

CAPTAIN GAGE

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - PLANETOID

SUPERIMPOSE: "A.D. 2289"

The planetoid is closing in on Earth, which is in b.g. A fleet of starships from the Circle of Allied Systems is heading toward the planetoid. Communications chatter bounces back and forth between all the vessels.

INT. STARSHIP C.A.S. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

The BRIDGE CREW sit at their respective posts, which are lined with touch-control panels. The red alert sounds. The bridge crew stares at a hologram of the planetoid. At the command post sits CAPT. LORENA SANCHEZ, 47.

SANCHEZ

This is Capt. Lorena Sanchez of the Circle of Allied Systems starship MacLeod.

At the tactical station sits CADET NILES M. GAGE, 20.

GAGE

Hey, who do these assholes think they are?!

SANCHEZ

At ease, Cadet Gage. At ease.

GAGE

Yes, ma'am.

EXT. PLANETOID - SURFACE - DAY

A rock opens and a coblar (CONcentrated Blast of Light Amplified by Radiation) cannon rolls out of it. It fires a bolt of light. The cannon recoils.

EXT. SPACE - FLEET

The bolt strikes the MacLeod.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

Some of the instrumentation touch panels flicker.

SANCHEZ
Return fire, Mr. Gage!

GAGE
Yes ma'am!

Gage touches a control.

EXT. SPACE - PLANETOID

The MacLeod's cannons release bursts of light energy at the planetoid, disabling the enemy cannons. Other laser cannons on the planetoid's surface return fire as the other starships also open fire.

Explosions rock the surface of the planetoid as the coblar blasts rain down on it. Another cannon shot strikes the MacLeod. It sets off a small explosion on its outer hull.

EXT. SPACE - MACLEOD

An explosion knocks the captain to the deck. Gage whirls around in his seat and looks at the fallen captain in disbelief. He whirls back to his console and fires another blast at the planetoid. He leaps out of his seat and touches a control on one of the command chair's arms.

GAGE
Bridge to sick bay! The captain's hurt. Medics! On the double.

O.S. MEDIC
Right away.

Cadet Bauers opens up a compartment near the exit and pulls out a first aid kit. He rushes to Gage with it. Another blast from the planetoid rocks the ship. The two cadets pop open the first aid kit and look at its contents. The exit doors open. Two NURSES, one a human male and one a robot, rush to the captain with a gurney. Gage and Bauers glance at each other.

BAUERS
It's all yours, Gage.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

Niles.

BAUERS

Linc.

They shake hands.

GAGE

We'll get through this, Linc.

The nurses lift Captain Sanchez onto the gurney and start to roll her to the exit.

GAGE

Will she be all right?

ROBOT NURSE

She'll be fine. If we survive.

Gage returns to his post.

GAGE

I didn't mean to insult you last week, Captain. You just want us all to be our best. Now we've got no choice. I can't believe in this day and age there are still people all over the galaxy no better than the tyrants we've all read about in the history books.

BAUERS

You've heard what happens when these guys board, right?

GAGE

No prisoners. Are we gonna let these creeps attack our lush, peaceful homeworld, starting with my hometown of Orbitropolis? To say nothing of giving their own species a bad name?!

BRIDGE CREW

Hell, no!

GAGE

We're too young to die! Let's live to see the galaxy!

(CONTINUED)

BRIDGE CREW

Hell, yes!

GAGE

I for one want my own ship someday,
like many of us.

BAUERS

I just want to retire someday.

GAGE

So let's protect our dreams and
defend our homeworld, people!

The bridge crew CHEERS.

Yet another hit rocks the MacLeod.

GAGE

Spank their asses! I mean, return
fire.

EXT. PLANETOID - DAY

Coblar blasts rain on its surface, destroying more cannons.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

GAGE

Ramming speed.

The bridge crew stare at him in disbelief.

GAGE

Pull up at the last minute in hopes
they'll retreat.

EXT. SPACE - PLANETOID AND FLEET

The MacLeod speeds toward the planetoid.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

The communications instrumentation buzzes with the voices of
the commanders of the other ships.

EXT. SPACE - PLANETOID

The MacLeod races ever closer. The planetoid starts to retreat.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

GAGE
Pull up! Success. I hope.

EXT. SPACE - MACLEOD

She turns to rejoin the fleet. The planetoid opens fire on the ships again. They return fire.

EXT. SPACE - PLANETOID AND FLEET

Earth now looms large in b.g. A larger planetoid JUMPS out of hyperspace and blasts the first planetoid to space dust, sending a shock wave in all directions. Chunks of the planetoid ricochet off of the ships. One starship, the C.A.S. Gossamer, is sent cartwheeling toward Earth by the shock wave.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

Gage throws his hands in the air.

GAGE
What the shit?!

EXT. SPACE - LARGER PLANETOID

It JUMPS into hyperspace and out of sight as quickly as it arrived.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

The bridge crew exchange confused looks. Gage shakes his head.

GAGE
All that for nothing?! What kind of universe is this?

Bauers looks at his instrumentation. His jaw falls open.

(CONTINUED)

BAUERS

Holy shit!

Gage spins around to face Bauers.

BAUERS

The Gossamer's been knocked into Earth's gravitational pull. And she appears too damaged to pull out!

GOSSAMER COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER O.S.

Mayday! Mayday!

GAGE

Let's go get them. Prepare tractor beam.

He sits back in the command chair.

EXT. SPACE - EARTH ORBIT

The MacLeod streaks into Earth orbit. The Gossamer tumbles into the atmosphere. The MacLeod swoops in front of it. A tractor beam emits from the stern and catches the Gossamer. A city skyline sprawls far below.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

GAGE

Full forward thrust.

EXT. EARTH - SKY - DAY

The MacLeod leaps back into orbit with the Gossamer in tow.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

Gage sits back in the command chair.

GAGE

MacLeod to Gossamer. You okay?

GOSSAMER CAPTAIN (O.S.)

A bit scratched, MacLeod, but no major injuries. Any idea what just happened?

(CONTINUED)

GAGE
(chuckling)
Your guess is as good as mine.
Capt. Sanchez is in sick bay, I'm
afraid. They say she'll be all
right.

INT. GOSSAMER - BRIDGE

The instrumentation flickers. A CREW MEMBER sprays a fire extinguisher on a flaming panel. The GOSSAMER CAPTAIN, a human male in his mid-40's, sits at his post.

GOSSAMER CAPTAIN
Then who's this?

GAGE (O.S.)
Cadet Niles Gage, sir. I had to
take command to save both your
vessel and mine.

GOSSAMER CAPTAIN
Incredible, son! You won't be a
cadet for long. You've saved over
200 lives here. We can't thank you
enough.

INT. MACLEOD - BRIDGE

Bauers HIGH FIVES Gage before returning to his post.

GAGE
Likewise, sir. All in a day's work.

GOSSAMER CAPTAIN (O.S.)
Amen.

EXT. SPACE - C.A.S. FLEET

The remaining ships head toward Earth, their aft thrusters burning blue-white. Looming over it in b.g. is ORBITROPOLIS, a space city inside a slowly-spinning double wheel.

EXT. SPACE - PLANET SIGMA NU

A junkyard world orbited by a horizontal ring of junk in turn orbited by a vertical ring of more junk. Between the rings orbits the star cruiser Venturer. SUPERIMPOSE: "22 years later."

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage, now 42 with longer hair and sporting a goatee, enters the bridge and sits at the command post. At the communications post sits stout, blonde-haired APRIL ROBERTS, 51.

APRIL

I've encrypted a communique from the planet Roveltus, Captain.

GAGE

Good job, Roberts. Let's have a look. April touches a control pad and the holographic image of an 8-foot-tall alien blinks to life.

FLEET ADMIRAL STITO

This is Fleet Admiral Stito of Roveltoid Star Central calling the Circle of Allied Systems. CAS Europa has not arrived for the peace talks. Failure to appear may further strain diplomatic relations between Roveltus and the Circle. We demand that you contact the Roveltoid Star Empire at once. Fleet Admiral Stito out.

GAGE

Switch off and save, April.

APRIL

Yes, sir. At the helm sits XAHNA, a female from a planet of highly evolved plants.

XAHNA

Roveltus. Last time I visited that planet, I'd just sprouted from the birthing patch.

GAGE

I was just a boy when I last visited Roveltus, but that's the last thing on my mind.

APRIL

What is it, Niles?

GAGE

My old academy buddy Linc Bauers commands Europa. I even took his

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (cont'd)
suggestion to get my own ship when
I was downsized out of the Circle.
Shipwide, April.

GAGE (CONT'D)
Attention, this is your captain.
CAS Europa has apparently gone
missing en route to peace talks
with the Roveltoids. So it's off to
Roveltus as soon as Chief Engineer
Baldrica returns from Sigma Nu.

INT. VENTURER CORRIDORS

PERSONNEL groan in disappointment.

EXT. SURFACE OF SIGMA NU - DAY

A panorama of junk spacecraft, robots and myriad other junk.
The junkyard "dog," an exoskeletoned space creature, paces
back and forth nearby. Someone tosses it a hunk of meat and
it starts wolfing it down. CELESTE BALDRICA, 40, a
voluptuous redhead, browses the junkyard.

CELESTE
Some of this junk is so old that
it's angular. None of the smooth
curves and sweeping lines of the
last century or so.

She spies an android kit and picks up the head just as a
human JUNK COLLECTOR approaches.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
Alas, poor Yorick.

JUNK COLLECTOR
I'll show you a great deal. Even
comes with attack mode.

CELESTE
Well, he looks mighty new to be in
a junkyard.

JUNK COLLECTOR
Oh, his owner was such a prick.
Claimed he left him here to teach
him a lesson. Can you believe it?

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

Oh, how awful.

JUNK COLLECTOR

The only reason I bought him was in hopes of finding a nicer buyer. I've even been maintaining him.

CELESTE

Well, friend, you've got yourself a new customer.

JUNK COLLECTOR

Hey, fetch a dolly.

The junkyard "dog" stands on its hind legs and strides off toward one of the dollies. Gage's voice comes from Celeste's uniform belt.

GAGE (O.S.)

Gage to Baldrica.

Celeste taps the communicator on her belt with her hand.

CELESTE

Baldrica here.

GAGE

Celeste, get back up here ASAP. We've picked up a communique from Roveltus.

CELESTE

Great. More Roveltoid problems. Be aboard shortly. And I won't be alone.

EXT. SPACE - VENTURER

As Celeste's starspeeder approaches her.

INT. STARSPEEDER

As Venturer looms large in the main viewport.

INT. VENTURER ENGINEERING DECK

PERSONNEL scurry around as warning lights blink red from various areas of the deck. Celeste pushes YORICK into the engine room on a cargo lift just as Gage enters.

CELESTE

So what's going on with the
Roveltoids this time?

GAGE

Star Central says Europa never made
it to the peace talks. Yorick here
even comes with attack mode.

Gage gives Yorick a once-over and strokes his goatee. He sighs.

GAGE

Attack mode. Hope this is a good
investment of your share of the
petty scrip. How soon can we have
him on line?

CELESTE

With Josie's help, shouldn't take
more than two hours. After which
I'll be taking a nice, long shower.
I don't suppose you'd like to join
me?

GAGE

I'll take it under consideration.

Celeste shrugs and watches Gage leave the engine room with his hands behind his back.

CELESTE

Last chance, Gage.

EXT. SPACE SIGMA NU

Venturer leaves orbit and STREAKS into hyperspace.

INT. SHIP'S LAB

Celeste places Yorick's head, with the scalp temporarily removed, onto his neck. She extends one hand to 16-year-old Science Office JOSIE MING, who hands Celeste a small tool. With it, Celeste places a chip in Yorick's brain. Josie nods her approval. Yorick's eyes switch on like snowy TV screens.

(CONTINUED)

Celeste fine tunes his opticals so the snow forms pupils and irises. Josie pokes Yorick's fingers with a tool and each finger winces. Josie hooks Yorick's brain to a computer bank.

CELESTE

Break out the champagne, Josie.

INT. GAGE'S CABIN

Circle of Allied Systems medals hang on one wall, and souvenirs from various planets decorate the cabin. In a bottle on a mantle contains a model of Venturer. Gage gets up from his bed and eyes a three-dimensional picture of himself and Linc Bauers in their Circle uniforms. Gage touches on his wall com.

APRIL (O.S.)

Bridge.

GAGE

Ms. Roberts...April...report to the captain's cabin on the double. I'm feeling lonely.

APRIL (O.S.)

Yes, sir.

The cabin doors SLIDE open.

GAGE

Roberts, belay until further notice.

APRIL (O.S.)

(sighs)

Acknowledged.

Gage quickly touches the wall com off. Celeste and Josie enter with Yorick, who now wears a Venturer jumpsuit.

CELESTE

Capt. Gage, Josie and I would like you to meet Venturer crew member 52: Yorick. Yorick, this is Capt. Niles Gage. Gage and Yorick shake hands.

GAGE

Welcome aboard, Yorick.

(CONTINUED)

YORICK

Thank you, sir. It'll be a pleasure working with all of you.

YORICK (CONT'D)

Celeste has fed me all the necessary data on Venturer and on you. She installed a Rosetta chip also, so there ought to be no problem understanding alien languages.

JOSIE

He'll make a wonderful security officer.

GAGE

That he will. You ladies have done it again.

Celeste bows.

JOSIE

Thank you. If I may be dismissed, sir, I've got some projects I'd like to start.

GAGE

By all means.

Josie leaves.

GAGE (CONT'D)

So, Yorick. Let's take you to the bridge.

INT. A VENTURER CORRIDOR

Gage and Celeste watch Yorick look in all directions as the three of them head down the corridor. He occasionally touches the walls.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage, Celeste and Yorick enter.

GAGE

Excellent. Yorick, this is April Roberts, communications. April, Yorick.

April stands up and extends her hand. Yorick kisses it.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (CONT'D)

Here at the helm we have Navigator Xahna.

Xahna stands up and shakes Yorick's hand.

XAHNA

Good to know you, Yorick. May you find working with these animals as much a pleasure as I have.

YORICK

I see. You aren't an animal. You must be a plant.

XAHNA

That's right. Never thought I'd go from nightclub singer to star pilot. Thanks to the captain. Gage touches on a holographic star map, which blinks on around the bridge crew.

GAGE

As for our mission, we're headed here. He points to one of the countless stars on the map.

GAGE (CONT'D)

The Roveltus system. This is Where Capt. Bauers's ship was headed. since I'm no longer with the Circle of Allied Systems, I don't have to follow their rules and regulations. A CAS captain is restricted as to how much risk he or she's allowed to take. Has to send crew members on the dangerous missions. Got dull.

GAGE

Either way, I'd've helped Capt. Bauers and others like him somehow.

INT. CELESTE'S CABIN SHOWER

Celeste rinses her body one last time before touching the shower off. She exits the shower and steps between drying units on either wall. Once she's dry, she reaches for the ceiling and the ship's computer slides her bathrobe onto her arms. As she ties her robe shut, she enters her bedroom and touches on her wall com.

(CONTINUED)

SHIP'S COOK (O.S.)
Venturer Interplanetary Food Court.

CELESTE
Galley, Celeste here. Hey, send me
a bottle of wine. How about some
Arcturan mauve?

SHIP'S COOK
One bottle of Arcturan mauve coming
up!

CELESTE
Grazzi.

Celeste touches the wall com pad again.

DR. BLACKWING (O.S.)
Life Center, this is Dr. Blackwing.

CELESTE
Steve, it's Celeste.

BLACKWING (O.S.)
What can I do for you, Celeste?

CELESTE
I just ordered a bottle of wine,
and I was looking for a man to
share it with.

A small hatch opens in the wall to reveal the bottle.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
Why, here it is now.

BLACKWING (O.S.)
I see. I can get away for awhile.

CELESTE
I'll be looking forward.

Celeste places the bottle of wine on her table. She takes
two glasses out of a cabinet and places them next to the
wine. She then stands in front of her mirror.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
Niles Gage, eat your heart out.

INT. VENTURER CORRIDOR

DR. STEVE BLACKWING, 45, a tall Native American man, arrives at Celeste's door. It SLIDES open and Celeste stands in the doorway still in her bathrobe.

CELESTE
(sensual)
Come in and have a seat, Doctor.

Celeste leans against the inside of her doorway and ushers him in, eyeing him. He approaches the table.

BLACKWING
Arcturan mauve. Blackwing sits at the table as Celeste pours him some wine. She places his glass back on the table and doesn't take her eyes off him until she sits across from him and fills her glass.

BLACKWING (CONT'D)
So to what do I owe this occasion?

CELESTE
Just thought we could both use some company.

BLACKWING
Can't say I'm not flattered.

CELESTE
Flattered. That's a start.

Celeste takes a sip of wine and Blackwing follows suit.

BLACKWING
What do you think of our latest mission? Unless we find Europa intact, the captain's setting himself up for disappointment.

CELESTE
Yeah, yeah. I didn't invite you here to talk about him.

BLACKWING
I'm serious, Celeste. The take from last week's mining expedition may be handsome, but we all know it wasn't worth the life of Crewman Michaels.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

Neither was the sample Josie managed to obtain of that creature that killed him. But I'm serious too. It gets lonely out here sometimes.

DR. BLACKWING

Don't tell me. You'd like a physical.

CELESTE

All right, in a sense yes. Don't tell me you never get lonely or horny.

BLACKWING

So you'd like to have a thing. Why didn't you say so?

CELESTE

(chuckling) Why didn't I say so?

Celeste's wall com BEEPS.

GAGE (O.S.)

Gage to Celeste.

Celeste puts her head on the table. She sits up, gulps down some wine and goes to answer the call.

CELESTE

Celeste here.

GAGE (O.S.)

I need you to report to the briefing room in 10 minutes.

CELESTE

Be there in 10 minutes. Out.
Celeste returns to the table and slams down the rest of her glass of wine.

BLACKWING

If it has to be.

CELESTE

Just consider what we were talking about.

(CONTINUED)

BLACKWING

Definitely.

CELESTE

Frustrated me again, didn't you,
Gage?

INT. VENTURER BRIEFING ROOM

Gage, Celeste and Yorick sit at the conference table. Gage and Celeste each hold a cup of coffee.

GAGE

Since the Roveltoid Star Empire and the Circle of Allied Systems will be looking for Europa. So Xahna, dispatch a warning buoy as soon as we leave.

XAHNA

Yes, sir.

GAGE

And remember how anal-retentive the Roveltoids are. Don't volunteer anything. Xahna nods.

GAGE (CONT'D)

They contact you, of course you cooperate. Until then, lay as low as possible. Only as a last resort do we want to waste our precious time filling out their damn bureaucratic paperwork.

CELESTE

Amen.

GAGE

And, Yorick, my friend. We of course are bringing you on your first mission with us in case of any life-threatening circumstances.

YORICK

Understood, sir.

GAGE

I just hope we aren't throwing you to the wolves. We've got no idea what's happened to Europa. Any questions?

(CONTINUED)

XAHNA

I think you've covered everything.

GAGE

All right. Let's go.

INT. A VENTURER CORRIDOR

Xahna and Blackwing escort Gage, Celeste and Yorick to the starspeeder hangar.

BLACKWING

Have a safe trip.

CELESTE

Come here, you big lug.

Celeste hugs Blackwing.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

We'll pick up where we left off
when we get back.

BLACKWING

Count on it.

GAGE

All right, everyone. We'll be back
as soon as possible.

Gage, Celeste and Yorick enter the hangar. Xahna and Blackwing stand by as it SLIDES shut.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

As the starspeeder launches from the hangar.

INT. STARSPEEDER

Gage pilots the craft as Celeste and Yorick man the other stations.

YORICK

So you and Capt. Bauers met at the
Circle Space Academy.

GAGE

Sure did. Aboard the MacLeod .

(CONTINUED)

YORICK

So there's been all this tension between Roveltus and the Circle ever since that incident in which some CAS astronauts boarded a Roveltoid ship and accidentally killed the passengers and crew by trying to wake them from their hibernation cycle.

GAGE

And they won't let the Circle forget it.

Gage gives his controls a puzzled look.

GAGE (CONT'D)

My instrumentation's acting up. My gauges are running backwards. Or running too fast.

CELESTE

My chronometer's slowing down. And I recently recalibrated everything. The starspeeder buckles.

Gage tightens his grip on the controls.

GAGE

Whoa! What's going on? Celeste examines her instrumentation.

CELESTE

So far, temporal distortion.

GAGE

I can't seem to steer. Come on, work with me here.

The starfield ahead starts to spin like a giant whirlpool as Gage fights with the controls.

EXT. STARSPEEDER IN SPACE

It starts to tumble toward the spinning starfield.

INT. STARSPEEDER

Gage looks at one of his scopes.

GAGE

Meteor shower closing in on port side.

YORICK

I think we'll always remember this mission.

GAGE

Let's see what happens on autopilot.

Yorick opens his mouth to say something, but he suddenly starts moving very rapidly. Instead of words, all that comes out of his mouth is a chattering sound like a recorder rewinding. His arms shake wildly and his pupils briefly break up into snowy images. Gage looks surprised.

GAGE (CONT'D)

What's wrong, Yorick?!

YORICK

(voice slowed down)
I--doon't--knoow.

EXT STARSPEEDER IN SPACE

The starfield spins even faster.

INT. STARSPEEDER

Celeste's chronometer runs so fast that it finally short-circuits. Its glass casing pops out.

EXT. SPACE

As it turns into an immense spiral into which the starspeeder PLUNGES.

EXT. SURFACE OF PLANET RYGON PRIME - DAY

Gage's eyes suddenly snap open. He springs to his feet and whirls around to find Celeste standing up a few feet away.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

Where the hell are we? Where's the starspeeder?

GAGE

I don't know, but this place doesn't look familiar, does it?

Gage and Celeste look around them to see an alien city. THREE-JAWED CREATURES mill around, some walking other species of aliens on leashes. Huge rocks, dotted with windows, loom in the sky topped with additional architecture. Each rock is connected to the ground with a beam of light. A gondola-like vehicle climbs one beam. Holographic billboards, some on the sides of skyscrapers, dot the cityscape. All of them show an ornately-dressed three-jawed creature spouting alien-invasion paranoia.

CELESTE

Gage, look.

Two of the three-jawed creatures line an alien of another species against the wall of a building and SHOOT it to death with photonic weapons. Celeste GASPS.

GAGE

What the hell?! What is this?

Gage and Celeste turn to find a handful of three-jawed creatures pointing weapons at them.

GAGE (CONT'D)

Capt. Niles Gage Earthship Venturer.

ENFORCER #1

Tell it to His Excellency, Rygon.

GAGE

Would he by any chance know how we got here? Any of you? There was another of us, but somehow we've gotten split up.

ENFORCER #1

This way.

The Enforcers escort Gage and Celeste to one of the gondolas. Everyone climbs in and the gondola heads up to one of the rocks in the sky. Gage and Celeste take in the skyline. It's lined with buildings of all different sizes and dotted with small flying craft.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

So why was that creature executed just before you found us?

ENFORCER #1

It was a threat to our world order.

CELESTE

How?

ENFORCER #1

It gave other outworlders ideas about rebelling against Rygon.

GAGE

And why would it have a problem with Rygon?

ENFORCER #1

It invaded our world. It came the same way you did. Out of the sky. We put it in its place in the name of Rygon.

GAGE

Can't wait to meet him. Just can't wait.

ENFORCER #2

Maybe we ought to execute them too. Enforcer #1 shakes his head.

INT. SKY FORTRESS

The gondola slows to a stop and its hatch opens. The Enforcers escort Gage and Celeste into a sprawling atrium decorated with what appears to be statues of various alien life forms, as well as more three-jawed creatures. Many have looks of fear or agony frozen on their faces.

ENFORCER #1

These statues used to be living beings before they opposed Rygon.

ENFORCER #2

That one is, or I should say, was, Rygon's stepfather.

GAGE

I've got a bad feeling about the decorator, much less Rygon.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

You aren't alone.

ENFORCER #1

Here he is. The Enforcers lead Gage and Celeste to RYGON, a three-jawed Rygonian MALE who climbs to the top of a staircase that lead sup into the room. MARDONA, the rough equivalent of a 14-year-old female, flanks him.

ENFORCER #1 (CONT'D)

Rygon, Your Eminence. We found these creatures in the open city.

RYGON

You may get up. Enforcer #1 stands up and faces Gage and Celeste.

GAGE

So you're Rygon. From the billboards.

RYGON

The very one. Welcome to Rygon Prime.

GAGE

Not a warm welcome.

RYGON

What do you think, Mardona? MARDONA, the young female, clutches Rygon's arm.

MARDONA

More humans. I've already got some of them.

GAGE

What? Other humans on this world? And you've got some of them?!

RYGON

They invaded Rygon Prime.

GAGE

Look. I'm Capt. Niles Gage of the Earthship Venturer. Some of the people we're searching for are human. But now we also need to find our ship and one of my crew and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (cont'd)

then we can leave. Any idea how we got here?

RYGON

A vague idea, but now that you're here, you can join your own kind. And many other kinds.

GAGE

Where are they?

RYGON

Many of them are at the Pound, where they're bought and sold as pets.

CELESTE

Pets?! What the hell?!

RYGON

And some of them are taken to the moon of Rygon 2. Gage steps forward and Enforcer #1 gets in his way.

GAGE

Look, Rygon of Rygon Prime. I'm here on a mission of peace. In my corner of the galaxy, peace depends on bringing those people back. Then we just want to go home!

RYGON

The people of Rygon Prime don't cooperate with you freakish outworlders. We don't negotiate with invaders.

GAGE

Invaders?! We never even knew of this place.

CELESTE

And I wish we still didn't!

RYGON

Take them to the Pound and the other to Rygon 2.

GAGE

Now wait a minute! I didn't come here to kiss your dictatorial ass!

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE
Give him hell, Gage!

The Enforcers grab Gage and Celeste and drag them. Rygon and Mardona laugh.

GAGE
We aren't even armed!

CELESTE
What are you people afraid of?!

MARDONA
I'm actually glad my parents failed to pay their taxes, Rygon. Otherwise I wouldn't be here with you now as collateral.

RYGON
And you're the best collateral I've ever collected.

EXT. SPACE - A STARLESS VOID

The starspeeder cruises among a variety of ships drifting unmanned.

INT. STARSPEEDER

The starspeeder log runs on one screen, showing Gage and Celeste fading away right after the starspeeder plunges into the cosmic whirlpool.

EXT. SPACE - UNMANNED ALIEN SHIPS

The starspeeder weaves between two of the alien vessels and approaches another ship.

INT. STARSPEEDER

Yorick touches on a scanner. It magnifies the outer hull of the other ship. The nameplate reads: C.A.S. EUROPA. Yorick clenches a fist.

YORICK
Eureka!

INT. THE POUND - RYGON PRIME

A subterranean complex lined with corridors of cells containing outworlders behind a transparent blue-tinted forcefield. Two KEEPERS escort Gage and Celeste to a cell.

GAGE

So Rygon didn't like his stepdad?

KEEPER #1

His mother had more than one stepfather. What you saw was the latest.

GAGE

And as free-thinkers tried to oppose Rygon, he did more and more interior decorating. The Keepers stop at an occupied cell.

KEEPER #2

We thought we'd let you see one of your own kind before placing you in your own cell.

GAGE

(sarcastic)

How thoughtful of you.

Keeper #1 touches a panel next to the cell threshold and the forcefield DISAPPEARS. They push Gage into the cell and turn the forcefield back on. Gage gets up to his feet and comes face to face with a MIDDLE-AGED BLACK WOMAN. The Keepers drag Celeste further down the corridor.

GAGE

Where are you taking her? Hey!

He turns back around to the woman.

GAGE (CONT'D)

I know you. You're the President of the Circle.

PRESIDENT

Captain Niles Gage?

Gage nods.

GAGE

Are you all right, Madame President?

(CONTINUED)

PRESIDENT

Considering the circumstances, yes.

GAGE

Where're the rest of the Europa passengers and crew?

PRESIDENT

Scattered. Some are here in separate cells and some have already been sold as domestic pets or slaves.

GAGE

The bastards!

GAGE (CONT'D)

Capt. Bauers. Where is he?

The President slowly turns away and lowers her head.

GAGE (CONT'D)

Madame President?

She lifts her head but doesn't turn back around.

PRESIDENT

He led an escape attempt. It failed. He hijacked a vehicle and Rygon himself blew it up. Gage stares in disbelief and slowly shakes his head.

Celeste covers her mouth.

GAGE

I'm the godfather of his children.

He picks up a chair and throws it at the forcefield. It stretches the forcefield and then bounces back.

GAGE (CONT'D)

I'm the godfather of his children! The President bursts into tears and rushes up to Gage.

PRESIDENT

Captain! Listen to me!

GAGE

Where's Rygon?! I'm gonna burn this shit hole down first, then Rygon's fortress!

(CONTINUED)

The President shakes Gage.

PRESIDENT

Pull yourself together! This is why Capt. Bauers was transporting us to the peace talks. So our worlds don't have to be like this one. We've got to try and finish his -- our work.

GAGE

You're right. And I'll be there to make sure there's peace in our sector. Not like this God-forsaken excuse for a planet. Someday soon the Circle of Allied Systems and the Roveltoid Star Empire will break bread. Just like Linc and I used to. Just like my crew members and me do.

PRESIDENT

That's the spirit, Captain.

KEEPER #1

Time's up.

GAGE

Oh, up yours!

KEEPER #1

Up mine? Up my what?

The President hugs Gage.

GAGE

We'll get out of this one way or another.

PRESIDENT

I'm sure we will.

GAGE

For putting aside our differences. and for Linc.

The forcefield disappears and the Keepers storm into the cell. They escort Gage out into the corridor.

GAGE (CONT'D)

You know, you could save space if you put more than one of us in each cell.

(CONTINUED)

KEEPER #1

Eventually Rygon may instruct us to do so, but we'd probably still keep you humans apart. We can't have you conspiring.

GAGE

Is Rygon scared? Understandable.

They march Gage to the cell where Cleste is now incarcerated. They give him a shove.

KEEPER #1

All right, into the cell! Keeper #2 turns on the forcefield.

GAGE

I'll get you, Rygon!

KEEPER #1

You aren't the first to make that claim.

CELESTE

Gage, what happened?

GAGE

They just let me talk to the President of the Circle. She says Linc died trying to spring the ambassadors and his crew.

He bites his lip.

CELESTE

Oh, God, no! How are you holding up?

GAGE

Barely. Just barely.

He punches the palm of his hand with his fist.

CELESTE

You delivered his first child.

Gage nods and closes his eyes tightly for a second.

GAGE

What'll become of his family?

Gage and Celeste sit quietly.

EXT. RYGONIAN TRANSPORT IN SPACE

It heads toward Xar, Rygon Prime's moon.

EXT.XAR - SURFACE - SLAVE CAMP

Celeste and a handful of other aliens are herded to the slave camp aboard the slave ship by Rygonian deck hands. An overdressed Rygonian female receives them.

REESTA

I am Reesta, wife of Rygon.

CELESTE

How many wives does this creep have?

Reesta scowls at Celeste, then approaches her.

REESTA

You're now on Xar, which is the moon of Rygon Prime. The atmosphere's effects vary depending on your physiology. Some become intoxicated and crave a return visit when brought back aboard. Some mutate, some die. In the meantime, try to enjoy your stay.

CELESTE

Whatta cunt.

REESTA

Have you something to say, alien?

CELESTE

To you? You're the last life form I'd want to talk to. Unless you're more helpful than your husband.

REESTA

You dare insult not only me but Rygon?

Reesta STRIKES Celeste, who stumbles to the ground. Reesta drags her to her feet, struggling, by the hair.

INT. THE POUND - RYGON PRIME

The Keepers escort the aliens into a mess hall. Gage grabs a tray and lines up behind other aliens. When he makes it to the window at the front of the line, a Rygonian food server plops a helping of food on his tray. Gage looks at it, and the food server hits him on the head with a serving utensil.

FOOD SERVER
Keep the line moving!

Gage grabs the food server by the arm with one hand. Keeper #1 puts a weapon to Gage's head. Gage lets the food server go.

GAGE
He isn't worth it.

Gage turns and spots the CAS President sitting down with a tray of food as another Keeper stands watch near her table.

KEEPER #1
Forget about her.

Keeper #1 escorts Gage to a table on the other side of the mess hall where a FOUR-ARMED ALIEN sits.

GAGE
So what is this slop?

KEEPER #1
Rygonian table scraps.

GAGE
Why the hell am I not surprised?

KEEPER #1
Just be glad we feed you at all.

GAGE
Oh, my mouth's just watering.

Gage sits at the table across from Four Arms.

GAGE (CONT'D)
Greetings.

FOUR ARMS
Hello.

GAGE
So what brings you here?

(CONTINUED)

FOUR ARMS

I was on my way to visit my family when the universe all around me started spinning and swallowed me up. No sign of my vessel since. Everyone I've talked to here has told me similar things.

GAGE

So this phenomenon must have some sort of multiple conduits in various areas of the galaxy, if not the whole universe.

FOUR ARMS

I've overheard the Keepers saying the scientists of this planet are developing technology to understand the phenomenon.

GAGE

(raising eyebrows)

You don't say. He leans in.

FOUR ARMS

The Keepers don't think we listen to them. They underestimate us.

GAGE

Yes they do. So family's important to you too.

FOUR ARMS

What else is there?

GAGE

I've got a family on my homeworld, but I also have a family of sorts that I travel the galaxy with. I'm getting back with them one way or another.

FOUR ARMS

I hope all of us outworlders can.

INT. THE POUND

Rygon strides down a corridor and observes the aliens in their cells.

(CONTINUED)

RYGON

Are these creatures giving you any problems?

KEEPER #1

Nothing we haven't been able to handle, Your Luminescence. Rygon stops by Gage's cubicle and Gage sticks his face into the forcefield, scowling at Rygon.

RYGON

Don't worry, alien. You'll get used to your new accommodations.

GAGE

I don't know if I'll be around here that long. I will, however, be outliving my good friend Capt. Linc Bauers! Another Rygonian behind Rygon observes the aliens and stops at Gage's cell. Keeper #1 approaches him.

KEEPER #1

This one may be a problem, Vidazz. Thinks he's got something to say.

VIDAZZ

Interesting. Something to say about what?

KEEPER #1

Mainly about somehow getting off this planet. Some of us Keepers overheard him earlier in the mess. You're a scientist. You could always experiment on him.

GAGE

A scientist?

VIDAZZ

My government-approved profession.

GAGE

You're the first scientist I know of who's come here since Rygon had me stuck in here yesterday. We may very well get along. So. What do you think of that monument known as Rygon?

(CONTINUED)

VIDAZZ

Can't say.

GAGE

Oh, that's right, of course you can't. Not here and now, that is.

VIDAZZ

You've got to be the most audacious alien I've seen here at the Pound so far.

GAGE

Niles Gage, captain of the Earthship Venturer.

VIDAZZ

I'm Vidazz.

KEEPER #1

You aren't considering purchasing him, are you, Vidazz?

GAGE

And you say you're a scientist?

VIDAZZ

Correct.

Gage steps back and eyes Vidazz. He strokes his goatee and nods at Vidazz.

VIDAZZ

I'll take this one. Niles, I believe it was?

GAGE

Captain Niles Gage.

Two Enforcers storm up to Gage's cell. The forcefield blinks off.

EXT. RYGONIAN SKYLINE - DAY

Vidazz's vehicle flies between the skyscrapers.

INT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

Gage rides shotgun, studying the vehicle's instrumentation as well as the surrounding city.

GAGE

I've got a vehicle something like this on my homeworld. Cost me 1400 scrip. Not cheap since the Great Price Rollback of 2145.

VIDAZZ

Price Rollback?

GAGE

Inflation. Almost ruined my world. Something had to be done about it, especially if my world was to take part in interplanetary commerce.

VIDAZZ

Here on Rygon Prime, everything's on loan from the government. They can take it away anytime they want.

GAGE

Sounds like Rygon. So what is your opinion of Rygon? Mine's low for obvious reasons.

VIDAZZ

Many of our citizens don't like him, but those who have tried to overthrow him have failed. So how did you end up on Rygon Prime?

GAGE

We were coming home from an asteroid-mining expedition. It's how my crew and I finance our other voyages. We stopped at a junkyard world, and from there we ended up investigating an area of space that turned out to be unstable. So here I am.

EXT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As it descends to a street lined with houses that all look alike. A vehicle similar to Vidazz's cruises overhead.

(CONTINUED)

VIDAZZ
The Enforcer patrol.

GAGE
So this is the Rygonian suburbs.

EXT. SPACE - XAR

Rygon Prime's moon. A shuttle from Reesta's slave ship heads for it.

EXT. SURFACE OF XAR - DAY

Rygon Prime looms large on the horizon. Areas of translucent rock dot the landscape. One such area sprawls up to a lake with an islet. A village stands cut from translucent rock and the slave shuttle lands just outside it.

EXT. TRANSLUCENT VILLAGE - DAY

The deck hands march the aliens out of the craft, re-enter it, and take off. Celeste ambles toward the village.

CELESTE
So that's it? We're supposed to just exist here until that bitch sends her goons back for us? If she even sends them back for us? And what then? Whatta waste of life. Celeste takes a walk through the village. It's little more than a network of caves. She enters one of them.

INT. TRANSLUCENT CAVE

Celeste sees something in a corner of the cave and approaches it. It's a skeleton.

CELESTE
Oh my God. That isn't right.

EXT. VILLAGE

Celeste and the aliens carry the skeletons out of the village and toss them in a pile. Then they pick some large leaves and fruit from an area outside the village where vegetation grows. They return and Celeste piles some leaves on the floor. She lies on them.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE
Comfy cozy enough.

Celeste gets up and leaves the cave.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

The other aliens are milling around.

CELESTE
Excuse me, but if anyone can
understand me, what do you think of
planning a surprise for Reesta?

The aliens start talking on top of one another. It taxes Celeste's Rosetta chip, so she touches her ear. She hears some of them ask what kind of surprise.

CELESTE
Looks like I've got everyone's
attention.

CELESTE
It'll take awhile to figure out,
but it doesn't look like any of us
is going anywhere indefinitely.

EXT. VIDAZZ'S HOUSE RYGON PRIME - NIGHT

An Enforcers rides a Rygonian beast of burden past it.

INT. VIDAZZ'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Paintings of Rygon hang on the walls. The furniture is sleek but simple. Gage, hands behind his back, stands looking at the paintings.

GAGE
So how do you stand existing in a
society where nothing's really
yours? Not even your life? Total
conformity?

VIDAZZ
It's the way.

GAGE
It's the way. It's the way. I
wouldn't dream of trying to change
things on this world. I won't have
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (cont'd)
the time anyhow when I find a way
off this planet. It all just
reminds me of what I've read about
in history books.

VIDAZZ
How do you think society could
survive without conformity?

GAGE
Without conformity? I don't know,
but I'm glad I don't have to live
on a world where there's nothing
but conformity.

VIDAZZ
So how much conformity did you
demand from your crew?

GAGE
I do demand just enough to run a
tight ship. No more, no less.
Everyone's ideas are listened to.
He wasn't only trying to help his
kind but all intelligent beings
where I come from. What do I tell
his family, huh?! What would you
tell them? What, no friends?

VIDAZZ
I've got some friends. And I was
married once.

GAGE
Do tell.

VIDAZZ
She committed suicide. She loved
someone else, but the government
arranged for her and me to be
married. I knew she still saw him
behind my back.

GAGE
All the more reason for me to find
a way off Rygon Prime. He gestures
at a painting of Rygon.

GAGE (CONT'D)
Who painted these?

VIDAZZ

I did. My own interest is art, but I'm only allowed to display art that glorifies Rygon. Let me show you my other works.

Vidazz takes down a painting of Rygon, revealing a touch panel. He touches it and a secret door in the wall opens. Vidazz leads Gage through the door which leads to a basement. The walls are lined with various paintings. One is a group portrait of various outworlders and Rygonians. Vidazz looms over them, arms outstretched. Everyone in the painting is smiling. Gage slowly approaches the painting and stares at it.

GAGE

This one is more like it. I mean the others are great, but...

VIDAZZ

It came to me from a dream I've had.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

in orbit around Roveltus.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Xahna enters the bridge and sits at the command post. A distant silvery speck gleams in the bow viewport.

XAHNA

Let's see them up close, April.

A holographic image blinks on of the Roveltoid ship.

XAHNA (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Lovely. Audio.

ROVELTOID COMMANDER (O.S.)

Roveltoid battle cruiser Rindar to Earthship. Your warning buoy is unauthorized.

XAHNA

Yellow alert. Intership channel, April.

(CONTINUED)

APRIL

Open, ma'am.

XAHNA

Earthship Venturer to Rindar. We're investigating the likely disappearance of the CAS Europa.

The image of the Rindar switches to that of her commander.

ROVELTOID COMMANDER

Not CAS Venturer, just Venturer?

XAHNA

That's right. The warning buoy is just that, Commander. Not a weapon of any kind.

ROVELTOID COMMANDER

You'll have to obtain a permit to place another warning buoy in our star system. Rindar out.

The holographic image of the Roveltoid Commander switches to that of the Rindar.

VASQUEZ

Rindar's weapons targeting buoy, ma'am.

XAHNA

Tractor beam.

EXT. SPACE - RINDAR

As its swoops down on the buoy. Its weapons fire and the buoy explodes.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

VASQUEZ

Too late to use the tractor beam.

Xahna rolls her eyes.

INT. VIDAZZ'S HOUSE - RYGON PRIME

Gage lies on Vidazz's sofa trying to fall asleep but tosses and turns. He sits up. He then gets up and drags himself down to the basement, activating the lights. He sits on the floor in front of the painting of the Rygonians and the outworlders.

INT. VIDAZZ'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Vidazz searches for Gage. He sees the basement door is open, so he goes in. Gage is asleep on the floor in front of the painting of the Rygonians and the outworlders. Vidazz turns to leave.

GAGE

Going to work?

Vidazz turns.

VIDAZZ

Going to work, yes.

GAGE

I'd like to talk with you about something.

VIDAZZ

What is it?

Gage stands up and approaches Vidazz.

GAGE

I heard some interesting things at the Pound. Some of the aliens got here the same way I did. The stories all sound alike.

VIDAZZ

And?

GAGE

And, word is that people in your line of work are working on some way of counteracting the phenomenon that brought unsuspecting outworlders here.

VIDAZZ

It was supposed to be top secret. Apparently some of my people don't like that idea. GAGE Which leaves you in a position.

(CONTINUED)

VIDAZZ

What kind of position?

Gage approaches Vidazz.

GAGE

What do you think of us
outworlders?

VIDAZZ

I find outworlders fascinating. I
may even purchase another.

GAGE

Unfortunately, if you do, I'm sure
it can't be another human like me.
The way the Keepers acted at the
Pound. Maybe they're paranoid.

VIDAZZ

And what does all this have to do
with me?

GAGE

Help us outworlders get back to our
homeworlds. Get Rygon out of our
hair and vice versa.

VIDAZZ

Which means I could end up among
Rygon's decorations. Gage starts
pacing in a circle around Vidazz.
GAGE If Rygon were to catch you.

VIDAZZ

Which he likely would.

GAGE

If you stayed on this planet. Makes
sense, doesn't it?

VIDAZZ

Our technology's still in the
experimental stage.

GAGE

Why not take a day or so to think
about a little experimenting?

VIDAZZ

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

I understand.

Vidazz slowly climbs the stairs out of the basement while Gage watches him. He smiles.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

She looms large against a backdrop of stars.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

April looks closely at her instrumentation as Xahna sits at the command post.

XAHNA

Yes, April.

APRIL

You'll never believe this, but we just picked up Europa.

XAHNA

What?! Don't play with me.

APRIL

Absolutely not, ma'am. There are no life forms aboard, but Yorick is.

XAHNA

Put him on. YORICK (O.S.) Europa to Venturer.

XAHNA

Yorick! It's Xahna. What happened?

YORICK (O.S.)

You'll have to see for yourself as soon as I board. In the meantime, I got some help from Europa's computer.

XAHNA

Amazing! Welcome back.

INT. VENTURER BRIEFING ROOM

Xahna, Yorick and Josie sit at the briefing table watching Europa's log. The stars outside the bridge's forward viewport start to spin like a whirlpool. Everyone aboard the bridge of Europa suddenly dematerializes.

XAHNA

What do you make of it, Josie?

JOSIE

I've never seen anything like it.

YORICK

No idea what happened to any of them.

JOSIE

Apparently a space-time anomaly. The void you ended up in must have magnetic properties, Yorick.

YORICK

The coordinates of the anomaly are in the ship's computer of both the starspeeder and Europa, but how close can we get to those coordinates?

JOSIE

It would be a good idea not to get too close, at least until we can gather more information.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

As Xahna enters and stops at the communications station.

XAHNA

April, open up a channel to Roveltoid Star Central, licensing branch.

APRIL

Channel open.

XAHNA

This is Earthship Venturer to Roveltoid Star Central.

(CONTINUED)

SWITCHBOARD (O.S.)
Roveltoid Star Central switchboard.
How may I direct you?

XAHNA
I would like to obtain a space
research permit for this star
system.

SWITCHBOARD (O.S.)
Here you are.

A holographic image blinks on of a female Roveltoid clerk.

CLERK
Licensing and permits.

XAHNA
Yes, this is Earthship Venturer. We
were just advised that we need to
apply for a permit to explore this
star system. We're looking for a
missing vessel.

CLERK
Europa?

XAHNA
The very one.

CLERK
All right. We can transmit all the
necessary forms via this
communication frequency. To give
you an idea of their length, this
is the hard copy.

She holds up a thick stack of paperwork.

Xahna smiles.

XAHNA
Thank you so much, and may you be
ten feet tall when you come out of
hibernation.

CLERK
You're wonderful. I will now
transmit everything.

The hologram blinks off. Xahna sighs.

XAHNA

All that just to apply for a
permit.

EXT. SCIENCE LAB - RYGON PRIME - NIGHT

Vidazz's vehicle parks just outside the lab.

GAGE (O.S.)

Now you remembered to bring the
bypass, right?

VIDAZZ (O.S.)

I've got it. Don't worry. Once I've
got the data, we're gone.

Gage and Vidazz climb out of the vehicle and go up the steps to the rear entrance. Vidazz slides a small device into a slot and the door swings open. Vidazz leads Gage inside. Gage looks around quickly before entering.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Gage and Vidazz edge down a dimly-lit corridor to a room lined with wall-to-wall instrumentation. Vidazz sits in a chair and runs his hands over the controls. While Gage keeps looking around, holographic data windows spring from the panel and Vidazz touches one. Another window pops up and he shakes his head.

VIDAZZ

It isn't here.

GAGE

You sure? It isn't a set-up, a
hoax?

VIDAZZ

I assure you it isn't.

Vidazz stands and they move out of the room into another corridor. Gage keeps turning around and looking over his shoulder until Vidazz enters another room and activates more controls. More data windows pop up and Vidazz touches one. Another window pops up and Vidazz runs a hand over it. The data switches to some more data.

VIDAZZ (CONT'D)

Here it is.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE
What? Where?

VIDAZZ
Right here.

Vidazz points to the current data window. He waves a hand over the panel and the data blinks off.

VIDAZZ (CONT'D)
They've equipped a spacecraft with an invention that counteracts the effects of the phenomenon that's brought you and other outworlders here.

GAGE
How?

VIDAZZ
Apparently, it transports life forms here but traps machines such as spacecraft in a magnetic void. GAGE Which means it would trap artificial intelligences such as androids in the magnetic void.

VIDAZZ
Of course it would. Let's get to the craft.

GAGE
I'm with you.

INT. CORRIDOR

Just as Vidazz and Gage scurry into the corridor, an ALARM KLAXON SOUNDS. Gage and Vidazz freeze for a moment. then they rush down the corridor into a detachment of Enforcers. They turn and head the other way, but the Enforcers give chase.

INT. INSTRUMENTATION ROOM

Two Enforcers enter with weapons drawn. They look gingerly around at the walls and at the ceiling. Gage sneaks up on them and jumps them.

INT. LOBBY

Vidazz crouches behind a desk as another Enforcer passes through the lobby with weapon at the ready. He leaves without seeing Vidazz. Vidazz slowly stands up and spins around. Almost running into Gage, he stumbles back, startled. Gage offers him the weapon of one of the Enforcers he overpowered.

GAGE

Let's roll.

A blast from an Enforcer's weapon strikes the wall next to Gage. He and Vidazz return fire and bolt from the lobby as another blast almost hits Vidazz.

INT. CORRIDOR

Gage sneaks around a corner and looks around to see if the coast is clear. He nods for Vidazz to follow.

EXT. SCIENCE LAB - NIGHT

Gage and Vidazz bolt out of the lab and into Vidazz's vehicle. It takes off just as some Enforcers leap from the lab back door and open fire. Vidazz's vehicle ascends into the sky.

INT. VIDAZZ'S CRAFT

Vidazz runs his hands over his control panels.

GAGE

What are you doing now?

VIDAZZ

Feeding in the correct coordinates.

EXT. SKYLINE OF RYGON PRIME - NIGHT

Another vehicle dives out of the sky after Gage and Vidazz.

INT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

Vidazz looks at his instrumentation.

(CONTINUED)

VIDAZZ
Hold on, Niles.

EXT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As it dives between two buildings on its way toward the ground. Then it dives between two other buildings. They almost run headlong into another Enforcer transport.

INT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As Vidazz takes it back into the sky.

GAGE
WOO-HOO! Show 'em how it's done!

Vidazz gives Gage a puzzled glance and swings the transport out of the way of a skyscraper. The craft then passes right through one of Rygon's holographic billboards. Its image disperses for a split second.

EXT. RYGONIAN SKYLINE - SKYSCRAPER

As Vidazz's transport narrowly misses it. A pursuing Enforcer transport wings the side of the building, causing it to tumble out of control and into another building. It bursts into flames.

INT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

VIDAZZ
What are you having so much fun about?

GAGE
Are you kidding? I eat this sort of thing for breakfast! Any sign of the spaceport yet?

The vehicle shakes.

GAGE (CONT'D)
What the shit?!

EXT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As another Enforcer vehicle deliberately rams into it from behind, propelling Vidazz's vehicle forward.

EXT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As Vidazz steers it downward. The Enforcer vehicle stays right on Vidazz's tail and rams into it again as another Enforcer craft swerves in front of Vidazz's vehicle. GAGE
They're gonna box us in!

VIDAZZ

No they aren't.

Vidazz dives out of the way. The two Enforcer craft smash into each other head-on and burst into flames.

INT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As Vidazz tightly grasps the controls. He and Gage look in horror out the canopy as everything comes up at them.

EXT. VIDAZZ'S VEHICLE

As it skids on the ground, turning up plants and heading toward a building. The canopy slides open and Gage and Vidazz leap out just before the vehicle barrels headlong into the building. Its front end explodes as Gage and Vidazz look on.

GAGE

Damn! Now what?!

VIDAZZ (APPROACHING)

Are you all right?

GAGE

Sure. And you?

VIDAZZ

Fine.

GAGE

Damn, damn and damn!

Gage places a hand on Vidazz's shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (CONT'D)

I can never thank you for everything you've done. Are you sure you still want to help?

VIDAZZ

As sure as ever.

GAGE

I'm greatly in your debt.

VIDAZZ

No you aren't.

GAGE

I'm sure glad you took me in.

The sound of an Enforcer craft grows louder. Gage and Vidazz look around and then at each other.

Gage and Vidazz hide behind some trees just before the Enforcer craft lands near the wreckage. Two Enforcers step out and take a few steps toward the burning wreckage.

GAGE (CONT'D)

It's now or never, Vidazz.

They jump the Enforcers. Gage knocks one enforcer's weapon out of his hand and subdues him with two quick karate chops. Vidazz tries to follow Gage's example but the other Enforcer kicks his weapon away just as it falls to the ground.

Gage knocks the first Enforcer against the craft and rushes to help Vidazz, punching the Enforcer. He hits the ground. Gage and Vidazz climb into the Enforcer craft and Vidazz pilots it into the air just as another Enforcer shows up on a Rygonian beast of burden. She watches the craft take off and then looks at the wreckage.

VIDAZZ

Almost there.

EXT. RYGONIAN SKYLINE

As Vidazz's transport flies into the distance toward a...

EXT. RYGONIAN SPACEPORT

An island in the sky topped with runways and launch pads. Launch tubes are built into its sides. A craft darts out of one of the tubes.

Vidazz pulls his transport up to the experimental spacecraft, which is just a few times larger. Gage and Vidazz rush out of the transport and head for the spacecraft's gangplank. They run into an Enforcer disembarking and Gage roundhouse kicks him off the gangplank.

INT. EXPERIMENTAL SPACECRAFT

As Gage and Vidazz climb into the cockpit seats.

GAGE

You sure you know how to pilot this thing?

VIDAZZ

Of course.

Gage looks out the main viewport and spots an Enforcer transport approaching in the distance.

GAGE

Yep. Let's get the hell out of here!

Vidazz activates the controls and the instrumentation lights up. The engines start to hum.

EXT. RUNWAY

As the Enforcers leap out of their transport and open fire on the spacecraft. It rolls forward and into the sky as the Enforcers step out of its way.

INT. SPACECRAFT

As Gage heaves a sigh of relief.

GAGE

Now that was hairy.

VIDAZZ

The anomaly awaits us.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

You've really kicked some ass so far. Thank you.

He extends his hand to Vidazz. Vidazz looks at it a second and reaches out to it. Gage shakes his hand.

GAGE (CONT'D)

You really don't realize how much you're helping my cause.

VIDAZZ

Your peace mission shows how much you differ from Rygon's rule.

Vidazz examines the ship's guidance.

VIDAZZ (CONT'D)

Another ship's approaching. It's an assault cruiser.

GAGE

Sounds like it might be large.

EXT. SPACE - ASSAULT CRUISER

As it moves toward the speeding experimental craft and fires a bolt of light.

INT. EXPERIMENTAL CRAFT

Buckling from the impact.

GAGE

How much longer to the anomaly?!

VIDAZZ

Just ahead.

Another blast hits the craft just as the stars suddenly start spinning like a whirlpool.

GAGE (QUIETLY)

We're here.

They both withdraw in their seats and gaze at the anomaly as the craft enters it.

EXT. SPACE - ANOMALY

As the craft plunges into it.

EXT. SPACE - STARLESS VOID

The craft speeds into it and comes upon the unmanned vessels.

INT. CRAFT

As the unmanned vessels fill the main viewport.

GAGE

Slow up!

Vidazz compensates. The craft slows almost to a stop, narrowly missing another craft.

VIDAZZ

Amazing.

GAGE

So this is where all those aliens' craft are.

VIDAZZ

Looks like the experiment is a success.

GAGE

Where's Europa?

EXT. SPACE - STARLESS VOID

As the ship weaves between the unmanned vessels.

INT. SHIP

Gage nods knowingly and smiles.

INT. RYGON'S FORTRESS - CHAMBERS

Rygon is luxuriating in a plush chair listening to outworlders being tortured when a holographic image blinks on.

(CONTINUED)

ASSAULT CRUISER COMMANDER
Assault cruiser 2 to Rygon.

RYGON
This is Rygon.

ASSAULT CRUISER COMMANDER
Your Eminence, one of our
scientists has smuggled the
nonconformist called Gage into the
spatial anomaly.

RYGON
What?!

He throws his drink across the room.

RYGON (CONT'D)
You let them escape?!

ASSAULT CRUISER COMMANDER
We didn't let them. They just
escaped despite our best efforts.

RYGON
Put your nearest security officer
on!

ASSAULT CRUISER COMMANDER
Yes sir.

He nods and a security officer appears.

SECURITY OFFICER
Yes, Your Excellency.

RYGON
Kill your commander. I'm replacing
him with his first mate.

The commander shakes his head in horror.

SECURITY OFFICER
Sir?!

RYGON
You heard me!

SECURITY OFFICER
Yes sir.

The officer draws her weapon as the commander backs away.

(CONTINUED)

ASSAULT CRUISER COMMANDER
Your Greatness, I'm one of your
most faithful. I even helped you
kill those freedom fighters who hid
out on Xar.

The security guard shoots the commander point blank. He hits
the deck.

RYGON
Put your first mate on!

SECURITY OFFICER
Yes, Your Luminescence. She nods
and the first mate comes on,
looking horrified.

RYGON
First mate!

FIRST MATE
Yes sir.

RYGON
Congratulations on your new
promotion. And don't fail me.

FIRST MATE
Never.

The hologram of the first mate blinks off. Rygon gets up and
EXITS the chamber.

INT. SLEEP CHAMBER

Mardona lies in a bed as Rygon ENTERS. He sits at the side
of the bed.

MARDONA
Are you ready to tell me a bedtime
story, Rygon?

RYGON
All right.

INT. RYGON'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY (FLASHBACK)

RYGON (V.O.)

When I was an adolescent, Rygon Prime was known a Allayus. A
completely backward world as I would come to understand.

(CONTINUED)

ADOLESCENT RYGON ENTERS his home through the front door as his mother SHRIEKS. Rygon stops and listens. He slowly inches in the direction of the screaming. Someone STRIKES her as Rygon draws closer to the kitchen. He enters and a FIVE-JAWED MALE whose corpse is attacking Rygon's mother. He grabs her as she STRIKES him. He throws her against a wall as she screams. The male turns and glares at Rygon. Rygon's mother stops and looks at her son, and the male backhands her.

FIVE JAWS

What do you want? Get out or you'll
get the same!

RYGON'S MOTHER

Leave Rygon alone!

Rygon stands his ground, scowling at Five Jaws. He takes a step toward Rygon, who produces a sharp stone.

RYGON (V.O.)

It was at that moment my life would
change.

RYGON

I told you to carry one of these,
mother.

He rushes Five Jaws. His mother gasps as Rygon stabs the five-jawed male repeatedly. All five jaws open in shock as Rygon's mother screams. The five-jawed male stumbles to the ground. Yellow blood stains the floor.

EXT. RYGON'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

The front door opens and Rygon is pushed out onto the ground.

RYGON'S MOTHER

And never come back!

Rygon jumps to his feet.

RYGON

Someday I'll rule this planet and
I'll enslave freaks like him!

RYGON (V.O.)

I then began looking for followers
who felt as I did.

EXT. SURFACE OF ALLAYUS - STREET - NIGHT

A handful of Rygonians gather as Rygon rants and raves. BACK TO PRESENT

INT. RYGON'S FORTRESS

Rygon smiles.

EXT. SPACE - ANOMALY

As the experimental craft speeds out of it.

INT. EXPERIMENTAL SHIP

Vidazz checks his instrumentation for signs of other vessels.

VIDAZZ

Nothing yet. Wait. Picking up a larger vessel. Two, in fact.

Gage leans over to look at the scope.

GAGE

That's Venturer. And Europa!

VIDAZZ

I'm opening a channel for you to contact them. Go ahead.

GAGE

Venturer, this is your captain speaking.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

The bridge crew start buzzing. April happily opens the intership channel and smiles at Xahna.

XAHNA

Captain! You're all right! What about Celeste?

GAGE (O.S.)

We've got to search for her before we free the peace-talk ambassadors. I'll explain everything when I'm back aboard. So how did you find Europa?

(CONTINUED)

XAHNA

Yorick pulled that off, so we've
seen Europa's log. Bizarre.

GAGE (O.S.)

You don't know the half of it. I do
have a friend with me who'll be
helping us. Gage out.

Xahna and April look at each other curiously.

INT SPACE - VENTURER

The experimental craft approaches her. An airlock reaches
out from Venturer and attaches itself to the experimental
craft.

INT VENTURER

As Gage and Vidazz enter her via an airlock. Xahna meets
them, flanked by Yorick and armed security guards. Xahna
hugs Gage.

XAHNA

Welcome home, Niles.

YORICK

Welcome home, sir.

Gage and Yorick shake hands.

GAGE

Thank you. Good to see you made it
back too. Vidazz, meet my first
mate Xahna and my newest crew
member Yorick.

VIDAZZ

It's a pleasure to meet you.

XAHNA

Likewise.

YORICK

Good to meet you.

INT. VENTURER - GYM

Gage, sporting boxing gloves, hits a punching bag repeatedly.

GAGE

It isn't over, Rygon!

Xahna gingerly enters and stands just inside the entrance.

INT. VENTURER - SCIENCE LAB

Josie powers off some equipment.

JOSIE

All work and no play.

She opens a desk and pulls out a deck of playing cards.

JOSIE

Who wants to take a gambling break
with me and get cleaned out?

The wall com buzzes.

O.S. GAGE

Gage to Dr. Ming.

JOSIE

Yes sir.

O.S. GAGE

Come to the mess.

JOSIE

Aye-aye! It's so good hearing your
voice again!

She shoves the deck of cards back into the desk drawer.

EXT. XAR - CAVE

Celeste holds her head in her hands.

CELESTE

What the hell's in the atmosphere?

The cave transforms into a...

INT. EARTH - HOTEL

Celeste looks out a window. Flying cars buss the low skies.

CELESTE

I wish, but this is Xar, not Earth!

INT. EARTH - HOTEL - MASTER SUITE

Celeste watches in amazement as Gage sits across from another Celeste.

CELESTE

What? There I am! It's my job interview! What's going on?!

GAGE

Your resume's pretty staggering. You speak not only English and Italian, but Rovelt, and...

CELESTE

Well, thank you.

GAGE

This'll be your first engineering job on a privately-owned space vessel?

CELESTE

That's right.

GAGE

Your engineering job at Infinity Starlines lasted a few years. Impressive.

Gage starts to fade away. Celeste clenches her fists.

INT. VENTURER MESS

Gage, Xahna, Yorick, Vidazz and Josie are all having dinner together.

GAGE

History's at once fascinated and disturbed me since I was a boy. The things our race have done, over religious beliefs, a piece of land. We're a bit less petty these days. I know not everyone in the galaxy

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (cont'd)

has the same values as humans do,
but Rygon Prime still shocks me.

Our main source of income is deep
space mining. Once joined a mining
expedition with Linc. The take was
big enough for me to buy Venturer
in an auction. Mining module
already included and all. Being a
captain in the Circle, the crew saw
most of the action. Kind of a drag.

VIDAZZ

So what about your other sources of
income?

GAGE

Occasional privateering.

Gage lowers his head.

GAGE (CONT'D)

That's why people like Linc and me
joined the Circle. It taught us
everything we know.

JOSIE

Rygon Prime by no means sounds like
either a nice place to visit nor
live.

GAGE

Far cry from Vega 4, I can tell ya
that.

VIDAZZ

Vega 4?

GAGE

The lush, tropical planet where my
parents were stranded for months
when they were 17. They were on a
cruise liner that suffered an
engine explosion. Their escape pod
landed on Vega 4. Not a whole lot
to do but conceive their first
child.

Vidazz smiles.

(CONTINUED)

VIDAZZ

You mean...

GAGE

Yours truly. Since they became realtors, they've even bought and sold property on Vega 4.

JOSIE

I look forward to working with you in retrofitting Venturer with this new piece of technology you've brought us, Vidazz.

VIDAZZ

It'll be an experience for me too.

XAHNA

Captain, a word with you in private, please?

GAGE

Sure. Excuse us.

Gage and Xahna stand. She leads Gage to the other end of the mess.

GAGE

What is it? You've been quiet since Vidazz and I came aboard.

XAHNA

You know I'm deeply sorry about Capt. Bauers, but can we trust Vidazz not to be like Rygon?

GAGE

What are you insinuating, Xahna?

XAHNA

I realize you've known him longer than I have.

GAGE

In a short time he and I have already had a hell of a run.

XAHNA

Do we know what he's capable of?
GAGE I understand your concern, but we need him.

(CONTINUED)

XAHNA

Point taken. I hope you don't think I'm as prejudiced as Rygon sounds.

GAGE

Not at all. After dinner, we can figure out how to get Rygon out of the way.

Gage punches his left fist into his right palm and strides back into the mess. Xahna follows, with a quizzical look.

INT. VENTURER - SCIENCE LAB

Vidazz shows Josie blueprints for the spatial anomaly bypass.

GAGE (V.O.)

While Josie and Vidazz work on retrofitting Venturer...

INT. EUROPA

As Venturer crew members rush aboard Europa.

GAGE (V.O.)

We send some of our crew to man Europa. You, Xahna, will command her. We go to Rygon 2 and look for Celeste, then it's off to Rygon Prime.

INT. EUROPA BRIDGE

As Xahna approaches the command post.

INT. GAGE'S CABIN

Gage steps out of the lavatory in his bathrobe. He finds April lying on his bed. APRIL Thought you might like someone to unwind with. Gage smiles and approaches the bed.

EXT. XAR - TRANSLUCENT VILLAGE - DAY

Celeste stands on the banks of the lake, looking out at the horizon. She turns and starts walking along the banks. She brings a hand up to her head and falters.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (O.S.)

Celeste.

Celeste turns around and sees Gage standing about 30 feet away.

GAGE

It's me, Celeste. It's the captain.

Celeste stands looking dumbfounded at Gage.

CELESTE

It's you. It's really you. How did you do it? How did you get here?

GAGE

How did I do it? I jumped Rygon when he wasn't looking. Then the Enforcers tried to pull me off him, but I single-handedly held my own against all of them.

He starts doing karate chops and spinning kicks while Celeste watches with a smile.

GAGE

Then I leaped aboard a nearby escape craft and took it here. I had to blast a whole attack fleet out of the sky to make it here in one piece. But it was worth it just to find you.

Celeste gives Gage a puzzled look which turns into a smile.

CELESTE

Sounds a little farfetched, but who cares?

She rushes toward Gage, arms outstretched. Gage does the same. Just as they reach other, Celeste falls to the ground. She gets up and looks around. There's no one around.

CELESTE

I should've known. This damn air! She looks up at the sky.

CELESTE

Better not come back, Reesta.

Celeste looks up and sees a light in the sky.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE
Speak of the devil.

Celeste runs back to the village.

EXT. VILLAGE

Outworlders mill around as Celeste and Yaxar trots into view.

CELESTE
I'm leaving the village awhile in hopes of buying time if and when the Rygonians come to get us.

The confused outworlders start mumbling.

CELESTE
That way we might have more time to form some sort of plan. Anyone who wants to join us is welcome.

Most of the other outworlders approach Celeste and Yaxar while some stand their ground. A multi-eyed alien steps forward.

MULTI-EYES
How can we trust you? The atmosphere has caused you to talk to people who aren't really there. I saw you.

CELESTE
So I'm hallucinating even more than I realize. If you can come up with something better, feel free. The rest of us are off for now.

Most of the other outworlders turn and start hiking away from the village.

INT GAGE'S CABIN - VENTURER

As Gage cuddles in bed with April.

APRIL
Whaddya know? After everything you've been through, you're still as potent as ever.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE
I always aim to please.

The wall com BEEPS. Gage sighs.

JOSIE (O.S.)
Captain.

GAGE
Yes, Josie?

JOSIE (O.S.)
We're done retrofitting Venturer
and Europa.

GAGE
Good job. We've given Europa the
coordinates of the Pound.

EXT. SPACE - VENTURER AND EUROPA

As Venturer retracts her universal airlock.

GAGE (O.S.)
This is your captain speaking.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

GAGE
We're now heading into the spatial
anomaly. On the other side lies
extremely hostile territory.

INT. EUROPA BRIDGE

As Xahna and the acting bridge crew sit at their posts
listening to Gage.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage sits at the command post and clenches a fist.

GAGE
Now that we've got two ships, it's
time to kick ass!

EXT. SPACE

As Venturer leads Europa into the anomaly.

EXT. LAKE - XAR - NIGHT

Celeste and Yaxar stand. Celeste stumbles and Yaxar helps her up.

YAXAR
You all right?

Celeste stands still, gets her bearings, and awkwardly nods.

YAXAR (CONT'D)
Let's keep going.

CELESTE
I'm all for that.

Everyone scurries on.

EXT. XAR - DAY

Celeste and the outworlders return to the village. All they find are the corpses of the rest of the outworlders.

CELESTE
What the hell?!

Celeste falls to her knees. An outworlder GROANS
O.S. Celeste rushes to a multi-eyed heap on the ground.

MULTI-EYES
They saw you missing. We wouldn't
tell them where you'd gone.

CELESTE
So they killed you because of me.

MULTI-EYES
It-wasn't-your-fault...

All his eyes close.

CELESTE
My idea backfired.

A slave shuttle's engines WHINE O.S. Celeste looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE (CONT'D)

And they're coming back to finish us off! They've used the multi-eyed one and the others as bait.

The other outworlders scatter. Celeste rushes into one of the caves as the slave shuttle touches down. The crew members disembark and storm the village. One crew member enters the cave where Celeste is hiding. She rushes him and runs him through with her sharpened tree branch, but her end breaks off, leaving the point stuck in him. She socks him and kicks him. He falls to the ground and she steps right on him as she rushes out of the cave.

The other outworlders are putting up a fight with stones, branches, whatever they can pick up and throw. Two aliens hastily board the shuttle. Another outworlder sticks a tree branch into the campfire and brandishes it at another crewmember.

CELESTE

That's it! Kick their asses!

From outside the slave shuttle's cockpit, two outworlders bang a crewmember against the forward viewport. One outworlder touches a control pad. The shuttle EXPLODES. Some of the surviving outworlders, including Celeste, scream and scurry in different directions. A chunk of the cockpit springs into the air and crashes down on an outworlder who couldn't get out of the way.

EXT. SLAVE SHIP IN SPACE

As another of its shuttles boards her.

INT. SLAVE SHIP - BRIG

Enforcers herd the aliens into their cubicles as Reesta looks on.

REESTA

Rygon isn't at all happy with what you creatures did to those hunters back there on Xar.

The doorway has the same blue-tinted forcefield as those at the Pound. Celeste and Yaxar share a cubicle with two other aliens.

INT. CORRIDOR

Celeste could be taken to an area where her and other aliens' thoughts are extracted to find out their homeworlds weaknesses. May even just do it with a beam from the ship to Xar.

INT. SLAVE SHIP - BRIDGE

Reesta slowly passes by each crew member as they man their stations. She then returns to the command post. The door to the bridge opens, and Celeste rushes in. Reesta spins around just as Celeste rushes her. Celeste knocks her to the floor and bangs her against the deck several times.

CELESTE

I'm gonna kill you, bitch!

CELESTE (CONT'D)

This is what you get for leaving me on Xar and letting me get high! And I had to watch your shuttle explode with all those aliens on board.

REESTA

I instructed the pilot to self-destruct if any of you aliens attacked.

Celeste raises her weapon and aims it between Reesta's eyes.

CELESTE

For the time being.

Celeste slowly lowers the weapon.

REESTA

My husband won't negotiate.

CELESTE

We don't think he will. So we'll just have to overthrow him. Then we can free all the aliens.

Celeste points her weapon at Reesta.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

Now let's get this ship on course!

REESTA

Never.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

You'd prefer to be locked up, is that it? Whichever of you is the helmsman, your commander dies unless you plot a course for Rygon Prime.

HELMSMAN

I'm the helmsman. I'll take us back to Rygon Prime. If only in the hope that you'll be captured. You'll be heading right into his hands.

CELESTE

Save it.

COMMUNICATIONS

Picking up a pair of alien vessels.

EXT. SPACE - VENTURER AND EUROPA

As they speed toward Xar.

INT. VENTURER

Gage sits at the command post.

APRIL

Picking up a Rygonian vessel heading toward Rygon Prime. Captain! Celeste is aboard!

GAGE

What?!

APRIL

Here she is.

Gage leans forward in his seat.

CELESTE (O.S.)

Venturer! I don't believe it!

GAGE

Believe it, Celeste!

CELESTE (O.S.)

How did you escape?

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

It's a long story. What's going on on your end? Did you hijack that ship?

INT. SLAVE SHIP - BRIDGE

Celeste eyes Reesta.

CELESTE

I certainly did. With pleasure. So you found Capt. Bauers?

GAGE (O.S.)

We found Europa, but Linc Bauers was killed by Rygon by the time you and I arrived on Rygon Prime.

CELESTE

No. Oh my God.

Reesta smiles. Celeste scowls at her, and Reesta's smile disappears. Celeste quickly lets go of Gage.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

And what about Yorick?

GAGE (O.S.)

He's here. I'll explain everything later. In the meantime, we're boarding that ship.

Celeste looks around the bridge.

CELESTE

I'll be waiting. Out. Hear that, assholes?

Celeste blasts an instrumentation console. The person manning it stumbles out of his seat and lands on the deck on his knees.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

As it approaches the slave ship. Europa cruises in b.g., guarding Venturer.

INT. SLAVE SHIP

A hatch opens and Gage and the security team, including Yorick, storm out of the hatch onto the slave ship. Celeste rushes into Gage's arms.

CELESTE

Come here. I'm so sorry about Linc!
Are you all right?!

GAGE

I'm fine, considering. How about
you?

CELESTE

I don't know. They left us on their
moon, and the atmosphere there has
elements that are addictive to some
species.

GAGE

Including you, you mean?

Celeste nods.

GAGE (CONT'D)

Bastards. Now where's the
commander?

CELESTE

We put the bitch and the bridge
crew in the brig, where they
belong! Acutally they belong in
Hell, but hey, it's the next best
thing!

GAGE

Well let's get you and the aliens
off this bucket.

Gage's belt communicator BUZZES. Gage touches it on.

GAGE (CONT'D)

Yeah.

XAHNA (O.S.)

A Rygonian vessel is closing in.

GAGE

All right. We're just getting
Celeste back aboard Venturer. Out.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

The crew examine a hologram of the Rygonian ship. Gage rushes to the command chair and grasps the backrest.

GAGE
Battle stations. Look alive,
people.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

Her coblar cannons sprout into position from their turret domes.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage now sits at the command station.

VASQUEZ
Coblar cannons powered up.

GAGE
Evasive.

EXT. WARSHIP 2 IN SPACE

As her weapons unleash bolts of light energy in Venturer's direction. Venturer swings out of the way as Europa opens fire on attack cruiser 2, blowing a chunk off the outer hull.

INT. EUROPA BRIDGE

As Xahna sits at the command station.

GAGE (O.S.)
Good job, Xahna!

XAHNA
Thank you. Good job, tactical.

EXT. WARSHIP 2 IN SPACE

One weapon bank opens fire on Venturer while another fires on Europa. Both ships sustain hits.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage's chair spins about 45 degrees.

GAGE

Nasty. Talk back at 'em, Vasquez.

EXT. SPACE - VENTURER

She returns fire on the Rygonian attack vessel, setting off an explosion near the bow. Europa starts to head toward Rygon Prime and warship 2's aft weapons graze her with a round of fire. Europa returns fire and takes out the attack cruiser's stern.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage watches a holographic image of Europa and the warship.

VASQUEZ

Another vessel approaching.

Gage throws up his hands.

GAGE

To hell with it. Vasquez!

VASQUEZ

Sir.

Gage stares at the hologram a moment and draws in a long breath.

GAGE

Take out the bridge.

VASQUEZ

Yes sir.

Vasquez touches the fire pad.

EXT. SPACE - VENTURER

As her forward cannons open fire on the Rygonian ship, taking out the bridge.

INT. BRIDGE - WARSHIP

A bulkhead crashes to the deck, landing on the command station as the commander leaps out of the way. Instrumentation bursts into flames and a wall rips open. The bridge crew are sucked into space.

EXT. WARSHIP 2 IN SPACE

As tiny Rygonian figures tumble out into the vacuum.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage sits at the command station shaking his head.

GAGE

Why can't we just get to Rygon, so others wouldn't have to die? April, sick bay first, then Europa.

APRIL

Open.

GAGE

Xahna.

XAHNA (V.O.)

Xahna here.

GAGE

Casualties?

XAHNA (V.O.)

Two injured. Three dead.

Gage pounds his fist on one of his armrests.

GAGE

You know reinforcements are on their way?

XAHNA (V.O.)

We know. How do you want to play it?

GAGE

We make a break for Rygon Prime and deal with them if and when they intercept us.

(CONTINUED)

XAHNA (V.O.)
Let's do it.

GAGE
Out.

He touches his communicator again. Gage rubs his forehead.

GAGE (CONT'D)
How's Celeste?

BLACKWING (V.O.)
About as well as can be expected.

GAGE
Be down there in a minute. Out.

APRIL
Engineering reports dorsal engine
down to 61%.

GAGE
We've still got our belly engine
and most of our dorsal engine.

EXT. RYGON'S FORTRESS

Small craft frantically buzz around it.

INT. RYGON'S FORTRESS - BANQUET ROOM

Rygon and Mardona are having dinner. A hologram of a
Rygonian WARSHIP COMMANDER materializes next to the banquet
table.

WARSHIP COMMANDER (GENUFLECTING)
Your Eminence.

Rygon drops his food back onto his plate in annoyance.

RYGON
What?!

WARSHIP COMMANDER
The nonconformist called Gage has
disabled this ship with his vessel.

RYGON
Notify attack cruiser 3 that I'll
be taking command of her. I'll be
leaving immediately to board her.

(CONTINUED)

WARSHIP COMMANDER
Your Eminence?

RYGON
You heard me! I'll deal with Gage
myself!

The holographic transmission blinks off. Rygon takes some food in his hands and squeezes it.

RYGON (CONT'D)
I'll make an example of Gage. If
there's anything left of him, I'll
add him to my display!

MARDONA
May I come with you?

RYGON
I can't bring you. If something
happens to me, the people will need
your guidance. You're the only one
who understands.

He storms out of the banquet room.

EXT. RYGON'S FORTRESS

As Rygon's shuttle departs from it and streaks into the sky.

INT. BRIDGE

Gage paces around the command post, hands behind his back.
Deck hands extinguish a control-panel fire in b.g.

VASQUEZ
Sir, another vessel is approaching
from Rygon Prime.

GAGE
I just bet it is!

EXT. WARSHIP

Cruising toward Venturer with Rygon Prime in b.g.

INT. BRIDGE-WARSHIP

Rygon stands at the command post.

RYGON

All right, Gage. You want to end up
like your friend, nothing will
please me more than arranging it.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage now sits at his command post, stroking his goatee.

GAGE

Weapons ready.

VASQUEZ

Ready, sir.

Gage sits back in the command seat and scowls.

INT. BRIDGE-WARSHIP

Rygon smiles.

RYGON

Open fire!

EXT. WARSHIP 3 IN SPACE

As it fires a round of light energy at Venturer, which
maneuvers just out of the way.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage leans forward.

GAGE

Return fire!

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

Her forward cannons open fire on Warship 3, striking its
starboard side and setting off an explosion.

INT. A CORRIDOR - WARSHIP

As an interior explosion sends DECK HANDS stumbling and rips a bulkhead from its moorings.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

As April touches on the intership communicator at her station.

GAGE

Look, Rygon. It could've been simple. Let the peace-talk ambassadors go and we'll leave in peace.

RYGON (O.S.)

Peace? You've disrupted the order on my world. You turned one of my scientists against me, and now he's wanted. By me! GAGE Hand my people over! What have I got to do?!

RYGON

Die!

GAGE

Evasive!

Just as Josie touches a control, the bridge buckles from another burst of fire. An instrumental panel explodes.

INT. BRIDGE - WARSHIP

Rygon stands at his post, laughing heartily.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

GAGE

Lower the boom on the son of a bitch!

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

She opens fire on Warship 3, causing an explosion near an engine.

INT. BRIDGE - WARSHIP

A station off to the port side bursts into flames, knocking the crew member working it to the deck.

ENGINEER (V.O.)
Your Radiance. We've sustained
minor engine damage.

RYGON
Helm. Retreat until Engineering can
repair the damage. Return fire!

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

Venturer suffers another strike.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

The bridge crew brace themselves.

GAGE
Damage?

JOSIE
No power to the weapons system.

GAGE
Venturer to Europa. We've got to
retreat and repair the weapons
system. Run today, fight tomorrow.

EXT. VENTURER AND EUROPA IN SPACE

as they cruise toward Xar.

INT. VENTURER SICK BAY

Dr. Blackwing and his team tend to the injured. Gage enters.

BLACKWING
Captain.

GAGE
How is she, Doc?

BLACKWING
Celeste? She's resting. She's in
the next room lying down.

(CONTINUED)

Gage enters the next room. Celeste is lying down with a big smile.

CELESTE (CHUCKLES)

Gage, honey. What are you doing to the ship?

GAGE

Me? It's those Rygonians. Venturer and Europa have just survived their attacks on us. So far, that is. How are you?

CELESTE (GIGGLES)

I don't remember when I ever felt better. Doc fixed me up good. The withdrawals made me depressed, but not anymore.

She reaches out and touches Gage's face.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

So when can I get back to work, hm?

GAGE

Not for awhile.

CELESTE (LAUGHS)

All right. No hurry.

Gage turns to see Blackwing standing in the doorway.

BLACKWING

I've done my best with what we've got on hand. Whatever's in the atmosphere on Rygon 2 isn't quite like anything I've ever encountered.

Gage places a hand on Blackwing's shoulder.

GAGE

I understand. It's no one's fault. Except Rygon's. Every minute, I have to remind myself not to give in to vengeance. What Linc and other victims of Rygon must've gone through.

BLACKWING

You know we'll help you keep things in perspective. Most of us would follow you into Hell if you asked us to.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

I'm sure you would, unlike those
who deserted us last year.

Celeste suddenly gets between the two men, laughing.

CELESTE

I'd follow you anywhere, Gage.

She salutes playfully and laughs some more as Blackwing
escorts her back to bed.

BLACKWING

Back to bed, Celeste. Just awhile
longer.

CELESTE (LAUGHING)

Whatever you say, medicine man.

Celeste climbs back into bed.

GAGE

How much longer do you estimate
till she's herself again?

BLACKWING

At least 3 or 4 hours.

GAGE (NODDING)

Fair enough.

EXT. SPACE - EUROPA

It exchanges fire with Warship 2.

INT. VENTURER - BRIDGE

A hologram blinks on of Rygon.

RYGON

Unless you give up this
foolishness, prepare to be boarded.

GAGE

I'd just love to see you try! Gage
out!

Rygon's image disappears.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (CONT'D)

We're gonna have to take care of ourselves, as Europa's trapped. Damn. Shipwide.

APRIL

Open.

GAGE

This is your captain speaking. We're about to be boarded. And you know what to do.

Bridge crew scramble for weapons.

INT. VENTURER - CORRIDORS

Crew members storm the corridors with their weapons.

INT. BRIDGE - WARSHIP

Technicians repair an instrumentation console as Rygon touches a communication pad on his panel.

RYGON

Progress report.

ENGINEER (O.S.)

The engines will be in perfect functioning order momentarily, Your Worship.

RYGON

Outstanding. He touches the pad again.

RYGON (CONT'D)

Soon, Gage, I'll blow you out of the Universe.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

As Gage enters and returns to the command post.

VASQUEZ

We're in range of Rygon's fortress, sir.

(CONTINUED)

APRIL

Picking up Rygon. He's heading this way.

GAGE

Battle stations. I knew he'd come back for some more.

EXT. WARSHIP 3 AND VENTURER IN SPACE

As Warship 3 opens fire on Venturer.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

As everyone braces themselves. The bridge shakes from the impact.

GAGE

Return fire.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

She fires on the warship, sending chunks of its outer hull into space. Europa swoops down from behind and opens fire on Warship 3's stern.

GAGE

April, audio.

APRIL

Audio up.

GAGE

Gage to Rygon. Gage to Rygon. Surrender or we'll finish you off.

RYGON (O.S.)

I'll never surrender to you or to anyone. And since you won't surrender either, you'll all be destroyed.

GAGE

Suit yourself. Gage out. To hell with it. Josie, take us closer to Rygon Prime. We're gonna go ahead and destroy Rygon's fortress.

(CONTINUED)

JOSIE

Aye aye.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

As she speeds closer to Rygon Prime. Warship 3 fires on them with their aft weapons, grazing Venturer's aft hull. Europa blasts Attack Cruiser 3's aft weapons bank.

INT. VENTURER IN SPACE

Josie and Vasquez stare at their instrumentation.

VASQUEZ

Almost in range of the fortress.

A hit from Warship 3 rocks Venturer.

GAGE

Fire at will, Vasquez.

VASQUEZ

Yes sir.

Vasquez touches the fire pad.

EXT. VENTURER IN SPACE

Her forward cannon fires at Rygon Prime.

EXT. SKY FORTRESS-RYGON PRIME - DAY

As the weapon blasts lance the atrium, blowing it to bits.

INT. CITADEL

Enforcers scurry in all directions as the ceiling crashes in. Some of them get out of the way in time.

INT. A CITADEL CORRIDOR

Mardona rushes to a hatch and opens it. Another burst of fire from Venturer rocks the corridor, causing her to stumble to the ground. An explosion rips out a nearby wall while she leaps to her feet. She rushes to a hatch and opens it, climbing into an escape craft and activating the controls. The engine hums to life. An Enforcer tries to climb into the cockpit through her.

(CONTINUED)

ENFORCER

Please! Let me in!

Mardona literally kicks him out of the hatch and he stumbles to the floor just as another explosion sends a chunk of the ceiling crashing down on him. He starts to scream but never finishes. Mardona straps herself in and launches the escape craft. Just as she takes off, an explosion cripples the escape craft.

EXT. SKY FORTRESS

The escape craft leaps into the sky but then spins out of control toward the ground.

INT. ESCAPE CRAFT

Mardona wrestles with the controls as she careens toward a skyscraper. She yanks a control stick back, ejecting her seat.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER

The escape craft crashes into it, bringing down most of the building.

INT. BRIDGE - WARSHIP

Rygon grasps the command post, fuming.

COMMUNICATIONS

They've destroyed your sky
fortress!

RYGON

Then blow them out of the heavens!

EXT. WARSHIP 3 IN SPACE

As her forward weapon banks open fire on Venturer and her aft banks attack Europa. Each ship returns about three times as much fire, causing severe explosions all over Warship 3's outer hull.

INT. ENGINEERING DECK - WARSHIP

The engineering crew scurry out of the engine room as the engine core begins to glow bright red, then orange.

INT. BRIDGE

As the communications officer gapes at his panel.

COMMUNICATIONS
Engine overload!

Rygon touches a pad and a transparent cylinder from the ceiling closes around him. His station descends just as the helm explodes, throwing the helmsman against the cylinder. Rygon, command station and all, disappears below decks, the cylinder retracts, and a hatch closes where the command station was.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage is now standing in front of his command post, fists balled.

GAGE
That's it!

APRIL
Captain.

GAGE
No more mercy!

APRIL
Niles! Their engine's overloading.
It's done.

Gage peers at Warship 3 in the forward viewport.

GAGE
Overloading? Warship 3's engine
suddenly detonates.

The Venturer bridge crew all try to shield their eyes.

GAGE (CONT'D)
Evasive!

EXT. VENTURER AND EUROPA IN SPACE

As the explosion unleashes a shock wave mushrooming throughout the sector. Venturer swings hard to starboard and Europa hard to port in an effort to avoid the worst of the shock wave.

EXT. SURFACE OF RYGON PRIME - DAY

The shock wave rattles buildings and causes cracks in some of them, accompanied by a low rumble. Even the ground cracks in some areas.

EXT. VENTURER AND EUROPA IN SPACE

Debris pelts both ships, but it's small enough that the outer hull of each vessel absorbs most of the impact.

INT. EUROPA BRIDGE

The bridge mildly shakes.

XAHNA

Europa to Venturer. Are you all right?

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

Gage is sitting down again.

GAGE

We're all right. Quite a lightshow. And you?

XAHNA (O.S.)

We're fine.

GAGE

You probably didn't get to fire on the Pound.

INT. EUROPA BRIDGE

XAHNA

No, but now it looks like we ought to have a clear shot.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE (O.S.)
Fire away.

XAHNA
Fire.

EXT. EUROPA IN SPACE

As she fires at Rygon Prime.

EXT. SURFACE - RYGON PRIME - DAY

Europa's blast strikes the ground above the Pound.

INT. THE POUND

The Keeper area on the higher levels caves in. Keepers scurry out of the way.

INT. THE POUND - LOWER LEVELS

The incarcerated aliens look around in bewilderment. Madame President is no exception as she stands still, trying to hear what's going on. Another strike and the stretch forcefields flicker off. The aliens rush out of their cubicles, attacking the Keepers.

INT. VENTURER BRIDGE

April stares intently at her panel. GAGE Visual. April brings up the holoscreen, which shows a crater left by Europa's strike.

EXT. VENTURER AND EUROPA IN SPACE

Both ships' forward hulls detach and head for the surface of Rygon Prime.

EXT. SURFACE OF RYGON PRIME - DAY

The forward hull of Venturer lands near the Pound, and Gage, Josie, Vidazz and Yorick disembark, all armed with coblar rifles. They climb into the crater. Vidazz activates the elevator door and it opens. The foursome enter the elevator and take it to the lower levels. When they exit the elevator, they run into aliens fighting Keepers. Some of the Keepers spot Gage and aim their weapons at him.

(CONTINUED)

YORICK
Attack mode!

Yorick's forearms MORPH into coblar gun barrels, and he opens fire on the Keepers, knocking them across the corridor. All the other Keepers and outworlders freeze a moment.

PRESIDENT
Captain!

GAGE
Madame President. Looks like you had everything under control.

PRESIDENT
It was the damndest thing. The other Keepers just ran away. Some even took off their uniforms!

GAGE
What?!

JOSIE
I just arrived on this world, and already I'd like to get off.

VIDAZZ
Some of these people probably don't know what to do now that you attacked the sky fortress.

PRESIDENT
You attacked the sky fortress?! Outstanding, Captain! Did you also blow up the generators here?

GAGE
With Europa's help. I'll explain as we're getting everyone to the surface.

Gage sees a figure at the end of the corridor scurry around a corner. He steps forward.

GAGE (CONT'D)
Everyone to the surface.

JOSIE
What is it?

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

I'll be up as soon as I can, now
move!

Rygon tries to bolt past Gage, but Gage grabs him. He points his weapon at Rygon.

EXT. SURFACE OF RYGON PRIME - DAY

The elevator opens and Gage and Rygon stumble out, hands at each other's throats. Gage pulls Rygon to his feet and shakes him.

GAGE

You oppress outworlders. You
murdered my best friend. But you
haven't died yet, oh no.

Josie and Yorick spot the commotion and rush a few yards closer. The other outworlders amble toward Gage and Rygon also.

JOSIE

Captain.

GAGE

After all the trouble we've gone
through.

PRESIDENT

For the love of God. Captain,
don't. A mission of peace,
remember? Remember?

GAGE

Peace. That's right.

JOSIE (GULPING)

That's right. Right.

A number of Rygonian citizens crowd around. Gage surveys them.

RYGON (SMILING)

I relished the sound of the blast
when I blew up your friend. And the
sounds of outworlders crying when I
boasted to them about it.

GAGE

I won't stoop to your level, so
just give it up.

(CONTINUED)

RYGON

Coward!

GAGE

On the other hand, how do the
citizens feel?

RYGON

The citizens?!

GAGE

Citizens of Rygon Prime, I present
the cause of this planet's
problems: Rygon himself! He's all
yours.

Gage pushes Rygon away and scurries out of the way of the small mob of citizens. Josie and Yorick step out of the way as the citizens attack Rygon. Yorick puts a hand on Gage's shoulder and Gage nods. Josie hugs Gage. Mardona rides up on a Rygonian beast of burden and frantically climbs off. She fights her way through the mob and they slowly disperse, revealing a bruised, bloody corpse. Mardona screams and cradles Rygon in her arms.

MARDONA

Please don't leave me, Rygon.
Who'll give me guidance? Who'll
keep me from contamination by
outworlders?

Josie eases toward Mardona.

GAGE (QUIETLY)

Josie, what are you doing?

Josie raises a hand to him as Yorick stands at the ready.

JOSIE

Mardona. You've got a lifetime
ahead of you.

MARDONA

Go away! You hear me?!

Josie winces slightly.

JOSIE

Vidazz says Rygon took you away
from your parents as collateral for
unpaid taxes.

(CONTINUED)

MARDONA

A fair trade. My parents were irresponsible.

JOSIE

But now Rygon Prime can be free.
And the outworlders can go home.

MARDONA

My husband's dead and it's all the fault of you miserable outworlders. Rygon Prime's in chaos, and it'll never be the same. Never!

Gage rolls his eyes and shakes his head.

GAGE

I should hope not.

MARDONA

Just leave us!

JOSIE

(raising her hands)
All right.

Mardona bolts away. Josie turns to rejoin Gage and Yorick.

GAGE

Now let's get the hell out of here once and for all.

Mardona stops long enough to touch a control on her belt. She looks up at the sky, then runs away. A rock in the sky begins to buckle. Its lights flicker. Gage looks at Mardona, then upward.

GAGE (CONT'D)

All aboard! Let's go!

CREW MEMBERS scurry onto the Venturer gangplank.

GAGE (CONT'D)

Come on, move, move! That's it, one in front of the other!

The rock falls from the sky as the gangplank begins to close. Gage leaps onto it. The instant it closes, Venturer streaks into the sky. The rock above falls. It crashes onto the ground and shatters, leveling every building on top of it. Rubble and dust spread out for at least a mile as nearby buildings on the ground begin to falter.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - RYGON PRIME - DAY

Mardona drags herself aimlessly down the street and spots a Rygonian family jumping up and down and praising the fall of Rygon's sky fortress. Mardona stops and watches them. She then looks up at the scorched, smoking sky fortress in the distance. She falls to her knees and cries.

EXT. SPACE - VENTURER AND EUROPA

Both ships, battle-scarred, cruise out of Rygon Prime's orbit and streak off into the spatial anomaly.

INT. GAGE'S CABIN - VENTURER

Gage sits at his desk composing a message for the Bauers family on his computer.

GAGE

Dear Ophelia, I'm sure that by now
you've received the awful news
about Linc.

Gage now stands in front of his dresser mirror in tears.

GAGE (CONT'D)

I couldn't help but offer my
condolences and ask what I can do
for you and the children. Please
tell them I ought to be Earthside
in a couple of weeks.

GAGE (V.O.)

Linc has always been there for me,
and we won't be the same without
him.

Gage turns away from the mirror.

GAGE

Josh, Bianca: your father's passing
wasn't in vain. He took a step
toward peace in our quadrant.

The image of Gage breaks up and vanishes from in front of the dresser mirror. Gage himself still sits at his desk.

GAGE (CONT'D)

Well, it's a start.

EXT. SPACE - ROVELTUS

Venturer and Europa approach the planet's orbit. Each ship's forward hull detaches and heads for the planet's surface.

EXT. ROVELTOID EMBASSY BUILDING SURFACE OF ROVELTUS - NIGHT

Gage, Celeste, Yorick and Xahna disembark in dress uniforms, greeted by a Roveltoid welcoming committee. Fleet Admiral Stito leads the committee toward both vessels once the ambassadors disembark from Europa. The welcoming committee applaud. Gage and others wave at them.

GAGE

Thank you, thank you everyone.

The welcoming committee approach Gage and his entourage.

STITO

Capt. Gage. We finally meet in person.

Gage shakes Stito's hand.

GAGE

Admiral. We did it.

STITO

Your communique concerning Capt. Bauers was quite unfortunate.

Gage nods solemnly.

STITO (CONT'D)

So was the situation with your warning buoy. At least we could replace that.

GAGE

That's appreciated, Admiral. Those who survived incarceration on Rygon prime were traumatized by the experience.

STITO

Of course, so the Council has decided to postpone the peace talks until the ambassadors undergo psychiatric treatment.

(CONTINUED)

GAGE

Damn good idea.

STITO

In the meantime, however, we've a grand celebration prepared.

CELESTE

I'll drink to that. Celeste Baldrica, Engineering.

Celeste briskly shakes hands with the Admiral.

INT. EMBASSY BUILDING

Where the celebration takes place. An alien waitress uses her many appendages to bring out food. Gage is talking with Fleet Admiral Stito while Celeste and Xahna sit at a table sipping wine. Dr. Blackwing joins Europa's chief medical officer in asking the ambassadors medical questions. Madame President is shaking hands with everyone as Roveltoid music plays.

GAGE

So I was able to make a friend or two on Rygon Prime, and that's how I got help bringing back the ambassadors. As I was saying goodbye to Vidazz, he said something about possibly getting some of his people together and starting a whole new regime. I'm sure if he does his art will replace Rygon's decorations.

STITO

A fascinating story. As for the peace talks, we'll be able to hold them after the ambassadors undergo some rehabilitation.

Celeste excuses herself and heads for the nearest exit as Blackwing watches her leave.

EXT. EMBASSY BUILDING NIGHT

Celeste sits just outside the building with her drink as a Roveltoid enters the building. She gazes up at the stars as a spacecraft streaks by.

(CONTINUED)

CELESTE

So where can I go to forget about
you, Gage?

She gulps down some more wine and looks up in the sky again.

FADE OUT