

Dangerous Bounty

by Bryan Schuder

"The Tzerkz empire will pay a huge bounty for that human!"

"I don't know. One of the humans responsible for that big hyperspace breach that sucked all those Tzerkz warships in... Are you sure it's safe keeping him here?"

"Relax! He's in a metal lockdown brigg. That thing can keep Hurlars in!"

"Sure. Speaking of which... Trzzi, go down there and sure he's fed!"

Trzzi gritted her jagged, sharp teeth. She had been enjoying her break until the captain summoned her. The captain and first mate had been fantasizing about what they were going to do with the reward for turning over the human for the past hour or so. It made enjoying her break hard.

"Anytime like the present, Trzzi!"

Trzzi's ears flipped back and her golden eyes narrowed, "FINE! I'll go feed the smelly thing! I can't see how you two can tolerate the stench!"

Trzzi stomped up from her berth and went straight to the ration store. She looked around and finally found a suitable ration bar, the one that had been in the back and was the oldest around. She had been taking exceptional pride in finding the worse rations in the ship to give to the human the last few days. It was her way of paying back the kick to her backside the human had given her in an attempt to escape capture. A twitch in eye and a grimace signals the recent memory of the kick... right into a pile of morg dung. With claws dug into the wrapper of the ration bar, she marches off to the brigg cell in the hold.

Trzzi checks the monitor on the side of the door before going in, "Here's your food human!"

Trzzi kicks the door of the cell open with her bolter drawn. The cell was a simple metal box with an air vent in the ceiling, waste bucket in the corner, and a simple platform serving as the bed. She saw the human on the bed, resting comfortably, wrapped up with his precious blanket and pillow. The Captain must of been in a really good mood to have not only listened, but actually complied with the human's demands. "HEY! HUMAN! FOOD!"

Trzzi angrily pitches the ration bar right towards the human's head. The ration bar makes a direct hit, but oddly... No reaction from the human. Trzzi puzzles at this for a moment before, walking cautiously up to the bed. "STENCH BEAST!"

Nothing still. Trzzi is right above, next to the bed the human is on. She aims her bolter right at his head and reluctantly grabs the blanket. "HUMAN! You WILL answer me when-"

Before Trzzi is a collection of clothes, rolled to create the rough outline of a human figure on the bed. Her nose aches with the human stench. He's still here, but where- The thought is cut short as a pair of hands comes out from under the bed and grabs hold of Trzzi's ankles. A quick, hard pull and Trzzi loses balance and crashes onto the metal floor, her bolter bounces from her hand as the hard impact hits her arm. Before she's able to get some sense of her situation a figure erupts from under the bed, grabs the blanket with a quick swipe, spins to open up the blanket, and dives on top of her. A quick bout of wrestling and Trzzi is held from behind by a figure on the ground. It's a deadlock and neither able to really gain any kind of control over the other. Trzzi can tell... It's the human... The smelly, stinky human.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"

"Escaping."

"Well, that's not going to work out well! I'm not going to let you win this fight! I'm just as strong as you and far more skilled! And I'll claw you the second you let me go."

"Yup."

It's this moment Trzzi realizes the blanket is wrapped around the both of them, coccooning them both. "What the fuck are you planning human!"

"My colleague Hans. She mentioned Wrettas before and how sensitive their sense of smell was."

"So?!"

"Well, let's see... I'm recovering from a hangover induced from stun blasts and alcohol, I haven't showered in days, and I've been feed the worst ration bars you got for a few of those days. Speaking of which-"

The human releases a monserous belch that echoed throughout the cell.

"GODS DAMN YOU HUMAN! That's disgusting!"

"Exactly... Right now... It's just you and me, wrapped inside this lovely high thread count blanket... with all my smells growing stronger by the second. And judging by the few spasms I felt, you are about to overload that part of your brain dedicated to processing them all."

Trzzi pupils narrow. The fucking, smelly human was right. Wretta have one weakness and that's too many strong, concentrated smells at time. And for Trzzi it was getting harder to see straight with her eyes watering and she could feel muscle spasms as her mind races uncontrollably. She needs to get out now and to fresher air!

"And before you try to escape..."

Trzzi pauses, expecting something the human thought clever to say. She hears something... a long abrupt rumbling, vibrating upon the metal floor, and - OH HOLY GODS, FUCK, SHIT, THAT SMELL!?!?!?

The blanket explodes to life as the two struggle underneath. Hisses, growls, and coughs ring out in the room as the blanket somehow tumbles from one corner to next. A few seconds later, the blanket stops moving. After a minute, the blanket unravels and a human male rolls out. Dressed in nothing but his boxer shorts and socks. He pulls himself up to sit on the floor, gathers his senses, and wraps the unconscious Trzzi back in the blanket. He picks her up and carefully places her on the bed, positions her to look similarly to the dummy he made before.

A quick dressing of clothing from the piles he used before and a bolter acquisition later, the human exits the cell, gently closing the door behind him. "Nighty nighty, consider the headache when you wake up payment for the fine room service."

"Dammit. What's taking Trzzi so long? She better not be roughing up the human!"

"Nah, she wouldn't touch him! Probably shoot him...."

"..."

"..."

"We might want to check."

Two big bulky creatures squeeze their way out of the bulkhead door from the cockpit of the vessel. Thick, scaly gray skin covering their bodies and a horns on their massive heads. They both did not so much as walk as alternate side step towards a forward direction, rocking their upper bodies in rhythm. It was a few minutes before they reached the cell.

"Huh... Looks like the human is still in there."

"Let's ask and see if Trzzi's pestered him."

"Plus make sure Trzzi didn't shoot him or worse."

After unlocked the cell, both squeeze in with their massive heavy pistols drawn.

"Human! Has Trzzi been here?"

"Yah, has the Wretta bothered you yet?"

Nothing.

The first mate carefully approaches the figure on the bed, the captain raises his pistol ready to react. A quick yank of the blanket.

"Trzzi?!"

"Whoa, that's a foul smell!"

"Shit, her nose got the best of her, get her out the cell!"

The first mate grabs Trzzi and carries her out with the captain leading, his pistol pointing cautiously about. After a few moments, Trzzi briefly twitches and soon after startles back to life. "OH GODS! My HEAD!"

"What the hell, Trzzi?!"

"Yah!"

Trzzi's eyes narrow and teeth bear, "Fuck you two! You knew how dangerous the human was.... Where is the human?!"

The three look around the hold of the ship, searching in vain to see a sign of where the human is... "Yah, where is that damn human at!"

The voice over the ship's intercom catches the attention of the trio.

"Ha! You didn't know the ship had one of these, huh? Probably because you guys stole it! HA! You did! There's no way any of you has a Tramarian clan name."

"He must be in the cockpit, let's go!"

"Nope."

As the captain angrily rushes towards the walkway to the cockpit bulkhead, he ceases forward movement and momentarily runs in place. He stops running in place as momentum causes him to pitch and rotate in place.

Trzzi backs away from the captain and first mate, looking nervous, "Captain... What the hell is going on!?"

Trzzi ceases to have contact on the floor and reflexively tries to grab onto anything but only throws herself for a loop, before slowly being halted and righted by some mysterious force.

"What is going on?!"

"That's a great question! And I'm happy to answer, young lady! You see Tramarian trade ships have this really neat gravity control system with a built-in tractor control option. So... I can do stuff like this!"

The first mate floats off the floor and stops roughly a meter off the ground. As he ascends he starts spinning. Faster and faster. Until about 33 RPM and centrifical forces puts him sideways in the air as he spins.

"You spin me right round baby..."

"GODDAMN YOU CAPTAIN!"

"SHADDAP! I SHOULD HAVE NEVER MADE YOU FIRST MATE!"

Both figures stop, "Hey! That's not nice! The captain and first mate should be buddies! Now, say you're sorry, and kiss and make up!"

The captain and first mate slam into each other with a loud thump.

"Oops, shit. Sorry about that. Tramarians use hexadecimal for some reason. Oh! Trzzi!"

Trzzi's face washes with horror at hearing her name on the intercom, "Y-y-yes?"

"You can chill. I got my vengence on you for now. Here, have a medkit."

From across the hold a solitary general medkit floats across into the anti-grav bubble Trzzi is in. She cautiously takes in and opens it up, looking for something for her pounding headache.

"Now... For you two! I'm betting one of you had the idea to abduct me... from my nice hotel right after my low-key birthday party. I spent a lot of money on that hotel and really wanted to enjoy a nice relaxing weekend. But, someone decided to snatch me right before I get there and shoot me multiple times with the stun setting... ON THE WEAKEST SETTING! So... I've got about four hours before my crew comes to pick me up. What am I going to do to keep myself entertained... What. Am. I. Going. To. Do....?"

The captain and first mate look to each other, and pitifully hold each other in as the fright finds its way to their eyes.