Star Vs Sad Monster

Cow's, LookenFer

Episode One

The following program has been translated from our sponsor, Weezers cough medicine for chipmunks. The planet names have been changed for earthling consumption. They cry about stuff otherwise. We all know when our chipmunks struggle with a cough it's hard to get them the care they need. No more! The people at Weezers cough medicine for chipmunks work around the clock on the best formula for your furry friend. Warning, do not play Weezer music while giving your chipmunk cough medicine. You've been warned.

"Ten seconds remains." The announcers voice echoed through the arena. Local humans from the near by galaxies, and aliens with tennecical hands and other species watched from above while the zero gravity players dashed towards a floating fire puck. Etoile panted, heaved over helplessly on the court holding onto her glow stick to dear life. She had trained for this, but yet she her muscles burned from exhausting. The only kind of pain that comes from pushing ones self too much, but it did not matter. For months she had trained by herself, staying longer on the court night after night. She hurt, tired but none of it mattered. Only she could stop the next coming of the space hubs firepuck god. The son of a legend. Against someone who wasn't even a Martin. No one thought she, a Lambert could have played this well. No one would admit it. She knew that soon none of that mattered, the only way to stake her claim as the true fireball queen she would have to do two things.

- 1. Mentally quiet the thunderous boo's and curses from the crowd of Martins.
- 2. Stop her step-brother from scoring.

Etoile watched Soren Martin adjusted his goggles before leaping with the firepuck in his sticks net. With ease he quickly floated towards her.

Don't block the firepuck with your body Etoile. She thought, in a voice much like the her father used to speak to her in when they played above the ozone after dinner. When she was little. When things were simpler.

That's what he wants. The voice in her head continued.

A whistle blew. Soren flung the puck at her. Instead of using her body, fighting every instinct she reached out with her net. Just before the puck could enter the net, she twisted her stick. Hitting the floating firepuck on the metal part, sending it rocking in the opposite direction.

The once roaring crowd was silenced. Mouths were open, buttered Ringin pop kernals flew in the air from angry Martins. The puck wiped around the playing court, bouncing off the inviable force field in their three dimenicinal air hockey.

OH NO. Etoile realized. Her angle was off, the puck was going in the wrong direction. She turned to her net, seeing it creeping closer to the unguarded goal.

Soren slammed his body into hers as he raced towards the net, sending her checking into the force field. It shocked her. She pushed off the wall anyways, pushing Soren slightly, and reach out with her net as far as she could.

The puck stopped in her net just before the goal. She flung it at Soren, who had positioned himself in front of his own net. But she did not send the shot at his upper body. She slapped the puck so that if it hit him it would be somewhere unpleasant in the lower region of his body.

Soren instead jumped out of the way. And the fire puck went in.

"Etoile Wins."

Gravity returned to the court, and Etoile threw down her stick and screamed in triumph. Now the space hub would have to accept that she was the better player. She ripped the neck of her tight uniform, stopping just before ripping the entire thing she was so joyful.

But no one in the crowd spoke. Instead they quietly picked up their things and filed out of the arena, one after another in disappointment. Etoile, with her hands outstretched high ran around. Singing. What she was singing she did not know, but she was so excited that she did not care. She had done it, She had found a way.

Finally something sent her out of her excitement and back into the reality of it all. The same sort of place that she always found her self in.

"E-toilet." The man yelled. "Turn off the lights and lock up when you are done gloating you hitting below the belt show boat!"

Etoile stood in stunned silence. "Below the belt? That's how this game is played! If he wanted to win..."

It didn't matter. She couldn't even argue her point. The janitor had left. Never mind he had four hours left on his shift, it was Etoile's problem now. She didn't even work at the arena. She realized that not even her step-father or mother remained in the crowd. In fact no one did. There was no awards presentation for winning the tournament. There's there any presentations for Lamberts.

She hung her head, and slowly made her way back to the locker room. There she would have changed into her street clothes, but the door was locked. She would have to find her own way home back to the planet somehow.

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The space cab driver finally stopped trying to sell the woman into working full-time for a delivery company, called Future Treats. Everyone seemed to be trying to sell that "job" but rightfully Artbubeans caught on. Even the suckers living in an orbital interference zone were too smart for such an obvious thing. Plus since no one could make a call on the planet, working app-based jobs did not work.

She threw the Future Treats flyer the driver had given her into a waste bin near the sidewalk of her parent's house. The bin was also full of Future Treat ads.

I hate it here. Etoile Lambert thought. I can't do anything if they refuse to see me for what I am.

The sight of the "good try" banners fell from the high ceiling. Purple light shone in from the morning's moon rising. The tall thin athletic nineteen-year-old girl stood by the open window looking at the view of waving red grass, with edges sharp enough to cut any insect who poorly chose to land out of it. The Martin family had chosen this type of species of grass not only for its unique ability to control the temperature around it for the harsh Artubean winter but also to keep out the wildlife and unwanted neighbours.

All the wanted neighbours were there that evening as Etoile finally allowed herself to order a glass of sparking apple juice. Not because she was diverting in her protest against her stepbrother, who her stepfather for throwing a "you got second place" at the fireball tournament.

With her hands on her back and the 1st placed metal around her neck, she watched as her stepfather greeted everyone in the room with a firm handshake. Women, small children, anyone he could see. The entire time he travelled from person to person, making sure they had heard all the wonderful things about their firstborn son, Sorren.

Uncontrollably the girl snarled. Suddenly she felt ridiculous wearing such skin-tight wear. Of course, this was necessary because one's skin might hurt if it came in contact with a 800-degree fireball puck. Throw in playing the game in zero gravity and let's just say that there are a lot of fireball patients in the Artubin Medical Centre for humans and humanlike species. The place is well know partly because of the excellent care provided and also because they refuse to let anyone abbreviate the centers name. It's not AMCHH. To shorten the name is an insult to the doctors, who had developed a unique culture living on a planet out in the middle of nowhere.

Why do people play a game they know is dangerous and might get burned? Or worse? Entertainment of course! What else! And a rich tradition in all twenty-two years of the sport. A sport that her own stepfather had become great in when he was in reeducation school. He had picked up eyes from planets from across the galaxy on how he would win matches so easily. When he re-married his high school sweetheart and had a son, all of Artubin proclaimed the coming of a new fireball king. The next Labron James so to speak, but Etoile didn't pay attention to that space channel too often. Mostly it aired messages about what humans were like, sharing sounds and experiences. That's how she knew what earth people called their their solar system, qweryt1234 number 2. They did seem a little stuck up to Etoile, thinking their existence was so great that they had to make sure everyone else knew about how they thought things sounded to them. Over all, it was a nice attempt by the humans of Earth, but yet their content in the end was pretty dull to the girl.

As some of the fire hockey players passed Etoile, she felt

herself cross her arms in front of her chest. Her jumpsuit seemed to be getting tighter around her chest and shoulders the longer she wore it. It made her uneasy, and she wondered why she hadn't changed before the celebration started. Why was she there at all? She easily could have gone upstairs to her room, or one of the other apartments in the complex and waited out the nonsense coming from the main entertainment room. She knew none of the family would speak to her. There would be no "good job on winning first." In fact, she could feel the stinging glares of some of her Stepfather's relatives, his mother being one of them.

If I had been born a Martin and not a Lambert this would be my party. She thought. She could only sigh since her list of things she could do about the situation was short. She had considered them, however. But where would a nineteen-year-old human go in that part of the galaxy? Outside of where fireball wasn't banned for harm and violent toxic culture it brings. If she were a man things would be different. She would be hired as a trader, or scout for Globulin Toxal berries in the inner moons of Iageeor couldntthinkofaname 2. Fun fact, that planet was discovered by an astronomer named Rick in Tuson Arizona who had too many sky like objects to log that night. Globulin Toxal berries of course were powerful, hard to find, and very profitable the gangs like the ringbelt bandits. Gangs who did not like working with women. Especially with women who did not have the last birth name of "Martin."

"Listen every Martin!" Her Stepfather said raising a glass of blue goo in a clear water substance. Little sparks swam in his glass as he spoke. "A toast! To my son Soren. The Chosen one!"

Friends and relatives raised their glasses from where they stood. Either by the dining tables lined with a feast of delicacies only found on the planet, or by the club-like side rooms where family and friends clanked bottles together and drank. The mall structured like room contained so many faces Etoile had grown tired of seeing.

Her fingers gripped her first-place metal for a moment as she thought. *I am never going to be anything to these people. Am I?* She let go.

She caught her stepfather's glare. She narrowed her eyes and turned to meet it. He shook his head and said with a sense of piety "Although he surely was robbed of 1st place, am I right?" He chucked. She knew the laugh when he would hide a bit of truth inside something that did not sound like a joke at all. A feeling she knew well at that point and had learned to accept.

"You were pretty aggress towards your step-brother there at the end." He said.

"Watifal." Etoile's mother said, rising in her blue gown with an extended skirt. She looked much like her mother, her figure and how she would carry herself. With a sense of keeping upright and steady.

"If he wanted it he would have won it. I wanted it more." She said taking steps towards the others.

"Martins. Always. Want it more." Watifal said.

Etolie felt all the eyes in the room on her as she walked over to a plate of food. She picked a vegetable and inserted it into a dip. The sharp bit echoed in the silent room.

"If you would let me go." She said, without thought of consequence. "He might win. Since he can't seem to beat me."

Someone coughed, which caused a wave of signs of uncomfortable expressions.

He chuckled. "Find your brother a training replacement and you can go. I'll tell you what. I'm so confident that he would beat you if you gave him a chance to learn. You don't need to find a human partner. Find some creature who wants to play fetch with fire. Then you can go. Do. Whatever it is you think the universe is."

"Cool." She turned towards her room, one that she could see from the floor below from where she stood. "Then you can go be all weird over your true blood thing. Which is creepy by the way."

"The sooner the better." He said.

Her mother approached the well-dressed man with a glowing tie. "She doesn't understand how important this is to you. She doesn't mean it." She said.

"No." He said." I think Star is ready to be on her own, is that what I am hearing."

"Yes." She said.

"You know what to do." He said.

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Crystal formations that littered the red ground glowed as Etoile searched the land. She had put on a skirt, with undershorts that had pockets but still wore the formfitting bodysuit. Her grey-blue eyes with auburn around her pupils shifted as she looked into the foggy haze of the basin. She had ridden away off of her giant lizard-like mount. One of her step-fathers rides of course but one he did not ride often since it seemed to like Etoile so much. She and the creature over the years had learned to ride together and she stopped by its pen as frequently as her re-education and fireball tournaments would allow her. She wondered what old Lumpy as she called him would do after she left.

I did say all of that, she thought. The sky darkened. The time of day, known to the plant as the passing of the moons, created a temporary dark period of about fifteen minutes every morning.

Oh crud. She thought. Not realizing the morning freeze had not yet passed that morning. The freeze that always happened every morning every day ever. The one she always forgot repeatedly.

Causally, Etoile removed a small packaged bundle from her pockets. She tried to open it as the plants and ground around her froze and turned to a bright blue patch of ice. Her exposed skin began to burn, as she desperately tried to open the bundle. Her finger joints hurt so much that she felt as though her soul was leaving her body against her will through the cold. With a fling, the package opened. A tent bigger than her popped out of it and landed on the ground. The girl stepped into the warm tent. She zipped it up and set a timer on her arm computer for when the freeze would pass. She stuck her hands in her warmer short pockets and made herself small for warmth.

Why do I always forget about the morning freeze? She thought. That could have been a lot worse.

A multitude of cracking sounds rang out from outside as plants and objects shattered from the cold.

Why do I live on such a stupid planet? She thought. She knew she wasn't in a great spot, in the middle of a grass field far from the space hub planet station. Not to be confused with the orbital guest homes and the satellite penthouse suite of Artubia.

Where was she going to go? She had of course not considered any of her actions to this point, all she knew was she could no longer control what she said around her stepfather. She could no longer bear hearing about the great Soreen. There had to be somewhere else she could be doing something productive. She often wondered as to what, but she hadn't yet discovered what that was. Sure, she might be lucky to be part of a Martin family and to live in such a lavishly large place. But why even when nothing you did mattered? Maybe that was it, she wondered. Maybe that is why she wanted to leave. That and the planet had so many moons that it did very strange things to its environment that made it not cool to live in. She would always be a Lambert no matter where she went, but at least she could be miserable somewhere else for a while.

If she could catch one of these fire creatures. A few of the

species would work, any of them dumb enough to chase fire and childlike enough not to know that they are working and not playing. A Char-Weazer or Blow Tatcher work enough for her to be allowed to leave. To finally find some place where not being a Martin didn't matter.

Something from above caught Etoile's attention. A high pith buzzing, sounding as if it were crashing out of the sky. Before she could consider what could be causing such as great noise out in the middle of nowhere, a rumble that rocked the planet to its core.

As the roar grew louder, Etoile realised the sound was coming in the direction of the shelter. What could she do? She would quickly freeze to death if she left. The odds of something crashing where she was were so low she felt it must have been an impossibility. But then again she was a Lambert, and the universe was out to get her.

She opened up the flap of the tent and looked up to the sky. At first, the light that reflected from the icy surface blinded her. But as she focused harder she could spot from beyond the rolling grassy hills a silver spaceship flying towards the spot where she sat. It travelled at such as speed that she knew instantly she had no hope. She could not run. The wayward ship was coming to her.

She considered what to do in her final moments. Cowering in shame hating the universe seemed like a fitting choice. One she had found herself living in most of her life ever since arriving in Artubia as a young child. Instead of any of that, she found herself on her feet, with her elbows on her hips.

"I'll take the puck to the body this time." Etoile said.

She watched the round craft with an upper and lower clear dome strike the side of the hill. Cutting into the tall grass and flowers, churning the ground like a till ploughing a field.

As the metal from the ship hit the icy surface, a loud hiss rang out. Water sprouted, ice turning into liquid from the

heat of the entering the planet. A stream of water pooled into the valley below.

"ICE!" She said, suddenly before sliding like a baseball player coming into home plate down. As she slid she realized she could see someone standing in the upper dome of the ship, looking at to her.

As she slid she cursed as she came face to face with the outter rim of the ship. So close she could feel the hell like heat. A heat that she could feel from the tips of her toes to the back of her hair that trailed behind her.

"I'm not going to make it!" She screamed. Realising that this was the end.

As she closed her eyes, she felt something tug at her hair. It stopped her from proceeding any further, holding her by the hair.

She screamed without thinking "Let me go!." There was no one holding her, and she felt a horrid feeling of having had this reaction. She felt a dangling weightless feeling in her feet.

She opened her eyes. Below she could see all the way to the bottom of a deep canyon. No one could survive that kind of fall. She knew of no canyon here, not in all her free summers when the creatures weren't needing lead to other fields. Or farming building setup after any of the freak occurrences that happen when you live on a planet that has four moons and thirty-seven trash-like asteroids.

Somehow, some way she had to get back up on safe ground. When she looked to try to free herself of whatever was still pulling on her hair, she saw only metal. The ship has gotten stuck on the side of the hill. The only real she had not fallen to her death was because her hair had gotten stuck in the impact.

How much time did she have? A very quick guess that a 125-pound woman's hair might not hold long against a megaton

intergalactic space vehicle.

From in front of her, she heard a pounding. A woman sat in the dome, pounding on the side.

"You should get out of there!" The woman's yells were muffled through the walls of the ship.

Out of all the advice that is the one the woman had picked? She shook it off. She needed her help. Whoever she was. However, the wayward space traveller had got there.

"Give me something to cut my hair with!" Etoile yelled. She held on to the side of the cliff, trying to pull herself up to let off the pressure and pain from her head.

"No! Long hair looks better with your face type!" She yelled back through the doom glass.

This had to be a joke, Etoile thought. That simply could not be a reaction in such a moment. Could this woman not see her struggling for her life? All that could save her was a pair of scissors. A pair of trimmers would stop the hairs pulling out from her scalp.

A loud squelch erupted from the rim stuck in the hill above her. The back end, where the woman sat in the dome, began to tilt to fall into the canyon.

Etoile pushed herself as far up as she could go against the rim of the ship. As she did, the object fell behind her. It took a few seconds for the loud thud to sound from below. Creatures chirped and Purwafeled near by as she slowly turned to where the ship had crashed.

That's when she noticed the wooden sign posted on the other side of the newly formed canyon.

"Warning. Newly formed canyon." The sign said.

"Thanks." Etoile mouthed mockingly.

The top dome of the ship had cracked. The bottom where the woman had been had landed face first.

Her eyes did not turn from what to her looked like broken glass. Could she have survived that? In that beat up looking ship?

Etoile ran to the edge. "Are you okay?" she yelled to the bottom.

A creature Purwafeled very close near by. She knew the sound, a firgarbing. A creature know to roam to camp sites to play with campers and outer galaxy tourists. Them and their marshmallows. Perfect for firepuck purposes. The creature wandered into view, seeming drawn to something in the pit.

All Etoile needed to do was hog tie the firgarbing, bring it to her Martin step father and she would be free to leave. To live. To finally grow as a person. To be rid of her so called family.

But the woman at the bottom could still be alive. And she could not both capture the creature and help the woman. The creature that seemed so helplessly lead by the smoke.

Etoile removed the rope pouch from her pocket and like a tape measure began to remove yards upon yards of rope. She stared at the creature. Known for their "deer in the headlight" like reactions. Like emo kids being lead to buy new Linkin Park Records.

She lassoed the creature by the ankles and pulled. Causing the creature to fall over like a rag doll. Effortlessly she walked and pulled until the new firepuck getter could be put under.

But she looked back. Back to the pit. She imaged walking away, getting everything she ever wanted. And knowing that it was the price she was willing to give for it. The life of another person. This was the price of admission.

She sucked on her bottom teeth, and she considered what she

wanted. Who did she want to be?

"Get out of here you stupid animal." She told the creature as she untied it. "You get to go. For now."

The hardware store rope would have to hold strong enough for her to reach the bottom of the canyon.

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The melted water from the warming planet pooled into a rushing stream by the time Etoile reached where the ship had landed. Pieces of red rock and dirt had fallen, as well as entire trees that at one time had been on the surface and not in a sinkhole. As if some sort of air pocket had collapsed in the planet. For such an unstable place was normal, but still, what were the odds?

Black and blue smoke rose from somewhere inside the ship. Etoile knew she did not have long if something electrical was on fire. There would be no one to help, and with no way to communicate via cellular or most radio due to orbital interference, there would be no other help.

Her feet touched the rocky debris surface. A burned electronic

smell rose from the ship. Etoile climbed past the broken dome and into the main room of the craft. A large single field-like plane with a small shack, looking poorly put together.

To Etoile's surprise, the ground inside the ship was dirt, not metal. She recognized four garden beds, with tall plants sprouting out of them. Each with a fruiting substance. She wondered how long the woman had spent in that strange cockpit field. This did not look like the standard ice patriots who wandered in. Or the Burparisan Slapper Jockies and their small one-person crafts made from the equivalent of space tin foil.

The edges of the field did not seem to lead to any tunnels to the dome down below. Etoile looked for any kind of hatch, door, or thing but found nothing. If the woman were injured, she could be out of time. She searched the field, tapping her foot on the ground trying to find any kind of path down.

Once near the shack, she looked inside. She was a tablet computer and a novel. Letting her curiosity overcome her for a moment, she picked up the book. The Shepherd of the Hills. This did not seem familiar, nothing that she had heard in any of the space radio she and her father had once listened to together.

A voice cried out from down below. The same one the woman had heard before. Young, deep but with a strange dialect not like others.

"Someone. Please." The voice said in a crackly desprete tone. "Don't leave me down here. Not now, I've come so far please!"

"I'm here." Etoile found herself saying. "How do I find you? There's not an access tunnel or..."

"Open the door and come get me!" She yelled.

Etoile doubled her efforts but still could find nothing. Did she need to start digging? How did this strange vehicle operate? Doubling back to the shack, she picked up the tablet. Maybe the secret entrance could be opened there. While Etoile was not a hacker or even skilled at communicating with AI, that had to be it. She checked everything else in the field cockpit.

But when the object powered on, it was not in artubian. It wasn't even in Fashundunco, a fun language with grunts with pitch accents.

"What is wrong with your computer, the language script looks completely broken," Etoile yelled. "Half of it is drawings of faces and some sort of large vegetable."

"Ask Betty to open it for you." The woman cried.

Etoile looked around. Was the woman delusional? She saw no one else in the cockpit field growing thicker with smoke. What a strange name at that.

"I'm the only one here," Etoile shouted. "There is no Betty."

The tablet dinged and began to speak in the same strange dactylic as the space traveller. The twang and the draw seemed far worse.

"Dag gum what you on? Ain't no one asked you nothing. You ain't wanted here." It rambled.

"Open the dome!" Etoile yelled while catching her foot on the edge of a garden bed planter. She stumbled towards the shack, picking up the tablet.

Nothing happened.

"Open the door!" Etoile said.

There was a pause. "Nah." It said.

Etoile, tablet in hand, wandered out of the shack and into the field to avoid the growing toxic smell coming from below.

"I'm human you are supposed to listen to me." She said.

"Shiiiizzz I don't gonna do nothing I don't want to. Go write your own history report childrens."

The woman called from below. "Betty! Let her in!"

The tablet's volume grew louder. "I still ain't talking to you! You tried putt'n me in sleep mode."

Etoile's eyes narrowed at the tablet. Her face grew flush like a toddler who dropped the top scope of strawberry ice cream in the dirt. Why couldn't she communicate? With either the machine or the woman?

She climbed out of the broken dome. On the outside of the ship saucer, she found an opening and squeezed her way past rocks and debris. She used the tablet to start digging into the soil. Before the thing could even start to complain about how its current use was in strict violation of its terms and conditions, she struck something solid and hollow.

"Stop!" The woman yelled, appearing behind the glass for Etoile to see. "That glass is expensive!"

The ridiculousness of the statement didn't even matter, the tablet was not strong enough to break the asteroid-resistant glass that a spaceship should have. Etoile realized there was nothing left to do. The view of the woman began to vanish behind the dark mist behind the glass. Sparks shot out from the back of the dome.

Etoile bared her teeth and slammed the tablet into the dome in frustration, like Bill Belichick sick of waiting for the Windows video player to show a failed play. She let out a scream as the edge of the tablet hit the submerged dome.

The glass cracked.

She grabbed the tablet again and furiously struck the glass over and over until she could clear enough to crawl inside. Holding her breath, she reached out. Feeling for the woman.

The ship's tablet beeped. "Fine, I'll open the hatch."

From above a hatch clicked unlocked. Etoile lowered her eyebrows in disgust.

Something cloth crossed Etoile's fingers. Clothing. She grabbed onto the fabric and lifted the woman. She felt thin, weak muscled. Frail. Etoile dragged her to the opening and despite a struggle, managed to somehow lift the woman to safety. Before she burst out in a coughing fit.

When she lifted herself out into the fresh air, she fought to catch her breath when she noticed something alarming. The woman was not breathing.

She cursed. She wasn't a doctor, nor did she know anything about what was causing the fire. Was it too late? The woman had colour on her face, but her chest did not move. She lay there in her yellow jump and white striped jumpsuit motionless.

Something behind Etoile began to move, something crawling upward. The rope that had been lowered now was being pulled up. She looked up and saw a figure at the top. With the sun behind the person, she could not tell who it was. All she knew was she now had two major problems. Not only did it look like she could not save the woman, but what was going to happen to her? Being stuck in a hole?

She returned to the woman and held her in her arms. In the hope that somehow if she sat up life providing air would be pulled into her lungs, desperately needing clean air. It didn't.

"I won't let you leave me," Etoile said softly in her ear, holding her head steady in the palm of her hand. "Breathe, please. Come on. Breathe."

What if the toxic air was still in her? She tried to push on her lower rib case, hoping to expel air from her lungs. Some air did, but not enough.

She wondered how long someone would live without oxygen. She

had no idea. One thing entered her mind to try, one final ditch effort.

Without thought, without desire, she placed her lips on the space travellers. She pressed again on her ribs and sucked. A rush of a burning sensation entered her body. It travelled through her veins.

This wasn't electrical related. Etoile was sure about that. This was not even due to the crash landing. No. She knew this sort of feeling. The feeling of a creature stings, or warning spray. This felt biological.

The woman gasped. Etoile turned her head and coughed violently as the woman immediately held onto her. The woman held her as if she had not touched a person in a very long time. Etoile pressed her lips together, wanting free to deal with what was going on inside. But she felt needed.

What the Gurgiasmorf is this? She thought. Feeling needed. I'm not a Martin.

"Greetings." The woman finally choked out in that vocal odd twang. "I am Coleen Esiner. On behalf of a planet called Earth, I come in peace. And would like to welcome you into a peaceful alliance."

Etoile half smiled and tried not to look away from her brown eyes. Earth had made it out to Artubian? The feat was impressive. The journey must have taken ages.

She added. "We don't have to talk about why you were getting to first base with me neither."

Etoile crossed her arms and shot her a look.

Behind them the smoke cleared, and something black and furry appeared from the ship. From under the thick of hair were catlike red eyes. Etoile stood between the creature and Coleen. Its pupils thinned, and instantly Etoile felt her mood change. She had been hopeful, but suddenly she felt cold. Lost. When its eyes changed, the feeling vanished.

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