what little breath was passing through her broken ribcage. It felt like a broken wind chime was pinned in her throat, dragging and shifting, stuck in an eternity of a moment.

Zu cringed at the memory's resurface, forcing her eyes back open and to look toward the comforting view of the Voidbreaker's hangar bay. It wouldn't do to just sit here, she had to get Jet to her father.

That poor boy. He hadn't deserved to be orphaned, but his mother made a choice and options were limited. They had to prioritise their own other that of others. It didn't make looking into the empty gaze of a pre-teen any easier though. She'd settled the lad into a seat in the cargo area on the ship, with some food and water and a blanket. It wasn't much but on such short notice it'd have to do.

She performed the final checks, before clicking her comms on, "Zuza calling in, requesting to head out?"

"You're good to go Zu just, be back soon." The worried voice of Zig chimed back.

The captain had probably noticed the ship had been primed for a few minutes without action. Or the shake in Zuza's voice. Maybe both.

The Human gave confirmation of hearing Zig before taking the ship into the air, carefully manoeuvring out of the hangar and then across the desert sands. Her father's home was only a few towns over, by air it was a short distance of unremarkable territory. Just sand and rocks out here. Odd skeleton too, but those weren't visible from as high off the ground as they were.

Within minutes, they were just outside of the small town that her father had settled in. The landing was smooth.

Unbuckling swiftly, Zuza made her way into the small cargo hold and her eyes landed on the young boy sitting as he was when she left him. She walked over, bending slightly to carefully undo his seatbelt and taking a step back.

"We're here Jet. I..." She bit her lip, thinking. Talking to the kid they had orphaned was difficult... "Do you want to get anything to eat? Maybe a drink at least. My dad, Gwaine, he'll have stuff but if there's anything-"

She was cut off as Jet silently walked past her towards the exit, stopping beside it with his eyes aimed down. Empty.

Despite the heat of the desert blasting them as the door opened, Zuza felt cold. That sensation overpowered the throbbing agony building. Guilt was odd like that though, even though she was doing her best to rectify it.

It wouldn't be enough, it wouldn't ever be.