Sleep

by GoldenSnowflake

Summary

"Who? What-! Oh." The alarm in Dib's eyes disappeared when his stare met that of his arch-nemesis. "So that WASN'T all just an uncomfortably pleasant dream." ZADR

"Dib?"

The Dib in question remained unresponsive, his long eyelashes covering his sleepy gaze as he mindlessly surveyed the opposite wall.

When his audience closed his eyes again, Zim was dissatisfied.

"Dib-humannnnn…?"

A small green finger poked at the sleeping mass of flesh. Dib hummed an unintelligible syllable in response and shifted.

Zim was now thoroughly upset.

"Dib-beast!"

At the violent jab to his stomach Dib sprang awake.

"Who? What-? Oh." The alarm in his eyes disappeared when his stare met that of his arch-nemesis. "So that wasn't all just an uncomfortably pleasant dream."

The Irken chose to ignore his enemy's insane rambling. "Dib-beast! Answer when I speak to you!"

"Mmmm. Okay." Dib dreamily rubbed his eye, looking very content and sleepy.
"I've been wondering: what is this strange activity you perform at night?"

"Wha-? Zim, you've been here for- what? -years now. You don't know what sleep is?"

"SILENCE!"

"Seriously, Zim. That's pretty bad."

The boy's blank stare made his enemy's haughty expression fade to a thoughtful one. "Yes. I am indeed great and powerful. Now answer the almighty ZIM."

The boy sighed and rolled his eyes, still not awake. "Sleep is what all humans and lots of land animals do at night. It allows our brains to consolidate the events of the day and our bodies have time to repair before tomorrow."

The little alien actually seemed to be taking this in. "Hmmm! Very interesting indeed."

Dib's eyelids drooped. "Yeah, well, I'm gonna go back to doing all that stuff now, okay?"

"MMMMN?" Zim hummed in one of his displays of nonsensical horror. "No!" He began to poke the human maniacally with both index fingers. "I am Zim! I am ZIM!"

"Stop," Dib muttered, frowning with his eyes closed and waving away the green and pointy claws. "Sleep now, Zim. Paranormal inquiries later."

The tiny Irken's antennae laid back against his head as he frowned at his rival, his luminous crimson eyes unearthly in the unusually bright moonlight. "Dib…?" His voice softened as he leaned closer, expression quizzical. "Smell?"

The boy crinkled his brows together once more, not bothering to form coherent syllables. He fisted the blue sheets and yanked them up over his shoulder, rolling onto his side to nestle against the warm green creature.

Antennae lifting a little, Zim stared in fascination at the boy as he exhaled softly and his face faded to a peaceful blank.

"Your ways are strange, Dib-smell," the invader murmured thoughtfully. "It will take time for the almighty Zim to decipher such pig-smelly nonsense."

"Shut your eyes, Zim."

Zim blinked down at his human as the boy forced himself upward towards consciousness. "Just shut your eyes and stop … talking … for a little while." The invader took a long moment to scrutinize the warm body rested against him, its constant sneer absent and the rocklike tension gone from its limbs.

So peculiar this "sleep" was. So blatantly … disarming.

The little green creature's gaze drifted up to a poster of some fictional monster wedged between wall and ceiling. "I suppose I'll have to mimic your behavior until I get a better handle on it," he finally mumbled loftily.

The whispering of the sheets and the shifting of weight caused Dib to feel a warmth that was oddly familiar in a way he didn't completely understand. A small smile stretched his lips as he wrapped his
arm around it and snuggled close. Unable to find a suitable retort to this, Zim gazed through the blinds at the brilliant glow of the moon.

It was bizarre how pleasant Dib's presence was.

The human's breaths slowed and his hand on Zim's little stomach twitched once. Zim could feel the human's heart rate slow minutely as his muscles unclenched.

That odd earth-monkey state again.

That … "sleep."

Zim was able to keep quiet for almost five minutes.

"Dib-humannn?"

The overzealous tone was almost identical to how it had been before. Dib's eyebrows drew together.

The little alien wiggled about until his face was close to his rival's. He didn't wait for the Dib to reply.

"Pig-smelly, I have many inquiries about these meats of luuuv you possess."

"In the morning," the boy attempted to mumble.

"Zim wishes to know if all humans require the same meats for sexual function."

Dib deadpanned for a minute before producing a sudden sputtering cackle. Zim glared in outrage, irked all the more when Dib snuggled back against his pillow and showed that he had entirely no intentions to answer.

"Snn- we have sex with … dffrmnt … peepeople," he drawled. His voice went monotone as he slipped closer to unconsciousness. "Girls … have … yuu-tr…sss. Males have love-meats…"

At this phrase passing his lips, Dib giggled again, this time so loud that Zim screwed up his mouth and clenched his fists in anger.

"Dib-smell! This is serious! Zim needs to know if all human-ickieees behave similarly when engaging in mating rituals."

"Mnnnwell, most human-ickies aren't as enthusiastic as you are." He made a little grunting sound and pressed his face into the hollow of Zim's little shoulder, forcing him to turn slightly away from the human as he was used as a makeshift teddy bear. The invader's alien senses alerted him to the fact that warmth was radiating from his face as Dib pretended to doze.

The little alien gazed out the window absently, his agitation traded for a dreamy sense of contentment at the strong body pressed against him and at the hand clasped possessively on his middle. How chilly this planet often became wasn't favorable, but it certainly made the warmth of its inhabitants much more significant.

The blush on his human's face was obvious against his shoulderblade for a long while. Only when Dib sleep-mumbled something did the Irken realize that he'd fallen unconscious and that a considerable amount of time had slipped surreptitiously by.

This fascinating "sleep" phenomenon was making Zim's mind go into overdrive. How could these humans need to recharge so frequently when they only lived for the better part of a century? How
were there so many of them when this state left them so defenseless for so long at a time? And what did it have to do with mating rituals? Wasn't mating supposed to be a show of power? So why on Irk did they get all snuggly and affectionate afterwards instead?

Zim frowned at the cracks in the Venetian blinds. Silly stink-beasts.

Filthy ball of dirt.

The silence had stretched on for almost twenty minutes.

"Dib-humannnnnn!"

Dib grimaced immediately into the plane of the Irken's back.

Oblivious, Zim rolled over to face his enemy. "Dib-HUMANNNNN!"

"WHAT?"

Dib's golden eyes shot open as he glared daggers at the green thing staring him in the face.

"I have a question for you, Earth-stink."

Dib ran a hand exhaustedly over his face. "Of course you do."

"Your all-powerful overlord wishes to know: what purpose does mating hold in your stinky Earthanoid culture?"

The investigator rolled onto his back, pinching the bridge of his nose and grunting. "It- it means that we … Zim, can't you just leave me alone?"

"Foolish hyumaaan! Obey Zim unless you wish to meet your imminent demise!"

The boy's brows pinched together and he let out an exasperated sigh. After a long moment his frustrated expression disappeared.

"Mating-"

"I am ZIIIM!"

"Mat-"

"I am ZIIIM!"

"Zim! Listen!"

"Hmmmmm?"

Dib breathed in deeply to keep calm. "Mating, for humans, is the ultimate show of love and vulnerability. It's what people do with the one most important to them."

"Love?" Zim gawked at the boy in horror. "What does love have to do with mating?"

"Everything," Dib answered exasperatedly.

"Hmm." Zim blinked thoughtfully. "In human culture mating is a display of love."

"Yes," Dib replied, sounding extremely relieved to have this information relayed successfully.
"Yet in less smelly parts of space, mating is a display of power."

"Uhhh, sure."

"So Dib-smelly is admitting his … love … or in other words his allegiance to Zim!"

Dib frowned, not opening his eyes. "No!"

"While the all-powerful ZIM is displaying his dominance over the Dib!"

"No!"

"Splendid! This 'mating' may prove to be extremely useful in my conquest of this planet."

"Zim, no! You can't go around mating with everybody!"

The Irken blinked. "Why not?"

"Because you're- because you mated with me," Dib cried, pushing himself up on his elbows as he stared at his enemy and blushed wildly.

"Nonsense! There is more than enough of Zim to go around."

The paranormal investigator grabbed the sheets and flung them out of the way, rolling over to pin the alien beneath him. Zim gasped hoarsely, his luminous eyes huge in surprise. Dib blinked at him with eyes narrowed in annoyance.

"Does it look like I'm going to share you with anybody?"

Unable to argue, the Irken blinked up at the boy. "No."

"Good." Dib's voice lowered in irritation and he pressed his face against Zim's neck to nuzzle him. "'Cause I'm not."

"Hmmm," Zim hummed, his attempt at sounding thoughtful coming out far less confident than he intended. "P-perhaps … Zim can resign his almighty self to this exclusive mate for a period of time."

"Good," Dib muttered again before lightly biting Zim's shoulder. The little alien shuddered, sucking in air and unconsciously turning his head to block the attacking teeth from his sensitive flesh. Dib ignored him and nipped the green skin closer to the alien's neck.

"D-Dib-thing." Zim's antennae drew forward, his mouth opening slightly as words drifted sluggishly around the invader's head, refusing to arrange themselves into coherent sentences. "There will be no nibblies of looove on … Zim's mighty … body."

"Quit it," Dib mumbled, moving to kiss the Irken again on the side of his face. "Zim shall-" he was interrupted by a gentle peck on the corner of his mouth. ":-punish you in ways m-more despicable than you can possibly imagine, Earth-smelly."

"Sure." Dib pressed his lips to the Irken's, finding them far more willing than the alien had wanted them to be. "Maybe … later."

The alien's antennae went limp as he surrendered to the boy above him.
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