

THE ANTARES INITIATIVE



ARTICLE BETA 0.05/JAN 2017

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JAN2017

PLANET: DEFOR

ARTICLE BETA 0.05

LOCATION: DETERMINATE



MAT SELLICK



GHAR COMMANDER

With another month complete and another to begin I took this chance to start the foundations of my named character & army history, to assist in his creation and as a result - a brain dump for you all to read.

I thought I'd start with the name of General Budak; a famous (infamous?) Ghar enslaver sent in first by High Commander Karg to not only break down the defences of weak nations, but to also ensure capture of the natives which will be exploited for the Ghar cause. While this isn't a new tactic for the Ghar, Budak's brutality changes this formula up.

Void of all emotion or remorse, Budak is feared by both Ghar and their enemies alike. Given Defor's proximity to other worlds ripe for Ghar domination, it makes sense that Budak would be there early. The crystalline natives are not be much good for Ghar Slavery/exploitation purposes, but as they say in real estate, Defor is all about location, location, location!

I went through a few ideas with basic modified suits before looking at Karg's command crawler and I imagined that the Ghar would be very similar to the human race in that bigger is better and more important! As Budak is a general, I figured I need to go bigger than a combat suit but not quite the size of a crawler.

As such I thought I'd combine a scutter and a battle suit to provide more output. This will give Budak good range thanks to the scourer cannon on the scutter and the torso of a close combat monster. Naturally this suit, like the rest of the Ghar, would be fed via a plasma reactor and have built in amplifiers, for Budak would have seen the variety of terrain and unique properties of alien planets.

As for attributes, I felt that given the general's combat preparation and extensive battlefield experience, particularly in invasions - MOD2 would be an auto include. When it came to leadership value I initially thought Leadership 2 was also an automatic include however, given the element of fear he puts in his own troops, I felt it prudent that he should only be leadership 1. Command and Follow as skills would also be apt for someone of such stature and also assist with the playability of Budak in-game.

While I do not yet have the parts to start this custom build for Budak, I'm really looking forward to working with the models, mashing them together to create my Defor leader.



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BEN KOCHSKAMPER



ISORIAN COMMANDER

"It's been a long trip NuHu iMa."

The Isorian transport vessel slowly moved into orbit of the barren red world of Defor.

"You know why we are here captain, we must extract a rare artefact and bring it back for research."

"Are we expecting any resistance?" said Captain Namos.

"I'm not sure Captain, our drones have been scanning the surface of Defor for the last 6 months and are yet to pick up any signs of intelligent life anywhere."

"There could be hidden life forms underground Commander" said the Captain.

"There very well could be but we won't know until we scout the surface. Just remember we are not here to cause conflict, we need to extract the artefact and nothing more."

NuHu iMa stared from the cockpit, his dainty hands scratched his chin whilst he studied the Defor surface as it got closer and closer. He saw large crystal formations and took note on how the light reflected from them, he also noticed the strange patterns they created.

"Get ready for landing!" screamed the pilot.

The vessel's crew braced as the Isorian pilot managed to land the vessel beside a small cavern giving it and its crew somewhere to take cover from the planets harsh weather conditions.

The ship door opened and a wave of heat hit NuHu iMa's face. As iMa walked down the ramp, he stopped suddenly, sweat dripped down his pale white skin. This humidity was like nothing he had ever experienced before.

The burning red planet reminded him of his childhood. Vivid memories of screaming, hiding and waiting for help passed through his mind. He remembers watching his homeland being burnt to the ground, invading Ghar forces destroying whatever lay in their way, and executing the small Isorian community he once called his family.

On that day iMa managed to stay out of sight from the invading Ghar forces. He lay hidden for days until the Ghar Battle suits and outcasts moved on, havoc pushing any survivors along leaving iMa alone, scared and with little chance of survival.

After three days, iMa rose from the destroyed dwelling he'd been hiding in and began to roam for food, barely struggling to find anything of use.



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ISORIAN COMMANDER

Weeks passed and supplies started to dwindle. iMa's energy was slowly being sapped and it was a struggle for him to get to his feet. After walking a few miles, iMa sat himself against a rock, looked into the distant sunset and wondered if he somehow managed to survive, would life ever be the same? Before long he had fallen unconscious, darkness taking his thoughts from him.

A day and a half had passed with very little movement from iMa, he lay lifeless against the rock. Awoken by some strange sounds, iMa groggily tried to assess what could be going on. He attempted to open his eyes, however could not focus on what was in front of him. He soon passed out again, the effort of trying to focus stealing last energy reserves he had.

iMa, against all odds, had been found by an Isorian Rescue Party and was picked up by a squad of Tsan Ra that were scouting the area. The Tsan Ra, royal body guard of NuHu Sol took iMa back to the landing site where he was attended to by the emergency medical team.

Days had passed before iMa finally awoke.

"Hello child" said NuHu Sol.

"Where... am... I? Who... are you?" said iMa, nervous, worried, and confused.

"I am NuHu Sol and it was my royal guard who saved you. They were searching for the raiding Ghar forces that destroyed your home. You have shown strength, courage and an immense will to survive. I have plans for you my child" said Sol.

"I don't understand" replied iMa.

"You will in time my child. Rest, and we will discuss your future when we have cleansed the area."

Weeks, months and years passed.

NuHu Sol now knew the time was right. He had seen the courage in the boy the day he was saved, he knew he had to train iMa, now a teenager, to become the next NuHu in line to lead his force.

At the age of 34, iMa had completed his training to take over NuHu Sol's position. Old age had hit Sol. He was now 67 and ready to retire as force commander and stepped down to a smaller role within the NuHu council. He was confident that NuHu iMa could handle his force just as he had... he had been trained well.

Sol had much confidence in the young NuHu, so much so that he asked his royal guard to protect and watch over iMa as they did him.

Although many years have passed since he was found, NuHu iMa still has a deep respect for his royal guard, the troops that saved him. As NuHu iMa gazed upon the landscape of Defor, he said to his guard, "Arm our troops, scout the area, and setup camp. We could be here for a while. Our existence hinges on that artefact being found."



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HUW EVANS



CONCORD COMMANDER

Panhuman Jetpack Adventures Volume 1

Born on the planet Calphalon, it was evident from an early age that the Shard had something special in store for Jeramiah Teflon. In retrospect, it is clear that it was merely waiting for him to reach an appropriate age. A thrill-seeker from birth, Teflon was never satisfied with the idyllic but pedestrian life of a Concord citizen. Without knowing why, he would rebel against the most trivial directive and attempt unnecessary sabotages and subterfuge whenever he had the chance. This behaviour was of course, always thwarted at every turn.

Crime itself is all but unheard of in Concord culture, after all, any planet's local Shard will discover any plots long before they come to fruition. Furthermore, the citizens have everything they could ever need provided for them, rendering most motives for committing a crime non-existent.

This didn't stop Teflon, aged eighteen, from impulsively robbing several legitimate businesses and then immediately spending the credits acquired (before they could be traced) on a household cleaning drone. This alone would have been cause for concern, but Teflon proceeded to override the drone's programming and surf it down the town's main thoroughfare, whooping obscene slogans at passers-by whilst wearing nothing but a feathered cap. To make matters worse, the drone contained the soul of an elderly Woman (approximately 400 Earth years in age) who was so scarred by the incident that she now prefers to remain outside, sweeping in pitiful, futile circles and muttering to herself in incoherent machine code.

Teflon blamed the whole incident on an overindulgence of ethanol juice and snap sticks, but the Calphalon Shard remained unconvinced. Where a less enlightened society may have decided to put Teflon down for this kind of idiotic behaviour, the Shard preferred to put him to good use. In actual fact, it decided, Teflon had displayed remarkable ingenuity and had even managed to evade local security forces for several minutes before the police drones made the highly undignified arrest.

To prevent further undue embarrassment, Teflon was immediately drafted into the military. Perhaps surprisingly, Teflon has found the C3 Shard a much more agreeable home. He has even excelled to the point of being promoted several times and now enjoys the rank of Lieutenant!

Over the course of his career Teflon has certainly died his fair share of times, but his incorrigible nature is resilient to a point approaching insanity, which makes him perfectly suited to the trials and hardships of frontline combat. In keeping with this, Teflon prefers to deploy in Drop Troop kit, sporting his trademark feathered cap. He is then able to satisfy his need for speed, jetting all over the battlefield and directing his soldiers where they are needed most. The men and women under his command are ever willing to follow their flamboyant peacock of a commander into the guns of the enemy against all odds, which works in their favour more often than the C3 Shard's calculations indicate that it should.



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HUW EVANS



CONCORD COMMANDER

The C3 Shard has found that what Lieutenant Teflon lacks in tactical genius, he more than makes up for in bravado and daring, which marks him as something of an uncanny enigma. An asset, that shouldn't be an asset.

His troops are fiercely loyal, often following their commander in suicidal headlong charges, only to find themselves time and again in the regeneration vats aboard their home vessel, hearing of the victory they earned over the ship's inter-coms. This unpredictable and adaptable approach to warfare repeatedly proves successful where more conventional means have failed, which is why Teflon's cadre are regularly deployed on the most difficult of missions in the harshest of environments.

Lieutenant Teflon now faces his greatest test yet, the battle for Defor. Can he survive against all odds again or will he finally become unstuck?

Stay tuned for Panhuman Jetpack Adventures Volume 2 to find out.



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BEN RANTALL



BOROMITE COMMANDER

Rico Rasczak wasn't always this way; a kind yet strong teacher, a harsh but understanding mentor, a determined but considerate supervisor. You wouldn't know it though. His stern exterior belies the soft side which he tries to hide as best as he can as Defor is a harsh world and to present your soft underbelly here is to flirt with death.

Rasczak's mining guild has seen great success while under his supervision. His work ethic and knowledge of the soil and minerals of Defor has seen to this. He has even been able to communicate with the "natives" in some crude way, a skill that has been passed to his kin but yet to be taught to outsiders. Rico has finally been able to be content with his lot, has finally been able to put his past to rest, and with his Matriarch, has finally made a home for his people. Rico Rasczak: beloved, gentile, sting, respected, honoured.

But Rico Rasczak wasn't always this way...

As a younger man, Rico had spent years mining some of the most hazardous asteroid belts in Antarean space. This is where his physical prowess and talent for mining made itself known and as a result, he was given the nickname "Roughneck" – something quite rare considering almost all Boromites perform hard labour. To be singled out as such is no mean feat.

Such talent could not be left to mere labour or so Gorak, head of a powerful labour guild and criminal mastermind, thought. A specimen such as Rico should be doing more with his life, should be helping Gorak secure his position, and should be removing his competition. So it was that Rico was plucked from his small colony while his guild members were slaughtered and forced into a soldier's position for Gorak. There was nothing that could be done.

Rico's survival instincts took hold. Play nice, do what needs to be done and strike back when least expected. This would take time... Rico was patient.

After years of servitude and rising through the ranks, Rico was finally in a position to make a move. The success of Rico's gang raids had lead him to lead a squad of gangers at first, but that soon changed as Rico moved from strength to strength until Gorak eventually demanded Rico be his personal guard and advisor. Excellent.

The night that changed his course was quiet and clear, much like Rico's mindset. This was his chance.

Gorak the dishonourable slaver met his end while sitting on his metal throne while holding court to the few gang leaders he trusted. Rico, while standing beside Gorak, took his sharpened trench tool and forcefully slammed it into Gorak's heart; an act to symbolise what Rico had felt all those years ago. One thing Rico didn't count on though, were the locomites that would be sent his way in response to the murder of their leader.



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BEN RANTALL



BOROMITE COMMANDER

Running for his life and with locomite hot on his heels, Rico fled to the nearest settlement. It wasn't long before every habitat in the area that was under siege by the gang leaders, determined to smoke out the traitor Rico. Innocent workers were dying because of his actions. This one thought, brought him to his feet and with guilty conscience that needed clearing, Rico took up arms and fought back. His talent with the mining tools were on full display, mowing down gangers left and right – it wasn't enough though. There was just too many. Using his most commanding voice he ordered the locals to retreat to the haulers and make good their escape. He would stay behind and face judgement while buying enough time for all that was left to leave.

Rico's visage was something of legend and his stoicism brought even the hardy Boromites to tears. The last hauler couldn't just leave him to his fate... it swung around and made to pick Rico up in a daring manoeuvre. A decision made to late. The locomite found their mark.

Set upon by all side Rico deflected the savage bites and lunges, barely managing to avoid destruction. As the hauler hovered by a young worker called out "This way! You can make it!" Rico turned to see where the voice was coming from and to follow, as instructed, when there was a sickening crunch. A locomite struck home.

"A flesh wound" Rico thought to himself. Undeterred that there was a full grown locomite swallowing his arm, Rico made for the hauler and when he was almost at his destination, he punched the locomite with a force of a wrecking ball. This of course meant his arm would be removed with it, still in the mouth of the now stunned locomite.

Bloodied and bruised, Rico leapt onto the hauler and passed out.

It was some time before he came to. The Boromites that made their escape had dropped him off at the local trading town for medical attention. Where there once was a bleeding stump there was now a new metallic arm, grafted into place. This new limb also brought with it a new found respect for the rock monsters; a constant reminder of their power and determination.

Rico now had no home, no guild, and no family. Seclusion is what he sought. Perhaps he could find peace on the edge of space. Checking the start charts and focusing on the outlying worlds, there was one planet in particular that caught his eye: Defor. A harsh, unimportant planet marked as a waste of time by the Concord IMTel. Perfect.

Finding passage was the hard part as not many ventured out that way... not many, but enough.

...and so Rico Raszak, took flight to his new home aboard a Freeborn vessel and landed on the red planet though to his surprise, he was not alone. There was already a very small but established Boromite guild, struggling to make ends meet. Seeing these people in such a position lit an old spark; here he could help, join a family and eventually make peace.



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BOROMITE COMMANDER

It has been an age since his departure from Gorak and Rico is no longer a young man. Rumbings have stirred and the once peaceful Defor has become the centre of attention, for reasons unknown to the Boromites. Any reason wasn't good enough.

Outsiders have landed and are causing distress amongst the once peaceful setting... but not for much longer. If the Boromites didn't make their stand now and push back against the oppression of the other races then Rico would lose yet another home. As the Boromite workforce readied themselves for the first retaliatory strike, a mix of veteran miners and fresh labourers, Rico took centre stage.

"This is for all you new people... I have only one rule. Everybody fights, no one quits. If you don't do your job, I'll kill you myself! Welcome to the Roughnecks!"

With that, Rico mounts his locomite and charges forth, Rico's Roughnecks following closely behind. The vibrations of the Boromites on the march could be felt halfway across the world. A warning to the meddling races: Leave now. We are coming!

