

She woke to the sound of her brother's voice. Her head pounding. The feel of cold metal underneath her cheek. She flexed her fingers, and the sensation of the weight of the shackles around her wrists joined her other sentiments.

"Justicar Savil, clearance code <code>. Returning with the prisoner."

"Confirmed. Welcome home, sir."

Saraya sat up, a touch too quickly, nausea spilling to her gut, her vision swimming. He'd hit her hard. She'd feel better underneath the sun or moonlight of Dacwen. Stood up from her position on the floor, and the sight that greeted her made her gasp aloud. Her home was on fire. She could see smoke rising from the center of the Capital city. Other scattered flames marking the brilliant skyline. Her stomach clenched, her heart squeezing in her chest.

"My goddess. Savil." She jerked her gaze to her brother. "What have you done?"

He swiveled around in his chair, looking at her with hatred in his eyes. "You were given everything as a child. They handed you the keys to our empire, you and Atomeia and you squandered it away."

"You wanted to be <King> so badly you did this?" Saraya jerked her head towards the window, wincing at the pain it brought.

"That is what you and mother never <fucking> got. I don't want to be <King>. I never have."

"Then why!?" Fury rose inside Saraya, her hands balling into fists. "What's the point of this!?"

"Because you, like most sentient beings, think just because you're alive you should have freedom. That the very act of your creation somehow dictates you're not meant to be enslaved. Yet, your actions prove otherwise." Savil rose from his chair walking toward her. "Look at Dacwen. Look at the legacy you, our mother continued. You think your way is the best way. You think, just because one man did a <shitty> job as ruler of the planet that every woman alive should have that power instead. And you call me arrogant."

"Are you kidding me? You killed our sister, you've unleashed the Demiurge just to give men the right to be King again?" Saraya felt like she couldn't breathe.

"You're so emotional sister you're not listening," he growled and slapped her, a hard open handed strike to her face that made Saraya's head jerk. "Focus on the pain. Clear your mind and hear me. I don't care who rules, Dacwen. The failure of your matriarchal society is just one reason in a long list that Dacwen, much like humans, should be enslaved to a higher power. You don't deserve freedom. You haven't earned it. The Demiurge will ensure you earn it, or cease to exist."

Saraya tasted blood on her tongue. Breathed in through the pain and drew her gaze back to her kin. "I won't allow you to enslave the souls of every Dacwenian on this planet. Do you hear me, Savil? You have no idea what this entity is capable of. It was made for earth. For earth conditions. For that density. Power corrupts everything, Savil. *Everything*. It's corrupted the Demiurge too. Can't you feel it? They stopped making humans earn Ascension along time ago. They nearly made it impossible."

Savil stepped closer to her, leaning down and whispered in her ear. "I don't care."

Her hands were tied. The shackles preventing her from using her tanarull. Instead with a growl of pure, fury she jerked her body forward, ramming into her brother and throwing

him off balance. He stumbled backwards, and Saraya did the only thing she could, head butting him.

It was at that moment the doors to the shuttle opened, and Kalturo marched in.

“Narozen!” They were on her in an instant, pulling her back from Savil.

Savil glared at her, furious, holding the bridge of his bloody nose. “Take the traitor away. Put her with the others.”

“This will not stand, Savil! On our mothers and sisters grave, I vow it!” Saraya shouted back at him, the firm grip of the Kalturo’s hand on her arm, leading her away from the shuttle.

<describe the mess>

Dacwen did not have prisons. Those who were so far gone that they could not be rehabilitated were sent to Earth’s moon. She was led into the library, where more Kalturo were posted. Some looked at her in anger, others hopeful. Some she saw, turned their gaze away from her, as if ashamed. The doors to one of the conference rooms were opened and she was pushed inside.

“Why have you allowed this?” Saraya said, turning to face them. “What has poisoned you all so, that you can no longer see truth?” They said nothing, merely backed out of the room and closed the doors.

“What truth?” Saraya recognized the voice of one of the <GA people>. “Atomeia the Narosel is accused of treason. Saraya, the Narosel sentenced twice for law breaking. The second time, she escaped custody with the disgraced Kalturo <leader>, fleeing to the planet of a lesser species she continues to desecrate our laws for. And our beloved Narozen attempted to murder her own son.”

Saraya’s shoulders slumped under the weight of those words. “Atomeia is innocent.”

“Perhaps. But are you, Narosel? Is your mother?” <GA> asked, though not unkindly. His tone as he spoke her titles was still respectful she noted silently.

Saraya shook her head. “I am not, no. I don’t know.... I don’t know what mother did or didn’t do. But I didn’t run away to earth to abandon or people or disrespect our laws. I went to save it. To find the truth of what’s happening here.”

“Where you successful?”

“Partly. What I lack is proof but there isn’t time to get it. He means to unseal the doorways and free the Demiurge from their prison around earth. He means to let them come here.”

<tone, conflict, development of character goes here. Saraya should be struggling with duty vs rebellion and the consequences of her choice>.