

Excerpt from Gracie's Touch

By S. E. Smith

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Gracie groaned in frustration. *Why did the stupid solar cells have to die now?! What was Murphy's Law? If anything can go wrong, it will?* Gracie banged her fist on the console again but nothing happened. It seemed the solar cells and the fuel cells decided to quit working at the same time. She didn't know anything about mechanics or machines. If she couldn't program it or hit it with a wrench, she was hopeless. The guys always fixed everything. Gracie sat down suddenly in the chair and pulled her knees up to her chest wrapping her arms around them. At first it was just her lip that trembled, then she hiccupped. By the third breath she was balling like a baby with her head buried against her knees. Her whole body shook as the despair at being alone again crushed what little spirit she had left. She was going to die on this miserable moon all alone. Why couldn't she have just died like she was supposed to when the mother ship exploded? Why was she being punished? Gracie was determined she was going to throw the mother of all pity parties and she wasn't inviting anyone else to come! She had the right to be upset, dammit. Gracie cried and cried and cried before she wiped her nose and eyes against her pant leg.

"Fine! If this is what I have to look forward to than FUCK YOU!" Gracie screamed as she jumped to her feet. "I will fucking die the way I fucking want to and no can tell me I fucking can't!" Gracie yelled out as the platform door descended. "And, I can say fuck all I want to and no one can tell me it is bad, so there!" Gracie added at the top of her lungs for good measure before she froze in horror.

"Oh, fuck!" She whispered as she stared at the group of huge ass men standing outside the supply ship staring at her like she was some kind of banshee from an Irish fairy tale.

Gracie stumbled backwards trying to hit the button to close the platform door but kept missing it. She screamed out when one of the men broke away from the group and charged at her. Turning, she scrambled over some boxes of supplies knocking them over trying to get to the front of the supply ship. She had no idea what she would do when she got there but she hoped by then her brain would figure something out. She continued throwing things behind her ignoring the loud curses as the man following her collided with them. Sliding into the area she normally used for sleeping, she spied her bow. Gracie grabbed it with one hand while grabbing her arrows with the other. She turned just as the huge male reached the open doorway. Gracie fitted the arrow into the notch and swung around pointing it at his chest.

"STOP!" Gracie called out frantically as she pulled the string back. "Please...stop." She whispered.

Kordon froze as he stared into the dark green eyes of the female that moments ago was screaming as if she were being tortured. He could hear the others coming up behind him but he did not move. In truth, he felt almost frozen as he stared at the breathing image of the female who had haunted his every waking and sleeping moment since he first heard her voice. He straightened until he was standing at his full height. He held back a smile as he watched her eyes grow larger as he towered over her petite form. He growled out in a low, deep voice his displeasure at her thinness. He would see she was fed properly from now on.

"Please don't make me hurt you. Please just go away." Gracie was saying over and over in a pleading voice. *I really didn't want company if they were big enough to squish me. Being alone was nice. Really, it was.* Gracie thought desperately. *You never had to worry about being crushed like a bug by creatures bigger than you when you were alone.* Gracie had no idea she was still speaking out loud.

Gracie gasped when she heard a feminine chuckle behind the huge male staring at her like she was breakfast, lunch, and dinner all rolled into one. Her arm was beginning to shake from holding the bow string back and her nose was beginning to itch from all the crying. *Oh, hell.* Gracie thought just as a sneeze over came her. *Damn Murphy's Law.*

The sneeze caught her by surprise so fast she accidentally let go of the bow string firing the arrow. Gracie sneezed loudly then gasped as she saw what she had done. With a cry, she dropped her bow and moved forward without thinking.