Avatar Fan Fiction – My Sister's Blood, by Jerathai

Neytiri stood over an open pit that had been dug by grieving Omaticaya. Lying in the bottom of the hole, curled up as if in sleep, was the body of her sister Sylwanin. Loving hands had sponged the blood from her sister's back; from this angle she could not see the holes left by the bullets that had taken her sister's life.

Neytiri had barely spoken a word since it had happened. In her mind's eye she kept seeing Sylwanin running right at her, her face full of fear, then remembered hearing the *crack* of gunfire. Neytiri had been looking right into her sister's eyes and had seen the life-light go out, followed by the now-lifeless form's slamming into the ground. The gunfire had continued, people had been screaming and running – and she had heard none of it. As Teekan had roughly grabbed her and manhandled her unresisting body to safety, all she had comprehended was the sight of her sister's lifeless body lying in the dirt.

The clan was outraged and grief-stricken, but before the war parties went out to exact vengeance the dead must be properly laid to rest. Mo'at had choked and stammered on the sacred words and had been stopped by her tears a number of times, but would permit no one else to perform this final service for her eldest daughter.

Now it was time for the final goodbye. Neytiri was at a total loss; custom encouraged a love one to offer the gift of a flower or some such token to the deceased. *It's not enough,* she thought. Many others had left such tokens. She scanned the grave; her sister's body was nearly covered with flowers.

The motion of her head caused her braids to swing enough to make the beads in her hair click together. *When did Sylwanin braid them into my hair? Just two days ago?* As she looked at her sister's body, bow in hand, through the curtain of beads, an answer to her need presented itself to her thoughts.

Neytiri drew her knife with one hand and grasped a handful of braids with the other. One slice with the glass-sharp blade and they fell free of her head. Many gasped. Mo'at stifled a moan against Eytukan's shoulder. To bury part of oneself with the deceased was a powerful and ominous act.

There were more gasps when she carefully jumped down into the open grave. Being careful not to disturb anything else, she removed Sylwanin's bow from the cold hand and laid the sheaf of severed braids in its place. Neytiri touched her sister's cheek one last time in farewell, and climbed out of the earth. There was

an undercurrent of grim and fierce approval as the people saw the bow in her hand.

She left as soon as her mother said the final words; she did not want to see the Omaticaya fill in the grave. She headed directly for Hometree, intending to go to her sleeping-space, where everyone would leave her alone.

When Neytiri got to the space she shared with her parents, she realized her mistake. There were too many memories here. She and Sylwanin had grown up together in this space. Moreover, she realized that her mother would definitely have something to say regarding her remaining daughter's shocking act.

A decision crystallized in Neytiri's thoughts. The beloved sister of her childhood had died; let her childhood die with Sylwanin. She grabbed a carry net and swiftly threw her meager possessions into it. She gave the place one last look and then ran up the Tree, to the top levels where the clan's singles hung their hammocks.

She found an unclaimed spare and tied her bag of belongings to the anchor rope to indicate that it was now occupied. She jumped into it and curled herself around her sister's bow. With that act, the tears and rage finally came. *Sylwanin's bow will avenge Sylwanin's death, by the hand of Sylwanin's sister!* she swore silently to Eywa. Neytiri the tsahik-apprentice was no more. Now was the time of Neytiri the Hunter come.