

"A Hungry Season"

by Molotov

Setting:

Ideally, somewhere along the Kzinti / Federation border. Then again, might do well set anywhere other than the Kzinti / Federation border.

Premise:

A dangerous outbreak of Subjenix Flu, a virulent and contagious disease, in the Sector the Crew occupies (total coincidence). Subjenix Flu is a known hazard; the most common treatment is the use of the Dafyyd IX serum, an expensive treatment due to it's fairly rare and esoteric components. A Kzinti Raider and his powerful Patron. A Federation Medical ship, and your favorite PCs...

SCENES

Opening:

Players receive a distress call from a nearby Starfleet Scout or Merchant. A small Kzinti pirate ship (an older model) has surprised the Federation craft. By the time the PCs arrive, the Kzinti have disabled her engines. Sensor checks confirm the presence of a Kzinti boarding party aboard the Federation ship (preventing the PCs from simply shooting their way out of the scene). At the GM's preference, the Kzinti are wearing pattern inhibitors/ECM/shield patterns prevent the responding ship from locking on the Kzinti raiders (the Kzinti ship has shields up). The Kzinti may have boarded via shuttlecraft, or may have beamed in once taking out (or weakening) the target's engines and shields.

There are many possible PC responses to the situation. The Kzinti crew is relatively inexperienced and poorly led. The leader of the raid should be killed or taken into custody by the Crew; which matters little. The Kzinti were after a shipment of the Dafyyd IX serum of course. The 'Flu is not known to effect the Kzinti, however, although it will take some digging (or

suitable roll) to learn this.

Development:

Filler scenes can consist of rescue missions, police actions, and some diplomacy as PCs try to deal with the outbreaks of Subjenix Flu and the nature of the Kzinti attack. The PCs will likely learn that the Kzinti pirate was a "wanted criminal" of the Kzinti government. They refuse, of course, to be held accountable for the actions of the raiders. Any additional Kzinti attacks consist of older style pirate vessels (old style only in terms of what comes at the crisis point...these ships are more or less "the latest" according to Starfleet records. The Federation currently believes the Kzinti to be lagging somewhat in technological development.... ;)

The 'Flu's exact effects are not detailed; I was thinking of paralysis followed by coma - mainly because this can lead to some deep space rescue missions and such.

Crisis Point:

The outbreaks continue. Starfleet sends in an Olympic Class Medical Starship (or other Medical ship) to assist with the situation. The U.S.S. Savior (NCC 63478-A) is also carrying a large shipment of the Dafyyd IX serum (of course). The ship likely has escorts as well - perhaps two Miranda-class Cruisers - , although Starfleet under protects her, as they have underestimated Kzinti capabilities. At some point along the Savior's duties, the Medical ship and her escorts are ambushed by a small group of Kzinti raiders. The lead ship of the Raider group is of an unknown class, although hull patterns will match her to the Kzinti style (use the Kzinti ship of your choice - preferable make it one to match the Crew's own in power). Her power output is considerable, putting her on par

with a D'kora-class Maruader (again, vary to taste). The other ships in the Raider group may be equally mysterious, although they should be much less powerful, of course. The Raider group concentrates on the two Federation Destroyers while the lead Kzinti ship delivers a series of punishing blows, gutting the Savior's warp nacelles and battering her shields down (if not out). A boarding party is beamed over (they are expected to return via stolen shuttlecraft first - the Kzinti do not plan on dropping shields for a beam out. The boarding party's goals: the Dafyyd IX serum and the Captain of the Savior!. The Kzinti boarding party will manage to circumvent the Savior's security systems and escape with both the Captain and much of the serum. Given time, they will take more of the Federation's components (or even tow her via tractor to a pirate base) if unchallenged or given time. The remaining Raiders will press the attack on the Mirandas until they are defeated, driven off or the Mirandas are destroyed. The PC's ship may happen upon the scene at any time. They may be assigned to escort the Savior, they may pick up a distress call, or they may arrive in time or any time thereafter having learned of the Kzinti ambush through their own investigations. Again, there are numerous ways PCs may choose to deal with the situation. The use of boarding parties will likely hamper some efforts and require the PCs to work.

Motives:

The Captain of the Kzinti Raider group is a contemptuous, bitter Kzinti indeed. On top of his usual venomous personality, the PCs have unknowingly killed or captured one of his potential protégés. This grizzled Raider has

deliberately undertaken a course of action designed to bring him into conflict with the PCs. Acting as a "criminal" to the Kzinti government, he has taken his powerful, modern Kzin wargroup on the offensive, choosing a target he is "sure" the PCs will respond to - the Medical ship (due to its cargo and the PC prior intervention. Whether they knew about the cargo then - or even now - winds up being irrelevant). The Captain wants the PC responsible for the capture or slaying of his student (ideally, a PC 1st Officer) - to fight in personal combat (8 foot tall Kzintis). Barring that, the Raider plans on selling both the serum and the Starfleet Captain to the highest bidder at an underground criminal conference. Attacking a "weak, helpless" Medical ship full of "pacifists" is not only acceptable to the Raiders, but desirable.

This Episode could conclude with PC actions on board the Savior, in space combat, through careful negotiation or tactics, or stretch to tracking down the illegal conference and busting the Kzinti. A particularly Trek plan (and possibly a cliched one) would be for the Crew to make an exchange of the hated PC officer for the Savior's Captain. The Kzinti brings the PC to the conference, intending to battle him there (where he can get more honor for the deed). The PCs, of course, track them down, effect a rescue and teach the Kzinti (and possibly the Ferengi, Orion, etc.) a little lesson.

With the updated Kzinti starships, a GM could use this encounter to bring the Kzinti "up-to-date" so to speak, in a manner similar to the first appearance of the D'Deridex Warbird.