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Laurence doesn't seem nearly as bothered as Laurel did by the whole affair that had them summarily assigned to scanning the communications tower. He's whistling a little as they walk, indifferent to if they keep pace.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Homewrecking. Real classy. That what you youngsters are up to these days?

He winks as he says it, but it's hard to not notice how dead his eyes seem, as he shifts the strap of the gun he's holding so that it doesn't bite into his shoulder as much.

Henri doesn't say anything, although he's beginning to look incredibly bitter.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

The sanctum of marriage ain't what it used to be, these days!  
Ah, well. I was never one for weighing myself down like that.  
And clearly some among us aren't either!

He chuckles. They're just walking around the room, as he examines various paperweights and items to see if they're of any use.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Not that I entirely mind- more fun for me. Tom's always been fun to provoke- especially seeing as Lola despises it so.

He's smiling absently, as he rummages through someone's personal desk, yanking drawers out roughly to search for ID cards.

Jessie stays quiet, though he's clearly bothered by Laurence. Out of the frying pan and into the fire, one might say.

Laurence makes a little noise when he's found an ID card, shoving it into his pocket. He pauses for a moment, before noticing something- or someone, underneath the table.

He sighs, hauling them out by an arm- corpse still somewhat pliable, even as rigor mortis begins to settle in.

He flops them onto the carpet in front of Jessie and Henri- before he's picking up a hefty letter opener, and proceeds to roughly gouge out the person's eye socket, scraping the curve of the blade around their eye- before the ocular implant comes loose and pops out wetly.

This, he puts into a little plastic sandwich bag he... packed for this express purpose.

He's in the middle of zipping it up when he looks up at the two other men, getting up from his knees.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

If you see any more- do tell me, would you? My little sister can probably make better use of them than the corpses can. No sense in wasting resources- when who knows when something'll go wrong.

Another cheery smile, as he wipes his bloodied hands off on the front of the person's corpse.

Henri visibly gags. Gross.

Laurence is still smiling amicably, as he continues to meander around the room. One might even begin to think that he's rather enjoying himself too much.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Oh, lighten up, buttercup. You'll see worse things on board before our time's done, I imagine. Fenne is a little creative genius, emphasis on creative.

Jessie grimaces, uncomfortable with treating corpses as resources.

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When the room's been stripped of anything of interest, Laurence slouches on towards the door- sticking his head out briefly, before recoiling and closing the door as quickly- and quietly as he can. He points firmly in the opposite direction: back to the door they just came from, finger pressed to his lips to ask for silence, meaningfully looking over his shoulder at the door he just shut.

Henri looks like he's about to say something, but thinks better of it once he sees Laurence's signal. He looks towards the door that he'd just closed, before crouching for cover behind a nearby desk. He motions for Jessie to do the same.

There's a distant roar in the background: the sound of metal clashing against metal, a high pitched *plink* as cables under high tension snap. Electrical wires sizzle: and in the room: overhead lights flicker, before dying completely. The air reeks of ozone, and Laurence looks unsettled, as he touches his gun, as if for reassurance.

His ocular implant projects a few words across the floor.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY (OCULAR IMPLANT)**

STAY QUIET. UNKNOWN ENTITY ON BOARD. LOLA AND URSA WOULD KNOW MORE. ITS BLIND.

Henri nods. He glances back towards the door, eyes wide with terror.

There's a questioning tendril, covered in black, insectile shell, segmented as it writhes underneath the gap of the door. Laurence stares at it, and then at the other exit- though the sound seems to encompass the room. He breathes out, lightly, as he inches away from it. It whiplashes out, seizing him by the ankle- and Laurence looks like he wants to scream.

He holds it in, though- as it drags him forwards, until he gets stuck against the corpse that'd been laid out in the middle of the room. Laurence fumbles in his pockets- before pulling out

his cigarette lighter, and sparking it against the corpse's hair.

It catches flame readily- the room roiling with smoke and the smell of pork crackling. The tendril lets go of his ankle, immediately seizing the corpse around the neck- and yanking furiously at it towards the south set door.

Laurence struggles to his feet- before he's nearly running for the northern one- pointing at Jessie and Henri with his fingers in the shape of a 'V', before jabbing his thumb at the door he's running towards, folding his hand down twice in a 'hurry up' gesture.

Henri looks absolutely horrified by the flaming corpse. He stands there for a moment, rooted to the spot, before the sight of the tendril snaps him out of it. He grabs Jessie by the wrist and starts to run towards the door.

Out on the circular platform, the lighthouse-like tower of the central communications hub is shielding them partially from the view of *whatever* it is that's on the other side of the column.

Laurence winces, as he examines their surroundings- the shimmying catwalk that seems so insubstantial, out in the open, or the ladder that is a sharp drop downwards.

He sets one foot down on the ladder. It's a long walk down- and with the circular hoops of metal enclosing the ladder- Laurence takes his chances.

He lets go- falling straight down, more or less- until he hooks his hands through the encircling bars of metal a little above the bottom.

That must've wrenched his shoulders- though from the superhuman reflex involved in judging the timing and grabbing the bars, it doesn't seem as if he's playing on fair grounds.

He hurriedly gets out of the way, looking back up at Jessie and Henri- before pointing at the large doors propped wide open by miscellaneous rubble that'd been shovelled up against the wall by the tendril sweeping against the floor.

Henri starts the painstaking process of climbing down the ladder. He takes the rungs two at a time, moving as quietly as he can. Henri's about half-way down when his foot slips. He falls a few rungs before catching himself, but twists his wrist painfully in the process. Henri inhales sharply, a small but damning sound.

The tendril that'd been coasting around the floor whips upwards- prying through the gaps in the cage to stroke around, fumbling blindly against Henri's face. It quests around- before jabbing hard into the left socket. Blood streams downwards, and Laurence seems agitated.

He picks up a hunk of metal from the ground, before throwing it hard against the other side of the room. It pings, bouncing between several boulders- and the tendril withdraws from the socket, whiplashing to find the source of the sound.

Laurence is chucking more rocks towards the other side of the tower- bouncing them off of more piles of rubble and debris. Whatever it is flickers back and forth, unable to decide where to focus its attention. Laurence is walking quietly towards the doors as he keeps cover, still tossing random scraps he can find on the ground.

The creature pierces his eye with a painful squelch, and Henri feels a stream of blood pouring down the side of his face. He bites down hard on his bottom lip to keep from crying out -- and is mercifully successful.

Henri starts to climb down once again, the creature having withdrawn by now. He clasps a hand over his eye when he reaches the ground, applying what pressure he can to the wound, before starting the quiet walk towards the doors.

Laurence, meanwhile, is apparently wrestling with a corpse. More like- a corpse's hand, as he pries up a small toy. He rips open the back panelling- and jabs a sliver of metal into its backing, just as he swings it overhead as far as he can.

It's a babbling doll, cheerfully chirping through her wound up lines, and thoroughly catching the creature's interest. Laurence takes one look at Henri- before scooping him up into a bridal carry, and yanking Jessie alongside him back towards the labs.

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Laurel doesn't look pleased, as she stares out the windows at them in the reception room- but after much pointed back and forth in silent gestures and Laurence threatening to bang on the doors with his fist- they're let back in.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

What are you doing here?

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

You're the ocular implant specialist, Lola- so do something about him.

Laurel pauses, walking over- though she frowns at the sight of the blood.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

What do you mean? Henri doesn't have one-

And with that, the two siblings exchange looks momentarily. Laurence puts Henri down onto a nearby bed, before wrenching his hand off to slap on a handful of the nanite goop, and lowering his palm back down onto his face again.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Where's Tom?

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

He's out, at the moment- he and Nina went to follow up on a signal they picked up on one of the scanners.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

How long will that take?

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

Long enough.

Henri looks fucking petrified, gaze flicking fearfully between the two siblings. He inhales sharply as Laurence slaps the nanite goop on, gritting his teeth and snapping:

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

A little warning, next time!

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

And you're sure that you can't preserve it?

Laurence asks, though his voice is lilting, teasing. He already knows the answer Laurel is going to give him.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

In my professional assessment- no.

She's rummaging around for tools, and Laurence is fiddling around with one of the more intact ocular implants he's scavenged from some of the corpses they've run into along the way.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Anesthetic?

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

We're out of it- the last of it was flooded into the cryotanks, to prevent ICU psychosis.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Well, I suppose we'll just have to hold him down then.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

I suppose so.

Laurence is pinning Henri down by the shoulders- as Laurel wipes clean a... melon baller. She looks down at Henri, red hair falling loose, almost touching his cheek.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

This is going to hurt. Apologies.

That's the only warning he gets- before she's sticking her fingers and the scoop into the slurry of nanite goop and the rest of his eyeball- ripping it out soundly and shoving the implant into place, the metal claw scraping and scratching until it clicks into position.

Laurence is leaning his full body weight down on Henri, to keep him pinned in place, as she goes about her work rapidly- with a smoothness that comes only with practice.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

And the interfacing, Lola?

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

You got a newer generation of implant- it'll lay itself down. Shouldn't take but a minute.

Henri lets out a blood-curdling scream as his eye is ripped from its socket-- a sound which only grows louder as the implant is shoved into place. He's thrashing wildly on the table, all the while letting out a steady stream of pleas to stop. He's never going to eat melon again.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

There, all's said and done.



Laurel withdraws, as she examines the eye, two fingers holding open his lids to shine a penlight over it.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

I do believe we're going to have to update his medical records.  
I'll get to that.

Laurence nods easily, as he continues to hold Henri down.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

On the bright side, now you won't bleed to death- and you'll be able to see. Isn't that fun? You'll like the look of them- they're mismatched, but that's some of the charm, isn't it? We can always get you some custom lenses later, if you'd like, to make the colour suit- but, my, I think it's pretty.

He's chatting as if they're at afternoon tea, smiling down at Henri vaguely.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

I can go get you a mirror, if you'll stop thrashing around. Or I can use the restraints, but I'd really rather not. What'll it be?

Henri's is still thrashing as he spits directly into Laurence's face. It's not very successful, more of a spit-spray than a spit-ball, but it certainly gets the message across. Laurence wipes his face off with one hand delicately, before dragging his palm back over Henri's face, avoiding his mouth and smearing the spit back across the- quite raw wound of his eye socket still.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Don't be a brat.

His tone is oddly parental, as he looks down at Henri.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

You don't have to look if you don't want to, yet. That'll come later, then.

Henri lets out a guttural sound. He lifts his head and bites down as hard as he can on Laurence's hand.

Laurence jerks back, swearing- blood running down the back of his knuckles.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Fuck!

Laurence grabs Henri by the collar with his other hand- and throws him onto the ground summarily, right by the lab doors. Which conveniently, lands him right in front of Tom- who still dives down to the ground to catch Henri, managing to barely catch his head before it bonks across the tiling.

**TOM WREKE**

Henri?!

Laurence is busy sticking his hand into Theodore's tank, swishing it around in the goop overtop- the bite marks closing over, as he does so.

**TOM WREKE**

Laurence, what's going on here?

On Tom's necklace, there's a new addition, beside the dog tags and cross- a little heart shaped locket. Laurence looks at Tom, shrugging.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Laurel seems to be in the habit of saving people's lives, as of late. Bizarre, I know.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

*She melon-balled my fucking eye!*

Henri is shaking violently, whether from pain or rage or some combination of both. He looks between Laurence and Laurel, pupils blown wide with panic. There is still a substantial amount of spit on his wound.

Tom looks frankly, bewildered. Nina is in the background- but one look from him, and she disappears into the other lab, closing the door behind herself.

**TOM WREKE**

Henri...

Tom's voice is tender, as he gently wipes away some of the spit above his eyebrow- afraid to touch the still livid surface of the actual socket.

**LAUREL SCORESBY**

We had to, Tom- there's no way we could have salvaged the eye.  
He would've bled to death.

Laurel's voice is steady, clear. Laurence is smiling winningly at Tom.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

Come on now- you're my favourite boy. I wouldn't cause undue harm to your favourite playthings- I didn't throw anyone from the labs out to the wilds, because I know how much they mean to Laurel. Similarly so here- he'll be fine. He'll be better than fine, once he adjusts to it.

Tom looks uneasy, shifting so that he's sort of cradling Henri closer to him, as if to keep Laurel and Laurence away from his body.

**TOM WREKE**

I'm going to clean him up. You two... you two stay here.

Laurel looks surprised- but Laurence only nods, putting a hand on his sister's shoulder, and squeezing tight.

**LAURENCE SCORESBY**

You do that, honey.

Laurence's tone is dulcet, but he's smiling in that peculiar way again- the light never quite touching his eyes. He and Laurel begin cleaning up the mess they've made- the eyeball remnants getting tossed casually by Laurence into a nearby trash bin.

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Tom carries Henri off into the room with Nina- who clears out of it as they approach, shutting herself into the Aquaponics room.

He's still cradling him against his chest with one arm, as he wheels out a stretcher- plopping one of the thin mattresses from the beds on top of it, a pillow flopped down awkwardly on the top, before he's setting Henri down on top. There's another pillow, this one offered to him to hold onto- and a blanket that Tom gently tucks him in with.

The nanite goop is dulling sensation- as Tom takes a little wet hand cloth to wipe the spit, touch impossibly light as he does so, before gently scrubbing off the blood encrusting Henri's face.

Henri clutches the pillow like a lifeline, and tries to stay still as Tom starts to scrub the blood from his face. He's mostly successful -- save for the odd twitch or grimace of pain, he doesn't move.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Thank you. I'm sorry you had to see that.

Henri's voice is still raw from screaming when he speaks. He sounds uncharacteristically small.

**TOM WREKE**

It's alright. Don't worry.

Tom doesn't seem to have very much to say, as he continues to gently wipe Henri's face clean. When he's done, he sets the cloth down into a bucket of water on the counter.

He hesitates for a moment, before smoothing Henri's bangs out of his face, drawing his hand back quickly, and looking away: as if he doesn't have the right to do what he's done.

**TOM WREKE**

You'll be okay.

The reassurance sounds unsure in of itself, before Tom is wheeling the stretcher back into the oncall room he took the mattress from.

**TOM WREKE**

Do you... Would you rather be alone, right now?

Tom asks, hesitating by the doorway, one hand holding onto it as he leans his weight against the wall, much like Nina had when coming out to shout at Henri before their excursion out.

Henri looks relieved, for a moment, despite the bone-deep exhaustion set heavy in his expression. But then Tom is going to leave, and he's started shaking again.

It's not as violent as before, but Henri clutches the pillow tighter, digging his nails into the fabric as he mutters a quiet:

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

No.

He hesitates to even look at Tom, though he does. Henri knows he's asking a lot.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I really don't want to be alone right now, and I'd feel safer if you stayed.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

If that's asking too much, that's fine-- I get it.

When Henri starts to shake- Tom reaches a hand out, to lightly lay it on top of his shoulder, trying to comfort him.

He looks horrified by his impulse, drawing his hand away- as if he's been bitten.

**TOM WREKE**

I- I'll sit on the other side of the room. I won't leave you.

Tom swallows, before he's doing just that, climbing on top of the bunk bed to sit on top- he's too tall to sit down in the bottom bunk without banging his head on the metal slats.

He looks abjectly miserable for a moment, as he digs around in the sheets- and pries out a book.

It's Laurel's copy of Wuthering Heights- and he holds it close to him for a moment, like a child holding onto a stuffed animal- before he cracks the spine of the book open.

He smooths the pages down with one broad palm, and lays it flat over his knees, legs dangling off of the side of the bed.

**TOM WREKE**

It's okay. You can sleep. I won't go.

Tom's voice is low, sad- roughened at the edges, like he's trying not to cry.

He rubs his fingers over the print on the page, as if to ground himself.

The realization that he won't be left alone seems to be enough of a reassurance, because Henri's managed to stop shaking.

He looks away as Tom draws back, muttering a quiet:

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Thank you.

Henri lets his head fall back against the pillow. He stares up at the ceiling for a moment before he closes his eyes, trying to calm down.

His breathing evens out after a bit.

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