

Katusha

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Katusha

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Summary

A part of the AU where Ceti Alpha VI was never destroyed, and the colony on Ceti Alpha V thrived. This is a look at the next generations of Augments as teens

Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Rumor had it that, in part, Mikhail Ivanovich Petrov's genetic template had been copied from famed Russian dancers. After living all seventeen years of his life on an isolated planet, Arjun Noonien Singh never had the cultural context to fully comprehend what that meant, but when Mikhail's daughter Ekaterina, Katya, grew into a young woman, he began to understand. A slender form, long limbs, elegant posture... she drove him wild.

It was the rainy season on Ceti Alpha V: wet and dark, but at least it warm. Arjun had been thinking about Katya for weeks but couldn't puzzle out how to approach her, or when would be the best time, or what to say. When he finally caught her alone it was only in passing. The moment seemed as though it would skip through his fingers, so he reached out to grab her arm. She flinched and pulled away.

"What do you want?" Katya snapped, shrinking away. She spoke in Russian, knowing that Arjun would understand. The original Augments who fled earth so long ago were an international crew, and ever since he had been a small child Arjun had easily been able to speak each language he heard around him.

"A bit more respect to start," Arjun demanded. "You know who you're speaking to. Mostly, though I want your companionship, to spend time with you, to know you, and to see what might come of it."

"I'm not interested."

"Katka." Arjun spoke forcefully and stepped closer. He had an intimidating appearance: tall, muscular, and looked older for his age. "I'm not used to being told no."

"Taking rejection is an important lesson to learn."

Arjun reached for Katya again, but she ran away, just as quick as she was graceful. He let her go, they'd cross paths again soon, and maybe she would come to her senses by then.

Katya was off and into the rain, trying to find some secret place to find a moment to gather her thoughts. It was no easy task, out of necessity the settlement on Ceti Alpha V was compactly built, but if you looked carefully you could find a private alcove.

She had her usual spot, but her heart sank when she reached the place and saw that someone else had the same idea. Maya Noonien Singh was the older of Khan's children, but Katya often saw her as the little sister. Her mother was the only non-Augment to step foot on Ceti Alpha V, and Maya was smaller, quiet, and trailed behind her peers.

"Sorry, didn't mean to bother you," Katya turned to go. She spoke in English now, well aware that Maya didn't have the same linguistic talent as her brother.

"No, it's fine," Maya pleaded. "It's less solitude that I want, just space from certain people."

"Me too. Oddly enough it's your brother I want to avoid,"

"My half brother," Maya corrected. "When he's disagreeable, I want to put more space between us."

"Your half brother wants a relationship with me and was furious to be refused"

Maya's eyes grew wide with shock. "You don't mean that he..?"

"No, no nothing like that, he was only frustrated."

A moment of silence as the two of them listened to the rain. "It was brave of you to turn him down." Maya finally said. "Everyone else seems to adore him to curry favor with our father."

"I'm surprised more people don't adore you."

Maya froze for a moment before she answered. "I...don't understand."

"It's refreshing to be around you. You aren't completely absorbed in yourself."

"My father might consider that a weakness."

"Maybe he's wrong." Katya suggested, reaching out to touch Maya's hand.

Maya held Katya's hand, even though it felt like a bold act of defiance. "Don't let anyone else know you think that."

Katya kissed the back of Maya's hand. "Our secret."

Russian naming conventions:

Most formal (ie for record keeping)
Given name patronymic family name

ie
Mikhail Ivanovich Petrov
Ekaterina Mikehailovna Petrova

Formal but slightly less official is given name + patronymic

Familiar is “half name” part of the given name with -ya or -sha

ie
Katya
Misha

Familiar and diminutive:

-enka
-ochka
-usha

Extremely casual (insulting without proper rapport) names ending in -ka

ie
Katka

Chapter 2

After their first encounter, Maya lived for the little moments she could steal with Katya: a smile in passing, a brief conversation, and when they were sure they were quite alone, a kiss. Maya didn't want to let on that she was so much as friends with Katya, afraid of attracting her brother's ire. For all the joy she found in those little moments, there was a sense of melancholy about it. For the first time she had found someone who didn't give a damn about her imperfect genetic makeup, yet she couldn't tell a soul. In time, they were bold enough to dare to spend more time together, making plans to go on walks in the rain or to study together, even though Katya was far more advanced in everything.

This time of year, days when the rain stopped and the sun shined were rare. Katya and Maya took advantage of one such treasured day by taking a barefoot walk along the river that ran west of the settlement. The air was heavy and humid and the ground soft beneath their feet, but the day was beautiful and they were all alone.

Or so they thought. Katya froze and stood alert, suddenly taking hold of Maya's arm. "Listen."

Maya stood silently trying to pick up whatever it was that Katya heard, but she only heard the sound of the river. Katya turned to look first, and then Maya. Some way behind them, coming around the bend, a figure approached, moving with purpose but not running.

"It's Arjun," Katya whispered. The pair stood still, waiting as he came closer.

"Maya! Katka!" He called before breaking into a jog to close the distance between them. "Don't run off, I only want to talk." His tone was bold and demanding, but not angry, not yet at least. He looked from Maya to Katya with disdain in his eyes. "Strange, isn't it, Maya, that the moment I take interest in someone you start to spend more and more time with them."

"Jealous of my friends, Arjun?" Maya spoke boldly to defend herself. Normally she wasn't brave enough to stand up for herself, but being near Katya made her feel stronger.

"What sort of friends are you, exactly? For all of your attempts at secrecy, everyone knows what's been going on between the two of you." Arjun accused, each word heavy with gravitas. He stepped closer, towering over Maya. "And it seems to me that you're the one who's jealous, as usual. Always wanting what I have, and now taking it when you finally have the chance."

"I would never be with a self-absorbed worm like you!" Katya shouted, lunging forward to push Arjun away. Arjun reacted quickly, grabbing Katya by the shoulders.

Maya could not stand to simply watch the fight, not when Arjun was among the strongest people on this planet. She rushed toward her brother and tried to pull him away even though she knew she lacked the strength to have an effect. Arjun let go of Katya and instead turned his attention to his sister, taking a firm hold on her left wrist. Maya tried to pull away, but at that exact moment, Arjun forcefully yanked her arm the other direction. Maya let out a guttural scream as a burst of pain exploded from her shoulder and surged through her body. She collapsed to ground, and because she was unable to control her body enough to break her fall, she landed hard on the ground.

That was enough to satisfy Arjun's rage. He knelt beside his sister, and grabbed the collar of her shirt to pull her out of the mud. Her face was bloody from the fall. "Consequences for your actions, don't let it happen again" Without another word, Arjun turned and left.

Clouds rolled in to darken the sky, and a single raindrop fell...and then another and another. Katya rushed to Maya's side to help her up to her feet. Once Maya was upright, Katya could see that her left shoulder was misshapen, hanging limp at her side. She stared with wide eyed shock for a moment, feeling her stomach turn at the sight of human anatomy looking so...off.

"Maya." Katya spoke softly and tried to remain calm, both for her sake and for Maya's. "You're badly hurt. You need help." By now the rain was pouring down, any signs of the sunny weather from earlier gone.

"No!" She sounded desperate and panicked, her breathing rapid and heavy. "No one can know what happened."

"Maya." Katya was still calm, but firm now. "Maya, look at me." She turned her head to comply, so much fear still in her eyes. "Your shoulder is completely dislocated. It isn't going to get better in its own."

"You can't try to put it back yourself?" Maya pleaded

Katya shook her head. "I think that would do more harm than good. Come on, we can think up a good cover story on the way."

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Content warnings:

Medical trauma

Use of hallucinogenic drugs

Three attempt to put her injured shoulder back in place, and each had the same result: her muscles tensed and swelled so strongly that the joints couldn't be manipulated back into place. Maya was ready to give up hope on ever recovering, but Suzette Ling's gentle and encouraging words kept her from dwelling too much on those pessimistic thoughts. While Suzette was no doctor, she more or less filled the role of medic on Ceti Alpha V, having earned that honor with her warm demeanor and advanced biological knowledge. She was also one of the few people who Maya trusted.

The fourth attempt required a different approach. Maya had been given a large quantity of a root that grew on Ceti Alpha V—mostly used for its powerful analgesic properties, but caused mild hallucinations in high doses, and Maya was more susceptible to the side effects than a full Augment would be—and had an hour or so to rest, lying face down on a cot, her left arm hanging off the side with a weight tied to her wrist. Her body rested, but her mind was active, trying to puzzle out if she had always been able to hear color if it the dancing lights she saw when she closed her eyes were a dream or part of reality.

Footsteps. Those were real, something to ground herself and make the hallucinations less intense, and it meant that Suzette was back. Suzette perched on the edge of the cot and began to massage and manipulate the injured joint. Maya only felt a dull ache, but what made her feel unwell was how strange it felt.

"I know what happened," Suzette said as she worked, her voice was soft yet grave, a gentle delivery of news that she knew would be unwelcome.

Maya groaned. With such a weak grasp of reality in her current state, she couldn't begin to navigate the complexity of trying to deny the truth. Even her emotions were dulled, which was probably for the best. Rather than shock or anger, Maya only felt a mild sense of surprise. "How did you find out?" She spoke slowly and carefully, suddenly uncomfortable with the sound of her own voice.

"I'm better at reading people than Katya is at lying." Maya felt a pop in her shoulder, no pain, just an unusual sensation. "It's done," Suzette said as she began to untie the weight from Maya's wrist. "But I'm not sure if it will ever return to normal."

That information didn't bother Maya as much as it should have, her primary concern still on getting a grip on reality. She sat up, not sure if she moved too quickly or that her sense of space was so impaired that any motion would make her head spin.

"My father can't know what happened." Her voice was soft and distant, but she was starting to feel more comfortable with the sound of her own voice again.

"Maya..." Suzette still spoke as though she was trying to soften the blow from some bad news.

Even in her current state, when the world seemed unreal and everything around her was difficult to process, she could put the pieces together. She looked away. "He already knows, doesn't he?"

A heavy moment of silence. "Im sorry. My loyalty requires me to disclose everything."

"Everything?"

Suzette nodded. "He wants to speak to all three of you."

Maya closed her eyes, but that didn't help restore any sense of normalcy. Colors and lights swirled behind her eyelids, and they lingered even after she opened her eyes again. "I am in no state for that."

Suzette nodded. "I know. You can take a few more hours to rest and come back to yourself."

With that, Suzette stood and left. Maya laid down, wishing she could simply sleep it off.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Content warnings:

- toxic family dynamics
- homophobia

The hallucinations had stopped and only a hint of that indescribable feeling of strangeness lingered. What Maya felt instead was fear, so overwhelming that she felt almost as disoriented as when the drugs still had a firm grip on her mind. For all the rage she knew her father could be capable of, it had never been directed at her. Though, he didn't need to be angry to be utterly terrifying.

Maya, Katya, and Arjun stood before Khan Nnonien Singh, each with a very different reaction to gathering together for this meeting. Maya was a combination of fear, exhaustion, and pain. Her injured arm was supported in a sling: searing pain above the elbow and numbness below. Katya looked as though she was about to cry. Arjun only looked irritated, and Khan was the most exasperated of all: tired, frustrated, disappointed.

"Katka." Khan's voice was demanding and dripped with disdain. Katya tried to avoid looking him in the eye. "You were the cause of all this. Never speak to my children again." a brief pause Katya tried to gather enough courage to respond, but Khan didn't give her that chance. "Go."

Katya didn't dare to stay a moment longer, rushing away with her head down. Maya watched her as she went, her heart aching to think not only of the pain her lover must be facing but also of the sudden loss of the one relationship that brought her joy. She couldn't help but blame herself. If she had enough self control to keep from getting too close to Katya, and if they had truly been only friends then maybe her brother wouldn't have grown so furious. Maybe she would still have a dear friend and would be spared a devastating injury.

"Arjun." Khan addressed his son next, speaking more like a man giving advice to an equal rather than a father speaking to a disobedient child. "You and your friends might solve your disagreements with your fists, but exercise some restraint with your sister, for she is far too fragile. And Maya..." His tone shifted, becoming condescending. "You have a personal responsibility to avoid angering your brother, now that you know what he is capable of."

Maya gave Arjun a sideways glance. He may have given her a lifelong injury and faced no consequences, and yet her father's words confirmed the nasty thoughts that circled in her head: that everything was her fault.

"Arjun, you may go. Maya, I have more I need to say to you,"

As Arjun turned to leave Maya gave her father a desperate look. "I don't think I should bear the responsibility for my brother's actions."

"This isn't about that." He stepped closer and leaned in, resting one hand on Maya's uninjured shoulder. His face shifted, softening with warmth coming in through his eyes. Maya rarely saw her father look so kind and gentle. She no longer felt quite so fearful, but her heart was still racing. "Maya, you're young. You're entitled to have dalliances with whomever you please, but Katka isn't worth so much trouble."

"I'm sorry, I don't understand what's wrong with her." Maya began to grow defensive. Even though her father spoke as if these were the most loving words a father could say to his child, she detected a hint of hostility.

"The trouble doesn't lie with her alone, but with the two of you together." He paused, considering the best way to explain something that was so important to him. "You carry within your body an incredible genetic legacy. It would be a shame for that to go to waste because of who you choose to be intimate with."

Of all the pain she endured today, this one stung the worst. Her peers had reached an age when they couldn't keep their hands to themselves, and Maya hadn't understood any of it until Katya took interest in her. She felt a deep sense of betrayal, but she wasn't sure from where, whether it was from her own seemingly innocent feelings or from the sudden knowledge that the person whose opinion mattered most to her didn't approve.

"I don't know what Suzette told you, but I'd hardly say Katya and I were intimate. We hardly even kissed." Her voice was shaky, but Maya was still determined to say something in her own defense.

"My point still stands. Have I made myself clear?" All of his warmth was gone, and he was demanding and spoke with the same disdain he had for Katya.

"Crystal clear."

Chapter 5

Three days had passed, and the pain in Maya's shoulder began to dull. Alarming, though, the numbness radiating down her left arm had not yet improved, nor had the feeling that her limb was a foreign part of her body or the difficulty in controlling her fingers. Still, Maya tried to remain hopeful. Hope was free, but so was disappointment.

In those three days, the rain had not slowed down, and Maya had spent that time resting, avoid people, and doing as little as she could get away with. Her excuse was that she need to heal her injured body, but really it was her heart that hurt the most.

She craved closure for this chapter of her live that both started and ended so abruptly, but she had no idea of how to seek it until she happened to catch sight of Katya from the other side of the compound. Just the sight of her gave Maya a burst of energy strong enough to pull her out of her despair.

"Katya!" Maya called. Katya froze and turned to look, wearing an expression of pleasant surprise as Maya ran toward her, bare feet splashing in the mud. She took Katya's hand in her own, the right one, the uninjured one, even though it felt awkward to use her non-dominant hand. "Please tell me you've been coping better than I have."

"Maya..." Katya shrank away. "I'm sorry, you aren't supposed to be speaking to me."

"No," a playful smirk appeared on Maya's face. "You aren't supposed to be speaking to me. I started this conversation, so, therefore, you have done nothing wrong."

Katya smiled. It was small but still reached her eyes. "I'd still feel more comfortable to keep this brief."

"Of course. I only want...". What did she want? To run away with Katya and never speak to another damn person as long as they lived, but that was out of the question. As for her intentions with this conversation, she knew what she meant to do, but lacked the courage to do it. "I want to end this on my own terms."

"I'm not sure I want to end anything." Katya spoke softly and looked down. "I liked the idea that maybe if we were better at keeping secrets...and I I still don't entirely understand the problem your father has with me beyond the conflict between you and Arjun."

"Mostly that you can't get me pregnant," Maya blurted out, bluntly. Katya's eyes widened with shock. "I'm trying to make peace with whatever my future might look like. Ya lyublyu tebya."

Katya shook her head and chuckled. "I appreciate the effort, but your pronunciation is terrible. Dasvidaniya Mayochka,"

"Dasvidaniya Katusha,"

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