

Avarus stared hard through the window of the stasis capsule. Beyond the glass barrier lay a human face; calm and unflinching. A small scar ran half an inch up her chin but was barely visible through the thick fluids. Avarus knew exactly which memory to explore next. However, he didn't want to engage their subject right away. Besides, his overly virtuous research lead wouldn't permit it. And Avarus knew better than to argue. He understood very well that not all individuals were gifted with a relentless thirst for ambition and an undeterred conviction to pursue it. What he envisioned could take months, if not years. However, he was certain that the right time would come and the woman in front of him was the key.

"You're not falling in love with her, are you?" Blueskin smirked. Avarus had gotten used to how his research lead would occasionally slip into the room without warning.

"She's special... very special" Avarus replied, eyes still glued to the scar on the subject's chin.

"I wouldn't buy it just yet" Blueskin cautioned, "for all we know, her mind is filling the gaps in her memories with nonfactual information. And besides, it's not our job Avarus"

Avarus pressed his eyelids to a close, suppressing his urge to protest. Blueskin's stringent regulations were a lot to live by. However, what his superior was postulating wasn't actually inaccurate. It's what almost every human brain does - Try to fill up incomplete information in one's memories with contents from one's dominant thoughts. And over an expanse of a decade, as was the case with their subject, these minor nonfactual plugs would get cemented over.

"Yep, not our job..." Avarus muttered as he moved away from the stasis capsule to switch on the screen.

"Hey!" Blueskin called out noticing Avarus's frustration, "I thought we've been over this. What part of a 'NO' do you not understand?" The screen took no time at all to come alive.

"Listen, I'm not suggesting that you're wrong, but what we saw back there... Maybe there is a tiny possibility of something..." Avarus was trying hard not to lose his serenity but Blueskin cut him off abruptly.

"We are not authorised to communicate with the subject while she wanders inside the simulation" Blueskin's cold voice dictated clear authority, "Now if we're clear on that, I want you to go through these interrogation reports" Saying so, Blueskin slid a fat cardboard folder towards Avarus's end of the long table forcing him to catch it before it could slide right off. Avarus was infuriated at the way Blueskin had been belittling him over the years. For a short woman, Blueskin had quite an intimidating personality. Bypassing her was a risk that Avarus didn't want to take. He knew he had to patiently stick to his plan.

"Avarus!" Blueskin called out looking a little puzzled, "Where is she?"

"What?" Avarus took a moment to snap out of his thoughts before spinning around to check the screen.

"Where did she go?" Blueskin raised her voice, clearly disturbed by what she was seeing.

Avarus began switching hastily between the various camera views to locate their subject's avatar. Soon enough, they spotted her in an unexpected region of the simulation; examining an uneven wall surface.

"How the hell did she access a hall on level 2?" Blueskin demanded.

"I don't know, maybe she figured out a way to jump levels. If run the diagnostics and check for..." Avarus was explaining with a hint of uneasiness in his voice when Blueskin interjected.

"What are you hiding from me, Avarus?" The blunt question caught Avarus off guard. He continued staring at the screen to buy some time and check his expressions before meeting Blueskin's eyes.