

Blazing Guns / Flashing Sword

The fanfiction magazine



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Cover art by Dalton Gamble Howse: <http://j.karma.deviantart.com/>

And now, a word from the editor:

This issue was really last minute; normally, if anything's last minute, it's the cover. This time, Mister Howse gave me cover art shortly after last issue, but I didn't get two of the stories until early this morning.

Anyway, it's here; stop listening to me and go read the stories and look at the pictures.

Thank you for reading. You got any questions or comments? I'd love to hear them: please send an email to: fanficmag@gmail.com

Or, if you want to reach me personally, you can reach me at hans.mahler@gmail.com, or check out my user page at either <http://jochannon.deviantart.com> or at <http://warhammer40kfanon.wikia.com/wiki/User:Jochannon>

Feel like you've missed something? Just email me and I'll send you any of the previous issues

Jochannon Mahler

We have a wonderful selection of stories from a bunch of great writers here, so without further ado let's get to them.

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BulletFodder80's stories

A really cool guy called Bulletfodder80 on Deviantart.com sent me these two stories; normally, it's one story per person per issue, but these are both quite short, and on the same subject, so I have decided to make an exception in this case.

Subject: Starfox Adventures

Peace of Mind

The cloudless sky above the great forest was calm and unmoving, save for a lone figure that soared through the open air on powerful, silvery wings. The long tailed, reptilian like silhouette flew through the sky with practiced ease, beating its wings at a slow, steady pace.

The young dragon's bright green scales and silver plates on his chest and stomach glistened slightly in the sunlight, as did the short spikes on his neck and the ends of his wing bones. Two swept back horns took their place just above and behind a pair of content, emerald eyes.

For once, Cyrus was enjoying himself. Normally, he would be either in his mountainside den, or on a stone peak above the clouds, looking out over the landscape and contemplating how he could adjust to a life of peace and tranquility. So far, he had made some progress with his efforts, but not enough to change his isolated personality or forget the memories that he wished he never had.

Those memories stemmed from fifteen long, unforgiving years in hiding. Throughout almost his entire life, up until earlier that year, Cyrus had been on the run from his enemies while a great war ravaged the planet. For fifteen years, he had never known a friend. For fifteen years, he fought for survival as malevolent forces were attempting to destroy the world. For fifteen years, all he had ever known was a life of hardship and uncertainty.

Cyrus was nineteen years old.

Times had changed, however. The war was over. The planet was rebuilding, and others like him were stepping out from

their sanctuaries into the bright sunlight of a new age. The lands had become safe to roam freely again, as well as the open skies.

Being a rare wind dragon, Cyrus cherished this privilege greatly. Even when he had known it was safe, Cyrus had always kept an eye open for activity whenever he took flight during his past. But now, there was no need. He ignored his instinct to scan the ground as he flew freely through the air, even performing a quick barrel roll. He had never had the leisure time to do so quite frankly, he had only ever used the maneuver when he fought and enjoyed the quick, dizzying feeling that it created.

He then fell into a dive, his body spiraling slowly as he did. The feeling of weightlessness engulfed him until he pulled up, skimming the tree tops of the forest. Birds cried out and scattered in his wake.

With the winds lending him their energy, Cyrus swooped over the landscape at the fastest speed he could. The terrain below him was nothing more than a multicolored blur as he raced through the open air, to where he did not know.

Up ahead, a range of tall, steep cliffs could be seen on the horizon, as well as a sprawling waterfall that covered at least half a mile with its width, its rushing waters crashing down to earth with relentless force. The surface of the river beneath it was partly shrouded in white, misty foam.

Cyrus flew towards the waterfall, where from above he could see many wide boulders protruding from the water's surface. Slowing himself, he spiraled around the huge rocks until he descended to the level of the water. He pulled up and

flapped his wings repeatedly, halting in midair, before settling himself onto one of the boulders, perching with his tail wrapped around his paws. He enjoyed the feeling of the wet mist spraying him as the water hit the rocks, and the strong winds

Starfox: Respite

Starfox: Respite

Based in the game Starfox Adventures.

Propped against the side of his Arwing, an exhausted Fox McCloud sat in the low grasses of Thorntail Hollow, letting the gentle atmosphere of the sunken valley relax his acute senses. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath of fresh air as the sun began to approach the western side of the cliffs, adding a tinge of orange to the sky.

A voice called his name, and Fox looked up to find a Thorntail making its way toward him, carrying something in its jaws. Too weary to move much, he let the huge herbivore walk to him until it halted at his side.

The dinosaur lowered his head and dropped a Dumbledang Pod on the ground next to him. "You looked tired, so I thought you might want this, Fox," the Thorntail said.

Using his good arm, Fox grasped the large pod and set it in his lap. "Thanks. This'll probably help for later." The Thorntail dipped his head and turned to look to another part of the hollow. "Your little friend the Prince seems to be enjoying himself."

Leaning to see past him, Fox smiled at the sight of Prince Tricky playing in the flower beds, chasing the nearby butterflies and laughing. The little triceratops, though young and naive, had proven himself a worthy and loyal ally who always stuck by his side. And though he partly hated to admit it, he liked the little guy, with his enthusiastic laughter and his willingness to

weaving through his outstretched wings.

A rare smile touched Cyrus's face. Today, there was nothing to worry about. All there was to do was live. That was something anyone could enjoy, even him.

follow him into danger. Even on this endangered planet, threatening to completely break apart, Fox had managed to find a friend.

"Yeah. Somehow he always does," Fox said, smiling. He held up the Dumbledang Pod to the Thorntail. "Hey, thanks again for this."

The Thorntail nodded and walked away, returning to his usual place to graze at the grass and rest. Fox raised the pod to his mouth and bit into it, tasting the sweet, sticky juice inside.

Swallowing the bite and setting the pod down on the grass, Fox then removed his field backpack and unzipped a side pocket. He had managed to take a few burns during the trip through Moon Mountain Pass and the Volcano Force Point Temple, which he couldn't pay close attention to until now. He had yet to make his way to the Krazoa Palace to release the second Krazoa Spirit, but, he thought, he might as well take a brief rest in Thorntail Hollow while he was still there.

Until he made the trip, the ancient Krazoa Spirit that temporarily shared his body would lie dormant inside of him, and his eyes would continue to glow a sharp violet color. He felt a gentle pull on his consciousness towards the Warpstone, which could take him to the Palace, but he tried to ignore it.

"I'll do it later," Fox grumbled to the Spirit. He felt the light tug in his mind fade away, and the Spirit seemed to go into a restless hibernation in his body. Unnerved, he shook his head and tried not to think of how the Krazoa Spirit had appeared to understand him.

Remembering what he was about to do, from the side pocket of his field backpack Fox removed bandages, burn ointment, and a canteen of water. He then peered down at the burn on his right forearm, noting how the skin was somewhat blackened and the fur around it was singed, giving off a bad smell.

Fox opened the canteen and began to pour water onto the burn. He gritted his teeth and squeezed his eyes shut as the wound bit, stung, and itched painfully. Doing this would clean the wound of any dirt and dust that had settled on it. He stood it until he figured the burn was soaked enough before he pulled the canteen away and set it aside. He then took the Dumbledang Pod and tore a chunk out of it before he picked up the burn ointment, unscrewing the cap off the little tube. While he still chewed on the pod, he squeezed a small amount out on two fingers and began to spread it over the burn.

He had just swallowed his bit of the Dumbledang Pod and was about to bandage up the wound when Tricky, laughing as usual, ran up to Fox's side. "C'mon, Fox, let's go play!"

With one hand on the roll of gauze, Fox gave the young triceratops a look. "Not now, Tricky."

"But Fox! It's boring just sitting around here. C'mon, I wanna explore!" Tricky briefly reared up onto his hind paws in anticipation, unable to stay still.

"Tricky, you've got the whole Hollow here to run around in." In his mind, Fox shook his head at his restless sidekick. Despite the long trek from the Hollow to the Temple and back, Tricky remained as lively as ever. It amazed Fox to see that he wanted to play after all of the events in the past few hours, one of many examples of his boundless energy.

Fox sighed. "Look, Tricky...we need to rest," he said. "After being in all that heat in that Force Point Temple, and then finding a Krazoa Spirit, I'm exhausted. Aren't you?"

"Nope!" Tricky's enthusiastic reply

prompted Fox to bury his face in his palm, yet while he did so he smiled.

"Tricky..." He paused as he continued to smile, shaking his head. "Tricky, I really can't right now. I'm sorry, I just don't have the energy. Maybe later."

"Alright, Fox..." With a disappointed look, Tricky turned and walked away, directing his attention back to the flower beds. He stared at them for a moment, then looked around for something else to occupy himself. When nothing could be found, he sat in the grass and sighed, staring at nothing in particular.

Fox watched him, feeling bad for the little guy. As he took the roll of bandages and began to wrap it about his arm, he tried to find a way to make up for how he had acted towards Tricky. He was beginning to feel better now and besides, he could always fly back to his mothership, the Great Fox, and have R.O.B. and Slippy patch him up later. In the meantime, he had finished wrapping his arm, and as he tore the gauze off the roll with his teeth, his eyes settled on the Shopkeeper's store in the center of the Hollow.

Fox hit his head lightly with his fist. Of course! He pushed himself off the ground, his legs stiff from being still for so long. He turned to his Arwing as he punched in a few keys on his wrist communicator. A hissing sound was heard as the cockpit opened up on a hinge and two small steps extended from the side of the starfighter.

Fox hopped up to the second step and leaned half of his body into the Arwing, his arms reaching down into the space below the controls. From there he pulled out a small red ball with yellow stars, and as he gripped it, the ball made a squeaking noise.

The ball had been an impulse buy from the Shopkeeper; it was inexpensive, and he was carrying spare Scarabs on him at the time. Fox had tossed it into the Arwing without a second thought, and had regretted it later when he stepped on it while flying back to Dinosaur Planet from the Great Fox sometime afterwards. He had known it would be a great gift for Tricky, but as he got himself wrapped up with Spellstones, temples and Krazoa

Spirits, he soon forgot about it.

Fox jumped down from the Arwing's steps, the cockpit closing automatically as it detected his presence leaving. He placed two fingers in his mouth and whistled loudly, catching Tricky's attention. Smiling, he waved the red ball in the air, squeaking it as he did.

The little triceratops' face lit up, and he ran up to Fox with renewed energy. Fox's smile grew wider as Tricky tried to jump up and bite at the ball that he held out of reach.

Tricky wagged his tail expectantly, which looked rather comical on a triceratops. "Cool ball, Fox! Are we gonna play?"

"What, you thought I pulled it out to fight the Sharpclaw with? Of course we're gonna play, Tricky," Fox replied good humoredly.

As Tricky let out a "Yay!" of celebration, Fox unsheathed Krystal's golden staff from its center grip. Using it like a bat, Fox tossed the ball up into the air and sent it flying away with a quick, powerful strike. At this, Tricky laughed excitedly and chased after it, turning quickly as the ball bounced

off the rock wall of the Hollow.

Watching him, Fox planted the staff's end into the ground and leaned on it, smiling as Tricky managed to tackle the rolling ball and grab hold of it. As he looked up into the sky, he noticed for the first time that the sun was setting, with dying orange light reflecting off the environment and all of the creatures within it. Many of the Thorntails were beginning to curl up into a ball and fall asleep, and even the Warpstone, the giant friendly golem rooted into the northwest portion of the Hollow, let out a thunderous yawn that echoed slightly through the air.

He was brought back to reality as Tricky set the ball back at his feet with a squeak. "Hit it again, Fox! Haha!"

Fox rubbed the triceratops' head roughly. "Alright, alright." Once more he sent the ball away with a thwack from the staff, and as Tricky set out after it with enthusiasm, Fox realized that they had little daylight left to play in.

What a shame, Fox thought. I was just starting to have fun.

The Hunter and the Witch

By: Riordan Zentler

Subject: Left 4 Dead

The hooded figure, crouched high above everything around himself, noted his scenery. He was in a sugar mill, on top of a silo, and it was a very rainy day. The ground was covered in ankle deep water. But that didn't matter to him. It was far below, and he was free to go almost anywhere he pleased. Crouching further still and placing his hands in front of him, he then leaped, going far, far into the air before landing with a heavy thud on top of a before distant silo that was slightly higher than the last. From here, he could see even more of the mill.

But he wasn't just sightseeing, he was looking for something in particular; or rather, someone in particular. After a time of sitting there, he finally heard it; muffled sobs coming from a fair distance to the left. He leaped once again, traveling far into the air, the wind and rain on his face as he did so. He landed once again with an even heavier thud than before on a silo far to the left and only about half as tall as the previous.

From here, he could finally see her; Wearing no more than panties and a torn shirt, was who he was looking for. There she stood about, in a slight daze, silently sobbing to herself. Her fingers were exceedingly long and sharp, and her hands covered her face. She was the Witch.

He wondered why she always cried. She never exploited her freedom that she now possessed, she never did much anything; just sat there, crying and crying. What was her purpose? Why was she this way? She was different from the rest. The rest of their kind stood about, mindless, not doing much anything. Occasionally they would wander off or wander into the sugar mill, but very recently, many of them had all run off in the same direction at speeds that they looked incapable of achieving.

Because of this, the sugar mill was now more or less empty, except for a few. Among these were himself, and this girl, along with a few others who occasionally showed up, sitting idly by, but exploring nonetheless. Noting the small pole that went to ground level from the top of the silo, the Hunter grabbed ahold of it with one hand, and, supporting himself with his feet, slowly slid down until he was a mere ten feet above her. She still continued to cry, not even noticing him. He almost wished she would, but wondered what would happen if she did. Would she attack him? Or would she stop crying? Despite the fact that he did not seem to have much mental thought, he did have a slight curiosity for the girl below him.

She finally walked a bit further, getting even closer to him. Still crying and apparently unaware of his existence, her sobs finally stifled for a moment, and she peeked through her long, sharp fingers to get a good glimpse at him. He was a monstrosity like her, with grey skin, long, sharp nails and teeth, wearing a grey hoodie and brown polyester pants that were both shredded and ripped. He had duck tape on many places on his limbs in order to stop air flow from hindering his ability to pounce. His hood covered his eyes. He was the Hunter.

For a moment, they just stood there, staring at each other. They were not capable of discussion, and it was quite incredible that either of them were experiencing some emotion, weak though it may have been. Finally, the Hunter dropped from the few feet above that he was at. He approached the Witch carefully and slowly; he had observed her in action before, and if she attacked, he had to be very quick about getting away. He was perhaps only a couple of feet away from the Witch now, and they still observed each other for a long time.

Finally, something completely unexpected happened. The Witch suddenly sprang into action, wrapping her arms around his, and the Hunter found himself unable to get away. She may have looked weak, but he discovered that she was incredibly strong. Soon, he stopped struggling. She wasn't attacking him. She was apparently embracing him. He felt something that moment. He didn't know what it was, but he suddenly found himself feeling awkward here and yet... proud at the same time. The Hunter suddenly felt a urge of what could be described as nothing other than compassion, and he returned the embrace. They hugged each other far tighter than necessary, to the point where they should have been in pain were it not for their mental condition.

It began to rain harder than before in the mill, and it was soon difficult to see further than thirty feet away. The Hunter released her slowly, and to his surprise, the Witch did as well. He was familiar with the area after lurking there for so long, and, keeping one arm around her shoulder, started walking very slowly over towards a small building. After a short time, she replied by going along with him, and eventually, they found themselves inside the small building. It was very plain wooden building, with the boards run down, and it only contained a toolbox and a wrench lying next to it. There was no door. He led her over to a wall in the interior, and they both sat down.

They both sat there a long time, and the rain showed no signs of giving up. They both did very little but sit there, looking at each other, but for once, the Witch was not crying. The Hunter wondered if her crying was due to loneliness in the first place, or due to her condition; perhaps she was more sensitive about her condition than the rest. He may have felt some remorse due to being infected, but he could only very rarely conjure any sort of rational thought.

The Hunter thought. He wondered why this had happened to all of the world as far as he knew. He felt remorse, longing for his old life. He had freedom as he was

now, but all he knew was pain and blind rage. Suddenly, the Hunter felt something on his right cheek. He felt something. It had been so long since he had physically felt anything, and only just recently had he managed to mentally feel for longer than a few seconds. He took a finger and wiped his cheek, and upon inspection, there was the remains of a single tear drop on his finger. The Hunter looked away from the Witch, as if in shame. He felt compassion once again, and he did not want to make her cry again too.

Then he felt something on his left cheek this time. It was lips, and he felt the Witch's icy cold breath on his cheek as she kissed him there. When she stopped, he looked over at her. There was an explosion of emotions; shock, then love, then shock, and then love again. Behind her wrinkled, contorted face, he saw something beautiful. The only thing that had ever provoked emotion in him for seemingly forever. He suddenly felt the urge to return her favor, and his head went forward and his lips met hers'. They were cold, but the Hunter did not care. He felt something emotionally other than rage, he actually felt something physically. They kissed there for a time, but after a while, they both heard something outside and suddenly snapped away from each other.

"Check for supplies in these storage rooms." The Hunter and the Witch both heard muffled footsteps then in the neighboring buildings identical to the one they were in. Soon, another voice.

"Well, there's this crowbar here, if anyone wants it."

"I'll take it."

"And... looks like a magnum here."

"Great, that's mine."

"Hey, I wanted it."

"Too bad, you've got your crowbar, right?"

"Well, alright..."

The footsteps were closer now. The Hunter looked over at the Witch and saw that she looked like she was going into a daze. She sobbed, one hard sob. But that was all that it took to alert the people of their presence.

"...Did you hear that?"

"Holy shit, that Witch is close. We'd better get out of here quick."

"Damn good thing we haven't gone into that last storage room yet."

The Hunter felt extremely anxious for a moment, but then it all went black. His vision faded for a moment before returning, and then he knew nothing. Once again all the Hunter knew was blind rage. He got onto all fours and began to crawl out of the building towards the voices that he heard. Just then, a walking person; a real, honest person walked out of the building. He wasn't shuffling, he wasn't walking about blindly, he was jogging out of the building. The Hunter suddenly felt an uncontrollable urge to attack the man, to tear him limb from limb, to eat his flesh, to drink his blood.

Before he even knew it, he was leaping through the air, letting out a devilish, high pitched scream, and in mid air he collided with the man, tackling him to the ground. The man screamed for help, and the Hunter pinned him to the ground. He felt his goal for blood, to hear the flesh ripping right off the man, was near. He began to sink his claws into the man's chest, and he ripped once, hard. A blood curdling scream emitted from the man below him, and the Hunter felt the urge to silence him. He once again sunk his claws into the man, this time into his stomach. It was all happening so fast, but it felt like ages for

the Hunter. He relished in the gore and destruction that he was causing. He had never felt anything so good, and yet, he could not get enough.

But that all ended very abruptly. He found himself suddenly rolling off of the man onto the ground, and he felt more rage. The Hunter wanted more death and violence, and he was just denied. On all fours again, he looked up at his surroundings and growled. There was the man on the ground from before, and there were two more people standing up before him. One had just shoved him off the man with his crowbar, and another was holding a magnum and taking aim right at the Hunter. The Hunter shrieked and jumped once again, this time at the man brandishing the crowbar. He was stopped in mid air when he thrust out the crowbar in front of him at the last moment. He should have felt the hard metal collide with his chest, but he didn't. The Hunter fell to the ground with a slight howl of rage; denied once again his thirst for bloodshed.

Gunshots went off. He should have felt something, but he didn't. He heard the bullets collide with the ground directly behind him, blood spurted out of his chest, but he did not feel it. The Hunter began to get ready for another pounce, but suddenly found himself unable to. He slowly crumpled to the ground, completely unable to move. His thirst for violence could not be quenched, this time due to his body. It wouldn't move. He wanted to attack, to kill, but all he could manage to do was look up at his killers; they were helping up the man who he had only managed to get two slashes in on. His wounds were severe, but the Hunter did not care. He wanted more. He wanted the man to be no more than a million scattered chunks of flesh.

The Hunter heard something in the room behind him. Growls of anger and the urge to kill. That was when he remembered what was in that room; it was the Witch. The Hunter heard the panicked voices of the people, when suddenly, she let out a scream of pure rage. She ran right at the people, right past the Hunter. He watched

her run forward. The person with the magnum began emptying shots into her body, but she still rushed forward at the group. They all ran back, the wounded man not nearly quick enough. The Witch was finally right up to the man, and she slashed him all up his entire torso, from bottom to top, with her huge claws. The amounts of blood and chunks of organs and flesh and who knew what else was incredible. The man crumpled, falling to the ground instantly, not even making a sound.

Then, one last shot rang out from the other two people. The man with the magnum had made one well aimed shot straight at the Witch's head moments after she had hesitated after her kill. Grey matter spewed out of the back of her head, and she was dead before she hit the ground.

"Shit... Man down..."

Author's Comments: When I wrote this story, I wanted to invoke emotion in the reader at the appropriate times; Pity, surprise, compassion, and sadness. From what I've gotten back, it seems I succeeded, and I'm very happy with that! Thanks for the offer BTW. Get back to me on stuff I need to know. =

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The two remaining survivors sighed heavily and began to move onward. They walked around the bodies, including the Hunter's. He tried to growl but could not even manage that much.

Finally, the survivors were far away, and the Hunter could hear them no more. Staring at the Witch's limp, lifeless body, trace amounts of thought once again returned to him. And then he felt pain once more, and it was physical pain beyond anything he could have possibly imagined. And that's when the emotional pain kicked in, too. He wanted to die. He was in so much agony, and he knew that he would never feel the Witch next to his body ever again.

The Hunter tried to crawl over to the Witch's body, but he could not even manage to go more than a few inches. A tear escaped from his eyes, and rolled down his mangled cheek. His vision began to fade, and soon, he neither saw nor felt any longer.

IN HIS EMPEROR'S SERVICE

Chapter 8; this is a continuation of a story that began in issue #1

By Jonathan Taylor

Subject: Warhammer 40,000

*****ENCODED TRANSMISSION*****
*****TO: INQUISITOR RESTRICTED *****
*****FROM: RESTRICTED *****
SUBJECT: PROCUREMENT OF RESTRICTED
LOCATION: STATION MARAK ROGUE TRADER SPACE
*****MESSAGE BEGINS*****

Ohmi took the Lasgun from my hands, tossing it aside, I saw the weapon land upon her bed. I grunted in shock as her Servo Arm shot out, striking me just above my shoulder pinning me to the wall. I felt her strong bionic arm press hard against my other arm.

The hell is she doing? "What... what are you doing?"

She grinned, and then her eye shutting, and the bionic implant of her right eye going dim. She pressed herself against me, I felt her mouth meet my own her lips were soft against mine but the suddenness of her assault meant our teeth knicked together. Her free hand began to move up my side, stroking me sensually. I groaned in confused pleasure.

Ohmi led me unresisting to her bed, where she bade me sit down there. She then pushed me down, hard so that I was now on my back, then mounted me.. She towered over me briefly, looking triumphant. Then lowered herself onto me, her hips beginning to grind against my own as she planted another kiss on my mouth. Her touch was unreal, feeling her body pressing against my own like this it was, incredible. I wrapped my arms around her and surrendered to her. Finally allowing myself to relax with her. Years of frustration, of pent up desire, began to overwhelm me as I let her take over completely...

□

Afterwards, as we lay together, I found myself drifting to sleep drifting back...

□

I felt heavy. Something heavy was on my back, crushing me. What the hell is going on now? I raised my arms up, pressing my palms down on the ground. I could feel

the crunch of grass beneath my hands. Hmm. As I raised myself up, I felt the weight upon my back slide off. Something scratched my arm. Now on my hands and knees, I looked up to see trees, foliage and a sky tinged with green. Turning to look at the thing by my side, noticing it had a leathery hide, and was garbed in only some kind of loincloth. Strapped to its arm was a large knife tied on with cord. It had an oversized beak for a face. Kroot.

My hearing returned in a flash, just in time for me to hear the piercing yell of another one of those beasts bearing down on me. I rolled quickly to my side, as it smashed down with the curved axe blade on its rifle, striking into the ground at my side.

"Stop moving human."

I got to my feet. I pulling a knife out from its sleeve on my forearm. I sprung forward, as the Kroot raised its rifle in an overarm swing, thrusting my blade into its armpit. Before it could scream in shock, I struck the Xenos in its neck as hard as I could with my fist. I heard a satisfied crunch as its neck broke under my fist. Throwing the gurgling corpse aside I stood up straight, and took a brief look around me. The Eldar had fled, heh, left me to die it seems. Tau Xenos were moving over our firing position. The Kroot had found us first, I had grappled with one before another grabbed me from behind, but a single shot rang out striking the Kroot in the back of the head. Hmm. Someone had saved my life.

"There! Don't let the prey get away!"

Firewarriors. Damn it all. And it seemed my rifle had been broken by one of the Kroot during the fight. I reached down and took the Kroot's knife, it was much larger than mine. And seemed better made.

Heh. I noticed a tiny line of blood marred

the tip of the weapon. Matching the blood from my forearm, hmm.

"Eldar! You will pay for the Ethereal's death!" Seems they hadn't spotted me yet. I crept forward, using the forest undergrowth for cover, I spotted the bright orange uniforms of the Ethereal's bodyguard. And, the green and white camouflaged gear of one of the Eldar Rangers...

The Ranger seemed to have been wounded, their spent rifle on the ground by their side. The Tau raised their weapons to fire. I pulled out my only frag grenade and weighed it in my hand for several moments. I made up my mind. Pulling out the safety pin, I cooked the grenade for a second before throwing it at the three clustered Tau. The grenade exploded at chest height, the blast knocking them off their feet. I sprung forward, the Kroot knife at hand I thrust into the first prostrate Xeno's neck. Kicking down hard on the Tau's skull with my boot, I pulled the blade free. Grabbing the second Xeno from behind as he tried to regain his footing, I forced the blade through its lower lumbar vertebrae, penetrating the weak joining section of its armour and severing its spine.

"Sun'Tsue! No! Hrrr I shall kill you human!!" Damn, I took too long the last one of them has already recovered. The final Tau fired his pulse rifle from the hip, I held the corpse in front of me as a shield, luckily the shots failed to penetrate the Xeno's corpse. I threw the limp form of 'Sun'Tsue at the xeno, who cried out dropping his pulse rifle as the bloodied smoking corpse landed in his arms. A moment later I swung the Kroot knife two handed, cutting off his head. Panting, I turned to the Eldar, feeling the heady feeling of my adrenalin pulsing in my veins, the exhilaration of felling the Emperor's foes the Joy of Battle. The Eldar then raised her shuriken pistol with one hand, pointed it at me and pulled the trigger...

In a flash I was awake. Several confused moments passed as I checked myself for injuries. Finally, I heard the comforting sound of Ohmi's relaxed breathing and the whirring sound of her augmentics.. With a smile, I reached had ran my hand over her warm flesh and cool metal bionics without

pausing I found I was amazed at her form. She was perfectly made her bionics melding expertly with the rest of her flesh. It surprised me that I didn't mind that, that the wires in the back of her neck had tangled my hand as I carressed her or that her bionic hand had squeezed my arm roughly leaving it bruised, or that I could hear the faint 'wirr' of her servo motors as she moved atop me.

"That tickles." She said suddenly. It seemed my carress had awoken her.. I leaned over and kissed her shoulder, working my way up. She giggled, her 'Hehek' sounding so cute. She murmured some encouragement as she rolled onto her back, as I began to

The Vox Speakers suddenly crackled to life. "Mr Kale, would you be so kind as to come to my office? Now."

Ohmi groaned, mirroring my own annoyance. "What!?! Now! Cant this wait ten minutes at least!"

The Vox was silent for several moments. I noticed Ohmi's hands relax from me, and she looked away from me. She seemed to be a little upset.

Still looking away from me, "You had better go and see him then, I guess."

I quickly pulled my clothes back on and made my way to the door, "You had better come back ya bastard!" She suddenly called after me.

I turned around, and saw the look on her face. She looked upset, angry even. I couldn't tell. But it was enough, something was about to happen.

Marching briskly to Mr Sandhammer's door, my mind kept wandering back to Ohmi. To her grin, her shapely form, the bionics that melded seamlessly with her body, the feel of her mouth on mine, the soft warmth of her body pressed against... Oh crap, I'm in his office.

"Mr Sandhammer, Sir." I saluted. Emperor Damn it, I don't even remember if I knocked before I entered.

Mr Sandhammer was seated behind a seemingly wooden desk of a truly archaic design, its old battered frame looked far stronger than it should however. Various papers and half open files were spread absent mindedly upon the desk itself, while Mr Sandhammer looked at me over his steepled fingers. His head leaned forward slightly, so that he was looking up at me through his eyes, while his fingers obscured his mouth. I could feel the

tension in the air.

"Mr Kale, you will forgive me if I do not salute back. Unlike yourself I am not a military man. I do however, highly respect the chain of command.. And I do not appreciate being left out of the loop."

"Sir." Be brief tell him nothing, reveal nothing!

He narrowed his eyes at me, I could sense his frustration.

"Mr Kale, you are a psyker." I nodded.

"And you are unsanctioned." Again, I nodded, staring straight ahead, at a spot on the wall just above his head.

"Give me one reason why I shouldn't kill you now." Damn it, I knew he was going to ask me this. Oh well.

I stared straight ahead, I simply did not have an answer. Looks like I failed. At last...

I saw myself spring forward, clicking my wrists together as I leapt at him. The twin wrist knives sprang from their sheaths on my forearms. Sandhammer could move fast for a man his age, I knew and he would likely be prepared for such things. I discovered to my vague horror as I soared through the air that his right arm on the table was in fact a fake. His real right arm sitting on his lap, holding a sawn off Executor shotgun. He pulled the trigger. I could feel the pain as the shell's pellets tore into my flesh, yet the blast from that range would not enough to throw me off completely, and I managed to get a single strike to his face before he could cock the weapon and fire again.

The blade tore through the flimsy plastics of his face, exposing the metallic face of a servitor. As I dug the knife in completely, which should have severed his brain.

Thick black fluid poured from the hole, covering my hand.

"Not bad Kale, but I have been doing this longer than you."

My wrist knife stuck in the face of a servitor, and a likely armed man behind me. It was finally over. I let my eyelids fall, I felt a great surge of relief flow through me

I opened my eyes, to see Mr Sandhammer seated behind his desk. Yeah, as if that would work, I would not even be able to clear his desk, more likely I would land flat on my face. My vision finished, I allowed myself to a brief chuckle.

"You find this to be amusing, Mr Kale?"
Heh, yeah I suppose I do, its just all so

fucking hysterical insn't it? He was so paranoid that he even had a Servitor sitting at his desk. I could feel its mind, it was fragmented, weak. Sandhammer, though his mind was like clockwork. Each piece fitting perfectly. I turned, to face Sandhammer, who was stood behind me in his right arm, pointed at me, was an Executioner shotgun. Hmm.

"I have no answer Mr Sandhammer."

"Well thats quite enough of this I think."

Mr Sandhammmmer raised the shotgun to his shoulder, now with the business end pointed away from me I stiffened. With a twirl of his moustage, Mr Sandhammer began to explain the situation to me.□□□□□

"You see Mr Kale, a man in my position must take precautions The Servitor, Miakis, has served as a decoy for me many times in the past. A simple technique, but extremely effective." Mr Sandhammer began, as he twirled his moustage with his free hand as he walked smartly over to his desk. "I wasn't sure if you would take the bait, considering your Psyker abilities. Hmm, I must say I am impressed. You are the first to have seen through Miakis here..."

The Servitor, Miakis, turned its head to face Sandhammer I saw that it had a very good likeness of the Rogue Trader for a face and indeed, did have a spare arm holding a cocked shotgun. Sandhammer nodded, and the Servitor rose from the seat and took position in the corner of the office.

Sandhammer sat behind his desk, placing his own weapon down on the desk as he flashed me a grin before leaning back in his chair. "You are quite, different to the Mercenaries who have worked for me in the past, Mr Kale.. You say your prayers, you don't get drunk and pass out in the canteen, and the rest of my crew is quite fond of you." He chuckled, before waving his hand dismissively. "In fact, if it wasn't for this 'psyker' problem, then you may very well be the best mercenary I have ever hired."

"The very fact your still alive after four weeks with my crew is quite something after all." I noticed a twinkle in his eye. Something's not right. He seemed to be stalling, but why?

His eyes locked with mine, I dared not blink. He had a small smile on his face, he looked very pleased with himself.

I felt that I had no choice, with a grimace, I used IT. I felt the flash of pain behind my eyes, the encroaching feeling of bile in my stomach. There. At the forefront of his mind Ohmi's 'gift' heh. Clever girl, I never suspected a thing. And something else. I immediately withdrew from his mind, as Mr Sandhammer's smile faded slightly. He suspects. I did my best to keep my face placid, hiding the pain. "What do you plan to do with me?" "It would seem that you are in luck Kale, I

still need your expertise with Xeno Technology to recover the RESTRICTED . And if you continue to behave, I may even let you go free when we are finished." I grimaced, but it was still better than I had expected. "Now, Mr Kale, if you would be so kind as to get out of my office. Oh and, be prepared for landing, we just entered High Orbit over Charadon." Shit, now it made sense. Ohmi expected him to kill me.

*****MESSAGE ENDS*****

Attached pictures are in the 'Pictures corner' Pictures kindly provided by <http://lodiz.deviantart.com/> Lodiz of Sweden. :D

You can reach the author at: Crazy8osguy@yahoo.co.uk, or visit his home page, at <http://crazy8osguy.deviantart.com/>

Maximum Ride: 9/11

By: Brittany Miller

Subject: Maximum Ride

I

I love dangerous things. This isn't a statement; it's a truthful and obvious fact. Prove it? Well I'm up to that challenge. In the past few months, my life has been a complete HELL. People in white lab coats have been chasing me and my five close friends who are really considered my family members all across the world, Erasers mutant freak failures, though, I really shouldn't be talking... have almost killed us definitely more than one time, and right now...right this VERY second, I was up in the sky at more than twenty thousand feet up in the air. How? Ahahaha...well like I mentioned...

I'm a mutant freak failure.

I flapped my wings at a steady pace, loving the feeling of wind all around me. I glanced around me and saw my friends my flock my family soaring with me through the sky.

Fang. My right wing man. Dark, short and shaggy hair, piercing eyes, and jet black wings that stood out in the sunset colors around us. He glanced over at me and caught my gaze, then gave a little smile. My best friend.

Iggy. Our bomb maker that cooks super good even though he's blind. Same age as Fang and I. He flew at a steady pace, a peaceful look on his face.

Nudge. The talker who was like my sister, at eleven years old. She looked over at me and grinned. "Hey! Max! When are we going to land? I'm really hungry. I bet the others are also. Can we stop somewhere where there's Mexican food? Suddenly I'm

craving it really bad! I..." I've trained myself to tune her out once in a while when needed.

The Gasman, or "Gazzy" as we called him. Iggy's partner in crime and mischief, and the big eater. Eight years old. "I'm also hungry!!" Of course he was.

And lastly, Angel. My six year old cute as could be little girl. I practically raised her.

Okay, we done with introductions now? Good.

"Hmmm..." I said, thinking of a place to eat. I glanced down and saw the lights of a town ahead. "There! We can stop there."

Gazzy and Nudge cheered, and then we tilted a bit and started to descend slowly. We hadn't seen any Erasers or any other horrible scientist people chasing after us in a day or tow. A record for us! We always had to be high alert when going into a town...or really...we were always on high alert.

All of us tucked in our wings and landed on the outskirts of the small desert town. I glanced at everyone, then nodded a little and walked down the streets.

"Oh!! A Mexican restaurant!!" Nudge squealed happily. "I knew there was going to be one!! I just knew it!! Oh, Max?! Can I please, please, please have some chips and salsa? And maybe fried ice cream!! I've never had one of those!!"

I laughed a little. "Sure, Nugde...let's go. Remember, stay alert guys."

Everyone nodded and they followed me as I walked into the Mexican restaurant, lit dimly with red and green lights, foreign music playing in the background. We sat at a table, close to the window, away from the doors, and in the very back. I dug into my pockets, getting out all the cash I had out and counting it under the table. Ouch. This might be our last time eating out for a

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I shivered a little and pulled my jacket tighter around me as we flew over the beautiful New Jersey scenery. Trees of yellow, red, orange, and green were laid out below us, along with meadows and rivers that snaked through forests. The sky was a clear blue and the September air was cool up high in the air.

A perfect morning.

“It’s so pretty here!” Nudge exclaimed happily, grinning. “There’s all these different colors, and the pure blue sky, and so much more!!”

“I wonder if New York City’s food is any good...” Gazzy wondered out loud.

Iggy laughed. “Of course it is!! Do you know how big New York is?! It’s HUGE!”

“How would you know?!”

“I listen to a bunch of peoples’ conversations, Gazzy.” He laughed.

I rolled my eyes and smiled, glad that everyone was enjoying themselves.

Angel gasped. “LOOK!! There it is!! I can see it!!”

Fang smiled a little as everyone got really excited.

Seriously, we’ve never been to a big city. I mean, we’ve been to them, but haven’t stayed for long. This time, I planned to stay until the Erasers found us. Ha, what do you think about THAT for caring about your family? Am I good or what? Okay,

anyways...

Buildings were literally everywhere. There wasn’t a spot on the ground where there weren’t buildings! How much did these people have to build, anyways?! Oh wait! I see a park! Thank goodness!

“Let’s land there, guys!” I said, pointing.

We landed in what was called “Central Park” not a minute later. It seriously looked like a forest, which was a HUGE plus for us. All of us sat in a tree together, spread out on the thick branches.

I leaned back and closed my eyes, sighing of relief. It felt good to be surrounded by tall trees, the peaceful sounds of birds and

“Max? I’m hungry!!”

Dang, how much do these kids need to eat?! Three or four thousand calories a day?! Oh wait...ahaha...we really do need to eat that much a day. And that’s when it’s nice temperature, plus not getting into any fights.

“Alright...” I muttered. “Let’s rest for a couple minutes, then we can head into the city.”

As soon as they couldn’t stand it anymore from being hungry even Fang was complaining about it! we cautiously went out into the streets.

New York City was huge I tell ya. As we walked down the sidewalk, the buildings towering above us almost blocked out the sky. It kinda makes you claustrophobic...which would make us crazy claustrophobic.

Gazzy came running up to me, grinning. “Look Max!! Look what I found!!” he held up a piece of paper.

Blinking, I took it. “What is it?” My eyes widened and so did Fang’s behind me. Call us lucky, but Gazzy just found us a 100 dollar bill. Wow! Hopefully we would have this luck throughout all our stay here! ...psh, I doubt it.

We stopped by a hotdog vender and got

Understand why we were really jumpy now?

Nudge and Angel were at the edge, looking through those microscope stand things that were drilled to the cement ground while Iggy and Gazzy were seeing how much damage they could do if they blew it up. Of course.

I glanced at Fang, tense. The muscles in his neck were tight and anyone could tell that he was nervous and uncomfortable. We had to get out of here soon.

“Alright kids!” I heard a father say. “It’s 8:45! We need to...”

“Max! Look!!” I heard Nudge say in an anxious voice. I ran over quick, Fang on my heels.

“What is it? What’s wrong?!”

Nudge pointed. “Is that plane supposed to be flying that low?”

I looked, then gasped a little.

Before any of us could even think, the loudest explosion in the world filled the air. The top of the building shook and I stumbled. Nudge grabbed Gazzy and Angel as Fang grabbed my arm.

The first thing that went through my mind was: Iggy and Gazzy. But then I remembered that plane.

I looked at Angel. “What happened?!”

Angel coughed as thick, dark gray smoke filled the air. “The plane crashed into the North Tower! A terrorist!”

I heard screams and stumbled to the edge of the tower, then my eyes widened in horror. A plane had crashed into the tower next to us and caused a huge explosion.

People ran screaming. They all crowded at the stairs, then the top of the building was empty except for the six of us.

My eyes burned and I breathed in ash, coughing. We had to get out of here. But the smoke was so thick even we could barely see.

“Ugh...g get out of here!!” I yelled over all the noise. Gazzy managed to get in the air and I winced. “Everyone meet at the ocean!!” Angel managed to follow Gazzy and they disappeared.

Okay. Deep breaths. Try and concentrate.

I slowly took in what was around, above, and below me. The North Tower, right next to us, was on fire from a plane crashing into it. Iggy, Fang, and Nudge stood next to me, waiting for an idea to come to me. Below us, I could hear screaming and crying of people on the ground, plus the yells of the ones in both of the towers. Smoke was all around us, along with pieces of ash floating around.

We needed to get out of here. But how?

I looked over. “Iggy!! Nudge!! You guys jump off and trying to find safety!”

I knew Fang wouldn’t leave my side for one second as I watched the two obey the command and jump off, disappearing.

I looked at Fang and he nodded. “Let’s go.”

But before either of us could move, another explosion filled the air. This time, it was right below us. The South Tower shook under our feet and I stumbled, then fell to the cement. Fang cursed, looking around fast.

“Another one?!” he yelled, then got a mouthful of ash in his mouth and choked.

I quickly got to my feet, going over to Fang. All of a sudden, I hated □New York City.

“We need to get down on the ground!” I yelled to him. He nodded and wiped his mouth. I ran to the edge of the building and jumped off, feeling the rush of air all around me. I sighed a little, then my wings snapped out and I flew away from the Twin Towers, Fang behind me.

I just hoped the others were alright. And that Fang and I would get out of this alive.

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The air around Fang and I was so hot and particles of burning ash kept hitting our wings, that we were forced to land on the ground. It wasn't any more safe on the ground either. People were going crazy. Some were taking pictures, some video recording, and others just standing there with their mouth open, staring.

□The two of us ran into an alley, hiding and ducking for cover. We folded in our wings tight. At least we didn't have to worry about people noticing us, since the terrorist attack was, you know, kind of a big deal right now.

Right now, I was surprisingly calm. On the other hand, Fang beside me was freaking out still. We had seen bombs in our lives, of course. But not this big. Plus the people around us were making it worse.

I would say it had to have been an hour past, and then all hell broke loose.

I heard people starting to scream again and I ran out of the alley into the street out of curiosity. I gasped out loud, eyes wide. One of the towers started to collapse from the top.

Glass shattered and concrete crushed with

metal. A "popping" noise sounded as ash and dust clouded around the descending building. Fang yanked me back into the alley and crouched against the wall, his body shielding me. Dust hit us hard and chunks of concrete fell all around.

Ash and debris was literally up to my knees and I coughed hard against Fang's chest. I could hear him breathing unevenly. We needed to get out of here, and quick.

Two problems. One, there was so much ash everywhere that we couldn't get a good running start to get in the air. Two, we couldn't even breathe, much less fly.

I don't know how long it was, but finally we tried to take off into the air, using the top of a building. Just as we were in the air, the other tower burst into more flames and started to collapse.

Oh just GREAT!

We managed to get into the air, but blasts of ash hit us again. We hung in midair for a minute, coughing and hacking, then got high enough where the air was clear.

I breathed hard, gasping in the fresh air. Fang stayed beside me, also breathing fast.

"I hope everyone is o okay..." I muttered, tilting and flying off. Fang followed me and nodded silently.

Okay, so seriously. Barely anything freaks me out or gets me into a shaken state of mind. But this...this pushed me head first into a damaged mental state. Fang and I just escaped from a huge terrorist attack by a hair, and I didn't have a clue if everyone made it to the ocean safely.

As we flew, our lungs cleared out and we were able to breathe normally again. My eyes still stung a little, but otherwise, we were physically okay.

That's until I realized Fang was literally dripping blood.

"Fang!! You're bleeding!" I yelled, diving over to him. As usual, he protested and tried to tell me it was fine, but then as we landed on the rocky shore of the ocean, I found a huge piece of metal sliced into his

back.

CRAP!!!

This was bad. Really bad. I knelt beside him on the sand and examined it, licking my lips nervously.

“We need to get you to a hospital...”

Fang shook his head. “N no...”

I swallowed hard, then with all my strength it was hard to do this, trust me... I yanked the metal out quick.

To all you doctors out there, don't tell me how I'm such an idiot and I should've taken him straight to a hospital. Didn't you hear me mention that in the first place?! Besides...it wasn't really bad...I think...

Fang yelled loud, his hands digging into the sand. He grit his teeth as blood poured out of the wound. “Nn...”

I quickly ripped off a thick piece of my shirt and tied it around his torso after getting the little chunks of metal out of it.

He had probably gotten the metal in him when he had thrown himself at me as the first tower collapsed.

Ugh, what was I going to do with him?!

I tore strips off my pants and also tied them around it, making a huge bandage.

“Just hang in there...” I mumbled, laying him down on his stomach on the ground.

He groaned, trying to be tough. I smiled a little despite the situation.

A couple minutes later, the rest of the flock found us and I sighed of relief. They were all just fine, but in total shock. Then the shock increased even more when they saw Fang.

Nudge looked at me, worried. “We need to take him to a hospital, Max...you know we should.”

I put a hand to my head. “I know...”

Fang glared. “No!!”

I smirked at him, laughing. “Yes, we are. Let's go guys.”

~

Fang eventually recovered, but it took him a couple months to start walking again. A huge, awesome scar formed on his back and he was secretly proud of it. The flock was proud of it.

I was proud of it. Proud of him.

He's my hero...

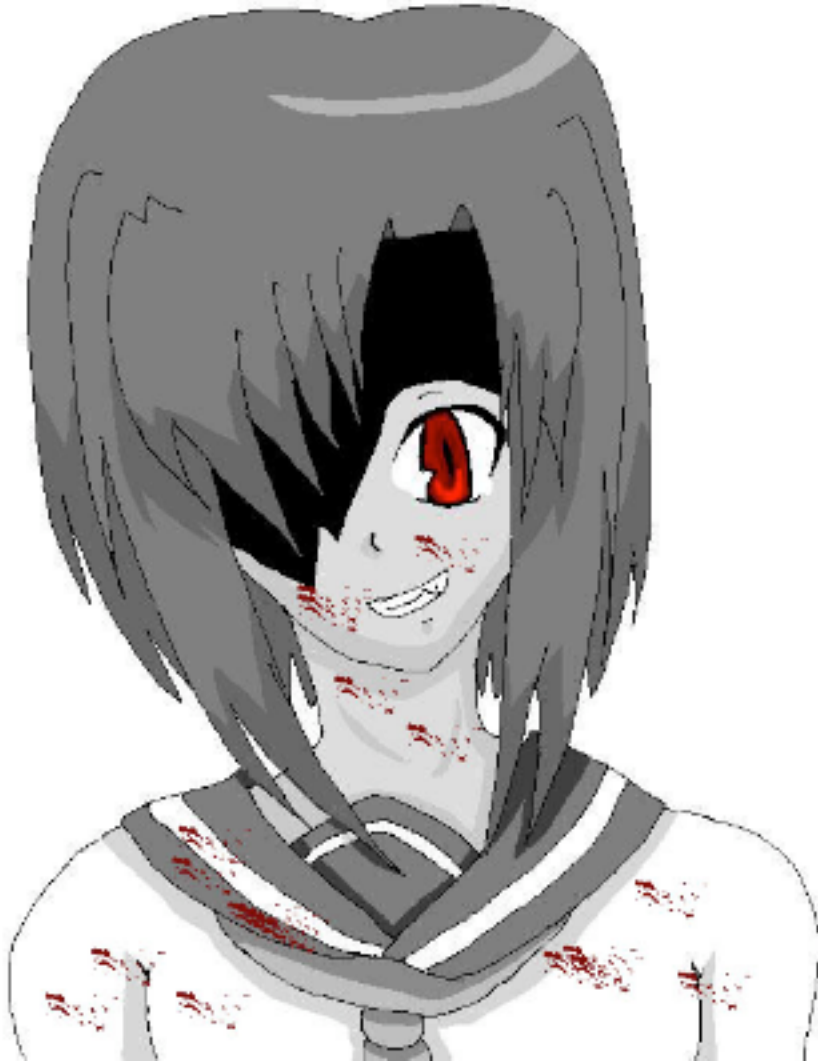
The End

Author's comments: none

E mail address: ilovetheocean_05@yahoo.com Homepage: none.

Pictures Corner

The following two pictures, of Rena Ryuguu from Higurashi No Naku Koro Ni and Robin, of Batman and Teen Titans fame, are from Miss Amber M. of <falloutboyxgirl3@yahoo.com>

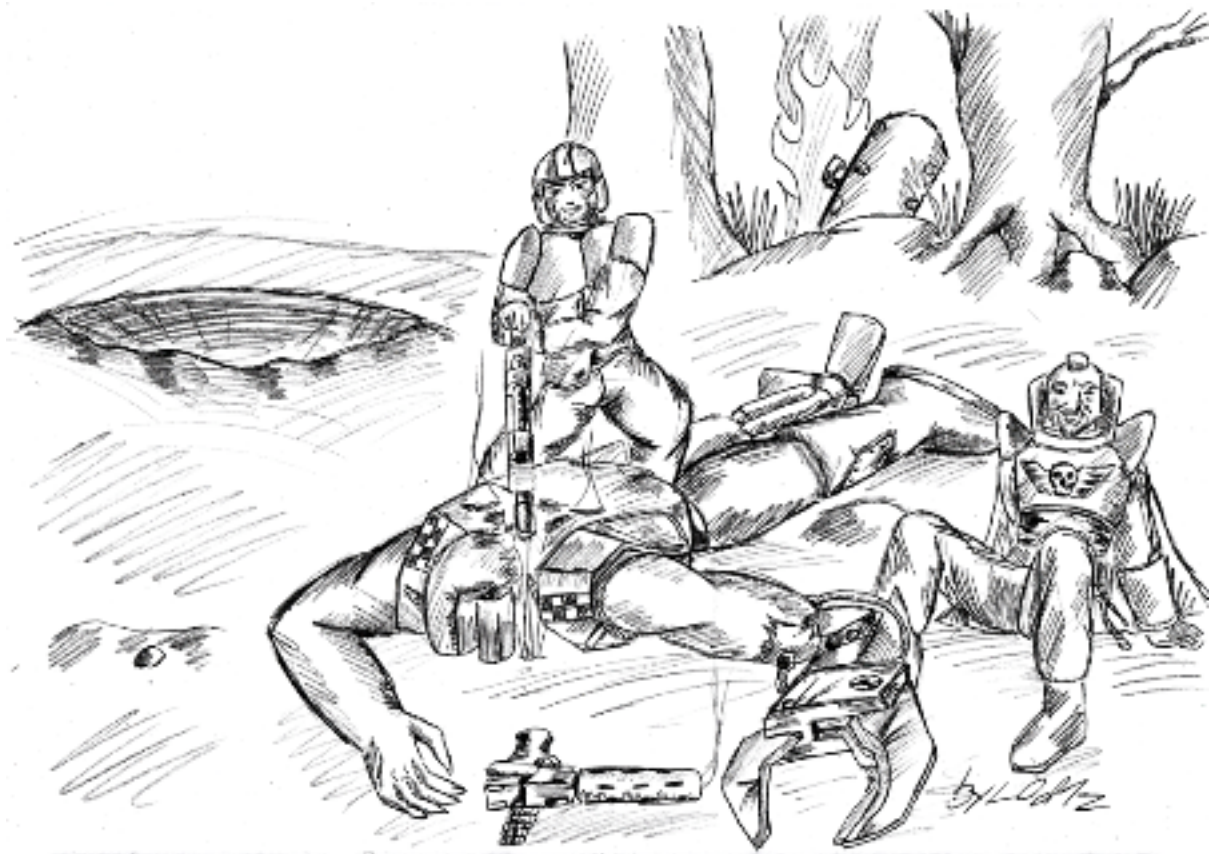




Robin



The following three pictures are provided by <http://lodiz.deviantart.com/> □Lodiz of Sweden; they are of Jon Taylor's story In His Emerpro's Service:





Websites of Note

Warhammer 40,000 fanon wiki:

http://warhammer40kfanon.wikia.com/wiki/Warhammer_40,000_Wiki

A few guys got together and created a wiki of fanon characters, vehicles, places, battles, and organizations; very friendly people, and some very interesting stuff there. I highly recommend you go and take a look.

Bleach fan fiction wiki

http://bleachfanfiction.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

I'm not into Bleach, but this seems a great site for those who are.

'The' fan fiction wiki

http://fanfiction.wikia.com/wiki/Fan_Fiction_Wiki

Personally, I think these guys got a bit of an attitude, but it's an invaluable resource if you want to know what other fan fiction writers are up to.

Casting Call

Like what you see? I sure hope so.

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Previous issues are available for free download at: <http://www.lulu.com/johnsstories>

Fan Fiction:

Got a great story you want to share? We'd love to read it: send contributions as text in the body of an e mail in the following format:

Subject line: *Contributing.*

First line: *Author's name, e mail address, Author's home page;*

Second line: *Genre WoD, Naruto, Warhammer, etc. , Story name, Word count;*

Text of Story.

Author's comments.

Send any pictures associated with the story as attachments to the e mail; unless otherwise stated, they'll be included in the Pictures Corner.

Now, I can't say this too many times: any stories you submit are still yours: I'm not asking for any exclusive rights; if it's your story, you can do whatever you want with it.

Cover Art:

Absolutely necessary; cover art has to be of the young lady on the cover, in costume from something with fandom Star Wars, Star Trek, Harry Potter, etc : original drawing here: [http://jochannon.deviantart.com/art/Leanna Magazine Mascot 139944247](http://jochannon.deviantart.com/art/Leanna+Magazine+Mascot+139944247)

Other fan art:

1, Poetry:

Poetry is no problem, just so long as it follows the same guidelines as fiction.

2, Pictures and Drawings:

Pictures and drawings may be published by arrangement.

Original fiction:

I am not opposed to original fiction, if you have a story you want to publish here; but this is for fanfiction, so any original writings will have to take back seat.

Fiction Submission Guidelines:

1, Length:

Up to 3,000 words is optimum; I'm willing to go up to 5,000 words; longer stories can be published as serials by arrangement.

2, Foul language:

In moderation, I have no problem with vulgar language; it depends on how much, and how it's used: if your characters have a conversation and curse two or three times, that's fine; if there's hardly a sentence in the whole story they don't curse, that's a problem.

3, No netspeak:

If one or two characters speak in netspeak, that's no problem, but the body of the story has to be recognizably English.

4, Format.

Do NOT use indents: double space between paragraphs;

All text will be published in the same size and font, so any fancy formatting tricks won't work. Sorry.

5, Editing:

I will not edit your stories; they will be published exactly the way you submit them. By the same token, I will not fix typos.

6, Sex:

It's normal, it's natural, sex will not get your story disqualified, but NO pornography!

6.1, anything even hinting of pedophilia will be thrown out immediately.

6.2, stories touching on rape will have to handle it very delicately.

7, Spelling:

If you have a spellchecker, use it: like I said, I won't fix typos.

8, Property:

I'm not asking for any exclusive rights: any story you submit is still yours: I'm not even looking for first printing rights; I'm asking for non exclusive printing and archival rights.

In simple language? I'm asking for permission to publish your story in the magazine, and to archive the story so people can go back and read it again.

9, Re publishing:

If a story's already published, on DA or Fanfiction.com or elsewhere, that's fine; as long as you own it, you can submit it.