

I opened my eyes. Sun was high above the horizon. I slowly grabbed the phone lying right beside me. Hmm... ten minutes before nine. Long sleep, but I could afford it. Some of the lab crew, including Fiura, are present today. Good that I don't have to work at weekends.

After standing up from the bed, I went straight to the bathroom. Not only to use a toilet, but I also wanted a long shower. I didn't have any clothes on me, so after switching the temperature to hot, I began washing myself.

Thinking about work isn't something that should be done. Having the free time means that one should just relax, doing what one desires. I know guys and girls that still think about the job on leave and I suggested them that they should visit a therapist, because it isn't normal.

Still, there isn't that much to do at weekends in the laboratory. Fiura is taking care of Silan now, either helping him know his new colleagues or torment him with literal flood of words. Nonetheless, he won't get bored.

And that dream with me fighting Ren... I'm glad that the only hostile meeting we had was the first one, on the bridge, interrupted by danger from the outside. Yes, I stood in her defense when she was lying on the ground. I'm still not completely sure why I did that, but... it felt like the right thing to do.

If someone will find this journal, then you probably made your conclusions about me and her. Allow me to clarify: we've never were in relationship. I never even wanted such a thing. I don't think it'd work out, since we're the opposites, each of us on the different sides of the conflict we aren't part of anymore. Having her as a friend is already a big achievement for someone like me.

But I know she's stressed. However, I don't know what's the cause of this. Her work as a policewoman is the most likely candidate. I wouldn't like to be in that job - I'm not even fitting there. It also can be something from the personal life. But is it from the present... or from the past?

Eh... life as a normal being has more problems than one can see. I'm used to something more... dynamic. But doing things more slowly is great too - feeling of peace is really what I needed for a long time. It's sometimes interrupted by random events, but things like this happens all the time. My friend was right - Yav is a strange place indeed. Rest in peace, bratan...

I left the shower and started wiping myself with the towel. It always take a while. After putting it down, I wanted to leave the bathroom, but saw my reflection in the mirror. I looked directly into my heterochromic eyes. I was briefly repeating one sentence: "I'm not the monster".

I took the loose clothes and put it inside the washing machine. After turning it on, I decided to prepare a breakfast. And then I saw that Zharena was still sleeping on a couch, occasionally swiping her tail. So I instantly returned to my bedroom - I don't know what would she say when she'd see me without any clothes. I took boxers and red shirt. I don't have any T-shirts - it's hard to put them on with such horns as mine.

After dressing up, I was slowly getting into the kitchen, so I wouldn't wake up my visitor. She probably had a rough week and she deserves a nice rest too. Anyway, I got to the fridge and started taking things out. I thought about something that we'd both enjoy and I opted for something more... red.

While some ingredients were frying on the pan, I was cutting the vegetables into pieces. I used to think that green products are bad and preferred something that's more tasty. But with time, it changed, just like my personality.

After all of the parts got prepared, I just put them into a bigger bowl. Will have something for later - for me or for us, if she decides that she wants to spend more time with me. I made two portions and put them on the table, along

with cutlery.

I was getting closer to Zharena to see if she was still sleeping. It looked like she wasn't awake yet. On the one hand, I should leave her alone, so she can get a good rest, but on the other hand, eating the meal I prepared as cold isn't that great. However, it looked like I didn't have to do anything, because she woke up on her own. After yawning, she opened her eyes, looking directly at mine.

"Ru... Ruvim?" - bird asked, still not fully conscious.

"Hey, firebird." - I replied with calm. - "How was the sleep?"

"This was exactly what I needed. But..."

"What is it?"

"Eh... maybe I'll tell you later... wait... what's that smell?"

"I did the breakfast for us. I wasn't sure if I should wake you up, but that's not the problem anymore."

"What did you prepare?"

"I thought about what would we like and I remember... you know..."

"Yeah, I probably know what you mean. That you used "red tasty sauce", as you called it. Let's go."

Zharena stood up and I took her to the table. We sat across from each other. She briefly looked at me and then at the meal. She was hesitant at first, but eventually, she tried it.

"Wow... I shouldn't say it, but that's great."

"Thanks, Ren."

"Can you give me the recipe later?"

"And you'll have time to actually make it?"

"Huh... I'll certainly try sooner or later."

"If you say so..."

She must haven't eaten that "special" red sauce in years. I only use it from time to time - I'm perfectly fine without it, but earlier I added it pretty much everywhere I could.

"I'm curious... how's Soluna?" - Zharena asked.

"Always nearby." - I replied with faint smile.

"Still in one piece?"

"Da. It's beautiful and deadly piece of art."

"Good to hear it."

"By the way, you wanted to tell me something."

"What? Yeah... I had a strange dream."

"Give me the details."

"I was in some dark landscape. I could see bogs, meadows and forests covered by eternal night." - I saw her irises getting smaller when she was describing that place.

"So... Nav?"

"I thought about this too. I was exploring it, while the voice was talking to me. I couldn't find its source."

"What did this voice say?"

"Nasty things. Like it was testing if my believe of things dear to me is strong."

"Faith crisis... It still torments you."

"When you don't think on your own and you just listen to someone's orders... life was easier. I like freedom, but when I got it for the first time, I didn't know what to do with it. Guess that being part of a secret society really messes with your mind."

"Yeah, your order... Good that I wasn't in such organization. Still, it doesn't mean I wasn't a messed up person, but I was surely your enemy. Anyway, what this voice sounded like?"

Ren lowered her head and gaze. She was silent for a bit, but I patiently waited for the answer.

"It was exactly like yours, Ruvim." - firebird replied with a bit of sadness in her voice.

"That's fitting. After all, I was the one who made you question your worldview."

"Yeah..."

"It sounds like you regret that I saved you..."

"What? No!"

"Are you sure?"

"I... No, I'm not. I live because of you, but... it's a hard life. Tell me, how do you deal with it?"

"I had more contact with normal society during my voyages, unlike you. That's why I could easily adapt here."

"So I have to spend more time with others."

"Da. Talk with your roommate, go with her to do some random things, perhaps go to the parties she attend. Many things to do here in this place I like to call "Yavian Refuge"."

"Ugh... This again..."

"Sorry."

"But yeah... I might try it. Thanks, Ruvim."

"That's what friends are for - to help each other."

"Then I must be a terrible friend..." - Ren lowered her head. - "Since I mostly take help from others..."

"Life consists of ups and downs. Problem is that their amount isn't balanced. That's why we may need more help. Help that I'll provide you, if you need."

"I... I understand."

"So... what will you do?"

"Go back to the apartment. And then... try more of a normal life. Thank you."

"My pleasure, podrugá."

"I think I'll go now."

"When will we meet?"

"Next week? Same hour?"

"Noted. Take care, firebird."

Zharena nodded and left my house. And I just finished eating. I didn't want to stop her- she has her own life now, even if she struggles to enjoy it. Eh... I think I'll go for a walk. And after return, I'll just grab a book. Probably I'll read "In Tune with the Infinite" again.