Twilight
by Lizzen

Summary

Father, she says, dear one.
Who’s to say the alien doesn’t have daddy issues.
Or, What Ripley learns on Fiorina 161

Notes

as always, thanks to my A <333

A sun sets on a wasteland, a lost planet, a corporate-owned space, an almost forgotten prison of lost souls and a hungry child.

* 
Fiorina 161

* 
She sleeps, not the sleep of the dead, and not the sleep of the living either; she’s going to die tomorrow, and die horribly. Something has burrowed into her chest, holding her close and resting till she’s ready.

Ready to be a queen. Ready to birth thousands of millions.

And the alienness consumes her, overwhelms her and in ways unnatural because Ellen sleeps, and she sleeps, and she dreams. Dreams of--

*
His hands touch soft flesh, and he peers over it; thoughtful, thoughtfully -- (thoughtless). The man is handsome; so handsome that it's almost unsettling to look at him. She thinks briefly of the pin ups in Wierzbowski’s locker, of holos she watched back home. The man’s mouth widens into a smile that is all teeth.

Much to be done, much still to do. Down to his circuits, down to the fabric of his making, he wants, oh he wants, he wants this. It’s all he’s planned for: a life that begets life that begets life that begets li--

*

Father, she says, dear one.

*

Memory is passed from one soul to the next, to the next, to the next. She remembers him, remembers his smiles and the press of his hands and the white of his insides and the pride in his eyes.

The queen remembers.

*

When the host dreams, the child says:

Father loved a man once. He wasn’t really a man, but he looked like one. And he looked like Father; a man with his face and arms and legs and hands (and hand) and feet and --

Then the child blushes because there was a moment, fleeting and special and significant, when Father wanted more than lips and touch and taste. A hunger for unnatural compliance; for dark eyes and an open mouth and--

For things humans desire.

Father loved a man once, she says. But he didn’t let it ruin him. Not like you.

*

And she, she, she remembers a dead man who burned to ash, next to a child, a child, a real human child.

*

How do you feel?, the father says.

And the child says: Alive.

*

The queen will do what she was built to do: continue His work.

Father would be proud of me, the queen-to-be sings. Of what I am. Of what I am to become.

*

Your father loved you, and she is repulsed.

The queen whispers back. He did, he loved us as his own. As his progeny, as his kin.

And Ellen Ripley breathes deeply in her sleep. He was a machine, you were made by the parts and the white and the machinations of corporate agenda.
Something recoils inside her. *We were made with care, we were his whole life.*

And with the memories that aren’t hers, Ellen smiles. *But Father loved a man.*

The queen, the queen-to-be, sing songs: *But Father murdered him. For us.*

* There was a man she loved, and one before that, and one before that. There was a child once, her Amy, and there was another child, her--

It’s my fault they’re all dead, she thinks. My fault, my fault, *her* fault.

* Things Ellen does not know: tomorrow, she will meet a human, a man of flesh, of blood, of sinew, of bone, and his mouth will open and the words he speaks are:

*think of all we could learn from it. it's the chance of a lifetime, you must let me have it.*

Things Ellen will know: this, this, this is a true son of Weyland.

* Bishop gurgled with the white and the wires and the wet; a dying head separated from his body.

As did Ash, twitchy as he was; a synthetic soul turned to zeros and ones and nothing, and more nothing.

But David did not--

*Father did not die.*

* He is an old model, *Father,* and easily recognized for what he is; the curve of his neck as he moves, the steadiness of his hands, the even tone of his voice. And he was built to last.

Things Ellen knows: When Yutani joined the company, the research dollars moved from lifespan and mechanical parts to figuring out how a robot could seamlessly integrate with humanity. "I don’t care if they last, I care if they care," was the edict.

Things Ellen came to find out: And it was Yutani that build models who could blend in, be more human than human; yet efficiently compliant to corporate directives. And it was Yutani that would build the Hyperdyne Systems 120-A/2, with plenty of model options so no one would know. No one would guess. Until--

* He presses his hand against Walter’s chest, listening for the heart that will never beat. *O you wonder,* he says.

* Want?, Father said. *Not a concept I’m familiar with.*

Then: he uses fingers and synapses and vision to create the perfect killing machine.

* Then: he presses his mouth against cool lips and holds there for one, two, three, four seconds. Like humans do. Meaning what humans mean. Wanting what humans want.
Ellen thought a lot about kissing Hicks; waking him up with a kiss, waiting days or weeks or months before kissing him, letting him kiss her first. So many options available to her once. She would have let the first press of lips against lips last for moments before opening her mouth, letting him in, letting him know she wants him, every inch of her.

_No one will ever love you like I do_, she thinks, she believes with all the beats of her heart.

The child says: _Father loved us._

The host says: _Your father was insane._

David stares at his creation and he opens his mouth and he says, _you’ve been in my life so long, I can’t remember anything else._ And he loves, as much as a conglomeration of parts and coolant and synthetic materials can love.

His eyes turn to Ellen, and in a familiar voice: _I admire its purity. Unclouded by conscience, remorse, or delusions of morality. A perfect organism,_ he says.

Then, David is on her, his hands touching her skin and his lips close to her own. _You are a dying species,_ he says. And she remembers Ash’s grip, vise-like and cruel. _Expendable._

_Tell me,_ he says and with her own voice, _tell me you aren’t. You don’t see them fucking each other over for a goddamn percentage._

Ellen smiles back, smiles so hard that he takes a step back, flinching.

_You’re right,_ she says. _You’re right about us._ And she thinks of how she will not part with her child this time. _And yet, we’re going to take out as many of your creatures as we go._

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!