

DREAMLINGS

Written by

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INT. PLANET SARAI - VARI'S HOME - MEAL ROOM - NIGHT

VARI, 14, pink skin, walks past her parents, LEEVRA, 42, purple tinged skin, and MALICH, 46, purple skin, eating in the meal room. She stops in front of the food depositor and scrolls down her list of options for this cycle.

She selects a "slice of toreq thigh" and "mashed julas" then glances out of the window as she waits for her drink to dispense. Below, on the street, security forces shoot a man with a bubble gun as it envelops him, secluding him from others.

LEEVRA

Did you get the recent report,
Malich?

MALICH

Da, Leevra. You see the
afterimages?

LEEVRA

Nu, I couldn't. Once I saw the blue
splatter of blood, I blocked the
cortex link.

MALICH

Be glad you did. He keeps the heads
he takes, so it's a mess to view.

VARI

Can we not talk about killers while
we replenish?

INT. VARI'S HEAD SPACE/AVA'S REALM - NIGHT

AVA, ageless, being made of light, sits at a control panel, watching Vari's life through Vari's eyes. "Disgust" and "Interest" appear on Ava's screen as Vari's feelings register for her Dreamling's knowledge.

Ava leans forward as Vari turns to face her mom.

AVA

Listen to her! She can't know these
details. You'll snap her
consciousness!

Ava, looking worried, taps her control board and pulls up a manual titled, "Dreamling Emergency Procedures."

INT. PLANET SARAI - VARI'S HOME - MEAL ROOM - NIGHT

Vari grabs her meal and drink, then sits next to her parents.

LEEVR

I'm sorry, Vari, but we must.

MALICH

It's important we solve this case.

VARI

But, you're ambassadors. That's not your problem.

LEEVR

Once the killer hopped planets, we were tasked to investigate as Peace Ambassadors for the Ga-la-xies.

VARI

You don't have to talk to me like I'm a stump... but why can't --

MALICH

Vari, turn on a simulation and let us get back to work.

Vari struggles to keep her face composed as she reaches up and taps her temple. A light screen shudders down between them as her parents voices drift into background noise.

INT. VARI'S HEAD SPACE/AVA'S REALM - NIGHT

Ava's control panel lights up as emotions swirl through Vari's consciousness. "Anger, Isolation, and Neglect" flash across the screen.

AVA

Sorry, fawn, but it's for the best.

She taps on the "serotonin" option on her panel and watches Vari relax as her emotions normalize.

INT. PLANET SARAI - VARI'S HOME - MEAL ROOM - NIGHT

Vari eats as she selects a teen show that features her face as the main character. She clicks through various options in the story as she builds her own happy outcome on the show.

She exits the simulation and finds the meal room empty. Her parents voices drift through the pod from their cube as she stands and presses a button on the table, then exits.

A tube slides under the table as her discarded food evaporates through the surface and into the chute.

INT. PLANET SARAI - VARI'S ROOM - NIGHT

Vari throws herself onto her bed, grabs her teeth cleaner, and pops it into her mouth. A moment later, she removes the device and sets it down.

She rolls over and blinks quickly at the ceiling.

The lights go out.

A faint glow emanates from her ears as she closes her eyes and falls asleep.

INT. VARI'S HEAD SPACE/AVA'S REALM - NIGHT

Ava flips through dream options and selects a teenage party for the setting, then chooses a happy theme for Vari's slumber.

AVA
Good moons, Vari. Enjoy having
friends tonight.

Once the colorful vision appears on screen, Ava props her feet up and settles into reading the "Dreamling Emergency Procedures."

INT. VARI'S DREAM - NIGHT

Vari walks through a gaggle of familiar, faceless, auras and is handed a bubbling drink. She shrugs and takes a sip as she moves through the party, nodding her head to the music drifting throughout the room.

She enters a den and plops down on a chair as bodies sway to the beat around her. A painting catches her eye, and she stands, moving closer to it.

Violence and bloodshed greet her as she leans in to watch the painting shape and reshape into various death scenes. The music changes to heavy beating drums as she tips forward and falls into the picture.

A MASKED MAN, 50, orange skin, carrying a scythe, slices at Vari through a haze of blue blood. She runs. He chases her.

INT. VARI'S HEAD SPACE/AVA'S REALM - NIGHT

Ava, absorbed in the manual, doesn't see the words, "Deja Vu" drift across her screen as the warning lights switch from green to blue.

INT. VARI'S DREAM - NIGHT

Vari runs into a windowless, high walled room, and turns to face the door as the Masked Man approaches.

VARI (V.O.)
He'll go left, so I need to hide
this way.

She ducks under a bridge as she flees to the right and meets a dead end. She spins in place as he gets closer.

VARI (V.O.)
Frickle! This is how he killed me
last time. Weapon. I need a weapon.

She scrunches up her face and waves her arms out, taking control of her dream as the room sucks in, then exhales with a loud pop. A sword appears in her hands as she turns to face the masked man, who's right behind her.

He raises the scythe and severs her head from her body.

As her corpse tumbles to the floor, Vari's soul leaves her body. She watches the masked man retrieve her head and raise his mouth to lick her face.

A vortex wraps around her and sucks her through flashes of memories on all sides of the static laden tube.

INT. VARI'S HEAD SPACE/AVA'S REALM - NIGHT

ALARMS blare throughout Vari's head space as Ava drops her feet and snaps her head up. "Warning: Soul Separation Occurred" flashes across the screen as red lights blink on every surface of the room.

AVA
Not my second case! They'll fire
me.

She panics as she reads, "Find non-numbered soul in Transfer Chamber" on the screen, then turns and runs toward the light-wave wall behind her.

AVA (CONT'D)
I knew they shouldn't talk about
the killer!

She steps into the light-stream and disappears.

INT. TRANSFER CHAMBER - (TIMELESS) DAY

Vari stumbles as she lands in an all white room, crowded with
bright colored souls that emanate low light in various
colors.

She stares in awe at them as she makes her way into the room.

VARI (V.O.)
I died, but how? And why do I
remember this place?

She makes her way to a cluster of all white couches and is
stopped by a hand on her shoulder.

OPA
Hello, young Giver. I've been
waiting a long time to see you.

Vari turns and stands transfixed as she takes in OPA's, 60,
bright, flickering, face, and green numbers over his left
shoulder. She shakes her head and averts her eyes.

VARI
It hurts to look at you, but you
feel familiar. Have we met?

OPA
I am your grandfather, Opa, from
another life span.

VARI
What is this place? I've been here
before.

OPA
It's the Transfer Chamber where all
souls come between rebirths.

VARI
You've been waiting here for me?

OPA
Ha, da, but also for others.

Vari clutches her head.

VARI

Wait. I remember. Each life is a chapter for our souls, right?

OPA

Yes, and don't worry, sweet Giver, it'll come back to you in time. For now, follow me.

He turns and walks down a corridor boarded on both sides by streams of light.

INT. TRANSFER CHAMBER - TRANSPORT CORRIDOR - (TIMELESS) DAY

Other SOULS, in various color tones, with red or green numbers over their left shoulders, step into and out of light streams as Vari follows Opa through the crowd.

VARI

Where are we going?

OPA

To see your body, of course.

He takes her hand and pulls her away from some nearby red numbered souls as he leans down to whisper.

OPA (CONT'D)

Stay away from the red ones while you're here.

VARI

Why? Oh, wait.

She stops and puts a hand to her temple.

VARI (CONT'D)

Those are the tainted souls.

Opa smiles brightly as his features flicker through faces he's worn in other lifetimes.

OPA

Precisely, so stay close.

He gives her a slight nudge forward as they step through the light-stream and disappear.

INT. TRANSFER CHAMBER - (TIMELESS) DAY

Ava stalks through the newly released souls as she spots a GIRL, 13, who looks like Vari and marches toward her.

Ava grasps her shoulder and spins her around as the girl's green numbers come into view.

AVA

Sorry. I thought you were someone else.

GIRL

Where am I?

AVA

Your shepherd should be here soon.
Have you seen a girl your age
without numbers over her shoulder?

GIRL

Nu, sorry.

Ava releases her and spins in a circle as souls walk past. The girl's GUIDE, 40, bathed in light, appears and takes her hand.

GUIDE

Hello, dear niece. Would you like
to see your family and say goodbye?

GIRL

Da, please.

They walk toward the transfer corridor as Ava slaps her forehead.

AVA

Of course!

She hurries after them.

INT. VISIT CHAMBER - PLANET SARAI - MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Vari and Opa step out of the light stream and walk into a hazy mirror world of the planet Sarai. Vari's comatose body lies on a hovering bed, monitored by a series of machines.

They see Leevra, deeper purple colored skin than before, crying over Vari as her shoulders shake. Vari freezes as she takes in her corporal form.

VARI

I thought I died.

OPA
 Only in your dream, so your body
 appears comatose on your home
 planet, Sarai.

Leevra's shoulders shake as a sob echoes throughout the room.

VARI
 Why is she pretending she cares?

OPA
 I'm shocked at you, little Giver.
 Of course Leevra cares.

VARI
 Could have fooled me. When I was
 alive, she ignored me all the time.

OPA
 Everything your parents do is for
 you and their work helps the green
 numbered souls avoid point battles.

VARI
 You may be my grandfather in
 another life, but you have nu idea
 what this cycle was like! They --

Ava steps out of the light stream behind them and stares
 between Opa and Vari as Vari shields her eyes from Ava's
 bright aura.

OPA
 Hello, Ava. It's nice to have my
 girls ba --

AVA
 Good to see you, too, Opa, but it's
 not her time, yet.

She turns, firmly grabs Vari by the arm, and pulls her
 through the light stream. Opa watches them disappear, then
 turns and places a hand on Leevra's back, comforting her.

INT. TRANSFER CHAMBER - TRANSPORT CORRIDOR - (TIMELESS) DAY

Ava drags Vari behind her as she moves through a crowd of
 SOULS. Vari plants her feet and stops their forward movement.

VARI
 Who the frickle are you? I want to
 stay with Opa.

Ava drops Vari's hand and takes on a softer expression.

AVA
Hi, Vari, I'm your Dreamling, Ava.

VARI
What's a Dreamling?

AVA
I'm a superior being who's tasked
with keeping you safe in your
dreams and --

VARI
Where were you earlier? Taking a
clorint break?

Ava winces, then gives her a hard look.

AVA
And also in charge of guiding your
life to ensure your destiny. I'm
sorry about --

VARI
My destiny? What do you mean?

AVA
Every decision you make is pre-
planned to make sure you live out
the life that fate determined.

Vari looks horrified as Ava's words sink in.

VARI
Every decision?

AVA
Da. You need to get back in your
body before my bosses find out
you're gone.

Vari backpedals as she scans the corridor.

VARI
What's the point? I'm alone on
Sarai and not free there, but I am
here and I have Opa.

AVA
But it's not your time. This will
all still be here when you die.

Ava reaches out to grab Vari.

Vari shoves her and runs as Ava tumbles to the floor.

AVA (CONT'D)
Bethie, wait!

Ava's words slam into Vari as she ducks through the crowd, making her falter in her steps.

VARI (V.O.)
Bethie? I was Bethie once.

She shakes her head in denial and resumes her flight.

Opa appears next to Ava and helps her up.

OPA
You really should tell her who you are and how she's connected to the killer.

AVA
It's not allowed. If she found out about past lives, our murder... who I was to her. Ugh, it's too much!

Ava shakes his hand off and marches after Vari.

INT. TRANSFER CHAMBER - TRANSPORT CORRIDOR - (TIMELESS) DAY

Vari jostles through a group of red numbered souls and gets caught in the moving crowd as they hurry toward a light stream.

Ava appears down the hall and spots Vari as Vari's pulled through the stream of lights and disappears.

An omniscient BEING steps in front of Ava and stops her forward movement.

BEING
Ava Ling! What are you doing here?
Where is your charge?

Ava bows her head and raises two fingers over her left eye as she curtsies.

AVA
Light Bringer, she's home in bed sleeping. I came here to --

EXT. SOUL BATTLE ARENA - NIGHT

Vari stumbles into the soul battle arena and sidesteps the growing CROWD of cheering red souls as they step onto bleachers around a hovering platform in the center of a pit.

She takes in the nightmarish FIGURES from other planets, covered in rainbow splatters of blood and waving weapons, as they pump-up the crowd.

A HORN blares from everywhere at once.

ANNOUNCER

Contestants, step forward to begin
your next soul point battle.

A cluster of red numbered souls move toward the center stage.

They choose from a selection of weapons pinned to a board outside of the fighting ring, then step onto the swaying platform.

The crowd cheers as a buzzer goes off.

The fighters launch into battle.

Pink, red, green, and yellow blood splatter across the stage as the losing souls blink out of existence. One young, scared RED SOUL is tossed into the endless pit beyond the platform.

Horrified, Vari backs into a group of cheering red souls. They shove her away, giving her menacing looks.

She turns and runs toward the light stream wall, then stops.

She looks back at the stage and sees an arm fly into the leering crowd as she steps through the light stream and disappears.

INT. VISIT CHAMBER - PLANET SARAI - MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Vari steps out of the light stream and into the mirror world on Sarai.

Malich stands over Vari's comatose body, holding her hand. Leevra sits in a chair by a night stand with a desk light on it.

Vari runs to Malich and throws her arms around him as she drifts through his body. She crashes into the night stand and desk light beside Leevra.

Malich looks up from Vari's body as the lamp wobbles on the table.

MALICH

Vari?

Vari stands and faces her dad, looking hopeful.

VARI

Can you hear me?

Malich gazes around the room as Leevra shoots him a hopeful look.

LEEVR

Did she move?

MALICH

Nu. I thought I felt... never mind.

Leevra taps her arm and looks at the clock that pops up.

LEEVR

Do you need to get back to work?

MALICH

I can't leave her, yet. Work is so... unimportant right now.

VARI

Nu, dad. Go. If your work stops the horror I just saw, you have to go!

LEEVR

I know what you mean, Malich. I can't bring myself to... does she know that we love her?

MALICH

I don't know. We're so caught up in our jobs that we ignore her a lot.

Leevra breaks down as Malich comforts her. Vari drops to her knees in front of them as tears roll down her face.

Ava steps through the light stream behind Vari and stands there quietly, watching them.

VARI

I'm so sorry, mom and dad. I understand now.

AVA

You can go back any time.

Vari whirls around to face her.

VARI

Where've you been? It was awful.
There was blood and death
everywhere.

AVA

I ran into my Light Bringer and had
to lie to him about you. Did you
see a soul battle?

Ava steps forward and gently helps Vari stand as she wipes
away Vari's tears.

Vari nods as she pulls away.

VARI

It was awful.

AVA

Some souls don't have a chance at
improving, so they fight to steal
points from each other.

VARI

Why?

AVA

Corrupted souls are reborn on the
planet Niagul, and each of their
lives are too horrible to describe.

VARI

Why'd you call me Bethie earlier?

AVA

I can't tell you that.

VARI

Da, you can.

AVA

Past-life knowledge is forbidden in
your current state. It's simply not
allowed.

VARI

I'm not allowed to die in dreams
either, but here we are.

She waves her arms across the room to her corporal form.

VARI (CONT'D)
Would you rather I yell until your
(uncertain)
Light Bringer comes, then ask him?

AVA
You've gotten some memories back!
Anything you want to share?

VARI
Nu. Quit stalling and tell me.

AVA
I'll get reassigned if I do.

VARI
You'll get reassigned if you don't.

Ava sizes Vari up, then nods her head.

AVA
You're not supposed to remember any
of this once you're home, so...

Ava takes Vari's hand and touches it to her temple.

Memories of their past life flood into Vari's mind in a
stream of videos.

INT. PLANET NIAGUL - VARI AND AVA'S HOME - NIGHT

An orange skinned Masked Man chases Ava/RUTH, 12, blue
skinned, in a pink body suit, and Vari/BETHIE, 7, yellow
skinned, in a purple body suit, through a run down house.

Red, angry, whirling skies storm outside the windows.

AVA/RUTH
Run, Bethie! Hide.

Ava/Ruth pushes Vari/Bethie into a war torn, destroyed room,
and turns to shove a dresser in front of the doorway.

Vari/Bethie freezes as she watches the Masked Man slide the
scythe around the dresser and sever Ava/Ruth's arm. Her hand
falls to the floor as yellow blood gushes from the stump.

VARI/BETHIE
Ruth! Nu!

Ava/Ruth howls in pain as the Masked Man shoves the dresser
forward. It topples, pinning Ava/Ruth under it.

Vari/Bethie runs toward them as the Masked Man brings the scythe down and slices through Ava/Ruth's neck.

Her head tumbles across the floor, rolling into Vari/Bethie's running feet.

Vari/Bethie jumps over it and falls down beside Ava/Ruth's body as she wets herself.

The Masked Man steps closer, laughing, as he slices at Vari/Bethie.

Pain and flashes of blood flood Vari's mind as she gasps and slightly steps back.

INT. VISIT CHAMBER - PLANET SARAI - MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Ava drops Vari's hand from Ava's temple as the visions end.

VARI

You're my sister! You died to save me, but he got me, too.

She opens her eyes and regards Ava with awe as tears slide down her cheeks.

AVA

Da, and that killer was reborn as the murderer your parents seek.

Vari snaps her head towards her parents, horrified.

VARI

Are they in danger?

AVA

Nu, but you are the longer your soul is torn from your body.

Vari stares at the floor, digging her toe into the haze around the viewing room. She takes a breath and looks at Ava.

VARI

I'm sorry about everything. Thank you for trying to save me. I wish...

She takes Ava's hand and rubs small circles in her palm.

VARI (CONT'D)

If you were on Sarai, I wouldn't be so alone, and maybe I'd accept this boxed up life I didn't choose.

Ava touches her cheek and smiles, then hugs her.

AVA
Sweet, Bethie, I'll always forgive
you and... you chose your destiny
before you were born in this body.

Ava sweeps her hand through the air, motioning to Vari's
comatose form on the floating hospital bed.

VARI
I did? How? What is my fate?

AVA
You chose a pre-destined path for a
brave soul to bear.

Ava releases her and steps back, peering into Vari's face.

AVA (CONT'D)
You're The Great Giver of Sarai.
Your prior deaths prepared you to
spare souls in this time line.

VARI
There's more than one?

AVA
Ha, da, but you have to go now.

Ava leads Vari to her body and gently pushes her down beside
her corporal form.

VARI
Wait! Will you visit me?

AVA
Only in dreams, my sister. Only in
dreams.

She lays her hands on both of Vari's heads and hums as the
two fragmented parts of Vari combine.

INT. PLANET SARAI - MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Vari opens her eyes on the hovering bed. Leevra's wracking
sobs echo around the room as Malich crouches in front of her
chair, holding her.

Vari quietly hops out of bed, crouches beside them, and
throws her arms around her parents.

MALICH
You're awake!

LEEVRA
Vari?

Her parents envelope Vari in a hug as tears stream down her smiling face.

VARI
I love you both, but you have to
get back to work. It's important.

They pull away from her in shock as her mother checks Vari's forehead.

LEEVRA
Did you hit your head? Are you
okay? What happened?

MALICH
We should get the doctor.

Vari laughs as she pulls them closer.

VARI
Nu, but I finally see the truth and
I love you.

LEEVRA/MALICH
We love you too. Always.

VARI
For once, I know that.

Her parents share a confused, grateful look over Vari's head.

INT. VARI'S HEAD SPACE/AVA'S REALM - DAY

Ava leans back in a chair at the control panel, feet propped up, as she watches Vari stand at a podium, addressing a darkened AUDIENCE.

Opa stands beside her, enthralled by the screen.

VARI (V.O.)
I learned that heaven and hell are
earned through our actions here on
Sarai and the other five planets in
our universe.

Shocked, Ava drops her feet and leans forward.

OPA
Did you know she retained the
memory of her visit?

AVA
Nu, but how?

She leans forward and pulls up the Emergency Dreamling Manual, then scrolls through the index as Opa watches Vari.

VARI (V.O.)
We must band together and lift each
other up, so no soul dies for
others to find peace.

Opa places a hand on Ava's frantic shoulders, calming her.

OPA
Be at peace, granddaughter. This is
how she becomes The Great Giver of
Sarai.

Ava looks up at him, thinking deeply as a smile spreads
across her face.

AVA
Maybe, Opa. Our plans don't show a
starting point in her journey.

OPA
You're her starting and end points,
Dreamling, so watch her closely.

Ava swipes away the Emergency Dreamling Manual, and beams at
Vari on the screen as Opa turns and steps through the light
stream, leaving Ava to her Dreamer with a smile on his face.