

Summary: There are no straight lines in life

Categories: [Andromeda](#) Characters: Dylan Hunt, Ensemble, Hunt/Harper, Hunt/Rommie

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## 1. [Chapter 1](#) by ZJAZZZ

Chapter 1 by ZJAZZZ

The Three Wise men

"I must get you a wedding present."

"Hohne, we've been married two years." Harper said. "I would of invited you to the wedding, but seeing as you were dead again and all..."

"Dead Mr. Harper," the Persied tittered, "I've been traveling the universes. If I had known you were getting married I would of stopped by...an anniversary gift perhaps."

Harper opened his mouth to say that it was unnecessary, but Rhade cut him off. "We would be most thankful for an anniversary gift."

Harper looked at Rhade pointedly. "My good friend has just risen from the dead, AGAIN. That is gift enough. Nietzscheans are such gift hogs!"

"He didn't raise from the dead. You heard him yourself he's been shopping in the far corners of the universe and if he wants to give us a gift well..."

Hohne watched them and an idea of ideas came to him that brought an intrigued smile to his face.

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"Run that by me again."

"My gift to you is a child." Hohne said pleased.

Dylan chocked on his drink and Beka hit him heartily on the back. Trance smiled amused by his reddened coloration.

"A what?"

"You see Mr. Harper the end result of reproduction is offspring made up of the gen💎💎"

"I know what a child is! I was shocked, okay. That's a big gift" Harper exclaimed.

"It was my understanding that a child was a relatively small thing in comparison to its adult state." Hohne pondered making a note on his data-pad.

"You could do that," Rhade asked speaking for the first time since Hohne had dropped the news at the dinner table. Harper looked at him curiously.

"It is my strong belief that I can. There are some calculations that don't work, but I think with your assistance Mr. Harper all things are possible."

Harper and Rhade shared a wordless look. "Yeah, let me have a look at what you've got so far."

"I would like to help too," Trance said almost bouncing with excitement in her seat.

Hohne looked to Harper. "Well, if your looking for answers to making impossible things possible, Trance is the sun avatar for the job."

"Wonderful." Hohne remarked regarding Trance in a way that made her blush.

"Does this mean I'm going to be an uncle?" Dylan asked.

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Harper came in late as he had for the past month. He sat down on the edge of the bed beside Rhade.

Harper took it as a sign of trust that Rhade didn't wake up on full attack mode at his presence like he had in the very beginning of their relationship.

"Lem, wake-up. Wake-up."

Rhade roused sleepily, but quickly was fully alert. "Hello Stranger."

Harper looked down at him. "It's done."

"You don't seem happy about it." Rhade said sitting up against the headboard.

"I've been working on it and I thought when it was perfect and finished I would feel differently, but I don't." Harper turned away from Rhade, "I just can't get past my fear of having something inside me. I mean I know it wouldn't be the same, but..."

He shuddered and Rhade pulled him back into his bare warm chest. "I'll do it." Harper whipped around in his arms and looked at him shocked. Rhade gave him a sappy smile, "Sheamus, I'd like to have a pride with you."

Harper didn't know what to say so he just kissed his husband.

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Rhade was looking positively green at his post after some patented Beka Valentine style maneuvering of the Andromeda to out run some enemy ships.

"Rhade" Dylan turned to give him an order, but saw the man's retreating form exiting the bridge.

"Sorry." Beka called after him.

Rhade made it to a lavatory where he promptly threw up. "Damn Beka" he grumbled then threw up again, "Stupid bridge with no bathrouumpf..."

When the urge to vomit seemed to pass he laid his head miserably on the toilet seat. Nietzscheans didn't get sick. Not even pregnant Nietzscheans. This illness, what Beka called 'morning sickness', was distinctively human and Rhade was blaming Harper wholly for this crime

against Nietzschean physiology.

After he cleaned up he made his way to their quarters to rest. He entered nearly tripping over one of Harper's 'tinkerings'. He grumbled, but didn't move it knowing Harper had his creative way of ordering his inventions. Rhade was only firm that the mad scientist not bring anything potentially deadly into the bed chambers after the eyebrow and perplexingly nose hair incident.

He collapsed on the bed. Exhaustion he understood after exertion, but he hadn't done anything warranting this kind of weariness. He had only closed his eyes for a few minutes when he heard the door slide open. He kept his eyes closed listening to Harper trying to be quiet so not to disturb him. Rhade didn't have the heart to tell Harper that he could never be quiet enough for his sensitive hearing.

He refrained from smiling when he felt Harper crawl into the bed with him. Rhade generally wore out around the same times and Harper, if not busy in his workroom, would join him for naptime.

Harper rubbed a calloused hand over Rhade's slightly rounded belly and whispered, "Breckin out of Telemachus by Sheamus."

Rhade snorted. "Breckin. I think not."

"I knew you weren't asleep." Harper pounced.

Rhade grinned up at him, "No fooling you. And absolutely not Breckin that's no name for a Nietzschean."

"This kid is going to be half human so that cuts the pompous name quotient in half." Harper surmised.

"Pompous." Rhade sputtered with too many comebacks. Harper kissed him to cut him off at the pass.

Rhade seemed fuzzy as to what he was going to say when Harper pulled away. "I made something for you and the baby." Rhade's hungry attention on Harper's lips was momentarily distracted.

Harper handed him a smooth, circular, metal object no more than an inch thick that fit easily in the palm of Rhade's hand. "What is---"? A sudden burst of energy erupted from the disk and a ball of light rotated like a brilliant star changing colors in accompaniment to Vedran music. Rhade marveled at it. "Oh Sheamus."

"I have to get back to work. Ship's taken some damage..." Rhade pulled him into a hard kiss.

"I, uh, take it you like it." Harper grinned.

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The ship shook violently waking Rhade from his nap prematurely. Whoever was responsible was going to pay severely he thought harshly. Andromeda's ship wide call for all pilots to their Slip Fighters had Rhade on his feet.

He rushed out into the halls and followed the stream of other crewmembers rushing to their posts.

"Rhade. Where do you think your going?"

"My Slip Fighter, Dylan." Rhade cringed as the words left his mouth.

"I believe we've had this conversation before Rhade. More than once." Dylan's said tiredly.

Rhade frowned, "You want to keep me safe."

"As safe as I can on a ship that's getting fired upon. Now Rhade if you're through sulking I could use your skills on the bridge if you can handle Ms. Valentine's driving."

Rhade looked green at the thought, but shored up his courage. "I can handle it."

They ran through the corridors with the ship rocking with subsequent hits.

"Warning! Gravitation Error! Warning! Gravitation Error!" Andromeda blared over the ship wide seconds before Rhade and Dylan were lifted from the floor and slammed into the ceiling.

They were dropped to the floor just as hard where Rhade lost consciousness.

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Rhade opened his eyes. All was quiet and the ship was still. He was in the medical bay. Trance had her back to him watching his monitors. She turned to him the monitors denoting his consciousness.

"Did I miss the fight"?

"The Vanguard were beaten back hours ago." She said softly.

Rhade felt strange his head hurt terribly. Trance came towards him with a pain reliever. He intervened, "Is it safe for the baby?"

"It doesn't matter now." Trance said.

Rhade was so stunned he didn't even feel the prick of the injection.

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Rhade wouldn't talk about the baby. When the others came to visit him and express their sorrow over his loss he pointedly ignored them.

Harper knew not to push though looking into those sad blue eyes made Rhade want to distance himself from him as well.

When he was allowed to return to their quarters he was relieved to not have to deal with so many people checking up on him trying to see if he was all right.

He was fine. He understood the situation and he was fine. He began cleaning the chamber. Hanging up clothes, rearranging furniture and moving Harper's `tinkerings'. He picked up the present that Harper had given him without thought and the tiny sun erupted. He froze watching it spin and change color, then sputter out of existence producing a rancid smell. Rhade hurled the metal disk across the room.

He felt sick, like he might vomit. He shouldn't be sick anymore he thought. He wasn't pregnant anymore. He wasn't pregnant. He didn't have a piece of Harper growing inside him anymore. He understood that and he was fine.

He was crying. How could that be? He was fine.

He felt arms wrap around his waist and looked down startled into Harper's face. He hadn't heard him come in.

"I've got you Harper," he said his voice tear clogged.

"You're stuck with me." Harper swore solemnly

Joi to the Worlds

"Andromeda! Locate Harper." Rhade demanded.

The ship's avatar appeared on the hall console screen. "I am unable to locate Harper. He has disabled my sensors."

Rhade looked distraught at hearing the words.

"Don't worry Rhade. We'll find him," Dylan said assuredly. Rhade had no doubt that they would find Harper. It was how they found him that caused this un- Nietzschean fear in him.

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Beka wanted to look away, but like anyone that happened across the remnants of a space battle one could not help but look on with morbid fascination. Trance went peacefully about her work.

"How can you be so calm," Beka snapped.

"I am not." Trance said continuing her wrapping.

Beka couldn't tell otherwise and she was angry about it, "This is your fault!"

Trance paused in her work surprised. "How is this my fault?"

Beka gaped at her. "You telling them they could have everything." Beka gestured to the swaddled infant now cradled in Trance's arms. "That their child would grow-up to fight the Darkness."

"I do not lie, Beka. Their child will do these things and much more."

"Trance..." Beka frowned knowing Trance's logic to be strange at best, but not delusional.

"Oh."

Trance gave her a small smile.

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They located Harper holed up in one of the crawl ways of the ship. Rhade let out a shaky breath. "I'm going in after him."

Dylan placed a comforting hand on his shoulder. "I'll just be out here if you need me."

The crawl way wasn't so small that Rhade had to actually crawl, but he did have to stoop. Harper sat dazed with a Force Lance in his hand not even seemingly aware of Rhade's presence.

"I found you." Rhade said softly. Usually that would cause Harper to quip that he had wanted to

be found. Rhade hoped that was the case.

Rhade sat back on his heels before him. "Sheamus, if you intend to use that Force Lance. Use it on me first because there is no way possible that I would go on after losing both you and Joi." The name elicited a full body shudder from Harper.

"Joi," Rhade repeated getting the same reaction. He swallowed and continued. "Joiful Hohne Rhade... out of Sheamus by Telemachus." His voice becoming hoarse at the lineage declaration.

The words broke something in Harper and he began to scream and batter at Rhade, "Shut-up! Shut-up! Don't say his name! Don't say it!"

Rhade let him batter him listening to the screams that seemed to be coming from everywhere as they bounced off the walls.

"I've got you, Harper." Rhade repeated softly.

Harper collapsed exhausted and could only manage to cry, "I'm sorry. I'm sorry."

"Shh, there's nothing to be sorry for," Rhade said thinking he meant the beating.

"It was my crappy genes that gave him a crappy immune system." Harper sobbed, "If I hadn't been a weak human..."

"Stop that! I wanted him, Sheamus, so badly with you. Only you." Rhade said trying to remain calm, "Neither of us had any idea...its not your fault."

Harper sobbed into the crook of Rhade's neck. He felt feverish to Rhade's skin and worry that he might become ill like their son caused him to hold him tighter.

"Hello?" He nearly told the intruder he would eviscerate them, but he saw that it was Trance and saw who she had with her.

"I thought you all would like to be together."

Harper looked up with watery blue eyes. Rhade felt Harper grip his arm painfully in reaction. He let go and shifted in Rhade's arms so that his back was pressed into Rhade's chest.

"Trance you said..." Harper's voice was hollow.

"I know what I said." Trance said simply.

Rhade snarled at her.

"It wasn't Joi."

Rhade heard the blood rushing in his ears. "Why would you..."? Rhade was caught between homicidal rage and absolute grief and couldn't manage to speak further.

"Would you have liked it better if I had spared you these two months of Joi?" Trance asked sincerely.

Rhade wanted to shout, 'Yes! A thousand times, yes!' but he knew it would be a lie. Harper opened his arms silently and Trance transferred the infant like the holiest of gifts.

Harper cradled the child close. He ran a finger through reddish-brown hair and kissed once pink cheeks. "He's so cold," his voice trembled.

Rhade looked at his son so quiet and handsome. Born weeks early he had appeared a miracle of good health and strangely delighted to be here---giggling, smiling, joyful. "It seems appropriate that a savior of the known and unknown universes would be so cheerful." Harper had mused admiringly of their infant son.

Now, Harper was sobbing again and Rhade buried his face in his hair listening to Harper's anguished repetition of, "My Joi, my Joi, my Joi..."

The 25th

Harper exited his workshop and ran right into the cross holographic image of the Andromeda Ascendant as well as its equally ticked android.

"Ladies." Harper backed up.

"You've disabled my sensors in the workshop." Holo Rommie stated.

"And prevented anyone's admittance." Rommie added.

"That's true." Harper said.

"What are you doing in there Harper?" Rommie demanded.

"It's a surprise."

"I'm a warship, Harper, I don't like surprises." Rommie stated firmly.

"You'll like this. It'll make you an even more powerful warship. Plus, it's shiny." Harper babbled.

"More powerful?" Holo Rommie sounded interested.

Harper nodded.

"It's not anything that will require us to quarantine and decontaminate the crew again, is it?" Rommie asked arms crossed.

"Sheesh. You eradicate the crew one time and you never hear the end of it." Harper complained.

"The crew was hairless for three months."

"A great look. Not everyone can pull off bald, but this crew looked quite fetching. If I say so myself and I do cause if I didn't who would be saying it---"

"Harper!" Romie interjected showing frustration even though technically emotionless. He stopped talking, which was a feat within itself. "Do you promise I won't have to seal off this part of ship due to you blowing a hole in the hull?"

Harper would have been insulted had that not been an occurrence just in the last two weeks. "I promise."

The two Rommies seemed to come to a decision and Holo Rommie disappeared and Rommie nodded to Harper and headed down the corridor.

Harper let out a sigh of relief and was heading off to pillage more parts when he heard something that made him stop in his tracks.

"Harper!"

"Damn." Harper muttered under his breath.

Rhade caught up with him in a few easy strides. Harper didn't even have the time to contemplate running.

"You stole the Centripetal Stabilizers from my Slip Fighter!"

Harper decided to feign innocence, "That was your Slip Fighter?"

"You know very well it was. It has the sign that says 'you must be this tall,'" Rhade gestured above Harper's head, "to ride'."

"I was going to tell you, but I, uh, forgot." Harper winced knowing it was the truth, but it wouldn't sound like it to Rhade.

"I could have been killed!"

"Genius cannot be hampered." Harper rationalized.

"It can, however, be thrown out of an airlock." Rhade growled advancing on him.

A blazing light coming from an adjacent corridor interrupted their argument.

Rhade looked at him, "Your project?"

"No." Harper said, "At least I hope not."

The light died just as soon as it appeared.

"Andromeda. What the hell was that?" Rhade called. There was no answer.

They cautiously headed towards the corridor and came face to face with ...Rhade.

Rhade, leather-clad, lengthy hair pulled back and bound, and a full beard, but Rhade just the same.

Rhade made a move towards his duplicate, but Harper grabbed his arm. "What are you crazy? No two objects yadda yadda space and time. Point being Kabloooo! I'm not so sure its safe to even be standing in the hall like this."

"Its not" the other Rhade said, "I'll have to return to my time soon."

"And what time would that be?" Rhade prompted.

"Ten years in the future," the other Rhade said hastily, "Look that doesn't matter what matters---"

"It doesn't matter!" Harper crowed, " I'd like to know, oh I dunno, who wins the next ten Interstellar Games, the numbers for Haltarian Dizian Lotto..."

"Harper..." Rhade warned, "My future self didn't come ten years in the past to give you gambling cheats!"



"Says you!"

"I think I would know myself better than anyone here...besides myself!"

Future Rhade cleared his throat bringing their attention back to him. He didn't seem annoyed almost wistful actually.

"Like I said there isn't much time," he sighed, " Seamus, you must come out now."

There was no response.

"Is Seamus here." Harper asked gesturing wildly at the empty space beside future Rhade.

"Seamus," Future Rhade snapped. There was a brief silence, and then a figure came around the curve of the hall.

Blonde-bobbed hair intermixed with gray, face a little older with visible wrinkles, a little paunchy, but it was definitely Harper cradling an infant protectively.

Harper gawked at himself and blurted out, "I've got gray hair! How come you don't have gray hair?"

"My superior genes," Rhade smirked at him.

"Lem, I can't!" Seamus pleaded with Future Rhade.

"Seamus, we must, you know this" Lem stressed.

Seamus looked down at the child and began to sob and Lem joined him unashamed. Cradling Seamus's face between his hands he leaned down and pressed a kiss to his forehead.

A startled "Wha?," escaped the usually unflappable Rhade.

"I, uh, ooooookay," Harper babbled, " I mean, just...What the hell?!"

Lem caressed the frightened child's face lovingly then Seamus pulled away from him walking determinately towards Rhade with the shrieking infant.

Watery blue eyes in sickly pale skin turned up to Rhade. "Here. Take her," he said haltingly, trying to hold off more tears.

Rhade stared at him dumbly. "Take the child!" Lem barked jarring the other from his stupor. Rhade took the thrust upon child.

Seamus looked at Harper and saw the questions swirling in his eyes. "Ask Trance." He said simply retreating towards Lem.

Seamus stumbled. "I've got you," Lem said catching him easily.

The blazing light appeared and when Rhade and Harper can see again the hall is empty before them and sound seems bereft except for the crying of the infant.

"I don't understand." Rhade said unconsciously rocking the infant.

"Let's find Trance."

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"Oh good, she's her!" Trance exclaimed happily on sight of her.

"You were expecting?" Harper gestured at the suddenly silent infant.

Trance gave a peculiar look at that and motioned for Rhade to hand over the baby. He did and watched her carefully as she laid the infant down and began to unswaddle her. Rhade noted that she possessed the beginnings of bone spurs.

Inside the wrap was a data-pad that Trance handed to Harper. It activated upon his touch. "December Rhade, out of Seamus by Telemachus..." Harper dropped the data-pad to the floor.

Rhade picked it up. "...born on the 25th on Tarn-Vedra with the enlisted help of the of the Persieds..."

"Tarn-Verdra." Rhade puzzled, "It doesn't exist."

"...take care of our beloved daughter."

That was the extent of the message.

"Is that it?" Rhade was stunned.

"She is your daughter," Trance said with a smile as the child tangled her hands in Trance's red locks.

"Even if it where possible." Harper snipped.

"It can be, it will be and has been", Trance pronounced, enigmatic as always.

"Why did they bring her here?" Rhade said having seen the pure anguish on the two men's faces.

"The future needs her, but she can't be there now. She needs to be here now to be there then." She explained.

"What?!" both men exclaimed confused.

"December is to fight the darkness in the future, but she was too young in the other future because you two experienced great loss before her happiness entered your life, which stalled her arrival and thus all was doomed to forever night."

Rhade still looked confused. "They brought her back to an earlier time so when the time comes she'll be old enough," Harper said distantly.

"That's right" Trance beamed, "Would you like to hold your daughter, Harper?"

"No!" he said turning swiftly, briefly catching Rhade's hurt look before he fled from the room.

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Rhade entered the workshop finding Harper tinkering away feverishly as per usual.

"We should talk," Rhade said moving up behind him causing Harper to jump.

"Man with a laser-torch here. You're lucky I didn't sear your eyebrows not to mention the top of your head off Nitech." Harper turned off the torch and put it down on the worktable.

"How the hell did you get in here anyway? I've got locks, upon locks, not to mention a few nasty traps." He pondered, going over his security system on his data-pad.

Rhade pointedly ignored the inquiry. "We have a daughter together."

Harper flinched.

"She has your eyes." Rhade added.

"Oh yeah, well she has your..." Harper knocked on Rhade's bone spurs and walked away.

"Harper?"

"What!" Harper snapped, "I'm kind of freaked out by what having a daughter with you means."

"Am I so terrible?"

"Yes! No, I mean, I don't know what I mean!"

They were silent.

"I was just going about my business being an all around genius when wham! I'm told I've completely lost my mind in the future." Harper's face showed disgust.

He made his way up a ladder towards one of the supply shelves just in need for as much space between Rhade and himself as possible.

Rhade moved to the bottom of the ladder, " I don't remember that being said."

Harper made a frustrated sound and turned slightly on the ladder, " Obviously, somehow in the course of the next ten years I go mad because that is the only absolute freakin' way that I would ever have anything to do with a dirty Nitechian after the things they did let alone have a baby... something squirming inside me." Harper shuddered, "After the Magog larvae I don't think so, pal."

"We're married, " Rhade said.

"What?!"

"In the message I saw my pride's arm band on you. Married for nine years by the marking." Rhade said surprisingly calm about it.

"Say what, that would mean I lost my mind sooner thaaaaaaa..." Harper screamed as he slipped from the ladder falling backwards.

"Harper, I've got you" Rhade breathed above him.

Harper opened his clear blue-eyes finding himself being gently lowered to the floor. Rhade crouched over him looking worried.

"I know," Harper said softly.

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