

[Add the fantasy element here that's floating around in your brain]

Simone was in a hammock, a black coffee mug in her hand. The view and the sound were beautiful. Soothing. A contradiction to the turmoil that effected the planet. Waves crested against the rocky cliffs, a harmonious song and dance between nature. In a place like this, it was easy to forget that Earth itself was in such turmoil.

“Hello Saraya,” Simone said without moving from her position.

“Simone.” Saraya came forward, moving to the side of the hammock so she could be seen. “I need to know where the original Holon is.”

Simone took a sip from her mug, pulling her gaze from the ocean and looked at Saraya. “A century. 100 hundred years. I know it's not long for you, but us, it's a long time. Fighting for choice. Freedom. Just to find out, the thing that really has the keys...”

“Humans wouldn't have ascended without the freedom from the Anunnaki and the destruction of ELMINT,” Saraya said, her patience thin.

“You call this freedom?” Simone sat up in the hammock, swinging her legs out of the side and stood. “Where is Caleb's soul, Saraya? Where?”

“Why would I know?” Saraya spat. “If he fulfilled his contract free.”

“And if he didn't?”

Saraya hesitated. “Then he is powering the Demiurge as they walk the Earth.”

Simone was silent at first, her face a mask the kind Terenzio's wore so well. That calm facade shattered when she abruptly growled and hurled the mug across the patio, the glass shattering on the side of the villa. “How do I kill it? Them?”

“You don't. You can't. But, I can. My people can.”

Simone narrowed her eyes at Saraya. “But you won’t, will you? You don’t give a damn about us. You’re here for another reason, the thing the Demiurge wants. You’ll get that, and you’ll leave Earth to rot.”

“So what?” Saraya barked. “Do you know how much I’ve given for humans already?! My family is dead. My planet is under attack-”

Simone took a step closer to Saraya her voice softer, but laced with just as much fury. “So. Is. Mine.”

Saraya inhaled, blew out the breath just as heavy. “What do you want, Simone?”

“I want all you fucking aliens off my planet, that’s what I want. I want true, total freedom for Earth. So if you want the original holon, if you want me to tell you where it’s been moved, you’re not going to just protect whatever it is that needs protecting, you’re going to fucking kill it, or you’re going to tell me how to kill it.”

Frustration colored Saraya’s tone. “It’s a waste of time! Earth is lost. Even if I did this, killed the Demiurge, the toil humans have taken on Earth is massive. She will course correct and the odds that humans can survive what’s coming are slim.”

“Which wouldn’t have accelerated if half the fucking planet wasn’t sitting in a darkness caused by aliens, yet again. I don’t know whose job it was to protect the Galactic Federation so that our Ascension process could be completed but they fucked up. *We* my family did it’s job.” Simone drew a breath, searching for calm. “But that’s my problem and I’ll see to it without interference. Do we have a deal or not, *alien*.” Simone said the world with all the disdain Saraya had said human.

Saraya narrowed her eyes at Simone. Took a step closer to the woman so there was barely any space between them. “I’m not going to deal with you. Either you tell me or I’ll rip the information from inside your petty, arrogant skull.”

Simone smirked at Saraya. “Do it. You’ll find I don’t know where the Holon is for that same reason. One of my Agents does though. You’d be able to pull her name from my mind.

Of course you'd have to go and find her. And it's possible she's already passed that information alone to someone else, so she might not know anymore either. Do you have the time to go and look for it? I'm sure you'd find it without my help, eventually. But... you seem hurried."

Saraya growled in frustration her temper unleashed. A blade shot from her forearm, and Saraya aimed the tip at Simone's throat. "Tell me, Simone."

"Fuck you, Saraya," Simone snarled her fury an equal match for Saraya's, her eyes like steel. "I didn't bow to the Anunnaki or the Angels. What makes you think I'll bow to you?"

Saraya canted her head slightly. "Your child is young. Perhaps he would."

<Simone and Saraya straight up fight>

"SARAYA!"

The muscles in Saraya's arms bunched with the control it took to halt her strike before the blade sunk into Simone's neck. Saraya did not take her eyes from the hateful glare Simone was giving her.

"I'm handling this!"

"No. You're not. By the Goddess is this who you want to be?"

"Who I want to be doesn't matter anymore!"

"Why not?"

The question wasn't asked by Jochlan but Will. Saraya looked over her shoulder. Will and Elena stood next to Jochlan and the expressions on their faces... shamed her. Which angered her, but... her shame was greater.

She looked back down at Simone. At her beaten and bloody face and saw past her anger. A mother's fear. The fight in her not just for a legacy of her family but the survival for the future of someone she loved. They were not so different the pair of them. And truth be told,

alien interference on Earth had delayed many things, yet still, human's tried to do better. Not enough, but at least some. And not in the feel good way, but in the way that truly mattered. They took their power back. They chose love. Those were the people that started revolutions. Those people were the reasons planets ascended. Those people were reason enough to give them a chance to survive on their own planet.

Saraya called back her blade. She pressed a hand to Simone's face, and closing her eyes healed what had been damaged. Simone hissed in pain but her face returned to normal. Saraya climbed off Simone standing and after a moment, offered her hand down to the other woman.

Simone hesitated. Took it, and stood up.

"I won't apologize," Saraya said. "But I will compromise. Tell me where the Holon is. Have your best on call if I need them, and I will fight and kill the Demiurge and free your planet from control of anyone but your people."

"I don't need your apology, Saraya. Just your word." Simone walked over to the overturned table, picking up her cell phone.

"Fine. You have it."

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Saraya remained standing on the balcony, over looking the waves. "I'm sorry you had to see that," she said.

"Sorry I saw it, or sorry it happened?" Will's tone was gentle, and a bit hesitant.

Saraya sighed. "Both. Maybe."

Will let the silence hang between them. "Would you have killed her? If Jochlan hadn't stopped you?"

Saraya rubbed her hands against the railing. "Why are you asking me this?"

“Because you scare the crap out of me. And I, and the person I love most in the world are running around the world with you on this adventure and you’ve been protecting us from a lot of scary things and I’m really grateful for that, but now I’m afraid maybe somebody should be protecting us from you.”

Saraya’s brows pinched at his words. She was woefully unprepared for how much it stung that he was afraid of her. “I won’t hurt you Will,” she answered quickly the words coming out of her mouth before she had time to process why she felt the way she did. “Or Elena.”

“Because you need us right? I know I’m just a human but I’m a pretty smart one. I know where our value lies in all this.”

Saraya’s grip tightened on the railing then. That’s exactly what it should have been. They had transactional value, nothing more. Human’s were not a ascended species therefore they were inferior. Childlike. And Saraya had to be honest with herself she felt that way about every human on earth. Except, Will and Elena. And she could not for the life of her discern why.

She had no idea how Will might be interpreted her silence, but he came forward, moving to stand at the railing next to her. “I don’t know what you’re going through Saraya. I don’t know anything about your culture or how you view the world. I know your hurting and your angry and that... well that makes me really really sad, deeply sad, Elena too for reasons we can’t explain. But, maybe...” he swallowed. “... you’re just not the only one going through it. And we’re trying, she and I to follow along and not get in your way and help you, because it really feels like we don’t have a choice but this is scary. Our world has been upside down and zigzag since 2012. And just when we were finally kind of figuring things out, and adjusting and healing, everything’s fucked up again. We’ve lost people... *again*. We have no idea what the future is going to be or how we’re going to survive it, *again*. I don’t know if that means anything to you or if it’s just suppose to be this way or what, but... I’m just saying it’s hard. For us too.”

She could understand his words only because she felt that way now. But this kind of insanity had only happened to her once. She had been born on a planet well into it's evolution. Perhaps now even in it's decline.

"I hear you, Will," She said quietly. "I'm not sure what if anything you're asking of me, but I hear you." She finally looked at him. "There are many things on this planet and beyond it that should fear me, and my temper." She offered him a half smile. "You and Elena are not one of them. You have my <alien word for word>."

"I have no idea what <aw-word> means but it sounds serious."

Saraya felt the smile forming of it's own volition. "It is."

Will smiled back at her. "Okay."

"He's asking you all sorts of questions isn't he?" Elena slowly approached the pair, a smile on her face.

Saraya turned her relaxed expression onto Elena. "Just important ones." She paused. "What happened earlier... with Simone..."

"You two have a history it looks like," Elena's tone was gentle, as if she was hesitate to broach further on the topic.

"Somewhat. There was an issue in the past that I helped her with. But what happened.. I've assured, Will it won't happen again."

"Okay," Elena said and rested her hands on Will's shoulder. Saraya noted how comfortable the two of them were with each other.

"You have been a couple a long time. He has great affection for you."

Simultaneously the pair of them blushed. Will's cheeks colored brighter than Elena's and they both started stuttering. Saraya watched this display curiously, canting her head at them.

"We're not like a couple couple-"

“Exactly. We’ve been best friends for years, so yeah, I’ve got... uh great affection I mean...”

“Right! What he said. I mean we love each other, but like *love*.”

Saraya arched a brow then, trading glances between the pair. “But you do. You know, of all the reasons my people thought of humans as lesser beings, the moments you fail to love is the strongest. Every day you are given is a gift, you understand that better than most. Proclaim your love for each other. Consumate it in celebration.”

“Oh my god...” Elena was laughing into the hands over her face.

“What did you just say... you did just say that. Wow. Look, can we... I mean... maybe there’s a bigger issue at hand... are Simone and Jochlan done yet?” Will’s blush hadn’t calmed and he was now turning around looking back towards the house.

“Strange indeed,” Simone mused and shook her head.