

TUG
and
The Suki Kamasutri
starring in
All She Do Is Talk-Talk
by
Eddie Takosori

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At long last, an Ether whose plot revolves around the difficulties inherent in interplanetary shopping and the frustration of realizing that now that you've finally found that perfect dress, the purse you need to complete the ensemble lies half-way across the alt-p-verse in one direction while the shoes lie two-D over in the other...

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Synopsis

Marketing Material

Main story starts a few pages down.
Think of this as the book flap if you'd like...

Tug was trying to meditate. OK. What he was really trying to do at this point was ignore Suki. But anybody who knew Miss Kamasutri -- just the least little bit -- could have told you, that wasn't going to last very long... especially after you considered she had just gotten done sharpening her nails.

“Oh, and even better than that, it's over 99.99% dialogue.”
“So really what Mister is saying, the story is over .01% crap and filler?”

“No.”

“Yes, that’s what the Mister just said. Suki can add, she’ll have the Mister know.”

“It’s not crap, OK? That .01% sets up the scene. It’s a small price to pay for plot integrity. Besides, I think you’re concentrating on the wrong aspect. I mean, what we’re really saying is that after a short introductory blurb at the start of each chapter, you and I talk for the remainder.”

“So now the Mister is just lying.”

“How am I lying?”

“Well, if Mister talk half the time, the story is clearly going to be tediously boring at least half of the time, as well... Yeah, the Mister just think on that one awhile. Meanwhile, Suki will let everyone know that if the price is right, she is willing to work alone. Oh, and if Suki doesn’t get top billing, this whole thing is off.”

“Sure, we can call it Suki Kamasutri: The Girl of Your Nightmares -- Sadly, Returns Are Not Accepted.”

“Mister kidnap Suki! And then these are the mean, nasty things he say about her?”

“I never kidnapped you.”

“No listen to the Mister. He kidnap Suki, alright; and then he play hard to get. It very frustrating. Suki believe that when a girl gets kidnapped, she can expect her honor to be called into question now and again, but not with this guy.”

“I never kidnapped you.”

“Yeah, Mister keep saying that long enough, maybe someone believe him.”

Suki Kamasutri: All She Do Is Talk-Talk

“And you can trust the Suki on this one, it not through any lack of trying!”

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Fluff #1

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Insubstantial fluff packaged as a love story of cosmic proportions: Suki Kamasutri is the ideal antidote to boredom, loneliness, and depression... though one should be warned, reading this story has been known to result in certain side effects including laughter, knowing smiles, and a tendency to speak in broken English... er, rather, I mean, broken Galactica.

“What he mean? Suki no speak in broken Galactica.”

“Well, you do sort of drop your articles and speak in the third person.”

“That not broken, that the Cool Speak. It like he no never listen to Pinky-Green.”

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Fluff #2

>^.^< >^.^< >^.^<

A space opera so thin and full of fluff, the plot might as well revolve around the problems of buying a dress in these Galactic Times of ours.

“Eh, that just silly. This story no about buying the dress. It about the Mister taking Suki dancing.”

“Oh, no. The deal was I went with you to buy a dress. It took long enough, but we finally got you a dress we both could live with, so mission complete. Now, I get to spend the next month meditating in some quite corner of the universe.”

“Suki no agree to that. Mister meditate for the whole month? What Suki do? She go crazy! Suki have the better idea. Mister

take the Suki dancing.”

“I’m going to meditate.”

“Mister know what good for him, he going to take the Suki dancing.”

“Sorry, that’s just going to have to wait for the sequel.”

Suki Kamasutri, a story that could be about something... anything really, maybe even something meaningful or important, but happily it is not. It is a story about nothing. And therein lies its true beauty.

“That sounds Meta-cryptic, Mister.”

“It sounds stupid if you ask me.”

“Eh, Suki guess the Mister be expert on that.”

“Hey... Wait a minute!”

Suki Kamastutra: 75,000 words, 10,000 lines of dialogue, and no redeeming social value whatsoever -- none, nada, zip.

“Now he talking. Suki say it time to Pa-ar-arty! Come on, Mister. Hear the end music rolling? That mean it time to take the Suki dancing.”

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And here, now, the feature attraction...

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>^.^< # 1 # >^.^<

>^.^< **And away, she goes.** >^.^<

>^.^< # 1 # >^.^<

Tug was trying to meditate. OK. Fair enough. What he was really trying to do at this point was ignore Suki. But anybody who knew Miss Kamasutri -- just the least little bit -- could have told you, that wasn't going to last very long... especially after you considered that she had just gotten done sharpening her nails.

“Ow! Ouch! What? Why did you do that?”

“Suki wanted to see if the Mister still alive.”

“You’re kidding me, right?”

“Mister sit there. He no move. Suki start to wonder.”

“It’s called meditating.”

“Is it? Really? Gee, Suki didn’t know that.”

“Why are you in such a mood?”

“Why is Suki in such a mood? Why is Suki in such a mood? Suki can’t believe this, the Mister is actually asking her why she is in such a mood?”

“Fine. Forget I asked. If that’s all then? Ouch!”

“Mister no turn his back on Suki. He kidnapped her, remember? He kidnapped her, stole her away from her family and then took her to... Where in the name of all the forsaken stardust has the Mister taken Suki, anyway?”

“We’re inside a nebula.”

“Inside a nebula? Not next to it? Not in the neighborhood of? But inside an actual nebula? Is this Mister’s stupid idea of a romantic a getaway?”

“Well, actually...”

“Oh, now Suki know. She figure it out. Mister brought Suki here so nobody could hear her scream. That’s it, isn’t it? Suki just thought the Mister was trying to bore her to death...”

“Now there’s an idea...”

“But suddenly Suki realize the Mister has something more sinister up his sleeve.”

“Like?”

“Oh, wouldn’t Mister like to know?”

“No. Actually, I wouldn’t. Look, I was busy...”

“Mister was sleeping.”

“I was working on inner peace and harmony.”

“The job’s obviously not done, Mister. Most of the enlightened types are a lot nicer than the Mister is.”

“Oh, so that explains why the Brothers pushed you off onto me.”

“The Brothers no push Suki off! Mister kidnapped Suki! And if Mister were a man about it, he would have ravaged the Suki ages ago. A girl likes to be ravaged now and again, the Mister know.”

“We’ve been through this before. Not going to happen. Don’t you have a pile of dresses you need to organize or something?”

“Nope. No need.”

“What do you mean, no need?”

“No need.”

“Why are you twirling around like that?”

“Duh, why? How does the Suki look?”

“Fine.”

“Fine? That’s how the Suki looks, fine? Not gorgeous. Not enrapturing. Not, ‘Suki, Mister has fought this feeling that’s been welling up inside of him for as long as he can, Mister must have the Suki right now before the stars and everyone.’ Not anything like that, just fine?”

“Not really a lot of stars out there right now.”

“Mister no change the subject on the Suki.”

“Your dress looks fine. You look good.”

“Is good supposed to be better than fine?”

“You look good. You look fine. You look nice.”

“Nice? Suki no want to look nice, OK? Nice is the last way Suki want to look. Suki wants to look like the temptress, like the B-movie queen, like the slutty girl of every space cadet’s dream.”

“Fine. Fine. Er, rather, I mean, no. You don’t look fine. You look like a slut... a gutter tramp and a whore.”

“Aw, the Mister’s just saying that.”

“No, really. You look like a slut. Go put on some clothes or something. I can’t believe you grew up in a monastery.”

“Suki no really grow up in the monastery, it was more like next to the monastery. And even if the Mister believe it or not, the “Brothers” no really take that whole chastity thing as seriously as he seems to do. How do you think I came into being, anyhow? Mister does know about the birds and the bees, doesn’t he?”

“Yes, they taught us in...”

“Just checking, ‘cause sometimes the Suki wonder. Oh, Suki almost forgot to mention. The dress...”

“If you want to call it that.”

“Oh. Now, the Mister’s talking. But it wasn’t only the dress that the Suki wanted to show the Mister. Suki just did her nails.

Sharpened them up like razors and then enameled them with a micro-layer of ruby... and the Mister didn't even notice."

"Actually, I did sort of notice them, earlier, if you'll remember?"

"Well? Does the Mister like them? No too gouache, Suki hope?"

"Not too gouache? About this, the Suki has concerns?"

"Gouache is always out. The trick is to be gouache without being too gouache..."

"That's the new gouache."

"Is it, Mister?"

"Oh, yeah. I heard it on the Ether, earlier. Gouache is the new gouache."

"Really?"

"Oh, yeah-yeah. Everybody's talking about it. Who's that flitty guy you like? That prissy guy you're always listening to? You know, the color dude? Not light-blue? Not lavender-yellow?"

"Mister mean the Pinky Green?"

"Yeah, yeah. The Pinkster was all over it. He just came right out and said it, 'Gouache is the new gouache.' And then he went on to say how sharp nails were so last week."

"Really? But they were all the rage? But then... that was last week? And the Suki hasn't heard a thing since she slipped into this boring ball of dust. Who knows what's all the rage now? It could be anything.

"It's dull nails and simple clothing."

"What?"

"The rage: it's dull nails and simple clothing."

"Really?"

"Yeah, really. That whole gouache thing was bound to blow over eventually. I mean, it had a good run, but times change. The market has spoken. Sharp nails especially are considered to be in poor taste. They've even been outlawed completely in most of the major systems... on account of the inadvertent injuries."

"Really? Even the cool systems?"

“Oh, yeah. Especially the cool system.”

“Suki can’t believe it. She feel so out of touch, so dated, so last week. Hey! Wait a minute! Suki no been able to get a thing on the Ether ever since the Mister flew into this Black Death, backwater Nowheresville of a nebula. How does the Mister know all this?”

“Well, I..”

“Oh, the Suki’s not believing this! Mister’s got one of those ultra-short high end receivers hidden up here, doesn’t he? That’s why the Mister is always sitting in his chair. He’s not meditating. He’s not staring into the empty black beyond. He’s got the feed. He’s got the headset implant. Suki bets the Mister spend all his time plugging into one of those sick twisted Feelies. That’s what it is! The Mister’s sick! The Mister’s twisted! But more importantly, the Mister’s selfish. Why isn’t the Mister sharing? Come on, Mister! Where’s the feed? Where’s he hide it?”

“What? Don’t touch that! No! I don’t have a feed! I was just joking! I don’t know anything about the latest fashions! Please, don’t touch that!”

“Suki getting closer, isn’t she? She can tell.”

“No! No! DON’T PUSH THAT BUTTON!”

<F-Whoomph!!!>

And away, she goes.

>^.^< # 2 # >^.^<

>^.^< Lost in Space >^.^<

>^.^< With Nary a Coherent Plot in Sight >^.^<

>^.^< # 2 # >^.^<

Having just activated the Mystery Drive, neither Suki Kamasutri nor Tug have the slightest idea where they are. And quite frankly, at this point your humble narrator is just along for the ride.

“Where are we?”

“I don’t know.”

“What does the Mister mean, he no know? This is Mister’s ship, isn’t it? So, where’d he just F-Whoomph off to?”

“I don’t know. I’m not the one who activated the drive... without dialing in a destination first, I might add.”

“So, the Mister blaming the Suki for that?”

“Yes.”

“Suki no see why. The Mister shouldn’t have a button on his control panel -- just sticking out that like, begging to be pushed -- if he no want someone to push it. It’s rude. Besides, why have the button on his control panel if the Mister never going to push it?”

“See, there’s the key. There’s sort of a difference between the Mister pushing a button on his control panel and a passenger doing the same thing.”

“Is there? It sounds sort of controlling, if you ask the Suki.”

“Yeah, well, deal with it. It’s my ship. I’m the captain. And Suki isn’t allowed to touch any of the buttons on the Mister’s control panel without asking him first! Got it?”

“Mister gets that little vein thing happening on his forehead whenever he get mad. Has anyone ever told the Mister that?”

“Don’t change the subject.”

“Suki no changing the subject. She just saying, it really gets going.”

“My buttons! My ship! Don’t touch them!”

“Throb. Throb. Throb. That vein is really going. If the Mister doesn’t watch it, he going to have a heart attack. Mister no look so young to the Suki. He no spring chicken.”

“Are you even listening to me?”

“Is the Mister even listening to the Suki? All this sitting

around, watching sick, perverted, disgusting Feelies all day, the Mister needs to get out more and exercise.”

“Can we just drop this?”

“All Suki saying, maybe the Mister should think about engaging in some physically strenuous activity for a change. Maybe fool around a little. Burn off a few calories. Who knows, maybe Mister find that he like it.”

“Yeah, is that a fact? I’ll give it some thought? In the meantime, don’t touch any buttons!”

“So what you’re saying is, Suki’s no suppose to touch any buttons.”

“No.”

“And Suki’s only supposed to go where the Mister take her?”

“Yes.”

“And Suki’s probably no supposed to talk back, either?”

“That would be nice.”

“Maybe kneel at the Mister’s feet and beg for his forgiveness.”

“Get up.”

“Suki’s been the bad girl. She so sorry. She make it up to the Mister, he see.”

“Get up... GET UP!”

“Geez! A girl can’t have any fun around here, can she?”

“No. No she can’t.”

“So just out of curiosity, how is being trapped and bored out of her skull any different for the Suki than being kidnapped?”

“What?”

“How is the Mister being in control of everything and the Suki getting absolutely no say in anything different from the Suki being kidnapped?”

“Are you back on that again?”

“Suki just saying, the Mister never takes her anywhere interesting. Suki never does anything fun. And the Mister spend every free moment he have up here watching his demented Feelies...”

“I was meditating.”

“While Mister makes the Suki clean his ship.”

“They’re your dresses! It’s your mess!”

“Suki should have a maid.”

“What?”

“A maid. Mister sure does have trouble hearing. It probably because he old man. Maybe he has wax in his ears, Suki think. All that hair probably traps the wax and makes it hard to hear.”

“I’m not old. I don’t have wax in my ears. And you’re not getting a maid.”

“But Mister no deny the bit about the hair in his ears?”

“I don’t know. If its there, it’s there.”

“Oh, it there alright.”

“Fine.”

“It gross.”

“Fine, whatever. Is this even important? What were we talking about.”

“How Mister is a mean slave driver and won’t get Suki a maid. Mister should think twice about the maid. He never know, it could be fun.”

“I’m not getting you a maid, and that’s final.”

“How about a robot?”

“No!”

“Man servant?”

“I don’t think so. Why do you always change the subject?”

“Suki? She no change the subject. It the Mister who’s always changing the subject with his, ‘What? What? What?’ Mister should own up and face the facts. He old; he need the implant. All Suki know is that the Mister should have taken better care of his body when he was young.”

“I am young. I’m only 32.”

“Wow! You old, Mister. Suki knew the Mister was old, but she only thought the Mister was like 27 old, maybe 28 old. She never realized Mister had already passed the big 3-0. When the Mister up for retirement?”

“Can we please just get back to what we were talking about?”

“Suki no know what the Mister was talking about... and by sound of it, neither does the Mister. So, Suki think it best if the Mister just keep talking about what Suki is talking about and get her a maid.”

“OK. Please. Just stop. No more nonsense. All I want is for the Suki to promise me that she won’t touch anymore buttons. OK? Please? For me? Can the Suki do that for me?”

“OK. Suki do that... if the Mister gets down on his knees and beg the Suki.”

“What?”

“Mister really needs to take care of that waxy buildup. Suki just explain how she want the Mister to get down on his knees and beg her, to say pretty please, and that sort of thing.”

“You’ve got to be kidding me.”

“Suki kid the Mister not. Beg... or she push the button.”

“What? You’re crazy. The drive hasn’t cooled down, yet. We don’t have a destination dialed in. Anything could happen.”

“Then the Mister better get down on his knees and beg.”

“No.”

“What?”

“You’re pretty young to be suffering from hearing loss, Missy. Maybe you have that waxy buildup thing happening in your ears, as well. Yeah-yeah, you heard me. I’m thinking it’s all that hair that’s sprouting every which way over your face... in your ears... out of your nose.”

“What!?”

“You heard me. Go ahead. Push the button. What do I care?”

“Is the Mister daring the Suki?”

“No. No. But then, one planet is as good as the next for me. This one looks pretty harmless. Well... purple clouds mean the atmosphere probably isn’t breathable. And a red-orange landmass denotes a total absence of water. But hey, fry out the drive. What do I care? If we get lucky we’ll go straight through the planet’s

core and blow up before we know what's happened.”

“The Mister is trying to trick the Suki. She can tell.”

“Me, why would the Mister want to trick the Suki? Oh, yeah. Think on that, my little minx. If I wanted anything -- and I mean Anything! -- out of you. I would have taken it a long time ago, and you know it. So go ahead, push that button. What do I care? Of course the downside is, we'll probably be stranded here... like forever.”

“Suki think the Mister is lying. Suki no so stupid. She knows the Mister is trying to trick her.”

“Yeah, that's it. That's what I'm trying to do. I figure that if you go ahead and push that button right now, why, with any luck we'll be stranded here... forever; and what, with no one trying to contact us planet-side, we know that this rock's got to be deserted; and since my trigger happy navigator launched us into hyperspace before we registered a course and since all we're getting on the Ether is static, well, that just means no one is ever going to figure out where in the name of stardust we are and that no rescue ship will ever be forthcoming.”

“Mister...”

“No. No. None of that matters. Like I was saying, by all means, push the button, blow us up, fry out the drive; and then, you and I can just grow old together, like two love birds, snug as a bug in our personal tomb, forever... or at least until the air runs out.”

“The Mister is trying to trick Suki. She knows he is.”

“That's right. The Suki has the Mister all figured it out. So, go ahead. No worries. Call the Mister's bluff. Push the button. Go ahead. I dare you... No, no. I double dare you.”

“Fine! The Mister win. How long the Suki have to wait until she can get out of here?”

“Probably as long as it will take her to clean up that mess back there... and change into something more respectable. You know, I actually liked you in that outfit you were wearing when we first met.”

“Suki looked like the ninja.”

“Yeah, but a cute ninja.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really. Now go change. And in the meantime, I’ll try to figure out where we are.”

Which in case you didn’t figure it out at the beginning of the chapter, was the middle of nowhere, with nary a coherent plot in sight.

>^.^< # 3 # >^.^<

>^.^< B-B-Baby! >^.^<

>^.^< # 3 # >^.^<

It’s not easy pinpointing your location when you’re 2.49375 sidereal years off the beaten path. But once Tug knew where they were, he sat back and closed his eyes, preparing to engage in his favorite activity: meditation.

Of course, that’s when the airlock opened and all of Suki’s belongings shot into space and drifted lazily towards the red-orange planet far below.

Needless to say, he was a wee bit concerned, so Tug rushed back to into Suki’s rooms to make sure she was alright.

“Are you alright?”

“What the Mister care about Suki?”

“What do you mean, ‘What do I care?’ I hear the airlock open. All your stuff goes sailing out into space. I thought I’d lost you.”

“That why Mister smiling? He think he finally get rid of the Suki.”

“No. How could you say such a thing? I’m smiling, because I’m relieved to see that you’re OK.”

“That’s a nice thing for the Mister to say about Suki. But if the Mister all done, he can go now.”

“What’s gotten in to you.”

“Suki fine. She clean the mess just like the Mister say. She get rid of all her clothes. She fine... sigh.”

“What’s the matter? Are feeling OK? Are you depressed or something?”

“No. Suki fine. Mister say, ‘Make mess disappear. He never want to see again.’ So, Suki do what the Mister say. She load everything she own into airlock, shed a tear, say goodbye, and then shoomph. It all gone. Maybe, Mister no yell at the Suki no more.”

“Look, I’m sorry.”

“It no matter. All clothes go bye-bye.”

“You got rid of everything?”

“Everything but what Suki was wearing when the Mister kidnap her, but Mister probably no like it anymore. Sigh! Everything else go bye-bye. It no matter. Suki no have room to store it, anyhow. Mister only give her the two rooms and keep the rest of the ship for himself. Mister soo selfish... but it no matter.

“Uh-huh? Is that a fact?”

“Sad but true. Suki just the caged beast -- no more than the pretty plaything for the Mister. But the Mister no want to play, not with the Suki, not anymore.”

“What are you up to?”

“Sigh!”

“No really, what are you up to? What’s your game?”

“This where Mister get all mad at Suki again? And start yelling? Say, ‘No touch this,’ and, ‘No touch that?’ Eh, it no matter. Suki no touch nothing no more. Suki no care. She just lay here and die. When she stop breathing, Mister can throw her out in space along with everything else and forget about her. It no matter.”

“You know that I know that you’re playing, right? I don’t

know your angle, but I know you're up to something. You know that, don't you?"

"Is the Mister asking the Suki if she know that the Mister know that Suki know she playing? Is that what Mister want to know? Because Suki not sure she know what the Mister is asking. She might think she know, but if she wrong, the Mister maybe yell at her again. That all Suki know."

"So, you are playing?"

"Suki no playing. She no care... no more. She just lay here and die... Does Mister know how long we were in the nebula?"

"A week."

"And before that, how long we at Tip of Ant'aries."

"Two weeks."

"Tip of Ant'aries boring place, Mister. Sigh. Suki no see how it worse than death."

"I think you're exaggerating a bit. Besides, in-between those two we were in dock for a while."

"How long, Mister? Do you know how long we were in dock, in the thriving metropolis of Ant'aries, Suki might add? Well, the Suki does. The Suki knows exactly how long we were there, but she doesn't think the Mister knows. Do you, Mister?"

"Um..."

"We were there for 243 minutes, Mister. That's how long we were in Ant'aries. The Suki knows, and now the Mister knows."

"Um..."

"And that's the other thing, Mister. You not really such the conversationalist."

"Hey. That's not fair."

"It fair. Suki wake up, she hear, 'Don't bother the Mister, he meditating.'"

"Um, I guess I do say that a lot."

"Oh, yeah the Mister does. 'Leave the Mister alone,' not just for breakfast anymore. All day long the Mister meditate and Suki left by herself, trapped. It worse than prison. At least there, Suki have someone to talk to."

“I don’t really think it’s worse than prison.”

“You no know... unless maybe the Mister does? The Mister ever take the vacation to the Big House? The Mister got the secret past? That why he so earnest in his quest for inner peace? He’s got that Big Karma Hammer hanging over his and he’s scared it going to drop any second?”

“Just let it go. OK. I’ve never been in prison... not like you think, anyhow.”

“Not like I think? Oh, this be good story, huh, Mister? Hard to explain? Not quite like it seem. Maybe the Mister be framed. It OK. The Mister take his time. Suki not going anywhere. She listen real well. She even be the shoulder to cry on if Mister need it.”

“It’s not actually any of your business, OK? How did we get sidetracked onto this subject, anyhow?”

“Suki no know. One minute the Mister yelling at her, making her get rid of her clothes so she has to prance around half-naked for the Mister’s amusement. And the next, the Mister is scaring her with stories of his criminal past so she’ll cower and attend to his sick-sexual desires. The Mister will make Suki attend to his sick-sexual desires now, won’t he?”

“Uh-huh?”

“Is that the yes?”

“No, it’s not. And tell me again, why aren’t you wearing that ninja outfit? I thought we both agreed that you were going to change into what you were wearing when you first came aboard?”

“Suki is. Oh... Oh! The Mister meant that ninja outfit. Suki just remember how Mister undress her with his eyes when they first meet. She figure she save him the trouble in the future.”

“I never undressed you with my eyes.”

“Well, the Mister should have. If he had, then he’d realize that this is what Suki was wearing underneath.”

“Hey, wait a second! I remember this outfit. The 400-credits that you spent in Ant’aries just last week -- that I let you spend, mind you -- most of that went for this... um, outfit.”

“Mister like? If the Mister no like, the Suki can take it off. Maybe the Suki take it off, anyway, just to be on the safe side.”

“No... No! Where are the robes you were wearing when we first met.”

“Gone. Space. In flames by now, Mister. It all gone.”

“Why?”

“If the Mister no like, the Suki no like, so they gone.”

“But I liked that outfit.”

“Strange thing that; the one outfit the Mister like, the Suki no can stand. She hate those clothes. She should have burned them long ago.”

“OK, fair enough. You don’t have to wear anything you don’t want to...”

“OK! Now the Mister talking!”

“But you’ve got to wear something.”

“Oh...”

“I suppose it does sort of stand to reason that you wouldn’t like those ninja robes...”

“Shatori. They called shatori, Mister. If the Mister keep calling them ninja clothes, everybody think he the idiot. They the shatori.

“OK, fine. I guess it stands to reason you wouldn’t like wearing... the shatori. You hated Kay’o.”

“That place boring... worse even than the Mister’s ship.”

“Still, I don’t get it. Are you telling me that in a pique of... whatever, you jettisoned all of your clothes?”

“Suki just do what the Mister tell her to do.”

“I never told you to do that.”

“It no matter.”

“Do you have anything to wear.”

“Mister blind? Suki wear this.”

“Do you have anything more than the underwear you’re wearing?”

“This not underwear. This dance clothes.”

“They’re what?”

“Dance clothes, Mister. You know, so when Suki move her stuff on the floor, all the boys know what they going to get if they take the Suki home. Here, Suki show Mister.”

“No. No. I think I’ve seen enough, already.”

“Hey! Where the Mister go? Suki just get started. The Mister, he ain’t seen nothing yet.”

And this, of course, is where the dance tunes comes rolling in at 110 decibels. I’m guessing it would go something along the lines of:

The M-M-M-Mister, he ain’t seen nothing yet...

>^.^< # 4 # >^.^<

>^.^< Good Things Come to Those Who Wait >^.^<

>^.^< And as to the rest, well... >^.^<

>^.^< # 4 # >^.^<

Realizing he might loose control and do something he might regret in the morning, Tug bid a hasty retreat from Suki’s dancing form.

However, since this was almost exactly the type of reaction Suki had been hoping for, she pursued Tug back into the control room, gyrating her body and shaking her hips for all she was worth every step of the way.

And let me tell you, she was worth plenty... open market... black market... slave market... but I digress.

“Hey, it no fair if the Mister close his eyes. Really, this no time to plug into the Feelies, Mister. The Suki right here. This the real thing. Suki say live a little, grab hold and give the Suki a

ride.”

“I’m not going to -- as you so delicately put it -- give the Suki a ride. And how many times do I have to tell you, I’m not plugging into a Feelie; it’s called meditation and fighting off this sort of temptation is exactly what meditation was designed for in the first place.”

“That’s sort of nice, Mister. It maybe the nicest thing the Mister ever say to the Suki. It stupidest, too. But it nice.”

“So, are you done dancing?”

“For the moment? Hey! Mister going to tell Suki how he got arrested, now? It be the bank robbery, hold up heist, right?”

“No.”

“Suki no even close?”

“No.”

“Confidence game, then? Love ‘em and leave ‘em. Mister be the cold hearted, he be good at that one.”

“I didn’t trick anybody.”

“So, the Mister not going to tell the Suki is was something stupid like the Mister forget to register his space ship?”

“No.”

“OK. Suki see that the Mister is making the game of it. So when Suki guess close enough, the Mister has to tell her all about it.”

“No.”

“Mister no supposed to say no yet. First the Suki has to guess.”

“No.”

“Mister must have been the only child, Suki guessing. And so he never play any guessing games.”

“No and no. That’s right, two no’s; figure it out, little girl. Or better yet, is this really what you want to do? I mean, do you really want to sit here and play a game of Twenty Questions? Or do you want to go somewhere?”

“What stupid, boring place the Mister plan on going to next?”

“I thought I’d let you decide.”

“Really?”

“Within reason.”

“What does the Mister mean by that?”

“I should have known you’d have difficulty with that particular concept.”

“What the Mister trying to say?”

“Look. Forget it. Do you want to pick a destination or not?”

“This first time the Mister ever ask the Suki where she want to go. That hidden past of the Mister’s must be something if the Mister try to buy Suki’s silence this way.”

“It was nothing. OK?”

“Suki no think so. What the Mister covering up?”

“Fine. You think there’s some great story there, then let’s just get this over with. But I warning you, you’ll be disappointed.”

“Suki no be disappointed. She finally get the dirt on the Mister.”

“If you want to call it that.”

“Suki think that she does.”

“OK. Here’s the scoop. There was a time when I was young...”

“Mister sure this not the Fairy Tale.”

“Ha. Ha. And I was a bit rash...”

“Now the Suki know the Mister is pulling her leg. It not really like the Mister to lie.”

“Do you want to hear this story or not?”

“OK. Suki listening.”

“Well, at this backwater starport, I got into a bit of a tiff with one of guys in the control tower.”

“Tiff? What the Mister mean by the tiff?”

“He had me stacked up and wasn’t giving me clearance to land.”

“That no sound much like the tiff.”

“Yeah, well. Words were exchanged.”

“Mister go to jail for swearing?”

“Not so much for swearing, but for hunting out his wife after

the fact and seducing her.”

“This the good story Mister!”

“Yeah, well. I guess I outstayed my welcome, should have just had me fun and left, because Mr. Control Tower walked in on us...”

“He walk in on you, while...”

“Yes. And there was lot of shouting and screaming, posturing mostly, but before long security came and arrested me. Holding a grudge, the guy pulled a few strings... almost managed to get my license revoked, but luckily the guy didn’t have that much pull. Anyhow that’s it. End of story. Can we move on, now?”

“Suki just thinking that this maybe why the Mister so afraid of her. But the Suki no send the Mister to jail. She no married. Suki no even have the lover. And there no way she get the Mister’s license revoked. So really, the Mister have nothing to worry about with the Suki.”

“I’d worry about feeling guilty.”

“Guilty?”

“Yeah, guilty. And that’s much worse than worrying about spending a few months in jail.”

“Few months? The Mister no say it was that long.”

“Can we just move on? I told you the story. There’s nothing else to it.”

“What they call you in prison?”

“What?”

“What they call you in prison, Mister? What your prison name? They call you Snake? They call you Meteor?”

“Meteor?”

“Eh, it what Suki think of first. So, maybe it what somebody else think of first. On a whim, they call the Mister ‘Meteor’ and the name somehow stick.”

“Oddly, the other guys in prison -- all two of them -- they just asked me what my name was. Not being as quick as you, I guess I missed my chance to be called Meteor, Comet... or Wreck. And

instead they called me Tug.”

“Wreck?”

“Just like you, the first thing that came to my mind.”

“So, that how you get named Tug, in the first place?”

“Not exactly... or maybe. I don’t know. They said it was the first word out of my mouth when I was a child.”

“Tug?”

“Yeah.”

“Tug?”

“I loved Tug Boats, OK? Still do. All I ever wanted to do was be a Tug Boat Captain? Big quarters, powerful engines...”

“Big quarters?”

“Well, you didn’t grow up in space. If this was a cruise ship... We could probably get fifty passengers in this room alone.”

“Now the Mister talking. Crank the tunes. Party!”

“Yeah, I guess you would like it. Me I found it smothering.”

“It sad the way the Mister always running from the good times.”

“Yeah, whatever. So, do you want to select a destination or shall we just camp out on the far side of the moon? Heck, we could just stay here for all I care. The view’s pretty good.”

“It’s the orange planet, Mister. There not that much to it. Hey, the Mister ever find out where we are?”

“Middle of nowhere.”

“So, the Mister finally admits it!”

“It’s C-19-delta-G... and so on.”

“The delta-G, sort of say it all.”

“Yep.”

“So Suki say, we blow this Popsicle stand. Hey! The Suki know what! We go shopping. Buy the Suki a new dress.”

“A new dress?”

“Yeah, the Suki need the new dress. Has the Mister looked in her closet recently? Suki has like literally nothing to wear. So, Suki need the new dress.”

“I suppose you got a point. I mean, if you go tramping

around in that getup, you're liable to get arrested."

"Unless, we go dancing. Hey, forget about shopping. Let's go dancing, Mister! Take the Suki dancing, Mister! Come on, Mister! Take the Suki dancing! Show her off. I bet the Mister has some wild moves, stuff he maybe learned in the Big House or during the days of his misspent youth when he was seducing married women."

"I'm not taking you dancing, OK?"

"It's not OK. Take the Suki dancing."

"No."

"Then the Mister has to buy the Suki a new dress. Hey! Suki know. They open that new mall at the Core -- The Emporium! Well, that was the whole week ago... so maybe they going out of business by now. Eh, you take the Suki there all the same. Maybe she have pity on the Mister and buy something on the discount sale rack."

"That doesn't seem very likely."

"It could happen."

"No, it couldn't."

"The Mister probably right."

"Maybe what you could do -- what we could do -- is pick out a dress together, something we both like."

"The Suki try to do that for ages, but the Mister no never like nothing she ever pick out."

"Well, tell you what. I'll help this time. We can look together, make it an outing, go shopping."

"Really?"

"Yeah, really"

"That sort of romantic, Mister."

"Well, don't get any ideas."

"Oh, the Suki get the idea alright. The Suki think that if maybe the Mister like the dress and the Suki like the dress, then the Suki no be wearing the dress for very long."

"That's not what I had in mind."

"But you say you help Suki find a dress."

“Yes, but...”

“No buts, Mister. The Suki shop with the Mister until they find that perfect dress -- the one that winds up in a heap on the floor, the one that the Suki no need to wear no more.”

“I didn’t...

“The Mister promise.”

“You know as well as I do, that’s not what I meant.”

“The Mister promise. The Mister no going to break his word to the Suki?”

“Fine... fine. We’ll go shopping. We’ll go to the Core, wherever. And we’ll keep on shopping until you find that perfect dress.”

“Really? What’s the catch? The Mister got that devious, criminal, ex-con look in his eyes. How the Mister trick the Suki?”

“The Mister no trick the Suki. We’ll go shopping just like you want. Fine. And I’ll look at as many stupid dresses as you like. Also, fine. In fact, I’ll go you one further. I’ll look at as many dresses, shoes, purses, or whatever you want. But the minute you buy anything -- just one thing -- I’m off the hook. Mission complete.”

“So, the Suki can shop but she no can buy.”

“Buy to your heart’s content, but after that first purchase I’m done. You’re back to shopping alone... or whatever. You know, in the end, you might be happier in some permanent port of call. I could drop you off wherever.”

“And leave the Mister? Never! The Mister steal the Suki’s heart and she’s not leaving the Mister till he give it back!”

“Are we talking about my heart or yours?”

“Suki no too particular. She take what she can get at this point.”

“Hey! What are you doing.”

“Suki tell the Mister, already. She taking what she can get.”

“Stop! STOP IT!”

“Eh, it no matter. Suki know in advance the Mister going to say that. All the same, it good to know the Mister is in shape. He

nice and firm down there.”

“Um, thanks.”

“OK. The Mister promise to take her shopping, so Suki press the button now. Galactic Core, here we come!”

“No! Wait!”

<F-Whoo... sputter... gasp... groan... oomph...>

Oh, and just by-the-by, that's the sound a Mystery Drive makes when it's not working properly. A lack of a destination programmed into the Astro-Navigator will do that. Which is to say, good things come to those who wait (until after they've programmed something into the Astro-Navigator to press the magic button), and as to the rest, well...

>^.^< # 5 # >^.^<

>^.^< The Silent Treatment >^.^<

>^.^< # 5 # >^.^<

When last we saw our intrepid band of inter-galactic shoppers, Tug had just agreed to accompany Suki on her quest to find the ultimate dress.

And then Suki had activated the Mystery Drive. Again! Without so much as setting a destination! Going through a safety check! Or anything!

If you were to have asked Tug, he would have told you, it was starting to look like a bad habit.

“Oh... um. Suki sorry about that, Mister. We still going shopping though, right? Right, Mister? Mister? This no time to shut your eyes, Mister?”

“Stop touching the controls buttons. How many times do I

have to tell you? Don't touch any buttons. You don't really know what any of them do, so just stop touching them.”

“Wow! The Mister all calm. His voice so even. It sort of scary. Now is when the Mister should be all mad and yelling, not calm. It spooky, Mister.”

“I'll be honest. I'm a little annoyed with you at the moment, but I'm trying not to show it. Just sort of trying to keep it under wraps. So please, just leave me alone for a minute.”

“That not the good idea. The Mister got to let it all out. He keep it inside, the Mister wind up being one of those guys on the Ether: Mister know, the quiet ones who keep all to themselves and keep it all in until they explode. Suki see it happen the million times. No doubt in the glamorous follow up interview, after the horrific massacre, the sole surviving crew member -- that be Suki -- will say how the Mister was always the bestest of bunk mates. Never sleep around much, that sort of problematic, but other than that he always neat, tidy, and clean; always kept his tools organized, never fell behind in the maintenance schedule and always did more than his fair share of the community chores. But then one day without warning -- unless you count his habit of closing his eyes and withdrawing whenever he get mad -- the Mister just let loose; he go crazy, kill everyone on the ship... except for the Suki, the Suki just remind him in case he forget. He spare her on account of the secret desire welling inside; it one of the many secret passions he repress. But then one day he can't take no more. Turns out he got the space sickness... but then, they do the background check and they realize the Mister he be sick all along... maybe got the hidden past; he do a little time in jail, problem socializing with others, that sort of thing. But then, things get really interesting! They dig a little deeper and find out how the Mister lied on his employment application. Maybe they do the exposé and find how he spends all his free time in the middle of nowhere, staring at nothing, plugging into the Feelies, letting the crew fend for themselves! Oh, wait... Only problem with all that is the Mister, he no be the employee. Ah! But maybe that because

he scared of what they find if he ever go for the job interview, during screening. So, instead of getting the job, he bought his own space ship. Only... Hey! How the crazy guy like the Mister afford his own spaceship, anyhow? That what the Suki want to know. How she know the Mister no steal the ship and already kill the crew? Maybe they already do the special exposé about the Mister on the Ether and Suki loose her chance to be in the interview, her moment in the sun. The Suki watch the Mister when he not looking, she have him know. And he always taking the deep breaths, closing his eyes. The Mister like the ticking time bomb; that's what he is. He go Tick. Tick. Tick."

"Give it a rest, will you?"

"That more like the fizzle than the explosion, the Mister ask the Suki. But the fuse, she still be burning."

"Oh, the fuse is burning alright."

"Speaking of which, the Mister figure out what he needed to figure out? He through with the thinking or he just hoping the Suki will go away so he can plug back into the Feelies?"

"Actually..."

"Oh, the Suki know what she wanted to ask the Mister, now. Where'd we F-Whoom... sputter-sputter gasp-groan off to, anyhow?"

"The planet."

"The planet?"

"Yes, the planet. You didn't set a destination, so the drive headed for the same place it had headed to last time... only we were already there."

"So, why we go to the planet again, Mister?"

"I guess the drive thought you wanted to land."

"The drive figure that out on its own?"

"Maybe."

"Mister no know?"

"No."

"Why the Mister no know?"

"Look, I just don't... and don't ask me anything else. Just be

a good little girl for a change and go get my tool box out of the equipment locker... the blue one.”

“Why?”

“Because I asked you to. Because I need a moment to think. Because I said please.”

“Mister no say please.”

“I’m saying it now... Please, OK? Please, go get my blue tool box.”

“Mister need to fix something?”

“You could say that.”

“But what would the Mister say? That really more what the Suki want to know.”

“The Mister would say that he has decided to put a safety switch on the drive activator, so despite Suki’s best efforts, she won’t be able to blow the Mister up or get him stranded in some desolate corner of the universe.”

“So we no stranded, now?”

“I don’t think so.”

“What with the F-whoom, sputter, sputter, sputter, gasp groan cough hack... hack... hack... hack?”

“I don’t know...”

“Suki not really done hack, hack, hacking, yet.”

“Fine, take your time.”

“Hack... OK, it not as fun as Suki think. The Mister was saying.”

“I don’t know if we’re stranded. And I won’t know either, not until after I check a few things under the dash... and then while I’m down there, make a few modifications, and maybe install an idiot light or two to help you figure out when pushing buttons might be a bad idea.”

“Is the Mister calling the Suki the idiot?”

“If the shoe fits... Look, just get me my tool box, OK? I’ll even show you what I’m doing if you like.”

“Why the Mister do that?”

“Duh? So, you’ll know what I’m doing, because maybe it

will be important for you to know how to fly this bucket of bolts on your own someday. It'll, also, keep you where I can see you while I'm working. But mostly, I'm hoping that you'll realize -- quite quickly -- how terribly complicated and dangerous a spaceship is, and you'll just back-off and stop pushing buttons at random."

"Suki, no push buttons at random. She mostly just push this button right here... Ow! Ouch!"

"Don't even think about pushing that button!"

"Ow!"

"Go get the tool box. Now!"

"Ow!"

"Don't 'Ow!' me. I'm not hurting you."

"Mister almost break the Suki's wrist."

"Yeah well, the Suki almost blow up the Mister's ship at least a dozen times by now, so I figure we're even. Now, go get my tool box! Now! Scat!"

"That it Mister. Let it all out."

"Go Get The Tool Box!"

"That pretty good, Mister. Suki almost believe the Mister is mad."

"Go! Get!"

"OK. OK. Sheesh! Suki go. But the Mister, he no watch no of those Feelies while the Suki gone. There be plenty of time for that later. Right now, the Mister got the idjit light to install, so Suki knows when the Mister is in one of his moods and not thinking clearly. You ask Suki, she be thinking that light be on most of the time."

"Ha. Ha."

"This no the laughing matter, Mister. This be serious. Now Mister just sit there and no touch no buttons while the Suki gone. This the spaceship, not the toy. The sooner the Mister learns that simple lesson, the happier the Suki will be."

"Are you finished?"

"Suki no know. But she be sure to let the Mister know when

she get back. So, Mister promise he no touch nothing before the Suki get back?"

"I promise."

"And no Feelies!"

"On that... I don't know if I can give you my word."

"Well, the Suki just hope for the best and keep her concerns to herself. No need to nag the Mister"

"That would be nice, you know, for a change."

"Suki hear that. And no mumbling under the Mister's breath while the Suki away, either."

"Uh-huh."

"The Suki hear that!"

Good hearing that Suki! And from out of the room and down the hall, no less!

What? No, 'The Suki hear that, too' in response to the narrator's comments?

Oh, right. The Invisible narrator. Sorry, forgot about that. My bad. Won't happen again.

But wait! You don't think? No? She couldn't be giving me... the silent treatment?

Well, two can play at that game!

Until the start of the next chapter, anyhow...

>^.^< # 6 # >^.^<

>^.^< The Sparks Fly... >^.^<

>^.^< In all the colors of the rainbow >^.^<

>^.^< # 6 # >^.^<

The truth of the matter is, Tug had expected Suki to forget

what she had gone to retrieve and get sidetracked, maybe wander off to her rooms in order to sing, dance, and listen to music. But the prospect of learning more about the ship's inner workings intrigued Suki, and so she had returned as quickly as possible, dragging a heavy blue toolbox behind her; which unsurprisingly, was long before Tug had any desire to move or even open his eyes.

Probably not the wisest course of action that last. I mean, there's probably a line in the Space Cadet's Manual somewhere that says something about how you should always keep your eyes peeled for danger, in whatever guise it might take... no matter how cute or adorable it may seem at first sight.

“This thing heavy, Mister.”

“That's why it's got a lev-switch.

“Oh?”

“You didn't know that?”

“Um... Oh, yeah! Suki no want to push any buttons without the Mister's okay-dokey, so she drag it, instead.”

“Uh-huh?”

“Yep. So, what the Mister need first? The spanner? The hex grip torque? Or the space-time coefficient defibrillator?”

“Oh, hey. If we've got a space-time coefficient defibrillator in there, just hand it over. I always wanted one of those.”

“Um, Suki think maybe that in the red toolbox.”

“Yeah. Probably. So how about handing me a screw driver: midsize, Phillips head.”

“Um. Suzy think maybe he come and get it.”

“What?”

“Mister tell the Suki which one the screw driver again?”

“That one... there... yes. Take it out of the box and hand it to me.”

“Right! Right! Screw driver! Here you go, Mister! Um, what we doing first?”

“First we're going to take off the cabinet facing.”

“Wow! That fast, Mister. They sure don't make these Tug

Boats the way they used to. That facing stuff just come right off.”

“OK. Here’s the screw driver back.”

“Why hand it to the Suki? Mister down on the floor now, he can just put it back in the case himself.”

“Because that’s your job.”

“Oh! Right. This like one of those medical dramas. Suki get it now. The Mister be the doctor, and the Suki be the nurse.

What’s next Mister Doctor Mister, M.D.?”

“I’ll need a pair of wire cutters... Nurse Suki.”

“Smile when you say that, Mister.”

“Oh, I’m smiling... the wire cutters... those... over there.”

“These the wire cutters?”

“Yes.”

“Here you go, Mister Doctor.”

“Thank you, Nurse Suki.”

“You welcome, Mister Doctor. You know, in these medical dramas... Hey, what we call our show?”

“Fixing the Tug.”

“If the Mister call it that, this be one of those shows they cancel halfway through the first episode. Let’s see, the problem is the Mister needs a better name for his ship.”

“No I don’t. I’m Tug. I drive a Tug. And that’s its name: Tug. Simple.”

“Boring. Mister’s ship needs the better name.”

“OK, fine. I’m game. You want to rename my ship? What’s your suggestion?”

“Suki think on it. What the Mister doing now.”

“He’s striping the wires?”

“Those wires sure are lucky, Mister.”

“What? What are you saying?”

“Oh, Suki just talking to herself.”

“OK... fine. Hand me a pair of pliers, please... the green handled things, like scissors, next to the Philips. There you go.”

“One pair of pliers, Doctor Mister... Ahem, Suki say, one pair of pliers, Doctor Mister.”

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, Doctor Mister. Suki just glad to be the help. She hope the patient be alright. Whenever the Doctor Mister looses a patient he get all grumpy...”

“What are you talking about?”

“Fixing the Tug... Maybe Suki figure out the better name later... Oh, Suki know. We call the ship Suite Suki. It the pun.”

“I gathered as much. But we’re not naming the ship the Sweet Suki.”

“Suki Express?”

“No.”

“Suki on Top?”

“No.”

“Suki on Bottom?”

“Now, you’re just being salacious. Hand me some of those twist-ties.”

“Mister hold his ship together with the twist-ties?”

“Parts of it.”

“Mister no use the Duck Tape.”

“Only for the reactor core.”

“Mister joke, right?”

“Mister joke. I should have a box of lights... just hand me the tray... please.”

“Mister almost try to trick Suki. He slow to say the please at the end. It like the game of Mister Says Please. If the Suki pass the Mister what he ask for without the him saying the please, the Suki be out of the game.”

“So, now we’re playing Mister Say Please?”

“Yep! But before that Suki was telling the Mister about this exciting new medical drama called Fixing the Tug. It mostly boring show, but Suki watch it all the same, mainly because it the only thing on out here in the boonies... Oh, but the good part is, whenever Doctor Mister saves a patient, which he usually does, the Nurse Suki is happy to report.”

“Glad to hear it.”

“The Mister should be, because whenever the Doctor Mister saves the patient, he kisses the Nurse Suki... It just the Plutonarium...”

“Platonic?”

“Yeah, the Mister know. It just the Platonic kiss. It sort of sad, really. Nurse Suki could move on. She could get her own show. Everybody say so...”

“Everybody?”

“Suki’s agent, the dailies... Pinky-Green said as much on his show last week. That Nurse Suki always chatting it up with the Pinky-Green.”

“So why doesn’t she get her own show?”

“Because she in love with the Doctor Mister. Everybody know that... except for maybe the Doctor Mister.”

“Oh, I think the Doctor Mister has figured that out by now.”

“He has? Then why he no marry the Nurse Suki? Make the honest woman of her? Or at least take her on the date? Maybe go dancing?”

“It’s complicated.”

“It no complicated.”

“It is, too, complicated.”

“Why it complicated?”

“Huh?”

“You no get out of it by saying, ‘Huh?’ Mister. The Suki know the Mister understand just fine. So, why the Mister make it so complicated?”

“Because... I need some tape.”

“That no good answer.”

“Please... Nurse Suki... Am I missing anything? Any secret phrase in there you need me to say. Do I need to add with sugar on top? I need the black tape... Will you please pass me the black tape, Nurse Suki... Thank you.”

“Doctor Mister be the welcome. Nurse Suki thinking this must be the experimental procedure. She never see the Doctor Mister use the...”

“Electrical tape.”

“She never see the Doctor Mister use the electrical tape on the patient before.”

“Well, this case is pretty touch and go. Most of the circuits... it’s all built by hand, OK? There’s not a lot of safety circuitry in there.”

“It sound sort of dangerous, if the Mister Doctor ask the Nurse Suki.”

“Fair enough. But the Mister Doctor is used to operating alone. He never had to worry about anyone pressing the wrong button before... You know, there’s a lot of getting used to... little things.”

“There could be more... bigger things.”

“Hey! Keep your hands to yourself! Nurse Suki!”

“Alright. Alright... um, how much longer this take, anyway?”

“Bored with your little game already, Nurse Suki? You know, that really is one of the Doctor Mister’s primary concerns. You can be a bit flighty at time.”

“Oh, Suki no so bored... no so much... no right now.”

“Good. Glad to hear it. So, did the light go on, Nurse Suki?”

“Huh? Oh, Mister being meta-cryptic. Suki not really listening. She sort of distracted. Um, this place is the delta-G, right Mister?”

“No Doctor Mister? You’re slipping Nurse Suki.”

“It the delta-G, Mister?”

“Yeah, delta-G. Do you see the light? There should be a light. The button should be illuminated by now. And you don’t push it when it’s lit, understand?”

“The Suki seeing plenty of lights right now, Mister.”

“Just that one button. Is the light on?”

“That not the light Suki looking at. The light Suki concentrating on is dancing and twirling. Lightning not supposed to move like that, Mister.”

“What are you talking about? Come on, focus Nurse Suki,

focus! How's our patient doing?"

"The... um... Did the Mister look out the windshield while he was up here earlier, maybe spend a moment and watch the lightning?"

"A bit."

"But the Mister, he just close his eyes mostly?"

"Yeah. What's up? What do you see out there?"

"Maybe the Mister should come out from under there and look for himself, make sure the Suki not losing her mind? Her eyes not playing the tricks on her? There, the Mister see it?"

"Where?"

"There, behind the rock. Lightning don't usually get bashful and hide like that, Mister."

"Um... Is that? I guess it is. What else could it be? Well, one thing's for certain, this place is definitely not Delta-G... not anymore."

"What's the Mister saying?"

"I think that's an electro-cat... a sprite, a small one. I wish that light would go on. I must have crossed a wire or something down there. I would be very-very happy to just jump out of here right about now."

"What the electro-cat, Mister? They playful? They look playful."

"Playful? I don't know, I guess so. I really don't know. They're supposed to be some sort of sentient lightning... a self contained cohesive matrix of electrons or something. How one got out here, though, I'll never know."

"Maybe he lost. Maybe the 'lectro-kitty on the vacation with his family. He go out for the stroll and he get lost. Poor, 'lectro-kitty. He look sad and lonely, Mister."

"He looks dangerous."

"How Mister say that? Kitty look scared."

"I think you're putting too much weight on the name."

"Suki no think so. Suki think the 'lectro-kitty lost, so he send out the emergency beacon, and the Mister's ship lock onto it. It

happen all the time on the Ethers.”

“This isn’t an Ether, OK? This is real life. And it’s just a coincidence that we wound up here.”

“It no coincidence.”

“It’s just a coincidence.”

“It no coincidence. Nothing ever the coincidence on the Nurse Suki Show.”

“So, now we’re just leaving reality totally behind? Oh, right. OK. In that case, how did it ever get to be your show?”

“Suki think we both agree, Fixing the Tug no have that special ring to it.”

“Yeah well, maybe we should just call this little episode Doctor Mister Knows Best. And I’m telling you, the sooner we get out of here, the better we’ll be. Now why isn’t that light going on?”

“That what the Nurse Suki saying. If the Doctor Mister Knows Best, how come his light no come on? All that work down there and still no light? Suki think maybe the Doctor Mister is slipping, loosing it. At one time, the Doctor Mister was the greatest surgeon in all the galaxies; but lately, the Doctor Mister has been getting confused and making the small conceptual errors. Easy to overlook for most folks, but the Nurse Suki, she work closely with the Doctor Mister, and she see a lot of Ethers in her spare time, so she notice. Oh, she suppose it understandable considering the Doctor Mister’s age. At 32, Suki think the Doctor Mister must be in his dotage. When the Mister get down to it, he lucky he last this long... but then, he have the Nurse Suki to look after him.”

“Funny. Ha-ha.”

“It no laughing matter, Mister. Just now, the Doctor Mister forget he install the idjit light to let the Suki know when not to touch the button.”

“Hey, that’s right!”

“Suki surprised at the Doctor Mister’s response. Usually the patient no so happy to learn that the best years of his life has

already passed him by.”

“I wasn’t saying right to that. The light isn’t supposed to be on. So, OK. Press the button, let’s see if this thing works... Come on! Press it the button... Nurse Suki? Please? With sugar on top? Come on! What’s the hold up? Let’s get out of here!”

“The Mister think he want to press the button, but the Mister he no want to press the button!”

“Huh? Why?”

“Two reasons. First, he no set the destination.”

“Oh, right.”

“It so sad, the Doctor Mister once the galaxy’s greatest genius.”

“Whatever. The Core, right?”

“And then there be the second, more serious problem that the Mister is currently having with the navigator’s union.”

“What? What! What are you doing with those wire clippers? No! Stop! Are you crazy?”

“So now Mister going to hit the Suki?”

“I should. You’re just lucky I’m a nice guy and I can just twist those wires back together.”

“Mister just lucky the Suki the nice girl. She the one holding the thingie clippers. She go snip-snip if the Mister no be careful some more.”

“Uh-huh? Whatever! Just get off my bridge, OK? Get out of my sight, before I... I swear... Just go! Get!”

“Mister be mad now, but he forgive the Suki later, he see. The Mister know deep down inside, he never forgive himself if he left the poor ‘lectro-kitty stranded out there, all alone.”

“What? What are you talking about? Where are you going? Forget about what I said about getting off my bridge. Stop! Get back here... please... pretty please... with sugar on top. Oh... Stardust! Now, I suppose, I have to go after her... and out into that.”

But really, what’s trip to a clearly mislabeled and quite

possibly dangerous Alpha-8 (if not restricted Class-X/x) planet would be complete without leaving the relative safety of one's own spaceship for a relaxing stroll on the planetary surface, you know, to get a lay for the land and maybe interact with any of the colorful locals who happen to be gifted with that certain something, that spark of life, that electrical flare, and/or the gift of gab...

>^.^< # 7 # >^.^<

>^.^< An Unauthorized Walk Planetside? >^.^<

>^.^< Shocking, simply Shocking! >^.^<

>^.^< # 7 # >^.^<

Grabbing a shield as she dashed out the door, Suki Kamasutri (a.k.a. Nurse Suki: physical therapist, erotic dancer, and cosmic adventurer extraordinaire) rushed to where she had last seen that most capricious of cosmic critters known to bold only as an... 'lectro-kitty.

“Here, kitty, kitty, kitty. Here, kitty. Where are you, ‘lectro-kitty? Why ‘lectro-kitty hide? Suki nice person, she no like that mean old nasty Mister Tug.”

“I’m not mean and nasty.”

“Why the Mister here? Why he no inside fixing his ship?”

“I figured keeping you alive had a slightly higher priority.”

“Suki can take care of herself.”

“Uh, huh. That’s why you’re out here.”

“Suki out here. Mister out here. It no big thing.”

“Can we just go back inside?”

“Mister, take his hands off of the Suki... that better.”

“Can we just go back inside?”

“Suki looking for the ‘lectro-kitty. Here, kitty, kitty, kitty.”

“This is crazy.”

“The Mister no want to help, maybe he should go back inside the spaceship by himself.”

“I can’t leave you out here alone. This place is dangerous. Is that a vortex?”

“Oh, that look nice, Mister. Suki no ever see one of those before. It like the *Wizard of Oz*.”

“It looks dangerous.”

“Mister sound a little bit like the coward.”

“Look, it is dangerous out here, alright? There’s a sandstorm raging, lightning everywhere you look, and now whirlwinds. Look, there’s another one.”

“Wow!”

“Come on, you’ve had your fun. Let’s go back inside. Now!”

“Let go of the Suki, Mister This last time the Suki warn the Mister. He better let go of the Suki. Now!”

“Well, what do you expect me to do? It’s like you’ve lost your mind or something. Come on, let’s go back inside.”

“Suki no go back inside until she find the ‘lectro-kitty. He look lost, like he need the help.”

“You’re crazy.”

“Suki no need the Mister’s help. He can go back to his ship if he want to. Suki be fine. Here, kitty, kitty, kitty.”

“What are you going to do once you find the sprite?”

“Um... Here, kitty, kitty, kitty.”

“What are you going to do once you find it?”

“Let go of the Suki!”

“What are you going to do? Hug it? Pet it? Are you crazy?”

“Suki no know!”

“Well, I do. You’re coming back with me... Ow! Stop that! This is for your own good.”

“Mister put the Suki down. Now! Or the Mister be sorry!”

“Ow! That’s not nice! Stop it!”

Bzzt!

“Stop it! Ow! What’s that?”

Bzzt!

“It’s the ‘lectro-kitty!”

“Ow.”

“Mister, should have let the Suki go when she asked.”

Bzzt!

“Hello, ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt!

“He say the Mister should watch his step, not come any closer. Well, that what Suki think the ‘lectro-kitty say. That what you say, ‘lectro-kitty?”

Bzzt!

“I don’t think…”

Bzzt!

“‘Lectro-kitty say he have to agree, the Mister no think. It his downfall, you ask the Suki.”

“Uh-huh. Is that a fact? Well, I’ll grant you he seems to be a lot smarter than I would have thought.”

Bzzt!

“Mister should watch what he say.”

“I’m just saying he seems to be able to understand what you’re saying. They only real question is can you understand it.”

Bzzt!

“Yeah, that’s basically what I’m saying. You see, little guy, I’ve left my Bzzt to Galactic dictionary at home.”

Bzzt!

“Yeah. Yeah. I know I should have packed it, but what are you going to do? These things happen.”

Bzzt!

“Oh! Suki know what to do! She see this on the Ether!”

“Look, just don’t touch it. It’s keeping its distance, so you should too. That thing’s electrical.”

“Duh? It the ‘lectro-kitty, Mister.”

“Well, so it could shock you.”

“It no shock the Suki.”

“Don’t!”

Bzzt!

“Okay, sorry, sorry. I’ll just stand over here.”

“See, Suki warn the Mister. This no be the time for the touchy-feely. The Mister have his chance, but he blow it. Isn’t that right, ‘lectro-kitty?’”

Bzzt!

“See, ‘lectro-kitty understand?’”

“You’re crazy. What does he understand?”

“One B-zrt for yes and two B-zrt’s for no, just like on the Ethers. Isn’t that right, ‘lectro-kitty?’”

Bzzt!

“See, Mister. ‘Electro-kitty say yes.’”

“That doesn’t mean anything. He hasn’t said anything but Ba-zit since we met him. For all we know, he’s just telling us his name.”

Bzzt!

“Ooo! The Mister figure that out on his own! The Mister be smarter than he look!”

“Ha-ha. I’ve seen an Ether or two myself, you know.”

Bzzt!

“Suki no know, ‘lecto-kitty...”

Bzzt!

“Suki mean B-zrt.”

“I think it’s more like, Ba-zit.”

“That what Suki say, B-zrt.”

Bzzt!

“See! Suki say it right, it B-zrt.”

Bzzt!

“B-zrt.”

Bzzt!

“B-zrt!”

Bzzt!
“B-zrt!!!”
“What are you doing now, Suki? Oh, for the love of Sol!
Don’t!”

Bzzt!
“Fine! Fine! I can see I’m outnumbered.”

Bzzt!
“Ooo! Suki touch the Bzzt!”

Bzzt!
Bzzt!
Bzzt!
“Um, I hate to be the voice of reason, here...”
“Then don’t be, Mister.”

Bzzt!
“But the electro-cat, the Ba-zit...”

Bzzt!
“It B-zrt, Mister.”

Bzzt!
“See!”
“Whatever it is, it’s eating your shield! Sucking your
charge!”

“It just nursing. Suki feed the B-zrt.”

Bzzt!
“It’s eating your shield! Look...”

Bzzt!
“Suki warn the Mister. He no grab the Suki no more. B-zrt
be the gentleman. He save the Suki.”

Bzzt!
“Yeah well, who’s going to save the Suki when the Ba-zit
eats away her shield? He’s already gone through a quarter of your
charge, you know. Those things are supposed to be good for hours.
And he’s sucking it down lickity-split. So tell me, Miss Kamasutri,
what exactly are you going to do when your charge is totally
gone?”

“Um...”

Bzzt!
“Um...”

Bzzt!
“Um, Suki have to go now, B-zrt.”

Bzzt!
“No really, Suki have to go now.”

Bzzt!
“She come back, Suki promise.”

Bzzt!
“This no good, Mister.”

Bzzt!
“OK. The Mister can help the Suki now.”

Bzzt!
“She no mind.”

Bzzt!
“Suki think it probably be for the best if the Mister carry the Suki back to the ship now.”

Bzzt!
“Yep, Suki think that probably be for the best, that what the Suki think.”

Bzzt!
“The Mister can manhandle the Suki on the way if he like.”

Bzzt!
“In fact, the Mister can do whatever he like to the Suki on the way.”

Bzzt!
“Ravage her, whatever. Suki no mind.”

Bzzt!
“Come on, Mister. Please!”

Bzzt!
“Just carry the Suki back to the ship like the Mister was saying.”

Bzzt!
“Why the Mister no carry the Suki back to the ship?”

Bzzt!

“Mister? ”

Bzzt!

Mister?

Bzzt!

“Why the Mister close his eyes?”

Bzzt!

“This no time to meditate, Mister.”

Bzzt!

“Mister!”

Yes, that’s right. What does the Mister usually do in times of stress? He meditates. A useful trick to be sure, but not always the proper tool for the job, especially in time critical situations when action -- any action -- is urgently required...

>^.^< # 8 # >^.^<

>^.^< The Tug, The Suki, and the Bzzt! >^.^<

>^.^< Or the reason why Suki wore dancing clothes. >^.^<

>^.^< # 8 # >^.^<

As you’ll recall from where we left off, Suki had rushed out of the ship followed by a concerned -- if slightly annoyed -- Tug. But when Tug had tried to carry Suki back to the ship against her will, the electro-cat had suddenly appeared.

And well, you know how it is. One thing led to another and before Suki knew what was happening the cute little ‘lectro-kitty was draining the charge from her shield, threatening to leave Suki exposed on a hostile planetary surface with little more for cover than her skivvies... or what passes in some parts of the Galaxy as -- and I use the term loosely -- “Dancing Clothes.”

“Um, while the Mister meditate, maybe the Suki just go back to the ship on her own. The Mister can always catch up, later.”

Bzzt!

“Yep, that what the Suki think she do.

Bzzt!

“Mister? You hear the Suki, Mister?”

Bzzt!

“Oh, that better. The Suki feel much better now that the Mister, at least, open his eyes.

Bzzt!

“Hey, why the Mister smiling at the Suki like that?”

Bzzt!

“Oh, I was just noting how hopeless the situation seems.”

“And this why the Mister smile? Suki going to die the horrible, painful, purple-gas death and the Mister smile?”

“You really think you’re going to die?”

Bzzt!

“Oh, right-right. The sprite -- Ba-zit -- he’s eating your shield and you’re just standing helplessly around, because your body -- outside of you mouth, of course -- has been paralyzed by fear. I get it.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, it’s good. Don’t get me wrong Ba-zit. Time is critical here and swift, decisive action is certain to be key, you know, central to mission success and all that. I mean, in a minute Suki will be exposed to the elements...”

“And then the Suki die! The Mister got to do something to help the Suki!”

“Right-right, like maybe the three of us should run back to the ship, just like the Suki’s been saying?”

“That the good idea Mister! Last one there, the rotten egg.”

“Whoa! Hold up there, Suki. Not so fast. Did you ever stop to think that if he’s eating your shield out here, the minute the sprite gets inside, he’s just going to start feeding on the reactor

core.”

“Um... the Suki no think of that.”

“No, probably not. I mean, I don’t know much about these sprites, but if they are prone to eating energy all willy-nilly, the last thing we can afford to do is let one of them loose inside the ship. We’d be stranded. And instead of dying in a minute or two, we’d just end up dying in an hour or two. Understand? So really, the last thing we can afford to do is bring a renegade energy sucking sprite back inside the spaceship with us.”

Bzzt!

“So, um, have you tried shaking the little sucker off your arm?”

Bzzt!

“See, the Suki try, but it no good.”

“Yeah, he’s stuck on there like glue. But then, you’re not really trying very hard, are you?”

“Suki try! Suki try!”

“I don’t know. I mean, if you ask me, your whole performance is just lacking a bit of that... um, what do you call it? That certain something... conviction? Yeah, and that other thing... um, believability.”

Bzzt!

“I’m just not buying it. I mean, I’ve not really see that many folks die in my time -- actually none -- but I can’t help but think that if Suki Kamasutri -- The Suki Kamasutri, mind you -- really thought she was about to bite the big one, she’d be running around like a maniac right about now, you know, like the proverbial chicken with its head cut off... screaming her fool head off... maybe trying to smashing the little guy on the ground or something as she desperately tried to rid herself of the foul beast.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, sorry, Ba-zit. I shouldn’t have called you a foul beast. My mistake. I apologize. I was being rude. You’ll have to excuse me. You see, an alien life form of unknown origin has taken one of my favorite passengers hostage. So understandably, I’m a bit

flustered at the moment.”

Bzzt!

“Um, so what do you say you and me just cut to the chase and solve this here problem once and for all, Ba-zit? You know, mano a mano... or, er, rather mano a 'lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt!

“OK. Good. Good. Then just hold still a second while I get out my laser pistol and shoot you between the eyes.”

“NO!”

Bzzt!

“Oh, sorry, sorry! Bad idea, Ba-zit! Scratch that!”

Bzzt!

“Look, I said I was sorry. Besides in the heat of the moment, I seem to have forgotten that I left my laser pistol inside. Ah, but I could grab a rock. Here, this one looks pretty promising. It's got a good heft to it. Now, just hold steady Suki and I'll bash the little sucker's brains in? That'll learn him to suck down your last remaining bit of charge.”

Bzzt!

“NO! Um... Suki mean, maybe the Mister hurt the Suki as well.”

“And the Ba-zit?”

“Um...”

“Um?”

Bzzt!

“Um... Suki want to keep the B-zrt, OK? Like the pet. You like that B-zrt.”

Bzzt!

“Even though he seems to be happy sucking down your charge, which, you know, would leave you exposed to the elements? Eh, but not to worry, the purple haze floating about makes me think the atmosphere is toxic and that you'd probably die, you know, fairly quickly.”

“Um... that good point, Mister. Suki think maybe the B-zrt put the mind control thing on her and the Suki no have the freewill.

So normally, Suki probably jump around and act all crazy just like the Mister been saying, but the Mister know how it is...”

“Uh-huh? And this mind control thing, when did the Suki first notice it.”

“Suki think maybe it was when the Mister was working on the controls. She look out the window and see the ‘lectro-kitty playing in the wind and her heart melt, her mind no longer her own. She helpless, Mister.”

“Uh-huh? You do understand, that’s even less of a reason to keep him as a pet. I’m pretty open-minded. I mean, a person might even be able to work around his energy needs, but these mind control powers of his seem pretty dangerous to me.”

Bzzt!

“What’s that, Ba-zit? You say, you think maybe Suki is exaggerating things a little?”

Bzzt!

“Yeah, probably. But I can see how she’s been taken in by you, all the same. You are sort of cute.”

Bzzt!

“So, how are you doing on your charge there, Suki?”

“Way Mister going on, the Suki think maybe he forget all about how she only got the few minutes to live.”

“Well, what does the Suki want the Mister to do? I mean, we’ve already been through this. If I try to bash his brains in...”

“NO!”

Bzzt!

“There would probably be some resistance.”

“Darn tooting! The Mister got that right!”

“So, what else is there? We could always try turning off your shield...”

“The Mister crazy?”

“Oh, just for a moment... maybe take the shield off and sacrifice it to the Ba-zit? And as he feasts on the remaining charge, you could run under my shield, and from there, maybe we could sneak away?”

Bzzt!

“How Suki get her shield off?”

“Well, yeah. There’s the safety. I could override it, but I didn’t bring any tools out here... and it would probably take me a few minutes, anyway.”

Bzzt!

“Suki no think she have the few minutes left, not anymore. Mister need to think of something else, and fast!”

Bzzt!

“Oh yeah... I know... I know. Time’s pretty critical at this point. I mean, if we had the time, I’d just run inside and grab my camera.”

Bzzt!

“What?”

“Yeah-yeah, you’re right. I think that’s what Ba-zit said, too. You’re really picking up the subtleties of his inflection, aren’t you Suki?”

Bzzt!

“Mister no change the subject. B-zrt want to know why the Mister get his camera. Mister want to record the Suki’s painful, suffering last gasps?”

“Well, yeah! Duh! The Pinkster’s got that killer contest on his show every week... Horribly Painful Deaths or something like that, I think you told me about it once.”

“Suki think the Mister maybe mean the Cute Pets and Pratfalls segment of the Pinky’s show.”

“Yeah-yeah, that’s it, that’s the one. Big prize money for that. And with a vid of you croaking, I’d be sure to win. You’re pretty cute, you know.”

Bzzt!

“Yeah-yeah, I agree. The only thing left to do is decide what to do with the winnings.”

Bzzt!

“Well, I’d like to share, I really would.”

Bzzt!

“But I think we’ve both already know how that’s going to play out. It seems to me, after Suki goes you’re just going to turn on me and then the ship.”

Bzzt!

“Well, yeah. I’d like to believe you. I really would. I’m a trusting type guy...”

“B-zrt no believe the Mister. B-zrt ask the Suki, she think the Mister up to something.”

“Yeah, in theory saving your skin, Miss Kamasutri.”

<Bleep!>

“What the Mister just do?”

“Lock the ship. Oh, and put the core on standby, Ba-zit.”

Bzzt!

“It’ll power down in a few minutes. There won’t be much left to eat after you’re through with us... if that was ever your intention. Now, if you’ll excuse me. I’d like to prepare my soul for the hereafter.”

“The Mister crazy! He just going to sit down and let the Suki die?”

“Yeah, pretty much... Oh wait, but look, the little guy’s stopped eating -- just in the nick of time, too, I might add. So, maybe he can control his appetite, after all. And that, I might add, is required behavioral trait if he ever wants to step foot inside my spaceship.”

“So, the Suki can keep him, Mister?”

“Maybe, here’s a spare shield.”

Bzzt!

“The Mister have the spare shield in his pocket all the time?”

“Give me some credit. I was a Space Scout -- made it all the way to First Mate. And carrying a spare shield is standard operating procedure.”

Bzzt!

“Yeah, now don’t be too greedy there, Ba-zit. And as for you Suki, I’m going to sit here for the next hour and enjoy the dust, the wind... and I guess, now, the purple acidic rain. By all that’s

Cosmic, if I'm lucky, maybe I'll get hit by a flash of lighting or get run over by a rogue twister..."

"Mister joking now, right?"

"Yeah, probably. Look, if both you and Ba-zit can modulate yourselves for an hour or two, you know to prove it's possible, maybe we can work out a deal: let him come inside for a look around and see how it goes from there."

"Really?"

Bzzt!

"Um, what happens if the Suki no modulate herself and she run out of the charge in the meantime?"

"Well then, Ba-zit gets to stay here."

"Suki mean, what happen to the Suki if the B-zrt gets hungry and she runs out of the charge?"

"Well then, Suki can crawl under my shield; and if Ba-zit follows her and insists on continuing his feast, we can all die together like a family, all happy like. I'm not beyond using my last bit of charge to set off a feedback loop, Ba-zit."

Bzzt!

"He say that no sound so nice, Mister."

"I did kind of gather that."

Bzzt!

"Well, it wasn't suppose to sound nice, Ba-zit. You know, eating someone else's shield isn't exactly what I would call polite behavior."

Bzzt!

"He say he sorry, Mister."

"Apology accepted. But just in case he wasn't serious... or he changes his mind... or we don't know what he's saying... or if he actually has that mind control thing, and we're both going to be dead in an hour anyway, I'd like to spend the last moments of my life seeking absolution for my sins... or at least enjoying the ambience."

Bzzt!

"B-zrt no know about the ambience, Mister. But he say that

if the Mister want the absolution, that maybe take more than the hour. Suki think maybe the B-zrt hear the rumors about the Mister's hidden past.”

“Is that a fact?

Bzzt!

“The Suki tell the B-zrt all about it later.”

“Well, why don't you just do that now and leave me to sit here and contemplate the vastness of space... and the rather annoying sound the acid rain makes as it fizzes on my shield.”

Bzzt!

“OK, the Suki do that. The B-zrt hear the Mister? The B-zrt understand? No, no. The Suki can no feed the B-zrt right now, not if the B-zrt want to travel with the Suki on the Mister's ship. So, we have to do something else.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, the Suki know! Does the B-zrt know how to dance?”

Bzzt!

“That OK, the Suki teach him.”

And so, believe it or not, that's exactly what Suki did: teach the Bzzt to sing and dance.

>^.^< # 9 # >^.^<

>^.^< Payback be the Suki >^.^<

>^.^< # 9 # >^.^<

It did not take long for Suki to teach Bzzt what dancing was all about, and soon the pair of them were hopping over rocks, twirling in the dust, and having a gay old time as they swirling about in the wind and the rain.

As they did, Bzzt kept the beat going with his:

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!
Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!
Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!
Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!
Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

While Suki sang accompaniment with the lyrics to a song she had composed on the fly.

Suki's friend, the 'lectro-kitty
 Suki's friend, the 'lectro-kitty
 B-zrt is... Suki's friend, the 'lectro-kitty

Suki's friend, the 'lectro-kitty
 Suki's friend, the 'lectro-kitty
 B-zrt is... Suki's friend, the 'lectro-kitty

With the same mind numbingly simple lyrics repeated over and over and over again, it was a performance that would have made Pinky-Green proud. But after a few hours, even Suki tired of this game.

“Suki tired. She need to sit down. Bzzt some dancer. Bzzt know that?”

Bzzt!

“No-no. The B-zrt be happier if he no eat right now and wait. There be plenty of food inside the Mister's ship.”

Bzzt!

“Suki know the B-zrt just want the nibble, but he has to wait.”

Bzzt!

“She no know why the Mister being so stingy. The charge in these shields be nothing compared to the energy in the drive. There no way the B-zrt could even make the dent.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, yeah. It big. B-zrt like it, Suki sure. It clean, pure energy, distilled and refined, Suki think.”

Bzzt!

“Suki no know what it taste like, but she sure it good, top of the line.”

Bzzt!

“That just the way the Mister be. He the perfectionist. B-zrt can bet the Mister’s proton juice be the best he ever taste.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, B-zrt no need to worry. That just the way the Mister act sometime. He just be kidding the B-zrt. Mister no hurt the fly. B-zrt should have seen him when we get the Space Mites. He no could kill the one. Besides, Suki push the Mister to the edge countless times and he no never do the nothing... Oh, that remind Suki. Suki owes the Mister.”

Bzzt!

“Yeah, the Mister tried to trick the Suki.”

Bzzt!

“Suki say try, B-ztt. Suki say try. The Mister try, but he no succeed. He try to make the Suki think that he let her die, that he no care, but it no work.

Bzzt!

“It mean spirited, that what it be.”

Bzzt!

“It cruel.”

Bzzt!

“It nasty.”

Bzzt!

“It devious.”

Bzzt!

“It sort of make the Suki proud of the Mister in the way.”

Bzzt!
“But it also call for the revenge.”

Bzzt!
“Suki could no agree more.”

Bzzt!
“Suki no know. The B-zrt have any idea?”

Bzzt!
“No, that too mean. Suki no could do that to the Mister...
Besides, he lock the ship.”

Bzzt!
“Where the Suki get the Monkeys?”

Bzzt!
“Oh, right. The B-zrt say Trunk Keys.”

Bzzt!
“Eh, it funny when Pinky-Green say it. Suki guess B-zrt
have to be there.”

Bzzt!
“Suki no know. He sort of motley brown, actually.”

Bzzt!
“Suki no know.”

Bzzt!
“Hey! B-zrt no end up being like the Mister and always
change the subject on the Suki!”

Bzzt!
“That better.”

Bzzt!
“Before the B-zrt start talking about the Pinky-Green, Suki
and him were trying to figure out a way to get back at the Mister.”

Bzzt!
“Now, there the good idea B-zrt.”

Bzzt!
“B-zrt right, it just might work. But B-zrt sure he no try to
trick the Suki?”

Bzzt!
“Okay! The Suki trust the B-zrt; and then when we done, the

Mister see that the B-zrt be trustworthy, too.”

Bzzt!

“But what if the B-zrt trying to trick the Suki?”

Bzzt!

“Suki guess B-zrt right. Then it still the win-win-win all the way around, because the Mister, he think of something.

Bzzt!

“Now the B-zrt just have to remember his lines.”

Bzzt!

“That good. Maybe he just juice it up a little.”

Bzzt!

“A little more.”

Bzzt!

“There the B-zrt go. Now, let’s go find the Mister.”

Bzzt!

“B-zrt, right. The Mister probably right where the Suki left him. He’d be lost with out the Suki, B-zrt know that?”

Bzzt!

“That just what the Suki saying.”

Here and there, in some of the more remote corners of the universe, you can still find primitive cultures that believe if someone saves your life you owe them yours in return. It’s a noble sort of belief: sort of renews your faith in the universe, and all that. However, like I said, for the most this belief has withered on the vine, and in the civilized world, as least, this custom has been replaced by the law of Tit For Tat, or as it is more colloquially known, Payback be the Suki.

>^.^< # 10 # >^.^<

>^.^< The Best Laid Plans of Bzzt’s and Suki’s >^.^<

>^.^< # 10 # >^.^<

Practical jokes and hostile interplanetary environments: two great tastes that taste great together.

“Shsh. B-zrt stay here and be quite. Suki going to tiptoe over here, get real close to the Mister, drop her shield, and then the Suki going to slip into something a little more comfortable; that be the Mister’s arms, just in case the B-zrt was wondering.”

“Huh? What are you doing?”

“Mister! Help! Help! The B-zrt go crazy!”

Bzzt!

“See!”

Bzzt!

“B-zrt out of control, Mister! He be all fine. Suki dance with the B-zrt for hours, but then he turn color...”

Bzzt!

“Like that! Like that!”

Bzzt!

“And then he chase the Suki back here! Suki had to drop her shield, just like the Mister say, sacrifice it to the B-zrt. Suki almost no get away! She only just hop into the Mister’s arms in the nick of time. Mister be the Suki’s hero.

Bzzt!

“Hey!”

“It no use fighting it, Mister. It well established fact that the hero gets the kisses after he rescue the Suki in distress.”

“Is that a fact?”

“It is. Suki think maybe they should have taught the Mister that in the Space Cadets. It pretty basic rule of the universe, if the Mister ask the Suki.”

“Enough of this! If you’re done with your game...”

“Oh, no. The Mister can no push the Suki away so easily this time. He forget that she no longer have the shield. Without the Mister, the Suki be all alone this desolate wasteland of a planet.

She be helpless. That probably be why the Mister bring the Suki to this desolate wasteland of a planet in the first place, the Suki think.”

“If I recall correctly...”

Bzzt!

“B-zrt right. It no matter about the details right now. What done be done. The important thing is that the B-zrt is holding both the Suki and the Mister hostage.”

Bzzt!

“See?”

“Uh-huh?”

“Mister just have to carry the Suki back to the ship, now. Oh, yippie! Suki like it when the Mister hold her close. Come on, B-zrt! We go inside now! Suki get B-zrt the big proton shake once we inside, just like the Suki promise.”

“I though you said he turned on you.”

“Um... that might have been like the little tiny fib that the Suki told. OK, the Mister squeeze it out of the Suki. She play the joke on the Mister. Mostly though, she just want to be in the Mister’s arms, again. Mister no be cross. Oh, see? The B-zrt being the good boy. He even carry the shields back to the ship for us... without eating them, the Suki might add.”

Bzzt!

“Yes, sirree. That B-zrt be one good ‘lectro-kitty. You should hear him sing, Mister.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Yeps, that’s how it go, B-zrt.

Bzzt!

“Don’t worry, Suki no forgot. She be sure to give the B-zrt the nice energy snack once we get inside.”

“What makes you so sure about that? That he’s going inside, that is?”

“The Mister no go back on his word? He say if the Suki and the B-zrt have the charge left in the couple-three hours, then the ‘lectro-kitty get to come inside, and we all see how it go. Well, the

Suki have so much charge left, she no know what to do with it all, so the ‘lectro-kitty get to go inside, just like the Mister say.

“Yeah, I guess that was the deal. So tell me again, why I’m carrying you back to the ship, then?”

“Oh, that easy to explain. The Mister carry the Suki back to the ship, because she play the joke on him.”

“It wasn’t a very good joke.”

Bzzt!

“You tell him, B-zrt. That because the joke not over yet. While the Mister carry the Suki back to the ship, his hands be full. And so, he no be able to stop the Suki from kissing him again.”

“Hey! That’s not fair.”

“Suki think maybe the Mister no ever hear the expression all be fair in the love and the war. They sure no teach you much in them Space Scouts of yours.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, speaking of which. If the Mister’s hands were to maybe wander a bit, the Mister know, maybe he take it upon himself to get a little touchy feely, because maybe he can’t control himself or something... or maybe say he slip and he stumble on the way.

“Hey! Watch it!”

“Oh, that nice, Mister. The Mister one naughty boy. He hide behind this prim and proper façade; but underneath it all, he one hungry animal, the raging beast.”

“Stop squirming.”

“That it, Mister.”

“Stop squirming!”

Bzzt!

“Even B-zrt know there no way to stop the Suki from squirming with the joy... not at a time like this!”

“Stop it!”

“Mister say it, but he no mean it. Oh, the Suki like it when the Mister hold her like that.”

Bzzt!

“Suki think so too, B-zrt. Maybe we just stop here? What

the Mister say? Let the sparks fly?”

“Stay still! Honestly, sometimes I don’t know why I bother with you at all.”

“Eh, the Mister say that, but he never really give the Suki the chance, so he no really know if she be worth the bother or not. Now, if the Mister were to give the Suki just the one chance, then she’d show the Mister, and then he’d know.”

“Stop! Don’t show me...”

Bzzt!

“Oh, for the love of...”

Bzzt!

“Ba-zit, can you control her?”

Bzzt!

“Yeah, I didn’t think so.”

“Suki no know why the Mister still talking.”

<SMOOCH!>

“Oh, that nice, Mister.”

<SMOOCH!>

“Oh, now that more like it, Mister...”

Bzzt!

“Hey, wait! Why no smooch? Why the Mister stop? Hey, let go of Suki! Oh, this no fair! The Mister trick the Suki! He give her the one great-big passionate kiss and she melt like butter in his hands. It no fair if the Mister use the Suki’s weakness against her. B-zrt, make the Mister do what he was doing again!”

Bzzt!

“Suki say, make the Mister do what he was doing before!”

Bzzt!

“Well, at least, follow us B-zrt! Come on, hurry up. Looks like the Mister is going to carry the Suki over the threshold.”

“Ha-ha. Funny.”

<Ba-bleep!>

“This mean the Suki and the Mister be married now, B-zrt.

So, the Suki just warn the Mister, he better watch his back. And when he least expect it, the Mister should expect it: another kiss, that be.”

“Trust me, this I’m learning to expect.”

Bzzt!

“Ha, Mister not fast enough! Now put the Suki down, she promise the B-zrt the proton shake. Where the Mister keep the proton shakes on this rust bucket, anyhow?”

“Sorry, fresh out.”

Bzzt!

“Electron sandwiches?”

“Forgot to order them.”

Bzzt!

“Neutrino wafers?”

“Ate the last one yesterday.”

“Even when the Mister knew we were having company over today?”

“Yesterday, I didn’t really think...”

Bzzt!

“Suki have to agree with the B-zrt. The Mister often no think. B-zrt have to get used to that. But in the meantime, B’zrt no worry. Suki find him something.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, what get the B-zrt’s interest. He smell the something good? Something tasty?”

“I’ve got a bad feeling about this.”

Bzzt!

“No, wait! Ba-zit! Stop!”

“Why he go there?”

“‘Why he go there?’ Are you really asking me that? Say! This isn’t some stupid joke you and Ba-zit worked out?”

“Suki no do that to the Mister.”

“Uh-huh?”

“Outside different, Mister. It just the play. Suki no know what the B-zrt up to, now.”

“So, he’s really just gone into the wiring of my ship? Of his own accord?”

“It sure look that way to the Suki.”

“Well, Blast and Stardust! I knew I should have never let a sprite inside my ship in the first place.”

Um, yeah. Personally, I’d have to agree. In fact, I think that particular eventuality is covered on page 243 of the Space Cadet’s Manual. Ah, here it is:

Never let a Sprite -- a.k.a. an ‘electro-kitty -- inside your spaceship; they really are unpredictable little buggers, and are liable to throw a wrench into the works and otherwise muck up the best laid plans of Tug’s and Suki’s, alike.

>^.^< # 11 # >^.^<

>^.^< The Bzzt in the Machine >^.^<

>^.^< # 11 # >^.^<

I’m no rocket scientist -- failed the entrance exam to the Academy twice, don’t you know. But it probably doesn’t take a genius to realize that a ball of sentient lightning would sort of be attracted to the nearest source of power... sort of like a moth to the proverbial flame.

And so, it should come as no great surprise -- to anyone -- that upon entering the spaceship, Bzzt headed straight for the exposed wiring under the dashboard... you know, the same wiring Tug had been fixing not too long ago... and that sort of happened to control his spaceship.

Can you say, “F-Whoomph!!! Somebody’s Mystery Drive is about to be engaged!”

“Hey! Where the Mister running off to? He just leave the Suki here? Hey, Mister! Wait up! Wait up!”

“Wow! The Mister sure can run fast when he want to. What he doing down here. Oh! Suki see what the Mister doing! That good thinking, Mister. If Mister cut the power, then there be no way for the B-zrt to take control of the ship. That Mister, he be one smart guy.”

Bzzt!

B-ZZRT!

“Mister no look at the Suki like that. Suki think B-zrt be pretty smart, as well. Suki think that maybe account for the sentient part of sentient lightning’s name.”

“Yeah. Well, maybe the little sparkplug wouldn’t be so all-fired smart next time if you didn’t tell him what to do.”

“Mister blame the Suki for this?”

“Yes! Yes, I do!”

“That seem pretty unreasonable, if the Mister ask the Suki. She no touch nothing.”

“Shssh! I don’t have time for this. Just let me think...”

“Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“What are you doing?”

“Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“Why are you saying that? Look, never mind. Just be quiet and let me concentrate.”

“B-zrt is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“OK. The little guy’s taken over the controls.”

“Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“He’s powering up the drive, and we’ve got maybe three, maybe four minutes before the ship’s ready to launch.”

“Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“Who knows what’ll happen when it is... or where it’ll go when it does. We could go screaming right through a planet.”

“B-zrt is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“If we does, there’ll be nothing left of us.”

“Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“So to prevent that, I could pull the rods, power down.... and then, we’d last maybe a day before we died from asphyxiation.”

“Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

“Or I could take a laser to the junction box, cut the connection, isolate it... maybe use an electro hammer. But if I tried that, the blasted creature would probably just suck the charge out of the hammer.”

“B-zrt is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“What in the name of all that is Cosmic was that?”

“No time to talk, Mister. Suki singing to her friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“B-zrt like to sing and dance, Mister, because he’s... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“OK. Good. That’s good. Keep it up.”

“B-zrt is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“He seems to like it. So, um, when does this song end?”

“Oh, it have no end, Mister, because B-zrt is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty. Always has been! Always will be!”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Ah!”

“What, Mister? You got the idea. I mean, Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Oh, wait! This isn’t doing any good! He’s not stopping the power up! He’s not even slowing down!”

“What?”

“Oh, the light show is pretty impressive, and I like the menacing groan he’s getting from the core... that takes some real

doing, shows that he knows what he's about... or that he just doesn't care! But either way, as far as I can tell, he's still powering up, getting ready to launch! Pretty soon, all systems will be go!"

"Hey! That no fair! B-zrt no want to blow the Suki up! She his friend!"

Bzzt!

"Suki is too the B-zrt's friend!"

Bzzt!

"Well, she no be his friend if he blow her up, Suki can tell the B-zrt that!"

Bzzt!

"What B-zrt mean by that?"

"Don't ask me, I thought you were the one who spoke Ba-zit-ka-nese."

"Suki thought she did, too. Why the B-zrt get so mean all of the sudden?"

Bzzt!

"And he said?"

"Suki no know. B-zrt, maybe? He say that a lot. Maybe Suki should try singing again?"

"Singing, what good will that do? Oh, Cosmic Craters! He's going into final countdown! The way he's got it wound up, he's going to take half the planet with us when he jumps. At least pay attention to the warning sensors, Ba-zit! Why are you doing this to us? Oh, Blast and Stardust!"

"This really why the Mister need to install those double redundant safety devices. Suki know they always fail on the Ethers, but she think they usually work pretty good in real life."

"Don't start with me right now. I'm trying to think."

"What the Mister really need to do is to stay calm. He got that vein thingy going in his forehead again. He make it out this alive, Suki really think the Mister should think about taking up the meditation. Suki hear it good for calming the frazzled nerves."

"I swear, if I get out of this, I'm going to..."

"The Mister shouldn't swear. Why the Mister so frantic

anyhow?”

“Because we’re about to die!”

“The Mister usually no get the hysterical when he about to die, usually he the freaky calm.”

“Well, usually I don’t think we’re about to die.”

“Suki confused. She thought that was why the Mister usually yell at the her?”

“No. The Mister usually yells at the Suki, because she almost killed him, but in this particular case death is looming in front of us and we are about to die. It’s a subtle, but important difference.”

“Suki no really understand.”

“Look, it doesn’t make any difference. We just have to figure out what we’re going to do. Um, what are we going to do?”

“Maybe the Mister should try closing his eyes and meditating like he usually does. That the good boy, Mister. Now the Suki just lead him around, take him for the nice relaxing stroll. Maybe it calm his frazzled nerves.”

“OK. You’re like eerily calm, you know that Suki? You’re about to die. You do realize that? Or is this some sort of joke you and Ba-zit worked out? Because if you did, good one. Ha-ha. You got the Mister. Tell me this is a joke.”

“Suki no play joke like this on the Mister... but she think maybe it best to think the B-zrt still be our friend.”

“What? Why’s that?”

“Well, the Suki remember now. While they were dancing, the B-zrt, who is Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty...”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“That real nice, B-zrt. Suki like it when B-zrt make the lights in here flash like the disco.”

“Yeah, wonderful.”

“Suki think the Mister should look on the bright side, maybe take the deep breath and enjoy the moment. Come to think of it, maybe he enjoy the moment a little better if he back on the bridge. That way if there be the big explosion that spread the Mister all

across the universe in little bitty dust-sized pieces, he get to watch it all first hand through the big picture window.”

“You’re not calming me down any. You know that Suki, right?”

Bzzt!

“Oh! Don’t you start with me now either, Ba-zit! I’m in no mood. I’ll have you know, you’ve made my list.”

“List? What list? Suki no know the Mister have the list.”

“Stop it! Stop changing the subject! Why are we going back to the bridge? Never mind. Look, you were going to tell me something... something important, right? I hope. You were, right? Tell me you were, going to tell me something important, something that was going to help us stay alive? Maybe explain why you think the Ba-zit might still be our friend?”

“Oh, yeah. The Suki was saying that while the B-zrt and her were dancing... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Just get to the point!”

“Suki do just that if the Mister give her half the chance. In the meantime, he need to breathe... in and out. Oo-hah. Try it, Mister. Oo-hah.”

“The point!”

“Mister really tense.”

“He’s getting tenser. Tell me the point! Pretty please... with sugar on top... if you don’t mind, that is.”

“Well, while they dancing, the B-zrt tell the Suki all about his problems at home, you know, about his overbearing father, who thinks he’s the big lightning bolt in the sky, but is really only a bunch of hot gas, and how this ferociously fiery forked father figure of his is always picking on the B-zrt. So, the B-zrt often spend his free time thinking how maybe he should run away from home.”

“You got all of this from a few stray Ba-zit’s and Ba-zat’s? We’re going to die for sure, aren’t we?”

“The Mister still looking at it all wrong. He have to look on

the bright side.”

“Oh right, the bright side. I always wanted to see the universe, and now I’m going to see it all at once. Yippee. Is that the bright side you’re talking about.”

“Suki no think that the Mister take looking on the bright side seriously, yet.”

“So, there really is a bright side?”

“The Suki thinks so.”

“And she knows this because?”

“She could see it in the B-zrt’s eyes. He could no never hurt the Suki.”

“The Ba-zit doesn’t have eyes.”

“The Mister’s trying Suki’s patience. He want to hear what the Suki has to say or not?”

“Gladly, if there’s a point.”

“Suki think that there is.”

“Fine! Fine. How about just giving me the short version, then?”

“Suki no know the short version only this version. The Mister want to hear the version Suki know or not?”

“Fine. If this is how you want to spend the last few moments of your life, strolling through the bowels of my ship, telling some tall tale to calm your nerves before you are reduced to stream of glittering stardust spread far and wide across the galaxy, then I can be OK with that. Just let me center myself. Take a deep breath. Oo-hah! Oo-hah! Oo-hah! OK. I feel much better, now. Oo-hah! Oo-hah! Oh, yes. Much, much better. I feel good, top of the world. So if you want, just go back to the beginning and start over. Blast! Honestly, I think I may have missed something, like how you got all of this from a stray Ba-zit or two. But hey, we’ve got a minute and a half to burn... maybe two. So, shoot. Give me that there long version and don’t leave out a single thing no matter how small or trivial. I want to hear it all!”

“Once again, if the Suki knew the long version, she’d tell the Mister the long version. But she only know this version.”

“Fine. Tell me this version.”

“The Mister sure?”

“Just get - on - with - it.”

“Well, the B-zrt tell the Suki about his troubles at home, how it always boring, nothing doing, and how he figure from what he see on the Ethers, the universe must be the much more interesting place somewhere else than where he is. Probably closer to the core, Suki think, but B-zrt no be so specific.”

“No, no. I think you’re probably spot-on with the core. I’m thinking the Ba-zit probably wanted to go shopping, too. He looks like a miniskirt, high heel kind of guy, if you ask me.”

“Mister not being serious.”

“Sorry, missed the cue. Forgot we were being serious. But don’t mind me, I get this way when an alien life form has taken my spaceship into final countdown. YOUR GOING TO KILL US, BA-ZIT!!! THERE’S NO WAY YOU’RE GOING TO SURVIVE THAT EXPLOSION IF YOU LAUNCH US BLINDLY, YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT!!!”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Very reassuring.”

“The Mister, alright?”

“No. No. The Mister is not alright.”

“The Mister should try the breathing again.”

“The Mister is not going to try the breathing again. The Suki is going to tell the Mister the point to her story. OK?”

“Well, after the B-zrt tell the Suki how he want to travel the universe, the Suki tell him how she already see a bit of the place, herself. And so she know, the B-zrt can no leave his problems behind simply by stealing the Mister’s spaceship...”

“Especially since she might not know how to work the controls. Or even if she did, if she pressed the wrong buttons, she might just BLOW HERSELF UP!”

“We talking about B-zrt here, Mister.”

“Sorry, my mistake.”

“It OK, the Suki understand how the Mister might get

confused. Anyhow, the Suki tell the B-zrt how it might sound all romantic to hitch the ride on the spaceship with the daring pilot whose found himself on the wrong side of the law the time or two because of his scandalous behavior with the ladies. But in the end, the B-zrt find that it really no be what he think it cracked up to be. There be the long lonely nights -- months really -- spent drifting aimlessly in the black of space on the wrong side of the Horse's Butt Nebula..."

"OK, look! I've had enough of this nonsense! We're going to die if he launches us blindly. Got it? The way he's got it wound up, we're sure to go worming through something and take half the planet with us when he does. You understand that, right? And this story of yours isn't getting us anywhere..."

"It get us back to the bridge, Mister."

"Great! We're here and all the wires, bypasses, and safety control switches are far-far away below deck. So, great. Fantastic. We are now at the end of the line. Does your little story have a point? Does it lead to some happily ever after? Or do you just get super-chatty when you're about to die?"

"Suki just saying that maybe there be the lots of reasons why the B-zrt want to leave this dust-ball in the hurry: crazy lightning flash for the father always yelling at him, going 'Boom. Boom. Boom;' bitter angry whirlwind for the mother jealous of his good looks, never satisfied, making him do this and that when all the B-zrt really want to do is dance; and then, with all that purple gas floating about, the Mister just know the place stink and it going to ruin his clothes in no time flat."

"The point! Get to the point! Is there the slightest reason that you've been telling me any of this? Or is it just that you don't think when you're talking and so it's your way to put our immanent death and destruction out of your mind? Wait a second. You do have an idea. You must have an idea, because if you didn't, you'd be spending your last moments..."

<SMOOCH!>

"OK. I'll give you that one..."

<SMOOCH!>

“OK. And that one, too...

<SMOOCH!>

“Right. OK... We’re just going to... walk over to the big picture window... right, right. Get a better view. Good idea. This should be good... looking forward to the fireworks, Ba-zit. You only die once, that’s what I say. Maybe I should sing or something, you know, to set the mood and commemorate the occasion. So, how did that song go, anyhow? Oh, the ‘lectro-kitty is the good-good cat! He likes to sing and he likes to scat!’”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“But... ole’ Tug would like him a whole lot better if he wasn’t... um, blown to a billion pieces and scattered evenly across the universe.”

Bzzt!

“Suki got to agree with the B-zrt. The Mister no never get on the Pinky’s show if he sing like that, because everyone know... Suki’s friend is the ‘lectro-kitty, and he likes to sing, and he likes to dance, with a buzz-buzz-zip and a zippy-do-dat!’”

And as to Suki’s plan?

Let’s just say, the scantily clad vixen knew their only hope lay in the possibility of communicating directly with the Bzzt that lay in the Machine.

>^.^< # 12 # >^.^<

>^.^< A slip of the Hip, will... >^.^<

>^.^< # 12 # >^.^<

Suki’s plan wasn’t brilliant. It wasn’t complicated. And it wasn’t involved. In fact, it was so obvious, you had to sort of stop

and wonder why Tug hadn't thought of it himself. That is, you'd have to stop and wonder if you hadn't been following the story, because if you had, then you'd realize Tug's brain had stopped working a while back... frozen with terror or something like that.

Anyhow, the principal point is that Suki plan was breathtakingly simple. She simply typed a course heading into the astro-navigator, and hoped for the best, which basically meant turning around and giving Tug as many kisses as she could.

“That's it?”

“Mister no think of it, so the Suki think it be the pretty good idea. Now kiss the Suki, she deserve it.”

<SMOOCH!>

“Ooh. That nice.”

<SMOOCH!>

“That even nicer.”

<SMOOCH!>

“Suki think maybe the Mister get frisky when he on the edge of the death. The Mister know what would be even better than kissing? Hey! The Mister no supposed to move away when Suki say that!”

“I was just noticing how long we've been kissing.”

“Suki no see how that matter. She only just start. Hey! The Mister, he get back here!”

“But don't you see? We haven't exploded. Ba-zit hasn't engaged the drive.”

“Then the Suki think the Mister owe her the real kiss. She think maybe they just be the warm up kisses so far. Now, now. There be the no use fighting it, Mister. The Mister must know by now, he can no...”

<SMOOCH!>

<SMOOCH!>

<SMOOCH!>

“Suki sort of light headed. She be weak in the knees. One thing Suki know for sure, that Mister, he sure be one good kisser.”

“I can’t believe we’re still alive.”

“Ahem, Suki think the Mister supposed to say something else.”

“Huh? What? Oh! Yeah-yeah. Suki’s one good kisser, too. I think maybe we died and went to Heaven.”

“Suki no know about the Mister, but if she be in the Heaven, she probably no still be on this pile of rocks... and Suki think, both she and the Mister probably be wearing the lot less clothing.”

“Um, in your case, I don’t see how that’s really possible.”

“No? OK, the Suki show the Mister.”

“Stop that.”

“Suki just saying.”

“Stop it.”

“Well, Mister may still think he in Heaven, but the Suki pretty certain now that she nowhere close. Hey! Suki just remember, if B-zrt no kill us, what he been up to all this time?”

Bzzt!

<Bing!>

“Oh, look! B-zrt just turned on the light that the Mister installed for the Suki. Does B-zrt want the Suki to push it?”

“No!”

Bzzt!

“Suki think maybe the Mister get overruled.”

“Are you crazy? We just escaped certain death...”

“But it really no certain if we just escape it, Mister. Sometime the Mister be real sloppy in what he say.”

“Just take your hand away, Suki! OK? I’m warning you, don’t push that button!”

“Mister warning the Suki, now?”

“OK, I’m begging the Suki.”

“Suki think maybe the Mister be more convincing with the begging if he be down on his knees...”

“Please, don’t press the button, OK? I’m begging you. We’ve gotten lucky so far. You have no idea. Why are you even thinking of pushing the button, now, after all we’ve been through?”

“Mister being melodramatic... that usually the Suki’s role.”

“Please. Just trust me. You got to set a course, look at charts, make sure you’re not going to run into anything.”

“Suki think the B-zrt take that into account, already.”

Bzzt!

“See?”

“You’re crazy. What does a sprite know about astro-navigation?”

Bzzt!

“I’m sorry. It’s just... Look, how can he know how to operate a spaceship?”

Bzzt!

“Suki no know, but she think maybe the B-zrt does.”

Bzzt!

“See? Suki right again. The B-zrt be the excellent pilot.”

“You’ve been watching too many Ethers.”

Bzzt!

“Look, please don’t press the button. Blast! Mark my words, if I live through this, I’m going to destroy that stupid button. Don’t know how I’m going to launch the ship afterwards, but I’m going to take that button out and smash it into a million-zillion pieces.”

“Mister feel that strongly about the Suki not pressing the button?”

“Yes!”

“Maybe if the Mister kiss Suki, again, she no press the button.”

<SMOOCH!>

“Like he mean it.”

<SMOOCH!>

“And then again, maybe not.”

“Hey! A deal’s a deal.”

“Suki no remember making the deal. She just said maybe.”

“Please don’t.”

Bzzt!

“Suki sure hope, B-zrt is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.’”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“He sound pretty benign, Mister.”

“How can you tell? How could you ever tell?”

“Suki just know. She think maybe the Mister should hold onto something. Maybe the Suki?”

“Do you really think Ba-zit knows what he’s doing?”

Bzzt!

“Nothing personal, but Ba-zit isn’t really sounding that reassuring to me at the moment.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“See, that better. The Mister happy now?”

“Not really...”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“See. Suki right all along, the B-zrt really is... Suki’s friend, the ‘lectro-kitty.’”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Do you really think?”

Bzzt!

“And that’s supposed to convince me.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“It convince the Suki! OK, B-zrt, ready? One...”

“Wait!”

Bzzt!

“Oh, that right. The Mister was going to hold on to something. Suki think maybe it should be her. The Mister feel free to squeeze the Suki real tight.”

“Just wait. What’s the hurry?”

Bzzt!

“Oh, the B-zrt have to get used to that. The Mister always like that, riding the breaks, going slow.”

“Yeah, that’s a good idea. Let’s just take is slow. Where are

we headed to, anyhow? You typed in a destination, right?”

Bzzt!

“Sort of.”

“Sort of? I thought you typed something into the astro-navigator.”

“Eh, that? Suki no really know how to work the astro-navigator so much, so she just type in the general idea.”

“The general idea?”

“Yep. But the B-zrt, he understand.”

Bzzt!

“Tell me, how does that work? Typing in a general idea into an astro-navigator? ‘Cause I’m sort of interested in that. It would sort of revolutionize space travel. Maybe I should get a patent on the concept or something.”

“Well... the Mister want to hear the long version?”

“Yes, please. If that will keep you from doing anything rash like pressing the button before we’ve thought this through all the way, that would be great. So please, knock yourself out. Tell me the long version. Maybe I could fix you a snack first, get a bottle of wine, we could make an evening of it.”

“It not that long. Beside, Suki bored of this rock. She want to leave, so she just tell the Mister the short version.”

“No really, the long version’s good.”

Bzzt!

“Or medium. Medium’s good. How about we compromise a little, here?”

“Well, the Suki just going to tell the Mister the version she know. Suki was in the rush, so she just type in the first thing she think of... going on the honeymoon with the Mister.”

Bzzt!

“How’s that?”

“Suki type in Honeymoon.”

Bzzt!

“What?”

“But then Suki realize she jumping the gun...”

“Good. Good.”

“Because the Suki and the Mister not be married, yet. So really, Suki realize going on the honeymoon no going to work at all.”

“Excellent thinking.”

“Suki think so, too. So she revise her plan, and decide it be best if they head off to the nearest Cathedral...”

“And get married?”

“Suki think the Mister never ask.”

“I wasn’t...”

Bzzt!

“That right. The B-zrt heard him, so the Suki have the witness, now.”

“Whatever. So which Cathedral did you choose?”

“Suki never get that far, she just type in the Cathedral.”

“OK. But like a honeymoon, that’s not really a destination an astro-navigator is going to understand.”

“It OK. Because then, the Suki look down at her outfit and she realize, she can no get married in this.”

“Amen, to that.”

Bzzt!

“It OK, B-zrt. Suki just going to ignore the Mister’s last remark. Besides, the Mister already agree that he would go looking for the dress with the Suki... even if he have to fly from one end of the universe to the other to find it.”

Bzzt!

“Oh, wait. Don’t tell me...”

“That right, Mister see it coming. Suki type in A Dress...”

Bzzt!

“Only she spell like the Mister would.”

“Like literally?”

“Yep.”

“So what you’re telling me is that you typed Honeymoon:Cathedral:A’Dress into the astro-navigator for coordinates.”

“Yep. The Mister got it.”

“And you don’t see a problem with that?”

“B-zrt know what the Suki mean. He figure it out. He one smart ‘lectro-kitty, that B-zrt.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“Maybe the Suki have to work out the second part of the song... the ‘lectro-kitty be the smart, smart cat...”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“... and you type in coordinates like that, and you’re going to go splat.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“SEE!”

“It no count, Mister. B-zrt just singing along, he no pay attention to what you say.”

Bzzt!

“I’m not to sure...”

“But the Suki is. So come on, it time for the Mister to put his arms around the Suki while she press the button.”

“You’re kidding, right? After all we’ve been through, you’re still willing to put your life into Ba-zits hands?”

Bzzt!

“Eh. Don’t mind the Mister, B-zrt. He over-reacting, again. Besides, if the Mister think on it, he realize the B-zrt really no do nothing yet. He even wait patiently all this time for the Suki to press the button... all this time, Mister. The Mister should think on that. Because why the B-zrt wait? Because the B-zrt realize that’s the Suki’s job. Isn’t that right, B-zrt?”

Bzzt!

“See! Besides, who knows? Maybe the B-zrt just play the joke on Suki and the Mister to show us he be the friend, just like Suki did to the Mister out in the purple mist.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“I’m not buying it.”

Bzzt-zt! Bzzt-zt-zt!

“It no matter. The Mister come around, the B-zrt see. In the

meantime, all the Mister needs to do is warp his arms around the Suki. Come on, Mister. He knows he wants to...”

“This really goes against my better judgment.”

“If you ask the Suki, the Mister really have too much of that.”

“What?”

“The better judgment. Shsh. The Mister just need to wrap his big strong arms around the Suki. That good. OK, now hold onto the Suki’s hand and together we press the button. Oh, wait. Maybe the Mister should first give the Suki the great big kiss for the luck.”

“Yeah. OK. Here goes nothing.”

“Ahem, it not the nothing, Mister. It the great big kiss for the luck.”

“Please don’t kill us Ba-zit.”

<SMOOCH!>

Bzzt!

<F-Whoomph!!!>

“OK. Now I think I really am in Heaven.”

“Suki pretty sure she have to agree. This the pretty place, B-zrt. Dazzling lights...”

Bzzt!

“What did he say?”

Bzzt!

“B-zrt. But Suki think maybe he meant, shut up and kiss the girl again, already.”

“OK.”

<SMOOCH!>

<F-Whoomph-whoomph-whoomph!!!>

“Um, sorry. Suki slip. Mister no get cross at the Suki. She already save the Mister once today, so maybe they just call it even. Besides, it not Suki’s fault her knees go all weak and wobbly whenever the Mister kiss her and so she push the button by

accident the second time...”

OK. I admit it. It actually makes absolutely no sense that Tug would willingly engage the Mystery drive without running a full diagnostic first. But then, you have to understand, his mind was more than just a little befuddled.

I’m sure you’ve heard the expression a slip of the lip will sink your ship. Well, Suki Kamasutri’s not so much into sinking ships, but I’m sure we can all agree that one sweet passionate kiss from her is all it would take to launch a fella’s ship into super-sonic, trans-dimensional, overdrive.

I’m talking F-Whoomph-whoomph-whoomph!!! speed here, folks.

>^.^< >^.^< >^.^<

And sadly, that’s all he wrote...

>^.^< >^.^< >^.^<

Though, there is another version of this story wherein the events unfold quite differently at:

www.paufler.net

>^.^< >^.^< >^.^<

>^.^< **The End** >^.^<

>^.^< >^.^< >^.^<

TUG
and

The Suki Kamasutri
starring in
All She Do Is Talk-Talk
by
Eddie Takosori

>^.^< >^.^< >^.^<

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Originally posted at:
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And that's where the rest of Eddie Takosori's stories may be found.

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TUG
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