

Limitations of the Art.

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Limitations of the Art.

by [CandyCurlsofMaddness](#)

Summary

To live in the past a moment longer is to steal from your future.

Notes

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

Nyota is the first call linguistics art. She thinks of words as stepping stones to comprehend the life around her. It's the key to her soul, the way she creates and the way the world makes sense.

"It takes more than saying the right things." Hemmer eyes her, his eye's dark as winter, and his skin as ghostly as its sky. "You have to do the right things too."

She realines cables more neatly now, accidentally arranging in order of thickness. The lines paint a picture, vector lines leading to the main control panel. It's not much, but it's thoughtful in its composition.

"Engineering is like art," Hemmer tells her, "Except everything must be effective too."

Sometimes Nyota comes to engineering after her shift just to bask in the colours. The whole ship is insanely monochrome; greys, whites, reds and yellows. But the entrails of the ship are bright and more random, every part humming with energy.

"Since you're here already, help me with this?"

Hemmer is less stern when he asks now, scattered conversations slowly tying them together in friendship. At the end of her Cadet rounds, Nyota leaves and comes back. She's an ensign now.

But engineering still calls to her.

Her array is her responsibility, each and every component is placed in an optimal position. It's important but she can't resist recreating alien syntax.

"Is this code?" Hemmer eyes her decision with amusement, recognising the overly pleased bounce to her step.

"Ancient Bolian." Nyota shrugs, gratified by his surprised laughter.

"And a useful design." He looks at her, his eyebrows raised.

"How many aliment designs can I claim? Surely, they don't need another version of the same."

"Write that paper Cadet."

Words are art. It's a stance Nyota is reconsidering after completing endless reports. Her design application sits off to the side, tormenting her with the possibilities.

"Not everyone can create a working flow, give those folks a chance." Hemmer becomes stern for a moment more, bringing to mind the memory of her fellow Cadets, who struggled to replace every part how they found it, let-a-lone in a better order.

But for all of Nyota skills, Hemmer is a master. From left over bits, he builds the sky.

In her quarters sits a tiny heater, it's elements creating the impression of the Vulcans symbol for sun. It's only clear when its lit, which Nyota shouldn't do on a starship, but it sits, waiting to be installed in her families apartment. The colours are neutral, bursting into light once it's activated.

It's that heater she curls up in front of during a dust storm.

It's a minor thing really, but Nyota is feeling the colder today. Layers haven't helped, increasing the temperature of her room has proven useless, and even a hot drink can't seem to warm her insides.

"I think Nyota's got a fever."

She can hear the anxious voices of her roommates, but the words don't seem to meet her mind, the definitions becoming meaningless blathering.

Words continue to flow, nothing reaching the depths of her mind. She curls closer to her secret heater, chills making her teeth chatter.

"Drink this." Pelia is here now, and that doesn't make sense to Nyota.

"You can't be here," Nyota informs her, tears beginning to fall for incomprehensible reasons. "If you're here, where's Hemmer?"

"Nyota, you already know."

More secret words are exchanged, nothing reaching Nyota on her ocean floor. She can't breathe, this can't be real.

The transporter buzzes, plopping Nyota in a cot. Sickbay is cold, she burrows under the thin cotten sheet neatly folded at its end.

"Can I have my heater please?" It embarrassing to cry, but somehow she'd forgotten about the gaping hole in her soul. She'd forgotten about Hemmer.

"Where did you get that?" Christine is almost warm, her tricorder filling the space with beeps and whistles.

"Hemmer made it for me."

Nyota just kept talking, crying all the while. She feels as if she's watching herself from a distance, the tears irritating her skin, yet seemingly entirely beyond her control.

"Hemmer wouldn't want you to be this upset."

From her tone, Nyota could tell Christine was reaching the end of her tether. She'd never had much patience for crying, regardless of the circumstance.

So she rolls over, staring helplessly past the sun. It isn't lit, and part of her wonders if it will ever be lit again. But she finds herself closing her eyes, feeling completely exhausted by grief.

Something unspecified zaps into life, the sound dragging Nyota from her medicine induced dreams.

"You can use the heater now." Pelia is back, her eyes altogether far too knowing for Nyota's taste. "I've set up a forcefield."

"Its not personal."

"I know." She switches its on without another word. "Get better, Ensign."

End Notes

Written and disgarded for the Spill the Tea Challenge.

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