

It was a wonderful day in the dense jungle of Altor Delties. The sun may have been at its zenith, but the canopy shrouded the bare forest floor in twilight. The oppressive heat and humidity forced most native creatures into the protective shadows. Even Sab'se avoided basking for the time being. Instead, the large naga was loosely curled around a partially submerged tree. Its roots were an excellent shelf to hang the coils of his body above the lazily flowing backwater, partially submerging his green scales in the soothing stream.

Sab'se let out a leisurely sigh, lowering his torso and upper tail into the cool water to ward away the otherwise fatiguing heat. Idly flicking his tongue forth, he sensed the air, although he had no intentions of catching any particular scent. Yet once he retracted his tongue, the serpent happened to catch a peculiar smell. □frowning his brow in slight confusion, he began to stir, shifting his entire length, sitting up as he tried to sort out what this intriguing smell came from...

It wasn't a tribal wandering nearby. He knew all of their scents well, but this was a peculiar odor. It wasn't familiar to him at all. □Raising his brow, he curled his lips in a smirk as recognition finally told him what, or rather who, this smell belonged to. The serpent began uncurling and unwinding himself from the roots of the tree.

How convenient, he thought, since he was getting a little hungry. It looked like the wretched heavens provided him with yet another demon from the skies to satiate his appetite. From what he could vaguely sense there was only one of them. They were alone, and they had no idea what was coming for them. He held a deep chuckle in the back of his throat. □

"An easy meal." Sab'se hissed to himself as he wound up the tree's trunk so he could slither across the canopy.

This so called sky-sent *demon* was in fact a piloting her ship towards the only opening within two days drive of a cargo beacon. Vivian Siona was commander of the ship "Rati", an ASP Explorer class, en route with medical supplies to a rim station. She had gone the long route to pick up scanner data and star maps when an oddity had drawn her attention to this world. A cargo beacon for a shipment of metals had only barely been detectable from her high orbit. Once she had located its surface position a landing was quickly needed.

Not an hour and a half later the vixen was in the process of setting up a camp with her ship and rover admits an apparent graveyard of vessels. Three older model Sidewinders, two Eagles, a Vulture, and a Type-9 formed a metallic ring around a crater meadow. Scans hadn't shown anything... threatening... but the vixen's mind was making notes as she planned out how best to leave the abandoned scrap yard.

First load the valuable cargo and leave, make the sell, double back with some new weapons and scanners... she was plotting as her small hex-copter drones began to sweep the surrounding area.

Two hours to go... Vivian sighed as she began to pull information from the rusty freighter before her onto her data pad.

□As the expeditious vixen worked her small salvage operation the massive serpent began to wind among the trees. Sab'se flicked his purple tongue in and out hunting her, curious as to how his next meal would look... and taste. He gradually drew closer to his prey, slightly hoping he could catch them by surprise. Whether it be by quickly grabbing the poor victim, or

lying nearby and waiting for them to stumble upon him, he always loved their reaction. It never grew old.

It seemed the winds had been in his favor this day, as nearly four agonizing hours passed before the clearing came into view. The bones of past sky people's great beast walled off a meadow their terrible fire rain had created. A wall that... in the end... had done little more than trap them.

Above one of the smallest beast's corpse he finally glimpsed his prey. The greedy, hedonistic snake smirked as he saw his prize, flicking his tongue again as he took in the sight of her by a new behemoth. A lusciously curved vixen peeled back her outer, black skin along its seam to well below her navel and its arms tied around her waist. Her copper red and flower white furred chest lay bare to the accursed sky she'd fallen from. Her slender arms fluffed up in a stiff breeze that shifted her auburn hair across her muzzle. The red locks fell to the middle of her back in a wavy cascade as she brushed the errant strands back out of her way.

The only problem with this delightful prey is that she sat on the round foot of an insectile beast. who's tiny, three eyed head slowly swept the perimeter. □She was lazily tapping on the data pad. Her jaws worked on the stem of some native grass while various smaller buzzing things darted to and fro the little camp she had erected around her resting beast.

He knew that some of these Sky people had horrific weapons, weapons that mauled and burned their victims alive with a destructive light, or slung small metal pieces just by pointing them at others, and this walking metal beast seemed to have a bigger version of such a weapon on it's head. He had to be careful from here on. Slowly, Sab's wound among the trees,

moving ever closer to the fox, careful to not be spotted by her wretched mount.

Vivian set her pad to the side, stretched her arms over her head, and let out a wide mouthed yawn to her repair drone. She glanced towards the forest, gaze too low to be looking directly at her hidden hunter. After a moment her emerald eyes wandered to the other side of the eerily quiet clearing. She picked up her belt from where it had been resting on a step bar and began to strap it on as she walked back towards the Type-9 where her small repair drone was feverishly trying to cut its way in. With her belt on she had a pouch, a knife, and a revolver within easy reach, but she was still oblivious to the danger.

□□"Damn enhanced hull plating... don't ya know it makes salvage three times longer?" She grumbled before giving the hull a solid, but honestly adorable kick.

□□Sab'se almost moved. Almost. He quickly remembered the weaponized walker. □Not wanting to test his luck, the serpent slowly broke off a small, sprouting part of the branch he was coiled around.. and dropped it in the line of sight of the barrels. At least he thought that's where it was looking. The turret, however, only let out a sharp beep. He at least knew it was looking his way. The beep also drew the attention of a flat, hexagon shaped, buzzing thing that hovered over his stick a moment before beginning to sweep its single eye over the trees near it. The drone rose up steadily and drawing ever closer to the naga.

Sab'se quickly grabbed another branch. He leveled a hard chop across the top of the drone as quickly as it came within range. The hex-a-copter spiraled to the ground as he began to

slither off to the side, rapidly winding down the tree so he could hide in the foliage.

As soon as the blow landed it began blaring an alarm. It tumbled out of control, slammed upside down on the ground and skidding to a halt. The vixen hastened to the middle of her camp while sharp eyes watched the woods. Her ship's back split and out roared a miniature version of the larger ship. It rocketed up high and began to circle far above.

The snake growled as he saw the ship take off, watching the thing circle in the sky.

"Cowards..." he muttered, glaring at the machine.□□

His prize had drawn her gun and was carefully making her way towards the downed drone. She stepped lightly and swiftly, padding over to the machine and crouching down, trusting in her rover's auto-turret to protect her in the event of an attack.

The serpent grimaced as he saw her weapon, inching somewhat closer to her in the dense foliage. He flicked his tongue once as his tail coiled beneath him.□It was so close! He could dart his tail out and drag her away, but he was sure her metal pet was watching and waiting to spit fire at him.

Vivian crouched over the drone and grimaced. □"Blunt impact. Good hit," she mused quietly, "Hello? Anyone out there?" Vivian called ears pricked up and attentive for a response.

"Yes, there is." He replied, slowly rising from the foliage.

The serpent looked and sounded more curious... more trustworthy to Vivian than some brute who just destroyed her drone. Sab'se immediately locked eyes with the vixen.

She froze where she was, blinking in surprise, her ears locking in on the giant of a naga before her. □

"Hey.... you're the one that hit my surveyor?" She asked calmly, easing her hand from her gun, unable to break his gaze.

"Yes, I was... it drew... uncomfortably close... but I apologize... is there... anything I can do for you to help?" The deceptive snake asked of her.

He leaned a bit forwards as a deeper, intrusive, but not unwelcome, alluring presence began to take precedence within his gaze. He now made he move: to actively lure her into his coils and soon enough his maw...

What are you playing at... Vivian wondered as she felt her heart skip a beat.

It was then her training clicked and she started to ward off her mind. Not enough that she couldn't feel what he wanted, no, but more than enough to still have full control. It was time for a game it seemed, and the serpent had no idea who he was dealing with. After all, who expected to run across a psionic? Especially one as disarming in appearance as her!□□"O-oh" she began, "I... wouldn't want to trouble you, this is your home after all..." she added, turning her head away, but keeping her eyes locked in his. □

Then she slowly, bashfully turned to look at him. Her cheeks were slightly flushed, breathing a bit faster... all the signs a suddenly flustered woman would have. Vivian shuffled forward a half step.□□"Oh, it's nothing, really... I can help you..." The serpent replied, thinking he was drawing the vixen in deeper in his influence.

Trying to make her more comfortable as he slowly curled the thinner end of his tail around behind her, preparing to coil his prey all while giving a more friendly smile.

□□"I... I don't even know what I'd ask for..." Vivian mumbled, "I'm just waiting to get in that cargo bay..." she continued, gesturing vaguely over her shoulder.□□

You can't feel the wall can you? Ohhh this is gonna be fun actually. Alright I'll play along snake she thought, realizing he wasn't directly attacking the barriers she had put up.□□

"Oh, well that's not a problem... I'm sure I can do at least... something to compensate for what I've done... for one, why don't you join me here, in the shade, hmm? It's a very hot day, after all." He replied, holding his hand out to what he believed to be a partially lulled vixen.

□□She nodded softly and began to step closer. The shade falling across her half-bare figure as she left the sun. □"It is much nicer over here..." she said, swallowing once as she looked up to the serpent.

Hold your nerve... just a bit longer... she thought to herself.□□

While he had been coaxing her, she had been hard at work trying to figure out his mental defenses, his strengths... Subtle pushes and pulls were her weapon. She inflated his ego a hair more and snuffed out what little caution he had been feeling. He even seemed to forget there was a turret trained on him. She'd set him up as a textbook example of a mentally vulnerable enemy all without him ever knowing. All that was left to do now... was strike.

Sab'se smirked, looking down to his prey with a greedy grin. He casually lifted her chin, gently helping her look directly into his eyes. Had it not been for his current attempt to lull her senseless so he could devour her whole and alive, the naga probably would seem favorable. There was a sense of allure to his handsome form, his toned figure and yet all he saw her to be was nothing more than food for him.□His tongue flicked from his mouth, nearly licking the vixen's warm muzzle.

□□"So beautiful...~" He said to her, commenting about her pretty appearance, still trying to draw her deeper into his mental snare.

□□A shiver ran down her body as he grazed her whiskers. She couldn't deny he was well toned or even favorable to gaze upon, but the first thing he'd done was coax her over to him to... what was he going to do? Was he horny or hungry? The signals he was sending out were quite mixed.□□

Okay... now I like compliments but your a bit fast for me... she thought, waiting for him to be the one fully secure feeling.

□□She swooned at his words, silently cursing herself and hoping her blush of anger was mistaken for a blush of flattery.□□His eyes slightly lowered as he saw her blush, confident he had subdued his helpless quarry. His hand caught her by the waist before she'd even began to crumple. He may have been going fast, but it was kinda the point. Regardless, most anyone else in her situation wouldn't be aware of the peril they'd be in right now. He rested an almost tender gaze upon her as he leaned in as if to kiss the vixen. As he neared, his mouth opened, then kept opening. The possibly tender gesture was unmistakably made into one of base animality as Sab'se leaned in to consume his meal.

□What the great serpent would feel next would not be the tickling of whiskers against the back of his throat, or the flick of an ear as his saliva wetted it for the first time. No, what Sab'se felt would start like an ice pick driven up through the roof of his mouth. An instant later his body would go numb and unresponsive. Then his arms would move of their own will to let his prey go, and the vixen took a step back, from him with a triumphant smirk. □

"Nice try, big guy" she cooed, "It's impolite to try and swallow a girl on the first date, but here. I have something you can swallow" she said as she fished around in her pouch.

The snake recoiled from the sudden sensation, wincing and nearly crying out before his body suddenly sagged. He was left under her control, only able to merely watch her in terror and anger as she commanded his frame. He wanted to speak, to lunge, to hit the damned vixen, but he was left with nothing to do. It was a cruel irony and one that scared him. She could see fear in his eyes, and for the first time in his life, the massive serpent began to panic.

Vivan fished out a bottle and popped three yellow pills onto her palm. □

"Open wide and swallow these. It's a tranquilizer. You and I are gonna have a little chat about all these ships being around here once you wake up." She said as his mouth obeyed her.

The three chalky tablets barely touched his tongue as she reached in and rammed them into his open throat. Quick as a whip she withdrew her hand out of reflex and, maybe to his relief, he could see a bead of blood on the tip of her nostril. He gave her a nose bleed at least. To be controlling such a larger and seething body wasn't part of her training after all.

She could feel the naga mentally try to fight her as she pulled out the pills. To the end he fought his capture from a Sky Person, but nonetheless he could do little to nothing as she force-fed him the tablets, sentencing to an inevitable, dreamless sleep within the next few moments. He hoped she could feel his anger, his hatred for her as he still stayed locked within her psionic grip... Oh he was mad.

"Alright come on, on the ground with you. Don't need you breaking anything." She grumbled starting to guide him awkwardly out of the tree and onto the ground. □He wouldn't have time to stay angry for long because he fell from her grasp... and consciousness by the time his tail touched the solid ground. In the quick moment that the serpent had control, she could see his body tense and shift. Feebly he reached out at her with a hand, trying to grab her by her throat only to land on the ground. His chin hit the thankfully softer soil before the rest of his length limply slid free from the branch, falling to the ground in a pile behind him. Sab'se easily amounted to over 25 feet long... probably even more!□The vixen triumphant cleared her flooded sinus then smirked down at the snake. She did a little, unprofessional happy dance before stopping suddenly and trying to tug on him by the arms. □

"Shit!" She exclaimed before dropping him back on the exact same spot he'd landed on.

She couldn't move him. □

Well... I have machines for this. Better get him loaded into a cell before this starts wearing off... she thought as she rubbed her pounding temple.□□

The serpent would awake to see the now fully clothed vixen only a few feet away. She was sitting, dosing even on the floor

with a blanket over her. His more immediate surrounding consisted of a gray padded, octagonal room with lights on all sides flush with the wall.□□He knew her grip wasn't on him and that the pills making him feel groggy and sluggish were starting to wear off. He didn't know, however, unless he looked closely was that there was a barrier separating them. A glass composite capable of being dropped from orbit without cracking. It's only give away the 3 inch gap on the seams of that wall facing her.

The angry naga made no delay in trying to get back at the fox, quickly curling and then springing himself at his captor. Sab'se held his arms before him which gave him enough information to know that there was a barrier between them both. Unfortunately there wasn't enough time to stop himself. After a very deep, but impressively loud thud, the vixen would probably awake to find the naga clutching the end of his snout.

She sat upright, pistol in hand, and looked over at him, blinking in surprise.□

"Ouch... Want a towel for that? Sounds like it might have hurt..." She asked, holstering her side arm and turning to face him. □

She didn't sound like she was gloating or being sarcastic but rather actually concerned

The serpent's eyes opened the moment he heard her voice again, looking at the fox with... malignancy.□

"How did you do that?" He near-demanded as he asked her, pulling his hands away from his bleeding snout. He really hit the glass hard...□□"Do... what? You lunged at a wall... that's not me doing that it's just a pane of glass." She said, brow furrowing as she tried to decipher what he meant.

□ "Not *that*." he venomously replied, hissing at her, thinking she was mocking him.

"How did you steal control of my body?"

□ "Oh! The same way you were trying to coax me into your stomach ya lazy prick!" She spat, ears flattening. □ □ The serpent snarled at her, curling up and folding his arms. □

"And what of it?" He replied, regarding his attempt to eat her whole and alive was in no way wrong... as if she had it coming for her. □ □ Either he had serious entitlement issues, or prejudice, but that still would not justify eating her nor eating the owners of every other ship here. □

"The way you do that? I can do it to. I'm a psionic as well" she said simply, bristling at his disregard for her □ □ "Well how fortunate for you.." He muttered, still pridefully facing the vixen. □ "What is it you want of me, anyway? I know nothing of your people's 'ships'. I have no use of them... only your people, who bring them here." Sab'se responds bitterly, being quite vague about the fates of the ship's crew. □ □ "Well they're more my concern. What happened to them? Same thing you planned to do to me?" Vivian demanded. □ □ "Yes. Each and every one of them." He coldly, amorally replied, insinuating he was the cause of not just a few, but several disappearances.

"Although, some came easier than others." Sab'se additionally added, looking back at her, "You were the quickest, though... I shouldn't have expected it to be that easy."

□ □ "Just because I was topless didn't mean I was easy." She remarked, pulling up her data pad and starting to tap away. "Lets see... what could I get as a reward for you..." □ □

"A reward?" He angrily asked, slithering up closer to the vixen, snarling... pressing his snout to the glass. □ "You're going to sell me?" The naga hatefully inquired, "And I'm the one at fault here? I merely protect the denizens of my jungle from the likes of you. You Sky people, who kill, murder, maimed, enslaved. You with your monstrous, wretched metal creations!"

□□ "I'm crunching numbers! I have no intent to sell you, but to turn you in to the authorities and let them decide how best to deal with you." She said, setting her data pad to the side, "But... what do you mean protect? I didn't see anything living on my scanners... is there a civilization here?" □□

"Why would I tell you? The last to meet them hurt and scarred my denizens in so many ways." The naga hissed as he spoke, growing quite defensive. □□

"Because..." vivian began with a sigh, "if you're actually the guardian or proclaiming the title of guardian... I have to let you go. So long as I have proof of you having a people to protect... and your world here can be registered as protected." She explained, "I only did what I did to protect myself. I landed here to scavenge parts and cargo and see if there were pirates about." □□

He leveled his gaze at her, still holding an unpleasant look.

"...you're lying." The snake said, not believing the fox, "Why would I believe you would let me go, and for.. whatever reason?"

□□ "Because I'm not a slaver! And I already have the cargo... and determined pirates didn't bring these ships down." She said, "tell ya what... what do I have to do to get you to trust me?"

□□ "...set me free. Right here, and now." He demanded, giving the vixen quite a high request. □ There was no guarantee that he wouldn't try to kill her on the spot if she was no longer safe behind the barrier.

"Prove to me you're willing to let me go, get me out of this metal shelter."

□□ "And I have your word you won't try to kill me?" She asked, getting to her feet □□.

"I probably can't get out of here if you are killed anyways... only you Sky people know how to enter and exit their metal maws." He archaically explained, probably talking about the underside cargo loading doors, or doors that parted to open.

□ It was humorous, in a way, to see how he understood these things. Regardless, he knew he couldn't operate them, but he once got another to for him; to gain access to a hiding Sky person. He didn't pay attention to what they did, though, so he was out of luck a once he had them both reduced to a bulge in his tail. He was left with no other option but to keep her alive. □□

"You have my word." He said, looking her in the eye, but not even daring to exert his mental grasp again. □□ She had braced herself if he had tried but raised an eyebrow.

"Alright... you're not even trying to push me... Sorry for the... brutality of my defense by the way." She offered as she walked out of sight. □

A moment later the end to his left hissed and seam appeared as the seal broke and door swung open. There to the side stood the vixen, arms crossed, a cautious eye on him, but her hands weren't even near her gun □□ Immediately, the naga's eyes went... well, to her gun, but as he saw her lack of motion, of

action in general, he visibly relaxed, lowering his crossed arms, still staring her down... Watching her for a few more seconds...□

"Well now that we have an understanding, can you please get me out of here?" He hastily asked, showing a bit of an uncomfortable disdain for the interior of the ship.□

It was cold, lifeless, walled in. There was light, but it wasn't warming. It honestly unnerved and disgusted him, he didn't understand how anyone could live in these things, or he at least thought they lived in them. Sab'se knew nothing about other planets, other worlds at all. He believed his world to be the only one presently existing. He believed that the Sky People were fallen beings from the once-believed heavens. Ever since the first Sky-people came, though, Sab'se and his protected people now associated air-borne creatures and the Sky to be not desirable, but untrustworthy and detested. The planet was the tribe's refuge, and Sab'se, the Sky-Eater, was the sentinel of their sanctuary.

□□"If that's what it takes to have a discussion... sure." She sighed,"the doors... uh, maws as you call them, are simple to operate. Here let me show you." The vixen said as she led him towards the main cargo bay. □□

She led him under the small fighter that took off when the alarm was raised and over her rover that was folded beneath the pathway. At the door, she waited for him to join her.

□□"Doors... doors? That's what you call them?" He asked, almost as if he were criticizing her language.□

From controlling and picking the minds of those he had spent time with before devouring, the serpent had learned a decent bit of the Sky language, their native tongue. He honestly was surprised she didn't question how he knew how to talk,

nevertheless, in a way she understood. He still carried an exotic accent, though, somewhat mixed between two exotic languages she knew of. □□ Still, he slowly followed the fox, cautious of the metal monsters she had in the bay. □

"Okay, doors they are... but why do you have them.. so large, or so strong? And... tell me more about that protection you said, what does all that mean?" □

She pointed to a green button on the side of the door and pressed it. The metal maw began to descend before them. □

"They're thick to help protect against projectiles, debris, and anything else that could damage the hull. If that happens everything gets sucked out into space." Vivian elaborated as she led the way back into the now evening sun, "protection adds you to a list that of planets pirates are forbidden from exploring without proper licenses." □□ "What... why would everything.... what makes it get sucked into... space?"

It was clear Vivian had some extra explaining to do, and a majority of it would have to be setting up the basic knowledge for him... hopefully he would remember most of it. □□ "A list of planets... planets? What are those? Are they.. the same as worlds? Some called our world... 'this planet'." Sab'se continued aloud, more for his sake than hers. □ "Are there... multiple worlds? Worlds like mine, like this? And what are... pirates, and 'proper licenses'?" □

Very quickly, the poor naga was appearing to panic more and more as the fox destroyed his previous, simple, primitive beliefs. He found himself now living in a... dear gods, he didn't even know what worlds would reside in.... he.... was there... if there was another world identical to his, was there... another him? What if there was a whole people of Sky people like him, or

not, but stronger, in every way, more potent than him? What could he do to stop them? To help the people he grew up defending, and now fought for?!□

At length Sab'se finally asked, "Are there... are there Sky people like me?"

□□He looked at Vivian with fear in his eyes. Not outright terror, not hate, but the naga was absolutely distraught from the sheer possibilities of it all. If his emotional expression wasn't enough, Vivian could easily sense his mental stress. She could feel the distress of the poor, panicking psionic serpent. He was going through an identity and existential crisis, breaking his gaze from the fox and looking down to the grass... then his palms, flexing his hands.

□There were possibilities as numerous as the grass in the clearing, as trees in the jungle, some of which he could handle, others he would struggle, but possibly, there were many where he could not prevail. He could be disabled, hurt, killed, enslaved, abducted, leaving his tribe to the exact same fates.□Sab'se's chest, and a section in his tail rose and fell more rapidly as his sense of power, of control dwindled. His once omnipotent presence shrunk into an unnoticeable speck. He and his planet were as helpless to Vivian, to any ill-willing Sky person, as the tiny bug that crawled upon his scales was as helpless to him. She alone subdued, and could have sold him off, leaving him lost to the skies forever. Never to return, never to stop any other adult, elder, or child to be taken, harmed, or killed by any other Sky person.□He looked up to her again, nearly... tearing up, curled up tightly in place, nearly balled up. Not once had he been afraid like this, not ever... not even Vivian's psionic domination instilled

such a sense of distress and duress upon the now broken 'Sky Eater'. □

He opened his mouth, but didn't speak. □ He didn't know... what to say.. what to ask...

Vivian watched him with a mixture of wonder, guilt, and self loathing as she realized what she did. He didn't know... and how could he? How could she have expected him to? He called the ship door a maw! □

"Hey... can... can I give you a hug?" She asked after a moment. □

She wanted to soothe him. She could, it was easy to do that. But that felt wrong... he needed actual comfort right now. □ □ "Wh-what's that?" The suddenly meek snake asked, acting as if he had just witnessed the ultimate end of his world.

He shifted his tightly wound coils, only to make himself look ever smaller. Good gods, the once +30' naga looked like he had a length of less than 20 feet. □ □ "There's strong ones of you Sky Dwellers, aren't there? Even more aggressive than the first..?" he whispered, almost too quiet for her to hear, "Will the... the list, the world-planet list, will that stop more of..."

He trailed off as he looked down at her, still terrified, but furrowed his brow. No, Sky People weren't all bad. What was the word she used?

"...stop more Sky Pyre...its... from coming..? The hateful, harmful Sky people? The ones that... aren't like you. That are... without heart."

Vivian didn't answer him directly, but cautiously, gently, stepped up to him and wrapped her slender arms around his

waist. Then she tried to pull his head down to rest on her shoulder.□

"Yes. It would put your world under monitoring. They wouldn't risk coming here." She offered soothingly□□.

Not wanting to harm the comparatively petite vixen, the serpent slowly put his strong arms around her back, and laid his head upon her shoulder, holding her close in a very loose embrace. She could tell, just by the way he was weakly hugging her, that he already wished no ill will upon her... in fact, he wanted her to stay unhurt. Boasting unusually high strength a wrong squeeze could force the wind from her lungs. He could even break a rib. The thoughts of which never crossed his mind. He needed her.

"Then what must be done so I can protect my world?" He asked her, idly flicking his tongue- unintentionally brushing up along the back of her ear, □"Everything else can be told to me later, I want my... planet... safe."□□

"You need to let me go. I'll get to the nearest station and send a report in. Then I can come back and meet the research team that'll come to verify my report, and... then your planet will be protected."

□□"How long will that take..?" The powerful snake looked down to her as he released her from the hug, a concerned look in his eyes.

"It may take some time sadly... But I have some friends that can get a patrol out here and... if it will make you feel better... I can stay here as well. I can be back by noon if I leave now I think."

She almost immediately saw the naga nod his head, but he stopped a split second afterwards. All his life, the serpent was powerful on his own, needing no one else, an omnipotent being. A symbol of strength and fortitude for the tribe. □□It was difficult to admit his sense, his need of dependence, but he couldn't be nearly as selfish as he was before. If it made it any better, he wasn't taking the help of someone smaller in comparison of potency, she did best him, after all...□

"I would feel.. safer with you here... so go now, then. I will still be in the branches, where I hit the flying metal pet." He explained, dreading the moment he would see her go.

□□"My drone... when I get back... maybe you'll allow me to share my knowledge with you?" She asked, taking a hesitant step back.

□□"Drone... I understand... and I would greatly appreciate it." He replies, patting the vixen on the shoulder.

□"Godspeed.." He finally added, starting to face away from her.

The naga slithered towards the treeline, but upon making it halfway there, he turned back to give her a wave goodbye, which felt quite odd. Usually, the Sky people he met were hidden beneath his scales when he bid them farewell... if he did bid them farewell, that is. Usually, Sab'se wished to never see the wretched Sky-demons ever again.

Yet now, for the first time, the arrogant serpent was desperately hoping for this alien's swift return...