

The King of Downbelow

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Not long after I've written that Buffybot/Deleenn story, Alicamel presents Spike/Deleenn as a challenge. Can you say "sequel"?

Featured fandoms: Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Babylon 5

Featured pairings: Deleenn/Spike

A.S.S Story codes: fm, ff

Story rating: R

Steadily, the stars revolved outside Babylon 5's panorama room. She knew quite well that it really was the other way around, but it was dizzying to try to actually see it that way. So much easier to imagine oneself the center of the universe, the one thing that everything else revolved around. So the stars revolved around Babylon 5, Deleenn and the bench she sat on, not the other way around.

"Entil'zha?" a voice said behind her. A minbari woman, from the sound of it.

"Yes?" she asked.

"I have the information you requested."

She motioned to the empty space beside herself on the bench. After a brief hesitation, the young ranger walked into the room and sat down. She'd heard that Entil'zha didn't care much for formality, but she hadn't quite wanted to believe it.

"You have managed to trace the robot's background?" Deleenn said.

"We have," the ranger said.

"Tell me," Deleenn said. "Don't be afraid, I won't bite."

The ranger looked nervously at her. Bite? Was that something humans usually did, or why did Entil'zha feel the need to assure her that she wouldn't?

"We traced the crate you found the robot in back to long-term storage in a section of Earth called California," she said, seeking refuge in doing what she knew she was supposed to. "It had been there for a long time, since long before the humans made official contact with any other species. We know now that the Vorlons were already there at the time, but they were in hiding. We were stumped for a time, until we thought to try contacting a human secret organization revealed to us by Valen, an organization called the Council of Watchers. In their written archives we found references not only to the name in which the long-term storage was rented, Alexander Harris, but also to the robot itself. It seems that she was built to be a copy of a powerful human warrior known as 'The Slayer' more than two and a half human century ago."

Deleenn looked at the ranger. "Did you find anything about this Spike who she keeps looking for?"

The ranger nodded. "We did, Entil'zha." She hesitated. "Although the information doesn't entirely make sense."

"Such are the times, Mirenn," Deleenn said. "Tell me anyway."

For a moment, the Ranger Mirenn couldn't speak. Entil'zha knew her name! She hadn't mentioned it, of course, she wasn't important, only her mission was. Yet Entil'zha knew who she was knew her name.

"According to the texts of the Council of Watchers," she said, "Spike was the one who had the robot built. He loved the Slayer, but she rejected him, so he got himself a copy of her. A copy that loved him, totally and forever."

"Well," Deleenn said. "That part certainly worked. Do their texts say what happened to him?"

"Yes," she said. "And that's the really strange part. He's here. Now. On Babylon 5."

One thing that space stations don't have a lot of is windows. In a five-mile rotating tin can, the only place you can have a window is either in the bottom-story floor or on the end caps. You don't have many of the first, because, well, you really want your floor to be as strong as possible. Particularly when people might shoot at you from time to time. So, the endcaps. Lots of windows there. Premium real estate.

Expensive as fuck. Not the place for Spike. Not that he wanted to be there, oh no, well inside the tin can where the burning sunlight never reached was absolutely fine, if you asked him. Lots of people, no need to hide. There weren't even a lot of mirrors to avoid. And as an extra bonus, most vampires refused to leave the Earth and their graves behind, so the ones up here all his children. There had been a few others at the start, but he quickly took care of that. A couple of centuries fighting various demons and vampires had left him a seriously badass vampire.

"Please," the Centauri girl in his lap pleaded. "Don't kill me. I'll do whatever you want."

But the best part, the absolutely positively fucking *best* part of being out here was that his ever so bloody annoying chip was very particular to humans.

"But all I want from you is your blood, precious," he said. "What house are you? Gridori?"

She nodded.

He grinned. "Good," he said. "I like Gridori blood. Tastes like cinnamon." Abruptly, his face changed to its predatorial version. "And the young ones are always the best," he added before he sank his fangs into the girl's neck and drained her.

"Er, boss?" one of his lieutenants said as he dropped the lifeless body to the floor. Officially, the room was a pub, but for several years now it had been Spike's unofficial throne room. Nothing much happened in Downbelow that didn't have its origin there.

"Yeah," he said, his face fading back to normal. "What?"

"Couple of Rangers have been asking around for you," the lieutenant said. Rob hadn't been a very bright boy even when he was alive, but he was big and looked scary, so he made an excellent enforcer.

"For me?"

"Yeah." Rob looked a little uncomfortable. "By name."

"Bloody *hell!* Do we know who they are?" Spike got up from his chair.

Rob took a step back. "We know one of them," he said.

"So? Spit it out!"

"It's Delenn."

Spike walked over to Rob, who backed away until the wall stopped him.

"Delenn?" Spike said. "The ever so high and mighty Entil'zha, wife of the President of the Interstellar fucking Alliance and bleedin' saint to the entire fucking Minbari *species* wants to see Spike?"

"Yeah," Rob muttered.

Spike walked back to his chair and dropped down into it. Rob eyed him warily.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" Spike said. "Bring her here!"

Cloaked Rangers were a common enough sight in Downbelow, and they were sufficiently respected and feared that they could mostly walk where they wanted with impunity.

At least, that's what Delenn had been led to believe. She was quickly learning otherwise. Mirenn had led her through Downbelow, avoiding large areas and preventing her from going into certain establishments. To *avoid problems*. A Ranger. Avoiding problems.

She wanted to blame Mirenn, but knew that it wasn't the girl's fault. She followed her training as best she could. No, Delenn blamed herself. She was Entil'zha, it was her responsibility to oversee the training of new Rangers, to make sure that they were taught well. She had been remiss in that responsibility, spending too much time on the Interstellar Alliance on too little on her sacred duty to the Anla'shok.

In the future she would do better.

"Someone's following us," Mirenn said. "Let's get out of here."

"No," Delenn said. "Who is it?"

"Large human, forty steps behind us."

Delenn stopped and turned around.

"Entil'zha!" Mirenn said. "What are you doing?"

"I am waiting for him, to ask what he wants," she said. "Since he's following us, he must want something from us."

She heard the shi-click sound of Mirenn extending her pike. "I don't think he's entirely human," the young Ranger said.

Before Delenn had time to ask what she meant, the large human reached them. "Can we help you?" she said.

"Yeah, well," the human said. "Spike wants to see you now."

"How convenient," Delenn said. "Take us to him."

Spike looked down at Delenn.

"I thought you'd be taller," he said. "You look taller on ISN."

Delenn looked at back at him.

"I thought you'd look older," she said. "About four hundred years older."

He grinned at her. "And if only you knew what I've learned in all that time, cutie," he said.

"I'm sure your studies have been extensive," Delenn said. "But I come here because of something, or rather someone, from very long ago."

Spike returned to his accustomed chair. Sat down, threw a leg over an armrest. "Oh?" he asked.

"I think maybe we should discuss this in private," Delenn said.

"Whatever," Spike said. "Rob, beat it."

Rob looked from the two rangers to his master. "But, Boss, what if they try something?"

"Then I'll *kill* them," Spike said. "Now do as I said and beat it, before I kill *you*."

Delenn turned towards her companion and bowed slightly. "Mirenn, would you be kind enough to leave us alone for a few moments?"

"Of course, Entil'zha," Mirenn said. "I will be just outside, if you need me." She returned Delenn's bow, only deeper, then left the dimly lit room. Rob followed right behind her.

"So," Spike said. "The Entil'zha. Come to see me. That is a bit of a surprise, I must admit."

"Officially, I am not here," Delenn said. "I am doing this as a favor to a friend."

"Really. Anyone I know?"

"I believe you had her built."

Spike frowned. "That I had her *built*...?" His face lit up with understanding. "The Buffybot! Blimey, does that old thing still exist? I thought it got destroyed that time Buffy was dead for a while."

Delenn gestured towards a chair. "May I...?"

"Yeah, yeah." He sat up more straight. "How did you come to know the Buffybot? And what has she been doing all this time?"

She sat down. "She's been stored in a crate," she said. "For more than two centuries, until I accidentally found her and let her out. Before that, she says she was with someone called Willow. I've had the records of the time looked through, and while there are information about you, both the live and the robot Buffy, her Watcher Mr Giles, her friend Mr Harris and so on, there is no mention at all of a Willow. Yet the robot insists there should be. That Willow was Buffy's best friend."

Delenn hesitated a little. "The robot also insists that Willow is recently gay, so I am not sure how well her mind works."

Something dark passed over Spike's face.

"You don't want to know about Willow, doll," he said. "The less you know about that, the better for everyone."

"It was more than two hundred years ago," Delenn said. "How can it be that bad today?"

"Right. Two hundred years. Ancient history and all that. Can't mean anything today, can it? Forget about the lot of it, might as well."

Delenn looked at him and smiled. "Your manner of speech is amusing," she said. "I have not heard anyone else speak like that."

"Yeah, well, let's hear how like everyone else *you're* talking when you're four hundred, shall we? What do you want here anyway? You've got the bleedin robot, good for you. What's it got to do with me?"

Delenn got up from her chair and started pacing back and forth.

"Buffy is very eager to find you," she said. "She talks about you. Frequently. Very frequently. And very... openly."

Spike followed her with his eyes. "So?"

"What she says... It has made me... curious."

"Curious."

"Yes. She talks about the sinister attraction of your cold and muscular body." Delenn stopped and looked straight at him. "Why cold?" she asked.

Spike got up. "You really have no idea what you've walked into, have you?" he said.

"A former drinking establishment in Downbelow, I believe," she said.

He approached her, stopped when hardly a hand would've fit between them.

"I'm a predator," he said. "I used to be human. Now I live on them. Well, them and those like them. Centauri, mostly." He smiled. "They taste better than minbari."

"Yes," Delenn said, unperturbed. "Buffy told me about that."

"And you still came here? You're *food*, girl. Go away before I get peckish."

"You haven't answered my question."

"What?"

"Why cold? You're active, you move around. You should generate as much heat as any other species of your size."

He looked at her. "You are a strange one," he said. "Cute, but strange."

"Good," she said.

"Excuse me?"

She smiled. "Good. That you find me cute. Because Buffy's tales got me wondering about other things."

Spike took a step back and looked at her. "You want me to fuck you!"

Deleenn nodded, still smiling.

"What the heck," Spike said. "Haven't had me a famous bint in a long time."

Without a further word, Deleenn started to remove her clothes.

Mirenn tried not to be fret. She was deep in what she knew was bad enemy territory, even if Entil'zha didn't, alone and with no quick way to get backup. She'd had to leave Entil'zha alone in a room with a vastly stronger enemy, when she ought to be protecting her with her own life, to suffer anything and everything in her place. Instead, she was standing next to a closed door, while another of the enemy sat on the floor on the other side of the opening.

Live for The One, die for The One.

Get really, really frustrated with The One.

There was a sound from inside the room.

Mirenn turned around, tried to hear what it was, trying to decide if it was something she should do something about.

Is sounded like moans. She didn't know much about Entil'zha's hybrid biology, and she hadn't known her long, but certainly that couldn't be right. She was in there to talk with the King of Downbelow. There shouldn't be any moaning involved. She extended her pike and prepared to go in.

"Your boss lady won't like it if you go in now," the flunky vampire said from where he was sitting on the floor.

She hesitated. "What?" she said.

"Oh, nothing. Just that I really don't think she'll appreciate an interruption right now. Nor will my boss, but hey, he can stuff it."

"I think you're trying to stall me," Mirenn said. "Why wouldn't Entil'zha want to see one of her own Rangers?"

"Perhaps because she's not being very Ranger-like at the moment," the vampire said. "But hey, you go in. It's no skin off *my* nose."

Without a further word, Mirenn opened the door and walked into the room.

Entil'zha was standing on her hands and knees in the middle of the floor. She was quite naked, and her clothes lay thrown in a heap. Her long, black hair hung down obscuring her face. Behind her, the Vampire King was kneeling. He held onto her hips with his hands, and seemed to be banging his pelvis rhythmically against hers. Mirenn could see Entil'zha's odd-looking human breasts swing back and forth in time with his banging.

"Entil'zha?" she said, confused. "Do you need help?"

"Go away!" came the answer, quite broken up by panting and peculiar little squeals.

"Oh I don't know," the vampire said. "She's kinda cute, you could ask her to join in." He, too, was sounding quite out of breath.

Mirenn backed out of the room. On her way, she thought she heard Entil'zha mutter something about "minbari" and "erogenous as rocks". She tried not to look, but didn't quite succeed. She thought she saw something long and hard stick out of the vampire's groin and into Entil'zha's, ut she wasn't sure. In any case, she suddenly had a strong desire to be anywhere else. She closed the door, separating herself from the disturbing sight.

"Told'ya," the vampire sitting outside said. "Wasn't too popular, was it?"

"It was my duty to make sure," Mirenn said, feeling embarrassed.

"Yeah, whatever," he said. "Now that you've seen it, maybe you'd like to try it out?" He leered at her.

She looked back at him for a moment, then she hit him over the head with her fighting pike.

Mirenn walked a respectful distance behind Entil'zha on their way back up from Downbelow. She'd come out of the room an hour or so after Mirenn had barged in, fully dressed but with her hair in some disarray. They'd walked away without speaking, either to each other or anyone they met.

"Entil'zha?" Mirenn said while they waited for a transport tube.

The sort-of human woman looked at her.

"My apologies for the intrusion," Mirenn said.

"We will forget it," Entil'zha said. "In fact, this entire trip never happened. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Entil'zha!" she said. "I understand perfectly. If anyone asks, I was doing nothing but my usual rounds this day."

"Good," Entil'zha said. "Good..."

They traveled the rest of the way in silence.

"Did you find him?"

The robotic Buffy bounced up from the couch where she'd been sitting when Deleenn entered the room.

"I'm afraid not," she said. "But I have a lead. I think I will find him soon."

Buffy smiled her wide and unreserved smile. "That is good. I miss Spike. I have not seen him in a very long time."

Deleenn sat down on the couch. "We'll find him," she said. "In time, we will find him."

"Yes. We will find him. Until then, I should slay. Did you find any demons for me to slay?"

"Not that either," Deleenn said. "This is a very civilized place, I'm afraid."

Buffy looked disappointed. "Oh," she said. "Then I will have to wait. I don't like waiting."

"Well," Deleenn said, half-voluntarily spreading her legs a little under her robes. "You could show me some more of those things Willow taught you."

"Yes," Buffy said. "I can do that." She knelt before Deleenn and pushed her robes up to her thighs, revealing a pair of slender, well-shaped legs. She put her head under the robes. "This is nice," she said, her voice sounding muffled.

Deleenn closed her eyes and leaned back, a blissful sigh escaping her.