

The Lament of B-33R

Realizing his dream to be the Commodore's private droid was not quite what B-33R thought it would be. As he hunched over the sink, washing two dishes at once to a beautiful, glistening perfection, he reflected on how he got to this point. While he was glad to have finally have found a purpose to serve the Empire according to his programming, he thought it would be different. He thought he would be doing strategic analysis, or calculating combat odds. Changing diapers and vacuuming was not what he had in mind.

At his feet, he felt something tug at his knee joint. He looked down to see Henry Terrik tugging at his leg. Beer noted the sagging diaper, and his olfactory receptors confirmed it. He let out an audible sigh and set his dishes down. He bent down to pick up Henry and carry him to his nursery.

"I do not know how humans deal with their brood. The constant excretion of fecal matter is very distressing," said Beer out loud. Setting Henry down upon his changing table, he removed the diaper, wiped him down, put a fresh one on, and put the soiled one in the trash. Henry cooed with happiness.

Suddenly, Beer detected his remote alarm beeping indicating that his owner had summoned him. "Your father is summoning me, Master Henry." He took Henry to see Elissa, who was holed up in her bedroom doing research and poring over the technical readouts of starships. "Good evening, Miss Val'Asha. Rear Admiral Terrik has summoned me. I must entrust Master Henry into your care while I am gone."

Elissa stood up, stretching her body and lekku out, grateful for the distraction. She had spent weeks engrossed in research, and hadn't done much else, including sleep. "Thank you, Beer," she said. She held Henry up, who giggled. "I believe he may be hungry, ma'am. He attempted to knead my chestplate as I carried him. I believe your brood thinks I can offer it sustenance," said Beer. Elissa sighed, tired of feeding this eating machine as she sat down at the table to nurse Henry and go back over her research.

Beer excused himself and proceeded to the bridge to rendezvous with the Commodore of the Warrior. As he entered, he noted Rear Admiral Terrik surrounding the holographic war planning table with the commanders of Wing II. Standing next to him were commanders Tommy of Rho and Robert Hogan of Sin; across the table were Sparky Wagglehorn of Kappa and Pete Mitchell of Theta. They were all discussing the formation of the fleet as it entered battle and how the squadrons would be deployed when Beer arrived. "I have arrived per your summons, Rear Admiral. How may I be of service to you?" he said.

"Beer, I'm so glad you're finally here. I really need your opinion on something. Gentlemen, if you will excuse me," said Zekk. His commanders all nodded, not even looking up from the hologram. Finally, thought Beer. I will be able to prove my strategic worth to the Warrior. Zekk walked up the stairs to the command chair from where he issued orders. He untied the cushion from around the chair and picked it up, holding it in front of Beer.

"Okay, you know how Silvius was a bit on the heavier side, right?" said Zekk. Beer nodded, not sure when the strategic analysis part was going to come. Zekk pointed to the top of the cushion. "Look, I don't weigh that much. I've been at this job a week and I just can't get the proper butt groove into this cushion," Zekk said. If Beer had any life in his eyes, he would have stared blankly back at Zekk.

“I am not sure I follow you, sir,” said Beer. “What are you asking of me?” Zekk continued on as if Beer hadn’t even spoken. “So I was thinking, do you think you could take this thing to get restuffed? I was thinking take the stuffing out, wash it, iron it out flat real good, then restuff it. Let’s wash the cushion while we’re at it. Who knows how many times Silvius farted on it?”

Zekk pressed the cushion into Beer’s hands. “No hurry, my friend. I know Henry keeps you very busy. I’ll be home shortly for supper,” he said. He patted Beer affectionately on the shoulder as he walked back to the planning table, leaving Beer holding the cushion. Beer let out an audible sigh, and proceed to the laundry room from the bridge.