

Resolution

The Rebellious Affair of Jatski Cenntros

The Science Vessel, *Diligent Affair*, makes a history-making decision while tasked with studying the advancement of life on Planet Q354a

Jatski paced the length of the small break room where a replicator hummed. Their soft, crackly voice spoke to no one while one of their two sets of tentacles was busy fixing themselves a sandwich while their eyes were glued to the tablet in hand. The break room door slid open with a hiss, though the squid-like *Davri* was too busy to parse their much louder colleague barreling into the room.

"Jat, my friend! Are you ready to get your ass beat in the sims?" The *Valuumi* twirled, always one to make a show of their presence, but Jatski was all too used to selectively ignoring the fishlike squirrel, even as their bright, luminescent esca pulsed her mood.

Jatski, lowering their voice, held a tendril up in a waving motion and finished their thought before sighing heavily, "Ari, I already told you I'm far too busy for that. Have you even SEEN these readouts? They are deeply concerning and-"

The luminescent bulb atop Ari's head flashed red, and Jatski's voice dropped off. The *valuumi* were notoriously easygoing, so when they chose to signal anger, it always threw them off.

"...and I'm your superior telling you to take a fucking break, Jat. Are you still on about that human girl?" Ari strode up to Jatski with an air of superiority that they only noticed when someone was stepping too close to her status quo.

She has no business having power here. She's the Admiral's fucking daughter, not a psychologist. Jatski thought, a little too forward in their brain. They could instantly tell that the empathic *valuumi* noticed, and shook their head.

"I'm sorry," they answered reflexively, "I'm just not used to watching violence like that. There must be something more we can do for her."

The red of her esca faded lightly, and a disappointed sigh followed. The replicator gave a happy, awkward chime and Ari strode up to take the cup of coffee that Jatski was replicating. Jatski gave an irritated glance, but Ari beamed red and leaned inches from their beak with a hard stare.

"Now I know you know the first directive of the Galactic Union, Jat. Don't interfere with developing civilizations. I'm here to make the decisions and you are here to follow orders, prawn. You don't have the power to do shit." Ari punctuated her anger by sipping the mug coffee they made.

On a normal day, that would've been that. On a normal day, Jatski wouldn't have even pushed back this much.

"Bullshit."

This time, Jatski projected their thoughts right at her. Ari halted as if she hit a wall and turned sharply. "What did you just say?"

"I said that's bullshit." Jatski boomed, "We can save her life right now. We can save hundreds of lives and you're telling me I can't because it's the morally right thing to do to watch an entire civilization suffer and die!"

In an instant, Jatski could not look at Ari directly. Her esca grew so fiery that even they could pick up on her empathic fuming. Far past the point of going back, Jatski pushed back with an audible laugh.

"You're done, Jat. Pack up and get the fuck off my ship."

Jatski sat in the moment with a large grin, "Nope, sorry. Technically I quit when I drugged the coffee."

A white glow. Funny. They'd never seen that before, nor had Jatski seen her shut up so quickly.

"Your anger is so predictable. Also I'll be taking the ship AND her." Jatski punctuated by shifting to return to their plans with a sigh as Ari collapsed to the floor, "Look at that, I guess I do have that power."