

The Project

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A/N: This is a sequel to The Marauder, I recommend you read that first cause you probably won't have much of a clue as to what is going on in this if not

But for the deep boom of boot on steel, it was difficult to notice Captain James striding down the corridor of the GTSC Sevrak. He strode purposefully, but without betraying an ounce of the anxiety he felt constricting his chest muscles. The door he wanted was last on the right. Normally vacated, the guest room today had an unexpected occupant. What was the commander of the GTD Galatea doing on board a civilian science vessel?

James rapped three times on the door and then entered without awaiting a response. The Admiral dropped his papers onto his desk at the sight of him. It was hard to find two men who looked more militant in confrontation. James glared, with an almost obscene malice at his superior. Wolf replied quietly to the unspoken challenge 'I will not say I approve of your methods Captain, but the matter has been taken out of my hands now. Do with him as you wish.'

At this, James relaxed slightly 'Where is he then?' he asked eagerly. Wolf nodded at the previously unseen Lieutenant sitting in the corner, who led James from the room. They walked briefly to an unlit door, only accessible by iris scan and blocked off to most crew members by a large, unmarked red square. Few crew members had passed through this door, most were denied access and many did not want access. The Lieutenant saluted sharply and departed.

The door slid open to reveal a virtually empty hangar. This long, wide area was almost pitch black, with only the tracklights being used to light the entire room. A young man was bound to a metal chair between the tracklights. Voices from the impenetrable darkness prompted him occasionally to 'stay still' or 'keep quiet'. James approached this man with a disgusted expression on his face. The man could not keep still, he was shaking and continuously muttering under his breath.

James could make out the hangar doors which made up the far wall, he considered opening them this instant and having done with it. But, perhaps that would be too easy, 'perhaps' he thought, 'young Scott might have more to offer us.' James reached into his breast pocket and removed a pair of round spectacles from a case. He shut the case and allowed the echo to continue long enough to provoke a moan of fear from Ensign Scott.

From nowhere, a man with greying hair appeared carrying a silver chair, he placed it down carefully and disappeared once more into the darkness. Captain James took the seat 'Contrary to popular belief Mr. Scott, I am not a torturer. I am not here to intimidate you. We in the GTI often require somewhere private to do our work, in this case it is somewhere very private.' Scott quivered slightly under James' gaze.

'Indeed, I do not think you have anything to fear from me at all Mr. Scott.' The raised voice sounded artificial, echoing loudly in the limitless surrounds.

'You do have a duty to me though and to all of us' concluded James quietly. The atmosphere shifted, Scott's face betrayed confusion but no longer fear. Barely speaking above a whisper, he asked 'What must I do?'

'You, Ensign Robert Scott must save humanity.' There followed a moment of complete stillness, a moment at which only the endless hum of the jump drives could be heard.

Scott looked shocked at this. James paced for a while, considering his options. What must one do? What must one do when pressed so urgently? Having The Taranis was a start of course but there were rumours, disturbing rumours coming from the Vasudans. Scott was an exceptional young pilot. Perhaps the finest of his generation and he had detached himself firmly from reality. Surely the perfect candidate for the GTI, for if he were to blurt out what he knew, who would believe him?

'The Vasudans have told us that they have encountered a capital ship that is completely impervious to their weapons. They found out about this through one of their infiltrators in the Hammer of Light. Having been requested to test their weapons on the ship, it soon became apparent that the Shivans have managed to equip this ship with an energy shielding that is completely impervious to our weapons. We have designated this ship The Lucifer.

We have reason to believe that, soon enough, this ship will be used against us not just for the destruction of the GTA but for the mass-xenocide of the human race. This is a ship that is equipped for atrocity and built for that purpose only. The Shivans are coming to finish us. You, Robert Scott, are going to stop them.' James looked deep into Scott's eyes, there was strength in this young man, strength borne of the torture he had suffered at the hands of the enemy. In short, the strength to do what was necessary.

James did not hesitate a moment longer, the full truth was what he was owed. 'Ensign, I'm going to ask you to give up your life. I'm going to ask you to weigh your own life against those of the eight billion others that inhabit our world. When the time comes, when the Shivans invade, because believe me they will, you will pilot Prometheus wing. You will have no power to shields or weapons, your ship will be loaded with explosives and you will crash, full on, into the hull of the Lucifer.'

Scott no longer looked fearful, he hated the idea of being imprisoned or tortured further but he had no such fear of death. Instead, determination fired behind his pupils, the kind of determination that comes with the chance of revenge. He would do anything to turn the terror he felt against the Shivans. They had been the cause of his suffering, the reason why he no longer felt human, the reason why no one believed him anymore, not even himself.

He understood now why he had the bandage around his foot. Everything made sense, he had been injured so that James could talk to him, so that he could truly fulfil his ambitions. The bloodlust coursing through his brain heated him in the cold hangar. James smiled at the noticeable change and ran his hand over the communications panel to relay the news to Wolf. 'Tell Singh that we have carried it out successfully, The Project now has a willing participant.' Scott was released from his chair by the men emerging from the darkness. The lights around them now activated on all sides and the whole hangar was revealed under an almost blinding white light. There was a craft on the far left hand side. It was essentially in the shape of a missile but larger, much larger so that it took up almost an entire side of the chamber.

Along its side, black lettering read 'The Prometheus'. Scott pondered the name for a moment, he had encountered it before, many years before in his book of Greek Mythology. Prometheus, the man who stole fire from the gods, how fitting. Captain James now joined Scott, surveying the craft with a sombre reverence 'We do not yet know when or even if we can use this but if we do you will know immediately. You will be expected to do everything you have just agreed to, from this day forth you are bound to it. There is no way of pulling out.'

Scott felt almost nothing as this was said, he did not believe there was anything that could distract him from this opportunity. He touched the craft for a moment, hearing his mind hum with excitement. 'I will not pull out' he stated decisively. James decided that now was a good moment to

leave him with the craft, to let the avenger get to know his weapon of choice.

He and the other nameless men departed. Scott was alone in the hangar, and that was the way he liked it.