

## Chapter 5

Sandy tied the laces of her boots and jumped to her feet, grabbing her new jacket from the bed. She smiled happily as she looked at herself in the mirror pressing a small hidden button in one of the pockets. At first glance it appeared to be just a simple short, cute jacket, but she giggled as she changed the color to blue, then squeezed it again and turned it into a beautiful purple. Technology absolutely fascinated and entertained her. She was determined to find out how it actually worked, but for now she had to settle for one of the colors as she hurried to the control room. The one thing that excited her more than the color-changing jacket was today's trip to the new alien planet of Doongoon.

"Moorning!" she chirped as she walked in.

Doctor was already at the console working out coordinates with Yaz.

"Morning babe" Yaz gave her a little waive and a big smile

"Oh morning Sandy" Doctor turned with a smile "Don't you look nice today"

"Awww...Thank you Doctor...well you always look nice yourself"

"Aaaaa thanks...I'm a bit paler than usual for the last three years"

Yaz frowned as she lifted her head from the console, but ended up laughing at the Doctor's stupid comment. Most of the time she didn't find anything funny in jokes about the Doctor being a hollo, which was also something the Doctor rather conveniently joked about all the time and she just wanted to gag her for the biggest part of it.

"Doctor....what color is my jacket?"

"Lilac...Isn't it obvious Sandy?"

"Wait...not really...." she said and pressed the hidden button "And now?"

"Aaaaa....liquid crystal paint! " Doctor jumped "Those are fun...yellow"

"Hmmm...it's interesting that you can see the same colors as I do"

"Of course I can....Why wouldn't I?...I'm not color blind you know"

"Oh...Nooooo....didn't think you were...not that it would be anything wrong if you were....It's just that...you're an alien"

"So?" she frowned

"Well...I was just wondering....the light is made up of wavelengths of light, and each wavelength is a particular color. The color we see is a result of which wavelengths are reflected back to our eyes. So, I wondered if aliens see different colors as their eyes are different than humans...You know like animals.... And I did not mean that as in comparing you an animal...."

"Aaaaa....very smart Sandy...that's an interesting theory.... See Yaz...told you she was smart" she leaned over the console smug

Yaz frowned shaking her head "I know she's smart...Alright coordinates set. I really hope this isn't another zombie apocalypse"

"Not this place Yaz....Doongoon is one of the most beautiful places in the universe...You're gonna love it"

"I'll remember this" she glanced at her with a smile strapping herself in "Sandy"

"Yes?" she hopped across the room

"Sit down babe...Don't want you falling"

"Aaa sure...sorry got distracted by thinking about those liquid crystals....You gotta tell me more about those Doctor"

"Sure Sandy...I'd be happy to...." she smiled satisfied

They landed and Doctor jumped across as they came to the door. "This is exciting.... You're gonna love it...This is one of the places I always wanted to take you Yaz. Just never got around to it"

Yaz looked at her sadly and brushing her hand through hers lovingly. "Well...you are now" she smiled

"Suppose so" she shrugged sadly

"Wooooow..." Yaz's jaw fell open as the door opened up

They stepped right into the dense forest, and this wasn't just any forest, as Yaz and Sandy gasped stepping outside. They found themselves surrounded by tall trees, the sheer size of which suggested they were very old. Their white bark was as smooth as glass, and their leaves were absolutely transparent, revealing every capillary. They reminded Yaz of skeletal leaves from a school project.

"Holly bananas" Sandy gasped looking up into a canopy

"Trees technically" Doctor smiled "Told ya....Stunning isn't it?"

"This is amazing" Yaz smiled towards the Doctor

"I can't believe this is real" Sandy said "OMG look" she said as her gaze fell to the forest floor, which was covered in carpet-like alien moss.

"Waaaaw....the leaves Look....OMG..." Yaz smiled

"That looks super soft....I just wanna take off my shoes and run around barefoot" Sandy said excited and knelt wanting to brush her palm over it.

"Don't touch it!" Doctor jumped and instinctively wanted to grab her wrist, but her hand went right through her

"Oh" Sandy frowned confused

"I did that once...." The Doctor said "I wouldn't recommend it. It can get pretty itchy"

"Oh noo"

"It releases chemicals similar to nettles"

"Wooooow...Is it dangerous?" Yaz asked concerned

"No...just very uncomfortable Yaz...But further down it's ok" she pointed

"Maybe we should get going" Yaz said reaching for Sandy's hand pulling her up "Shame it's so beautiful" she looked around mesmerized

"Aaaaaa....look...bug...Look at that bug" Sandy jumped excited looking at fluffy creature with massive purple wings resting on one of the trees

"Actually that's not insect Sandy"

"But It looks like a dragon fly" she asked confused

"Well...sometimes things are not what they appear to be" Doctor said coming close and they both followed her utterly confused "See..." she leaned over

"Nooooo way" Yaz leaned closer "Is that mechanical?"

"Yes it is Yaz...Beautiful craftsmanship isn't it?...They know we're here" Doctor smiled

"Who knows?" Sandy frowned

"They do" she pointed up towards the small mound to their left where two women stood tall watching them

"Doctor?"

"Aaaaa....how did you know?" She hoped excited towards them

"We've had news you will be coming. Although we did expect you in person"

"Well...that's a bit complicated at the moment...Anyways...nice to see you again. Its been a long time. This is Yaz and Sandy..Girls meet Arina and Halia"

"Hello, very nice to meet to Yaz and Sandy"

"Hello" the girls waived

Sandy couldn't keep her eyes off the beautiful dresses they wore, layers of sheer green fabric that flowed down to the forest floor, and Yaz kept looking at their long black braided hair decorated with tiny beads and ribbons that fell over their shoulders almost to their waists. Their smooth caramel skin with a slight shimmer left her speechless. Both carried long silver spears engraved with an intriguing swirling pattern. One of the two women, Arina, had her left arm tattooed with leaves and flowers from wrist to shoulder, and Yaz wondered why. Was it just a decoration or a symbol of her status.

"So, I hope things are going well for you since the war ended?" Doctor chatted away as they followed them through the forest

"Very well Doctor, we extended the city since and recovered our fields again. God's have been gracious to us"

"I'm very happy to hear that"

"Where is your Tardis Doctor? You left us confused coming with one of our ships"

"Yes, weeeell...long story...not good news I'm afraid, and very complicated situation. We have to talk"

"I see...I hope it served you well at least?"

"Needs some work I hope you don't mind us keeping it for the time being"

"Not at all if it helps"

"Thank you...I really appreciate it....Actually...you might be able to help in that department"

"We be happy to Doctor" Arina said

"You alright there?" Yaz turned as Sandy fell behind

"Mmmm...I feel a bit dizzy" she said faintly

Yaz paused and with one look at Sandy she knew something was wrong. She looked pale, her cheeks were flushed and her eyes glistened as if she were in a fever

"Doctooooor!"

"Yes Yaz" she turned over her shoulder

"I don't think she's ok" she said as she held Sandy's hand "She's shaking"

"Oh boy" Doctor hopped across "Let me see...Sandy could you possibly lift up your t-shirt for me"

"Sure" she said weakly and lifted the front of it exposing her tummy

"OMG...what's that?" Yaz asked worried

Her belly was covered in small round freckles of rash

"Mmmm...thought so"

"Uuu...she's got bitten by Axilo" Arina said

"Whaaa?" Yaz asked panicky

"Nothing to worry Yaz, it's similar to a mosquito, a bit uncomfortable until you get used to it. She might be a bit feverish till tomorrow morning"

"We have some remedies that will help" Arina said "Don't worry about it"

"Well Yaz...looks like we will be staying over night" Doctor said "I don't think you will be able to walk back today...I'm so sorry Sandy"

"That's alright..." she said pulling her t-shirt down

"Buuuut on a happier note...You'll get to see this place properly..." she smiled

"That's nice" Sandy smiled

"Let's get moving before the night falls" Arina said "It's not that long to go, whiles she can still walk"

"She's gonna be fine, right?" Yaz whispered to the Doctor

"Of course she is...seriously Yaz, it looks worse than it is...I've had it 3 times...First time I passed out in a forest and I woke up in a bed next morning, I didn't know where I was "

"You were crawling on a forest floor when we found you, mumbling how you have to repair the thrusters" Halia chuckled

"It was embarrassing" Doctor laughed

As they slowly progressed through the forest Sandy was getting weaker and leaning against Yaz struggling to walk.

But they arrived at what appeared to be the end of the wooded path just as it began to become dark. Yaz noticed Doctor coming to a halt at what appeared to be the end of the route before the forest floor plunged to the valley below. She smiled as she turned to face her.

"Look Yaz!" She moved excitedly to the side reveling city concealed in the woodland valley below. Small dwellings clinging to tree trunks reminded Yaz of those bizarre mushrooms that grow on the sides of tree trunks back home.

They were linked by stairs and hanging bridges that were illuminated by hundreds of spherical lanterns.

"Wooooow" she gasped "Sandy...look" she smiled

"Are we in Rivendell?" She asked dazed smiling as her half opened eyes struggled to look around

"Ammm...not really" Yaz giggled

"Yaz darling" Doctor came closer "I don't think she's gonna be able to go down there herself" she pointed to the stairs

"Nope...I don't think she will" she said leaning over the railing looking down "C'mere banana" Yaz said "wrap you arms around my shoulders as tight as you can"

"Nooo... can't carry me Yaz...it's alright I can do this myself"

"No you can't. Not really...come on banana...you're tiny we can do this...I'm not having you roll down cause that would be really embarrassing" she laughed as she moved in front of her and lifted her up on her back, gripping both of her legs just below her knees. "Here we go...see...no big deal...Comfy?" she smiled over her shoulder

"Yap" she smiled and kissed her cheek tightening her arms around her

Sandy was barely awake by the time they got to the bottom, clenching her arms around her with the last of her strength inside, her head sank to Yaz's shoulder as fever blazed through her, she was shaking and cold.

They were taken to one of the houses, which had a small wooden bed in one corner and a simple round table with a few chairs next to a round window, wooden shelves on the walls filled with pots and herbs, the walls which appeared to be made of some sort of clay or stone, just like their ship, and woven mats covering the floors. It was comfortable and warm. The soft light of the bubble lantern cast a lovely glow throughout.

She laid Sandy on the bed while Doctor chatted with a few more folks gathered on a small bridge in front of the door. She could only hear soft murmurs from outside, but she didn't care at this point, her thoughts were on Sandy, who was helplessly lying next to her. Yaz shifted strands of wet hair that were sticking to her flushed face, She was too hot to touch and Yaz worried. She wanted to kiss her blushing cheeks, shower her face with her lips and tell her everything would be alright, tell her she's got this. But she would be lying through her teeth as she was at a loss for what to do, feeling helpless and anxious, hating every minute of how she felt.

She ended up stroking her small fingers, which looked so dainty in her hand. A head shorter than her, like some small porcelain doll that may break, Sandy always seemed frail and vulnerable to her. It was a stupid concept and felt almost insulting to think of her in such way, but Yaz couldn't help it. She brushed her thumb over her hand and her knuckles gently over her hot cheek.

"Heeey...how is she doing?" Doctor whispered as she came back inside

"Heey" she turned worried out of her mind "She's really bad" then took a sonic out and zoomed over her "Look" she showed worried

"Fever...very high temperature but its normal Yaz...I know it looks scary...I know it is scary for you now. But I assure you, she will be fine by the morning. They will bring some medicine now. You need to keep her fever down Yaz....Get her out of the clothes, keep her warm and comfortable, put some wet towel on her head"

"Alright" she nodded

"I have something I need to do...There's someone I have to find....I'll be back in a bit"

"Alright..." she nodded "Heeey" she called her as she was about to leave

"Yes darling?"

"How did you ever cope? You know.... having all of us to worry about"

Doctor went back inside and sat next to her on a bed. Or more hovered to be precise

pretending she was sitting. It was kind of silent agreement they had between each other. She always made a point of moving as natural as she possibly could making at least that bit easier on Yaz.

"Have faith in yourself Yaz...We all make mistakes...I have, you will...it's a part of life, as long you learn from them and do your best...be the best of yourself always"

"I never knew...I never thought about it...how hard this is...was...you know back then for you" she looked down

"Look at me Yaz" Doctor said softly and she lifted her gaze back at her "You were all worth every minute of it...Specially you...look at you Yaz...With your own ship, saving the universe...I'm so proud of you"

"But I'm not like you....I'm so weak...Look at this...I was fine in UNIT...but this...It's pathetic" she said as tears rolled down her face

"Nooooo..." Doctor nodded her head "Oh nooo...you are mistaking love for weakness Yaz...We are all weak when faced with love but we are also the strongest when we have to be" she wrapped her fingers around her face and Yaz wanted so desperately to lean into them "I have to go...I have to speak to some people"

"Alright...I love you"

"I love you too"

"Butterflies" Sandy mumbled and they both burst out laughing

"OMG" Yaz laughed "Poor thing"

"Go get her comfortable...see you sharpish"

"See ya" she waived as she left the house and sighed deeply turning her gaze at Sandy "Right banana...let's get you sorted" she got up and got to work.

She removed most of the clothes from Sandy leaving her in her underwear and t-shirt then wrapped her up in a blanket. A man knocked on a door carrying a tray with food.

"Hello" Yaz smiled

"Hello, excuse the intrusion. Here is some food for yourself and a nice soup for your friend" he said placing a tray on a table "Also... " he reached into the pocket of his tunic "Wet this in the water and place it on her wrists. It will bring down the fever" he said passing her what to Yaz resembled Nori Seaweed

"Thank you so much"



The man bowed in respect and left.

"Here we go" she placed the wet leaves on her wrists and stroke her cheek. She was still hot, and she still felt helpless sitting on the edge of the bed mapping every inch of Sandy's face under the soft light, studding every line, every little adorable freckle. She kept her thumb on her forehead stroking it gently hoping she could feel her presence as she looked like she was having a bad dream.

"Let's hope this works ha" she said as if Sandy could hear her.

Maybe she could, or she was just doing it to kill time. Or perhaps she was just doing it because the stillness of the room was driving her nuts and she kept thinking of death. Why was she thinking of death she wasn't sure, but she was. Or how this trip wasn't such a good idea after all. Maybe staying on Earth was better, maybe she shouldn't play the hero and she was just pretending to be the Doctor. Maybe the whole thing just got into her head too much and she should have a word with herself because saving universe was more than owning a ship and the sonic. She wasn't sure of anything anymore except for the fact that Sandy was lying in a bed ill in the middle of some far away planet two days after she almost got killed on the other god forsaken planet and that if she continues in this pace it isn't going to end well.

"You better get better you know" she whispered "Cause I need you...I can't do this on my own. Who's gonna make me laugh, or make those killer pancakes or butter popcorn, and bring me coffee each morning"

She was stroking her thumb over her wrist "...I'm shit at cooking you know that...Remember when I made us both ill trying to make that curry you wanted" she chuckled "Also... I still don't know how to use that replicator...Not to mention I'm completely dumb as fuck when it comes to computers"

"That curry was horrid" Sandy said faintly with small smile

"Heeeey you" she smiled "Welcome back"

"Are we in Rivendell?" she said opening her eyes

"Yes we are" she chuckled and quickly wiped a tear from her face

Sandy reached for her hand hooking her finger to hers on a mattress. It made Yaz's heart jump, and she squeezed her fingers around hers tighter.

"Hey...I got some nice soup for you.... Well not sure if it's nice I haven't tried but it smells nice. And I didn't make it so I think you're pretty safe"

"Soup sounds nice" she smiled as their fingers slowly untangled when Yaz got up

"It's good I have decent nickers on" she giggled looking underneath the covers

"Wasn't paying attention I promise" Yaz smiled as she was getting the tray from the table  
"Sorry about that, had to get you comfy"

"That's alright...How long was I out?"

"About four hours"

"Jeeeezzz" she said shifting to sit up

"Wait" Yaz grabbed some pillows and showed them behind her back "Better?"

"Yeaaaah"

"Here you go...I think it got cold by now"

"That's fine" she looked towards the table "And you?...Did you eat?"

"Wasn't hungry"

"Why don't you eat something now. I hate eating alone"

"Suppose I could"

"You should" she smiled "Go on...go get it...looks nice. Where's your friend?"

"She went to speak with locals. I suppose to explain why we have their ship and where is the missing owner"

"Are they upset?"

"No" she nodded "More confused, I think. It's a strange place. Look, the walls are like on a ship, and that thing on a wall like in my bedroom"

"That's a heater by the way...or cooler....it can be both" Sandy laughed

"Are fucking kidding me?"

"Nope..." Sandy laughed "What did you think it was?"

"Dunno"

"And I'm supposed to be the one first time traveling with a spaceship" she shook her head laughing

"Oi...I can fly it"

"I'm sure I can learn" Sandy lifted her eyebrow

"Cocky Minion"

"Banana" she giggled

"Is the soups nice?"

"Not really" she laughed "Your food?"

"Not really...wanna try?" She offered some roll that tasted like bad sushi and Sandy took a bite making a face

"Ewww...Now I understand why Doctor changed the program on a food replicator"

"Thank god" Yaz laughed "Or I would park at the first McDonald's"

"Yaz" Sandy said and hooked her finger at hers again.

"Mmmmm?" she mumbled looking down at her plate. Or something...it wasn't really a plate. More like a tray, and why was she now thinking what it was like that's even important. But for some idiotic reason she was then she looked towards their fingers and wanted to keep them tangled like that for a considerable time.

"Thank you..."

"For what?" she said clearing her throat which was suddenly getting dry.

"Taking care of me"

"That's alright" she looked up "Don't be silly...You look tired"

"I am...Still not myself to be honest"

"Get some sleep" she said moving her hand. She didn't want to, but it seemed silly not to, she also had to in order to move the trays. And Sandy missed it when she did, but Yaz got up and took a tray back to the table.

"You should rest..." she said coming back to the bed

"What about you?" Sandy grabbed her hand again. She wasn't holding it properly, instead she was seamlessly threading Yaz's fingers through hers in an almost playful manner sending tingles down Yaz's spine. This made her feel embarrassed, half wondering if it was

showing on her face. She had felt this way more and more often in the last few days and she wasn't sure if she would be able to hide it much longer, neither from Sandy nor from herself. That scared her, but recently she was giving in to it and it was a very bad idea.

"I will...later. I have to wait for the Doctor....Don't worry about it" she said releasing her hand. Then bend over placing a tiny kiss to her forehead.

"Right...of course.... Arrrh...Yaz"

"Yes?" she turned at the door

"Are you staying here or...." she felt stupid asking but she wasn't sure about the sleeping arrangements. Not that it mattered, because it didn't. But she didn't want it to sound like it did and she wasn't sure if that's how it came across.

"I suppose so...I didn't think that far ahead to be honest"

"That's alright...we can share...I hope I don't snore" she giggled "But I do move around..."

"I don't know what my name is once I fall asleep so don't worry about it" she laughed "I'll be outside if you need something"

"Thank you nurse Khan" she giggled snuggling into bed

Yaz laughed shaking her head and walked outside. There was a small chair on the balcony, and she sat down, closing her eyes with relief after everything. Part of her wanted to move on, but there was a part of her that was content to stay there for a while, a few days, or a week just to run or hide, she wasn't sure. She hasn't taken a vacation since she left the Tardis. Her job was her escape from her messed up mind and she was very aware of that. She was doing this a lot, escaping. Buried in her work and venting her frustration through meaningless sex with women whose names she couldn't remember in the morning. Doctor was aware, though it was never mentioned, if it had, she would have died on the spot from shame. But she knew, because that would be the only time Yaz wouldn't call for her at night, and Doctor would give her the sweetest smile and be especially kind the next day, adding to her shame.

As each muscle in her body finally relaxed, she felt tired. Forest smelt sweet and fresh, and she relaxed as she listened to the noises of the night. The chirping of some birds or insects soothed and lulled her to sleep. Nobody was around at this point, she figured the majority of the residents were already asleep, and she wasn't sure what hour it was, but it seemed late.

"Yaz" whispering woke her up and she jolted in a chair "It's alright...it's just me" Doctor said hovering above her

"Shit...I fell asleep"

"Yes you have"

"What time is it?"

"Late...how is Sandy?"

"Better, her fever dropped...she ate some soup then went back to sleep"

"Brilliant....I should go...you should go. Get some rest"

"Nooo....tell me... what happened? Where did you go?" she frowned

"It's alright...just making few arrangements that's all. Had a lot of explaining to do why we came on their ship. And what happened to the owner.... that bit not being so pleasant, but it had to be said. You can keep the ship"

"Whaaaa?"

"Well, I do have contacts you know..." she smugged "Well, that and the fact that they want to prevent another genocide, they also feel responsible since it was one of their own people involved into it all. Anyways, we need to stay for at least one more day..."

"Why? I have to get back...I have to move on, Kate will lose her shit on me. We have that train to find"

"Relax Yaz, it's a time ship...wibbly wobbly timey wimey. Nobody's gonna know. Besides I arranged for the ship to be fixed"

"I didn't think it needed fixing?"

"Everything needs fixing Yaz....Just making sure it's safe that's all. Also...it be nice for you to see this place.... always wanted to take you here"

"You said that"

"I have..." she said looking around "C'mere" she nodded

"Whaaaa?"

"Come...." Doctor stepped down to the stairs and reached her hand out "Let's take a walk"

"What? Why?"

"Cause the night is beautiful...and I wanna show you something"

She rolled her eyes with a smile and followed her down the stairs to forest floor

"Where are you taking me?"

"You'll see" she said

They strolled through the darkness between the trees and the moss-covered enormous roots. The moths in this area glowed like fireflies in the dark, and their wings glowed in a variety of colors. They walked along the stone path for quite some time.

"This place is so beautiful, what's that glittering stuff in the barks of the trees?"

"Minerals from the soil, they get crystallized on the surface"

"Waaaaaw...I will never know all this stuff like you do"

"Maybe not all of it Yaz, but you will know a lot. Nobody knows everything, I just know more simply because I lived longer not because I'm smarter"

"Still, I wish I knew all that you do"

"Here we are...Look Yaz," the Doctor said as she stood in front of the little lake, passing through the stone arches at the end of the path. The pure blue clean water glistened in the night sky, while cascades of miniature waterfalls shone in the dark deeper down in the forest.

"OMG! Yaz's eyes widened at the site "That's so beautiful"

"Wonderful isn't it...look Yaz, you can see the fish...they are sleeping"

"Waaaaaw... they huddled together"

"It's a very special place Yaz, local people believe it's a passage between their world and the next one"

"Is it?"

"Nooo" she smiled "but a long time ago a temporal rift opened up caused by disturbance in the planets magnetic field"

"Oh" she laughed

They sat on the water's edge. Doctor's little hollo feet dangled from the edge next to Yaz's dipped in the water. Something about that cut to the core of her being. She wanted to put her head on her shoulder, she longed to clasp her hand, every moment they shared now was suddenly tinged with sadness, but she was grateful to have her. It was far from what

her heart desired, far from anything she could have dreamed back then, but that small bit of her glitching existence was hers forever, and it was something.

Doctor's eyes floated in quiet as the surface of the water rippled from small oxygen bubbles emerging from the lake's bottom. She wanted to bring Yaz here, she wanted kiss Yaz here a long time ago. A trip that never took place, a kiss that never was, a life that came to an end with no warning, no future to come. The edges of her lips twitched as she palmed her hand on the velvety moss, her fingers glitching as preceptors became overwhelmed with emotions. They still had this moment, and she was storing it in her memory. She wondered whether her other self could feel it, and while she knew it wasn't possible, there was a part of her that desired they could. It was the only part of herself she had. It seemed bizarre that the very part which gave her life was the only part of herself she despised the most. That aspect which came at a cost of pain and loss. As if the universe is balancing itself. She turned to face Yaz, her long gorgeous lashes and big brown eyes usually wide open in awe, but the spark had withered away with time, gradually being replaced by grief, sorrow, and regret eating away at her. She saw tear rolling down her cheek

"Yaz" Doctor said faintly as her eyes turned to the lake

"Mmmmm"

She looked at her softly "It's alright darling..."

"No its not...it's never gonna be alright"

"Darling...look at me"

She turned with sigh and exhaled with a whimper of pain from the bottom of her soul

"If you keep looking at the cup as half empty you will never be able to enjoy a part that is half full

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"You can't keep pretending you don't see"

"I don't understand what you're talking about"

"Yes you do...I need you to be happy..."

"Hooooow?" she crumbled in tears "I don't know how anymore"

"By listening to your heart darling, it's telling you all this time but you need to be brave. The answer is right there" she said softly brushing her fingers over her face and Yaz closed her eyes imagining the touch "She loves you Yaz, but your moment is now, don't miss it or someone else will recognize what you're refusing to see and it will be too late darling"

"Stooooop..."

"Noooo....not this time I won't....Do not repeat my mistakes"

"Oh fuck..." she looked up to the sky as tears streamed down her face

"C'mere" she said gently and Yaz lied down on a velvety moss closing her eyes "It's alright Yaz..." she said with a softest voice as her glitching hand stroke her hair and the words of familiar song lulled her into sleep.

"Yaz" a voice came from a far "Wake up darling"

"Ha?" she opened her eyes

"It's late....you need to go...I need to go. Tomorrow is a long day, loads to do"

"Alright" she nodded and got up

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She quietly entered the room, trying not to wake Sandy, who had fallen asleep and left her clothes on a chair then climbed silently into bed and turned to face the wall. She was physically and mentally drained, yet there was a sensation of tranquility inside her that she hadn't felt in a long time, and it was pleasant. Sandy mumbled and flattened herself into Yaz's back, her face tucked between her shoulder blades, and Yaz suddenly found it difficult to breathe as her entire body stiffened. A tiny hot breath blew through the fabric of her t-shirt, her ears straining to hear every sound, and suddenly a small hand shifted resting on her back just below her shoulder, the warmth of her body felt soothing, her chest rising against her spine almost overwhelming, in some strange way exactly what she needed, and she felt herself slowly melting into it. After a while exhaustion took over her, eyes becoming heavy and she feel asleep.

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She woke up alone, the sun was shining through the round window and a curtain of light falling over the freshly prepared breakfast waiting on the table. Her pillow still smelled of Sandy, it was strange to smell it. Part of her wanted to drown in it, store it in the back of her mind because it felt soothing, loving, and came with a sense of happiness. It was too much to feel the first moment she opened her eyes as it mixed with the heavy emotions that were still simmering from last night. She hadn't turned off the hollo last night. She didn't want to, it felt cruel and strange to do it anyway and she hated it when she had to. It was one part of this strange concept that made it even stranger, like she was putting the Doctor in her back pocket with the sonic and the thought of that always gave her chills because it reminded her of the lack of life that came with it. She ran her palm over the sheets and pulled the duvet



over her face.

"Mooooorning sunshine" Sandy's voice above her head made her jump screaming

"Fucking shit Sandy!!!" she moved the duvet laughing

"Sorry" she giggled

"I nearly glued to the ceiling you silly sod....Well you seem better"

"I am...thanks to the nurse Khan last night"

"You scared the shit out of nurse Khan last night...Can you please stop getting into trouble I'm losing my life span here"

"I'm sorry..." she laughed "I'm usually allergic to bugs....so I probably reacted a bit off more than an average person would...By the way" she bounced on the edge of the bed "You talk in your sleep"

"Oh god" she covered her face with a duvet again

"I was hoping to hear something juicy but don't worry, couldn't understand shit...Did get dulek...dilek...something like that"

Yaz pissed herself laughing under the duvet "Dalek you dope " she moved the duvet laughing her head off "Dilek....aaaaa" she couldn't stop laughing "I have to say this one to the Doctor...Anyway...and yooou snuggle"

"Oh noooo..." she grabbed the pillow and shoved her face in it "Im soooooorry....I doooo"

"And I don't mean a little snuggle...you're like a full on limpet..."

"Oh god....Shoot me pleeease....this is so embarrassing"

"It's not...I'm not complaining" she pulled the pillow off her face "It's cute...as it goes I needed a cuddle last night. It was nice"

"It was?" she blew hair of her face "Still feel like having a paper bag over my face"

"Don't...seriously its so cute"

"I'm used to sleeping with someone, that bit is still hard since I got divorced....It's stupid really, it's been three years"

"Do you miss her?"

"That's the strange part...no" she got up and grabbed the tray from the table bringing it to Yaz "Here...try...breakfast is actually surprisingly nice. Anyways...Felt like a failure when I left but then I felt freedom like never before. I was finally being myself.... Does that make any sense?"

"Yes...absolutely...mmmm...it is nice...want some? I can't eat all that"

"Mmmm...I might steal a bit...I felt so squished by her...she was suffocating me. Everything was fine only when it fitted what she wanted to do...and I mean everything Yaz. Then UNIT opportunity came up and working for UNIT...It was like nothing else...it was my ultimate dream...I wasn't gonna give that up.... I don't regret it Yaz. I never will..."

"Nobody should squish your dreams, that's not partnership...Also...I'm totally selfish here, but I'm glad you left. Don't know what I'd do without you" she smiled

"Yaaaz...you're gonna make me cry now...That's the nicest thing you ever said to me" she leaned over and quickly kissed her cheek

"Morning" Doctor smiled from the door "Am I intruding? Cause if I am I can come back"

"Of course not...don't be silly" Yaz smiled "Come in"

"Uuu... I love those" she looked at the tray "Arrrrr...I really miss my food"

"Heeey...is it done?" Sandy asked excited

"Is what done?" Yaz asked confused

Doctor put her hands in her pockets swinging her hips side to side with a smug face

"What have you two been up to that I'm not aware off?" Yaz asked looking at both of them. Sandy was smiling silly looking at the Doctor not saying anything "Go on...spit it out?"

"Well....go get dressed and we're gone show you" Doctor said turning on her heel and disappearing behind the door

"Saaandy?" Yaz turned to her with a cheeky smile

"Nooo" she got off the bed giggling

"Banana" she grabbed her wrist pulling her back "What are you hiding?"

"My lips are sealed" she giggled putting her hand over her mouth

"I'll tickle you until you tell me" she said squeezing her cheeks between her fingers

"Mmmmm" she nodded trying to get away but Yaz pulled her back "Not fair....huge breach of confidence with the Doctor" she yelled

Yaz started laughing like crazy "OMG...seriously?"

"Mmmmm" she nodded "It's the Doctor Yaz"

"Stars Sandy....She's not that dangerous" she giggled "Alright...I let you off the hook this time" she got up laughing "Pleaseeee tell me"

"Noooooo....go get dressed...Oh...I brought your toiletries from the ship...and bathroom is here by the way" she waived her hand in front of the stone wall by the bed and suddenly the door slid open revealing the bathroom similar to the one they had on a ship

"Now you're just being cocky" Yaz giggled

"Maybe" she smiled smug and hopped outside

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"Where are we going?" She asked as Sandy dragged her hand across the bridges and down the steps. Suddenly, she spotted loads of people going around, children laughing as they played in the trees and hung from the ropes. Then something flew over their heads, and they looked up to see the small craft flying through the air. They looked like Green June beetles, and it took her a while to get her head around the sight.

"I know, right..." Sandy said elated "Isn't it amazing....This place is like a land of fairies Yaz...I swear they are fairies....I have to ask the Doctor"

"That's just insane" she looked at another craft passing by then she was being pulled again by Sandy and she had to look down again if she didn't was to land on her face

"Here we go" she pointed to the clearing in front of them

"Whaaa? What's our ship doing here?"

"They brought it in the morning Yaz...they've been working on it since dawn, but they are incredibly fast...It's amazing to watch"

"Doing what?"

"Heeey Yaz" Doctor waived from the ship "C'mere....you're gonna love this"

"OMG. What did she do?" She laughed coming down the steps

"I swear I didn't say anything" Sandy said

"She really didn't" Yaz confirmed "Doctor what's going on here?"

"Go on..." she nodded towards the door "Have a peak..."

"Alright" she smiled as she passed next to her and stepped inside "Aaaaaaahhhh...Ooooh good..." she gasped and put her hand over her mouth standing frozen at the site

"Like it?" Doctor smiled lovingly

She turned to her, tears ran down her face as she was trying to get the words out of her mouth "You didn't?"

"I did..." she nodded smiling "Well....they did...I just gave instructions" she said softly "Go on...have a look"

Yaz took a slow step her eyes floating around as her breath become stuck in her throat. It was Tardis control room which surrounded her from all the sides or at least it looked like it, only this one was made out of the same material as the ship was originally. A control panel in the center and a tall ceiling above her head, the same stone walls as before, the same dome above her head, but it was her Tardis, a space that felt like home. A place which spoke to her heart and soul, and as she moved closer to the console, her vision became more obscured from tears. She brushed her trembling hand over the controls, they too were as close to what she knew. Stone-looking pillars spanned above the console over her head, and soft light lit the controls.

Doctor came up behind her swinging proudly with her hands in her pockets "It's different...couldn't get everything right...Still that badge..." she said looking around "Not sure I like it...It's a bit bland...Has Galifreyan on the edge of the stairs though....Rooms are that way...not as big as Tardis and I'm afraid there's no library. But there's a nice living room at the back with loads of shelving units, I'm sure you're gonna fill them up quickly" she pointed "And there's also this" she pointed to the pedal on the floor

"Oh god" Yaz looked at her absolutely falling apart by this point

"It's not custard cream but Sandy said they don't taste that bad" she giggled

"I adore you," Yaz murmured, her heart breaking as all she wanted to do was hold her as tightly as she could.

"I bloody hope so!...This wasn't easy to pull off all things considered" she said smug

Yaz shook her head, laughing through tears "You beautiful amazing dork" she said wiping her cheeks "I love you so much"

"I love you too...Wanna see the best part?"

"Sure"

"Here...press that Yaz...and turn this wheel, then flip those" she said

The machine made the buzzing sound then went quiet again "Right...what did I just do?"  
Yaz asked confused

"Holly bananas!!!!!" Sandy could be heard outside "It worked, Doctor!!!" she yelled, and Yaz turned to face the entrance, then blinked confused, as the ramp vanished, to be replaced by two wooden, very familiar doors.

"Nooo...noooo waaaay!!!" Yaz's eyes opened wide, and she ran outside

"Final touch" Doctor said smug from the door

"It's red?" Yaz said confused looking at red telephone box

"Whaaaa?" Doctor frowned and hopped outside "Ooooh" she scrunched her nose  
"Well...guess Tarids has a copyright Yaz" she shrugged "Still looks nice I suppose"

"It is..." she laughed her head off "So it has a chameleon circuit?"

"No Yaz...morphing system.... Similar but not the same...This works more as a perception filter, so you still need to be aware of its size from the outside.... It has its limitations darling it will never be the Tardis....but it's as close as we could get to it."

"It's perfect" she smiled "Absolutely perfect."

"What are we gonna call it?" Sandy asked making them laugh.

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"You do realize I will have to give this ship back to the UNIT once we're finished?" Yaz said as they walked back towards the city

"Well, technically Yaz this ship belongs to Doongoon not UNIT...And they just gave it to you"

"Are you serious?"

"Very serious Yaz. Even UNIT has no authorization to keep it. In saying that, later on we have to find out more about the owner."

"We do, Sandy did some digging and found out he had a family here. Maybe if we find them, speak to them. He was coming back here often he was actually here just before he died"

"I found out he had three sisters and the mother here" Sandy said "But they don't live here, another town, village..."

"Good job Sandy" Doctor said "Alright, we can pay them a visit later on. I'm gonna leave you now. There's something else I have to do before we leave this place"

"Alright Doctor"

"Sooo....What do you wanna do?" Sandy asked exited hopping in front of Yaz

"I don't know...We have few hours to kill before we go"

"Any suggestions?" she smiled

"Actually yes"

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"Where are we going?" Sandy asked as they climbed the spiral staircase which wrapped around one massive tree

"Doctor showed me this last night...You're gonna love it" she smiled leaning over the railing "Just need to get to the top" she pointed to hundreds of stairs still in front of them.

When they finally reached the top Yaz stepped onto a round balcony wrapping as ring around the tree just before the canopy starts.

"Here we go" she reached for Sandy's hand pulling her up

"OMG Yaz...this view"

"That's just stunning, isn't it" she smiled leaning on the wooden railing.

They were way up in the trees. The view stretched as far as the eye could reach across the entire forest, and far out in the valley, they could see gorgeous waterfalls and mountains. They sat down with their feet dangling from the edge.

"The forest looks like it's covered in snow from up here" Sandy said

"It does actually.... I've never seen anything like this in my life"

"And you've seen a lot Yaz" she said looking at curiously.

"I have actually"

"You never talk about it. Is it because it's too hard?"

"I suppose so" she said leaning her forehead to the railing "It seems so far away sometimes like decades passed"

"What will you do now...you know...if you get to keep this ship"

"Dunno" she sighed "Haven't thought about it" she said looking into the distance as something hard pressed her from the inside.

Sandy gave her a tender glance. She absorbed every inch of her face, each shiny strand of her hair, and inhaled the sweet scent of her skin carried by the breeze

"I don't want you to go" she said quietly

"What?" Yaz turned confused

"It wouldn't be the same without you" she said looking straight into her eyes "You know...If you were to go" Her lashes fluttered in a light breeze and locks of hair kept falling on her face.

"Sandy...the thought didn't even cross my mind...but if I ever...argument sake, in some wildest dream do decide to pack up and leave I would never leave you behind"

"Are you serious?" she yelled so much Yaz started to laugh as her voice echoed across the valley

"Heeey....stop laughing" she said hitting her shoulder

"Sorry but that was too real..."

"Stop it....Meanie" she giggled looking down

"Hey....Banana"

"Mmmmm?" she said looking down as her cheeks became red as a strawberry then glanced at her sideways with embarrassing smile

"I'm not going anywhere without you...Unless you wanna stay"

"Really?"

"Yeah...really" she nudged her with a shoulder "Chill out..." she smiled and looked back towards the forest. If she was completely honest with herself, she couldn't imagine being without her. And it was a terrifying thought. She would also rather cut off her arm than have her go through anything even remotely similar to what she herself had to deal with. It was something she wouldn't wish on her worst enemy.

Sandy smiled shyly, then looked back towards the forest relieved.