

Truth and Consequences

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Submitted: February 6, 2005

Updated: February 6, 2005

Tak crashes back into Earth. Zim finds out his mission is a lie. WHAT WILL THEY DO NOW?

Provided by Fanart Central.

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Where am I? Tak opened her eyes. She found herself in a strange room, lying on a soft, comfortable bed. She sat up slowly. A sharp pain crawled up her back and her right arm and shoulder were terribly sore. She remembered now. After her last battle with Zim, she had floated around in orbit for nearly a year. Her escape pod finally became caught in the Earth's gravity. The pod was too low on power to pull away and Tak plummeted towards the planet. Now she found herself in what she guessed was a human home. Tak listened carefully. No one was around. "Now what?" she murmured to herself as she laid back down slowly and painfully. Her head hurt. She felt like all her energy had been completely drained from her body. I'm surprised the crash didn't kill me. I wonder if I'd been better off dead... That thought startled her, even scared her a little. Was her situation really that bad? No. Maybe I've been given another chance to fight Zim. But...what would be the point? I'm sure everything's been destroyed. My ship, the magma pump, my escape pod, Mimi...Something hurt her just then, but it was a different kind of pain. Her one companion, the only friend she ever had, was gone too. "What's left for me? I failed. I failed the Tallest, I failed Mimi. I couldn't do it. I'm a failure..." "Now what kind of talk is that?" Tak picked up her head, startled. Standing in the bedroom doorway was an aged human male, with graying hair and crystal blue eyes. "I'd say you're quite lucky." His voice was kind and caring. "Who are you?" Tak tried to sound as threatening as she could manage. The human walked towards the bedside. The fact that she was an alien didn't seem to bother him at all. "My name's Will," the man said calmly. "You crashed into my tool shed last night. I managed to pull you out, but the shed and your ship are completely destroyed. It's incredible that you're still alive." "Why did you save me? You're not going to hand me over to the human authorities are you?" Tak asked warily. "No, I wouldn't do that. I was astonished to find an alien crashed in my yard. You were still breathing. I couldn't just leave you in all that wreckage." "I don't understand," Tak said, looking down at her hands. "I tried so hard. I did everything right. He still beat me. He ruined everything once again!" "Who is this you're talking about?" Tak narrowed her eyes. "It's Zim! He's ruined my entire life! Twice he's done it! I tried. I can't defeat him." "Is defeating him really what you want?" Will asked. His soft eyes settled onto hers. Tak stared back at him. She might have answered him right away with a quick, "Yes!" but something tugged at the back of her mind. She felt she would have enjoyed triumphing over Zim in the past, but now, it all seemed pointless. "I would have liked to beat him when I first came here, but right now, I don't think I would like to face him again. I would only fail once more. I just have to accept it." Will looked away from her gazed out the window. What was left of the alien's escape pod was still smoldering in the remains of his tool shed. "If that's how you feel about it, then all I can say is that you should find something else to do with your life, because it looks to me like the Fates decided to have mercy on you." He got up and went to the doorway. "Mercy..." Tak growled. "If they were merciful, they would have let me die." Will gave her a small smile. "Things may yet turn out in your favor after all, my dear." He walked out of the room. ----- "My Tallest! I have something amazing to show you!" Zim called his leaders up on the screen. Both Red and Purple were looking very annoyed. "It's my newest, ingenious plan to conquer this planet..." Zim went on and on, explaining his new plan, never noticing the angry looks the Tallests gave him. They had decided that they'd had enough of humoring the little defect. "Zim," Red growled, interrupting the smaller Irken. "There's something we need to discuss."----- Tak stepped outside the old human's house. While resting her body was able to repair most of the damage done to it, but she was still slightly sore. She stepped out from under the porch and observed her surroundings. Where exactly had she crashed? There were tall blue mountains standing on the horizon. The house was

settled in a wide open field, enclosed by a thick green forest. This human lives out in the middle of nowhere, she thought. She noticed a corral off to the side of the house where three brown and black horse-creatures watched her with interest. She turned away from their stares and started walking into the field. "Even if I wanted to face Zim, I have no way of getting to him. He must be miles away from here," she out loud to herself. "I wonder how long that human will allow me to stay?" She kept on walking, contemplating all her thoughts about Zim and the mission she should have. What was she supposed to do now? "There's nothing left for me to do." The old man's house was gradually becoming smaller in the distance behind her but she didn't seem to notice. Tak kept on walking. She soon reached the edge of the field where the woods began. She entered the forest with only a slight glance up at the towering trees. Far away, back at the house, crystal eyes watched the small alien's form disappear into the woods. "Each unto his own...I hope she'll be alright in there." Will turned away from the window.----- The white clouds passed outside Zim's cockpit. He needed to get out of the base to clear his head. He just couldn't believe it. He didn't want to believe that his mission was a fake. The Tallest had told him themselves though. The more he tried to deny it, the more some dark corner of his mind told him that he'd known the truth all along. He had been flying north for some time now. He was going to a place he had discovered a few months ago. He found himself traveling there very often. It must have been because it reminded him of Irk. Zim swiped the back of his hand across his eyes. He had been crying. He tried not to let the tears fall, but he couldn't help himself. He stared out at the wide horizon. There were very few humans living out this way. He spotted the familiar outcropping of rock glistening in the dying sunlight. Once the sun went down, the mirage of Irk would appear. ----- Tak wrapped her arms around herself. The sun had disappeared and the chill of the night air was closing in on her. She thought it might be best to turn back and head for the warm home of her human rescuer. Before she turned around, something gleaming in the moonlight caught her eye. She approached the object which was settled in a clearing. Once past the shelter of the trees, Tak recognized the familiar form of an Irken Vootcruiser. It sat near the edge of a cliff, looking over a wide, green valley. She walked towards it carefully but found no one in the cockpit. Her antennae suddenly twitched as she realized there was someone standing behind her. "Zim!" she exclaimed as she whirled around. Zim stood staring at her, a hint of surprise on his face. Tak's expression turned from startled to angry. "What are you doing out here!?" she yelled. "Can't you just leave me alone! I don't want to fight you anymore!" "I didn't come to fight you," Zim said. "What?" Tak stepped back from him. His eyes looked sad and tired. "I didn't even know you were back on Earth." Tak blinked. Even his voice sounded weak. "I wonder what happened..." "Well then, what are you doing out here?" she asked. Zim remained quiet for a moment before finally answering. "To see this," he pointed out above the valley where Tak saw something that she couldn't from under the trees. A gasp of awe escaped her throat as she beheld the bright glow of the Northern Lights. The blend of colors eerily danced against the backdrop of the stars. She turned back to the other Irken. "It's beautiful but, why?" Zim stared at the sky. "It reminds me of my old home back on Irk. I could see Irk's auroras every night there." Tak watched him curiously. He hasn't even thrown one insult at me yet. She found that quite pleasing. She wasn't exactly in the mood to put up with it. Zim's eyes remained fixed on the sky. There was a dull glimmer in them. "What happened to you Zim?" she asked, a stern gaze on her face. "You're acting nothing like you did when I first met you." Zim turned to her, frowning. Tak stood her ground. Zim's eyes suddenly softened. "You tried to tell me," he said quietly. "What?" Zim looked over the valley. "But I knew. Somehow I knew. A part of me just didn't want to believe it." Tak had a feeling what he was talking about. "Zim..." "I'm sorry I hurt you," he cut her off. Tak stared at him. Zim returned her gaze before turning and walking towards his Vootcruiser. For some unknown reason to her, Tak did not want him to leave. "Zim, I..." she started but nothing else came out. Zim looked back at her. Her eyes shimmered in the glow from the sky. Zim turned to fully face her. "Tak, when you first showed me what

you really were at my base, I realized you were the most amazing thing I'd ever seen." he stepped closer to her. "You're still as I remembered you, beautiful and strong." Tak seemed to have lost her ability to speak. She darted her eyes to the side when she realized how close he was. Zim continued. "I don't know if I'll ever see you again, and if I do, I don't know what side you may be on, so there's something I feel I must do before I leave." Tak felt her heart nearly jump out of her chest as Zim leaned forward and pressed his lips against hers. He quickly pulled away. Tak touched her mouth with the tip of her claws as she watched the small Irken return to his ship. She would have slapped him across the face if she didn't feel so depressed. Don't leave...Inside she was panicking. She was angry with Zim but she didn't hate him. She was stranded on an alien planet and he was the only one who could get her off it. Still there was another reason why she wanted him to stay. Tak had no idea what it could be. A strange unseen force seemed to take control of her body and she found herself marching after Zim, grabbing him by the arm before he could board the Vootcruiser. Zim was startled as Tak spun him around and kissed him deeply. He quickly gave in to the unexpected gesture, brushing his claws against the female's cheek. Tak pulled out of the kiss and looked into Zim's eyes. "You're not really going to leave, are you?" "Not without you," Zim said softly. "I want you to come with me. I want you to be on my side." He suddenly smirked got a smirk on his face, the first time he had smiled since the Tallest gave him the news about his mission. "We can conquer this planet together, Tak. You never know, you may become an Invader." Tak smiled. She was now glad that she had survived the crash or she wouldn't be there with Zim. Perhaps they both would receive the chance to make something of their lives, whether it was for the Empire or not. She closed her eyes as Zim kissed her again.----- Will smiled to himself as he saw the two aliens lift off in the spacecraft. He watched as it darted to the south and out of sight. Turning his horse back towards the way he came, he rode home under the lights gleaming from the north.