

JETWASH

By
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EXT. EARTH (FROM SPACE) - DAY

A comet streams past the Earth as a rocket from the North American continent bee-lines straight for it.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

Tomorrow, AD. The Earth piggy-backed a space observatory lab on a comet that zipped past the planet. The mission was to record the journey and get deeper images of space while analyzing the comet itself. This trip would take a good century. In the meantime...

EXT. OUTERSPACE

Construction space crafts build colonization quarters and space ports on various Solar System moons.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

What was left of Earth's governments unified to form the Galactic Government, or Big-G as we call it, to establish space ports throughout the Solar System. A hundred years went by and the satellite returned.

EXT. EARTH (FROM SPACE)

The comet returns. The space observatory lab detaches itself and careens toward snow-capped Antarctica.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

When the observatory lab was recovered an epidemic broke out causing mutations. Specifically a melding mutation, fusing man and machine together. The virus quickly became widespread.

EXT. FREEWAY

A DRIVER in gridlock pushes a button on his car radio as the illuminated numbers meld with his skin. He pulls his hand away, but the metal radio buttons crawl across his hand.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

The virus was an intelligent species of microscopic proportions using human bodies as vessels.

The driver looks out at the freeway seeing other DRIVERS merging with their vehicles -- a morbid contortion of man and machine.

ATLANTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We called it Mechanical Xenografting. The new species itself was called Mechanix for short.

EXT. ANTARCTICA

HALF MAN/HALF MACHINES gather at the impact crater of the satellite.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

While Man scrambled for an inoculation, the Mechanix created their own nation at the epicenter of the virus harvest, Antarctica, now known as Kaipin City.

Many months later Kaipin City has erected into a fortress... in a few more months a small base... in a couple more months a full-fledged metropolis.

ATLANTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Whatever the Mechanix were doing in Kaipin City seemed to cause abnormal weather patterns.

Hurricanes flood various parts of the Earth's landmasses.

ATLANTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

To power something as epic as Kaipin City it would have to get its energy from the core. Well, the soldier boys wanted to know what was going on in Kaipin City. It wasn't long before the Mechanix waged war on humanity. Or maybe it was the other way around. Either way, we scrapped.

Various cities crumble to the ground as SOLDIERS and MECHANIX fight in the streets.

ATLANTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Mech War lasted 30 long and very bloody years. As the Mechanix's numbers escalated, the human numbers dwindled until the human race surrendered and was eventually exiled from the Earth... to post homestead anywhere but there.

Space crafts in the thousands leave the Earth.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

The only humans that remain on the planet are a small pocket of environmental specialists dedicated to the longevity of the Earth. With Kaipin City's excessive use of the Earth's natural resources and the planet now in climate upheaval, it's feared the Mechanix will venture out and occupy the other planets.

EXT. EARTH

Kaipin City, now a large metallic metropolis that breaks through the cloud line takes up almost all of Antarctica.

ATLANTA (V.O.)

It's just a matter of when...

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - NIGHT

Bratton's hovercraft and Abominable Charlie's zero-gravity big-rig shred the slushy wasteland of the Saturn moon Pandora. Coming up behind them, a 75 x 200-foot wide cargo ship, The Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

CPT. JENN ATLANTA (30's, female) looks out her window to the hovercraft.

BRATTON (O.S.)

(over radio)

That thing's really got some power behind it, Atlanta.

A glow skull hangs from the rearview mirror. She white-knuckles a fuzzy pink and lavender steering wheel.

ATLANTA

I'm getting some trembles in the steering.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

That's because you overloaded that hunk of mess with construction vehicle parts. You shoulda left that bucket in the yard. That looks more trouble than it's worth.

ATLANTA

All it needs is a little love.

CRUNCH! The Boyington TREMBLES.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

There ain't enough love on Saturn, sweets.

ATLANTA

You might appreciate it later when we can take jobs farther out. More money in long distance rescue and recovery.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

The Boyington SMASHES the lip of an ice crater spraying ice up against Bratton's hovercraft windshield.

INT. BRATTON'S HOVERCRAFT (SPEEDING)

BRATTON (20's, male) tries to steady his craft.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

My fault, Bratton.

BRATTON

I can't see!

ATLANTA (O.S.)

Pull out before you hit the other side of the crater.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

Bratton's craft hits the up-slope of the crater anyway.

INT. THE BOYINGTON (SPEEDING)

ATLANTA

Bratton, you okay? Bratton, come
back.

Atlanta watches Bratton's craft slide down the crater.

BRATTON (O.S.)

Shit!

ATLANTA

Shit means you're still alive.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - ICE CRATER - LATER

Abominable Charlie's big-rig pulls in close to the Boyington
at the edge of the crater.

Atlanta steps to the edge of the crater watching Bratton
struggle up the slope while fumbling with his breathing
apparatus.

Bratton's hovercraft smokes in the background.

ATLANTA

It's not always about the machine.
It's how it's--

BRATTON

Yeah, yeah.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (50's, male) kneels at the edge of the
crater.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That's life on the F-ring, son.

Atlanta leans over, helping Bratton out of the crater.

BRATTON

So, how did the Boyington handle?

ATLANTA

Not bad. Still needs some tweaks
here and there. Once we repair the
space-fold unit we can take jobs
farther out.

A POP erupts from Bratton's hovercraft followed by smoke.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

While we at it, let's see if the crane works. Let's get that hunk of mess of yours outta there.

EXT. THE BOYINGTON - DERRICK CRANE

Abominable Charlie sits in the cab of a derrick crane and swings the latticed boom over the crater.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - ICE CRATER

Atlanta grabs onto the crane's hook as it lowers close to Bratton's hovercraft.

BRATTON

Hey. Check that out.

Bratton looks up at the black sky, making them turn around. They see a twinkling in the E-ring.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Somethin' comin' through the rings.

Atlanta takes out her spy glasses zooming into the E-ring which has broken bits of ice careening towards them.

ATLANTA

A ship crashed through the E-ring and debris is coming right for us. Get back in your buckets before it hits.

Bratton heads back down to his hovercraft.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hey, fool! Where you goin'? Git yo ass in my big-rig!

Bratton turns back around and struggles up to Abominable Charlie's big-rig.

As Atlanta and Abominable Charlie dash up toward the Boyington, a large shadow looms above.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT - LATER

Atlanta starts up the Boyington while looking up to a large military vessel with battle damage across its hull coming in for a crash-landing.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)
Looks military.

BRATTON (O.S.)
Let the Big-G take care of their
own stuff.

ATLANTA
It's got battle damage along its
hull. One way to lose your wings
is by ignoring a ship in distress.

BRATTON (O.S.)
We're better off without 'em.

ATLANTA
Head back to the Maze and stay on
the network for this.

BRATTON (O.S.)
You want I report it?

ATLANTA
Don't do that. Not yet anyway.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

The Boyington's engines WHINE as debris begins to PELT the
ground.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - NIGHT

The Boyington streaks across the icy wasteland as a hail of
debris CRASHES DOWN.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)
This ain't helpin' my PTSD, sweets.

The large interstellar craft is half buried into the terrain.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Atlanta looks in the rearview watching Abominable Charlie
enter the cockpit and takes a seat at the keyboard.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE
Sure is a big, old ship.

A graphic of the ship's aft pops up on the monitor. The database searches.

ATLANTA

It's definitely I-class.

"No Matches Found" blinks on Abominable Charlie's monitor.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Nothing coming up the D-base about an interstellar class ship like that. Gotta be some hush-hush military junk.

ATLANTA

Haven't seen something like that since the war.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - CRASH SITE

The Boyington circles the spacecraft which is half protruding out of the ground like a railroad spike.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

I don't see any insignia. Wonder what brought it down.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

Gotta be military to take this monster down.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

You don't think the Mechanix made it out this far?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

Hell naw. Mechanix got they own planet now. That's Big-G shooting down they own stuff and that's bad news all over.

Atlanta notices that some of the damage was from internal explosions.

ATLANTA (O.S.)

The damage looks like it came from inside.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

The scanner pickin' up a biohazard warning, but no trace of radiation or biological mess.

ATLANTA

We proceed with caution then.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - T.O.E. ROOM

Atlanta gathers an aid pack, hoisting cable, extinguisher, water, a sidearm and steps out.

Atlanta suits up into a radioactive protection suit.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The scanner also says that mess was loaded up with a second generation Grendel battle droid.

ATLANTA

Maybe that's what shot it down. I'm gonna check it out.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Ah hell. You ain't goin' alone.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - LATER

Atlanta and Abominable Charlie climb inside the ghost ship and make their way down the fuselage.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - HYPER-SLEEP CHAMBER - LATER

They see a row of battle-scarred humans behind hyper-sleep encasements labeled: "Biohazard". Some of the encasements have been shattered. Some bodies hang half out. Some just lay smashed against the glass from external hull damage.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Soldiers.

ATLANTA

Not pickin' up a bio or radio reading.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Maybe they labeled biohazard so no one be messin' with them.

Abominable Charlie begins reading the names on the encasements.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Mr. Frenzy, Mr. Scraps, Mr. Battle,
Mr. Clash, Mr. Fracas.
(MORE)

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Chief Warrant Officer ranks. They shock troops. Didn't you used to date a shock troop?

ATLANTA

I grew up with a guy that ended up being a shock troop. When we all got back from Old Detroit things were different.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Things were different for everyone after Old D.

Atlanta takes out her pulse reader as a faint blip blinks.

ATLANTA

I'm picking up a heartbeat at our High Noon. Possibly the cockpit.

Abominable Charlie sees one of the encasements labeled Mr. Skirmish blink: "Purged".

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hey, sweets. Looks like something got out.

ATLANTA

Or escaped.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Don't be puttin' the heebie-jeebies on me. It gets to a certain point in my old age where I don't need science experiments jumpin' me from behind and flinging me around.

ATLANTA

Let's head up to the cockpit and dig out the flight data recorder.

EXT. JUNKER'S MAZE - NIGHT

Abominable Charlie's big-rig tows Bratton's hovercraft into a graveyard of decommissioned military crafts.

INT. ABOMINABLE CHARLIE'S BIG-RIG (MOVING)

Bratton pilots the big-rig and notices a streak of fire disappearing on the horizon.

BRATTON
Who the hell was that?

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Air HISSES OUT as Atlanta and Abominable Charlie force open the cockpit doors. The cracks on the windshield begin to SPLIT with heavy external terrain pressure pushing on the glass. They see the pilot strapped into the seat.

ATLANTA
Hold on there. I'm gonna get you out. Abominable, see if you can jimmy the flight data recorder loose.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE
You okay with this guy?

ATLANTA
I'm okay.

Atlanta climbs in seeing the pilot, CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 MELEE (30's, male). She recognizes him.

ATLANTA
Deja vu, you.

She cups a breathing apparatus around his nose and mouth.

ATLANTA
Can you speak, Chief?

He's unconscious. The windshield starts to CRACKLE.

Abominable Charlie power-drills the black box panel loose revealing a bright orange metallic encasement.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE
Gotcha, ya sweet hunk of pleasure.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND - NIGHT

Somewhere deeper in the ice dunes of the Pandora Wasteland, a 30-foot Grendel II battle droid rises up out of a smoking impact crater.

INT. GRENDEL II - COCKPIT

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 SKIRMISH (30's, male) nurses an abdominal wound while surveying the Wasteland. There's a large crack in the cockpit window. He sees the smoking crash site of the Ghost Ship in the distance.

The monitor shows a telephoto zoom on the Boyington leaving the crash site. Mr. Skirmish starts up the propulsion engines, but the cockpit glass CRACKS setting off a PRESSURE SEEPAGE ALARM.

EXT. JUNKER'S MAZE - NIGHT

The Boyington glides into Junker's Maze.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18 - LATER

Mr. Melee lies on a slab as Atlanta and Bratton study him. Abominable Charlie checks out his flight suit which is littered with plugs on the joints.

BRATTON

What's he wearing?

ATLANTA

Looks like one of those flight suits they released near the end of the war. Those plugs attach to a gyroscope cockpit operated by their anatomy.

Bratton runs a scanner over his shoulders.

BRATTON

Who's this guy? He doesn't have an ident chip.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They wouldn't. They not supposed to exist as part of the Kaipin City Armistice Treaty. "No human may harbor weapons that may cause harm to Mechanix or agents acting theyof."

ATLANTA

You think Abominable Charlie's tough, these guys were the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

(MORE)

ATLANTA (CONT'D)

He's a shock troop trained by ProtoSystems' 2 Corp. Not the friendliest of fellas, but great to have on your side in a fight.

BRATTON

Is he human?

ATLANTA

He better be.

BRATTON

If they're so tough, why didn't they win the war?

ATLANTA

Introduced a little too late is my guess.

BRATTON

Well, Big-G's gonna be lookin' for this one for sure.

ATLANTA

We need to crack Big-G's network and see if that craft is on the hot sheet. By we, I mean you, Bratton.

BRATTON

You think there's a reward for this guy?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Hell naw. The Big-G probably hire privateers just to keep they asses clean.

Abominable Charlie's head twitches as he scratches at his neck.

ATLANTA

It'd be good to check, Bratton. We also gotta see what's on the FDR.

BRATTON

I'm on it then.

EXT. THE ORBIT OF JUPITER - NIGHT

The Alptraum-Konig, a large interstellar super carrier war ship glides past the Jupiter moon, Io, sporting a phrase along the flight deck: "In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming."

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

COMMANDER BLACKMARE (60's, male) ponderously stares out of the window watching the band clouds of Jupiter roll by.
LIEUTENANT COMMANDER KELTON (60's, female) walks up next to Blackmare.

LCDR. KELTON
Someone's on the Quiet Line.

CDR. BLACKMARE
Good to know. Hold the bridge.

LCDR. KELTON
Sir.

Cdr. Blackmare walks off.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BLACKMARE'S QUARTERS - LATER

Cdr. Blackmare turns on a monitor revealing ZEBRA (50's, male).

ZEBRA
Commander Blackmare, we have a problem on the Outer Rings of Saturn. We have an I-class personnel carrier shot down on the Saturn moon Pandora.

A schematic of the Ghost Ship pops on to the screen.

CDR. BLACKMARE
The Ruby Di Milo.

ZEBRA
Indeed. It seems that something has gone awry. The Mechanix attacked our Mars base and the only ship we lost contact with was the Ruby. We need you to recover the ship and particularly the flight data recorder. It appears we have someone snooping around our network.

(MORE)

ZEBRA (CONT'D)

We suspect someone on Pandora recovered it. Half of your moneys has been credited, the rest will be awarded after we've re-acquired the Ruby and have eliminated any proof of its existence. One last addendum. If you, your ship or any of your crew are spotted by the Mechanix, we will deny all existence of our affiliation.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Understood. Do you know who the pilot of the Ruby was?

ZEBRA

Last we heard the pilot was Chief Warrant Officer Melee.

Blackmare recognizes the name, but doesn't say anything. The monitor BLEEPs off. He pushes a button on the communicator.

LCDR. KELTON (O.S.)

Yes, sir?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Find Druckner and have her meet us on the bridge.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE - LATER

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS DRUCKNER (30's, female) enters with her flip-flops SLAPPING against her feet. She stops in front of Blackmare and salutes him while blowing a bubble gum bubble.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Stand at ease, Sarge.

Druckner SNAPS her gum and stands at ease.

CDR. BLACKMARE

I need you to get your unit together and have two drop ships ready. I want full tactical gear. Armed to the teeth.

DRUCKNER

Sounds dramatic, sir.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Could be. Mr. Melee's mixed up in this. A 2 Corp shock troop.

Druckner's gum-chewing slows as she pricks up.

DRUCKNER

Full gear, sir. To the tooth.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - INFIRMARY - DAY

Abominable Charlie sits on the exam table with his left sleeve rolled up revealing a metal catheter in his vein.

ATLANTA

We're running out of your dose,
Abominable. You may have to accept
that electronic side of yourself.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I don't wanna be pluggin' myself in
at night, sweets. I ain't a robot.

Atlanta plunges a syringe into his catheter.

ATLANTA

Probably live longer.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I like havin' my free will. I say
I earned it.

Abominable Charlie kisses his necklace medallion and rubs it between his fingers.

ATLANTA

It doesn't really seem like we got
that now. We're out here running a
junk heap on a Saturn moon.

Abominable Charlie gnashes his teeth as the chemical works through his body.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That mess hurts more every time.

ATLANTA

The mutation could be progressing.
Might have to up your dose.

Abominable Charlie rolls into the fetal position on the exam table as his body twitches. Atlanta and Abominable Charlie clutch each other's hands.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

At least the kid never saw the Mech War. All those great nations falling once. What a damn site.

ATLANTA

Ignorance is sometimes bliss.

Bratton enters surprised to see Abominable Charlie on the exam table.

BRATTON

What happened, Abominable Charlie?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Flu shot, bitch.

BRATTON

Could be the Mimas Pox. You don't want that at your age.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You don't wanna git beat down by someone my age. Guarantee that.

Atlanta points to the FDR sitting on the counter top next to a keyboard.

ATLANTA

I can't crack the FDR. It's got some sort of defense security lock.

BRATTON

Let me take a hammer to it then.

Bratton goes over to tinker with it.

ATLANTA

Anything on the network, Bratton?

BRATTON

Uh, yeah. Downloaded a bunch of stuff I haven't gone through all of it yet. I had to repair the propulsion unit on the hovercraft. But you're right, Atlanta. He's from 2 Corp by way of ProtoSystems.

ATLANTA

It would be ProtoSystems.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That's where the human war machine get they toys.

BRATTON

These shock troops were supposed to be incinerated as part of the Armistice Treaty. But these guys are currently used for interstellar exploration. These aren't soldiers.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They ain't "supposed" to be classified as soldiers. It part of the Armistice Treaty I was talkin' about.

BRATTON

But these are just people.

ATLANTA

These guys are cultivated from birth to be world class warriors. If there's a personnel craft loaded with a brigade of these shock troops, you can bet someone's plotting something.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Ya think the Big-G wanna take back the Earth? If the Mechanix find out, we goin' to war, sweets. They comin' to every planet and they moons to wipe us all out for good.

BRATTON

But he's just a guy. We don't have weapons or harbor any aggression.

ATLANTA

He is an act of aggression. Right down to every sub-atomic fiber of his being. I've seen these guys in action.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

That means Big-G definitely calling in privateers. Pro'lly Blackmare.

ATLANTA

We're gettin' outta here.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

In what?

ATLANTA

The Boyington. We're gonna load it up with everything we got. We can't turn him over to Blackmare. Blackmare will wipe us out.

Bratton turns from the FDR monitor blinking: ACCESS DENIED.

BRATTON

I can't crack this. It's written in a random media language.

ATLANTA

You tryin' to tell me that a graduate from the University of Io can't crack a lame government security code?

BRATTON

Yeah. It needs a special key.

ATLANTA

I thought Io only accepted the best and spawned the even better.

BRATTON

Well, yeah, but this is Big-G stuff. This could have a destruct mechanism in it. Or a lethal noxious gas trip.

Atlanta shakes her head mocking disappointment.

BRATTON

Okay, let me take another look. If I blow us up, it's all on you.

Orange lights strobe throughout Junker's Maze.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

What you do, Bratton?

BRATTON

That was definitely not me.

ATLANTA

Set out the good China, fellas. Hide the Chief.

INT. BLACKMARE'S DROP SHUTTLE - DAY

Blackmare talks into the radio and watches the other drop shuttle break away toward the Ghost Ship crash site.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Recover the flight data recorder
and that's it. No sight-seeing.
It's possible that the FDR has
already been recovered.

Druckner SLAPS her flip-flops against the soles of her feet while SLAPPING a magazine into her assault rifle. She blows a bubble and nods to her TROOPS. They LOCK AND LOAD.

INT. BRATTON'S BUNGALOW - DAY

Abominable Charlie and Bratton carry Mr. Melee into a bungalow, setting him on a cot.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Strip him into a grease monkey
suit. Watch him. Make sure he
don't go nowhere.

Abominable Charlie goes to his bungalow across the way, opens his locker, pulls out a Winchester repeating rifle and loads three bullets. He hands it to Bratton.

BRATTON

What's this?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The gun that won the West, fool.

BRATTON

What West?

EXT. THE GHOST SHIP - CRASH SITE - DAY

A drop shuttle halts to the side of the Ghost Ship. 5 of BLACKMARE'S SOLDIERS flank out around the ship.

The Grendel II rises up from behind the drop shuttle and MACHINE-GUNS them down.

INT. GRENDEL II

Through the monitor, Mr. Skirmish studies the paramilitary uniforms of the carcasses.

MR. SKIRMISH

Blackmare.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18 - DAY

The monitor shows a digital schematic of the Alptraum-Konig orbiting Pandora.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The A.K.

Atlanta and Abominable Charlie double-time it to the Boyington.

ATLANTA

Blackmare. We'll just have to be quick.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

This sucker's a war hero. A damn living legend.

ATLANTA

Show me a hero and I'll prove he's a bum.

Atlanta climbs a scaffolding to the roof of the Boyington.

LATER

Cdr. Blackmare and several of his heavily armed TROOPS enter the hangar led by Druckner.

Abominable Charlie steps into the cab of the Boyington's derrick crane. He's got a sidearm close while watching Blackmare and his men surround the Boyington. Atlanta guides a gravity drum dangling from the crane into the propulsion compartment of the Boyington.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Howdy, Captain.

ATLANTA

What can I do for you, Commander?
And your very heavily armed troops?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Nice boat. A cargo class rescue and recovery ship. Viking 9 series. Solar, Wind, Hydro-powered alternatives. Perfect for interstellar travel.

ATLANTA

Runs on bullshit too. Too bad they're extinct.

CDR. BLACKMARE

They certainly don't make them like that today.

Cdr. Blackmare strolls around the Boyington studying it as Druckner leads a team of men into the hangar bungalows.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Lot of modifications.

ATLANTA

We just threw it all together with pieces here and there.

CDR. BLACKMARE

That's the product of a high education and experience. You should've worked for ProtoSystems. Mighty fine work. Problem with your gravity drums?

ATLANTA

Yeah, well, bubblegum and tape.

CDR. BLACKMARE

I've had to do that on occasion. To the point, however. You happen to notice an I-class personnel carrier crashing down around these parts?

ATLANTA

You missing one? We got some stuff in the yard if you need repairs.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Appreciate that.

ATLANTA

Say, what's a big, ol' war hero like yourself operating a war class super carrier like the Alptraum-Konig during peacetime?

CDR. BLACKMARE

Hero? Not a word I've heard in my presence for some time. Not all of us could just give up our trades when the nations fell.

Blackmare winks at Abominable Charlie.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Not all of us could just take up work on remote salvage depots employing outlaws. Or take refuge on a monk moon making Ganymede gin drowning in post-war depression.

ATLANTA

Those Ganymedian monks make some fine gin though. Maybe you could take up some commerce on the Litter Belt. That's what everyone's doin' these days.

CDR. BLACKMARE

On the subject of monks. There was a convoy of personnel heading for the Armistice Moon, Triton. It fell off its beaten path. Don't reckon you've seen it?

ATLANTA

Psh. Is that what the Big-G is playing it off as? They're better off denying its existence altogether. It's not hard. Just say, "Hey, don't know anything about it." Me, myself, I never trust a moon in retrograde orbit.

CDR. BLACKMARE

My. That *is* a beautiful ship. I would hate to blow it and its pretty captain into pieces.

ATLANTA

Well, let's try and keep things where you like it. And thanks for the "pretty" thing. Not a word I've heard in *my* presence in a while.

INT. BRATTON'S BUNGALOW - DAY

Armed with the aged Winchester rifle, Bratton spies through a sliver of blinds watching Blackmare's privateers KICKING IN doors.

Hearing the MURMURING of Blackmare's men calling in their positions, Mr. Melee's eyes snap open.

Bratton turns around to check on Mr. Melee only to have his mouth covered and Winchester taken away. Mr. Melee sees the look of panic in his eyes. Mr. Melee removes his hand.

BRATTON

Hey, man, I'm your friend. We rescued you from the ship.

Mr. Melee hears radio SQUELCHES in the hallway. He peeks out the window.

BRATTON

There's ten guys in the hall.
There's only three rounds in there.

MR. MELEE

More than I need.

INT. BUNGALOW HALLWAY

Mr. Melee walks out coming face to face with one patrol member shoving the barrel of the Winchester into his mouth.

MR. MELEE

I got him!

The patrol group pricks up as Mr. Melee FIRES a round SPLITTING the member's head in half. The bullet RICOCHETS and SMACKS another patrol member in the face.

The patrol members OPEN FIRE, but Mr. Melee uses the leader's body and armor as a shield and pushes forward like a Spartan.

He shoves the carcass shield into the center of the hallway as Mr. Melee CRACKS the butt of the Winchester across one troop's face breaking the stock in half. He shoves the point of the broken stock in one member's mouth and the other half into another's.

The carcass shield now riddled with GUNFIRE, drops to the floor. Mr. Melee RACKS the rifle and FIRES twice.

Gunfire finally stops as bullet holes rest in the heads of the last six patrol members which were all filed behind each other like minute men. They collapse to the ground -- dead.

Bratton peeks out of his bungalow seeing all the bullets well-used. Mr. Melee tosses him the Winchester.

MR. MELEE

The gun that won the West.

BRATTON

It must've.

Mr. Melee collects a submachine rifle and a chatterbox grenade. He then hears the sound of flip-flops approaching. Druckner and her men BUST IN through the other side of the hallway.

INT. THE GHOST SHIP - COCKPIT - DAY

With his sidearm drawn, Mr. Skirmish sees that the cockpit is empty and the FDR is missing.

Sirens go off. The console reads: "Self Destruct Detonation Enabled."

Mr. Skirmish finds his way out just as the windshield CRACK flooding the cockpit with rock and ice.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18 - DAY

Cdr. Blackmare grabs his communicator.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Go ahead, Comm.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER (O.S.)

There's an abundance of photo-voltaic energy collecting near the Ruby Di Milo for a possible nuclear blast. It could blow that moon in half, sir.

ATLANTA

Shit! Start her up, Abominable!
I'm gonna find Bratton.

CDR. BLACKMARE
Sergeant Druckner, emergency evac!
Report to the Alptraum-Konig
immediately! This moon is
dangerously unstable!

Blackmare looks up at Atlanta.

CDR. BLACKMARE
Maybe we'll have a drink and a chat
about our post-war careers a little
later.

Blackmare and his men scramble towards their transports.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HALLWAY

Beaten and bloody, Druckner and five of her armed PRIVATEERS
sit at the edge of the hallway as GUNFIRE APPROACHES from
behind a bulkhead.

CDR. BLACKMARE (O.S.)
All flank leaders report in or you
will be left.

Druckner picks up her communicator just as the bulkhead
EXPLODES. What looks like a small, metal softball ZOOMS
right at them.

DRUCKNER
Chatterbox!

The chatterbox SPITS BULLETS as it approaches and then
EXPLODES flinging people back into a bloody mess.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18

Atlanta ducks as the bulkhead right next to her EXPLODES
slinging chunks of meat and bone. Mr. Melee walks through
the gaping maw of charred and twisted metal.

Druckner lies on the floor peppered with small shards of bone
and bullets. Mr. Melee sees she's still alive, but walks
past her.

Bratton is in disbelief as he stares at all the freshly
masticated bodies.

Atlanta aims her sidearm at Mr. Melee and his at her.

MR. MELEE
Captain.

ATLANTA

Chief.

BRATTON

You two know each other?

ATLANTA

Maybe.

MR. MELEE

We don't have much time. Mr.
Skirmish, another shock troop like
me, isn't far behind.

Atlanta doesn't take up much time thinking about it. She sees Druckner trying to crawl across the hangar. Druckner watches Blackmare's transport take off.

ATLANTA

Get in the bucket, Chief. Bratton,
help me with that one.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY - LATER

Bratton and Atlanta drop Druckner on a tattered sofa.

ATLANTA

See if you can patch her up.

BRATTON

I'm a computer engineer not a
doctor.

Atlanta bee-lines for the cockpit.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Atlanta sits in the captain's chair, flipping switches and resting her hands on the fuzzy steering wheel.

The ship begins to WHIR and WHINE as it powers up.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

It ain't workin', sweets.

ATLANTA

We cross pessimistic lines,
Abominable. That's what we do.

Abominable Charlie clicks the garage door opener as the hangar doors begin to open, but get stuck. They exchange glances.

ATLANTA

Blast it.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I didn't load ordnance.

ATLANTA

Why not?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Too damn heavy. We lucky to be able to lift off at all.

Atlanta jumps out of her chair.

ATLANTA

Don't wait for me. Head straight for the Litter Belt.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

We ain't leavin' you, sweets.

ATLANTA

You won't have to.

INT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18

Atlanta sprints out of the Boyington making for the hangar doors to try and push them apart. Not budging.

Suddenly, the doors ease apart making her fall to her ass. She sees Mr. Melee pushing the doors apart.

ATLANTA

I need you back in the ship.
(into radio)
Abominable Charlie, burn it.

A tremor RUMBLES through the hangar.

Mr. Melee slips back into the ship. She looks to make sure Mr. Melee's gone.

She sprints back into the bungalows.

EXT. JUNKER'S MAZE - HANGAR 18

The Boyington taxis out of the hangar.

INT. THE BOYINGTON (MOVING)

Abominable Charlie feels a sense of relief.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Damn. I tell ya, sweets, you had
me openin' my sweat pores for a
second there. And you now how I
hate the smell of my own sweat.

Then he notices the monitor: Atlanta on a jet cycle carrying
the FDR.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

How you passed officer training
school I'll never know!

A bright light breaks the horizon.

EXT. PANDORA WASTELAND

The Boyington lowers its embarking ramp to meet her. But the
cycle can't match the increasing speed of the Boyington.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

(over radio)

I can't go any slower, sweets!

Atlanta's bike starts to fall behind. Mr. Melee steps out on
to the embarking ramp. Mr. Melee spots the Grendel II coming
at them from 200 yards out.

Suddenly, Atlanta's bike hits a crater lip and the bike leaps
up on to the ramp. Mr. Melee grabs onto her handle bars as
the rear wheel spins.

ATLANTA

Climb, Abominable!

Mr. Melee heaves the bike inside as Junker's Maze disappears
in the light of a nuclear explosion. The embarking gear
closes.

The Boyington climbs as the shockwave spreads along Pandora's
surface.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - CARGO BAY

Atlanta drops the FDR on the floor.

ATLANTA

Remind me to thank you later,
Chief.

MR. MELEE

You won't need to.

ATLANTA

That's one less thing I gotta do
then.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

Abominable Charlie looks in the rearview seeing Atlanta enter. He shakes his head and counts down with his fingers.

ATLANTA

What's that?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Countin' down how many lives you
got left.

Atlanta hops back into the captain's chair.

ATLANTA

Keep that pretty, little thought in
that pretty, little head.

EXT. THE F-RING (OUTERSPACE)

From Saturn's F-ring a wave of tracer-fire sprays from the Alptraum-Konig's chainguns. The Boyington and nearby ice rocks take hits.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

Atlanta sees Blackmare's transport ahead of them making for the Alptraum-Konig.

ATLANTA

You think if we fly right up behind
them they'll stop shooting at us?

An ice rock EXPLODES spitting debris against their ship. He looks at her shrugging.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The F-ring ain't gone be much cover
in one, maybe two heartbeats.

EXT. THE F-RING (OUTERSPACE)

The Boyington slips behind Blackmare's ship like an elephant hiding behind a basketball. But tracer-fire suddenly stops.

The Saturn Moon Pandora EXPLODES as the Boyington flies over the flight deck of the Alptraum-Konig.

Mr. Skirmish's Grendel II is hit by the shockwave forcing it against the Alptraum-Konig's flight deck.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE

LCDR. KELTON
Launch interceptors!

Interceptor pods LAUNCH from the flight deck following the Boyington.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

An ALARM SOUNDS getting Abominable Charlie's attention.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE
They sending interceptors, sweets!

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY

Bratton and Mr. Melee look out the portholes checking out the inceptors making headway.

BRATTON
Don't worry, man. Atlanta will get us outta this.

MR. MELEE
I don't worry.

BRATTON
Good for you.

Bratton is panicked.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT (SPEEDING)

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE
You know they gonna cancel your flight status soon as we hit the Io station.

ATLANTA

I know, that's why we're takin' the
Sunshine Highway.

Abominable Charlie looks at her sideways.

ATLANTA

You think I'm battle whacky.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I don't speak Obvious. I just look
at you sideways.

ATLANTA

Charge up the space-fold drives.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

You mean, charge up the untested
space-fold drives built out of
recycled and rejected spare parts
that could split our asses into a
fifty billion subatomic particles
before they could actually catch us
making this whole damn escape a
jacked up attempt in the first
place? Those drives?

ATLANTA

Just look at me sideways,
Abominable Charlie?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I must be comin' down with what you
got. A case of the crazies! A
whole damn plague.

ATLANTA

Crazy's better than dead.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Dead people ain't stupid! They
already got they stupid stuff outta
the way.

The interceptor BLASTS RATTLE the Boyington forcing another
ALARM to go off. Atlanta yanks on the wheel as tracer-fire
slip past them.

ATLANTA

The ship's fallin' apart, but all
the alarms work. How's that fold
coming, Abominable?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

I pushed all my buttons. Sunshine
Highway or bust.

ATLANTA

Kiss my six, Blackmare.

EXT. OUTERSPACE

A sphere of energy forms around the Boyington. A wormhole opens in front of them. An interceptor moves in and then both crafts disappear leaving the other interceptors and the A.K. behind.

EXT. THE LITTER BELT - DAY

A wormhole forms spitting out the Boyington and the interceptor. The interceptor SMASHES into the Boyington's aft hull.

The Boyington cruises along the Asteroid Belt aka The Litter Belt. Billboards for local businesses are perched on rocks. Garbage and other assorted man-made space junk are locked in the Belt's orbit. VANDALS etch laser-graffiti into the sides of asteroids.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

There's a damn breach in the cargo
hold. Natch.

ATLANTA

It's not a munitions blast. Coulda
gotten ramrodded by an asteroid.

Atlanta checks out a large asteroid and maneuvers the craft into a large hole illuminated by neon.

INT. THE WESTWOOD ASTEROID

The Boyington cruises through a set of caverns lit by neon ads leading to a sunny beachside community with a well-maintained atmosphere.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - COCKPIT

ATLANTA

You ever been to Westwood,
Abominable Charlie? Home for your
underground forged digital
paraphernalia and your assorted
foodstuffs.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

How you know about this place?

She turns to him and winks.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Yeah, okay.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - PASSENGER BAY - DAY

Atlanta enters noticing Bratton and Mr. Melee. Druckner
clutches her bleeding wounds.

MR. MELEE

I suspect you have a reason for
saving this one?

ATLANTA

She's human. She lives. That's
how it is on my ship. It's still
my ship isn't it, Chief?

MR. MELEE

It is.

ATLANTA

First of all, much obliged for your
help on Pandora. For the better
and worst of it. Sincerely.

Atlanta kneels in front of Druckner.

ATLANTA

Before I allow you to indulge in
our fine medical program, I'd like
to know why that moon was nuked.

DRUCKNER

You know what I know. Not much. I
swallowed my gum.

ATLANTA

I'll get you another pack.
Bratton, get her dolled up.

Bratton helps Druckner up and walks off. With everyone gone, Atlanta turns to Mr. Melee.

MR. MELEE

I apologize.
(sneers at his
awkwardness)
That's the best I got.

ATLANTA

Yeah? Your apologies go back a ways. But hey, I'm not holding grudges. I'll be expecting a better one later. I know you're good for it. We were in the military. Go where the orders take you. I get it.

She shakes her head and winks.

ATLANTA

But every time you show up, things just go kaboom. Always drama with you.

MR. MELEE

I like the theater.

She's about to walk away, but he grabs her by the arm and looks her dead in the eyes.

MR. MELEE

Uh...

The silence goes on for a beat or two as a slight grin creeps on his face. She SNORTS and chucks him in the arm.

ATLANTA

Right back at ya, sport.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (O.S.)

Atlanta!

INT. THE BOYINGTON - CARGO BAY - DAY

Mr. Melee and Atlanta enter seeing Abominable Charlie scratching his head over the interceptor partially protruding into the ship.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

There ain't no pilot. All automatic or remote pilot.

ATLANTA

Drag it on in. Strip it for a possible remote link-up and see if any of these parts are salvageable.

Atlanta turns to Mr. Melee.

ATLANTA

Okay, you. Why was there a personnel carrier loaded with shock troops on my rock?

MR. MELEE

The Big-G had a clandestine shock troop training program on Mars before the Mechanix found it. I got the call to move the personnel before the Mechanix looked at it as an act of aggression. But they attacked anyway.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

The Mechanix are on Mars now?

MR. MELEE

Correct. We tried to fly out as many as possible, but the Ruby Di Milo sustained heavy damage. I haven't gotten word about the other ships.

ATLANTA

There are more ships? Loaded with more of you guys?

MR. MELEE

The new guys. I'm obsolete.

ATLANTA

You mean like this Skirmish character? What makes these new guys so badass?

MR. MELEE

I'm not sure.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

If you obsolete then why send you to rescue the new fellas?

MR. MELEE

It was a last minute decision.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

No shit.

ATLANTA

How did the Ruby make it all the way to Pandora if it was attacked near Mars?

MR. MELEE

The Ruby limped. I tried to make it to Ganymede, but knowing privateers often orbit Jupiter I stretched it out to the Rings of Saturn. The Big-G would have destroyed the ship to retain the guise of peace with the Mechanix. Possibly to apply blame on a rogue militant insurrectionist.

ATLANTA

Someone flying a ship like say the Ruby full of troops looks like a mutineer?

(beat)

You're an outlaw now, Chief.
You're in the right group.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

But why our rock? There's plenty of docking ports along the way.

MR. MELEE

Those ports are monitored by the Big-G and they would summon privateers. I did a quick command scan on Saturn's local satellites and recognized Captain Atlanta's name. We trained on 2 Corp together.

Abominable Charlie smirks and looks at Atlanta sideways.

ATLANTA

What finally crashed you, Chief?

MR. MELEE

The ship received an encrypted transmission of unknown origin before I broke past the Litter Belt. I suspect it was intended for one of the shock troops to assume control of the Ruby. My monitor showed that a hyper-sleep unit had been purged and a Grendel II was launched. Then I took on more battery. That's when I assume Blackmare was called in to pick up the pieces.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

If this ain't an inter-galactic incident, I don't know what is. If them Mechanix would fly out to Mars, they'd come to wipe the rest of us out.

ATLANTA

Whatever pockets of humans that are left aren't set up for war.

Mr. Melee stares suspiciously at Abominable Charlie noticing his left pupil fluttering.

MR. MELEE

You've got the Mechanix virus.

Atlanta looks over her shoulder to make sure no one else is listening.

ATLANTA

We try to keep that quiet around these parts.

MR. MELEE

We're dangerously close to Kaipin City's sleeper range. The virus could initiate its mutation properties.

ATLANTA

We couldn't stop at the Io station. Big-G would've grabbed us as soon as we docked. That said, we have to get Abominable's next dose.

Abominable Charlie's arm twitches.

ATLANTA

We're also gonna have to crack that flight data recorder to see what was in that transmission.

(to Mr. Melee)

Which I assume, you don't know how to do.

MR. MELEE

It's eyes only.

ATLANTA

That's how our luck rolls. Before we give it back we're gonna find out what was in that transmission and see why it was worth sending the most notorious privateer on the network to blow up our livelihood.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

(grimaces)

Natch.

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - THE BRIDGE - DAY

Mr. Skirmish strolls onto the bridge. Kelton turns around, staring in shock. Blackmare turns around staring at this juggernaut of a man.

MR. SKIRMISH

Commander Blackmare?

CDR. BLACKMARE

What do ya say, Chief?

Mr. Skirmish walks up to Blackmare and Kelton.

MR. SKIRMISH

I'm here to bring Chief Warrant Officer Melee to justice. I believe we can help each other.

CDR. BLACKMARE

How do you suppose that, Chief?

MR. SKIRMISH

I have a locator device that can help you track the Ruby Di Milo's flight data recorder if I'm within range. From what I understand, the flight recorder is missing.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Forgive my cynicism, Chief, but I've got troops I've lost on Pandora. It makes it a little tough to ally myself and my crew with you--

MR. SKIRMISH

The Ruby Di Milo's flight protocol is scheduled to self detonate if it is captured or shot down. There was an override command, but it can only be shut off by the ranking officer. That being Chief Melee.

CDR. BLACKMARE

I thought Chief Melee and his old unit were decommissioned due to the Armistice.

MR. SKIRMISH

The Galactic Government needs to retain that guise. The Galactic Government keeps me on to make sure soldiers like Chief Melee don't get out of hand.

CDR. BLACKMARE

What do you need from us?

MR. SKIRMISH

You're about to space-fold into the Asteroid Belt correct? I need a ride.

CDR. BLACKMARE

We are happy to oblige, Chief.

Mr. Skirmish walks toward the windshield staring at the Sun in the distance.

Kelton leans close to Blackmare and whispers.

LCDR. KELTON

This stinks. Neither one of those shock troops are supposed to be alive in the first place.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Someone's lying to us.

LCDR. KELTON

He's got the uniform, but he's not working for Big-G.

(MORE)

LCDR. KELTON (CONT'D)
Zebra wouldn't be stupid enough to
call us in and a shock troop.

CDR. BLACKMARE
When Mr. Skirmish finishes his
mission he'll more than likely get
rid of us.

LCDR. KELTON
I suggest getting on the Quiet
Line.

Mr. Skirmish stares at Blackmare and Kelton's reflection in
the window and reads their lips.

INT. THE BOYINGTON - THE GALLEY - DAY

Shirtless, Druckner sits on a metal counter cradling a series
of wounds through her ribcage.

BRATTON
You got a few punctures in your
lungs due to shrapnel.

DRUCKNER
I've had worse.

Druckner stares hard at Mr. Melee, who's leaning against the
wall with his arms folded.

BRATTON
I see you got your war patch with
the 3-67. They don't get any more
hardcore than that. Color me
impressed.

Bratton looks over his shoulder.

BRATTON
Or at least until he came along.

Bratton sees another piece of shrapnel jutting from the round
base of her breast. He's about to pluck it out with a pair
of serving tongs, but gets flustered.

BRATTON
Sorry. That's about as good as I
can get it.

Druckner scowls at his squeamishness and yanks the metal
shard from her breast.

BRATTON

Hey, whatever works.

Mr. Melee grins and walks away.

INT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE DOCKING PORT - DAY

Mr. Melee walks out to Atlanta ZAPPING a loose metal panel on the Boyington.

MR. MELEE

How is it?

ATLANTA

We took heavy battery on two of the gravity drum compartments. We're gonna need to replace one and maybe we can fix the other.

Abominable Charlie pokes his head out of the derrick crane.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

We can still fly with four drums.

ATLANTA

Not if we have to break atmo somewhere or wanna make another space-fold. Chief, you have tokens?

MR. MELEE

Tokens?

INT. KING COBRA'S ARCADE - DAY

Atlanta and Mr. Melee arrive at King Cobra's Arcade with a CADRE OF GUNFIGHTERS turning heads as they pass. A LARGE GUNFIGHTER stands between them and King Cobra's office.

LARGE GUNFIGHTER

Sure you belong around these parts, ma'am?

Mr. Melee is about to step up, but Atlanta holds him back.

ATLANTA

We're here to see King Cobra.

The gunfighter POUNDS twice on the door.

KING COBRA (O.S.)
Let 'em pass, yo.

INT. KING COBRA'S OFFICE

Atlanta and Mr. Melee enter as a skinny, little runt who calls himself KING COBRA (20's, male) sits behind a desk watching several monitors flickering breaking news on the Mars attack.

KING COBRA
Checkie here. Haven't seen yo fine ass in a while. I heard yo sweet ass blew up Pandora. You know you on the hot sheet, Atlanta. Dee-yum!

ATLANTA
You heard about all that already?

KING COBRA
That's right. King Cobra knows all. In this volah-tile age bad news like the housewife hotline, yo. It won't be long before everyone knows. You blew up one of Saturn's shepherd moons, baby.

ATLANTA
See, now that wasn't me.

KING COBRA
Denial ain't just another volcano on Io. You lucky you and yo crew the only one out there. So, tell me what you need and let's see if King Cobra can provide.

ATLANTA
Hot flight credentials, navigation software and an unregistered Viking cargo ship put on the network as if it's been there for a while.

King Cobra runs his fingers along a cork board full of old school USB drives.

KING COBRA
Ever since the Exile, the only nav software I gots is this junk.
(MORE)

KING COBRA (CONT'D)

It's still got some proposed space stations and Mars and Earth geography. But it's still good if you wanna be in the general vicinity. That bitch is on the house. But checkie here, the Big-G might've frozen your accounts.

ATLANTA

I've got an account on the Fringe. Your cousin, Copperhead, still runnin' that salvage yard in the Litter Belt?

KING COBRA

Yeah, he a few bricks out. Big flashin' lights: "Copperhead's Huge-ass Salvage Emporium".

ATLANTA

Run this for me.

Atlanta takes out a data drive and tosses it at King Cobra. King Cobra slips it into his computer.

KING COBRA

What's this?

ATLANTA

Don't know. You know language like that?

KING COBRA

While you here, you want some of my Snooper Dinkle-Doodles? Excellent long range transmissions and spyin' on Mechanix chatter.

ATLANTA

We're gonna go shortwave.

KING COBRA

You like Prehistoric and stuff, baby.

The computer monitor flicks random images and sounds.

KING COBRA

This is some weird junk, yo.

ATLANTA

You can read that?

KING COBRA

Naw. This almost like this random language invented by that dude Johnny Q. At least we think his name is Johnny Q. It's like an organic language and stuff. It recreates itself. It be like how the Mechanix speak to each other. It's not encrypted because whoever was gonna receive it would know the language.

ATLANTA

A Mechanix language, uh? Who's Johnny Q?

KING COBRA

Last I heard he was on Earth during the war. Was a ProtoSystems staple under Dr. Neva Farm. She be on the atmo processing joint up at the Rock Yard.

Mr. Melee knows the name and looks at Atlanta.

ATLANTA

(scoffs)

Neva Farm. Figures.

Atlanta double-takes the monitors showing an aerial dog fight of several ships. The graphic at the bottom reading: "Breaking News: Mars Incident."

KING COBRA

The Mechanix be makin' they way to the Litter Belt soon.

ATLANTA

Ready for this?

KING COBRA

Oh, hell ya. Bring on the Mechs, baby!

INT. THE ALPTRAUM-KONIG - BLACKMARE'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Blackmare is on the Quiet Line with Zebra.

ZEBRA

Nothing on the database regarding Mr. Skirmish.

(MORE)

ZEBRA (CONT'D)

We've traced Mr. Skirmish's origin to the Mars base and there's nothing in our records that show his training was uploaded by us.

CDR. BLACKMARE

Is it possible that his training was uploaded through a comm frequency?

ZEBRA

Possible? It's our greatest fear. That means the Mechanix have duped our shock troops.

INT. CLUB CASTAWAY - NIGHT

Atlanta, Mr. Melee, Druckner and Bratton sit on the patio bar overlooking an imported ocean.

ATLANTA

I apologize for carting you around with us, Druckner. You can either go your own way or you can have some chow and drinks on me.

DRUCKNER

I am hungry.

ATLANTA

Well, this place has the best Oki Dogs in the Solar System.

BRATTON

I didn't crack the FDR language, but I did find out that the Ruby received over 700 yottabytes before the Chief crash-landed on Pandora.

ATLANTA

That's pretty heavy for a communique. That's more like data transfer.

MR. MELEE

The Galactic Government's been known for hiding military secrets in citizens' brains.

BRATTON

I've heard of that brain-tapping stuff. There was this one guy at Io-U that passed his engineering final without cracking a PDF.

ATLANTA

Brain-tapping?

MR. MELEE

Encrypted information that can only be retrieved by the government. The host wouldn't know the difference.

ATLANTA

How do they do that?

MR. MELEE

Wireless communication devices.

ATLANTA

Bratton, you found that out and didn't crack the language code?

BRATTON

I can see the size of the information that comes in, but not *what* it is. Kinda like a windsock. You can see there's wind, but not what's in it. But there are no known nearby communication bases that could transfer that much so quickly. There's only one place it could've come from.

ATLANTA

Mars?

BRATTON

Mars has a crappy comm-signal. It can't successfully pass Jupiter's magnetic field without a satellite rebound. And by that time you're talkin' about data corruption.

MR. MELEE

The Mechanix most likely dropped a satellite in orbit to monitor and prevent human communication and tactical advances.

BRATTON

True, but it still wouldn't be strong enough to fling 700-plus yottabytes across space so quickly. The only thing powerful enough is on Earth. And it would have to have been received before the Chief's ship hit Jupiter's mag field.

ATLANTA

Aren't the humans on Earth prevented from communication beyond the planet?

BRATTON

I never said it was a human transmission.

MR. MELEE

The only facility large enough to handle that much data transfer is Kaipin City.

BRATTON

I think so, Chief.

ATLANTA

The Earth is on the far side of the Sun this part of the calendar.

BRATTON

Earth? That's an occupied planet.

Abominable Charlie arrives with drinks.

BRATTON (CONT'D)

Took you long enough.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Shut up, fool. I had to maneuver around three mosh pits to get here.

LATER

Atlanta leans against the wall of the bathroom corridor. Mr. Melee walks out of the restroom. She shoves her leg against the opposing wall block his path.

Bratton sees this from their table.

BRATTON

What's their deal?

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

They grew up at ProtoSystems together. She was 16 when she was sent off to fight the war in the skies and got her ace wings. They sent him to an advanced training unit called 2 Corp. I guess to become what he is now. But they didn't met again until the Showdown at Old D five years later.

Abominable Charlie takes a drink.

BRATTON

You're always talkin' about that, but I don't know what that is.

DRUCKNER

Old Detroit.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

Bad is what it was. Old D was the battle that would begin the long, hard fall of the human race.

Abominable Charlie rubs his medallion taking him back to the horror of that battle. Bratton tries to change the subject.

BRATTON

Uh... I thought Atlanta trained pilots.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE

She did. She like you. She got a penchant for trouble. Bending rules and sometimes breakin' them. Pissed off the wrong commander, took her outta the field and they sent her to 2 Corp to train. And them...

Abominable Charlie looks over at Atlanta and Mr. Melee laughing at talking.

ABOMINABLE CHARLIE (CONT'D)

... well, you know how that goes. Male parts, female parts. Together parts.

**to read more of the script contact Phil at
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