

Avatar Fan Fiction – Tribute, by Jerathai

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Neytiri was sitting in the warm sunshine outside New Hometree enjoying a rare lazy morning. Jake was off teaching some hunters and she had some time to herself.

She laid a hand over her abdomen and smiled tenderly. It was still too early in the pregnancy for her to be able to feel their child moving, but it gave her great pleasure to think about the baby. Was it a boy? A girl? Would it look more like her or Jake? Neytiri grinned as she remembered Mo'at's long ago snide comment about the size of Jake's eyes – her mother certainly wouldn't object to those eyes on a grandchild!

Perhaps the baby would inherit some of Mo'at's spot-patterns. *Mother's patterns are so beautiful. They look like the most delicate of ferns.*

Wouldn't it be wonderful if her child had Eytukan's proud nose? *It would almost be a message from Father, a message of joy and blessing that he Sees us from within Eywa and is happy for us*, she thought wistfully. Or maybe her firstborn would have her sister Sylwanin's graceful tail.

Of course, our child could well resemble someone in Jake's family too. Neytiri realized with a start that she had no idea what anyone in her beloved's family looked like. *Well, except for his twin, of course*, she mused.

Now that was an interesting thought. *However much our child looks like Jake, it will also look like his brother.*

Her mate had told her the story of how his twin's death had been the catalyst for his own journey to Pandora. *So sad. How horrible to die such a meaningless death – and how amazing that Eywa could take such an event and use it to create such great good!*

Neytiri slowly sat up straight as her thoughts focused on Jake's brother. *I never saw this man - her hands caressed her abdomen - and my child will never meet its uncle, even though he is in a way responsible for everything that has happened here.*

The tsahik frowned to herself in some distress. *If it were not for Tom's death, Jake would not have come here. He would not have come to the Omaticaya, would not have saved the Na'vi and the Tree of Souls from the insane ones. I*

would be mated to Tsu'tey, and this child - she covered her belly with both hands protectively - this child would not exist.

She spoke out loud in a contemplative tone, "If it were not for this man, so much would be destroyed now. But who remembers him? Who speaks his name to Eywa? Who but Jake has ever thanked him for the great gift his sacrifice has given to the People?"

Neytiri stood up, determined. *This cannot be. It is not right that someone who has sacrificed so much, someone who has given so much to so many, be forgotten. It is not right that no one speaks his name.* She wasn't going to allow it to happen.

The tsahik fetched a carry-net from her quarters and carefully placed a wide piece of thin tree bark in the bottom of it. Then she climbed the Tree and called her *ikran* and flew off into the jungle. She remembered from Kiree's ceremony where the flowers and plants she wanted grew, and soon collected a substantial number of them.

When she had all she wanted, Neytiri flew to the Tree of Souls. The Tree was deserted, quiet, standing guard in its hollow as it had for uncounted years.

She landed her *ikran* on the outer edge of the bottom of the well and walked slowly and reverently up to the dais at the base of the Tree. Once there she placed her carry-net down at her side. She removed the flowers she had gathered from the net one by one and arranged them on the dais as a thanks-offering to the spirit of her beloved's brother.

When the net was empty she connected her queue to the nearest strand of *Vitraya Ramunong*, laid a hand on her pregnant belly, and spoke aloud with Eywa as witness. "I promise that I will speak your name to this child and to all the children that Eywa may give your brother and I, Tom Sully. I will speak your name to the People so that they may know they have you to thank for sending us Toruk Makto to save the Na'vi."

She glanced down at her belly and smiled tenderly, "I promise that I will ask your father to tell you many tales of your uncle, so that you may know him even though you will never meet him in this life."

Neytiri looked back up at *Vitraya Ramunong* and said "I thank you, Tom Sully. I thank you for my people, for my mate, and for the children Jake and I will have that you have made possible. For as long as I, my children, and my children's children live, you will not be forgotten." She closed her eyes and bowed her head, sealing her pledge before Eywa. Then her queue disengaged, she rose quietly and left the sacred place.

On the dais behind her, under the Tree, the petals of the flowers she had left waved gently in the wind.

