

SpaceHighway

The Awakened

A19 ~ Stories

“Morning, Enya. Slept well?”

“Uh-huh~” she purrs and cuddles with me. “At your side, always.”

I sigh, I am not exactly sure why. Obviously, Enya notices.

“What is it, Kira?” she asks preoccupied.

“Just...” I sigh again. “I’m unsure...” I halt my thought in mid-sentence.

“Just?” she asks, moving a lock out of my face. “Kira,” she purrs, “you’re unsure since we’ve met. But lately, I’ve seen you even more restless. What is going on? You can tell me.”

“Thanks, Enya,” I tell her returning the caresses. “I think... I’m falling hard for Aia... Sorry, Enya,” I sigh deeply.

“I know, dummy...” she purrs while gently running her fingers along the muscle-lines of my chest. “Why is it a problem?”

“Enya...” I sigh again. “It’s about you, her, and me...”

“And?”

“How can you be so calm about it?”

“I love you,” she purrs.

“Enya...” I sigh yet again.

“I’m omnisexual, and polyamorous,” she giggles. “Why should it be a problem? I love you, and I want you two to be happy.”

“It’s not so easy for me, Enya...”

“Why? Aren’t you the almighty Phoenix with a bride awaiting you in each and every town?” she giggles.

“That’s—”

“Kira, it’s you. I know you’ll find your way. Even—” She stops her caresses and sighs. “Even if you tell me that we have to break up our relationship just for Aia’s sake... I will accept it.”

Her fingers tremble on my chest.

“Are you sure?” I have to ask. “You don’t seem like you—”

“Shh~” She silences me brushing her fingers over my lips. “I’ll be okay... It will hurt, but I’ll be okay. I don’t want to hurt you, Kira. If it’s your belief in having a monogamous partnership with Aia, I’ll accept it. Just be clear with me...”

“Enya...” I embrace the slightly shivering kitten strongly. “I don’t want to hurt you either, you are too dear to me.”

She begins to purr in my arms then sighs.

“Thanks, Kira. But tell me, why can’t you accept my love? Is it just Aia? If it’s so, I’m sure we three can work it out.”

“It’s not only Aia...” I sigh.

“Your promises?” I nod at her question. “But... if we three work it out, wouldn’t those promises be void?”

“There are other—” I bite my tongue. My promise to Jim...

“Other?” She looks into my eyes. “Regarding Aia and me?”

“Sorry, Enya.” I embrace her even more. “I cannot tell.”

“Don’t worry, Kira.” She hugs me back. “But be sure that none of us suffers because of those promises. We are not goods—”

“I know, Enya,” I sigh yet again. “I’ve never seen you as such.”

“I know, Kira,” she purrs into my neck. “But I want you to see how much we care for you.”

“We?”

“Yeah,” she nods and cuddles her head against my neck, “Aia and me. I know she cares for you a lot, even if she can’t show it. I love her too much to separate you two, I’ll never do it. I’d just wish I could be together with you, both of you.”

“Enya...” I sigh remembering my recurrent dreams.

“But, Kira, can you tell me why it is so difficult for you? To accept both of us? You are, after all, famous for always having many lovers.”

“It’s... easier said than done, Enya.”

“How so?”

I sigh deeply and caress Enya’s back along her fur lines.

“I don’t want to live up to those expectations of the *famous* womanizer anymore.”

“And? That’s why you can’t live up to *our* expectations?”

“No... that’s not it,” I sigh. “I wanted to begin anew. I don’t care much about what others say. But—it’s difficult to explain. As you know, I’ve been with other women since I’ve awoken.” She nods and goes on caressing me. “Each and every time, Aia came to my mind. It never happened being with you. I’m deeply attracted to her. I don’t know if her flirting while avoiding me just provokes me more or not, but certainly, I’m falling more and more for her.”

“Then—”

“But I don’t want to lose you either.”

“Oh, Kira...” she purrs.

“But I can’t hide our relationship from her, she is too dear to me.”

“I know, Kira. We’ve talked this through. She has to know, but only once she is clear with you. You’ll have a time alone together for a while, then we three will talk and find a solution.”

“Why are you so sure that—”

“Call it intuition,” she giggles. “I know that you two will come together, even if it takes you years.”

“Enya...”

“I hope not,” she giggles again, “that it will take that much time. But,” she takes a deep breath, “there’s more, right?”

“Yeah, seems you know me well by now.” I smirk, and she grins back. “In my past, I would, right now, have several lovers, just as you said. At least, until Aia would let me know her true feelings and her disposition for a relationship. Then, I would break up the other relationships to dedicate myself to her. I did that in the past several times.

“But I vowed to change, at least that part. I don’t want to be a heartbreaker anymore. I don’t know how it is affecting me... the change I want to go through. One thing is sure... I’m, strangely, not aroused by other women anymore, other than Aia and you.” I pet Enya sensually while she purrs excited. “It’s strange... I’ve always hung around having a hard-on while seeing half-naked chicks. Now... I’ve only got an erection when I see you or Aia...”

“Really? But you’re so sturdy...” Enya looks into my eyes. “You’re my most ferocious lover. Are you holding back for us, me?”

“Not really...” I negate. “I mean, I look forward to our meetings, but I certainly don’t hold back.”

“You know you can have other lovers, I’d never monopolize you.”

“I know, Enya, I know. But that is not the issue here. I don’t mind an open relationship. But this... polyamorous thing is still beyond me.”

“Kira...”

“I’m in a dilemma.”

“Because you want to be with both of us, but your standard of living dictates that you can only have one steady partner? Like in a monogamous relationship?”

“The like, Enya.”

“Then, right now, try to win Aia over. After that, we’ll see, okay?”

“Yeah.”

“Till then, let’s be *lovers*...”

“Yeah.”

“I love you, Kira,” she purrs.

Unsure how to answer her, I hum in affirmation and hold her tightly.

“Sexy time?” she asks sultry.

“Yeah...”

After a nice shower with Enya, we are having breakfast and talk about our route.

“So, you have a cargo back to the Alpha too?” she asks, and I nod. “A race back there, then?” She smirks.

“Why not,” I laugh.

«This can't be! Kira! You cheater! How come you've arrived at the same time as me?»

“Heh... You gave me a head-start, Enya.”

«Grrr! I shouldn't have!» she hisses and her fur bristles. «Now I've got to make you something nice,» she flirts sultry.

“No need, Enya,” I laugh. “It's a draw. We can give something mutually.”

«Deal!» she giggles. «Let's meet in the MaryQueens with a draft.»

“Perfect, see you there.”

«See ya!»

This Enya...

She is right, I should see what comes with Aia and don't rack my brains out.

“Heya! Wassup, Kira? Hey, speedy kitten, how're ya?” We are loudly greeted by a certain overly happy Space Cowboy.

“Hey, Jim,” I greet him bumping our fists.

“Hi, Jimmie,” Enya giggles doing the same.

“You're free tomorrow, righto? Wanna have a draft with ma?”

“Sure thing, pal.”

“Yup, I’m in too,” giggles Enya happily. “Oh! And that jug?”

“Is our beauty queen’s Aia’s,” informs Jim. “She’s in da ladies-room.”

“Hi, Enya. Hi, Kira. The usual?” asks Buz as we sit down.

“Yup, one each.” Enya grins.

“On the way,” laughs Buz.

“Oh! Hi, Enya. Hi, Kira. What’s up?” Aia greets us taking her seat elegantly as usual.

“Hi, Aia,” I greet her while she waves at me cutely.

“Hi, Aia. You won’t believe it! Kira tied with me in a race!”

“Again?” giggles Aia.

“It’s her fault.” I grin. “She gave me a head-start.”

“Not again, Kira!” Enya hisses. “You—”

“Your beer,” Buz says coldly and almost smashes the jugs onto the table interrupting Enya’s hissing and bristling. Now all her fur and hair stands up from the startling bang of the jugs. “And some snacks,” he adds laughing.

“Buuuuz... Wanna die?” Enya hisses again.

“Not in my place,” he laughs. “Now stop hissing and get drunk.”

We four explode in laughter as he turns around with a smirk on his face.

“Cheers!” “Kanpai!”

“That hit the spot!” Enya giggles.

While drinking, we begin to tell our latest adventures on the space-highways.

“What’s the craziest thing you have encountered so far?” I ask.

The three giggle and laugh.

“Well...” Aia begins, “I think it was when I met a certain guy frozen in time in the cryogenics lab...”

We all explode in laughter.

“You won’t believe it!” she goes on. “He’s the real Phoenix!”

“Good one, Aia!” laughs Enya. “He truly is the craziest thing we have met yet, and the sexiest one~” she purrs while I feel a foot brushing along my leg.

“Oh, yeah,” Aia giggles while Jim just laughs.

Luckily, we already have some beers behind us...

“Be real,” I laugh.

“Oh, I’m real,” Aia laughs. “But seems you’re asking for something else... Let’s see... Oh, yeah...”

“It was some years ago, just before I became the Queen. Well, before Mitsubishi-san gave me this nickname.

“Remember when he told you that I avoided a war between two factions?” she asks me.

“Yeah.” I nod. “The first or second day, when we came here to have a bite.”

“Yup, that one,” she giggles and straightens herself. “I was told that an urgent haul had to be delivered to a planet orbiting the Spica twins in the Virgo constellation.”

“Twins?” I ask.

“Yup! Issa binary system,” explains Jim.

“Exactly.” Aia nods. “That planet has a strange orbit around both stars. And because of it, the planet had a long drought and depended on outside deliveries.

“But, at that time, pirates were swarming around the system trying to get rich from hunting the truckers and their cargos down. The cargo would be sold on the black market, and the trucker held for ransom.”

“No fuck!”

“Yeah...” Aia nods after another sip of her pint and readjusting the neckline of her bodysuit. “Several Aces from various ISTM subsidiaries were doing their

deliveries there, but ours, from Central, were in an opposite quadrant. I saw the announcement for special deliveries. As you know, these deliveries are voluntary, and the benefits are sent to an NGO of the trucker's choice. I took it.

“At first, it didn't seem too dangerous as there were still safe, albeit longer routes. It got dangerous when I was already on route...”

Aia holds the tension by emptying her jug and signaling Buz for another one.

“I was contacted by the IPS just after leaving the Porrima Gate Complex with the message that my route was no longer safe and that I should wait for further instructions. Reluctantly, I accepted and pulled into a transit-station.

“There, I read that the Spica system was on the verge of collapse due to the lack of food. My manifest was... about four hundred forty-five metric kilotons of food.

“Angry about the wasted time, I called C-Comm and told them I would go in, with or without formal permission. I would do it under my own responsibility.

“I was so fed up by the hesitation of control that I simply ignored part of the protocols and jumped into my seat and pulled out of the station.

“After a while, an IPS patrol tailgated me and called in. They reminded me that that route was closed due to the pirates' activities. I simply said that the people of Spica needed my cargo, that I can't let them die.

“After a lengthy discussion with the IPS-guys, they let me press on, but only if they escorted me. Obviously, I accepted that offer.

“At about half the route, the AR went havoc. Everything splashing red alerts. Pirates...” She grins sipping from her fresh beer.

I almost forgot to breathe during her tale if Enya wouldn't flirt with me constantly. Not at the sight of everyone but beneath the table. She began to play footsies at the beginning of Aia's story.

Enya must have taken her boots off. When I moved my left hand down to move her foot away, I meet her bare foot. She is so limber with her foot-paw that she begins to caress my hand with it. Fuck you, Enya...

“Fortunately,” Aia goes on, “the IPS patrol was an armed one, if not...”

“Anyways, I ignored the pirates’ warnings and pushed my Thunderbird to the max. My baby screamed from excitement,” she laughs. “While the IPS craft was shooting warning shots, I pressed on. The pirates obviously didn’t like our non-compliance and began to attack. I veered the Thunderbird and its cargo from side to side using the inertia, even crossing the whole length against the pirates. They had no other options than evade me, or they would have crashed into the containers...”

Aia’s laughter rolls through the MaryQueens while I’m astonished and both our friends laugh and giggle.

“It was really fun to play with the pirates,” Aia goes on giggling. “Even the IPS-guys had to be careful not to hit me nor to crash into me. While I was seemingly spinning out of control, I calculated the best vector out of there.

“Once I found it and the pirates were quite disoriented, I seized the moment and pushed the powerplants to the max and blasted away.

“Obviously, they tried to follow me, even shot at me. Only the IPS craft was powerful enough to tailgate me.

“After some intense minutes, we were able to leave the pirates behind, and no further distraction happened till we reached the cargo port.”

“Wow!” I scream ignoring Enya’s playful foot. “The hell of a ride!”

“Yeah, truly,” laughs Jim. “*That’s* our beauty Queen.”

“Yup, when I’ve read about Aia’s achievement, I was determined that I wanted to enter the same ISTM group, I mean, Central,” giggles Enya. “Before that, I was just interested in entering the ISTM. From then on, I wanted to enter the Central ISTM as one of the Aces, whatever it takes.”

“And got it, girlfriend,” giggles Aia.

“Yup! And you were awarded with the name of Queen!”

Both girls cheer and empty their beers again.

After I lighting another fag, I ask Aia, “That food was enough to halt a war?”

“Actually, not just the food,” she negates. “But my determination to evade the pirates. It showed them that we are doing the utmost to help them. The IPS was already gathering resources in the sector to guarantee a safe route, but might have

been too late. We, the IPS patrol and I, were received like heroes. And, well, that's it..."

"You have to tell more, Aia, beauty," giggles Enya. "Tell too that you started dating the IPS pilot..."

Aia blushes deeply and gestures negation.

"No... no, no... That was just a fling... I can't call that dating. We just..." She slumps into the chair. "It was just a thing of a week..."

"I know, darling," giggles Enya. "Just messing with ya."

"Oh, you, Enya!"

"Ouch!" Enya giggles at Aia's soft punch.

"Your turn, Jim!" Aia laughs.

"Heh! Okay..."

Okay... I will try the utmost to translate Jim's narration so you won't have to decipher all his speech. I hope nothing gets lost in translation...

He begins telling about a route he had through the Skull Nebula in the Cetus constellation while Enya is rolling an *İhâl* joint

There, he got, by error, into a so-called *ice cloud*, which basically froze his whole system up. I don't really get how such thing is even possible, but nevertheless, I just nod while Enya keeps on teasing me now with both feet, and Aia seemingly flirts with me... I'm unsure about the latter, but seems so.

Jim tells, in his exaggerated way, that he almost froze to death as even the habitat's climate system began to shut down and freeze.

It was, as he tells, sheer luck that an IPS vessel was in the vicinity, *just* half a lightyear away. They could rescue him just before he became an icicle.

He was hospitalized for several weeks until he was fit enough to come back.

"Tell, why..." laughs Aia while Enya smirks and draws a puff from her joint.

"'Cause o' a cute nurse," Jim laughs. "Stayed dere jus' for her..."

We all laugh at his grimaces.

“And you, Enya?” I ask her.

“Hmm...” she seems to think, and I shudder.

“What’s it, Kira?” Jim asks.

“Nothing... perhaps I need another beer... Buz! Another one!”

“Coming!”

I can’t tell Jim that Enya’s playful feet crept up my legs .

“My tales are not that funny, nor interesting... Perhaps after some more beers, I might tell some not related to trucking,” she giggles.

“Oh, you, Enya,” Aia giggles too.

“Well, most of my interesting adventures happen to have taken place completely naked,” Enya giggles sultry and smirks at me and exhales the aromatic smoke. “The rest of my stories are only races.”

“Not true,” Aia interjects. “What about your haul to Fornax?”

“Ah, that one?” Enya asks, and Aia nods. “Which one? The one I ended with a bunch of guys and girls in—”

“Not that one, dummy,” Aia giggles. “The one with that race.”

“Ah...” Enya’s ears twitch, and she smirks. “That’s the one I ended with a bunch of—”

“The race part, Enya...” Aia punches Enya’s shoulder playfully.

“Oooh~ Ouch~” Enya giggles. “*That* part...”

We all laugh, grab the freshly served jugs, and cheer.

“Yeah, I had a fun race,” Enya laughs. “It all began when I cut a guy off while speeding into the cargo port. His vector overlapped mine, and I didn’t mind him. I assumed he wouldn’t be entering as fast as I would.”

“He went crazy and called himself the fastest one. Obviously, I ignited immediately and jeered at him. *I* am the fastest after all. He also flared up and asked for a race. Of course, I accepted.

“After having delivered our cargos, we met for the race. He knew some important guys there and made it an official race to decide the fastest one.”

“Really?” I ask baffled, trying to ignore her *caresses* beneath the table.

“Yup! The race was really fun,” Enya laughs. “I took him seriously. His rig was about as fast as mine and also tuned for speed. Nevertheless, he bit space dust.

“He asked for a rematch. I agreed, but the result was the same,” she giggles mischievously. “He then asked for running rematch.”

“As in running on foot?” I ask her.

“Yup!” she laughs. “He’s a Felii too, so I shrugged and accepted. He ate dust again.” She grins and takes another sip from her beer. “Even so, he was, and still is good. He knows a lot of tricks and has good reflexes, but no match for me. We ended getting drunk at one of the *fun houses* of the station. And we ended, well, together with a bunch of guys and girls.”

“No fuck,” I laugh.

“Sadly...” Enya sighs, “there, he was, indeed, the fastest...” she laughs.

We end up cackling at her grimaces.

“Not like Kira...” she laughs but halts after I gently kicked her. “If legends are true...” she adds laughing.

“*Mob*~ Enya... Don’t say such things...” Aia protests blushing deeply.

“Legends...” I shrug and laugh it off.

“Yer turn, Kira...” Jim says grinning.

“You already know my most extreme story...” I laugh.

“Yeah, but something from this century,” giggles Enya.

“True,” also giggles Aia. “Tell something from your hauls.”

“I don’t know...” I shrug. “So much happened since I’ve awakened. But I’ve never felt the same thrill in a haul. I mean, directly related to a haul...”

“I’ve already had spatial disorientation and space-anxiety; I was almost devoured by a Black Hole and almost died from asphyxia; I’ve met several aliens and even made friends from the strangest species; I even was jailed and busted out... I don’t know...”

“But ya’ve owacome dis shit,” laughs Jim and slaps my back.

“Yeah...” I sigh. “But, honestly, all this modern automation just makes trucking so more boring.”

“How so?” asks Enya with her smirk accompanied by her footsie-caresses.

“You know... Nowadays, I can almost be relaxed at the controls. Then, in my times, we were the ones doing all the work. The truck was just the machinery. We had no computers assisting us. The only hi-tech gadget we had, was the GPS...”

“GPS?” asks Aia.

“Oh, yes, the global positioning system. A kind of rudimentary navigation system with an interactive map pinpointing where you are and where you should go. But was quite new and began to spread in the nineties of the twentieth century.”

“Woow... So you already had a nav system...” Enya blinks astonished.

“Yeah,” I nod, “but was rudimentary, compared to nowadays’ standards. The maps had to be updated almost manually through disks or similar, and you had to pay for each update. If you didn’t, you could end in a dead-end road and with no possible way to turn around.”

“No way...” Aia also blinks astonished as if I’m telling the most absurd thing.

“Yeah...” I nod again. “But it was quite an advancement. Before the GPS, we only had paper maps. So better a rudimentary nav system than none.”

“Truly,” Jim laughs. “Den, whadda miss from *then*?”

“The action,” I sigh. “To be constantly on your toes... I don’t know...” I shrug and empty another jug. “The excitement shifted from the road to what you might encounter in the stations.”

“What do you mean, Kira?” asks Aia.

“Most exciting stuff happened to me was either on a space station or in a ground station, not so much in space. Omitting my first spacewalk and the Back Hole incident, of course. And most were related either to new species I met and friends I made, or the fights in certain establishments...”

“Well, we do more exciting stuff...” giggles Enya coyly.

“Yeah,” also giggles Aia.

We all are already tipsy from the many beers we guzzled down...

“Yeah,” I sigh remembering the excitement both Aia and Enya produce. “True...” I brush it away with another laughter.

“Yup!” also laughs Jim.

“Then, on the road,” I go on, “I had to take many evasive actions to avoid accidents and other nasty stuff. Nowadays, I haven’t had to make any. And if, the system alerts me with so much time to spare that it doesn’t really make sense to call them evasive actions.”

“True...” Aia nods.

“I don’t think I’m fit to be called an Ace...” I sigh.

“Why?” the three jump up screaming.

“I...” I sigh, “I don’t feel like I’ve done so much...”

“But ya’ve been always on time, even early,” protests Jim.

“Yeah,” Enya chimes in, “you even drew with me many times.”

“And you did awesome in adapting to our times,” confirms Aia.

“Perhaps,” I sigh again, “but I don’t feel like I’ve done so much. I’ve always relied on you three... I’m grateful but—”

“No, Kira,” Enya says sternly.

“Only strong people rely on others as you do,” adds Aia.

“Yup, only a true Ace does rely so much on *their* friends.” Jim nods.

“Because only true team players can become Aces,” asserts Enya.

“And Aces have unique qualities not found everywhere,” adds Aia.

“Qualities?” I ask not really convinced.

“Yah,” Jim laughs. “Hafta be passionate ’bout yer job, love to do good for others, be leaders but able to share responsibilities with other Aces, able to asses danger an’ act accordingly, be punctual, accept diversity an’ be open-minded, ya canna be a racist, understand hierarchy but able to think for yerself... I can go on an’ on...”

“Yeah,” Enya giggles. “And much more. You have all the qualities, Kira.”

“Yeah,” Aia also giggles. “We also represent the well-established reputation of the ISTM, and are public figures.”

“Yup, akin to heroes,” Jim laughs.

“We’re basically public stunts...” I sigh.

“More or less,” Aia nods, “but in a good way.”

“What do you mean?” I interrupt her.

“Because we love our job,” says Enya. “We do it well because we pride ourselves to be Aces. I wouldn’t defend my title of the fastest just because I believe I’m the fastest, but because I *am* the fastest Ace of Aces.”

“True,” Jim adds, “imma da best in hazmat transports out *there* an’ defend ma title till ma death. Not ’cause imma tellin’ ma imma da best, but ’cause I gained da title by maself.”

“Me too.” Aia nods. “I’ve never called myself the Queen until Mitsubishi-san bestowed on me the title. Now I’m committed to defending my name. Even if I needed to take off for a while because of this title, I still stand to it, as should you.”

“But...” I sigh yet again, “my *title* is old and mostly based on invented legends... I—”

“Yer da Phoenix, Kira. Full stop. None can go against it,” Jim says proudly. “Ya earned yer title as we did. Imma da Space Cowboy for ma stunts with hazmat cargo. Yer da Phoenix for yer stunts. Aia’s da Queen for hers, and Enya da SpeedKitty for hers, even if she created her nickname by herself. She owns it, as we all do.”

“Oh, Jimmie, you can say sweet things...” muses Enya and giggles.

Jim blushes at her praise while the rest of us laughs.

“But... why I’m also called the King of the Highways?” I ask them. “What legends created this *title*?”

“Many...” giggles Aia. “It truly formed from all the legends but is also old. We haven’t invented it nowadays.”

“Really?”

“Yeah.” Enya nods. “At least in my family, you’re always remembered as the King of the Highways.”

“Whatcha mean, Enya?” Jim beats me in asking.

“Well,” Enya takes a sip from her jug, “you all know that my family has the tradition of being truckers.”

“Yeah,” Aia confirms.

“Most of Kira’s legends are well known in my family, even the original tale of the forest fire and the nitroglycerin. At some point, it seems, Kira was given the title of King to avoid any other to be able to claim it.”

“No fuck, really?” I ask flipping out.

“Yeah.” Enya nods. “I do not know why we have this tradition. It seems that my family must have a link with someone who knew you in your times.”

“Wow!” Aia, Jim, and I exclaim.

“I can’t say for sure, it’s just my interpretation of all the legends. I could be mistaken, but what I’m certain of, is that Kira must have had an influence on one of my ancestors. Be it after he *vanished*, according to the legends, or before. That part isn’t corroborated by any legend or fact.”

Someone from my past comes suddenly to my mind who, strangely, had some vague features I always remembered while being with Enya.

It has to be a coincidence...

“Even so,” Enya goes on, “several truckers were claiming the King title but were never accepted. Everyone claiming to be the King of the Highways was dismissed as a fraud. It is as if the title *King* was protected, not only by my family but by any reputable trucker for a long time.”

“For real?” I ask again.

“Yeah.” Enya nods. “Somehow, the King title was attributed to you, as is your nickname reserved to you. No one could call himself Phoenix without being dismissed by the whole trucker community.”

“Wow...” I need another jug and signal Buz for a new one. “Is your family really that old?”

“Yeah...” Enya confirms. “Although many records are missing in my family tree, we are, at least, from the first recorded space-truckers in Gaian history.”

“Wow...” I repeat and sip from the fresh beer.

“It is said that my family might go back to your times, but only a legend...” she sighs. “Would be nice if it was true,” she giggles. “Perhaps, one of my ancestors has met you in your times,” she adds dreamily.

“Heh! Would be badass,” laughs Jim.

“Yeah,” adds Aia. “Would be really cool.”

“But...” I say pensive, “I couldn’t tell if I’ve met an ancestor of yours. I’ve had many friends and coworkers... and we haven’t had alien contact yet...”

“Don’t worry, Kira,” Enya laughs. “I do care about my ancestors, but you don’t have to rack your brains out because of this.”

“What do you mean, Enya?” I ask her.

“Well,” she says, “we Felii are not really religious in the sense of believing in higher beings such as gods, but we worship our ancestors. At least, those who have done impressive things, either for society or themselves and the family. An ancestor who’s done bad stuff is the disgrace of the family until one stands out to be a kind of hero. We do not negate the black sheep if we had one, but we honor and glorify those who stood out for the good they did.”

“Interesting...” I say. “Then, your faith is based on your ancestors...”

“Yeah.” She nods. “We believe that every good and bad ancestor determines, partially, who we are and become.”

“Partially?” asks Aia.

“Yeah.” Enya nods again. “But we are not completely deterministic. I mean, we have, after all, influence on what we want to become. And if this weren’t possible, then one bad guy in our family would have brought down the whole family.”

“True,” nods Jim, “an’ a bad guy wouldn’t appear either...”

“Exactly,” Enya confirms. “It isn’t that being trucker is written down in ourselves, nor biologically nor mystically. Many of my big family are not truckers, even if they pride themselves being part of the family.”

“How does all this work?” I ask. “I mean the family heritage of descendants.”

“Oh...” Enya looks at me. “Well, we’re a matriarchal society. Meaning, the mother’s bloodline carries the ancestors’ honor. I mean, if, for example, my dad’s family had a bad name and my mother a good one, I would only see my mother’s good ancestors as honorable. This is simplified, of course. A good family wouldn’t let a bad one to enter so easily.

“Even so, I’m free to honor and worship the ancestors of my father’s bloodline. I’m not restricted in not doing so. It’s just that my mother’s bloodline has some privileges in such cases.”

“And in case you have two mothers?” asks Aia. “The Felii are known to be polyamorous.”

“True.” Enya nods and takes another sip from her half-empty jug and lights a new fag. “In such case, all the mothers’ ancestors would be integrated into future generations’ belief.”

“If you’re matriarchal and have several mothers, who would be the matriarch?” I ask.

“Oh, all of them,” Enya giggles. “I must explain then the meaning of matriarch in the Felii society. In your terms, I believe, is that one female rules the family, right?” I nod. “Okay, that’s not our meaning. It does, indeed, mean ‘head of the family’ but mostly in addressing the family. Every decision regarding the family is taken by the matriarch after consulting her mates.”

“Mates?” I ask again. Wait... Gweraz already told something the like... Whatever, I’m a bit drunk already, and I want to hear it from Enya too.

“Yeah.” Enya nods. “It means lover, partner, husband, wife, soulmate... every possible word in Gaian English meaning to have full trust in your partners. For

example, the Felii Empress has two female and three male mates. She loves them equally and non-exclusively. She rules the Felii empire, but in each and every decision she has to take, she first consults her mates, and they make the decision together. The Matriarch ultimately proclaims the decision.

“Of course, nowadays the Matriarch, the Empress, has fewer decisions to take as the Felii empire is a mixed parliamentarian empire. Most political decisions are taken by the lower and the upper house of commons and the parliament, but the Empress might veto them if she considers the laws unjust according to the Felii edict.

“This edict states each and every basic obligations and privileges of being a Felii. It’s akin to your human rights declaration.”

In awe, I listen to Enya’s explanation while we keep drinking and puffing one fag after another. That’s more than Gweraz told me. She is so into it that she forgot her playful feet, which now just rest on my lap.

“But the house of commons and the parliament can also veto certain edicts from the Empress on the same basis. Meaning, if she declares something which would go against the original edict, the representatives of the commons can veto it. Obviously, it has to be a majority decision and must lie down solid proofs that the Empress is in the wrong.

“It didn’t happen often. Only twice in recorded history, an imperial edict was vetoed.

“The Matriarch rarely pushes changes of laws not already contemplated by the house of commons and the parliament, she merely signs the newly approved law and creates an edict if she considers it appropriate.”

“What’s the difference between a Felii law and an imperial edict?” asks Aia.

“Oh, as far as I know, a Felii law can be canceled by the house of commons and the parliament even if the Matriarch does not approve the change,” Enya explains. “Changing or canceling an edict, however, must count with the blessing of the Matriarch and the majority of the imperial families.”

“So, a protection against changes o’ da original edicts?” asks Jim.

“Exactly.” Enya nods. “An imperial edict can only change if all agree, the houses of commons, the parliament, the imperial families, and the Empress.”

“Impressive. But,” I have to ask, “if the Matriarch has female *mates*, what do they represent?”

“Oh...” Enya’s ears twitch. “In a family where several females are the head, they share the responsibilities. In the case of the Empress, they do so too, but having the Empress been elected as the Imperial Matriarch, she has the ultimate saying.”

“Elected?” I ask as I want to know more than Gweraz has told... More now that I have a hidden Felii lover...

“Yeah.” Enya nods again. “When the Empress’ life comes to an end, a new Empress is elected from one of the many imperial families and royal houses. The dying Empress may recommend a new candidate, but might be overruled by the house of commons, the parliament, and the rest of the families.

“They have to come to a consensus based on a large list of criteria the candidates have to fulfill. The aptest one will be instated as the new Empress, if possible, while the old Empress is still alive where she blesses the new Empress.”

“Wow...” we three say in awe already quite drunken.

“The next change will happen in a few years. The old Empress felt that it was time for a new generation to take over and asked the imperial and royal houses to seek for apt candidates. If the old Empress wants to retire, she may instruct the aptest candidates privately. Meaning, she teaches them what they’ll have to do as the Empress.

“In this case, one of the four candidates will be chosen in the next years. The actual Empress is very wise and hopes that the new Empress will take over before her own death and that she will be able to take her convictions for better mutual understanding to the next generation.”

“Whadda mean?” asks Jim.

“Lately, some people are not too keen about us mestizos, for some absurd reasons. The Empress is against the divide but admits that she has not the energy needed to press on against those wanting to, basically, outlaw interspecies relationships.”

“That’s horrible!” Aia cries out.

“Such a bullshit!” I smash my fist on the table. The three look at me startled, with Enya’s fur and hair bristling. “And what’s next? Only pure-breeding? Then

segregation? And concentration camps? Such revolting ideas have plagued the Earth for centuries. Have we learned nothing? Fuck these people! They're just fucking scum!"

"Kira..." both girls sigh.

"Yer right, Kira!" Jim also smashes his fist on the table. "Dis' too much! Canna watch dat comin' an' not takin' action! I ain't no big shot, but donna want to live in such universe!"

"Jim..." I lay my arm on his shoulder. "You're right, Jim. We have to do whatever we can to avoid such stupid ideas."

"Yeah!" Both girls also slam their fists on the table.

"You're right! Down with species' prejudices!" shouts Aia.

"Yes to mixin! Yes to interspecies relationships!" shouts Enya.

"Hurrah!" "Yer right!" "Long live da Aces!" "Long live the mestizos!"

We're suddenly showered with a standing ovation from the rest of the patrons of Sue and Buz's place. Our outbreak had reached them.

We end laughing at our drunken outcry for interspecies' justice.

"One last one?" asks Aia already laying her head on Enya's shoulder.

"Yeah, last one~" giggles Enya pointing at Jim already sleeping with his head lying on the table.

"Yeah~" I also affirm laughing drunkenly.

"One more for us, Buz," Aia tells the bartender. "The last one..."

"Okay, guys," he laughs. "I suppose Jim's already served."

"Yeah," we three laugh.

Promptly, he serves our last jugs.

"Cheers for the last one!" I laugh.

"Good one! Cheers!" giggles Aia.

“Cheers!” giggles Enya.

We hit the jugs.

“Ah~” Enya sighs. “Oh!” Her ears stand up. “Where do you sleep tonight? You’re too wasted to pilot home... I’ll sleep in my Cheetah.”

“I suppose I’ll sleep in my Falcon,” I say.

“Can I sleep with you?” asks Aia suddenly.

Enya and I look at her. Her face goes dark violet in an instant.

“I... I mean... I don’t want... to sleep alone...” she stammers.

“Way to go, girl!” giggles Enya. “Sure he let you. Right, Kira?” she smirks mischievously at me.

“Ye—yeah, no problem...”

“I—I just—”

“I understand, Aia, girl,” giggles Enya. “You need some company. I already had mine...”

Enya? Shit...

“What do you mean?” asks Aia blinking and moving her head unsteadily.

“Ah~” Enya squirms. “I mean...” she nears Aia’s ear and whispers something I can’t hear. I only see Aia’s reactions. First, she opens her eyes wide, then she blushes, and finally, she giggles. Phew... seems Enya defused the situation gracefully.

“Bye~bye~” Enya giggles barely able to stand at the door of her Cheetah. “Have sweet dreams you two~” She smirks and gives each a peck.

Stunned, Aia and I look first at each other, then at Enya.

“My way to kiss you goodnight,” she giggles and disappears into her truck.

We walk slowly towards my Falcon.

“What was that?” Aia suddenly asks brushing her fingers over her lips.

“Her way of saying goodnight?” I ask chuckling.

“Dummy~” Aia giggles. “It’s the first time she’s done that...”

“Oh~ You’re right... Too drunk, perhaps?”

“Perhaps...” she giggles.

“Want a coffee?” I ask Aia just in front of my Falcon while I look over my shoulder checking nobody is near.

“Huh? Oh, yeah~” she giggles.

“Really want one?” I ask her chuckling once inside.

“No~” she giggles. “You were making sure that no tabloid reporter was following us, right?”

“Yeah...” I try to nod, but I’m only capable of making an erratic movement.

“Fufu~” she giggles. “Right... as if asking me in for a coffee isn’t already shady enough.”

“True,” I also laugh, then I sigh.

“Is it about the tabloids gossiping about Enya and you?” she asks gently embracing me from behind.

“Yeah...” I admit.

“Don’t take ’em serious. I know you were just having a dinner and a movie outing. Something normal for friends.”

“It looked like a date...”

“And if it was? It doesn’t concern them. It’s your private life.”

“Yeah~”

“Oh~ Was it a date?” Aia turns me around. “It was, wasn’t it?”

“Aia... it was a friendly night out.”

“Right... you have, after all, a skinship.”

“Yeah~”

“Wanna have one with me?” she suddenly asks blushing deeply. “I mean... we already have a kind of skinship. But... wanna deepen it?”

“What—what do you mean, Aia?” I stutter overwhelmed.

“Just... ugh... ah~ we’re already doing it, right? Sleeping together, even half naked... right? And cuddling... and embracing... spooning... I... want to...”

Shit... she’s too drunk...

“Yeah...” I embrace her. “Let’s go to bed and... cuddle...”

“Yeah...”

Aia takes her bodysuit and bra off and lies them over the fixed chair near my bed. I undress while she is in the toilet.

She comes out of the toilet with only her thong on. She is so damn sexy! Almost hastily, I enter the bathroom. Fuck! I’m already loaded again. I have to fix that... even if Enya drained me quite a bit last night.

“Hi, Kira~” Aia sings lying on the bed. “Your bed is huge compared to mine,” she giggles. “Mine is only one twenty wide, yours’ almost two meters.”

“Yeah... That’s why I’ve chosen this truck,” I laugh.

“Oh, you~” she giggles.

I lie onto the bed, and Aia covers us while she presses herself against my back and embraces me. I feel her tits in my back.

“Is this the skinship you two have?” she asks obviously meaning Enya and me.

“Yeah...” I simply say.

“Kira...”

“Yeah?”

“I wanna see your face...”

“Hmm?”

“Just—”

I don't let her finish and turn around at look at her beautiful, smiling face.

She begins to brush over my face.

"Aia..."

"Just a bit..." she whispers.

I don't say anything and let her while I begin to caress her back.

She twitches...

"What is it?" I ask her.

"My back is sensible..." she giggles coyly. "Keep on..."

I keep my caresses on her back while she begins to do the same to me. A gentle yet so luscious sigh comes from her lips... Fuck! Another boner, and I thought I've had gotten rid of it just before...

"Kira..."

"Yeah?"

"Doing this with Enya too?"

Fuck!

"The like..."

She just giggles and keeps caressing me. She obviously avoids any supposedly erogenous zone of my body, but this is such a turn on...

Aia suddenly stops. I look at her, and she blushes deeply.

"Sorry, Kira..."

"Why?"

"I'm tempting you again... the whole night... Sorry..."

She turns around but searches for my left hand and warps my arm around her.

"I'd love to be able to do it..." she sighs. "I'd love I simply could... I want to, but I'm too afraid..."

"Afraid?" I ask her as gently as possible while caressing her tummy, avoiding to go too far up or down.

“*Hm~*” She nods. “I dunno why, but I’m afraid... that if I let you—if I let me— if I—we do something we won’t—”

“Shh~ It’s okay, Aia,” I whisper caressing her. “I won’t pressure you, you know it. It has to come from you. I’m here for you. I lo—” Shit! “Look out for you...” This shit has come out cheesy.

She sighs in relief.

“Thanks, Kira. It means a lot to me. I’d wish, I could make my mind finally up.”

“Don’t worry about it, Aia. The booze is clouding our minds now. Let’s sleep over it, alright?”

“Yeah~” she sighs and seems to enter her slumber.



A gentle, irregular breeze against my face awakes me.

“Good morning, Kira~” a gentle voice awakes me fully.

“Morning, Aia. Slept well?”

“*Hm~*” She embraces me. “At your side, always.”

Déjà vu...

“Is it really okay waiting for me, Kira?” she asks looking away.

“Why do you ask?”

I make her look at me again with a soft brushing along her chin.

“I told you how I feel months ago, and I still haven’t—”

“It’s okay, Aia.” I embrace her. “If you need it, take it. I don’t want to lose you over something we might do while drunk.”

“Kira... Do you really lo—do you really want to wait for me?”

“I do,” I say firmly. But to her first question she couldn’t end.

“Kira...” she whispers in a sigh of relief.

Aia begins to push me down gently and lies on me, with her tits pressing against my chest.

She brushes several locks out of my face with a beautiful smile.

“I had a beautiful dream last night...” she whispers as she lies her head on my shoulder. “A beautiful dream...”

“Was I in it?” I ask her almost stupidly.

“*Hm~*” she hums into my collarbone. “You, I, and... Enya...”

“Enya?” I ask her baffled.

“*Hm~*” she hums again. “I don’t know why... but we all seemed really near. I—I can’t remember the whole dream, just the part that I felt like the happiest girl in this universe. You were embracing me... and Enya... I believe she was embracing me...”

“Sweet.” I smile. Seems like a similar dream to my recurring one.

Aia suddenly turns deep purple.

“What is it?” I ask preoccupied.

“Oh, my...” she stutters, “we were naked... embracing naked...”

“Who?”

“The three of us... oh no...”

Even her ears are now deep purple...

I just embrace her. She jolts at my sudden hug.

“That’s some skinship...” I whisper jokingly.

She relaxes and sighs.

“Yeah, true,” she finally giggles. “But... Kira?”

“Yeah?”

“It’s just dream, right?” she asks shyly.

“Yeah,” I sigh.

“Yeah, a dream...”

“Why do you ask, Aia?”

“After yesternight’s peck... I’ve been thinking...”

“You mean Enya’s?”

“*Hm~*” She nods. “I’m hetero...” she sighs, “and quite convinced. I mean, I have many lesbian, bisexual or omnisexual friends. I’ve never had feelings towards a girl. But... suddenly I’m shaken by her kiss. It’s just a fucking peck, nothing more... Then why am I overthinking it?”

“I don’t know, Aia. Perhaps because we’re overthinking our own relationship...”

“Might be...” she sighs. “Perhaps this dream was because of that peck...”

“Most likely...”

“Kira,” Aia sighs.

“Yes?”

“I want to be able to say it to you clearly... that’s why I’ll work hard for our sake.”

“Then I’ll do the same.”

“Promise?”

“Promise.”

Ala’s lips meet mine in a short-lived peck. She blushes deeply like a teenager having just given her first kiss.

SI

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SpaceHighway: The Awakened ~ A20 ~ Kitty’s Legacy

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TL;DR:

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