
ArdOS v1.61b - ALL DIMENSIONAL TRAVELER Model 1.22

B-o-o/t-u-p~ ~s_e/q~u/e~n/c_e/ /i-n~i/t-i-a/t/e-d-!/ -P_l/e/a-s_e~ -d/
o~ ~n/o/t_ -p/o-w-e/r/ ~o-f-f/ -y/o-u/r_ /d-e/v/i/c/e-..

Initia|izing prel|imina|y memdisk scan...

...

Disabling internal memory lock.

INFO: Allocated in memdisk_oob_right+0x3d/0x75 [test_nirvana] age=0
cpu=0 pid=9385

__slab_alloc+0x4b4/0x4f0

memdisk_cache_alloc_trace+0x10b/0x190

memdisk_oob_right+0x00/0xff [test_nirvana]

init_module+0x9/0x47 [test_ascension]

load_module+0x2cb3/0x3b20

SYS_infinity_module+0x76/0x80

system_call_fastpath+0x12/0x17

INFO: Object 0xffff8800693bc558 @offset=1368 fp=0xffff8800693bc720

SYS_MOUNTED

SYS_CHECK=COMPLETE

MEM_CHECK=COMPLETE

Re-enabling internal memory lock.

...

4

The Beginning of the End

Vari woke up screaming Mira's name.

It was a long, continuous scream – one that carried no small amount of pain with it as it carried its way out into the walls of her room and into the halls of the hospital she now rested in. Her arms and legs thrashed underneath the fabric of her bedsheets as her voice finally faded into breathless panting, her violent movements reigniting subtle remnants of the pain and exhaustion she'd experienced from fighting in her previous round... all while painful memories of her wife danced their way into her head all over again.

Upon feeling her lover's name die out into deathly, rattling breaths against her lips, Vari simply sat there for a moment – her anxiety audibly piercing the silence of her room as her mind suddenly began spiraling into an oppressive maelstrom of emotions. Pain, sorrow, fear and detachment – all of this and more she felt as her vision narrowed and her breathing grew shallow. The growing dread and panic inside of her only seemed to snowball once she didn't immediately recognize her surroundings, and with wild, desperate eyes, Vari clutched her hand against her chest as she frantically turned from side to side, her heart beating against the palm of her hand while she hyperventilated even further into the throes of a blossoming panic attack.

Where was she?

Why was she here?

But most importantly... where was her sword?

Again and again, Vari panted breathlessly – her hand trembling helplessly against the heart which threatened to beat straight out of her bosom until finally...

She felt a paw resting gently on her arm.

With a sharp, dry gasp, Vari quickly turned her attention down towards the face of a tall, furry fox which she could now see was leaning anxiously against her bedside and looking directly at her. Even through the haze of her delirium, Vari could plainly see the abundance of worry in her furry visitor's eyes – almost as if it were attempting to beam a message to her that she couldn't quite hear yet, despite how badly she was trying to listen. Still, just like her surroundings, she didn't immediately recognize him through her growing panic – and as she sat there drowning in the waves of her growing fear and terror, Vari eventually began to hear the whispers of her name being called on repeat as she continued to hyperventilate atop her tangled bedsheets. *Va-ri-la. Va-ri-la.* She could almost *hear* the crowd still chanting her name as she tried and failed to recall just how exactly she'd gotten here from the colosseum, and it was only when the sound of her racing heartbeat finally began to fade from her ears that a sliver of recognition made its way to the forefront of her senses. Again, she looked down to face him...

"Varila!" Korinth exclaimed again, his voice now finally commanding a larger presence inside her head as he repeated her name for what must have been the dozenth time in a row.

"Korinth...?" Vari trembled, the mere recollection of his name finally bringing her out of the fog which had so thoroughly blinded her senses. Instantly, the glimmer in Korinth's eyes softened at the sound of his own name; it seemed he had finally gotten through to her.

"Yes, Miss Varila... I am here." the fox answered with a 'sigh' of relief.

'I am here.'

His 'voice' now rang as clearly as a bell in her mind as those simple words of reassurance looped themselves on repeat. The subtle tinge of relief in his words had almost felt infectious as well, the sensation stubbornly planting itself inside her head and forcing her anxieties aside while she shakily caught her breath. She could actually see the blurred edges of her vision coming back into frame again as the mere presence of someone familiar to her began to calm her down; and, although Korinth had indeed spotted the sense of calm which now flooded her lavender eyes, he did not yet remove his paw from her – the fox instead opting to let it linger on her skin for a while as she continued to pant breathlessly atop her bedsheets.

It was a long, much-needed silence which fell between them as Vari sat there in her bed.

Now wiping the beginnings of tears from her eyes, Vari gradually felt her breathing return to some sense of normalcy as the reality of her surroundings finally began to set in. Misty lavender eyes analyzed the hospital room she found herself in as she allowed Korinth's paw to rest against the bare skin of her arm – its layout nearly identical to the one she'd been admitted into after the end of her first round. Considering how familiar it was now starting to appear to her, she thought it strange that she hadn't immediately recognized it upon waking up... but she supposed that the fog which lingered from her rest – or lack thereof – had left her particularly vulnerable to feeling lost and disoriented.

Once she was finished examining her surroundings, she looked down to examine herself instead as a subtle tugging sensation eventually caught her attention. The array of tubes and wires she found attached to her forearm immediately caused her heart to skip a beat once she turned to face them – the woman realizing that she had actually been hooked up to a small array of monitors and machines this entire time.

Vari looked at them with mild amounts of concern as she quietly raised her arm to examine them. What was all of this? Her uneasiness only seemed to skyrocket once she realized that most, if not all of the tubes looked as if they had been fed directly into the veins of her forearm while she was unconscious – the act allowing substances she couldn't identify to be fed directly into her bloodstream while she mended from her wounds. It was a far more complicated setup than what she experienced last time she was in the hospital; though then again, the injuries she'd sustained from Kiri and Azta felt much different compared to the ones she'd received from Andrea. Each wound felt... intentional, and most certainly dug a little deeper than she'd initially given them credit for.

Suddenly, a hiss left her lips. Ugh, her shoulder and abdomen were still killing her; she could only hope that the conclusion of her third round wouldn't be as nearly dramatic as the end of her second.

It wasn't long, however, before her expression abruptly came to life as she suddenly remembered something important to her. Her eyes widened as she swiftly turned to face Korinth again, the fox now seemingly lost in thought himself as his eyes quietly bore holes into the floor underneath him.

Gods, of course! How could she have forgotten?

The end of Round Two.

"Mira..." Vari whispered. The sound of her voice immediately caught the attention of the fox again, who with curious eyes, quickly turned back to meet the Leporian's gaze as he cautiously placed his paw back down onto the tiled floor. She couldn't help but notice the hint of confusion in his features once he did

so, but actively chose to ignore it as she instead decided to turn her attention towards the tubes in her arm.

"I've got to go find her." Vari told him, the woman now tugging at the tubes in a hurried attempt to remove them. She needed to leave as fast as possible.

"M-Miss Varila-?"

"I need to go find her before she gets herself in trouble, or does something stupid, or Gods forbid gets herself tangled up in the bloody mess that is this tournament." Vari remarked. Korinth, however, responded only with silence as his brow gradually furrowed in confusion. It was when Vari saw this that she let out an impatient scoff and paused her fidgeting with the tubes, clearly displeased with having to explain herself. She really didn't have time for this.

"My wife, Mira. The girl you saw at the end of the fight? She had cat ears and wore a red dress." Vari explained, now resuming her fidgeting. "That was her. I need to know where she went after I passed out."

"Miss Varila... art thou certain you feel well?" Korinth replied with concern.

Again, Vari stopped pulling at the tubes.

Her burgeoning frustration began to grow inside of her upon hearing that particular answer – her face darkening with vexation as she then turned her attention back towards the fox's eyes with questioning annoyance. Was he being serious right now? Did he truly not know what she was talking about – or had this meant that he didn't even bother to watch her match at all?

No, surely he had watched it. Surely he had granted her *that* much.

"Don't, Korinth. I know you saw her too." Vari intoned, her voice morphing into something almost unrecognizable as it lowered into a deadly hum. She knew Mira would have been pretty hard to miss, considering the fact that she had somehow managed to make her way dead-center into the Colosseum. The thought that the fox somehow could have missed her despite her placement in the arena was borderline ridiculous to Vari.

“Miss Varila...” Korinth said after a brief pause. “My apologies, but I truly do not know what thou art referring to. Is it possible that more rest is needed?”

“What? No.” Vari said incredulously. “I’ve had enough rest. Did you even watch my match? You would have seen her if you’d bothered.”

“I assure thee, I witnessed thine match in full.” Korinth replied. “Though try as I might, I can recall no such woman who approached thee upon its conclusion. Art thou certain you no longer need rest? I am prepared to fetch a nurse, should thou wish it.”

“I don’t need a fucking nurse, Korinth.” Vari growled, the woman now sitting further upright in her bed. “What I *need* is for you to stop beating around the bush and tell me where my wife went.”

“Varila, I assure thee-“

“Red dress. Cat ears.”

“Varila-“

“Blonde hair. Pale skin.”

“Miss Varila, please-“

“Blue eyes. *Cat tail.*”

“Miss Varila, *there was no such woman.*”

The fox then recoiled in an uncharacteristic display of fright, however, upon seeing Vari finally slam her fist down onto the plastic railing of her hospital bed – her strike cracking and nearly shattering it in a furious display of frustration which had now boiled over completely. It seemed that through all of

Korinth's denial and supposed obliviousness, Vari had finally lost her patience with him... and the confused look on Korinth's face had done nothing to assist in the matter.

"DON'T BULLSHIT ME!" Vari all but screamed. The Leporian quickly sat herself upright again, nearly causing the fox to jump back for a moment as Vari's explosive display of anger caught him completely off guard. Even during her most emotional outbursts, Korinth had never seen her this angry before... and yet, there was also a conviction to her words which was impossible to deny.

"She was there. She was *right fucking there*, and you're telling me you didn't see her?! SHE HAD CAMERAS ON HER FOR GODS' SAKES!" Vari yelled. "Everyone with a *pulse* must have seen her walk into the arena, so why didn't *you*?!"

"Varila, please calm yourself! No one but Miss X came to greet thee upon the conclusion of thine match." Korinth answered. Had he spoken with his mouth instead of his mind, there perhaps would have been a tremble in his voice as he gave her his timid response. "Had anybody other than an official entered the arena after thine match, the Crossguards would have known and I am certain I would have seen it. I could perhaps examine the footage again to be certain, but..."

Upon hearing his voice trail off into silence again, Vari paused and her expression changed – albeit imperceptively. No longer was there simply rage in her expression, but denial as well.

No, she thought.

He was lying.

"Bastard..." Vari whimpered, her voice now trembling with pain. Her arms were shaking again, and her lips were quivering as she stubbornly clenched her hand into another tightened fist. She was now so upset she could cry all over again, and although she had known the fox to speak in circles before... this time, she just couldn't do it. She simply could not take any misdirection right now – especially when she was so close to finding the love of her life again.

With a foul-tempered glare, Vari again cracked her fist down onto the rail of her hospital bed – this time causing it to crumble completely and shatter onto the floor in pieces.

“WHY?!” Vari screamed again, tears now trickling from her eyes. “WHY WON’T YOU JUST TELL ME WHERE SHE WENT?!”

Again, the fox recoiled in fear. “Miss Varila, I-“

“You just want me to keep fighting, don’t you?! YOU DON’T WANT TO DEPRIVE YOUR GODDESS OF HER SHOW, IS THAT IT?!”

“No, Miss Varila...” Korinth pleaded, the fox growing visibly more nervous as Vari’s rage only seemed to intensify. “Believe me, it is not mine intention to-“

“WELL I’LL GIVE HER A SHOW!” Vari shouted. Her tears were now dripping freely into the fabric of her hospital gown as her anger grew even fiercer – roars echoing out against the walls of her hospital room and trickling out into the hallway beyond. “FUCK EVERYONE ELSE! I’ll fight the God Eater *herself* if that’s what you want me to do! I’ll ram a sword so far into her heart that she might even experience a *fraction* of the despair I feel once *I RIP IT OUT OF HER CHEST!* NOW WHERE IS SHE?! WHERE IS THAT SADISTIC FUCKING-“

“**VARILA!**” Korinth interjected, his voice now ringing so loudly in her ears that she couldn’t help but hiss from the pain as her violent train of thought was swiftly and unceremoniously derailed. She reflexively placed her hands up onto her rabbit ears in an attempt to block out his voice, even going as far as to briefly tuck them down onto her head in order to try and muffle the fox’s words into silence. It was whenever this didn’t work, however, that she merely stared at him with tears still trickling down her face – her trembling muscles punctuated with rageful daggers in her eyes as she waited for him to speak.

“Miss Varila... I would not, nor would my Madame *ever* keep such a thing from thee – even for the sake of the tournament.” Korinth finally said, his ‘voice’ now winding down into a gentler, much calmer tone. “Like any fox, the God Eater is known to have a penchant for mischief... but she is not cruel. She bears neither the want nor the need to resort to such measures for her own entertainment. And if it is the veracity of mine words which concern thee, then please, ask thyself; hast thou ever *once* known me to lie during our time together? For any reason?”

There was a long, strained pause between the two of them once the fox made his plea. From where she still sat, Vari could now spot a glimmer of something pitiable in his eyes that she hadn’t been able to see before. Was it fear? Sadness, perhaps? She couldn’t entirely be sure, but whatever it was, it had been more than enough to start melting Vari’s rage down into a lingering sense of guilt once she saw it – one

which sunk into the deepest pits of her stomach as fury gradually made way for sorrow. Then, after a brief moment of silence, that anger morphed even further into a vile mix of guilt and regret which only further urged the tears to trickle from her lavender eyes.

Eventually, the Leporian couldn't help but dejectedly lower her face into her hand once she realized that no, Korinth couldn't – *wouldn't* lie to her. He never had.

That left only one cruel possibility.

"Damnit..." Vari bemoaned, the cracks in her voice arriving just as quickly as her grief. She then shook her head for a moment as she hid herself into the palms of her hands – waves of realization quickly washing over her as she mentally walked herself through the last few moments she'd spent standing in the Colosseum. She thought of Mira again; the suddenness of her appearance, the way she'd smiled at her, the lack of reaction upon spotting her drenched in her own blood. Even the way her dress shimmered against the sunlight had seemed a touch too perfect at the time...

In truth, it was the first thought she'd had once she saw her; but she never wanted to admit it until Korinth finally made her realize...

"It wasn't real." she finally sniffled. Another tear slipped through her fingers as her voice faltered with another sorrowful crack, her rage instantly folding in on itself and disappearing into despair as she uttered the realization out loud.

A stifled sob escaped her as Korinth looked to the floor in sympathetic silence. Of *course* it wasn't real, Vari thought to herself. How could it have been? Mira's sudden appearance, the obliviousness from Miss X and the Crossguards around her... she'd even *looked* like she'd jumped straight out of Vari's head, wearing the Leporian's favorite shade of red and sparkling in that flowing burgundy dress of hers. Why would Mira have been here, in the Crossroads of all places, wearing the same dress she wore on the night of their first kiss? It didn't make sense – Vari *knew* it didn't make sense – but she had so badly wanted to buy into the illusion that she had been willing to suspend her disbelief... if even for a moment.

Eventually, Vari didn't bother to try and stifle her sobs anymore as they left her in full force.

"Thou hast my deepest and most sincere apologies, Miss Varila..." Korinth said as she wept. "I only wish I were mistaken. Thou had lost quite a bit of blood from the struggle with Miss Grant, and the fumes

from the fire left thine condition much worse for wear than it normally would have been. Thine condition was so severe, in fact, that many of the nurses stood ready to record the time of thine death as the doctors tended to thine injuries – though thankfully, such an event never came to pass...”

Another heart-wrenching sob escaped from Vari’s lips as she wept. Not only had she hallucinated Mira’s presence, but there was a good chance she had done so as a result of her own trap. How typical of her to cause her own suffering, Vari thought, as she hid herself deeper into her hands...

“From what I understand, Miss Grant herself has yet to awaken from her injuries.” Korinth continued. “I pray for her recovery as well, though I find myself contemplating whether both of thine injuries could have been avoided had I simply managed to make it to thee in time – before thy match could begin...”

“So where were you, then...?” Vari asked, her voice still trembling as it seeped through her fingers. The question gave Korinth pause as he suddenly turned his attention back towards Vari again, the woman’s face remaining firmly buried underneath her hands.

“Miss Varila?” Korinth asked, but it was the moment he said something that Vari’s explosive anger revealed itself again – even if it only reverted back into sorrow.

“I SAID WHERE WERE YOU?!” Vari cried, her expression now twisted with more sadness than rage as she stubbornly threw her fists back down onto her mattress. “I LOOKED for you, damnit! SEARCHED for you in that giant fucking crowd, but *you weren’t there!* I went into that match blind – *alone*, because you couldn’t be assed to just be there for me for FIVE FUCKING MINUTES! What ‘business’ was so important that you couldn’t see me off, that you decided to just throw me to the wolves?!”

Despite Vari’s expectations, however, the question seemed to give Korinth great pause – her words goading no immediate attempt from him to justify his absence from her. Instead, he merely shot another solemn look at her before veering his attention down to the floor for a moment – a great deal of contemplation now plain in his expression. Had she not known the fox better, she might have thought that he was attempting to formulate some half-assed explanation in order to better excuse himself. It was right when Vari opened her mouth to begin accusing him of this, however, that Korinth finally turned his attention back up at her to speak.

“I’d like to show you something.” The fox finally told her.

The response was succinct and direct, and his sudden shift in tone elicited a curiosity in Vari that, if even for the briefest of moments, broke her pained expression and replaced it with curiosity instead. She hadn't quite expected that response, and it didn't give her the impression that he was going to start rattling off the same long-winded soliloquies that he usually gave her. Even so, the Leporian forced a scowl at him in response, glaring at him for a moment while the fox proceeded to burrow his maw underneath her hospital bed and begin searching. She had no idea what he thought he might find under her hospital bed, but she was certain it would amount to wasted effort regardless.

That was what she thought at least, until he finally lifted his maw out from underneath her bed – and presented to her a fully refurbished ADT, held firmly between his teeth.

Vari swore she heard a soft gasp leave her lips as she then watched him place it onto the bed and nuzzle it even further into her lap – a solemn, yet awe-struck expression streaked right across her face as she quietly examined its new pristine exterior.

It... it looked perfect.

Were she to ever retrieve her visor again, she would have expected it to be much more damaged than it actually appeared. She would have expected it to be charred and chipped from the forest fire, and the glass of her visor still cracked from the damage it had received during her fight with Kiri... and yet, no such damage remained apparent. If anything, the visor appeared just as flawless as it had appeared the day Vari found it – the day she'd spotted it lying in wait inside the vault of a long-lost civilization, just waiting for somebody to try and unlock its secrets.

Eventually, the neural glove which remained fixed to her other arm appeared to light up in response to detecting its visual counterpart. The visor, too, appeared to come to life – automatically pairing and running through its bootup sequence the moment both components detected one another. Through all of the shock and amazement which coursed throughout her still-shaking body, Vari truly had no words. She genuinely couldn't believe what she was seeing, nor could she believe that Korinth had actually managed to find her device and *fix it*. With teary eyes and quivering lips, Vari turned her attention back towards the fox as the ADT quietly ran its diagnostics in the background.

She didn't know what to say.

"How...?" she finally uttered. At this, the fox merely beamed a smile through his eyes; she knew he could sense the sheer elation behind her voice.

“There are some truly amazing individuals who reside in the Crossroads, Miss Varila.” Korinth replied. “Individuals whom I bear a great deal of respect for... and vice versa.”

At this, Vari quietly took the visor of her ADT into her hands to examine it. Piercing lavender eyes studied the diagnostics which scrolled across its HUD faster than she could even read, the process almost resembling that of a small computer sifting its way through various processes and commands. Though she had no doubt that Korinth had been able to pull various strings in order to retrieve her device, she firmly decided that the vagueness of Korinth’s answer was anything but satisfactory to her. She needed to know more.

“Yeah, but...” Vari said, her eyes reflecting the subtle light which emanated from her visor. “It was destroyed, wasn’t it? If the fall didn’t break it, the fire definitely would have.”

She then looked back to Korinth, a burning curiosity still present in her bewildered expression. “So how? How did you fix it, much less even find it?”

Upon hearing this question, the smile in Korinth’s eyes softened a touch. Curiously, it looked for a moment as if he would search for another way to dodge the question... though it wasn’t long before the fox finally shook his head and met Vari’s gaze with a hint of resolve.

“Despite his nonchalance, Tenki is quite dedicated in the service towards his Madame.” Korinth answered. “A minor fib may have been required on my part in order for me to convince him to help me retrieve the device’s remains. Twas a simple enough matter for him to locate the dimension in which thou and Miss Kiriata fought during thine first round, but thou should know he advocated quite heavily towards allowing him to keep the device for himself. It was only once I had suggested to him that the Madame had personally taken an interest in it that he finally relinquished it into my possession.”

At this, Vari solemnly narrowed her eyes back down towards the device she still held in her hands. He’d actually gone that far...?

“I then solicited the help of many different individuals in the days of your recovery.” the fox explained. “For all of the Crossroad’s many scientists, mages, and engineers, not one of them knew how to identify the inner mechanisms locked away inside the visor itself, nor did they desire to even chance their hand at dissecting it. Each of them had deemed the device’s components far too unsalvageable to make such an attempt. I admit that eventually, even I felt that mine efforts would amount to naught... until I was

sent on an errand from Miss Saki regarding a request for a man stationed within the Iron Claw – who much to mine surprise, seemed quite practiced in the art of refurbishing magically-infused technology.”

Vari merely stared at the visor in her hands as another tear quietly trailed its way down the length of her bronzed cheek. The Leporian merely half-listened now as Korinth continued his explanation.

He’d done all of this? For her?

“It should be noted that he marveled quite heavily at the device’s inner components – not to mention their microscopic size.” Korinth said, not yet noticing the tears in Vari’s eyes. “Seeing as how I did not possess the funds, however, it admittedly took another well-placed fib or two to convince him to make an attempt at repairing the device. With more time, he perhaps could have tried his hand at deciphering the information present within the ADT as well – although he expressed certain... ‘difficulties’ in doing so, I fear.”

“Korinth...”

“Regardless, the device should well and truly remain operable. He noted that the device still bears some residual damage which is impossible to repair, though he assured thee that the device retains much of its original functionality.”

“Korinth.”

“There was also the matter of residual DNA located within the visor. He expressed his highest form of astonishment at the fact that the device could actually record previous users in such a-“

“Korinth!!!” Vari cried, her voice finally breaking the fox from his long-winded train of thought and causing him to turn his attention back towards her.

It was only once Korinth finally noticed the tears trickling freely down Vari’s cheeks that Korinth fell into silence.

“Thank you.” Vari whimpered.

Another sharp crack of her voice punctuated her words as she then placed the visor back down into her lap. For a moment, it appeared as if Korinth didn't quite know how to respond to such genuine gratitude – especially when one considered the fact that they had been uttered by Vari of all people – though the surprise which lingered in the fox's eyes was nothing in comparison to the shock he felt once Vari suddenly reached over to grab him...

...and pulled him into a long, tearful embrace.

She couldn't believe it. Tears trickled down Vari's face and into Korinth's fur for a moment as she hid her tears deep into his neck, a wild torrent of emotions surging throughout Vari's being as she held him closely against her. Mere moments ago, she'd been so angry at him – so eager to goad him into an explosive argument. But now, the Leporian's cold and pained exterior had completely melted from the one hint of warmth for anybody she'd felt in an extremely long time. Guilt and regret only seemed to pile on top of each other as she recalled the ferocity with which she'd just accused Korinth of lying mere moments beforehand; and soon, it seemed like the tears wouldn't stop – prompting Vari to suddenly retract herself away from the embrace in a futile attempt to wipe them away from her face.

Even through her tears, however, Vari could still see that smug little smile in Korinth's eyes.

"Twas nothing, Miss Varila. Truly." Korinth beamed as Vari continued to wipe her tears. "The work was accomplished by much brighter minds than mine. I was merely the messenger."

Vari sniffled as she finally managed to gain some semblance of control over her emotions; though it was much more difficult than she imagined to repair the dam once it was broken. Still, she managed a weak chuckle through her tears as he refused to take any credit for his actions. Whether he'd done so out of a genuine sense of humility or some ham-fisted attempt for more praise, Vari didn't know or care. Regardless, she simply looked at the fox with the remnants of a brief smile on her face – an expression she rarely wore, and one that few witnessed.

It wasn't long, however, before Vari eventually lifted the ADT back into her hands to examine it again. She might have been tempted to try the visor on if it hadn't always felt so uncomfortable on her.

"I must admit, however – I was not aware that Mira had also used the device." Korinth said, the poignant pause between them being broken and causing the subtle smile on Vari's lips to suddenly

transform into a look of surprise. Her lavender eyes flashed over towards the fox's in response, and for a moment, it seemed as if Vari might not say anything in response.

That is, until she again placed the visor down into her lap and sighed.

"So the egghead figured that out too, huh?" Vari solemnly asked him. Korinth nodded in reply.

"He spoke of a certain 'memory chip' implanted within the device." Korinth told her. "One which had recorded the DNA sequence of every single person who had once operated it. Much to mine surprise, it seems thou were not the first person to use the ADT – but rather, a person who had simply registered themselves as 'Mira'. It did not take much imagination for me to make the connection."

At this, Vari merely nodded. A hint of pain had now returned to her expression as her eyes solemnly drifted off to the side – the guilt, misery, and regret she felt before now making its way back in full force, but for different reasons.

"I..." Vari whispered, the subtle cracks in her voice lingering still as she searched for the right words. "I never did get the chance to tell you about her, did I?"

"No, thou did not." Korinth answered. He then sat himself down onto the tiled floor as he continued to maintain his attention on the woman in front of him. "The love thou bearest for her must be remarkable for thee to pursue her for so long, is it not?"

"Yeah..." Vari replied, the sorrow in her misty eyes once again making itself apparent. "I... I love her so fucking much, Korinth."

At this, the fox merely nodded. He then continued to look up at her for a while, the fox seemingly going back and forth between the questions he wanted to ask and the ones which carried the least risk. Eventually, however, he opted to break the brief silence which had once more fallen between them.

"I must confess that I am still curious to learn more of her, Miss Varila." Korinth replied. "If thou art amenable to it, I would ask permission to hear more before visiting hours come to a close."

With a half-hearted chuckle, the Leporian met his gaze once more. "I already said I would, you know." she reminded him. "But... yeah, I guess I can do that. I just... don't know where to begin."

"A veritable conundrum, to be sure." Korinth told her. "But if the start of thine story concerns thee, then why not start from the beginning?"

With another pause, Vari hummed under her breath for a moment in response. There was so much she wanted to tell him about her; she wanted to tell him about the day they first met, how they became friends, and how obvious it had been when Mira had formed the biggest crush on her. She wanted to talk about the night of their first kiss, the way they danced under moonlit bard-song, and all of the little kisses and 'I love yous' which swiftly came afterwards. Vari wanted to tell him about every laugh they had afterwards, every fight, and every loving embrace. And Gods, more than anything, Vari wanted to tell Korinth about their wedding day - about how they rode out of the cathedral together and spent the entire day holding each other in their arms.

A tear added itself to the pile on her hospital gown once she recalled the happiest day of her life.

"Yeah..." Vari sniffled, the woman quickly wiping a tear from her face before looking up at him with another smile. "From the beginning, then."