

# EPILOGUE — Decision Vector

The city didn't quiet.

---

It never did.

---

Even here—

---

above the street—

---

where distance softened the noise—

---

it remained.

---

Constant.

---

Unfinished.

---

Alive.

---

Ace stood at the edge.

---

Not looking down—

---

watching movement.

---

Patterns.

---

---

Flow.

---

---

Mai stood a step behind.

---

The object—

---

resting in her hand—

---

no longer shifting.

---

---

Not aligned.

---

---

Not resisting.

---

---

Waiting.

---

---

Shammy leaned against the railing.

---

---

The air—

---

---

uneven.

---

---

But breathable.

---

---

Real.

---

---

For a while—

---

none of them spoke.

---

---

They didn't need to.

---

---

The question—

---

already existed.

---

---

Mai answered it first.

---

---

“We can leave.”

---

---

Not a suggestion.

---

---

A fact.

---

---

Ace didn't turn.

---

---

"How."

---

---

Mai didn't hesitate.

---

---

"The structure remains accessible."

A beat.

---

---

"It is no longer stable—but it is traceable."

---

---

That tracked.

---

---

Shammy closed her eyes briefly.

---

---

The air shifted—

subtle—

---

confirming.

---

“It would take time,” she said.

---

A pause.

---

“And it wouldn’t be clean.”

---

That was expected.

---

Ace nodded once.

---

“Everything isn’t.”

---

Silence settled again.

---

Below them—

---

the city moved.

---

---

Unaware.

---

---

Unaffected.

---

---

Unconcerned.

---

---

Mai looked at it.

---

---

Not as environment.

---

---

As system.

---

---

“It will continue,” she said.

---

---

Ace didn't respond.

---

---

Because that was obvious.

---

Shammy opened her eyes.

---

---

The air—

---

held.

---

---

But not comfortably.

---

---

“It’s not finished,” she said.

---

---

Mai nodded.

---

---

“No.”

---

---

A beat.

---

---

“It never will be.”

---

---

That was the consequence.

---

Ace turned slightly.

---

---

Just enough.

---

---

“Then we stay.”

---

---

No hesitation.

---

---

No deliberation.

---

---

Just—

---

---

decision.

---

---

Mai didn't argue.

---

---

She adjusted the object in her hand—

---

---

not to hold it—

---

---

to keep it from settling.

---

---

“That is the optimal vector,” she said.

---

---

Shammy exhaled slowly.

---

---

The air—

---

shifted.

---

---

Accepted.

---

---

Not perfectly.

---

---

But enough.

---

---

“This place doesn’t break,” she said.

---

---

A pause.

---

“It absorbs.”

---

---

Ace nodded once.

---

---

“Good.”

---

---

That word again.

---

---

Below them—

---

---

the city continued.

---

---

Relentless.

---

---

Indifferent.

---

---

Perfect in its imperfection.

---

---

Mai looked out across it—

---

---

tracking—

---

mapping—

---

understanding.

---

Not their world.

---

Not their system.

---

But now—

---

their environment.

---

Shammy tilted her head slightly.

---

The air—

---

alive.

---

Full.

---

Not theirs.

---

---

But not rejecting them either.

---

---

Ace stepped back from the edge.

---

---

Decision made.

---

---

“We move,” she said.

---

---

No finality.

---

---

No closure.

---

---

Just—

---

continuation.

---

---

And behind them—

---

on the edge of alignment and refusal—

---

the object remained.

---

Not complete.

---

Not resolved.

---

Just—

---

present.

---

Like the city itself.

---

Something that didn't need to belong—

---

only to exist—

---

long enough

to matter.

—

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