Arn said, "Because we’re lost?"
The woman shook her head. "I defused the converter, Arn, right where Gyrd dropped it. You can make no successful lie, or excuse, for what you’ve done. A million different races, all with the potential to become what we are, would have been destroyed by what you planned."

Gyrd pulled nervously at one of her pigtails. "But they’re just festering in their nests. They don’t feel pain the way we can. It would be fun--"
"Fun?" the woman said, and Gyrd screamed.
"Go home now." She frowned in momentary concentration. "The arithmetic has been done. The machine is ready to jump. I’ll be following right behind you."

Both Arn and Gyrd were silent now, dazed. Arn made an adjustment in the controls, and their craft vanished, leaving the woman standing pensively in space.

Lal only caught the last part of the sentence.
"...Gone from the galaxy."
"Damn it! Why didn’t you say that in the first place?" snapped Harl.
"Never mind, General," said Lal. He turned back to the aide. "Say that again."

"Puissance, our instruments indicate that the intruder jumped before making any attempt to annihilate the sun."

The universe regained.

The silence was finally broken by General e’Kraft. "Have we your permission to resume tactical operations, Puissance?"

Lal looked through him and beyond. For a moment he could feel only the beauty of the luscious gardens and the now safe stars. But it could happen again. The Enemy could sweep in on any large star in the galaxy and set their bomb. "General, you may retreat, and you may ask the Mushfaces for peace terms." He gnashed his fangs once as he discarded his race’s dream and accepted a nightmare. "We can spread the news of this day through the galaxy much faster than we can our empire. And we’ll need all the help we can get." But Lal knew with silent desperation that there would never be enough advanced races to guard all the super stars.
"Everything that lives must be banded against them." He shook a talon at the sky.

The woman remained a moment, alone. Her feet seemed planted in the wispy Maelstrom—called the Milky Way by some—and faint air vapors encircled her. She gazed out from the sun and "saw" the Dorvik battlewagons twelve billion kilometers away. Perhaps some good could come of this yet. She hoped so. She wanted very much to believe that they really were good children . . . all of them.