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ZIRKON, HOME.

WHEN ELZA WAS YOUNG, HER FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY WERE EVENINGS BECAUSE BY THEN, MOM AND DAD WERE BOTH AT HOME...



HEHE, YOU BASTARD!

WOT YOU COME HERE!



...SHE REMEMBERED NOW THEY WERE COMING CLOSE AFTER THOSE MATCHES OF VERBAL SPARRING.



...UNKNOWN WHETHER WAS ALWAYS RAINING BEHIND THE WINDOWS... BUT, IN THOSE MOMENTS, ELZA FELT THAT THEIR KITCHEN WAS IMPERMEABLE FORTRESS.

WE LOVE YOU, ELZA.



DAD!
MOM!

NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!

...UNTIL EVERYTHING CEASED TO EXIST. EVERYTHING BURNED UP IN THE FIRES OF SOME DISTANT WAR, REMAINS OF WHICH, HAVE ALREADY BEEN LONG FORGOTTEN.





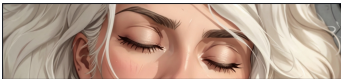
TAKE MY HAND!



SAVE YOURSELVES!!!



SLZA WAS DREAMING
HER PARENTS DIDN'T BURN ALIVE.
SIX CYCLES AGO THEY WERE
CONSCRIPTED TO FIGHT IN A WAR.
SHE WAS LEFT ALONE AND NEVER
HEARD FROM THEM SINCE.



HAAAGH!

ON HIS CORONATION, IMPERIAL MONARCH, LORD KHAM I HAS PROMISED THAT NO IMPRISONED PERSON WILL EVER BE SOLD FOR HUNGER, UNDER HIS RULE.



CONVICT ZHODMI! PREPARE FOR THE EXTRACTION!



...SINCE THEN, EACH IMPERIAL DETENTION CENTER BECAME AN OVERHEATED SAUNN.



ELZA WAS HELD AT THE BLUED MANSION - A HIGH SECURITY PRISON RESERVED FOR TERRORISTS, TRAITORS AND POLITICAL DISSIDENTS



SHE HAS BEEN THERE FOR A WEEK AND EACH DAY DOWN, HER GUARD, WAS LEADING ELZA TO AN INTERROGATION. THE ROUTINE WAS IDENTICAL TO A NINTE.



CORRECT!
PUT ON YOUR HANDCUFFS! TAKE A STEP BACK FROM THE DOOR!



KLACK
KLACK



GET SOME DECENTCY,
GEL THERE IS NO ONE TO IMPRESS HERE!



APOLOWES,
I TROUGHT THAT
I'M SUPPOSED TO FEEL
LIKE AT HOME IN THIS
COZY PLACE...

OUT
TALKING, CORRECT!
MOVE ON OR I'LL HAVE
TO ELECTROCHITE
YOU. AGAIN.



AN OPERATIVE, FROM THE
IMPERIAL MIAMI INTELLIGENCE,
WAS ALREADY WAITING FOR BL24
IN THE INTERROGATION ROOM
ALWAYS THE SAME MAN, BUT HIS
NAME AND TITLE WERE A
COMPLETE MYSTERY TO HER.



GOOD MORNING,
24X04.



HOW DO YOU FEEL
TODAY, BL24? READY FOR
OUR SMALL TALK?



I'M GREAT!
PUT ON MY BEST
CLOTHES, AS YOU CAN SEE
AND WE GOING TO GO
ON FOREVER!



WIFE,
START FROM
THE BEGINNING,
PLEASE.



I SURREY, AAAA.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND
THE PURPOSE OF THIS
TALK THOUGH.



THE INCIDENT HAD HAPPENED
AT THE TIME OF APPROX. IN
THE ORBIT OF PLANET OAG-28.
DURING THE ROUTINE STOP TO
COOL THE ENGINE, OUR SHIP,
INCS AAAA, GOT AMBUSHED BY
MULTIPLE HOSTILES.



BAM!



WOOSH!

I COULD NOT IDENTIFY THE ORIGINS
OF THE HOSTILE SHIPS. MOST OF THEM
WERE UNARMED DEVICES. UNUSUAL TECH,
FOR BOTH SIDES AND OUR ADVISORY



BREACHES ON MULTIPLE
DECKS! LOSING OXYGEN!
OUR HULL WILL NOT HOLD FOR
LONG! REROUTING POWER TO
THE ENGINES!

COMMANDER PVE TOOK OVER THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, CONSIDERING OUR DIVISION STRATEGY. SHE COUNTERED MY MEASURE WITH HER DIRECT ORDER.

WEEEEOOO!

WEEEEOOO!

WEEEEOOO!

CEASE, WHITNEY!
ALL ENERGY TOWARDS
THE SENSORY SUITE!
CALL FOR HELP!
NOW!!!

WEEEEOOO!

BUT COMMANDER,
THERE IS NO REASON
TO CALL FOR HELP IF WE
WILL EXPLODE TO DEATH!
WE NEED TO EVACUE
THEM FIRST..

WEEEEOOO!

DON'T DARE
QUESTION MY
IMPERIAL WILL, PILOT!
ALL POWER TOWARDS
THE COMMS!

I SUBMIT,
COMMANDER! ALL POWER
TO THE COMMS! SENDING
IMPERIAL DISTRESS CALL
ON ALL CHANNELS!

WEEEEOOO!

WEEEEOOO!

WEEEEOOO!

GOOD!
YOU WILL LAND
ARMY ON OOL-25 AND
AWAIT ARRIVAL OF
THE IMPERIAL
FORCES!

COMMANDER,
PLANETARY LANDING
OF A DAMAGED SHIP OF
THIS SIZE IS A CLEAR SCENE!
I DON'T HAVE EITHER
EXPERIENCE OR...

SHUT IT, WHITEN!
YOU ARE A SMOKE IMPERIAL,
SERVANT. SOLVE THE TASK,
OR FACE DISHONOR!

WEEEEOOO!

COMMANDER PYZ GAVE ME
EXTENSIVE INSTRUCTIONS.
AFTER THAT SHE PROCEEDED
TOWARDS THE ESCAPE PODS.

NO TIME, ELZA!
I HAVE FIVE CHILDREN
AT HOME! I NEED
TO LIVE!

NO TIME TO TALK,
WHITEN BY THE IMPERIAL
WILL, LAND THIS SHIP!
THIS IS YOUR DUTY!

COMMANDER?
REQUESTING
CLARIFICATION.

WEEEEOOO!

I FOLLOWED PVE'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER. THE FIRST STEP WAS SECURING THE COMMANDER'S SAFE ESCAPE

COMMANDER, YOU HAVE 30 SECONDS BEFORE WE ENTER A ATMOSPHERE!

WEEEEOOO!

WEEEEOOO!

WEEEEOOO!

CEASE THE DESCENT! STAY IN LOWER DECK! I'M ALMOST THERE!

EXPLOSION IN THE PRIME ENGINE COULD WE RE-LOAD POWER? I CAN'T...

WEEEEOOO!

HOLD IT, WHITEY! BREACHING THE AIRLOCK!

COMMANDER! I CAN'T STEER THIS SHIP ANYMORE FOR MY SAKES! YOU HAVE 20 SECONDS TO LAUNCH THE POD!

WEEEEOOO!



C'MON, LUDREN!
YOU ARE AN IMPERIAL
OFFICER! ONE MORE
STEP...

WEEEEOOO!



PSHSHSHT




ENTERING
THE ATMOSPHERE!
COMMANDER! YOU NEED
TO JUMP!

WOW!!!



DREDDDDDD!
THANK YOU, ELZA.
I'LL LIGHT A CANDLE FOR
YOU IN THE HALL OF
HEROES.

PYE OUT!

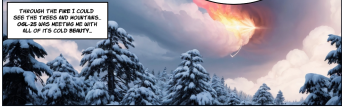


I FELT RELIEF AS THE CAPSULE,
WITH THE COMMANDER PYE ONBOARD,
SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED FROM
400M. THE LIFE OF A FIRST CLASS
CITIZEN, WAS, AND IS, OF
UTMOST IMPORTANCE FOR ME.



AS ASM WAS CATCHING FIRE, DURING THE UNCONTROLLED ATMOSPHERIC DESENTY, I PROCEEDED WITH THE PROTOCOL 4, FOR LETHAL SITUATIONS.

RECORD. PLOT BY NAME ELZA. FAMILY NAME. DOESN'T MATTER. I HAVE NO POSSESSIONS, NOR LIVING RELATIVES. I WILL DIE AS I HAVE LIVED - IN SERVICE TO THE EMPIRE!



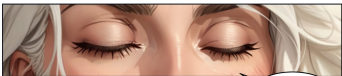
THROUGH THE FIRE I COULD SEE THE TREES AND MOUNTAINS. OML-25 WAS MEETING ME WITH ALL OF ITS COLD BEAUTY.



MOMMY AND DADDY... THESE WERE SIX LONG CYCLES.



THE VELOCITY OF ASM WAS BEYOND ALL SAFETY RANGING. THERE WAS NO HOPE TO SURVIVE IN THE CRASH.



WELCOME ME, AS I'M COMING TO YOU! I'M HOME! AT LAST!



DEBRIS FROM A3M GOT
SCATTERED ACROSS A FEW
SQUARE KILOMETERS
OF SURFACE AND CAUSED
A SMALL FOREST FIRE.



AS I REGAINED
CONSCIOUSNESS, MY
LUNGS WERE BURNING, AND
EVERY MUSCLE OF MY BODY
SEEMED TO BE STAGNANT.
BUT I WAS ALIVE!

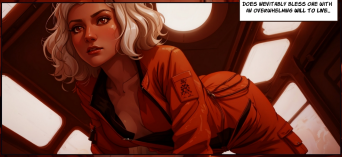




I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T CHOOSE TO SIMPLY CLOSE MY EYES AND SUFFOCATE.



I SUPPOSE THAT DYING ONCE DOES NEVITABLY BLESS ONE WITH AN OVERWHELMING WILL TO LIVE.



I PUT ON THE EMERGENCY SUIT AND CRAWLED OUT FROM ABOARD, I WAS BORN FROM THE MOUTH OF HER MELTING METAL.



I COULD HARDLY BREATHE, AS THE COLD AIR OF ORL-35 GOT INSIDE OF MY LEGS. MORALLY, I NEVER WOULD HAVE SOMETHING SO CLEAN IN MY ENTIRE LIFE.



THE ENEMY FORCES COULD ARISE AT ANY MOMENT. I PERFORMED THE STANDARD EVASION PROTOCOL AND GOT MYSELF AWAY FROM THE BURNING WRECK OF THE DEBATED ARMS.



ONLY AFTER REACHING THE DISTANCE OF TWENTY IMPERIAL KILOMETERS*, I COULD STOP AND LOOK BACK AT THE RESURGENT PILLAR OF FIRE BEHIND ME.

*IMPERIAL KILOMASURE (IKM) - EQUAL TO 1 EARTH KILOMETER



WSSSS...

HAH, NOT TODAY, YOU AN'S SPURRY!

HHSSSS!!!

HHSSSHAA!!!



SPLASH!

SPLASH!

WHILE ENJOYING THE LOCAL WILDLIFE, I NEGLECTED THE OTHER APPARENT DANGER.



WOOOSH!



SPLASH!

AAAAAGH!!!

SPLASH!

IMMEDIATELY AFTER I SLIPPED ON THE ICE, THE RIVER BEGAN TO CARRY ME AWAY DOWN THE STREAM. IT'S A MIRACLE HOW I'VE MANAGED TO GAIN A BALL OF A BODY SHOVE.



THE LONGER MY BODY WAS
SUBMERGED, THE LESS
RESPONSIVE IT BECAME.



MY TIRED ORGANISM CEASED
TO REST FOR SOME TIME, BUT
I KNEW THAT IT WOULD MERELY
SPEED UP THE HYPOTHERMIA
AND DID ME FOR GOOD.



OO'RON, E. ELZA/
OO. GREAT UNTIL YOU
OO. COLLAPSE!!!

SOON, SWIMERS BEGAN TO SET IN,
THE DENSE FOREST WAS READY.
I HAD TO MAKE IT THERE IN
ORDER TO BUILD A SHELTER

MY OVERALLS HAD A FUNCTIONAL
ANTI-FROSTBITE INSULATION
BUT EVEN THAT COULD FAIL AT
MY MOMENT... JUST LIKE MY
PROGRESSIVELY BURNING BODY...



SPLOOSH
SPASH!



SELF-ASSEMBLING
TEXT OF BMO-FABRIC...
MADE OF ZERON!



THOOOP
DON'T FAIL ME, ZONNA!



CLANK



WEEPOOP
WEEPOOP



THE EMERGENCY TENT
PROMPTLY STARTED TO
SELF-HEAT. THAT CHEMICAL
REACTION DID NOT LAST
FOR LONG THOUGH.

WHEN I SEALED MYSELF INSIDE
OF THE TENT, THE FEELING OF
SAFETY AND ADRENALINE LEVELS
IN MY BLOOD DECREASED BACK
TO NORMAL.

WITHOUT STRESS, EVERY STIMMED
MUSCLE, EVERY ACHEING
JOINT OF MY BODY, CAME TOGETHER
IN AN AGONIZING, SCREAMING
SYNDROME OF PAIN.

AAAAAH!!!

I COULD NOT HELP BUT SCREAM
AS IT FELT LIKE MY SKIN WAS
DETACHING FROM MY BODY TOGETHER
WITH THE WET CLOTHES.

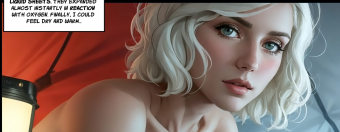
WRRRRRRAA!!!
AAAAAH!!!



EVERYTHING WAS SOBERING
MEET, EXCEPT FOR THE FEW
IMPASSIBLE MESSAGES FROM
THE EMERGENCY KIT.



TO CONTAIN HEAT, I USED
LINED SHEETS. THEY EXPANDED
ALMOST INSTANTLY IN REACTION
WITH OXYGEN. FINALLY, I COULD
FEEL DRY AND WARM.



WHEN THE TEMPERATURE OF
MY BODY NORMALIZED, I FELT
ASLEEP. I DIDN'T HAVE ANY
DREAMS. IT FELT LIKE MY
THIRD DEATH THAT DAY.



TOMP
TOMP

LATER, I NOTICED THAT SOMETHING WAS STOPPING HEAVILY ON THE SNOW OUTSIDE THE TENT.



TOMP
TOMP

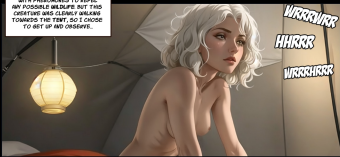


TOMP




WRRRAWWW

THE IMMO-FABRIC WAS COATED WITH PHEROMONES TO REPEL ANY POSSIBLE WILDLIFE BUT THIS CREATURE WAS CLEARLY WALKING TOWARDS THE TENT, SO I CHOSE TO GET UP AND OBSERVE.



WRRRRRR
HHRRR
WRRRRRR



...THIS CREATURE LOOKED LIKE NOTHING THAT I HAVE SEEN BEFORE! IT REMINDED ME MOST OF THE HARRY BEAST FROM THE ANCIENT MYTH OF HELL AND THE GODS OF OLD TERRA...

WRRRRH



BY THE BONES OF UMWESH!



WRRRAHHH



THE CREATURE PROCEEDED TO CHASE ME AS I RAN OUT OF THE TENT. IT WAS NO AND CLUMSY, BUT STILL EXTREMELY FAST!

WIRRRHARRR



AARGH!!

SUDDENLY, I STUMBLER ON THE FLAT SURFACE. A TINY MUSCLE IN MY CALF GAVE OUT. I COULD NOT RUN ANY LONGER...



THE Hairy BEAST WAS RAPIDLY APPROACHING ME FROM BEHIND...



I WAS BAKED, BURNED. I WAS ALONE IN THE MIDDLE OF A SNOWY FOREST, ON AN ALIEN PLANET. THERE WAS NO WAY FOR ME TO EITHER ESCAPE OR FIGHT FOR MY SURVIVAL THIS TIME.

...SO I CHOSE TO DE WITH PETA.

WIRRRH

RRRRAARRR!!!

COME AND FEAST ON ME,
YOU VICIOUS FURBALL!
I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU!
RRRRRRRR!!!

HRRRWR

I EVALUATE THAT EXHAUSTION,
STRESS AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION
HAD SEVERELY AFFECTED MY MENTAL
STATE AT THAT MOMENT. I CANNOT
FIND ANY RATIONAL EXPLANATION TO
THE THINGS THAT I SAID TO THAT
WILD BEAST...

TAKE A BITE OF ME,
I BEEG YOU TENDERLY,
MY DEAREST PRINCE!



I AM NOT SURE WHAT HAPPENED THEREAFTER. SUDDENLY, THIS CREATURE STARTED TO SMUFF ALL OVER MY BODY.

SMUFF

FRRRRFF



HEEY! EASY! DON'T YOU WANT TO WRITE ME FOR A DINNER FIRST?

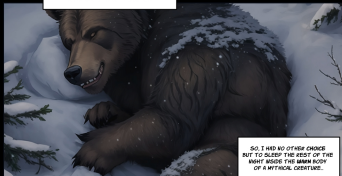


FRRRRFF

I COULD NOT RESIST, AS IT FORCED ME DOWN WITH THE WHOLE WEIGHT OF ITS GREAT BODY.

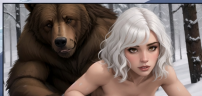


SURPRISINGLY, THIS BEAST HAD SOME KIND OF A MARIJUANA POUCH ON ITS BELLY. PROBABLY IT THOUGHT THAT I WAS ONE OF ITS YOUNG THAT WENT AWAY.



SO, I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO SLEEP THE REST OF THE NIGHT INSIDE THE BARE BODY OF A MYTHICAL CREATURE.

AFTER WAKING
UP THE NEXT MORNING,
I WAS STUNNED BY
THE SHEER BEAUTY
OF CBL-25!



I WAS STILL WARM AFTER SPENDING THE NIGHT INSIDE OF THE BEAST, SO I COULD STAND UNDER THE SNOW AS THE RAYS OF THE MORNING SUN WERE TENDERLY CARRESSING MY SKIN.



THANK YOU, MY FRIEND!
YOU WERE KIND TO ME. LET
ME CALL YOU "DROUG."

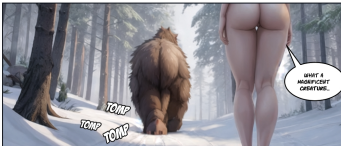
RAFFRRR
RRUURRR



I SEE
THERE MUST BE PLENTY OF
BEASTLY AFFAIRS TO ATTEND TO,
SO FREE! AND PLEASE, REMEMBER
ME, AS I AM FOREVER YOUR
ALLY!




WHAT A
MAGNIFICENT
CREATURE!



TOMP
TOMP
TOMP



PREDICTABLY, MY TENT WAS
REFUSED TO THE GROUND, BUT
BOTH THE LIQUID SHEETS AND
THE CLOTHES WERE SOMEWHAT
DRY AND WEARABLE.




I DECIDED ALSO TO REINFORCE MY
GEAR WITH A LAYER OF HEAT-PRESERVING
UNDERCLOTHES. THEY WERE SUPPOSED
TO BE THE LAST RESORT SOLUTION, BUT
I CHOSE CONVENIENCE AND HOPED
THAT EMERGENCY PROTOCOL...



RRRAAWRR

HSSSSSSAAS



...SUDDENLY, I HEARD A ROAR
THAT SHOOK THE TREETOPS IN THE
FOREST. SOMETHING JUST SUFFERED
A GRUESOME DEATH OUT THERE...

...I JUST HOPED THAT IT WAS NOT
DROGS THAT HAPPENED TO STUMBLE
ON SOMETHING SO NOISY THAT
HE COULD NOT RUN IT TO DEATH...

APPARENTLY, DROUG WAS INVOLVED IN THAT FOREST STAMBOFF, BUT NOT IN THE WAY THAT I EXPECTED.

TOMP

TOMP

TOMP

HELLO, ROAM!
DID YOU MISS ME,
MY FLUFFY BUDDY?

...HE DIDN'T JUST COME
BACK TO CHECK UP ON ME.
HE WAS RUSHING THROUGH
THE FOREST WITH A WARM
AND BLEEDING PRESENT
IN HIS SHARP PAW...

TOMP


TOMP

TOMP

TOMP

TOMP

TOMP



DRIOUS BROUGHT ME ONE OF THOSE
SNOW DRAGONS. THE CORPSE DID SMELL
LIKE A DUMPSTER - PLAYING STIFFY AND DEAD
JUST AS THEIR DEFENSE MECHANISM,
THOUGH MY HUNNY FRIEND SEEMED TO
ENJOY THAT WATTLE COMPLETELY.

FWRACK!



FFFRRRRR

THANK YOU, DEAR. I'LL
PASS ON THIS ONE. ENJOY
THIS FEAST ON YOUR OWN.
I HAVE MY NUTRIENT PILLS
INSTAID! NOPE, NOT GONNA
SHARE THEM!

CHOP

NOM-NOM

CHOP

AS DRIOUS WAS ENJOYING HIS PREY,
I WAS THINKING ABOUT MY NEXT STEP ON
THIS JOURNEY. MY PERSONAL COMMUNICATOR
THAT I USED FOR TRACKING THE ESCAPE PCO
WAS STILL SOMEWHERE IN THE RUBBLE.



ALL THOSE FOREST MIRACLES
COULD NOT HOLD ME BACK FROM
THE HARD TRUTH - IF RESCUE
PARTY FOUND COMMANDER PVE
BEFORE ME - THEY WOULD NOT WANT
FOR A SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN.



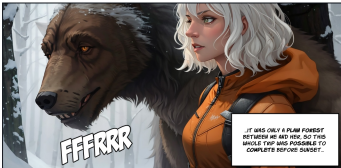
AM I FINDER DREAMS
OR SEEING THINGS THAT
NEVER SHOULD HAVE PASSED?



ACCORDING TO MY COMMUNICATOR,
PVE'S ESCAPE POD WAS ONLY 40
KILOMETER KILOMETERS AWAY!
JUST ON THE BORDER OF A
MOUNTAIN RANGE.



DOUGH!
TEAP-TEAP!
WILL YOU GO ON AN
ADVENTURE
WITH ME?



FFFRRR

IT WAS ONLY A PLAIN FOREST
BETWEEN ME AND HER, SO THIS
WHOLE TRIP WAS POSSIBLE TO
COMPLETE BEFORE SUNSET.



SURPRISINGLY, DRUM WAS FOLLOWING ME STEP BY STEP, EVEN THOUGH HE OBVIOUSLY BECAME TIRED AFTER A WHILE. THIS HAWK BEAST WAS A REAL FIGHTER!



THE ESCAPE POD WAS EASY TO FIND, BUT IT HAD ALREADY COOLED DOWN AND WAS BATHING IN SNOW, JUST LIKE A DAMT ROCK.



DRUM, SOON YOU'LL MEET COMMANDER PVE. REMEMBER, PVE IS NOT FOOD! PVE NOT TASTY!



COMMANDER PVE?

IT'S ELZA!

DON'T SHOOT!

THE BODY OF THE ESCAPE POD WAS INTACT, NO LEAKS WERE VISIBLE. IT WOULD BE A PERFECT SHELTER, BUT COMMANDER PVE WAS NOWHERE CLOSE.

THE COMMUNICATION ARRAY OF THE ESCAPE POD WAS PERFECTLY FUNCTIONAL. THE MOUNTAIN RANGE NEARBY WAS ACTING AS A SOUND AMPLIFIER. THESE WERE PERFECT CONDITIONS FOR GETTING IN CONTACT WITH THE RESCUE PARTY, AND THEY WERE NOW!

CREW OF AWMW!
THIS IS IMPERIAL CRUISER
"KRODH." TURN OFF YOUR
STEALTH EMITTER.

BROADCASTING!
THIS IS THE PILOT
OF THE INCS AWMW!
REQUESTING
ASSISTANCE!

KRODH!
REBUTTLE! I HAVE NO
AUTHORIZATION TO TURN
OFF THE STEALTH
EMITTER!

FROM KRODH
TO AWMW! I REPEAT!
TURN OFF YOUR STEALTH
AND ANSWER TO THIS
TRANSMISSION!
REPEAT...

KRODH,
TRANSMULATE ON MY
SIGNAL! KRODH, DO YOU
READ?! KRODHTW!

AM TAKING ME!
I CAN HEAR THEM, BUT
CANNOT ANSWER!

AS A SECURITY MEASURE, THE COMMUNICATION ARRAY WAS LOCKED TO INTERACT WITH THE COMMANDER'S PERSONAL COMMUNICATOR ONLY. SO, IN ORDER TO GET RESCUED, I HAD TO FIND COMMANDER PYLE.



DON'T EVEN ASK, BIG BOY! OUR ADVENTURE IS MERELY STARTING!

RAWWWR?

FORTUNATELY, EACH OF OUR PERSONAL COMMUNICATORS DID ENIT A WORK, BUT TRACKABLE SIGNAL...



...I COULD OBSERVE THAT PIV WAS AT THE CLOSE RANGE. THE CREW OF KRODH USED MILITARY GRADE SENSORS, SO, THEY SHOULD ALSO BE ABLE TO FOLLOW HER SIGNAL.



DEDDA, I DON'T WANT TO ASK YOU FOR MUCH, BUT... ARE YOU COMING WITH ME?

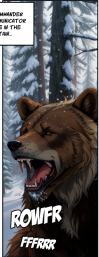


FFFRRRR

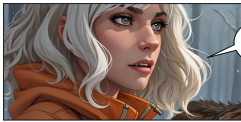


THIS PLACE IS FAR FROM YOUR HOME ENVIRONMENT...ARE YOU UP TO EXPLORE?

THE SIGNAL FROM COMMANDER PVE'S PERSONAL COMMUNICATOR LED TO A DARK CAVE IN THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN...



ROWRR
FFFFRR



I SWEAR YOU DID ENOUGH ALREADY, BROUSS! I'LL GET IT, AND BE BACK IN A MOMENT!

PLEASE, REMEMBER: PVE - NOT TASTY!

I ASSESSED THAT IT WAS A HIGHLY RISKY DECISION FOR COMMANDER PVE TO LEAVE THE SAFETY OF HIS ESCAPE POD AND SEEK SHELTER IN A COLD, STONY CAVE...



...OH, HOW CLUELESS I WAS IN THAT MOMENT...



THE AIR INSIDE OF THE CAVE WAS WARM AND MOIST. IT FELT LIKE HUNDREDS OF CREATURES WERE BARKING AT WITH THEIR SMELLY BREATH.



AS I DESCENDED DEEPER INTO THE CAVE, I COULD OBSERVE SOME STICKY, SLIMY MASSAS THAT WAS COVERING THE WALLS.



SPIRITS OF MY ANCESTORS AND THEIR THREATS! MAY THE FIRST IMPERIAL MARCH BESS BE FRONT OF MY EYES BECAUSE I HAVE SEEN THE IMPOSSIBLE!



I HAD LOCATED COMMANDER'S COMMUNICATOR. IT WAS LYING IN THE PILE OF HIS CLOTHES AND SEEMED TO BE FUNCTIONAL. COMMANDER PYLE WAS DEAD, BUT SOMEONE COULD PREPARE ME FOR WHAT I SAW NEXT...

IT IS STILL DIFFICULT FOR ME TO
FIND A PROPER DESCRIPTION FOR
HER CONDITION. SHE WAS BAKED,
BUT SHE DIDN'T SEEM TO FEEL IT.
THOSE WEBSINGS THAT HELD HER
BODY IN PLACE SEEMED TO CONTAIN
HER BODY HEAT AND KEEP HER
WET AS A LIVING PUP.



SURPRISINGLY, SHE FELT WAY TOO
CALM AND DOLE FOR BEING IN THAT
KIND OF A SITUATION. SHE DON'T TRY
TO STRUGGLE, NOR TO ESCAPE FROM
HER BONDS. I SUPPOSE THAT SHE
WAS AFFECTED BY SOME KIND OF
NATURAL RELAXANT OR APHRODISAC.

WHEN SOMETHING MOVED
IN THE SHADOWS, I PROMPTLY
HID MYSELF BEHIND A ROCK. I
COULD BARELY SEE WHAT WAS
HAPPENING TO COMMANDER PVE.

ARRR, YOU.
PLEASE, DON'T DO THIS TO
ME. LEHAG GOT DOWN. WHY...
DON'T YOU LE. HE GOT..

...SHE BEGAN TO SCREAM AS
THAT THING APPROACHED HER
FROM BEHIND. I WAS FORCED
TO MOVE, AS IT COULD
EXPOSE MY PRESENCE...

AAAGH!!!

NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!!!
PLEASE, DON'T DO IT!

SPLOOSH

AFTER STUPEFIED PVE FOR
SOME TIME, THE ANCHOR
INSERTED SOME SORT OF
APPENDAGE, IN HER.

GULP

...I SAW THIS APPENDAGE
THROBING, CONTRACTING,
LEAVING SOMETHING INSIDE
COMMANDER'S BODY...

GULP

GULP

...HER BELLY WAS MOVING AND
BULGING WITH EACH CONSECUTIVE
PUSH OF THE ANCHOR'S GRASP.



KILL ME.
I WANT TO DIE.

...IT WAS ONE OF THOSE THINGS
THAT I WISH TO UNSEE...

...BARELY THE ANNOYANCE CEASED
WHEN WITH PIV, IT SPENT
SOME TIME ON REINFORCING
HER BONDS.



C'MON, DIRTY
CREEP! DON'T YOU
HAVE ANYTHING
ELSE TO DO?

...IT WAS PAINFUL TO JUST SIT
STILL AND WAIT FOR THAT CREATURE
TO LEAVE... I WAS PUZZLED THOUGH -
HOW COULD SUCH A SMALL CREEPER
OVERPOWER AND DEFEAT AN
ADULT WOMAN LIKE HER?



POST!
COMMUNDE POST
QUIET! I FOLLOWED
YOUR SIGNAL!



E. EYAT?
IF YOU ARE REAL - BUT!
THEY PUT THINGS INSIDE
ME. I CANNOT...
TAKE IT.



COMMUNDE,
I HAVE YOUR COMMUNICATOR...
BUT... I WILL NOT LEAVE
YOU HERE!

NOT
TAKE THE THING AND
RUN! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
THESE THINGS, THEY ARE NOT
DROGS, DANCE, LURKING,
DEEP... SAVE YOURSELF!

WHAT'S!
NOBODY DESERVES
SUCH A FATE! I'M GOING
OUT YOU DOWN!

...THE MERS WERE TRYING TO
GET AID. COMMANDER PYR WAS
HEAVILY WOUNDED, THOUGH.
IT SEEMED THAT HER FIGHTING
SPIRIT WAS COMING BACK WITH
EVERY BOND THAT I SLICED...

MMH!
MORE, WHITEY!
OUT ALL THE WAY,
BOOKER!

CRACKKK

MMMM!
MOMMY IS OUT OF
BOUNDS!

CRACK
CRACK
CRACK

...AS COMMANDER PYR WAS FREED AND
REGAINING CONTROL OVER HER
BODY, I FELT THAT SOMETHING
BIG WAS MOVING TOWARDS US
FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE CAVE.



I COULD HEAR MULTIPLE
LESS HITTING THE ROCKY
FLOOR OF THE CAVE. THOSE
STEPS FELT AWAY, THEY CLEARLY
BELOUNGED TO SOMETHING THAT
NEITHER I NOR PVR COULD HANDLE.

CLACK

CLACK

CLACK

COMMANDER!
WE HAVE TO RUN NOW!
I'LL HELP YOU UP!



BLAZA, IT'S... MOKO.
MY LEGS ARE JELLY. IT
FEELS LIKE I'M SWIMMING IN
THE SHALLOW WATERS OF
THE LINDEN COAST.

STEP BY STEP,
COMMANDER! FOCUS!
WE ARE IN A HOSTILE
TERRITORY!

CLACK

CLACK

CLACK

COMMANDER PVR WAS
UNWILINGLY PADING IN AND
OUT. I TRIED TO APPEAL TO
HER SKILL, IN ORDER TO GET
HER TO MOVE FASTER.



AS WE RAN UP
TOWARDS THE EXIT FROM
THE CAVE, I COULD FEEL
THAT SOMETHING LARGE
WAS OBSESSIVELY LISTENING
ONE OR TWO FEETSTEPS,
BUT I WAS TOO SCARED
TO LOOK BACK.

TEV REQUIRES
MORE. COMMANDER! WE
ARE ALMOST OUT!
MOVE IT!

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

TZSHAAAAAAA

...THE THING THAT FOLLOWED US
OUT OF THE CAVE WAS SCARIER
THAN AN THEMSELVES! IT WAS A
LARGE INCARNATION OF PURE EVIL!
I DON'T THINK THAT THIS CREATURE
WAS OF ANY KNOWN SPECIES.



ELZAMA!!!

THIS PLANET IS AN'S
ZOO/PARK OF DEATH!



RAWWWRRR

TZSHAAAAA



YES, COMMANDER...
THIS MAMMAL IS MY
BEST FRIEND!

AM I HAVING
HALLUCINATIONS, OR
IS IT REALLY A GREAT
MAMMAL FIGHTING
THAT BLEH THING?

I HELPLESSLY OBSERVED, AS DROWM WAS IN A DEADLY CLASH WITH THE GANT ARMORED ANCHORD.



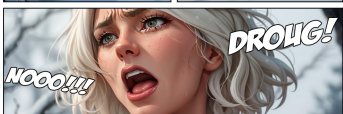
DROWM, FIGHT THAT AN'S SPANN! TEAR IT'S LEGS OFF! CRUSH IT WITH YOUR RIGHT!

THE ANCHORD HAD A CLEAR ADVANTAGE AT FIRST - ITS THICK CARAPACE WAS TOO HARD TO CRACK. THE CREATURE'S JOINTS THOUGH WERE SOFT AND EASY TO TEAR. THE FIGHT WAS OVER AS SOON AS DROWM FIGURED THAT OUT.

SZHAHAHA



AFTER LOSING ONE OF IT'S LEGS, THE ANCHORD COMEADLY RETREATED BACK TO THE CAVE. IT WAS TOO SORED TO RETURN.



I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO MERELY STAND AND WATCH, AS MY FRIEND WAS BLEEDING TO DEATH. THIS REMARKABLE CREATURE WAS HELPLESS AGAINST FIRE FROM HUMAN MADE WEAPONS.

THE SOLDIERS THAT KILLED HIM SEEMED PROFESSIONAL. THEY RAPIDLY DESCENDED FROM THE STEEP SLOPE AND SECURED THE PERIMETER AROUND US.



WHO ARE YOU? IDENTIFY YOURSELVES!!

IMPERIAL ARMY!
CREW OF IRMO KROBT!
KEEP YOUR DISTANCE AWAY
FROM THE CREATURE,
OVLAW!





DAMN, THIS THING IS MASSIVE!
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS!

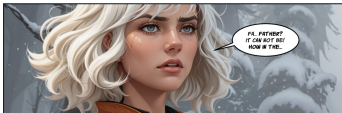
WHAT, HANNE?
HANGS OUT A PIECE OF IT
FOR A TROPHY?

...WHEN THE IMMEDIATE
DANGER WAS OVER, A LAX
ATTITUDE STARTED TO SHINE
THROUGH THE SOLDIERS. IT
FELT LIKE THEY WERE BARELY
HARBORS ON THE LEASH.

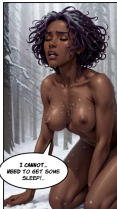
...ACKNOWLEDGED!
SHIPMASTER, SEND DOWN
A SHUTTLE FOR US. FIVE
MINUTES! OVER!



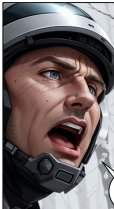
HELLO...
ELZA?



PA. PATHEW?
IT CAN NOT BEY
NOW IN THE.



I CANNOT... NEED TO GET SOME SLEEP...



MEDIC! STABILIZE THE CIVILIAN! APPLY ANTI-FROSTbite. PERFORM A SCAN FOR INFECTIONS! THE SHUTTLE IS ARRIVING IN FOUR!



ACKNOWLEDGED! SHE IS BARELY BREATHING IN THERE, COMMANDER! WE HAVE TO GET HER TO THE INFIRMARY NOW!!!

GET IT! WE CANNOT LOSE A FIRST CLASS OUT HERE!



...SUDDENLY IT HIT ME... I HAD NOT SEEN MY FATHER FOR SIX CYCLES! EVEN NOW, WE MERELY SAID A FEW WORDS TO EACH OTHER... BUT I WAS REASSURED AS I WATCHED HIM LEADING HIS MEN, SAVING US FROM DANGER... HE WAS JUST LIKE MY MEMORIES... BUT REAL!



SERGEANT! IGNORE THE SAFETY PROTOCOLS! MY ORDER! DOUBLE TIME! CRUISE OUT!



IN FEW MINUTES AFTER BOARDING THE SHUTTLE, WE WERE TRANSPORTED UP TO KRODH. IT WAS AN OLD DEVASTATOR CLASS INFANTRY CRUISER.



...SHIPS OF THIS MODEL WERE DESIGNED TO BE OPERATED BY A MINOR CREW OF 36 SERVICEMEN EACH ON AROUND. I COULD NOT SEE MORE THAN SEVEN MEN. THIS SHIP WAS UNDERSTAFFED BENEATH ALL FEASIBLE MARGINS!



COMMANDER BAKER, THE PATENT IS STABLE! WE HAVE REMOVED OVER A HUNDRED FOREIGN CONTAMINANTS FROM HER BODY...

REMARKABLE, MEDICAL ASSISTANT KIMMY WE COULD NOT LOSE A FIRST CLASS CITIZEN NOW WE ONLY NEED TO DELIVER HER HOME TO LAMAR. THEN WE CAN CARRY ON WITH OUR DUTY...

AND MY FATHER WAS A COMMANDER OF THIS GHOST SHIP. IT STILL PUEZZLES ME, WHAT EXACTLY WAS GOING ON IN HIS HEAD. HE OBVIOUSLY WAS THE ONLY GUY THAT HELD THE KRODH FROM IMMEDIATE DESTRUCTION.



APPRECIATE! WHAT ABOUT THE SECOND CLASS MORN, COMMANDER?

SHE IS OUR BEST NOW. PUT HER IN THE FIRST QUARTERS.



SECOND CLASS? I'M YOUR DAUGHTER! COMMANDER, CAN WE TALK IN PRIVATE?



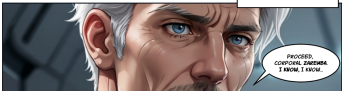
NO, SLEAV' IT IS NOTHER THE TIME OR THE PLACE FOR SUCH TALKS!



GO AND GET SOME REST! WE WILL SPEAK LATER.

COMMANDER, SLEAV', A WORD? NOW!

EVERYTHING FELT OUT OF PLACE ON BOARD OF KROON. EVEN MY FATHER'S BEHAVIOR SEEMED THAT HE WAS NOT COMPLETELY IN CONTROL. HE WAS SCARED OF SOMETHING... OR SOMEONE...



PROCEED, CORPORAL ZARENKA. I KNOW, I KNOW.



QUARTERS THAT I GOT DID CLEARLY BELONG TO A DECEASED MARINE BEFORE ME. HIS CREWMATES DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO REMOVE HIS PERSONAL ITEMS.



I CHOSE TO TAKE A LONG SHOWER - TWO DAYS OF STRESS AND PAIN DIDN'T COME OFF SO EASILY.



CORPORAL ZAREWAN I ADVISE YOU TO LEAVE THE FOOD OUTSIDE, AS OUR GUEST IS IN THE SHOWER.



SHUT IT, KISSA! DON'T PLAY AN HONORED LEGIONNAIRE ON ME HERE. THE OLD MAN GAVE US THE PERMISSION.





YOU ARE MAKING IT UP!
SHE IS HIS DAUGHTER
HE COULD NOT.

WHAT?
TO WOOD
DEALING WITH THAT
LITTLE BITCH
OF YOURS?



SOON,
THE OLD MAN
WANTS ONLY ONE
THING...

EXACTLY
HE WANTS TO COME
HOME TO HIS PRESH YOUNG
KUMI AND KIDS!

SADAF IS A
FIRST CLASS BOY NOW,
HEBBER? GIRL IN THAT ROOM.
SHE IS THE PAST THAT
HE DESPERATELY TRIES
TO FORGET!



HEY, YOU
SEEM A BIT TENSE,
MAYBE YOU SHOULD
JOIN THE LINE FOR
THIS BOOK!

NO, I'M NOT AN
ANIMAL LIKE YOU, ZARSHAN!
HAVE MY KUMI...

HAHA! MY BOY,
GOOD LUCK BEING YOUR KUMI
WHEN YOUR SURVIVAL CHANCE
FOR THIS ROTATION IS
MEREELY 33%.



AT LEAST, I KNOW
MY VALUES AND LIVE
BY THEM, AS MY SOUL
IS IN PEACE.



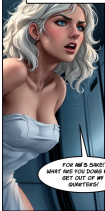
SHUT IT!
SICK OF YOUR
PREACHING...

GET LOST!
IT'S IN ORDER,
MANN!



KUMI - A DEROGATORY IMPERIAL TERM FOR A LOVE INTEREST, OR EVEN A REGISTERED LIFE PARTNER.

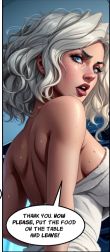
I DID NOT EXPECT ANY VISITORS, SO THE UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE OF CORPORAL ZAREBIN SHOCKED ME AND MADE ME FEEL UNSAFE...



FOR AFB'S SAKE! WHY ARE YOU DOWN HERE? GET OUT OF MY QUARTERS!



CORPORAL ZAREBIN AT YOUR SERVICE!



THANK YOU NOW PLEASE, PUT THE FOOD ON THE TABLE AND LEAVE!



AS CORPORAL WAS PLACING FOOD ON THE TABLE, I HAD POLITELY HATED THAT HIS EFFORT WAS APPRECIATED, BUT HIS PRESENCE WAS UNWANTED...

YOUR MOOD IS A BITTER LAW FOR ME, BEAUTIFUL!

WAS THE OLD MAN INSULTING YOU TODAY?



CHECK YOUR LANGUAGE, SOLDIER!

APOLOGIES...

COMMANDER GARDNER IS MY FATHER, I THOUGHT THAT I LOST HIM FOR OVER SIX...

LISTEN, SOLDIER! IT'S A PRIVATE TOPIC!



HONESTLY, I'M DEAD Tired. MIGHT NOW CAN WE CONTINUE OUR CONVERSATION SOME OTHER DAY?

IT BECAME REALLY ANNOYED AND CREEPY AS CORPORAL ZAREBIN WAS STALLING FOR TIME...



WHY WAIT FOR
LATER WHEN WE HAVE
HERE AND NOW,
SWEET PIST?

...INSTEAD OF LEAVING FOR GOOD,
CORPORAL ZARDEN APPROACHED
ME FROM BEHIND BY DOING THAT, HE
DEMONSTRATED COMPLETE ABRUSIVENESS
TOWARDS MY PERSONAL BOUNDARIES.

...DESPITE MY VERBALLY EXPRESSED
UNWILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE THE
CONVERSATION, AND MULTIPLE PLEAS
TO LEAVE ME ALONE, HE CHOSE TO
COMMIT AN UNSOLICITED, PHYSICAL
CONTACT. IN THAT REGARD, I HAD TO
ANSWER HIM WITH AILD VIOLENCE.

SCHMACK



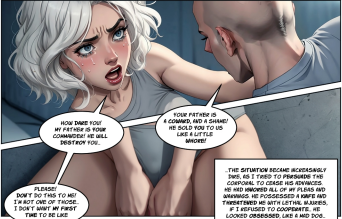
STEP BACK, ANNE!
DON'T YOU EVER TOUCH
ME AGAIN!

AAAGH!!



EASY GIRL! KEEP YOUR
FISTS IN CHECK! THE GUN
IS LOW, BUT SOME OF THEM
WILL CARE ABOUT YOUR FACE
AS MUCH AS YOU DO!

BE A GOOD GIRL!
LISTEN WHAT DADDY SAYS!
GO DOWN WILLINGLY...
OR I'LL MAKE YOU
COMPLY!



HOW DARE YOU!
MY FATHER IS YOUR
COMMANDER! HE WILL
DESTROY YOU!

YOUR FATHER IS
A COMMAND, AND A SHAME!
HE SOLD YOU TO US
LIKE A LITTLE
MURDER!

PLEASE!
DON'T DO THIS TO ME!
I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE.
I DON'T WANT MY FIRST
TIME TO BE LIKE
THIS!

...THE SITUATION BECAME INCREASINGLY
TENSE, AS I TRIED TO PERSUADE THE
COMMANDER TO CEASE HIS ADVANCES.
HE HAD IGNORED ALL OF MY PLEAS AND
OBJURATIONS. HE POSSESSED A KNIFE AND
THREATENED ME WITH LETHAL MAJORITY.
IF I REFUSED TO COOPERATE, HE
LOOKED OBSESSED, LIKE A MAD DOG.



PLEASE, I BEG YOU!
SPARE ME NOW AND WE CAN
GO ON A DATE WHEN YOU
ARE ON A LEAVE!


GIRL,
LISTEN, I HAVE NO
NEEDS, NOR TIME FOR THIS!
I'M AN UNBROKEN MAN'S SON!
I'M SICK, AND YOU ARE MY
MEDICINE!

CALL, CALL, GIRL, GUEST!
I SEE, YOU HAVE ANSWERED
YOURSELF THERE!



FLOWER, YOU
JUST HAVE BLOSSOMED!
YOU NEED A MAN LIKE ME!
I'LL MAKE YOU SEE
THE STARS!

...AS COMMANDER ZAPHERA IGNORED
ALL OF MY ATTEMPTS TO REASON
WITH HIM, AS HE PROCEEDED TO
PERFORM A NON-CONSENSUAL
SEXUAL ACT ON ME, I FELT
TRAPPED... I HAD NO CHOICE.



...BECAUSE BY THE CN 08L-25
I HAD THOUGHT ABT SOMETHING ABOUT
THE LOOP OF LIFE THERE.



...FOR EVERY PREDATOR
THERE IS A PREY THAT THEY
PURSUE... BUT EACH PREDATOR
IN ITS TURN IS MERELY A PREY
FOR SOMEONE ELSE.



...ALL MY LIFE I THOUGHT
THAT BEING A PREY WAS
A KEY PART OF MY NATURE...
BUT THEN I CHOSE TO
BECOME A PREDATOR.



...AS MY SPIRIT GREW,
AND TRANSFORMED,
ALL FORMERLY REVERED
PREDATORS TURNED
INTO A PREY FOR ME.

I'LL MAKE YOU SEE
THE VOID!

CORPORAL ZARDENA WAS LIKE
ONE OF THOSE SNOW DRAGONS.
HE GOT LOST FAR AWAY FROM HIS
FLOCK AND BECAME MY FIRST PREY.
HE CLEARLY SAID THAT THERE WAS
A GIBBER TO MY ROOM. THIS WAY,
THE WHOLE CREW OF KNOWN
WELCOMED MY VENGEANCE.

AAAGH!

GULP

GULP

GULP

MEDIC!

KHA... KHABIR!

HELP!

DIE!

DIE!

DIE!



I SUPPOSE, THIS IS THE
NATURE, THE ESSENCE OF WAR...
WHEN THE VIOLENCE HAS BEEN
NOTED, THERE IS NO WAY BACK.



I'M GONNA KILL
THEM ALL!!!



HEY, AFTER GETTING THE FIRST CLASS LADY TO UMMA, WE'LL GET A DAY OFF, RIGHT? WHAT WILL YOU GUYS DO?

OH, I'LL GO STRAIGHT TO THE DOCKS AND FUCK MY ALLOWANCE OFF!

AT LEAST!

COMMANDER, WHAT WILL YOU DO ON UMMA?

...KROON WAS ON THE AUTOPILOT. I FOUND THE REST OF THE CREW IN THE MESS HALL. THEY WERE JOKING AND LAUGHING. NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW OR CARE THAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO GET BRUTALLY RAPED JUST A FEW HUNDREDS AWAY FROM THEM.



HEY I WILL GET STRAIGHT TO MY GEL AND KIDS, OF COURSE!

MY ELZA, SHE REALLY MISSES ME - I GET TRANSMISSIONS FROM HER EVERY SECOND DAY!

AND KIDS... THEY DEVELOP SO FAST! I WISH I COULD BE THERE AND SEE THEM GROW DAY BY DAY...



ELZA?!
BY THE ASHES OF UMMAH!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE,
ALL BLOODY...



SHUT IT!
YOU SOLD ME LIKE A CUTLLET!
WHAT HAPPENED WITH AN IDEALIST
FATHER THAT SENT MY SON
TO CONSCRIPTION?



ELZA, I AM STILL YOUR FATHER, IMPERIAL WAR HERO.

DAUGHTER, FOODS! LOOK AT ME, LISTEN TO ME! WE ARE A CREW OF A PATROL SHIP, RIGHT?

DO YOU KNOW, HOW MANY INNOCENTS WILL BE WIPED OR KILLED IF WE LOSE OUR GUARDIAN?



IF SOLDIERS WERE DYING, ELZA, FACING AWAY ONE BY ONE! THEY NEEDED A WOMAN TO KEEP ON FIGHTING. IT WAS MY MISTAKE THAT I DIDN'T EXPLAIN IT TO YOU FIRST...



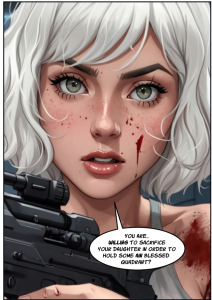
DON'T YOU EVER TRY SOMETHING. EVERYONE! HANDS ON THE TABLE!



PSST! WHO'S IS YOUR PUP?

DAMN! NOW IT'S FOR THE OLD MAN TO SOLVE.

WAS CLEARING IN THE ARCADE.



YOU ARE WILLING TO SACRIFICE YOUR DAUGHTER IN ORDER TO HOLD SOME AN BLESSED GUARDIAN?



IF IT MEANS THAT I
WILL COME BACK HOME TO MY
FAMILY, THEN YES!

PUT DOWN
THE GUN, ELZA
THIS IS YOUR LAST
CHANCE.

BANG

BANG

BANG

RRRAAAGH!!!

...COMMANDER BADEK TRIED
TO RESIST AN ATTEMPT TO
LEGITIMATELY ARREST HIM FOR
DISMOWING THE IMPERIAL
NAVY WITH HIS UNFORGIVABLE
ACTIONS HE DIDN'T LEAVE
HE ANY OTHER OPTIONS.

BANG

BANG

DIE!!!


BANG



...WHEN VIOLENCE IS MOTED, IT BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP. COMMANDER GADAM, MY FATHER, ALLOWED HIS ABANDONANCE TO PREVAIL OVER REASON - HE PAID THE PRICE.



...WHEN THE COMMANDER WAS ELIMINATED, I STOOD UP ALONE AGAINST FOUR PROFESSIONAL MARINES. I COULD NOT RISK MY LIFE BY GIVING THEM ANY INITIATIVE.



...I HELD DOWN THE TRIGGER, UNTIL THE LAST BODY HIT THE FLOOR, AND THE OVERHEATED BARREL STOPPED SPITTING THE PELLETS.



MY EYES WERE ACHING AS THE SMOKE BEGAN TO CLEAR. IT WAS PAINFUL TO SEE DISFIGURED CORPSES OF ONCE STRONG AND REVERED IMPERIAL SOLDIERS. I DID NOT WANT IT TO END LIKE THIS.



...EVEN AFTER THE LAST
BREATH WAS LEFT HIS
BODY, MY ONCE FATHER WAS
STARRING AT ME WITH HIS
EMPTY EYES.

KLACK
KLACK

...I DIDN'T FEEL ANY
REGRET FOR TAKING HIS
LIFE. HE HAD BETRAYED THE
SWORN THE SAME PROMISE
WHEN HE ALLOWED HIS OWN
SOLDIERS TO COMMAND
OVER HIM.

...HE WAS WEAK, AND DIDN'T
DESERVE A SINGLE TEAR.

KRRRAAAAWAAAGHAAA



A close-up of a woman with white hair, her face covered in tears and blood. Her mouth is open in a scream or cry. The sound effect 'KRRRAAAAWAAAGHAAA' is written across the bottom of the panel.

A VESSEL CANNOT OPERATE WITHOUT A PROPER LEADER, SO I WENT TOWARDS THE MEDBAY IN ORDER TO SURRENDER THE SHIP TO COMMANDER FYE...



...THE FOREIGN BODIES HAD ALREADY BEEN PURGED FROM HER SYSTEM, SO FYE WAS SLOWLY RECOVERING HER MIND AND BODY INSIDE OF A QUIET AND WELL-VENTILATED CELL...



E, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ELZE?

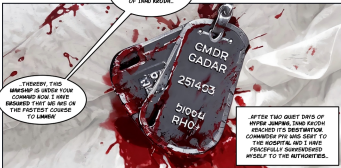
COMMANDER FYE! IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS...



...I HAD TO DISMISS COMMANDER GADAR AND THE REST OF THE CREW OF TANK KRODH...

...THEREBY, THIS WARSHIP IS UNDER YOUR COMMAND NOW. I HAVE ENSURED THAT WE ARE ON THE FASTEST COURSE TO LIBERTY!

...AFTER TWO QUIET DAYS OF HYPER JUMPING, TANK KRODH REACHED ITS DESTINATION. COMMANDER FYE WAS SENT TO THE HOSPITAL AND I HAVE PEACEFULLY SURRENDERED MYSELF TO THE AUTHORITIES...





SAYS THEM, I HAVE BEEN FULLY COOPERATIVE WITH THE AND DID NOT WITHHOLD ANY FACTS ABOUT THE INCIDENT.



IMPRESSIONS STORY, JINXONI TRULY IMPRESSIONS!



THANK YOU, INVESTIGATOR, CAN THIS BE THE LAST TIME THAT I HAVE TO RETELL IT TO YOU?



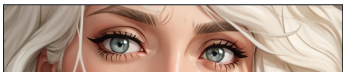
I THINK SO, YES, YOU COULD BECOME AN IMPERIAL WARD WITH YOUR RESOURCEFULNESS AND DETERMINATION, YOU KNOW?

BUT LET'S NOT FORGET THAT YOU HAVE KILLED SEVEN LOYAL SONS OF THE EMPIRE! IF EVERY YOUNG GIRL WOULD ACT LIKE YOU - WE WOULD NOT HAVE ANY ARMY LEFT!

CONVICT JINXONI BY THE IMPERIAL MILITARY FOR MURDER OF A FIRST CLASS CITIZEN, FOR SABOTAGE OF AN IMPERIAL PATROL ROUTE.



...I SENTENCE YOU TO A PUNISHMENT OF DEATH...



APOLONES CORRECTION...



BY THE IMPERIAL WILL, YOU ARE PARDONED AND CLEARED FROM ALL CHARGES.



SORRY, PLEASE LET OUR GUEST GO FIRST!

YOU SEEM TO HAVE FRIENDS IN REALLY HIGH PLACES, BLIA.

PILOT BLIA BARDAR, YOU HAVE MADE AN INVALUABLE SERVICE TO THE EMPIRE, BY SINGLE-HANDLEDY RECLAIMING A MARCHER FROM CRIMINALS AND TRAITORS...

...FOR THIS SELFLESS EFFORT, YOU ARE GRANTED AN OFFICIAL DISTINCTION AS A HERO OF THE EMPIRE AND A PROMOTION TO THE FIRST CLASS OF CITIZENSHIP. MAY YOU BE AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL FOLLOW IMPERIALS AND THE GENERATIONS TO COME...

...SO COMMANDS THE IMPERIAL WILL!

COMMANDER
PYR?

HELLO, HERO
OF THE EMPIRE!

I THOUGHT THAT
YOU WERE STILL
RECOVERING...

YES, I STILL AM
YOUR IMMEDIATE EXECUTION
THOUGH, WAS A GOOD ENOUGH
REASON TO GET SHOWN MY
LAZY MORNING...

I STILL DON'T
UNDERSTAND... I WAS
SENTENCED TO DEATH FIRST...

DEAR, PLEASE,
DON'T OVERTHINK IT!
HARDSHIP OF RULES IN AN
AUTHORITARIAN STATE IS ALWAYS
BEING COMPENSATED BY ELECTIVE
APPLICATION OF THOSE.
I HAVE PULLED SOME
STRASS, SO...

PRIVILEGED TRIBE?
A HOWEY?

WELCOME TO THE
PRIVILEGED TRIBE! HERE
IS YOUR ID-CYLINDER.
IT IS ALSO A KEY TO
YOUR NEW HOME...

THANK YOU,
COMMANDER!

CONGRATULATIONS,
GAL! NOW YOU HAVE A
WHOLE CYCLE TO FIND SOME
OCCUPATION OR YOUR FIRST
CITIZENSHIP CLASS WILL
BE REVOKED.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU
GOING TO DO NOW, BLAST?
I COULD USE SOMEONE OF YOUR
TALENT FOR MY... SOCIAL
PROJECTS...

THANK YOU,
PYR! BUT I DO ALREADY
HAVE SOME PLANS...
A SWISS!



IT FEELS WEIRD TO EVEN SAY THAT, BECAUSE I HAVE NEVER REALLY DREAMED OF ANYTHING UNTIL... NOW!



DO YOU WANT TO SNIKE, ELZAR? OR IS IT COMPLETELY HUSH-HUSH?

NOT FROM YOU, COMMANDER!

EVER SINCE I MET DEKORS AND SAW THOSE ARCHERS, SNOW DEKORS... I WANT TO STUDY KENOBIOLGY, PVE!



I WANT TO GET OUT THERE, EXPLORE THIS UNIVERSE AND MAKE IT MY OWN... LIKE...

THE UNIVERSE OF ELZA





