

In a New Light

“Mother, come quick! Something’s wrong with Syrb!” Corwyn came running into the kitchen, full with worry for his pet. The young Magarian had never been happy in early childhood, with his father always off visitin the other planets on government business. Then one day, about a year ago, Corwyn’s father brought home a boraxi, an inhabitant of their closest neighboring planet, Phoenix IV.

The young lad took an immediate liking to the boraxi, a furry creature that floated about a foot or so off the ground. Syrb, as Corwyn had named him, was a light brown color and had a black nose that stuck out of from the mass of thick fur covering his foot-long body. The boraxi possess empathy, the ability to detect others’ true emotions, and Syrb was always able to cheer up Corwyn when he was lonely or depressed.

“Corwyn, if this is another one of your tricks...”, his mother began to warn, remembering the time he had poured liquid carbon on Syrb and turned him blue.

“No, I swear! He’s really sick and he can’t even get off the ground.” His mother gazed into Corwyn’s bright orange eyes and was moved by the compassion she saw there. Syrb was the only thing Corwyn had cared about since his sister had died a few revolutions ago. Ruse was about two revolutions older than Corwyn, who was 11 now, and the two were as close as a brother and a sister could be. After she died, Corwyn withdrew into himself, refusing contact with the outside world. The new companion he found in Syrb had finally brought him out of his shell.

His mother also knew that the absence of Corwyn’s father was very painful for him. Corwyn needed that father-figure, someone he could really look up to. But, his father had been called away by the government to do some work on the eleventh planet, an ice-planet called Sundar.

His mother put her arm around Corwyn and they walked though the front portal out onto the lawn. The grass was a nice deep deep red and trimmed to perfection. In the middle lay Syrb, looking very tired, or sick, for an extremely hyper boraxi.

Corwyn ran from his mother’s side and laid down next to Syrb. “See, mother. He doesn’t even move.” Syrb raise his furry little head and gave Corwyn a small, pitiful whimper. The boy gave his friend a hug, in hopes of making him feel better, for all the times that Syrb had made Corwyn feel better.

The mother, concerned that the animal might have something contagious, called out to her son, “Corwyn, why don’t you come inside now. Your father will be home soon and I’m sure he’ll know what’s wrong.”



Corwyn’s father was not in his usual jovial mood after coming home from a long time out on Phoenix XI. He became even more depressed when he heard of Syrb’s condition. He and Corwyn brought the poor animal inside and put him in a dark room.

“Son,” his father began, with tears in his eyes. “Son, I think I know what’s wrong with Syrb, and I just want you to be strong for him during all this. The best thing for him is to love him and keep him out of direct sunlight, understand?” The boy nodded, even though he didn’t understand. Why was his father crying? All Corwyn wanted was for Syrb to get better. “Alright, good. Now, I’d like to talk to your mother for a few minutes, so why don’t you go study your lessons before dinner.”

The boy trotted off with a new hope for Syrb now that his father was home and back in control. He left the room just as his mother was entering and he gave her a big, bright smile, the kind that only the young and innocent are capable of, the kind that just seems to say that the world is okay. Corwyn turned on the anti-gravity field in his room and decided to relax a little, wightlessly, before dinner. He had had no intention of listening to his parents’ conversation, and afterwards he wished he hadn’t.

His mother began with the usual inquiries about the secret work on Phoenix XI, and Corwyn’s father finally told her what he had really been doing for the past few years. Corwyn gathered from their talk that a few men selected by the government were assembling a mini-history of the Magarians and of the other species in the solar system. Hopefully, the story of these peoples would be found by some other race. It all had something to do with the sun and why Syrb was sick. The boraxi lived farther away from the sun than the people on Magaria. There was some type of radiation emitting from their sun, and it was deadly, especially to the more remote species like the boraxi.

Corwyn slammed his gravity back on and slipped out of his room and down to Syrb’s. The boy found his best friend on the floor of his darkened room and laid down next to the dying animal. Corwyn hugged Syrb for all he was worth, and cried himself to sleep, Syrb still showing compassion despite his own torment.

Corwyn had missed the final part of his parents’ conversation, before they too had begun to weep. His father told his mother, as gently as possible, that their sun (and they themselves) probably only had a few months left of existence, before the star became a supernova.