

## **Poison**

By Myra

### Chapter 13

Myra and Schwenk looked around for Bengali. The shuttle ended up crashing on a nearby baron planet as a fight broke out between Bengali and Schwenk.

The ship was wrecked and Bengali had escaped on ahead with a transmitter, intent on alerting the others to come and get and re-capturing Schwenk and Myra.

Schwenk ran down the path where Bengali had gone...the hunt was on. The path forked left and right, Schwenk waited for Myra to catch up to him. "Which way do you want to go?"

"Why are we going after Bengali? We need to get off this planet!!"

"Well, he's on his own, we outnumber him and we're armed.... go figure! We don't have enough time to argue about this.... come on!" Schwenk moaned.

"Ok what about Lion-O, and Shula?" Myra asked, walking on with him.

"Haven't got a clue right now.... I like these odds and I'm making the most of the situation...it's what I do.... stop analyzing... it's so...irritating!"

"Whatever, don't blame me when you're dead!" Myra said walking on ahead. "We are not going to kill him or anything?"

"You asking or telling?"

Myra stopped. "Why are here again? Why can't we just get off the Planet and then cross that bridge when we come to it? I am asking Schwenk. I just hope you listen" Myra said walking on ahead. "We can just tie him up and then get out of here"

Schwenk didn't reply to her point, he didn't like lying to her and he had plans. "Can't you sense him or anything, can't you say a magic spell or something?"

"He can't be far"

Myra sighed, and held her staff out in the air. "Hail to the Guardians of Thundera! I call upon the guardian of the panther! With the powers of strength and honor that lay within, I summon thee!!" bright rays of light appeared from her staff and began to circle them both. The Panther soon manifested and stood before them waiting for her command.

Schwenk groaned inwardly "Erm...Myra...I was being sarcastic.... we haven't time for this.... he's got a radio transmitter.... if he gets to high ground he'll send out a distress call and we're screwed!!"

Myra glared at Schwenk. She knelt before the panther. Panther meanwhile just snorted at the human. " Go and find the noble Bengali. Do not kill him, disable him and keep him down" The panther looked uneasy... "Go now" Myra said sternly. The panther sniffed the air and found Bengalis sent. He took off after him at full speed. "I can sense the panther" Myra said, "We will find Bengali. Quickly"

"I'm already there!" he un-holstered his pistol.

The panther ran through the tall grass fields closing on his target fast, the smell was getting stronger. After another hill the target came in to sight. Myra breathed hard all of a sudden. "He has found him," She said, running on ahead in the same direction that the panther went.

Schwenk tried to keep up, but he started to fall behind the pace. The one thing he did know was that despite Myra's protests, Bengali wasn't leaving this planet alive.

Bengali came in to view. Myra caught up with the panther that waiting for her. She crept down beside him. "Good work" She whispered. "Go and disable him" The panther speed off and pounced on the unsuspecting Bengali.

Schwenk finally caught up with the others. He saw Bengali subdued by the panther and Myra laying in the grass nearby, but instead of waiting for her he ran past her and up to where Bengali was. He pointed the pistol at him. "Where's the transmitter you shit?"

"Get stuffed!" Bengali spat back.

"Only one person around here getting stuffed...and it's not me!" he sneered.

Bengali just stayed silent. Myra caught up with them. "Schwenk what you doing?" she shouted pushing the gun out of the way.

"I'm trying to find out where that freak has hidden the transmitter!!" he snorted. "Try getting aggressive with him...not me!"

"Bengali please, I have my reasons, give me the transmitter, I don't want you to get hurt, you more then anyone," She said sincerely.

"Myra! Don't try to reason with him! He's the reason why we crashed, why a distress signal is being sent as we speak...he's the cause of all my problems...spare me the bleeding hearts routine!!"

"I have no care for your problems, remember you where the cause of my problems! That's why I am in this mess with you!" She spat back. The panther snarled at Schwenk in response.

"Don't you turn on me!!" Schwenk snarled "He's the enemy...or maybe you've forgotten that...maybe you do prefer your own kind!" he raised his pistol again. "Now Benny...tell me or you die!"

"I will not tell you anything!" Bengali retorted. "Myra please forget this bitterness, he of all people would of taught you that, look at what he become! Don't walk down the same path," Myra pleaded to Schwenk. "Put the gun away"

"Sorry Myra...the line has been crossed. You said if it was necessary I could...well, I'm guessing it's necessary.... he's breathing the same air as me.... that's reason enough." he smiled and cocked the trigger.

"I can't believe I actually thought you would become reasonable one day, not solve your problems with your stupid old pistol" She spat.

"Tough! Now if you don't want to watch then turn away now.... as a favor I'll shoot him in the head...it's a big target and he won't suffer" he sniggered.

Bengali braced himself. Myra pushed Schwenk out of the way. "I should avenged Jaxx when I had a chance and not be forgiving like he insisted when he alive!"

Schwenk slipped back as Myra shoved him. He tried to raise the gun again but found Myra holding it down with both hands, her claws starting to dig into his wrist. "What the hell you doing?"

"What you think," Myra growled. "You knew very well I didn't want it come to this"

"Well it has...now, let go!"

"I cant Schwenk, I am sorry I just can't Its not because of what side I was on, its the fact it feels like right now you just used me to get to this point to get plain and simple revenge. I can't let happen. You taught me that believe or not. I was bitter like you. I wanted to kill you so much, but being with you, getting to know the guy underneath, I realized I couldn't, that's why I told you about it in the cell. Please Schwenk don't"

Schwenk tried to jerk his hand away from Myra. There was a loud bang and everything seemed to freeze.

The panther growled as if in pain, and faded slowly away... Myra looked at Schwenk and a little blood tickled from her mouth. "Schwenk?" She managed.

"Myra! No....Myra...don't...I..."

Blood began to seep through Myra's top. Myra grasped her torso and gasped at the sight of the blood.

"Myra...oh my.... what have I done?" Schwenk dropped the gun and looked at his hand, which was covered with blood.

Myra slumped to the floor, trembling, Her eyes never breaking away from Schwenk's. Her summoning staff began to crack and turn in to dust. Bengali scrambled to her. "No...no.... no!!!" Bengali spluttered, shaking his head in disbelief.

"Oh you stupid fool what you done!"

"I...I...didn't mean to.... I was pulling my hand away.... Myra...oh god, please wake up" he knelt the other of her and held her tightly.

"I am cold" She mumbled..."I'm tried" Bengali began to sob. He didn't care that he was in front of Schwenk. He knew what was coming.

"Hold on Myra...we'll get help.... just hold on dammit!"

"Please Myra please! He grabbed the transmitter out of his front pouch. He activated it. "Shula come in!"

Schwenk felt cold. He looked at Bengali; he was on the radio to Shula. "Drop the radio!" he raised the gun once again.

"Are you kidding me? You want her to die. Think your life or hers? If you care anything about her, make the right choice for Thundera's sake!!!"

"Drop it...now!"

"You going to kill her.... just like you killed her mate. You really are evil. Unlike you... I care about her. And I going to the man here and do something about it. If you want to kill me, go ahead," "Schwenk...." Myra mumbled.

Schwenk turned to Myra "What is it?" he leaned over her.

"I can't feel my legs...." Myra coughed, her bottom lip quivering. Bengali looked at his transmitter, "They will be here in minutes"

Schwenk was caught in a quandary. He wanted Myra to hold on, but he needed the transmission to end. He took a decision. "I'll stay with you Myra." he raised his gun and fired...destroying the transmitter.

Bengali hung his head. "You destroyed her chance of survival. How are you going to live with yourself?"

"ME?" Schwenk seethed. "You might as well have pulled the trigger...this is your doing! We were going to settle down peacefully, away somewhere, but 'oh no' big mighty Bengali has other

ideas. She became as much a fugitive as I was. You even imprisoned her...nice going! You've got blood on your hands as well. You killed her Bengali...how are you going to live with yourself?"

Tears fell down her face. She glanced at Schwenk. "Its been fun.... you taught me not to be bitter.... I am not angry at you anymore...I forgive...yo....."

"Myra!!! No Myra... " Bengali sobbed.

Schwenk stepped away from Bengali and Myra. She was gone; she had lit up his life briefly and shown him what he could be. Now she was gone. He looked at the pistol in his hand; he had to finish the job. He clicked the trigger back again. "Time for you to join her...stripey!" he said, sadly.

Bengali didn't even register what Schwenk said. He closed her empty eyes, letting his tears fall. He glanced up at Schwenk and saw his position. Sadness now turned to anger. He ran up to Schwenk and struggled with him grabbing him by the wrists. He will now pay for what he has done. That deathly silence returned when a second gunfire echoed through the fields.

As Bengali ran into him Schwenk had enough time to get another shot off. He fired. The bullet merely grazed Bengali. For a moment both were still, taking in what had just happened. Schwenk reacted first and lifted his arm to fire again.

"Why?" Bengali shouted. " I don't understand!" He said, Grabbing Schwenk's wrist to divert the line of fire.

"Don't understand what?" Schwenk replied, struggling under Bengali's weight.

"Why are you still doing this? As much as I hate to say it didn't you love her at all? Can't you keep you promise to her once?" he said struggling back.

"You caused this...if you hand kept pursuing her and me...we'd be happy and peaceful now...instead she's dead and it's your fault. This has got nothing to do with my promise to Myra...this is more to do with the good old fashioned Schwenk and revenge you bastard!"

"You never cease to surprise me Schwenk...even her giving her life wasn't enough for you...blaming everyone else but yourself" He roared.

"Whatever!" Schwenk sneered. He tried to maneuver the pistol back to Bengali again.

Bengali omitted a low growl. He grabbed the hand holding the pistol with both of his big hands in effort to get it out of his grasp.

With one hand free Schwenk grabbed Bengali's hair and pulled with all his might, he had no intention of letting go.

Bengali had enough. He was sick of tired of holding back, following the code, following Lion-O and the rules... His memories flashed back to when Myra was alive... the laughs and the time she was in the lair...when she used to make dinner.... and now that is was it can only be. Memories. Bengali now registered the fact that he was pulling his Mane and let an angry roar, which you could feel go through you. "No more games.... Thunderian Killer!!!! You killed her and what remorse you show!!! None!!! Another Number more likes!!" He shouted, and punching him in the stomach with all his might.

Schwenk doubled up in pain as Bengali punched him. He let a low groan. "You don't understand, Myra was different, not that you'd understand.... terrible thing, jealousy!"

"...So indulge the kitty how was she sooo different...as of course I wouldn't have a clue...but hey who shot her?"

Anger welled up in Schwenk "she WAS different, she cared for me, she loved me! Yes, I pulled the trigger, but had you not been there she'd still be alive" Schwenk was unused to sarcasm from others, which he found very painful.

"I pity you...You still blame others for you own doings...lets face it, you killed her and you didn't even feel a thing! Another rug to add to your collection, at least this one was nurtured with love eh?"

Schwenk punched Bengali hard in the face and he had to admit, it felt so good.

"Fuck you Bengali!" Schwenk hissed.

Bengali reeled with the blow...and punched Schwenk in the stomach again and then head butted him. He flexed his claws out ready...."Come on then human, time and plead and cry for your pitiful excuse of an existence.... I can do with a confidence boost!!!!"

"What...a hand to hand fight.... now I know you're crazy!" he rolled to one side and stood up. He faced Bengali. Bengali stood between him and his pistol.

"Oh god no....I am not going to waste my claws on you...He held his hammer out ready to fire. "This is more cleaner" He smiled.

Schwenk saw no alternative. He raised his hands. "OK...you win.... I surrender...I'm unarmed" he bowed his bloodied face.

"Exactly...I will never a chance to claim a prey like you like this again...god Shula would be jealous!" He grinned, positioning his hammer ready to fire...

"In that case, when I'm dead please take my old position in the Victish army.... I can think of no better replacement...bitter, angry, ruthless and above all, a cold-blooded murderer.... oh yes, you'd make a perfect Schwenk!"

Bengali's piercing blue eyes went wide. He was right. Myra would be kicking his arse right now if she knew what he was doing. He didn't want to go that way. "...Your in no position to dictate crap like that to me...You have no idea or care what you have done. You have killed the last Summoner. You killed someone's little girl. You killed someone's friend! But you do this so often...yet you think you can come up on top and make yourself feel better by giving me a lecture!" "PAH!"

"What's it to be Bengali?" Schwenk stepped forward; Bengali's weapon was only inches away. "Are you going to shoot me while looking in my eyes? Are you?"

Bengali's eyes diverted from Schwenk's and fell upon Myra's body. He sighed. "...Turn around"

"...And what?" Schwenk laughed "you'll shoot me in the back? No pal, I'm staying where I am!"

Bengali placed the cold metal of the hammer in-between Schwenk's eyes, and pushed forward, hard. "TURN AROUND" he hissed.

"Or.... what?" Schwenk remained where he was.

"Bengali thought for a few moments.... In a split thought he knocked Schwenk's legs with his hammer, sending him to the ground. Bengali took this time to get Schwenk's pistol...

Schwenk lay down in the dirt, his body aching. He laughed slowly. "Nice move Thundercat...where did they teach you that one?" he rolled on his back and looked up, Bengali loomed above him.

Bengali aimed his pistol and the hammer both at Schwenk. "Get up"

Schwenk leaned up on his arms and struggled to his feet. He raised his arms in surrender again.

"Let's move...we will wait at the escape ship for the others" He ordered, Pushing the human in front of him beckoning him to move.

"Before we go back.... allow me one favor?"

"I doubt it about that Schwenk...Move!"

Schwenk stood where he was. "Please?" he said softly.

"Schwenk I don't have time for this!" Bengali exclaimed.

"One minute with Myra...dammit. I won't get to see her again.... you doubtless will. Please Bengali...one minute, that's all. You have two pistols on me...where's the harm?"

Bengali forgot about her for a moment, and glanced over to her on the ground...as soon as he did, you could see the pain return on his face. "1 minute" He said eventually.

Schwenk walked to Myra without another word. He knelt down by the body, softened gently by dust blowing in the breeze. Tears welled up in Schwenk's eyes. "Oh Myra!" he sobbed.

"What have I done?! You treated me with warmth, kindness and love and what did I do to you?" he cupped her lifeless face in his grimy, bloodied hands. "I should be dead....not you! How can you ever forgive me! We had such a future and I destroyed all....again I destroyed all" he cried. Through the tears he saw the gleam of silver. It was a spare blade to Myra's staff. He removed it from her pouch and put it up his sleeve. "Forgive me Myra for what I'm about to do!" he stood slowly and hung his head and waited.....

"Schwenk come on.... lets go"

Schwenk plodded over to Bengali and stood next to him. "Thank you!"

"Lets get going" Bengali replied.

"Yeah...OK" Schwenk replied weakly. Bengali turned to walk on. Schwenk allowed the blade to slip in his hand. He raised it and aimed to strike on Bengali's neck. Just as the blade came down Bengali saw what was happening and moved. The blade sunk deeply into Bengali's left shoulder.

"ARGHHH!!!!!" Bengali. screamed...the pain the most intense thing he felt....making him buckle backwards on to the floor.

Schwenk pulled the knife out and in an instant had straddled the tiger, one leg either side of his torso. Schwenk lifted the blade again, this time aiming for his heart. For a moment Schwenk froze, he looked deeply into Bengali's eyes and saw something he'd never seen before....fear. Tears dropped from Schwenk's eyes. "I'm....sorry...Bengali!" Schwenk said, unable to stop the sadness welling up, "I'm so sorry for everything!!" he whispered, he brought the knife down.

"NO!!!!" Bengali shouted throwing hands in front of him, his claws flexed out as a natural defense, he closed his eyes waiting for it...

Schwenk froze. The blade dropped from his hands and bounced off Bengali's chest. Schwenk rolled off Bengali to his right. He tried to get up, to run, but found him unable to move. From flat on his back next to Bengali he raised his head and looked down his body. His body felt numb....he saw the blood. Ten neat puncture marks along his belly told the story. Schwenk started to feel coldness creeping into his limbs. The pain felt like his torso was on fire. He tried to scream with all his might, but nothing came out from his mouth, except a small trickle of blood.

"Schwenk....." Bengali staggered sitting up looking at his claws..."I didn't mean too"

Schwenk grabbed Bengali's hair and pulled, not in retribution, but to bring Bengali's head closer to his. "Don't let me....die.....alone" Schwenk gurgled.

Bengali looked at the human,...and then saw the humanity in him for the first time, which took him a back..."I....I was wrong...You did love her..." he said quietly, Never thinking before now he did, his blue eyes wide.

"In death....she....dies a hero...I shot her as she tried to apprehend me.....let her die with dignity and full honors....do that for me, you understand!! Her family.....must NEVER know the truth....."

Bengali's eyes glazed a little....this was all wrong... "Ok.....I... I.... promise" he managed.

"I will do it for her... for Myra"

Schwenk relaxed slightly, he time was nearly up. "You killed me 'cos you had to....don't you dare feel remorse you stripey bastard! I'd have killed you without a thought....." Schwenk's body let go its grip of Bengali's hair and he lay flat on his back. "I salute you.....and in death I respect you Bengali.....I.....I" he strained for every word. "Aaargh....I'm sorry for everything....."

Bengali knelt beside Schwenk watching him die, breathing hard his bottom lip trembling, overwhelmed by it all...He couldn't say a thing...he wouldn't where to start. He simply saluted him... the Thunderian salute. He didn't know what else to do.

Schwenk tears mixed with the pooling blood on the floor, he saw Bengali's salute and knew that the time had come. With his dying breath he uttered a single word, a lasting epitaph to his life "...hope....." darkness then shrouded Gaston Schwenk, and for the second time, he died.

Bengali just sat there looking at the two lifeless bodies in front of him. He let a deep sob. "No one was supposed to die... No one was supposed to die" He sobbed to himself, watching the tall grass flow around Myra and Schwenk like the sea.

"Hope.... I hope you're souls, and all souls lost by this.... This pain find each other in peace in the astral plane" he managed.

The End