

A Long Night

a *Rogue One* fanfic

by Rodo

for *tielan*

—We regret to inform you that Captain Andor was admitted to the infirmary in serious condition. As his emergency contact—

JYN DIDN'T BOTHER to finish listening to the message sent to her comlink. She started running, the route clear in her mind. In the half a year they'd been on Hoth, Jyn had spent most of her time in a small cupboard next to mechanics with another three slicers, breaking codes and forging scandocs. She knew the base like the back of her hand. Up the stairs past communications – people stared at her, one green recruit in a new uniform stumbled – then left through the cantina, right past the hangar, and then—

She came to a halt abruptly, almost colliding with a familiar dark steel torso.

"You cannot enter," a harried Caphex nurse told the droid in front of her. "Only medical personnel may—"

"But I am the one most familiar with his physiology. I've got his readings from the last six months committed to my local non-volatile memory. Surely that data is relevant when treating him," K-2SO argued.

The nurse wouldn't have it.

"I'm Jyn Erso, his emergency contact," Jyn told her. "What happened? Will he be all right?"

Beside her, K-2SO grumbled – or at least that was what Jyn supposed it was. A low hum of mechanical tension, perhaps caused by the nurse seeming a lot more receptive to Jyn's questions than Kaytoo's arguments, turning towards her and smiling apologetically.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you anything more at this moment. Rest assured, the doctors are doing all they can to treat Captain Andor. Although I must ask: are you aware of his wishes regarding resuscitation?"

Jyn's heart sank. Cassian hadn't talked to her about it – she was his medical emergency contact mostly because he trusted her, and because he wasn't that close to anybody but

Kaytoo, who didn't qualify on account of being a droid. She didn't want to be the one to make that decision. "Do what you can to save him, if it comes to it," she told the nurse. He better pull through so that she could curse him out later.

The nurse nodded. "Please take a seat in the waiting area. We will contact you once we know more."

Jyn nodded. Then she was left staring at the closed door to the surgery with its room number, Kaytoo at her back. Her whole body was vibrating with inaction – she was a doer, not a waiter. That she could do nothing, didn't even know what had happened...

"What happened?" she asked Kaytoo. There was no use standing in the way and blocking the hallway, so she followed the nurse's advice and walked towards the waiting area, Kaytoo lumbering in her wake. He drew some suspicious glances once they entered the waiting room, the both of them taking a seat on a bench with enough room for another person to sit between them – Cassian's place. There were a few other people around, all tired and worn from worry. The evening shift had just started, and most people should be getting off work rather than sitting here. A service droid rolled past, offering a caf. Jyn took it gladly.

"Your circadian rhythm will get its revenge," Kaytoo pointed out. "I, of course, suffer no such limitations."

"What happened?" Jyn repeated.

Kaytoo paused. His version of a sigh. "I don't know. I was waiting on the ship – he really needs to stop ordering me to stay on the ship, I am a very useful asset during fieldwork – so I only saw him stumble into the hold. I stopped the external bleeding, applied emergency bacta and flew back as fast as I could. He was... he wasn't quite conscious during most of it."

Jyn knew what Kaytoo meant. She'd seen him like that once. He'd hit his head slipping on a walkway – he was just that bad with ice, despite being from an ice planet. She'd looked up his record. For a good twelve hours after, he seemed to forget where he was sometimes, slipping into a language she couldn't place. Neither could Kaytoo. "I'm not a protocol droid," she remembered him saying.

"He'll be fine," she assured him, even though she wasn't certain he would. That question from the nurse had unsettled her. But Kaytoo needed the reassurance, and maybe saying it would make Jyn believe it as well.

On the opposite wall, there was a clock with red neon numbers ticking by in Galactic Standard Time, first minutes, then hours. Another display kept track of the surgeries by room number and patient, each line a person fighting for their life, each a team of doctors

working hard to save someone. Sometimes, the light went out behind a name, and one of the others stuck in this purgatory got to leave. Sometimes, one lit up and someone else joined them. To Jyn, they were shadows. She fixated on Cassian's name. Beside her, she saw Kaytoo doing the same, solid like a rock, glowing eyes unblinking.

It was past midnight when Jyn took her second cup of caf and Kaytoo's eyes finally flickered. "You can rest," he told her, "humans need eight hours of sleep on average to function properly. Sleep deprivation reduces reaction speed and cognitive ability. I will wake you if something changes."

"That's nice of you," she replied, taking a sip of her caf. "But I wouldn't be able to sleep either way."

"You care for him," Kaytoo observed.

"As do you," Jyn replied. "He'll be fine," she repeated.

Kaytoo didn't answer. Which told Jyn all she needed to know about the probability of it, based on his experience and calculations.

"He will," she promised.

The minutes kept ticking by, and Cassian kept hanging in there. He was a fighter, that one. He would make it if he'd come this far. Eventually, the caf failed her, but her body was so high on adrenaline that she stayed upright despite the fatigue. It was two, then three, then four. At some point, she left a message for her supervisor, telling her she wouldn't be in the next day. She wanted to talk to the others, but Bodhi was on a run, and Baze and Chirrut were on some sort of hush-hush mission. She was alone. Well, except for Kaytoo.

"You're right, you know," she told him. "Cassian shouldn't keep going out there alone. It's too dangerous."

"Maybe if you tell him, he'll finally listen."

"Oh, he listens to you too. He just thinks he knows better."

"He doesn't," Kay said. "My processes were optimized for risk assessment and enemy encounters. *I* know best. Obviously."

Jyn wanted to laugh. She felt it creep into her eyes despite her best efforts to keep a straight face. He was so painfully honest. That was why he made a bad spy.

"We'll discuss it with him when he wakes up, alright?"

Kay nodded. Then they went back to staring at the display. It was hypnotizing, the slight flickering of the light, the rhythm of time ticking by. She almost felt as if she was sleeping, except she was still awake. Then, at four hundred and thirty-five, Galactic Standard Time, Cassian's name disappeared, as if his life had been snuffed out. Her heart almost stopped. She was wide awake and on her feet before her mind caught up.

The nurse entered the waiting room before Jyn had made even two steps. “Captain Andor is out of danger and recovering in a bacta tank, she told them. You should get some rest, Sergeant Erso. You too,” she told Kaytoo.

“I am a droid,” he reminded her. “We don’t need rest.”

The nurse didn’t let it faze her. After a reassuring smile and a pat on Jyn’s arm, she left, whether to tend to another patient or to get some rest, Jyn didn’t know. She didn’t much care either. Cassian was alive. She would get a chance to lecture him at great length about, well, everything.

“I told you, didn’t I? That he’d be fine.”

“I’ll take your intuition under advisement the next time I’m calculating probabilities of survival,” Kaytoo told her, voice dry. As if. Jyn smiled at him anyway, and she had a feeling that he’d smile back if he had a face capable of it.

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