

The Yar'Zanti Invasion 5: Invasive Species

By

Jonathan Brothers

"I never understood why we're keeping them as slaves," questioned a male Yar'Zanti. He, along with his other fellow mech pilots, were relaxing off-duty in a pilot lounge. The room was stark with unpainted windowless concrete walls. The only bits of furniture and appointments were a grouping of re-purposed human sofas, a few tall metal lockers, a couple round tables and chairs, and a pair of big paper thin displays showing various Yar'Zanti notices and videos.

Within the space were six yellow armored Yar'Zanti. Five were sprawled out on the couches while the sixth sat at a table behind them. Two were males while the rest were females. With the relaxed atmosphere in the closed private room, all six had their helmets off exposing their bald heads and pale skin. While their faces appeared mostly human, their eyes were white and blue with purple irises. Their three forward facing eyes focused on each other as they casually gossiped. On the other hand, their rear eyes glanced at the room behind them.

"We're doing that because the council wants to keep them around as labor," casually explained a female.

"But commander Niki, I thought admiral Gala was against that," questioned another female.

"She is. Plus, I think she's cooking something up," gossiped the commander.

"I don't know, I'm in favor of simply disposing and gestating them into troops now. We're always in need of more," interjected the same male as before.

"I wish we could Hordak," answered Niki. "But, for now we must accede to the council's orders and continue to coddle the humans."

"What do you think Ado," he posed to the only other male in the room. Hordak peered at the yellow armored being with his rear eye. Ado had been sitting behind them at a table writing.

"What? Oh, um, sure I guess," absentmindedly answered Ado.

"What'cha doing back there," playfully taunted Niki.

"Just writing a note to a friend commander."

"What, a love note," teased one of the females.

"No lieutenant," quickly answered Ado.

"I think it's a love note," added Hordak.

"Wow, you move fast ensign. I don't think I've ever heard of someone just out of the tanks falling in love that quickly," the commander joked.

"No maam, just someone I've known for a while."

"But you're only a few months old?" Hordak chipped in referring to the amount of time since Ado was reborn. Before then he had been a human known as Brad Miller. Even more, the other male teasing was Brad's brother Edward who had died over five years ago.

"She's someone I knew before being reborn. Now that we're both Yar'Zanti, we've reconnected," Ado patiently explained.

"Ah ok, leave him to his letter," chided the commander.

"If it's Victae, tell her I said hi," Hordak calmly added before returning to the earlier conversation.

The female Yar'Zanti he referred to had been Brad's wife before she was killed in the conquest of earth. Later when Brad had been a human slave, he briefly worked for her and found out what had happened. Since being reborn, Ado kept up a steady correspondence with her. Plus, he occasionally gossiped with his daughter Mia who was a gestation tech named Darnada. He even tracked down his son Mason, now known as Aziz. He was a fighter pilot based out of what had been New York City.

Ado was not really interested in their conversation. Out of all the Yar'Zanti in his platoon, he was the only one less than three years old. The others had been Yar'Zanti for so long that many forgot what it had been like as a human. Sure they still had their human memories and could also speak their original languages. However, at this point they rarely chose too.

Ado had been a human when the Yar'Zanti conquered earth and witnessed the devastation they had caused. He saw his wife and family killed, though at the time he had no idea they had been reborn. Added to that, Brad was enslaved and forced to build a Yar'Zanti base. Then after a failed attack in which he died, Brad was reborn as Ado. Afterward, he was assigned to the one-of-first scouting platoon better known as the Dark Rangers.

Because of that painful experience, and the fact it happened to him recently, Ado had a different outlook towards humans. His past urged him to show them a bit of compassion. That humans had no idea they would most likely be reborn as

Yar'Zanti and live much longer. His personal thoughts were that they should be left to their limited lives. However, Ado knew he was in the extreme minority within the platoon. That none of the others shared his views and thus he kept his mouth shut.

Thankfully, Victae shared Ado's views. She later wrote that she regretted using him like she did when he was a slave. Even his daughter agreed with her parents. Though, Ado had the sense that Aziz sided with Hordak instead of his father.

Ado touched a finger to the message and sent it. For a moment, he contemplated the hand he just used. He was still trying to get comfortable with his new body. He marveled at how different it felt compared to his earlier human frame. How he once had two hands with five fingers each, yet now he possessed four arms with three fingers per hand. Even more was that despite lacking a few fingers per hand, those digits were more nimble than his old ones.

Another small bit of Ado's body that amazed him was the eye in the back of his head. He was intrigued at how he could be peering at the others with his front three eyes, yet also glancing at a computer screen behind him. He pondered the various bulletins that flashed over it.

Abruptly the six Yar'Zanti's relaxation was interrupted when they heard a soft bell chime in their commander's helmet. She reached a hand down, grabbed her helmet, and put it on. Everyone did the same as they knew when her suit made that sound, an assignment was coming.

"Yes maam," the commander responded. "I understand, we'll be there in five minutes." Afterward she stood up and glanced to see they were up and ready like she had trained them. "You heard that, command wants us on the tarmac in five minutes. Let's get out there," she ordered them.

Everyone darted out of the lounge, through a series of connecting concrete hallways, and through a door into the bright sun. Ado's helmet quickly corrected for the sudden light by dimming his visors. Within moments he and the others were lined up in single file at attention. Behind them were the squad's mechs. They had been painted black and white with what looked like a Grim Reaper in silhouette beside each glass enclosed cockpit.

Within minutes a small open hover car came gliding across the tarmac towards them. Behind it was an armored troop

transport. Getting out of the car's driver seat was a green armor. When the transport settled down, out came two purple, two red, and a few yellow armored Yar'Zanties. With the exception of one purple and two yellow soldiers, the rest were all female.

"There's been a major accident three hundred miles south. One of our support ships has crashed within Indiana. We've been assigned to go and assess the situation." The female then turned to Niki, "Commander, your mechs will provide us ground support while we go inside to investigate what happened."

"Yes captain," Niki promptly answered.

"Very good, let's get your mechs loaded into a mech transport and head out. I want to see the crash site in daylight," the captain ordered everyone. With practiced motion, the six mechs were rapidly loaded inside the cavernous specialized transport.

A short bit later on, Ado was surprised to learn that Victae was one of the engineers selected to come. Apparently her maintenance command loaned her out for the abrupt mission. While she was generally pleased to see her old husband, the two had to act proper around the others.

For a bit they went silent and listened to the two commanding officers discuss theories over what happened. Niki thought that maybe the loose humans had shot the ship down. Yet the captain mentioned the rebels did not have any capability to reach that far. That the ship was supposed to be in a parked orbit above earth.

The last bit brought up more questions, specifically what type of ship was it? The captain could only say it had been fully automated and was labeled Ship 526. Apparently, the thing had been a left over from when Yar still existed. However, no one had been inside it for ages due to its self sustainability. Even the green armor admitted few in the ruling council knew what its contents were.

After a while Ado and Victae crated a private channel between themselves. "Did you get my note," Ado posed to her.

"Yea, I'm sorry to hear that Edward turned out that way."

"I know, he was so level headed back as a human."

"I guess being a Yar'Zanti for so long really affected him?"

"True, I've noticed many who were Yar'Zanti long before we conquered earth seem to take a dim view towards humans. As if they had forgotten who they were before their rebirth."

"Some after the conquest as well."

"Oh, you mean Aziz? Yea he was always a head strong boy."

"I guess when he was reborn he chose not to remember his human life. In any event, has he contacted you at all?"

"Only to congratulate me on being reborn. Afterword I got the impression he had no need to talk to me any further. Mostly because I was a mech pilot and not a fighter pilot like him."

"That's Mason. He was always one to jump feet first into something," sighed Victae.

"Yep."

Before the two could gossip more, the transport pilot alerted everyone that they were getting close to their target. The two wished each other well before Victae began checking her equipment. Ado got up and headed back to his dormant mech. Like the other pilots, he climbed up into his machine and began starting its systems.

After a moment, Ado switched a monitor to the transport's exterior camera. While getting comfortable in his mech, he watched the ship approach the crash site. It looked like the huge ship had ploughed a long trail through what had been farmland before it came to a halt.

As the transport encircled the thing, Ado peered through the smoke and fire. He tried to figure out what the ship had looked like before the crash. Yet the impact had crumpled the vessel and cracked it open like an egg.

"What are those thing's scattered around it," commented one of the mech pilots on the combat channel.

"Don't know, dead humans," eagerly chipped in Hordak.

"No, I don't think so," Niki spoke dashing his hopes.

"Damn," Hordak quietly swore.

"Then what," added Ado.

"They sort of look familiar to me, but those things aren't from earth," spoke one female.

"How, I've not seen them before," questioned another.

"Wait, probe the memories the Yar'Zanti gifted us," exclaimed the previous female. Everyone, including Ado, pondered their memories of Yar. Then he began to grasp that he was looking at Merg'Na. A cow like beast that had once roamed

the fields of Yar. His memories suggested they had been pleasant beasts which tasted quite well.

Yet he quickly wondered how the Merg'Na had gotten there? His other memories also suggested those beasts had not been on any of the other mother ships. That invariably brought up the question of what had been the purpose of that vessel?

"Will you look at that," exclaimed commander Niki. After a moment, Ado saw something moving down amid the smoke. From high up, the thing looked positively huge. It had to be the size of a human bus. Then as Ado peered at it longer, he saw that the body seemed like a giant feline. Yet it had six dexterous legs, brownish green scales, and a strangely segmented tail. Even more was that its gazing head had ten eyes. Plus, four long fangs emerged from its single maw. Within moments he witnessed more cautiously emerge from the crashed ship.

Abruptly Ado's Yar'Zani memories named the thing as a Mi'Ga. He knew it was a feared predator. One that liked to hunt just about everything on Yar.

"Mech pilot's, prepare for a combat drop," announced the captain over their channel while the ship began to hover. Everyone's training kicked in. Ado quickly began preparing his mech for the drop. Within seconds, all of his systems showed green and ready.

"Dropping in five, four, three, two, one," called the transport's pilot as the door underneath Ado's mech opened up. Suddenly the clamps holding his mech in place disengaged causing the machine to drop to the ground. Its metal feet cushioned the its landing.

Between the open windows of his cockpit and the cameras behind him, Ado took stock of the spot he landed in. Grasping the peddles with his feet, he began to move his mech forward and used his hands to shift the thing's cannon arms about while taking position. The rest of his squad followed suit.

One of the escaping Mi'Ga saw them and paused to ponder them. The thing gazed at them with its multitudes of eyes. Then with a loud challenging roar, the monster rushed Ado's mech.

Ado's training suddenly kicked in and he brought all of his cannon's to bear. With a pull of a trigger, he started blasting the monster, yet he was only pushing it back. Not knowing what else to do, he opened his missile banks, took aim, and fired off

a few missiles. The small things flashed through the air, impacted against the monster, and exploded in huge fireballs. When the fire settled down, Ado could see the monster lay on the ground bleeding.

"Great job ensign," the commander called out. "Everyone, keep your eyes open for more."

"Yes maam," they all called out.

"Captain, the landing zone is cleared to land," Miki casually announced.

"Very good, we're coming in now."

With practiced motion, Ado began prepping more missiles. At one point he used his tail to flip a couple switches behind his chair. Those allowed a mechanism in the back of his machine to begin reloading the missile bank he fired. After a moment his computer beeped letting him know it was ready to fire again.

On the one hand Ado had his mech standing in a defensive circle facing outward. Because of that, he was peering out his canopy at the surroundings. However, he used his rear eye to watch the screens behind him. They showed the assault mech carrier gracefully landing in the center of the ring he guarded.

Then he watched a hatch on its side flip upwards allowing an armored personnel transport to leave. He assumed his wife and the others were inside. Then once free of the ship, the vehicle began moving forward. Ado and the other mech pilots started walking escort beside the truck.

With that, the group made their way towards the crashed ship. Occasionally, a few mechs had to surge forward to tackle a beast trying to escape. Each brought up more memories of Yar.

While they cautiously made their way across the ground, Ado listened to the open channel between them. It sounded like everyone was thinking the same thing he had. That the ship had been some sort of animal transport. How the original Yar'Zanti had loaded it up with as many beasts from their dying planet as they could.

However, the closer they got the more animals they found. Soon they came across one giant tare in the thing's side. Streaming through it were multitudes of beasts large and small. Plus, even more were flying out into the sky.

While many tried to avoid the armed convoy, there were many aggressive beasts which tried to attack them. Soon everyone was battling something. Some Ado found his cannons worked well

against, yet there were a few which only his missiles could do any damage.

Within a short bit he got an alarm alerting him that he was out of missiles! Realizing they were not able to get through the tare, the captain ordered them to retreat. As fast as they could, the group made their way back to the carrier. Yet the swarming beasts made it harder than before.

The transport pilot came up with a quick plan. She told the people inside the armored transport to get out and hurry inside the closest mech. Rapidly those inside the vehicle rushed to the nearest humanoid machine. Soon Ado was sharing a cramped cockpit with a female scientist.

Next the mech transport swooped in and hovered over each machine. It opened a hatch and used a tractor beam to pull each mech up inside it. Before long Ado and the scientist were safe. Afterward, the pilot banked her craft up into the sky high above the frantic scene below.

Ado got out of his machine and stood within the bay amid the others. Off to one side, the captain and commander Niki were furiously discussing the situation. Beside him stood Victae while the others checked their craft and other systems.

"That thing looked like an ark," whispered Victae.

"Uh huh, but how could command not know what was inside that relic of our past?"

"Not sure. But I gather that ship had been automatically following the fleet for ages. So long that few if any actually went inside it," she summarized.

"What's going to happen now. Those beasts are swarming out."

"That's not good for anyone."

"Agreed."

Ado's commander interrupted their conversation. "Listen up folks, instead of going in hot and heavy like we did last time, we're going to try a smaller approach. Everyone arm yourself. The transport pilots are going to hover over where the bridge should be. We're going to jump out and then the engineers will let us inside that way."

"Yes maam," everyone quickly called out. Ado went back to his machine and dug through his cockpit. Within moments, he pulled out a gun and strapped it to his belt. Then he removed a rifle which he slung over his upper shoulders. Getting back

out, he found everyone waiting beside a closed door. Each was armed with something.

"Get ready," called out the transport pilot over the space's speakers as she banked her ship closer to the crashed vessel. Within moments a side door opened up beside them. Ado quickly saw that they were hovering over the top of the ark. "Go now," the pilot called out. That caused everyone to jump the short distance to the ark.

Once his feet touched the pitted metal surface, he readied his rifle and took a guard position. Behind him, he watched the two engineers search for something. They soon discovered a hatch with a panel beside it. After pulling out a few tools from her belt, Victae began working at the panel. Soon she had uncovered some wires and worked to separate them. Finally, with the help of the other engineer she triggered something causing the hatch to pop open. Within a few moments she had the portal wide open.

Hordak was the first to jump through. They briefly heard him fire his weapon before signaling it was safe to come down. When Ado went through he saw the carcasses of some sort of small creatures. They sort of looked like a cross between slugs and spiders. It looked like they were trying to build a nest in the corridor.

"This way," spoke the captain gesturing down the hall.

Slowly the group made its way along the passage. The lead soldiers only encountered a few more of those strange creatures. Ado guarded their rear and thankfully only saw the dead carcasses of what the others had killed.

After twenty minutes, the group exited into the ship's archaic bridge. The scientists figured that they were the first Yar'Zanti to enter that space in over a century. The place was about two stories tall and in the shape of a cross. Ado noticed, unlike the more modern mother ships, this space had arching beams and exposed girders. The work stations had less touch screens and a lot more buttons.

"Wow, this thing has got to be well over three hundred years old," exclaimed one of the scientists.

"At least, if my memory serves me right," agreed Victae. "This technology goes all the way back to when our progenitors escaped Yar. Maybe even earlier than that. Long before they switched to touch screens."

"Enough chit chat, think you can resurrect this stuff," impatiently interrupted the captain.

"Good question maam," quickly answered Victae. "This technology was never impact friendly."

"Well, do what you can to get its databanks up and running. I want to know why this ship crashed."

"Yes maam," answered Victae, her engineering partner, and the scientists.

Just as they said that, the group could hear a thudding sound coming from the opposite side of the room. To Ado, it sounded like a heavy beast was trying to break its way inside. "You two, go and make sure that door is secure," the green armored female ordered two of Ado's fellow mech pilots. They both popped salutes and ran over to the door. There they began doing all sorts of things including welding the door's seams.

Victae and the others worked frantically to get any of the systems to start. As soon as she thought she had a panel working, it shorted out in a shower of sparks. To her, it appeared like a cascade electrical failure had raced through the bridge destroying many systems. Finally, she gave up trying to resurrect the ancient ship and began searching for any sort of databank.

Her training told her that vessels that old used rooms full of databanks. Yet, she had no interest in going back out into the beast filled main decks to find the computer room. Then she hit pay dirt when Victae found a backup system in one of the upper panels. It was a short term recording device that only stored a week's worth of bridge data. Within moments she was able to get it out of its panel.

With her prize in hand, she informed the captain her diagnosis. While the officer was unhappy not to have the entire ship's logs, she was at least mollified to have a week's worth. The green armor gave orders for them to leave.

Yet with the passageway now swarming with beasts, the group had to cut its way out. With the help from a few others including Ado, they were able to slice a hole in the ship's upper hull. Then they each climbed out and onto the waiting transport. Afterword, the group sped away from the crash site.

Back at the crashed vessel and throughout the night, more and more of the animals escaped. Some were as large as a Tyrannosaurus Rex, each with a nasty disposition. While others

were a bit smaller with much more teeth. Even large flocks of lizard like things flew out and headed south. Finally unseen, spores began spreading from the hull out into the planet's wind currents. Each waited for the right spot to plant themselves.