

Hunted by the Children

Everything hurt. The pain was so intense Sivall couldn't do anything— she couldn't breathe, couldn't scream, couldn't think. She felt the skin on her arm slowly crystalizing as sharp pieces of whatever stabbed into her, flowing into her veins from an IV. Her vision swam and she wailed mentally.

They had taken her from her home.

Her home.

She had no clue how they had gotten there but one minute she was asleep, the next minute she was being thrown around in a ship speeding off to wherever. She had been in her pajamas when they took her and she was lacking *anything* that could help. No saber, no datapad, no Ellie or Tor. Nothing. Nada. She was *alone*. *Completely kriffing alone.*

As far as anyone knew she was still asleep in her bed.

She reached out through the force like a desperate animal, to cry out to anyone who could hear— to Ruka, or Alex, or Bril, or Marick, or Zuji —anyone. For anyone to come save her from this pain which made her feel like death would be a blessing. It was a mistake. All that returned to her was the anguish of the rest of the people stuck here too. Dozens of faceless mental screams, pleading for the same thing as her, bounced around in her head.

She would have thrown up if she could have.

But now she had a mission. Free everyone here.

The Chiss sucked in a deep breath, focusing on the pain, focusing on dulling it and pushing down underneath the cold calm rising from somewhere within her. There were so many people here. So many people who needed to be saved. She *would* save them all, but first that meant she needed to save herself.

One of the scientists loomed over her, flashing a light in her eyes to check her responsiveness now that she had gone quiet and stopped spasming. Siv locked eyes with them through their safety glasses, her eyes flashing from sanguine to orange-red as she tapped into the Dark. The light would not help her here, not with her being this filled with hurt and anger.

She smirked and pulled on the restraints. Her muscles bolstered by the force caused them to snap like they were made of tissue paper. They should have known better, should have used durasteel or something better than *damn fabric*. The Chiss shot up into a sitting position and grabbed the scientist by his lab coat.

“Surprise, *searoten'i*,” she hissed.

Sivall quickly reeled her head back and smashed it into the scientist's face, cracking the guy's glasses and splitting both their foreheads. The guy— a human —crumpled to the ground and took a tray of surgical tools with him.

Sivall fluidly ripped the IV line out of her right arm, causing the burning from advancing further up it. She let out a sharp exhale and surveyed the damage to her limb.

Her skin glittered like ice. That was... not ideal.

The medic didn't get a chance to look at the aftermath of the crystallization any further than that as the other scientist in the room approached her with a syringe of some sort of fluid. There was no way that she was going to let that get inside her body— she had a solid idea that it was likely a drug to put her under, or worse.

The Chiss refused to be a casualty, refused to cause any of her *kih'n* that kind of pain. That cold sensation brewing inside her grew more intense and with it came a strange kind of calm. Sanguine eyes squinted as the scientist got closer and something in their fiery hues made them stop. That was all she needed.

Her foot snapped out, kicking the other tray of surgical supplies right at their dumb face. Sivall was sprinting then, despite the pain, despite her nerves in her right arm exploding in agony as she grabbed the needle from the scientist and stabbed it deep into their neck. This scientist was an Echani and their silver eyes dulled as blood and air bubbled from the side of their neck.

Siv took a few steps back and looked at her right arm again. The crystalline surface of her sky-blue skin had cracked and began to bleed. Not good.

Her slender hands hesitated before she grabbed a scalpel off one of the nearby surfaces and leveled it just where the shimmer of crystal stopped. The Chiss swallowed hard, preparing herself, then got to work.

The only thing that made it bearable was the thoughts of her family. Of Ruka in the hoodie she made, of talking fashion with Cora, doing silly quizzes with Minnie. Of reading with Bril, or cooking dinner with Alex— Alex. Her Alex, her stargazing *vi'vuckust*.

By the time she was finished, her lip was bleeding from the ferocity of how hard she had been biting down on it. It might have been better to find something to bite down on. But now her arm was free of crystals and she could heal it. It was an added bonus that no alarms had gone off yet.

BEEEEERRRRR-UP. BEEEEERRRRR-UP.

Ktah.

The medic plastered herself against the wall by the exit of the room as the chirping of the newly set off alarm dug into her temples like a knife. *Why were they so loud!?* Couldn't someone invent a quiet alarm? ... Did that defeat the point of the alarm? Kark.

The door rattled on its hinges as it was kicked in by security. Siv took only a second to remember their locations before she punched the switch for the lights in the room with a force-amplified fist. The room went dark other than the light pouring in from the doorway and the soft flashing of a single alarm light in the corner of the room.

She made quick work of them, recalling some of Connor's teachings on how to use Terror to her advantage to stall her enemies in their tracks first.

It made her feel wrong and dirty to use anything that her ex-owner had taught her, but she needed to survive to save everyone else here. With her arm still in a state of semi-healing she took off down the hall. She could always get bacta later.

The Arconan found the surveillance room accidentally. Unfortunately for her the room was filled with guards and other Children. Sivall tried to back out of the room quickly but blasterfire erupted before she could close the door. One shot went through her left shoulder, another through her right side, and the last one through her right shin. The last shot nearly dropped her.

Her eyes began to glow a golden-red in the dim light of the hall.

Her hand lashed out as she summoned a metal filing cabinet to herself, bulldozing several of her opponents and barely missing hitting her own person as it went crashing into the interior wall of the room by the door. The two guards left engaged her in a fight. They got a few good hits in, breaking a few of her ribs and probably giving her a concussion. Sivall finished them by ducking out of the way when they both shot at her whilst she was standing between them.

The Chiss medic stumbled back into the console behind her as the last two guards collapsed in puddles of their own blood. Blood dripped into one her eyes; eyes which were starting to lose their golden glow. She turned and looked at the security console under her fingers— the letters on the keypads were not a language she recognized.

She punched the console, desperately wishing she had listened more carefully to the cryptology class offered by the Shadow Academy, or language studies, or anything that could help her right now.

Well, if all else fails... destroy.

Sivall searched through one of the dead guards' pockets till she found what she needed— a thermal detonator and a frag grenade. Pale features crumpled as she held the thermal detonator in one of her hands, recalling all of her close calls with similar explosive devices. A

shudder passed through her and she backed out of the room, priming both explosives before letting them roll towards the console and turning to run.

Even halfway down the hall, the resulting explosion nearly toppled her over. Siv stumbled and fell into the wall of the hallway and she felt a *crack*. Frack.

Stumbling into the room that seemed to lead to the outside the medic paused. In front of her were four heavily armed guards. Two of them held lightsabers. Sivall looked up at the ceiling and groaned, a frustrated and tired and agitated groan. She was so close! So close to escaping! She heard something groan loudly, then the power went off.

What the ktah?

Sanguine eyes searched the darkened room, looking for the cause, but then heard a cacophony of voices and yelling and cheering. The cells had opened. Sivall gasped softly as hope filled her and her bones, willing her on. *If I defeat these guards, then everyone will have a clear path out!* She screamed internally. Her heart was singing. Just a bit further.

This fight was harder— she was already so worn down. But she needed to make it out of this, for all the people she cared about. She wanted to see them again. She worked first to take down the two saber-wielding enemies, taking their sabers so that she could fight but suffering a pretty bad slice to her right shoulder.

Her vision threatened to give out.

A tear, faint pink in color from the blood still pouring from the wound on her head, rolled down her cheek. The young woman let out a sound of frustration and heartbreak. Not yet! Her body couldn't stop yet! She willed The Force to give her the strength to continue but it didn't answer her. The last strike was launched towards the remaining opponent and her world pivoted on her side, sending her flying into the door.

Move. Move, please.

She pushed open the door and...

Dull sanguine eyes blinked at two figures running towards her— two humans of vastly different heights. She faintly heard them both call out to her and their voices rang with recognition in her head.

Zuza.

Alex.

Someone had come for her!

A strangled chuckle escaped her lips as she stumbled forward, trying her best to stay upright. But her eyes were closing. She was definitely a sight to behold—drenched in her own blood, her entire right arm skinned from the elbow down, blood dripping down her face and staining her dark brown silk pajamas, several blaster wounds to her limbs and a glaring lightsaber wound still smoldering from her right shoulder.

“Sivall!”

Alex. That voice was Alex. She couldn't see them anymore but the sheer panic and heartbreak in his voice hurt her. Her legs gave out and she was on her knees now, chuckling or sobbing or both. She heard Zuza say something but couldn't make out the words, but angered panic was there too.

Then hands were suddenly touching her and she flinched away at first, panic threatening to choke whatever air she was getting.

“Shhh... Shhh... Siv it's me. It's Alex, it's me.”

“Alex..”

She leaned into him and gripped tightly at his robes, clinging to him. She couldn't see but she could feel so many things from him—panic, relief, anger, sadness, *hatred*. She felt him move to get up, to leave her, but she clung harder.

“*Vi'vuckust, stay! Stay please. Don't leave. D-don't leave me,*” she pleaded, sobbing. He tensed, but then lifted her up to carry her. She gasped, unable to breathe through the pain the movement caused.

“Get her to the ship.”

That was Zuza. There was pain in her voice too, but not just pain for her recruit, physical pain. Siv tried her hardest to open her eyes, to pull herself from Alex's grasp.

“Zu...? Zu are you okay? What happened? I...”

“Don't worry about me, okay?” Zuza's voice was softer this time, Siv could almost hear the smile in it. A lie. “Alex is gonna bring you to one of the ships and he's gonna get you out of here. Did ya see anyone else from the Brotherhood inside?”

Siv shook her head, settling back into Alex's arms. She felt stored tension there, restraint. Restraint for what?

“No...” she croaked out, trying to will herself to stay awake, “No but I set everyone free. Inside. There’s f-fighting...” She let out a somewhat delirious chuckle before continuing.

“I blew it up. Their control center. D-damn thermal detonators were finally good for something...”

That got a half chuckle from Alex and she felt herself smile. He smelled like he normally did—leatherbound books and belonging. Her breathing was more labored now. *Right, blood loss*, she noted quietly in her head. Then suddenly there was movement again and another voice that she maybe recognized? All she cared about was that she was in Alex’s arms.

She sunk into the blackness. Into sleep.