

WHY YOU SHOULD NEVER ABDUCT A WITCH

BY

SNORE23

The examiner tried to compose himself. The subject would be coming soon, and he would need to be at full efficiency. Pushing buttons, he warmed up the beds in preparation for the evening. They hummed comfortingly in the plain white room. Of course, to his eyes, he could see all the sterilization warnings that were carefully placed throughout the room, but human eyes would be unable to thanks to their limited vision.

A hissing was his only warning. The door slid open revealing the takers. Beside them stood two nude human females. The one on the left stood about four *glek* tall. The examiner paused, trying to think of the human conversion. The number slid smoothly in his cerebrum. Six feet. The other was barely three and a half *glek*, perhaps. Maybe five feet in human parlance. He could get actual measurements on the tables.

As the women stepped calmly into the room, he could see the slightly glazed look from the controlling takers. They wouldn't remember anything of their abductions, or if they did it would seem a dream to them.

Dreams. The examiner tilted his grey head. He, of course, never had dreams. Briefly, he wondered what they would be like, living another life or memory while in rest cycle, but placed the thought aside. It would be counter-productive and he needed to be looking to accomplish his assigned task.

The taker placed the taller female on the left bed. The examiner walked over. She seemed to be an excellent specimen. Fully formed milk glands, larger than many but not oversized like some he had seen. She had long hair, yellow-hued, that reached past her firmly fleshed buttocks, and long legs that terminated in petite feet.

The examiner activated the bed and set the program. The scanners and samplers would take accurate measurements of the human, recording the data and sending it back to the main computer. However, some samples would have to actually be taken from the specimen, so he pulled out a long thin probe and inserted in the left nostril. The tip took blood samples and placed nanite recorders in the bloodstream. In moments they would be throughout the body, taking internal readings, before sending their signals to the bed. Afterwards, they would deactivate and be expelled naturally from the host.

As he left the nanites to do their work, he turned to the second specimen. He barely noticed the absence of the takers; they had done their job already. They would be able to recuperate and prepare for the return of the humans back to their homes, vehicles, or wherever they had come from. It was a neat arrangement, and he wished them well. That was not his function however, so he left his thoughts at that.

This smaller female had reddish tint to her hair, as well as it being much shorter than the others, perhaps reaching to her shoulders. The proportions of this female were in keeping with her hair, he noticed. She was formed smaller than the other, yet it seemed natural enough. That was another odd fact about these creatures; they came in all shapes, sizes and colors. Not like his own highly evolved race, where all were the same size, shape, and color. Much more efficient, and able to fulfill any role their people required of them. How strange, he mused, that this race would evolve so differently.

His thoughts were still on this meaningless trivia as he bent to activate the bed. In his other hand he slid the probe steadily towards the left nostril of the subject. He found himself completely unprepared for what happened next.

As the probe tip neared the orifice, the woman gasped! Startled, he reached to the emergency panel on the bed to place the subject under the pacifier when a powerful blow struck his face. Blinking his almond-shaped eyes, he quickly stepped back to reassess the situation.

The woman sat up, arm covering her milk glands, eyes alert and choked with apparent emotion. She stared around her wildly, probably attempting to gain her bearings. The examiner made no movement to provoke any further assaults on his person. Sliding his finger along his pocket, he pressed firmly against the pocket of his uniform, tripping the alert pad inside. He realized that it would take several *mokets* for assistance to arrive, which left him trying to determine his best course of action; should he attempt to physically subdue the subject, verbally communicate with it or simply maintain the current status quo.

The woman opened her mouth and spoke. The examiner suppressed his exasperation, in all his time of doing this he had never bothered to learn the human language. It hadn't been part of his job. He only collected data, he never analyzed it.

Suddenly the woman gestured angrily at him. He realized that she had pointed to the other bed. More precisely, he amended mentally, she had gestured to the other subject.

He sensed that the whole situation was spiraling rapidly out of control, but he didn't feel unduly alarmed. He knew the species, after all he had handled dozens of subjects before. Humans were strong, but not as strong as the *deje*. It should be a simple matter of overpowering her until the takers returned. He moved towards her again.

The human gestured, shouting again, her hands flying towards him, revealing her anatomy again. Her eyes glowed with light as she reached for *him*. The examiner stopped, he had never come across luminous eyes in any of his previous subjects. The light was now issuing from her fingers. This struck him as dangerous, perhaps he had better...

Pain shot along his extremities, going into his core. The examiner froze, trying to categorize the situation, but the answer eluded him as the feeling grew more intense.

He felt something erupting in his middle regions, so he looked down. He stared uncomprehending at the lumps forming on his upper stomach. His comforting grey color leached from his skin, leaving it a formless white, nearly the color of the walls. His entire body seemed to shift around him, becoming larger and heavier.

It took only moments, yet the wait seemed interminable. At last the pain lessened and he could take a better look at himself.

His body appeared to be that of one of the four-legged animal variety, similar to the meat-animals the humans regularly consumed he had examined. Except the body was leaner, taller, more designed for running. He believed the humans termed them equine.

A startled scream from his left made him turn to the second subject. The examiner stared. Apparently, she had undergone a similar transformation. Her equine-half appeared to be colored the same as her hair. Except for her tail, which had turned black.

The smaller subject was speaking, and the examiner felt a jolt when he realized *he could understand!* The words were as familiar to him as his own species' touch telepathic ability.

“-oh my gosh! I’m so sorry! I didn’t think the spell would affect you too! I just panicked!”

“What did you do to me!” the other subject screamed.

“I turned you into a centaur!” The examiner filed the term away. It was always good to recognize the species you had been turned into. Perhaps if he listened long enough he could figure a way out of the uncomfortable situation. However....

“Turn me back!”

“I can’t! It’s a permanent curse!”

“It’s WHAT!?!?” The other centaur seemed about ready to faint. Not that the examiner could blame her.

The sound of the door sliding open interrupted them all. Almost as one entity, the trio turned to brace the takers. The examiner felt relieved, once the situation was explained, he could get assistance in turning back to his normal shape...

“Stay away!” the smaller subject shouted. With a sweep of her arm, the takers were hurled from the room. They made no sound of course, but the examiner could feel the shock and surprise that came from them.

“Away from here we go, to my cavern deep below!”

A powerful wind swirled into life around the examiner. He raised his arm to ward off any strike against his person, but it was already too late. A squeezing, wrenching sensation, then the cool of the examination room disappeared to be replaced by dampness, odd smells, and a feeling of...oldness. The examiner stared wildly about, taking in the rough stone walls and the small, natural waterfall near the center that splashed merrily into a small pool. Where was he?

“Where are we?” came the other centaur’s voice. The examiner turned to her, impressed that she had asked the question he had most wanted. Then he reconsidered; perhaps it was simply natural for her to ask the obvious.

“In my workshop.” The other girl said, embarrassed. She had her arms crossed over her chest again, as did the other girl. The examiner remembered the briefing he had received on this species, how they preferred colorful clothes while only wearing a handful of functional. The student, a young female

recruit for the ship, had postulated that the humans wore such obviously nonfunctional clothing for mating purposes. When caught without them, they tended to feel inadequate and unworthy of mates. Was this what was happening?

Apparently, the other girl was aware of the situation. “Do you think you could get us some clothes?”

“Yep. Right here.” The other girl walked to an old container. *Trunk*. Something whispered to him. The examiner paused, trying to assess where the word had come from. He dismissed it as unimportant at the time.

From the trunk, the woman pulled several articles of clothing. She passed a couple articles to the female centaur, kept several for herself, then grimaced and tossed one to him. He caught it automatically, then studied it. It appeared to be for his upper body, but didn’t seem to contain any pockets or other useful items. He found it strange that she would offer him prospective mating clothing. Perhaps he was misinterpreting the situation?

A moment later the other two turned back around, dressed in their costumes, and continued to address one another.

“Can’t you turn me back to human?” the one asked, voice thick with some emotion. The examiner briefly wondered why her eyes were shiny, until he realized they were watering. Why were they doing so? There didn’t seem to be much debris that would irritate them. Maybe they were more sensitive than he had previously realized.

“I’m sorry.” His hypothesis seemed to be holding up, the debris clearly affected this subject as well. “I didn’t realize the spell would affect you as well. It’s a curse, a powerful transformation one. One that doesn’t have a counterspell.”

“You mean-?”

“I can’t turn you back, him either?” she pointed to the examiner. For the first time both women looked at him.

“Yeah, who are you?” the human demanded belligerently.

The examiner wondered briefly how he was going to communicate with them. After all, while his species had mouths, they were only used for ingestion of nutrients, not for oral communication. He wouldn’t have the appropriate apparatus for...

He caught sight of himself in a hanging mirror that stood over the trunk. It appeared the transformation had been more complete than he had thought. A clearly human body with dark hair, green eyes, and a hewn face stared back at him in surprise.

Well, if the ability to transform him had been that complete, then perhaps it had included the ability to speak in human tongue.

“I...am...the examiner.” He spoke slowly, clumsily. Using his tongue, he licked his lips, marveling at the sensation.

“The examiner?” The human frowned. “Is that your title? What’s your name, I asked.”

“My designation is Examiner.” He spoke firmly. They stared at him.

“Ookay.” The human drew out the word.

“Why? Why did you kidnap us?” the centaur asked. Her tail was swishing in a manner he recognized as frightened.

“No permanent harm would have come to you.” The examiner pointed out.

“That doesn’t make me feel better.” The girl flared.

The examiner nodded. “Well, we were simply collecting data. Body height, general health, sex of your fetus, general height...”

“WHAT!” the centaur shrieked. The human looked startled as well.

“Your fetus.” The examiner said unruffled. “It doesn’t appear to be fully developed yet, but it is still clearly there.”

The centaur looked down at her stomach, where her body merged with that of the other creature. “I’m pregnant?” she whispered.

“You did not realize?” The examiner questioned.

“Of course I had no idea! I haven’t had my period yet this month, perhaps, but it hasn’t been long enough to worry about!” she snapped.

The examiner did not take offense. In studies of pregnant humans, their hormones tended to be uncontrolled, oscillating to very high peaks. As such, it wouldn’t be surprising that their emotions would be affected.

“The diagnostic table confirmed it before we were...interrupted.” The examiner said delicately. “You have a female fetus growing inside you.”

She rubbed her belly slowly. “I’m going to be a mother.” She whispered.

“Actually,” the other woman said uncomfortably, “The baby’s in the other half of you now.”

The other woman looked up. “My baby, what’s happened to my baby?!”

“She’s going to be fine, she’s just going to be a centaur now.” The human soothed.

“We can’t be centaurs! What will my parents think! What about people at her school! She’ll be teased and picked on! My daughter can’t be a centaur! Change me back! Change both of us back!” she demanded. Her voice cracked, clearly she was on the verge of losing control.

“I can’t! I used a permanent curse! I didn’t realize it would hurt you! I’m sorry!”

The mother-to-be collapsed to the floor, giving a long, pained moan. The other woman wept down and wrapped her arms around the neck of the other woman. They sobbed in each other's arms, leaving the examiner wondering if he should step back farther to give them room.

He stopped when the human began speaking. "I'll find a way. I'll find a way to turn you human again, I promise." She looked down at the teary eyed centaur.

The girl sniffled and looked up. "You will?"

The human smiled. "I promise. I'm Kate, by the way."

"Cassie." The examiner perked up slightly. What designation was this? He ran through various industries or social functions, but couldn't remember if there were any with those names. Perhaps it was only a human function?

Well, X, I guess we need to figure out what to do with you." The human turned to look at him.

"Ex?" He asked in confusion.

"Yeah, it's a nickname, you know, something shorter to call you? And easier." She added under her breath.

"I'm not familiar with that designation..." he began carefully.

"Well, it doesn't matter. Now you are X, and I've got to decide what to do with you." She casually, but he could tell she was nervous. When she thought he wasn't looking she chewed her lip slightly. Apparently, the examination process had clearly unnerved her.

Now the examiner was faced with a dilemma. He believed, with some effort, he could send a signal back to the ship, thereby effecting a rescue and modification of the subjects. Or, more likely, the permanent taking of the subjects to the ship and a return to the homeworld for continued scans and probes to determine the mechanisms of this strange ability to move people through space, turn other's forms into different species, and whatever else she seemed capable of. Of course, those experiments could harm the infant, which he was loathe to do. It seemed like such a waste. The other option seemed more palatable; remain with the two to observe their interactions on a ground level, see the power in action, and perhaps understand more of social interactions. The amount of data he could collect and examine would be incalculable, irrefutable. It would be worth the effort expended.

"Very well." He spoke calmly. "I will join your ship crew and offer my designation to you."

"Huh?" the Kate asked cluelessly. He quickly elaborated.

"My designation. My purpose in life, to examine all subjects and material, collecting what data I am able, before sending it on to the Analyzer. While I know of no analyzer here, I can still collect and organize the data and provide it to you."

She stared at him, sorting through the possibilities he provided. She nodded to herself, coming to a decision.

“Very well. Perhaps I could use you. You can organize my pantry shelves.”

He bowed. “I live to serve.” He murmured.

“Well, I guess that will be that for a while.” She agreed. They broke up for the evening, he going to the far side of the room and the two females walking to the other side. There a door opened up, and they walked through together. The door shut firmly, he walked across to confirm that it was indeed, sealed. He nodded. He would only have to bide his time, and collect all the information he could possibly get.

This, he reflected as he found a place to get comfortable for the night, would be a very interesting mission.