

McCinnes Landing

He always hated the wait. The G-gel made his skin itch and he couldn't scratch it. He also knew that it was all in his mind since the gel couldn't be in contact with his skin anyway, but it still itched. So he waited. Actually he knew that their approach to the planet would be at c raised to the sixteenth, so after everyone was into their drop pods it would be almost instantaneous. It still seemed like it took forever. He reviewed the mission in his head. The Omegastar cargo ship, cruising without manifest out on the edge of the galaxy for some reason, suffered an instability in their matter anti-matter reactors and was forced to jettison the reactor. They were able to limp to a 24EL planet and force a controlled reentry. That was the

gun, tactical support and more armor than some battle cruisers. Actually, he wished...

Woosh....the Fates That Be picked this instant for the launch. It was inevitable that it would come when he had just started to get used to the coffin in which he had been sealed. Mickey checked his trajectory and breaking fins, they all looked good. The auto-firing chatter plastic to jam any auto-locking cannons or cruise missiles fired with no problem.

"Corporal McCinnes, report!"

"Aye, Aye sir. Drop ship laying down sensor jam, receding at maximum c . Drop pods 6 and 8 show .098 degrees deviation from programmed path. All else checks..... wait....Sir I show red lights across the board." Mickey couldn't believe his eyes, a failure of



last that Mil-Tec, the Andromedaen military intelligence division, had heard from them and they could briefed the unit and told them to assume that the natives were hostile. Mickey, that's what his friends called him, thought about the phrase "assume that the natives are hostile." The last time he had heard that was on a drop to K'Telk IV. He had been the only survivor. But that was the Glorious Andromedaen Marine Corp. See the galaxy, meet women, earn your freedom, get to kill the stinking Haga, of course they don't tell you the risk involved. Well, actually it wasn't all that bad. He was usually the one with the

this magnitude was impossible it couldn't happen. Suddenly, the life support indicator beeped slowly then accelerated until it became a soft whine. Its indicator light flickered to red on 11 of the 13 capsules. "EJECT!!!" yelled Mickey but it was too late. He had realized too late that the small power cells of the other 11 capsules had been bleeding into their G-gel supply, it caused an explosive combination.

"Corporal, are you all right," asked the Lieutenant?

"Yes sir, but the others...."

“Easy Corporal, we still have a job to do. Check your capsule and mine.” Mickey did a quick assessment, “Everything checks, Lieutenant. You have no leak but mine does. Because of my rotation though, the power cell hasn’t contacted the G-gel yet. I don’t think I’ll be able to soft-land.”

There was a long pause and Mickey knew what the Lieutenant was thinking. There was no way Mickey could live through a drop without the anti-gravity field to soften his landing. “Mickey, there’s nothing for it boy. I want you to use your breaking fins to come into position under me and we’re going to use Hellion’s maneuver...”

Mickey interjected, “It won’t work with one grav unit and mine damaged, you’ll impact at over 20 G’s!!”

“Mickey, listen to me. I’m old, VERY old, and I don’t have long to live but I saw your report, Mickey you’ve used your quota. There ain’t any more cloning in it for ya boy. Not on the Corps’ credits and I don’t have that much saved. Now I’m gonna do this with your help or without it. Always remember boy, you’ve got a mission to do and you had better make me proud!”

There wasn’t anything to say to that. He braked into position until he was only a few hundred meters below the Lieutenants capsule. “Remember, when you hit there won’t be a lot of time for ya ta get clear, so do it fast!” Mickey felt the molasses thick pull of the others anti-grav field kick in and his meters showed a decrease in velocity. Quietly Mickey heard over his comset, “Remember that I love you also, son.” There was a sudden lurching as the Capsule made contact with the ground and Mickey was jet-assisted from the pod. An instant later far across the horizon was an explosion titanic proportions.

With a single tear, Mickey mourned, “Father.....”.

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Mickey looked around, he wasn’t pleased at his surroundings. Desert for as far as you could see and extremely cold, just above 0° celsius. He would be alright since his powered armor had full life support in it and its insulation was designed to keep him warm or cool even in the depths of space.

His father had said that he had a mission to accomplish and he had been right, but his orders had said that any level of violence was sanctioned to liberate the crew and assure the destruction of the cargo. Any level of violence.....yea, he liked that....these monkeys were gonna pay.

Mickey looked down at his senacron mounted in the wrist of his suit, it showed a population center approximately 50 km to the north-east. He also picked up large quantities of tychromium. Mickey smiled. That was it, it had to be the downed ship, since tychromium is a industrial metal used for the construction of star ships and the closest thing that these apes had was an orbiter. Yea, this could go easy, but it wouldn’t, not for them, he was definitely going to get seen. And wouldn’t that be sad for the poor little monkeys. A low, evil laugh escaped Corporal McCinnes’ mouth.

He scanned for life. There were a few individuals but the only concentration was to the north-east at about 200 km. That would be the military base that they had been briefed about. For a moment Mickey let himself think about the malfunctions. Something like that just didn’t happen. He had read a single high power burst of microwaves from the military base. He thought about that and wasn’t too pleased. Things like that shouldn’t happen but they sometimes did.

Mickey moved off to the north-east in search of the base. Continuing to consult his senacron, he observed that the specs of the base checked with the high level recon of the scout ship. There were 4026 natives, low level of technology, mainly weapons which use gas propelled native metals, fossil fueled vehicles, and no powered armors. What these militant little dogs wouldn’t do for the technology that he was carrying on his back. The matter anti-matter power source alone could power one of their cities for a year, Mickey thought. He considered how he should approach this base and decided that a fast, direct assault would be the most effective. He engaged his jump jets with a maximum filter on them to reduce the amount of shed light. He easily covered 10 km at a jump leaving small scorched circles of earth behind him. Mickey looked down at his

feet where the jets were located and the 15 meter tongue of flame and thought of the devastating impact of the fusion exhaust on an unarmored person.....

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It took Mickey only about one hour to cover the intervening ground between him and the military base. As he approached the base, his IR sensors observed many of the monkeys were out and about. Yea, looking for their fabled "boogey - man". There was a detachment of armored, tracked, fossil-fuel vehicles heading out towards the crash site. Mickey just shook his head, he just couldn't understand how these monkeys thought they could hold this planet, much less the ship. Mickey decided that a nice messy frontal assault would be poor planning, but a good kill rate, so he used his jump jets to advance on the guards at the gate.....

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Sgt. Jerald T. Gussock didn't like the desert, especially on these weird nights when they were told to watch for anything "unusual". For the Sergeant, this was his last thought, for in the next instant he was

incinerated in a blue tongue of fusion exhaust. Seconds later his partner in guard duty joined him. Mickey punched the stud for his company's rally signal although he knew there was no one to answer it. Suddenly the base was alive with frantic guardsmen running for weapons as Mickey's external speakers blared "Form on me". Mickey knew that on this mission they were supposed to keep a low profile but he was going to make these fucking monkeys pay, he switched his Series 40 fusion blaster to full auto. The guardsmen were doing their best to stop him but he couldn't even believe, all they had were gas powered

slug throwers! Mickey let loose a barrage of nuclear grenades on a bunker, not because it was a threat but because that was training. In the real world fixed points could mean heavy artillery and he couldn't die, not yet. The on-boards showed he was getting about a 92% kill rate to shots fired, Yeah, rock 'n roll. He was sure that these were the best that the monkeys had, and in a way he sorry for them, but not too much. His shields were down to 48% but he was in sight of the ship....then it started. Two things suddenly happened, the company rally signal ended and suddenly his power supply started to red line. This may not be clear to the layman, but when you are carrying enough antimatter on your back to create a 450 megaton explosion, there is little point to a warning signal for the failure of the magnetic seals that contains said anti-matter. Still, the designers felt it was



necessary. He expanded the containment field and that seemed to help. Suddenly, Mickey was thrown to the ground by a deafening explosion. He quickly took stock...his shields were gone...his armor was functioning....

...the recall and rally started up again. All around him were the ghosts of his old friends urging him on telling him that they were with him. With a mighty roar, "DEATH BEFORE DESERTION!!!" He launched himself forward towards the ship, tearing and smashing, fangs ripping flesh, claws tearing

muscle. Even the commanders of the planetary forces after reviewing the battle couldn't blame their men for breaking and running. Science had nothing to do with next minutes, it was animal against animal, trial of beasts. With a roar of triumph, McCinnes smashed the last monkey onto the hull of the downed ship.

He quickly punched the access code and entered the ship. The sight that greeted him wasn't one of a downed cargo freighter but that of a high-tech surveillance craft. He quickly punched up the autolog, and it confirmed his beliefs. The crew had suicided as per standard ops when a possibility of capture was imminent. The ship had been able to send its information before the malfunction, and "the invasion was a go." Apparently, 4 divisions of marines were going to secure the planet with another 4 divisions as mop up. These monkeys were really gonna pay now...Mickey's thoughts were cut off by the sound of a phased plasma weapon going off. Pain pierced his back, he spun and dove for the holder of the weapon. He made contact and at over 250 kilos in full armor he literally crushed his opponent.

When he pulled away, he saw it was a Mishaavii female in a Republic uniform. His eyes narrowed, the creature breathing was labored, but with proper medical care she would live. "Are you all right?"

"...no I guess I was too slow...the others will get you...you bastard...we won't let you enslave innocents....they are strong they'll join us and we can ..." A fit of coughing cut off more commentary, but no more was needed. Mickey let her lie in her own blood. This was obviously a Republic base and they were the ones who killed his team mates.

He went quickly to the forward escape pod. It was in place. As he returned to the control room he saw a group of Republic Security lackeys coming towards the ship. He wasn't very afraid of Rebs but in numbers they could be annoying. It was then that he heard it, the division rally and reform.

It was the best sound ever heard. It was a coming from hundreds of dropships. He rushed to the controls and set one of the smaller batteries to overload. It would cause about a 2 kiloton explosion, not big, but just big enough to eliminate the base shields. He

punched the code and ran for the pod. barely fitting in he closed the hatch and punched the launch stud. He was smashed back into the seat as the acceleration boosted him away from the ship. The ship exploded seconds later dropping the base shields. Mickey piloted the pod in a slow circle and landed it near the main encampment.

As he approached the ranking officer of the army (the commanding marine officer would be out on the field), he cursed his luck. She was a monkey...he had to make himself stop thinking that. It was human,human,human!

"Excuse me sir, Corporal McCinnes reporting, sir!"

"No need to shout Corporal, I can hear. Nice what you did out there, but a little brutal don't you think?" The general was reviewing McCinnes' on-board recorder.

"Sir, my orders state any level of violence was approved, sir."

Somewhat pertly, the general responded, "Yes, well blasters were not approved for this mission. And I don't like your tone, mister! We'll just have to see what a review board has to say about that! Report to the medics, dismissed!"

Mickey knew she was bluffing, but man did he hate the army and monk...humans. Mickey turned and moved off towards the medics tent. He saw a wounded marine next to the tent and joyfully grasped her arm. Mickey let out a massive sigh, "Hey dra, how do you put up with these humans?!?!?"

The soldier responded to the nickname for Dremin in the Corp with a sudden laugh, "Dra, you should see how these humans run if they think a 3 meter tall lizard with a spiked tail, 104 teeth and scaly skin is pissed. Stick with me dra and hold your nose..."

Lowering their voices to a conspiratorial level, "...because, by the Shell, they stink and man are they ugly!"

They laughed and Mickey thought that he could really get to like this Dremin, especially since she was so good looking.