



Ghost
of
Arcwright

This turned out a little different than I expected it to, but I hope you like it. I live with stories like this in my head every day. I love exploring them, and have done since I was a kid.

Before I even thought about making drawing the thing I did, I always wanted to write stories. I've done a little dabbling at it here and there, but nothing serious. I always thought that my writing and my stories weren't good enough, nor ever would be. I thought the same thing about art, but I saw a piece that I aspired to, and told myself that I could never do it. It was impossible to get there, but I might as well try.

I still haven't reached that point, but it's been a journey worth taking and exploring. I'm still growing as an artist every day, but I've never fallen out of love for the stories I can come up with. I've always told myself that I am not good enough to share them. Perhaps I will never be.

But I might as well try.

So, this is the first serious effort to give people a glimpse into that world.

This is for *you*.

I know it's just a silly short story.
I'm just a big sappy idiot.

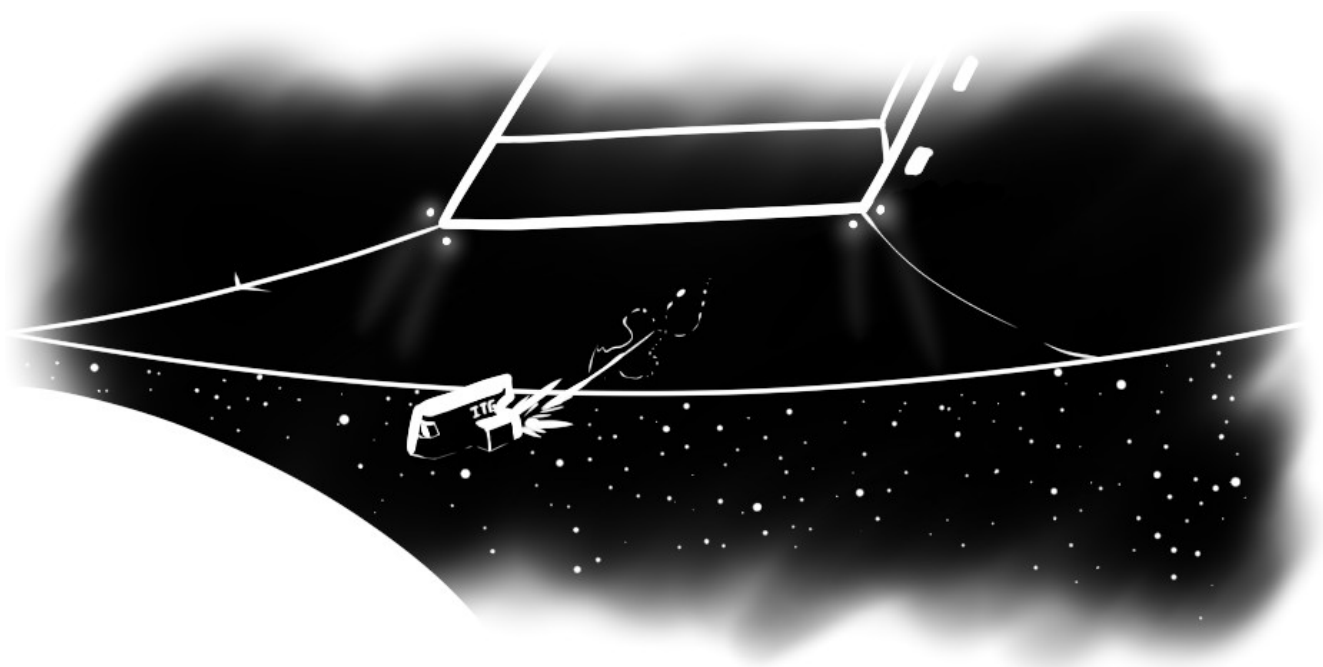


Out among the wisps and embers, far beyond the blue sky. A dance of stars and ether as old as time. The dancers frolic and play, their twirls and rounds mixing thoughtlessly into an endless ballet.

Among this dance, the odd mote achieves the right conditions to take a moment and consider itself. Odder still when these motes rise from their homes and join the dance, to strike out into those Turbulent Stars.

For an instant in this dance, a voice calls out far and wide, a cry for aid. The embers and ether that make up the dance cannot hear such small, brief cries. No help will come from them. The motes though, may break off from their own dance, to brave the current, to see the cry to its source.





KA-CHUNK...

Her stomach jumped up into her throat as the floor tried to fall away. Straps and hanging things seemed for the moment, disinterested in the concept of gravity, while the window out of the shuttle's cockpit flicked past the dock slot's lights and out into open space. Little in the way of stars to see though as the *Plucky Darling*, their mothership, had lined them up for their target. Out in front of the screen loomed a growing green and brown and blue sphere. Whispy white tufts of clouds rolled over the surface below them, while on the sensor screen, she could already see that the ship behind them had pulled away, moving into an orbit.

"Alright away team, we're estimating a seventy minute orbit." The Captain's voice rang out from her commpin, "Once you're on the surface, communication with the ship will probably be spotty to non-existent after twenty minutes or so. If you can get comms up at the site that'd be swell." She sounded a little bored about all of this. Most of the crew was. The planet in front of them had grown to the point that she couldn't see the edges anymore, and the shuttle was starting to shudder a bit as it hit atmosphere. "But, find that distress beacon, grab the stranded, and get back here. I guess keep an eye out for anything that might be useful, but don't hold your breath. It's probably a scavenger we're picking up, after all. This place should be pretty clean, as far as valuables go. I'd LIKE to get out of here in one pass, so, try to be off the ground in under an hour if you can. Keep us posted, out."

A boom from her left as the voice of Laalu burst forth, deep and rumbly even over the sounds of the shuttle flying through one of those clouds, "Undastood. It's a pretty small site so we should be able 'ta give the whole thing a peek before we're close on time." The sound made her chest quiver, and tickled between her ears in a good way. The away mission's security. She always felt safe sticking near Laalu. Laalu was hardly huge for her species, but she stood a head or two taller than most of the crew at least! She was a pretty tough looking woman with a distinctly canine body shape. A nice long snoot, tall ears and a big fluffy tail. She was very toned and looked strong, yet graceful at the same time!

At the front of the shuttle, the one actually bringing them in, was another relatively canine form, though distinctly smaller than Laalu was. "I'm telling you, probably didn't pull up all the loot if there's still a beacon." Dominic spoke in something of a shrill voice. Almost a screech to be heard over the rumble and rattle of the shuttle coming in, the retros firing to slow their ingress as they approached their destination. Compared to Laalu, Dominic was absolutely puny, he had massive radar dishes for ears and an impossibly fluffy tail, along with small little fluffy hands and feet. He hardly looked more than a cute little mascot of the team. One however should never judge by appearances, especially not when they're wearing an engineering jumpsuit. Dominic was a shrewd, calculating soul. Those small little fingers could dance over machines and see them stripped and rebuilt almost like magic, and with his small size, he could fit into all manner of vent and tube to work on whatever needed it.

She at last spoke up herself, "Now now, perhaps the people who came before were just trying to be decent. For all we know the beacon is the only thing left in this place, and whoever's down there is lucky for it. It IS against regulations to tamper with distress beacons, after all." She chided playfully. She did mean it, but her tone implied that she agreed with Dominic. It was unlikely that the place would have been cleaned out if the beacon remained, she just wanted to remind him that they would not be taking it. She was Turia, soft and plump of figure, rounded snoot, floppy ears with blunted horns, a goat of one sort or another. Turia was a trained and practiced medic, and her voice quaked a little with the motion of the shuttle. She bumped and bounced in her seat while Dominic snooted at the air as the ground rose up.

The sensors glittered with information that was complicated and alien to Turia, but in another couple of moments, the rumbling of the shuttle had slowed to a gentle hum, and moments still the shuttle alighted on solid ground. A gentle bump that jostled the lot of them, and then stillness as the shuttle creaked and settled. A snap of a switch and the shuttle's controls went dark. Clicks of belts and creaks of gear as the three rose up from their seats and made their final checks of all their stuff. Turia's heart fluttered, reasons not least of which being that, when Laalu stood up, Turia was totally cast in her shadow. Turia wasn't exactly small, but Laalu made her feel it, in a good way. Of course, they were all at least a little nervous about the situation...

The doors of the shuttle hissed as they opened outward, splitting in half horizontally, with the bottom half forming a short ramp. The sky outside was fading blue, with yellows and oranges creeping in across the puffy clouds. The shadows were getting a bit long. The air was crisp and fresh though, nice and cool, while many of the plants that surrounded the facility were starting to turn oranges and browns and purples. For all she knew this was how they normally looked, but she suspected what with the grass being green, that this was a seasonal behavior. The wind rustled the leaves gently, and she heard no animals, no bugs.



The facility itself was not all that out of date in design. Compared to ITG equipment and structural standards this was basically modern, if perhaps a little on the cheap side. Bare concrete and steel with little in the way of design flourishes or emblems, and basically nothing in the way of supporting structures. This was one of those little all in one sites. If she had to guess, Turia would bet that it was just one big block of reinforced concrete dug into the hillside here. The kind of place where companies do work that they don't want anyone to know about or interfere with until it's done. Or at least, that's what she imagined. The crew parted ways with the shuttle after Domnic papped his little hand across the shuttle's door control. The doors hissed again and closed themselves up politely.

Laalu went ahead of Domnic and Turia, noting the curious angular logo by the door. A hexagon with an unfamiliar symbol across its center. She looked to the others, while Turia shook her head, Domnic spoke up, "Is logo. Arcwright Technologies. They try to do like AVX, wide spread of product types for all kinds of application, buuut! Without ships like AVX has, success has been limited. Not very widespread." He looked a little more interested now though, his tail flicked back and forth with obvious excitement. "This isn't a manufacture facility. I think it may be a research facility... Maybe juicy tech nuggets inside. Could be a big payday~" He hooked his thumbs into his belt and scooped forward to investigate the door, which was closed up tight. The access panel looked dead.

"Well, they could have just as easily left **because** of what they developed here. For all we know it's irradiated inside." Puffed Turia, pulling out her analyzer. The blue lights flickered to life immediately and cooed its tone as she smoothly swiped it through the air. It chimed merrily about its findings, which Turia peeked at. "Mmnh. No radiation out here at least. Little above average CO2, but not enough to be toxic. She eyed the abundant plant growth around the landing pad. "Well, nothing to say we shouldn't go in." With that Laalu nodded and stepped back from the door, giving Domnic the space and light he needed to work around it. Her steps shook the ground just the tiniest bit underneath Turia's hooves, which again made her heart flutter while she looked around the area.

Laalu rounded the landing pad slowly, looking for any recent signs of people, while occasionally calling out! "OI! Rescue crew is here! Is anyone out there! Let me hear you!" The booming bark coming from what had to be seven or so feet of big buff canine lady bounded across the hills, and came back moments later a shadow of the call it once had been. Somewhere in the trees, little flapping things clattered and zipped away from the call, letting off little offended chirps as they went. Laalu did not seem pleased to get no reply.

After a minute or so of work, Domnic let out a happy trill of his own as the door hissed, and THE MOMENT his hand had left the access hatch, flashed open almost faster than blinking! The whole assembly rattling with the thundering crash of the doors sliding into the walls. "And we're in." He said in a cheeky tone, before trotting on casually inside. Laalu quickened her pace after him, while Turia trailed behind. "Let's not get any hands eaten by any doors, please." She sighed as the party entered the Arcwright Research Facility.

The power was out all over as it turned out, hardly surprising with what they had seen so far. Domnic and Laalu flicked on a light apiece and shined them in front of themselves. Domnic's was fancier though, as it seemed to have some kind of scanner attached with a little screen he looked over now and then. Laalu's light looked sort of comically small and fragile in her grasp. Carrying up the rear, Turia could see well enough with the light in front of her, her hooves clicking on the hard floor with each step they took deeper, save for the odd step on something softer. A leaf here, a scrap of cloth there. The floor was littered with little traces of outside and not recent occupation. The floor was dirty, caked in many places with mud and parts of machines, old leaves, papers too. The mess got worse the deeper they went in, which steadily muffled the clicking of the medic's hooves until they were as quiet as the boots and bare paws of her companions.



It seemed that nature had begun reclaiming this place, "Must be some other way in. Maybe a hole in a wall even." Chirped Domnic as he slowly swept his flashlight across the hallway this way and that. The three proceeded into the dark at a steady pace, though with how grimy they found the inside of the facility, their progress had become somewhat less enthusiastic. Now and then Laalu would announce herself in a stern tone, loud, but not quite shouting. "Rescue's here, anyone here? Announce yourselves!" Turia had sort of expected the sound to echo, but with all the dirt and debris, the sound seemed really closed in. They all got really quiet after each of the security dog's calls. Big sensitive ears of the two canines perked to full attention, scanning left and right and forward, listening for any sign of movement or voice that wasn't themselves.

They passed a number of doors on their way. Most of these were the old knob and hinge sort. They didn't pause for any of these though, not that Domnic wasn't plainly curious, but they all had a job to do first. Domnic was guiding them into the place, following a marker on his flashlight scanner. He let Laalu go through doors they were lead to first before picking back up the lead... They passed a vacant front desk where one might have expected some kind of security person to be posted. Down a long hallway with a number of doors with little name plaques stuck to the walls next to many of them. At the end of that long hallway was one of those powered security doors, of course dark and dead as everything else in here. An oppressive silence crept into them despite the lack of danger. Domnic seemed pretty insistent that this was the way, so once again, out came his tools. Turia finally took out her own flashlight and clicked it on, just to provide the extra light and area coverage as she peeked into the darkness.

She could hear the little clicks and clacks of Domnic's little hands working over the panel. Tinks and snips and tap taps in the dark. Domnic's light was attached to his arm, so the ladies stayed out of his way. Turia briefly collided with, and had to push a fuzzy hanging vine from the ceiling out of the way as she stepped over toward a window alongside the door. It was clouded with dirt and dust so she couldn't really see through it very well. Something scrambled behind her and a deep HISS filled the air, she flicked her light toward the sounds in time to see the door barring their way snap open much as the entrance had, a thundering, ear splitting CRASH filling the void of silence as the door's mechanisms were overridden. Laalu flared her nostrils a bit as she took a deep breath. "Well, if they didn't hear that, they've gotta be dead." She rumbled low as she went in first. Domnic put his tools back into his belt and trotted in after.

Turia put her arm out to catch the vine as she passed, but it never touched her as she went.

The room they stepped into had quite a few monitors and computer cases. All totally dark of course, but Dominic seemed smug about the find, "See, plenty of stuff to scrounge through." He tapped his little fingers together mischievously as he reached into his bag and pulled out a bulky looking block with a series of small blue lights along one side. He scrambled under one of the desks, and rummaged around for a moment before reappearing without the block. "There, should be able to power these for a little bit." He chattered as he tapped the power button for the computer. A gentle whirring coughed from the side of the machine for a moment as it spat out a bit of dust that had been settled onto its fans. The screen glowed behind the layer of dust and grime that had built up, but with a couple of swipes of his arm, Dominic had the machine mostly usable, and a very dusty forearm. The sounds of rapid clicking of tiny fingers tapping keys filled the air, while the computer screen glowed with the files the fennec was sifting through.

Laalu had seemed somewhat uneasy since they'd gotten here, so while Dominic saw to what he could with the machine, Turia went to check on her. She was lurking around the edges of the room, looking to the various ways in and out, doors, vents, even through the windows deeper on. "You doing okay? You're not usually so reserved." Laalu's ears flicked back, and she didn't look at Turia when she spoke, "Mnh. Something just doesn't feel right. Feels like we should have seen a sign of them. And I thought I saw a light moving just a little bit ago."

Turia put a hand on the forearm of the towering canine woman, gentle and comforting. "Well, maybe that was our mission. I didn't see any other flashlights here though." Laalu shook her head as she finally met Turia's gaze, "Naah, it wasn't bright enough for that. We been shinin' lights all over this place. Probably just some reflection I got spooked over." And to illustrate her point, she shined the light at one of the windows, and they watched as the light scattered over the few shiny spots of the surface. "Only really caught my attention 'cuz well... It was yellow, an' it looked like a light of its own. Didn't light up the space around it. My light passed over it though, and then it was gone." She stepped a little closer to Turia and bumped her hip against the shorter girl and put a heavy arm around her for a small, brief squeeze. Turia's heart fluttered again at the power of the larger woman. She leaned into the touch, overwhelmed by the squeeze, but it only lasted a moment. "W-well, sounds like a reflection to me at least."

A-and you know, even if you did see someone move, could still be our rescue target. There's no telling how long they've been here alone. Could be we just spooked them." Turia's voice quivered a little bit at first as she busied herself straightening out the straps for her gear and the wrinkles in her uniform.

"Jus' caught me off guard. Felt like an electric shock to the soul. Still tickly behind the eyes. Maybe need a proper checkup when we're back on the ship." Rumbled Laalu as she stood up a little straighter. "We need to be done before the ship gets back." And Turia nodded in agreement. "Well, does it hurt anywhere right now?" She asked in a small voice, tilting her head as she looked up to the big dog. Laalu shook her head. "Just a weird tingle." She murmured, before looking off into one of the windows again.

Domnic's little fingers had been flying over the keys the entire time. Turia was always surprised seeing him work. He seemed to attack problems in as vicious and straightforward manner as one could. She knew the manual override on powered doors tended to be loud, but she felt a bit like how he handled it was unsafe, and she doubted that any of the doors Domnic had messed with would ever work again. So, she wasn't really surprised at all when he hopped up and declared, "We need to split up." He had moved from sitting on the chair to standing with such speed that he actually spun around a couple times on it as he said so. "No." Rumbled Laalu flatly. "We don't even know where the person we're here for is. If they catch one of us alone it could be trouble." She was looking at Domnic specifically as she said this. He insisted though, "We need someone to go down to the generator room to turn power on. We also need someone here in the security room, to work the doors." He had his hands on his hips, his tone said all too clearly that he thought that the reasoning should have been obvious.

That big fluffy tail flicked and thrashed behind him with obvious annoyance. "You want to leave quickly, then we need the power on, and we need the room with all the security equipment manned. We don't have the ID cards to get through these doors on our own, so I'd have to override all of them until we find what we're looking for." He bobbed his head as Laalu frowned wider and wider at him, "Look, I'm all for taking forever here and pulling up every scrap of tech trash in this place." His expression and tone softened a little bit as he looked up at the big security dog, "But, if we want to get you back to the ship quickly, then this is how we do it."

Turia piped up then as she turned her attention back to the worried canine, "Well, I think if that's our best plan, and Domnic has the map memorized," she looked over to the big eared wrench jockey, who nodded easily, "Then I could stay here with the doors closed, and you two could go together. We know what's here, so I think it will be safer here. Domnic will need your cover in the unknown though." She said with a nod as Turia still seemed uneasy about this, "And besides, if you two get hurt, I can come rescue you~" Laalu gave a little sigh as she relented. "Fine. We'll get the power on and do a QUICK SWEEP, then we're out of here. I don't want to be apart in this place." She said with a little whine behind her voice.

Domnic bounced on his little feet, "Alright, we'll go fast. Turia, come come!" He squeaked as he patted the back of the chair. She stepped around it and came to sit down once Domnic was clear, and he hopped up to sit in her lap for a moment. A soft, light and wiggly shape. Warm and waggy of tail. He tapped at the keys and showed her his findings. There were applications for cameras and door locks, none of which were responsive at the moment. "When the power is up, you should get door open requests here." He gestured to a portion of the screen. "It should be pretty straightforward to open the doors as we come to them then." He looked up at her and gave a little thumbs up and tilted his head, his eyes glittering the reflection of the monitor.

When Turia gave a thumbs up in turn and nodded to him, he smiled and hopped off of her lap just as quick. "Sounds good. Will I break anything if I look around the computer?" Turia asked. He shook his head at her, "You shouldn't let it go to sleep though, you'll have to bypass the login again, and I doubt you know how to do that." Turia's ears flicked back and she shook her head. He nodded to her and laughed as he said, "Then probably best if you did explore it while you wait, to keep you and the computer awake~" He gestured to Laalu then, and set to trot to one of the doors. A scraping of tools and a few clicks. A minute of work and the door hissed open. It was loud, but it didn't bang so hard this time. Domnic worked on the other side, and then the door CLACKED closed again once Laalu had passed through. "We'll be done in no time~!"

She was on her own.

Laalu's voice came over her commpin after another moment, "Status update if you can still read us, *Plucky Darling*, the team has split up to get power back on here." No voice came back to her though. After another few moments of silence, Laalu's voice came again, "Alright, about forty minutes until we need to be in the shuttle. We'll let you know when we're at the power station, Turia." The medic reached up to press the out button on her pin, "Got'cha, keep me updated if anything changes." Her voice was a soothing coo over the airwaves, and she hoped it put Laalu at ease.

Turia settled into the seat now that she was alone. The sounds of Laalu's steps fading away as she wandered deeper into the facility, leaving her in an eerie silence, broken only occasionally by the little ticks of the computer in front of her thinking. She set her fingers to the controls and peered through files.

She quickly became aware of how boring the life of a security on a base like this would have to be. There were long and technical reports on all the people who worked there, who had what qualifications to be where, and then further who was supposed to be where and when. There were even numerous reports about all the times anyone had ever been places they weren't supposed to be. Fraternizing, lost, borrowing materials ... getting food from the **good** vending machine? Turia laughed at that last one.

Further exploring revealed a number of videos. In most of them she could see largely empty hallways with someone strolling toward or away from the camera. These must have been motion activated recordings, monitoring the movements of people around the facility. The place looked clean and nice, a lot of sterile looking white on the floors and walls, with accents of reddish brown wood. Turia thought the place in the recordings looked like a comfortable and safe place to work. The people passing the cameras looked relaxed, and they were seen laughing and carrying on together in many of the recordings. This remote place. It wasn't like any of these people could have just left whenever they wanted... She realized that they must have lived here together. This wasn't just some research station, it was a home for those who came here.

She looked around herself at the broken dirty remnants of what was on the screen, back and up, where she could see the shimmer of the camera that had once recorded this very room. Sitting in the shadow of this ruined place, she felt a little sad for the loss of what looked like a happy outpost of talented people.

Turia turned her attention back to the screen though, and kept on exploring. She found a video of someone thin and young standing and looking right at the camera! Behind him she could even see out of a window, at the very landscape they had seen when arriving. This must have been recorded in some office with a window.

"As you all know," his voice crackled through the machine's speakers!!! With how silent the room had been Turia jumped at the sudden sound. "We've made great strides here. I don't think it needs to be said, but I'll say it out loud. I'm proud of you. The T-type strand has proven more resilient and adaptable than we could have hoped. The product has been approved and accepted by headquarters, though they will need to put it through more rigorous testing than we can do here." He gave a bit of a shrug and a nod to the camera, "With a little luck these babies will put our team on the map, and help speed up colonization of places like this." He snapped his fingers, "Ah right, I thought they would want to give it a different name, but HQ seems quite taken by the nickname. It's cute and approachable, they say. So! Assuming all goes well, Teppi will be roaming the countryside of new lands soon."

He paused for a moment then, and gave a little sigh, looked a mite sheepish. "Unfortunately the V-type strand has proved perhaps more adaptable than can be realistically handled. She's smart, guys. I get fawning over her, but she's definitely noticed and started to take advantage of that." He looked stone serious then, "The V-type strand testing is to be discontinued in two weeks. We need to bring her in line before then. She needs to respect us as an authority and follow the boundaries we set for her. Soon she'll be too big to realistically control, and if we don't have her in line before then. There won't really be any choice. So. All of you are to treat her with appropriate respect and discipline. She is a dangerous animal, and if she realizes that, we'll all be in trouble."

His features softened a bit then, "So, I trust you all to continue to do us proud. Genetics will be finalizing W-type development over the coming two weeks, and then we'll enter W-type testing." He prattled on with some increasingly technical jargon that Turia could hardly even recognize as a language, relating to this 'W-type'. She skimmed through the rest of the video, and then moved on.

Turia recognized the name, Teppi. She'd even met a few on some of the further out missions she'd been a part of. Big fluffy beasties, cute and affectionate more often than not. So this is where they had been developed? Teppi were mainly used as a kind of starter livestock for new colonies, and had been so for more than a decade now at least. They could live basically anywhere with breathable air and vegetation.

She hadn't known where they came from though. They were made? That business must not have gone well. The one thing she knew about Teppi was how quickly they reproduced. Starting colonies that don't fail and have Teppi usually have Teppi as one of their first exports.

She tilted her head and picked another video. Within the nearby folders there were videos from the labs. The first she picked showed someone surrounded by a half dozen fluffy quadrupeds. They had big floppy ears and nubby horns, thick squashy tails. Each of them looked about three or four feet tall. A bunch of juvenile Teppi. They bumbled about and squashed on the labcoat wearing lady. She looked a little overwhelmed and unwilling to get up as one of them had curled up on her lap, while the others bumped and jostled her playfully. She petted and patted and hugged at them each in turn as she tried to show equal attention to each. Turia's heart melted. Now THAT was a dream job if she ever saw one.



There were many similar videos of people working with these animals, and others. Similar, but different. Some of the animals didn't come out quite right it seemed. There were some that were sickly, others didn't move much, or stared blankly off into space, no amount of play or treats to motivate them. And others still looked frail and slender and quaked as they moved. Turia's mouth formed a line as she kept diving deeper into these videos. Perhaps this job wasn't quite as nice as she thought after all... She guessed that these were the different 'types' that the man had referred to. They can't have just gone from 'T-type' to 'W-type' with nothing in-between, she reasoned.

She thought about backing out and checking footage from some other directory, but chanced a video in a folder. Something long and slender, but strong enough to move scooted along the corner of the room. It was so slinky and fuzzy. Like a kind of big noodle made of fur and sinew. When one of the lab techs walked by, it leaped out at him and scurried up his body, around his neck, and down again before he'd even had time to react! He cried out in fright just as it was jumping away! Landing gracefully and darting off out of frame again... He hadn't been hurt, just startled. He called after the creature. "Velkie!!!" He stormed off in a huff then, while a brush of cream colored fur noodled past the camera. Wide, silver eyes glittered up into view and filled the frame as the lens fogged up. The creature lost interest and turned to stalk around again, the opposite side of the room this time. It ran around the corner, and a moment later a woman squealed.



In the next, Velkie, Turia assumed, had wound themselves around one of the scientist's neck and shoulders. They were bigger now, and hardly looked like they fit there. This creature looked a bit more like a floppy fluid in this state, clearly very comfortable on this man's shoulders as he went about his business. He wandered from station to station tinkering with a computer here, adjusting a dial there, and writing notes on a clipboard that he handed to Velkie when he didn't need it. Little grabby hands would take hold of it. The lady from the Teppi video entered and came to check on the work. Velkie seemed hesitant to give up the clipboard to her. "She's helping you out again today?" Her voice was soft and warm, and the man Velkie was attached to nodded as he reached for the clipboard. The fluffy noodle readily released it to him, and he handed it to the woman. Velkie's eyes trained on it as it went... and her tail whipped out and around that woman's shoulders. Tugging her over into perhaps uncomfortable proximity to the man as she hugged herself to both of them. "Eehehe... she's a little strong willed, hm?" The two allowed this though, and went over the notes.

Turia's eyes glittered, she didn't hesitate to play the next one. Velkie was in a room with a group of juvenile Teppi. The group gyohed and pawed at her, while she looked rather frazzled, her head sticking up and out of the group! She warbled pitifully as the others butted and nibbled and played with her. She was easily twice their size, but not as thick of build. She batted at them gently. When the play became more than she would tolerate, Velkie jumped up and dashed across the room, sending a couple of the others wheeling through the air with all limbs splayed! They tumbled, got back up and chased her on their short legs! Velkie hopped up onto a box and peered over the edge at the gathering pawing up at her. She flicked her tail as her eyes went wide, the shimmering silver blazing yellow for a moment as she GLARED at the Teppi, fur raising with obvious annoyance, or anger? Turia was hovering a finger over the pause button at this point, but Velkie didn't get violent. Instead, the Teppi seemed to almost immediately calm. Each of them taking a step or two back, and sitting down to look up at her. The yellow gleam lingered in Velkie's eyes as she watched the Teppi. The view stayed that way for a long minute. Silence betrayed by gentle static coming through the speakers and the ticking of the machine. Without sound or gesture, the Teppi once more hopped up as one and tore off out of the room. Velkie's gaze had returned to its silver gleam, and she looked somehow smug as a soft, warm woman's voice in the distance came through. "Aww. Are you all gonna keep me company?" Velkie hopped down from her box, and slunk off in the opposite direction as the Teppi.



The next video was out on the landing pad. It looked much the same as it had when Turia had arrived here. An unfamiliar shuttle rested on the pad. A few people were loading up onto it. A long lanky shape slunk along the side of the building, just out of sight from the ones boarding, creeping in the twilight, closer and closer to the shuttle. Velkie's glittering silver eyes flashed in the light, her creamy fur stood out like a sore thumb against the tarmac. She glided quickly across it and poked her head around the side of the shuttle's door, then out of sight as she dashed inside! A few moments later a couple members of security sprinted across the landing pad, toward the shuttle with tasers drawn, and into the shuttle they went. A minute went by, and Turia couldn't understand the distant voices that came through the video. They didn't sound as panicked as she thought they ought to. Eventually though, the two security guards strolled back out, one of them with hands on hips as they lead a third shape out. This one was tangled up in creamy fur! "V-velkie! Come on! You can't be out here, you know better!" Came a man's voice. The same one Velkie had been riding in a previous video. She had to be at least twice as big now, and was definitely big enough to be a serious hazard if she really wanted to be. Velkie made a warbling cry as the man worked to untangle himself, and put her back on the ground. She kept grabbing at him, almost desperately. "Come on now, let's head back inside. You can't be out here." She looked up at him with those wide, bright, comprehending eyes. Her grabbing stopped, and she turned toward the building. She checked over her shoulder to make sure he was following, stepping quickly as the other three went after her.

She slipped out of view, into the building, followed by the two security guards. The man stopped at the door, the shadows of sunset shrouded his face. "I'm sorry. I have to go, for both our sakes... Goodbye, little one." He said in a quiet voice, the camera hardly picked up. A CLANG boomed through the speakers as the door sealed shut. A high pitched wail rang out from behind the door. Slowly fading as she was no doubt ushered away from the doors.

The man turned and walked to the shuttle slowly. He looked back as he boarded again, but only for a moment. Then he slipped out of sight. Velkie's distant cries did not cease, but the whirring roar of the shuttle taking off did cover them up.

Turia was a little stunned, and sat staring at the screen for a few moments after the video ended. Her heart ached at the sound of that cry. Still it rang in her ears. Turia shook herself out then, rubbing her fur down from standing on end as she got up from her seat, taking a couple of steps to stretch. She looked around the room as it was illuminated dimly by that single screen. Everything definitely looked like it had just been left behind. She brought her hand up to her commpin and tapped the out button, "How are things going?" Her voice was loud in her own ears even though she was sure she was speaking quietly. A moment later the sound of Laalu's deep tones rumbled through the little pin, "Domnic says we're almost there. Things have been quiet for us, apart from the work. The mess from out there is in here too." Domnic himself spoke up next, though his voice sounded a bit strained as he worked. "Probably ten minutes 'til power's up."

Turia checked the clock on her analyzer, "So about twenty to search this whole place once that's done." She huffed a steamy breath out. "I've found a bunch of videos and uh, yeah so they did genetics work here. Seems like Teppi were developed here, and some other stuff." Domnic came back with another grunt, "Well, have mini drive we might be able to load them on. Or we could just take the machine. Might be better." Turia turned back to the computer and went to sit down again. "We should probably focus on the job before that. If there's time. Keep me posted."

"We will." Laalu rumbled.

Turia scooted the chair in again and looked to the screen. She hesitated, in it, the same labcoat wearing lady from the teppi video was stood in the center of the room. She looked far less at ease than she had in previous videos, stern even. Standing tall as she could, she spoke with practiced

authority. "Velkie, come. It is time for your tests." The room did not answer her while she stared past the camera. She did not give up, "Velkie! You must comply. If you keep up this pouting, you will be made to come." Her tone was cold and hard. She did not look comfortable with what she was saying, but she did not falter. When still her words did not produce Velkie, a hand went into her pocket. A small, silver remote glinted in the light held so that it could be clearly seen. "Now." That final word carried a harsh, loud tone of a threat.

This at last produced a response. A deep, tearing snarl ripped through the air as a cream colored foot stepped over the camera. She obscured its sight for a moment, and that moment was all the time it took for her to clear the space between the woman and Velkie, who looked markedly changed. Her fur stood up, spiked and large as it stood on end, her lips drawn back into a wide grin, showing off large, sharp teeth. She stood at her full height in what was plainly a challenge, one that the woman did not flinch from. She held that remote like a lifeline. Velkie was most definitely an intimidating specimen now. Her horns had come in fully, long and sharp on the ends, adding to her height. Even as she tried to intimidate the woman, her ears were drooped, when Turia had seen them perked up tall in previous videos.

Velkie did not strike down the woman. She lowered her head and stepped around the woman. The woman turned to follow her, unwilling to turn her back on the creature they had once been so casual and caring with. Velkie turned to round the corner, and that was when Turia noticed it. A dark strap over her back and across her shoulders, another around her neck. Those hadn't been there in any of the previous videos. She'd just been wondering what the remote was for, and she didn't think she would have to do much imagining to guess its purpose now.

Turia was very done now. She could see that there were videos dated over the course of around two more weeks in this folder, but she positively dreaded what she would find in the coming ones. The final one loomed with an ominous presence on the screen before her. "There won't really be any choice." The voice of the man haunted the back of her mind, and turned her stomach.

Nope.

She backed out of that folder. It was definitely better that this place was closed down, she decided suddenly. A promising place full of talented people, sure, but the end of Velkie's story took root in Turia's imagination.

Anger flared inside of her, hot thunder of her heartbeat in her ears, but she shook her head and clapped her hands to her cheeks, closed her eyes and took a deep, slow breath. She cleared her mind, pushing the memory of that playful fluffy noodle out of her thoughts. Darkness. Quiet. The place was closed. The harm was done.

She took a couple of minutes to center herself. Slow, calming breaths. Once her anger had cooled, she opened her eyes, set her jaw and looked back at the screen. It had to only be a couple more minutes by now. How did this place close? It might offer her some closure to see the people leaving. She scrolled to the bottom of the main folder to find the final video. She held her breath, and opened it.

The final video any of the cameras had recorded in this place was dark. A light flickered far down the hallway, showing only the shadow of a person's shape on the wall, before the video ended... In that momentary flash, she could see that the place was a mess. Stuff was strewn all over, papers littered the floors with office supplies and testing equipment. None of the dirt and dust and hanging vines of today.

Turia was not satisfied with this final glimpse. For all she knew, this was just the moment before the power had gone out as they left. The mess suggested otherwise though, so she went back a few videos from the same day.

In this one she could see several people fleeing down a hall. The lights were still on closest to the camera, where the people were running to! The people were crying out incoherently as they went. Deeper in the image she could see that the lights were failing. Someone was running from light to light, smashing them with a wrench, while a few more people rushed past this person and after the ones who had come before. They were all people in the normal facility uniforms, or that's what it looked like to Turia, anyway. The ones that came second were definitely chasing, rather than fleeing, an icy focus on their faces as they sprinted out of frame. The light smasher methodically went from light to light all the way down the hallway, destroying every single one.

Once it was all dark, the motion capture video finally ended.

Turia's hand went up to her commpin. "Uh guys? Something weird I found in the videos from this place shutting down. Seems like some of them turned on each other, or went berserk or something. Let's avoid touching anything if we don't know what it is. For all we know, whatever this was is some kind of pathogen, or something. Let's get done as quick as we can."

"Uh, alright. That's the plan but we can rush the end." Laalu's rumbles tickled against her chest where the commpin vibrated. Turia clicked another of the end time videos, before the last one. "You need to STOP!" Shouted a woman's voice! She backed up into frame at the intersection of a hallway, while what she looked up at was out of frame. A click from behind Turia drew her attention! Her heart pounding once again. She spotted the lights on the door's access panel glowing. Power was back on! "STOP!!!" The woman squealed, as golden light passed over her. And then she was calm. Instead of backing up, she stepped forward and out of frame again.

"Power's good. We're set to rush through here and find the beacon. Should be at the back. Turia, check the window I showed you." Domnic's voice puffed through the pin. Turia closed the video and opened the windows like she had been shown. "It looks like things are responding here. The cameras can't see anything though. The lights are all out, because some weirdo went around smashing them at the end." A notice showed up on the door access window, "Alright Turia, alright. Here, did you get our request?" Domnic sounded more annoyed than anything. Turia selected the option to accept the request, "Awesome, door's open. Just keep it up, accept those when they come in and we'll rush."

Things picked up quite a bit then. Every twenty seconds or so Turia received another open request and she accepted it as quick as she could. She could hear the dull *kachunk* in the distance as the door slid open. Between requests, Turia selected yet more videos, to try to piece together what exactly they needed to be looking out for. More people running. More flashes of yellow. Then she arrived at one where things seemed calm. She let this one play out while accepting any of the door open notifications that came through.

The woman from before sat at a desk and looked into the camera. The one who had been working with Velkie. She looked like a glacier now, stone cold as she glared into Turia across time, "The order has been issued, W-type testing has begun, and the previous project is being handled as we speak, per your instructions. She has been highly resistant to your methods and several members of the team are now in the medical ward as a result.

We will get it done, but I would like to take the moment to once again request a transfer. I will not handle another project like this again." Turia's heart quivered as she checked the date of the video, and cross referenced it with the earlier ones.

Velkie's last video had the same date.

An unfamiliar notice showed up on the screen, which Turia clicked on without thinking. The camera application covered the screen then! A camera had detected something moving. The screen she looked at was dark. She stared at it for another few moments, really studying it. A sudden flash of pale light washed across one of the dirty walls! A moment later the short shape of a fennec rounded a corner, and tapped on one of the doors. The same instant, a door open notification showed up! She opened it up, and watched them enter. Laalu was lagging behind quite a bit. She looked like she was struggling more than before. She slipped slowly into the room after Dominic.

The door shut, and the camera's feed went totally dark again, leaving Turia in silence and with her thoughts. Her heart was pounding in her ears as she decided that it would probably be best to check out the other cameras. One after another she flicked through them, and through each she could see only darkness. "T-turia?" Came Dominic's squeaky voice through the commpin. She waited a few heartbeats, figuring that he would continue.

He didn't.

So she reached up to her own pin, "Yes? What is it, is everything okay? Did you find the source?" She tried to keep her voice level, but her insides were all aquiver! And still he did not reply. She waited as the seconds ticked by, dread building up in her chest as she thought about everything they'd been through. Laalu was not totally well, and while she hadn't been too worried in the moment, now that she thought on it, what if Laalu had collapsed? For all she knew this 'W-type' was some kind of bacteria that made people sick.

She wondered over why some had fled, and others had chased them. She needed more information to put this together, and her present panic was only leading to an inner tempest of imagined afflictions.

There was nothing for it, she would have to run out there and tend to Laalu and Domnic herself! A two or three had gone by and they definitely wouldn't have just left her hanging like this! She shot up from her chair with a deep well of fear in her heart. Stiff and clammy, she robotically put one leg in front of the other to go for the door! She bumped right into it. Oh. Right. She didn't have access here. The doors were powered, but they needed to be opened manually.

She tripped over her own feet at the impact and fell backward onto her rear. Feeling foolish, she reached up for her commpin again. A little bit of fire in her cheeks, when suddenly the door in front of her did open.

She blinked and looked up at it, as a towering figure stood behind it. A flicker of yellow shimmering behind their pupils. A wall of a person filled up the doorway, leaning down to creep through it. Laalu stepped out into the glow of the monitor. Her face looked sort of hollow and neutral as she gazed down on the goat woman. "Turia... Domnic had an accident..." Her voice sounded sort of strained, like she was struggling to push it out. "An accident! What kind of accident, where is he?" She cried out! She couldn't understand how Laalu could be so calm in telling her such a thing! "Take me to him! Why didn't you bring him with you?" She ordered the massive canine, as she looked her over. She could have easily carried him in her large hands, he would have only been a handful or two for her. She could have lifted him up and carried him away regardless of what he thought on the matter...

A muffled whine came from her, pitifully. Weak and quiet, if Turia had kept talking she might have missed it. Her eyes followed the sound down from Laalu's face, to a rounded shape about her middle, below her breast... her belly was distended with a subtly shifting shape, as Domnic struggled against the fate Laalu had decided for him. Turia's eyes widened slowly as the realization dawned on her, until those orbs might very well have escaped her skull. The panic only rising up inside of her as her worst fears were confirmed.

Whatever caused this place's fall was still here. And it had affected Laalu. She placed a hand on her distended tummy, and rumbled out low in that same strained voice, "I have him, do not worry. Let me help you up." She leaned over, one of those huge paws reaching for Turia! The goat was shocked to the point of frozen for a moment there, but when she realized what was about to happen to her, the goat's fight or flight kicked in, just in the nick of time!

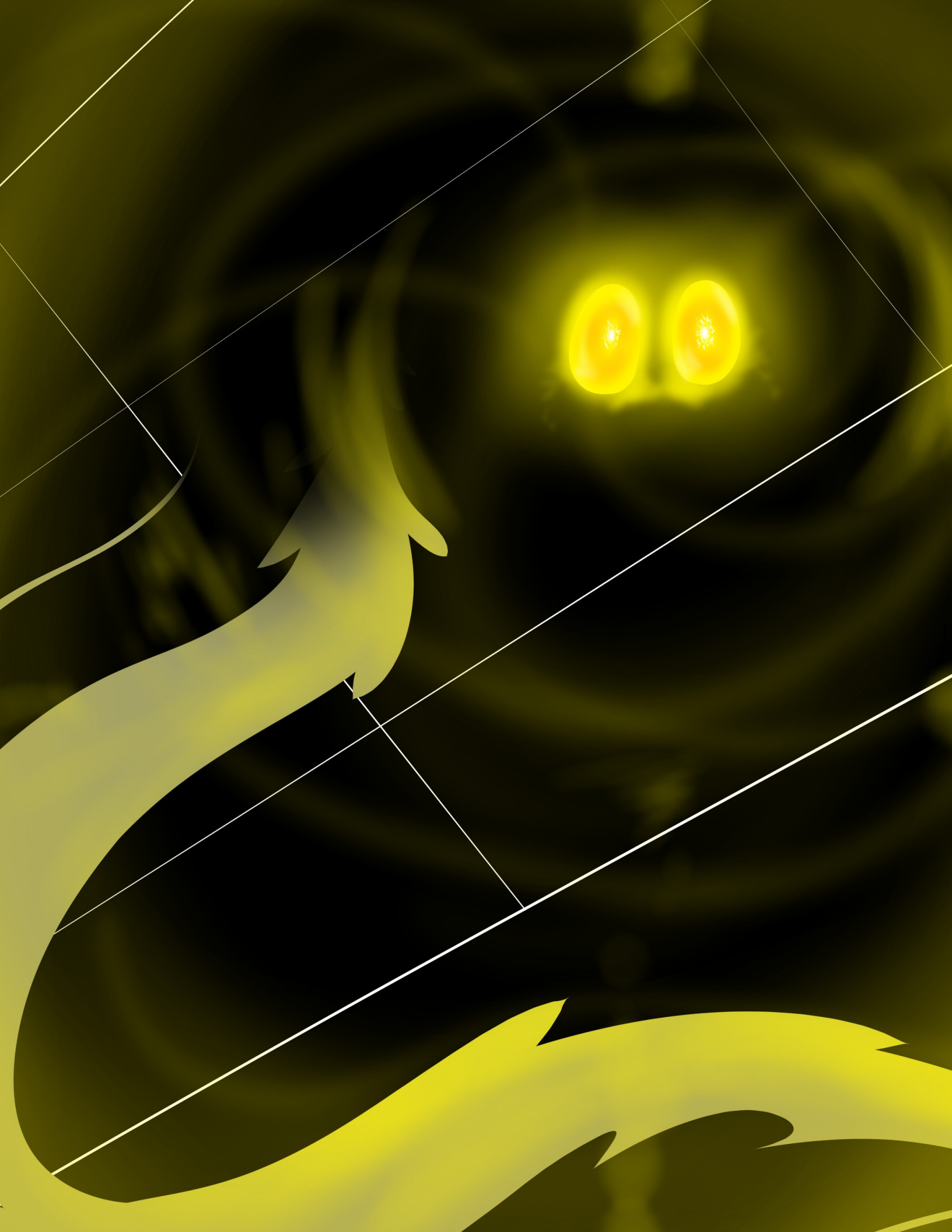


She kicked out at Laalu's hand, landing one of her hooves in the center of the massive palm. This didn't do much to push the paw away, but Turia did slide a foot or two across the floor! Screaming wildly, she scrambled up onto her feet and ran! As fast as her legs would carry her! The only way for her to go was back the way they had come. Domnic destroying these doors would make their exit easy, not that she was thinking of such things as she flew through the dark halls in blind panic! Each of her hooves hit the ground with as much force as she could muster, running as hard as she possibly could, though no amount of effort would carry her as fast as she wanted to go! Her heart was trying its best to hammer its way out of her chest as she skidded around corners, slamming into walls and dashing away as quick as she could manage! The path that they had opened had taken quite a while to go through on their way in, but on her way out, Turia would make it in a matter of a couple of minutes.

Laalu was no slouch either, those glittering yellow pupils shone in the darkness, and they always seemed to be just around the corner behind her. Massive as she was, she practically filled up the hallway behind Turia, and moved near silently. The medic knew that, though she was bigger than Domnic, she stood no better chance at overpowering Laalu. If the big dog caught her, she was done. "Laalu! Laalu why! Please Laalu stay away! You're sick!!! Please let him go!" She squealed as she ran away from her teammate.

"We have to help." Came a rumble from behind. It faded though, as Laalu slowed down at last, and Turia left her in her dust. Perhaps she had sensed it, or seen it. Turia could see the shadow of the doorway leading outside! The sun had almost totally set, leaving only the edges of the sky a bit orange. It was enough though. Enough to give her some hope, as she dashed through another fuzzy hanging vine!

And so she fell, tangled up in the vine she tumbled over and landed HARD on her front, Turia's snoot bounced off the floor, and her head rang with the impact, the edges of her vision fading for a moment as she shakily got up and woozily made for the door again. The vine was still on her, holding her to the spot... It wrapped its way around her chest and SQUEEZED there. Confused and panicked, Turia thrashed and squealed once more! She reached for a knife as she followed the vine up to the ceiling, where she saw how it protruded from a dark vent duct, with two wide yellow eyes glittering at her from up high! She yanked her knife free and drew in a breath.



"Velkie."

Those eyes flashed, bathing her in golden light. It filled her up with warmth and it tickled behind her own eyes. In an instant her panic had died and her knees wobbled a little as her body came down from the terror of the moments before. Held there steady in the wrap of Velkie's tail. The creature kept her fixed in her gaze, those yellow eyes practically drawing Turia out of herself and into their golden glow. She knew that this was a dangerous creature, but surely not to her, not here and now. She knew that she should keep running, but Velkie had just saved her from her pursuer. Surely she was safer here than she was anywhere else.

Turia found herself frozen in an alien comfort. She may have wanted to move to right herself and be free of Velkie's grasping tail, but while those eyes held her in their gaze, she could bring herself to hardly have a thought without some other consideration keeping her from taking any action. She had to warn the ship, but it was out of range, that could wait. She needed to save Dominic, but Laalu had him, surely he would be alright.

Velkie's cream colored fur flowed down out of the vent and onto the floor. Smooth and almost fluid. Those yellow eyes keeping her locked up, her will ensnared in a battle against an alien otherness that wanted her only to be calm. To relax. And so despite herself, she did just as the other willed. Her heart was still fluttering in her chest, a butterfly caught in a cage that was shrinking around it. The creature that had ensnared her had to be at least twice the size she had been in the last of the videos she had seen. It had been over ten years, after all. So it would seem that the people had not been able to end things after all. Velkie's large body drew near, large hands wrapping around Turia's waist and legs, lifting her away from the ground, and close to the huge creature's chest.

Turia's grasp on her knife slowly slackened as she relaxed, and at last she dropped it. The clatter of it hitting the floor echoed through the shadows of the Arcwright Research Facility, and it startled her briefly! Her whole body tensing for just a moment, while Velkie lifted her up, brought their faces together, and gazed deep into her! That golden glow flowed over her very soul, soaking into every corner of her. She wanted nothing more than that glow. It was torture even to blink away from it, as her eyelids moved so slowly.

The hot, humid gust of the larger creature's breath swirled over her in thick waves as she was handled. Lifted up and turned over. A belt undone here, a button popped there. A zipper sliced apart by dexterous claws. Little by little her things were taken and discarded off to the side. Some little part of her near the back of her mind cried out that this was a bad idea. That she should try to slip away. She mentally tutted at herself. This was no time for doubts and worries.

She had to help Velkie now.

So it was that the nude goat sat in the grasp of a monster, bathed from head to toe in that golden glow, like rays of honeyed sunlight dancing across every one of her senses. Velkie lifted her up and parted her jaws. Sharp, killing teeth glittered in the light, but they strayed far from her. Turia's head dipped down and accepted this, even as she knew she shouldn't. Even as some part of her desperately tried to move away. She leaned in and laid herself across the hot, gooey flesh of this creature. The slick surface of Velkie's tongue caressed her chest and across her tummy as at last that furry vine of a tail unraveled itself from around her and fell away. One large palm on her butt was all it took to give the goat a shove backward. Deeper into the darkness, deeper into the slick and slimy heat of Velkie's needy body.

It was honestly easy, what Velkie needed from her. Velkie would be doing all the work really. She was polite about it all, polite as one can be when eating the people who came to rescue you. Velkie's tongue pressed up into the soft spaces of Turia's body. Lapping across her every curve. Tasting her, savoring her, spreading more of that delight over her senses with every pass that the flowing flesh made across her figure. Overwhelmed by the whole situation, Turia really did find it easy to relax into this pit, as gusts of thick breath washed over her. Some part of her recognized some kind of link with the monster that was eating her. Some kind of connection. She knew that this was the biggest meal Velkie had eaten in some time. She knew that Laalu was meant for a different task, and had been under her command for some time. She knew that Velkie had actually been hoping to get the fennec, but that this had accidentally translated into Laalu. It all made sense to her, but it did mean that she would be taking his place in Velkie's plans now. And that also made sense.



The world tipped around her as she gazed into the glistening ripples of Velkie's throat. Her body angling more and more vertically as Velkie's palm pressed on her soft rear, helping her forward in a smooth, easy motion. The way forward formed to her snoot and parted easily as her face was sleeved in Velkie's tight gullet. Teeth tickled through her fur a little here and there as her wide hips passed into the monster's jaws, and she swallowed heavily around what she had caught. A squelching roll of flesh shrinkwrapped to her form as suction formed below! A deep, rolling GLLRRMPTCH squelched across her as she was forced downward, and into the grasp of hot, heavy rings of muscle! Groping over her head and shoulders first, and steadily crawling down her body, squeezing and compressing her breasts, caressing her tummy. Her pace was slowed when her wide tush hilted at the back of Velkie's jaws! For a moment she thought that she might be too big, and that that was too bad. Some other part of her was relieved. Perhaps she'd get stuck? The monster's tongue flicked up across her thighs, the smooth glide of it caressing their inner curves as it seemed to flex betwixt there, and SHOVED against her sensitive spaces in time with a firm bob of the head, to send those hips slipping past those gates, and on into the gullet after her.

Gllmp... gllrrmptch... GLLRRK...

Velkie's throat was tight, and her whole body was sweltering on the inside. She was squeezed tighter than she'd ever been pressed by anything as she was shunted down that chute, her legs flowing in easily once her hips had passed. She imagined that she must have formed quite the swell on the creature's neck as she passed down it. The chute was long but she traveled it quickly, squishy squelching filling her ears, until her snoot pressed up to a tightly sealed valve. Pinched together by a knot of muscles. The thick pulses of Velkie's heartbeats throbbed around her, while the grip of the flesh smothered her up against that valve tighter, tighter. Squeezing across the whole of her as Velkie swallowed once more! Slowly with a few presses that knotted muscle would seem to melt and become pliable, stretching little by little, until at last her head and shoulders slipped passed it. She flowed out into Velkie's stomach! The time squeezed in there had been enough to make her see stars! She greedily gulped down a few hot acrid breaths of air once she was shoved into that tight wrinkly sack.



This was it. This was where Velkie needed her, the job she needed the goat to do. Perhaps the only one who knew even part of her story anymore, and there she was, rocking across the creature's middle as she went about her business. The weight of Turia's figure was not allowed to be still. Even if her captor had not been moving around, the inside of a living thing is rarely still and docile. The pulse of Velkie's heart thumped close by, and could be felt throbbing through every curve of flesh that caressed her figure. All while the undulating CHURN of that same flesh rippled and kneaded inward at her! Smothering over her features in insistent waves. Squeezing her in flowing arcs while she was tossed from one end of the chamber to the other when the creature moved and slunk here and there. A syrupy slime that coated everything inside of there coated her in tingly heat from head to toe. It was sticky and overwhelmingly hot. No longer did the outside world bother her, Velkie was her world now. Steadily those squeezes and undulating pulses got rougher, heavier. Baring down on her weakening figure little by little. Clinging to her in that pitch black while she was made to ride along. An easy treat for someone who needed it. Bubbling away inside of there, while those heavy walls clung to her like molten marshmallow. Forming to her and letting her sink deep into that hot pressure.

Tighter and tighter those walls pressed, squeezing her until she thought she might break, pushing past where she thought the edges of her body must be. And flowing past that wonderful glow that had taken hold of all her senses. Her sensation steadily fizzled and faded out as she was readily claimed by those hungry environs. Greedily soaked up by those squeezing flexes. Where once there were two, a few focused flexes saw the goat claimed in her entirety. No more Turia, now there was only Velkie.

Velkie's swollen middle steadily shrank as the weight inside of it faded. Her hips and her tummy gaining an extra layer of insulating softness, while she turned toward Laalu and nodded. It had taken so long for someone to come back. She thought that she might never get away from here. She did not belong here among these shadows, and now at last the door was open, and people had come. They had sent him away on a shuttle like the one she could see. Her newest addition gave her the words she lacked. Words like shuttle, ship, and station. Interesting ponderings too. Perhaps with a bit more cleverness, investigating, patience, and luck... she might be able to find out where they had sent him.

Laalu went ahead of her, guiding her toward the shuttle. She opened it up without word or complaint. At last she would leave this place. Somewhere new, somewhere that might challenge her. She sauntered into the hold, the extra softness that had been spread over her swayed with her every step. Her new minion looked to her while she cleared that long furry tail out of the door. She came to settle then on the floor, filling up much of the rear of the shuttle. Such a place was clearly not designed with one such as she in mind. Still, this was no matter to her. These ones would help her find her special one.

The canine woman took the controls then, and with a whirring whine the shuttle rose off of the pad, and shot off into the night sky.



Thank you for reading my little spooky story~

Like I said, it came out a little different than I originally envisioned!
Perhaps not as spooky as I wanted it to be. :U

I would love to keep making stories like this, written as I have done, or through text adventure games and RPGs and stuff like that~

I do have to pay rent though, and I don't really get paid for this kind of thing. If you would like to support projects like this, or upcoming game projects, you can do so at either of these places!

<https://subscribestar.adult/verysoft> – **Preferred**, since subscribestar doesn't try to busybody on NSFW content, what I do is pretty explicitly allowed there.

<https://www.patreon.com/VerySoft> – Fine! But also what I do falls into a gray area with their terms, and may become unwelcome there sooner or later.

There's an extra little thing posted in those places exclusively that didn't fit into the story, but I wanted to write, involving Domnic becoming Laalu food.

OF COURSE, if you can't support these projects monetarily, but still want to help, please do share this with anyone you think might enjoy it. It's not easy getting people to peek at writing stuff.

And please, let me know what you think! <3

