

The Man

Only He

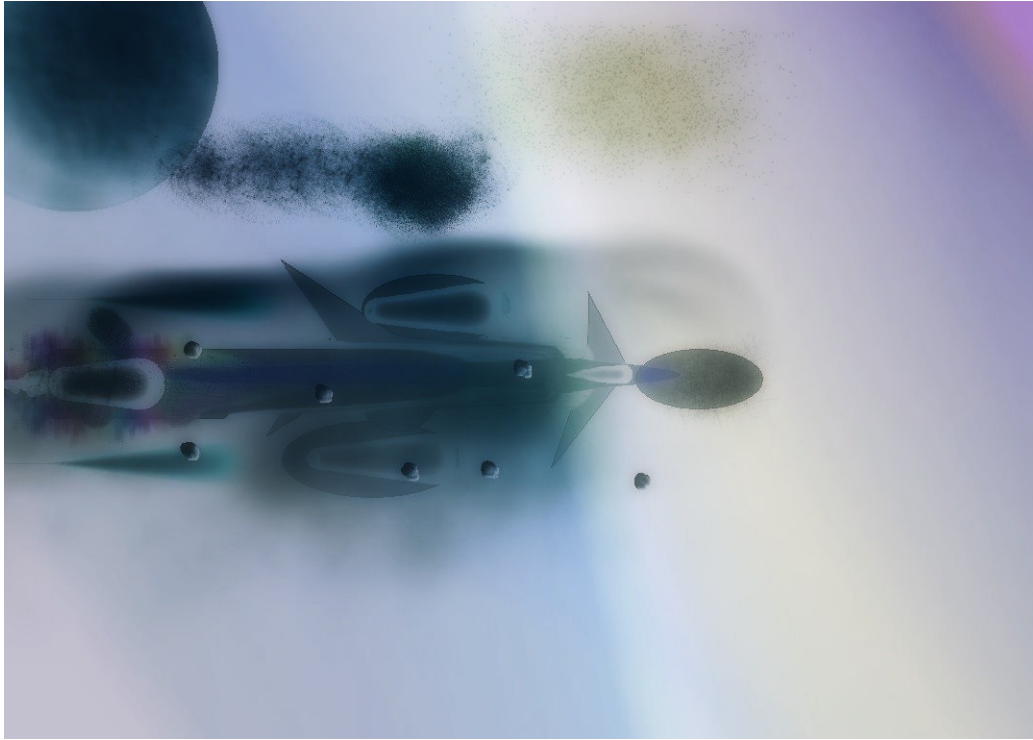


Illustration 23: The ships closed for battle

Colour Backdrop: Space illuminated by hundreds of battle wagons painted personal colours and own motifs on their hulls such as dancing girls and griffins.

And about these great ships transports fuellers and stars.

The Man's war cry was picked up by the opposing fleets.

What fleets, good question?

The Emperor Augustus Sutherland sat on his gold throne a worried man. The last news on the whereabouts of that detested beast was that he was lost in space, drifting aimlessly as a museum piece.

AND NOW THE DETESTED ONE WAS LOSE HERE.

And Po Wei sat below his emperor on a gilded smaller silver throne. After all he was only a secretary but Augustus had made him admiral of the fleet. It was a job he was not fit for as he was a politician. To him an engagement was moving your ships towards the enemy on the screen above them.

Po Wei was trying to digest all the gauges and news pouring in already about his ships and transports and the battle had not begun.

But was confident in himself in playing chess but he had never been an admiral. It was essential that he defeat The Man for prestige for there was too much 'Long live The Man' being shouted.

What he didn't realise was it had been Aelfric's idea to Augustus to have him made an admiral. None here had defeated The Man in a slog out match between battle wagons and the emperor knew Po Wei would take the blame.

That's why the emperor must be above it all so spent a lot of time with his women.

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Now Aelfric was behind the times and knew humans were trash so that meant The Man could be bought, why he had the brilliant idea to ask Llatchur to put something in a wicker basket and send it to The Man; the head of Posidonius the original, the rest needed a wash in a bath!

Aelfric had had enough of Posidonus and wanted him dead, except Posidonus didn't know that; Aelfric was his friend, *wasn't he?*

And the problem with Aelfric was that he had got used to buying people and escaping justice for he was of the CONDEMNED? Oh what a lovely world it is!

And Aelfric urged his commanders of the Trading Association to meet The Man's fleet and so approached cautiously.

"We are traders, let the regulars do the job they are paid to do," was the reply amongst themselves.

"Where is the fleet?" Po Wei asked not familiar with the gauges and LEDs flashing for he had been following an asteroids thinking them ships.

And Augustus finishing with his women was bathing before he make his grand entrance in saffron robes smelling of rose water. A fan fare and his courtiers would bow low as he came to enquire of the battles progress.

"I am Madam Butterfly Chou and neutral," and her ship was scanned by both sides and allowed through unmolested to Vegas. It was carrying a cargo of flesh and soldiers on both sides were men, whether human, alien, cyborg, robot or machine, they were men, soldiers, airmen and sailors.

SO VENEGANCE SLIPPED BY THE MIGHTY BATTLEWAGONS.

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Now Prince Vespa the robot remember had a neutron bomb implanted in him by Aelfric and was ordered to bring his great fleet to aid the Trading Association.

The cyborg knew the consequences if he refused, a small nuclear localised explosion would occur and he did perish, and he did not want to perish; he was enjoying life in the shoes of the original Vespa.

And he was very fond of Madam Chou and had given her a hand picked platoon of men, all robots like himself to protect her against himself just in case Aelfric was to use him against her. **It takes a robot to know a robot!**

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And The Man did only what he could do, he walked tall towards Vegas Hotel dome with the 5 at his side and his army behind. The first action being meeting ten robotic members of Vegas Police.

“Throw down your weapons,” the police had demanded, either crazy or had not seen the army behind the dictator?

“All brave men,” The Man liking crazy fearless soldiers.

And the 5 argued and laughed amongst themselves as to who should kill these men.

And the robotic police used to bullying slaves were unnerved for robotics have a nervous system of circuits and knew FEAR.

So The Man walked away to the right waving his hands “I am not with them I am not with them, I don’t know them,” meaning the 5 and the robotic police shouted at him to stop.

Since he was diverting the police unwatched the 5 attacked and slew all.

“I told you I was not one of them,” The Man meaning he was more human.

And a group of orange mutant monkeys with alien/human genes applauded for none loved the Vegas Robotic Police; they were famously monstrous.

Later: A mile away the Master Priest was shown the last robot police eye camera recording.

“The Man,” he sighed and checked his calendar. Six months to go till the virus inside Nesta awoke and where was Nesta?

When that virus awoke it would be ravenous and most of life as humans knew it would perish. It was time to empty his bank accounts and head into uncharted alien space; of course he did leave a trail as he would be needed to provide the cure which he already had, at a price.

He would take a hold of slaves, make his own farms for food, some aliens didn’t taste nice, their blood was too watery or metallic, *and he was after all a man of the delicatessen.*

“The Man has many friends amongst the aliens out there, I will then be careful where I go,” and reduced his choice to “Ten little piggy’s went to market.....and that left one piggy,” so choose

THE RHEGID EMPIRE

For he was ignorant of uncharted space apart from pirates patrolled its borders.

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The second encounter The Man and the 5 had with the enemy was meeting a platoon of the imperial garrison whose heart was not in the fight. They had been here

a while and been softened by the vices of Vegas Hotel; let the battle wagons slog it out, they could watch from the comfort of a bar with the aid of floozy hostesses.

And they saw HIM in his pink pantaloons and heard his screeching war cry and knew FEAR.

So much they fled into one of their own minefields and many died.

And now Posidonus listened to a survivor on a medic float bed, summoned to hear what he was telling the doctors.

“He has 5 others with him worse than himself.”

Posidonus questioned him further until BELIEF set in and with it FEAR for now there were 6 crazies coming his way.

“My orders are to stand and fight, this is what I do to cowards,” and Posidonus ordered the medic droids to stop keeping the trooper alive so the man felt pain and slipped into darkness and Feared because he had not led a good life.

And Posidonus retreated to a world where he wore rubber gloves and a green face mask, here The Man did not exist but beyond his closed door men whispered “The crazy, who does he call cowards,” and deserted for they would not fight for Posidonus.

So in an empty trench Zagor Blue Skin picked up a red can, opened it and drank.

“That is good, what is it?” He asked.

“Coca cola,” The Man.

“So when men are ruled by corrupt officials they become corrupt and when the top crumbles the bottom is washed away ready for a fresh beginning with a new sunrise,”
Tintagel the clone who finished the chronicles.