



Illustration 30: Snowed out

Since the adobe fort was out of bounds the Governor sought refuge in the
laboratory with The Master Priest.

And all because he had raised what flag was available?

And The Master Priest was not impressed with what he saw; he did not see the
garrison troops as fit; they had suffered years of excessive use of the nunnery wine
and penal inhabitants. You see The Master Priest saw everything as food, but
compared to the locals these men should be like softened tenderised veal.

And The Master Priest heard his stomach rumble, he had not been to a feast in a long time.

It was just bad timing, The Master Priest was packing his bags and getting the locals to transfer his crocodile suitcases to an old ship that he had been repairing. It had crashed here years ago in a cosmic storm, its survivors adding to the population as badly needed fresh genes.

Now the governor had looted the ship and kept quite so none new of its existence, except for The Master Priest that is.

“Master?” Posidonus called and the silence made him realise something was amiss? “Master?” He called again and saw the empty laboratory rooms, equipment missing; *“And you see why there were so many crocodile suitcases!”* Tintagel the Clone.

So Posidonus breathing hard fled out of the laboratory intending to follow the packers who had left a trail of flattened vegetation through the long safari pink grass where blue flamingos rose to the air in panic, for Posidonus grunted and sweated for he was unfit.

Now the yellow flowers of this type of blue grass produce much pollen so Posidonus went into an allergic reaction, sneezing and coughing so his eyes watered much as he stumbled, fell and felt little legs walking across his face.

Terrified he brushed the insect aside but it was a scorpion and its sting sunk into his hand. The chances were that if he had left it alone it would have crawled off him; but this was Posidonus who did not have nerves of steel. *“A man who ate all the*

wrong things because science allowed him too, cream buns and definitely no vegetables!” Tintagel the Clone.

And the venom made Posidonius vomit often so dizzily he called “Master Priest where are you? It is Posidonius.”

And then he saw salvation, a tube was in front of him, he could escape, go away and have nothing to do with Aelfric or The Master “*But he had no cash these days and did not eat his vegetables?”* Tintagel the Clone.

Thus with a dream of starting afresh on a new world he fell into the tube in a sitting position and the venom inside him began to make his muscles relax, “*All the better for the scorpion to eat its prey, normally insects, birds and small mammals,*” Tintagel the Clone.

And then a snake was dropped onto his lap and he screamed and tried to get up so stood and fell on the reptile and so it bit him several times.

Madam Butterfly Chou took the reptile from behind the head and directed it to bite Posidonius several times more on the face.

“Why?” He groaned.

“The dancer,” VENGEANCE replied.

And because Madam Butterfly Chou was gloating and not paying attention the snakes' head turned and bit her wrist.

So startled dropped the snake back onto Posidonius as she staggered backwards terrified she was going to die.

She could feel the pain and heat in her arm as the poison rushed through her body.

Her heart began to pound faster out of panic not venom.

She imagined her breathing was difficult and it was, she was having a panic attack so gasping for air she sank to her knees.

Then fell onto her back and with wide eyes stared at the racing yellow clouds in the green toxic atmosphere above and felt dizzy. All she had to do was to shut her eyes and calm down, but Madam Butterfly Chou didn't like snakes, she was convinced she was dying.

"Bugger Posidonus," she shouted swallowing her tongue as she gulped air and choked and began to turn blue.

Posidonus seeing all laughed, he wasn't going out alone.

Backdrop: white freeze up.

"The laboratory has fallen, I believe the 5 led the charge through the gates," I owe you much but did not add papa.

And tears ran from Slow Horse's eyes as the sounds of distant canon reached him, civil war and it was all his own doing.

"I am just a boy," he cried.

"Son, I am here, my fleet will arrive in two months and I will drive the Purists from your world," The Man for them outside the laboratory to hear.

"Will you really help me after all I have done?" And still did not say papa and The Man had not learned anything.

"We are friends, friends always help each other and you are my son, a good kid at heart," The Man and showed he had learned nothing by using the word 'kid.'

And Slow Horse looked at the 5 and did not want them as friends. They were horrid looking mutants, worse looking than The Man.

“The governor Sgian Briste escaped,” we have nothing to do here so we will chase him down,” Zagor Blue Skin as Pyoo-ur Sister looked the boy emperor up and down making him nervous, he did not want her as a wife no matter how exaggerated her curves and bosom.

“Where is Nesta?” He asked.

The Man did not reply as he watched the 5 charge out of the camp to seek the governor. “Tomorrow we will return to your capital and you can be an emperor?” The Man meaning equity not a boy playing at absolute power and again had learned nothing for he was speaking down to a boy.

Now outside away from the emperor “How are we going to take his capital?” Tintagel the Clone asked suspiciously.

“You told me General Farrell has driven out the Purists, all that boy has to do is act regal because the masses of his people see him as Tupt incarnate,” The Man replied wondering what Nesta was up too, glad he had left her aboard his ship; that boy was an adolescent teenager whose hormones could not be trusted because he was too used to being ABSOLUTE .

Nesta’s diary.

“I knew he was mine the moment he entered my room and shut the door, deliberately making sure I saw him lock the door.

I didn't say anything but sat there on the edge of my bed challenging him with my eyes. I wasn't going to give in that easy, a girl is the boss and the men follow; so the silence was getting to him.

We women could be so cruel and he looked funny in his pink pantaloons. So I helped him out by giggling and then turned the lights down.

Nesta's diary.

Princess Veig was made Consort to Tupt which meant I was pretty safe because the people remembered her with affection and Slow Horse already had one civil war on his hands!

The boy emperor had managed to call The Man 'papa' because it suited his whim to have a father about and then The Man announces he after the Purists had been defeated would leave for his own world. "With a Rhegid armada and my own forces I shall force Augustus to abdicate," and that meant Slow Horse would be under his own *absolute* hormonal influences again.

Nesta's diary.

The nuclear winter was the result of a proton reactor due to neglect exploding in the north of Dog Planet. This huge reactor had been built here to send energy back to Rhegid. "*Of course no sound mind wanted such a dangerous monolith on Rhegid, let it be with the dogs up there,*" Tintagel the clone.

So cold unpredictable winds suddenly blew south dropping temperatures well below freezing point.

Leaving a swath of ice and frozen life that had been too slow to move away; such as Posidonus who had been found with a snake on him and lying next to the tube, Madam Butterfly Chou, also frozen.

And The Man had taken us all to see to verify the claims that the evil Posidonus was dead at last.

“Take him to the north pole of this place and leave him there. Tell no one, it will be our secret and put a sign about his neck with these words, “An evil man, let none awake him,” and then The Man lifted Nesta’s chin so he could look into her eyes and he saw all the pain there Posidonus had given her. “You must go forward with me.”

“Shall I have Madam Chou taken aboard and cloned Master?” Tintagel the Clone.

“Indeed do, we will bury her elsewhere, all worlds owe her a debt of gratitude. We shall make much pomp and show out of it. A lesson and warning to evil men who pervert the sexes for profit. I just cannot imagine any world without Madam Chou and her girls,” The Man grinning at Tintagel the Clone who grinned back for only men could think like that..

“Such the acts of VENGEANCE, a pity she knew so much FEAR when she died,” Nesta added.

Diary.

And we on small cutters from the New Saturn saw below more of what the 5 had found looking for Sgian Briste the Governor of Dog Planet; a blue rusty ship whose doors had not been closed when the cold freezing wind had descended upon it. So penal labourers were now frozen testimonials to the nuclear winter.

“They say it is The Master Priest’s ship,” Hairless one of the 5...

“We must go down and see if he is dead inside,” Zagor Blue Skin.

Then the wind blew again so all shivered.

“Wrap up well friends,” The Man and I Nesta thought nothing of any danger, my man was with me.

And we landed and made our way to the ship in knee deep snow as the wind frosted our visors on our helmets.

Then we all saw him, standing at the entrance that was open to the wind, dressed for the summer.

THE MASTER PRIEST.

In a white cotton smock, as if he was a druid reincarnated and totally unaffected by the freezing weather?

And behind came Governor Sgian Briste, always there is another Posidonus, existing under the woodwork like slaters; also holding a large butchers knife. Now jumping he charged at us demonstrating threat tactics that we should leave or be killed.

But the snow was deep and he disappeared in a drift, emerged choking and wet, and to be wet here is fatal and he flopped about like a fish trying to get back to the ship he emerged from.

“It was also obvious The Master Priest was not amused by such clownish behaviour,” Tintagel the clone, “and The Man was half bionic so his eleven fingered hand reached out and took the knife hand, clamping shut like a vice.”

“I condemn the guilty,” The Man shouted and forced the knife back into Sgian Briste’s body, opening a dam so fluids gushed out and froze, making an ice bridge to the governor, who quickly froze as well.

“It was an execution for the benefit of The Master Priest for his appointed time to go home was near,” Tintagel the Clone.

“I condemn the guilty,” The Man shouted and using his bionic legs sprang at the doorway and his victim taken by surprise fell backwards fumbling as he did so to press the button to shut the ship door.

“You see one might hear tales of The Man’s agility but unless you see it you just don’t believe because you cannot do the same feats,” Tintagel the Clone, *“for most of us have difficulty lifting our message bags.”*

“Help help help me,” The Master Priest and those that would help him where his penal helpers hoping to catch a lift off this Planet of DOGS.

“Kill kill kill,” they came as if zombies out of a Hammer horror film.

“It was The Man who swung these unfortunates this way and that until his friends came aboard and thawed out,” Nesta.

“He is doing remarkably well by himself, doesn’t need us anyway,” Morair Nobleman and that annoyed me Nesta so stood beside my man and fought like a she were-cat.

With shrugs of embarrassment the 5 went to work; such a one sided fight and I am sure mercy would have been granted if the penals had JUST asked for it, *but they did*

not, The Master Priest had promised them a passage and they fought hard to escape the years of misery they had suffered.

*

A cockpit bathed in red infra red light. Many coloured LEDs

And a genius had donned flying goggles and leather jacket and had no idea how to fly; droid 34A was missing but he belonged to same class as The Man, Tintagel, the 5, even Augustus and Aelfric, they were people who did not behave as ordinary people did because they were different.

Wow!

Where had they all come from? These comic book heroes and villains?

“At last we are alone,” The Man behind the Master Priest wondering which lever to pull to get the ship airborne, any lever would do for he was in a hurry to escape.

“Mercy I beg,” The Master Priest.

“Of course and The Man drew his short sword to dispatch the evil scientist quickly, thus showing mercy.

Any lever would do? What about a throttle handle and The Master Priest pulled it all the way back so the ship boomed to life zigzagging across the snow throwing The Man onto the back of his victim.

“From such a vantageous position The Man could smell the iron on The Master Priest’s breath as the later turned to bite him,” Tintagel the Clone.

“I am hungry, I will feed upon you, die dictator die,” the vampire that was The Master Priest said gloating bringing his fangs down. And by gloating and boasting and wasting time he gave The Man valuable seconds to lurch backwards.

That is when the ship came to a stop in a snow drift, almost completely burying itself; but the action threw The Man forward and his short sword went home so that the leather flying gear of The Master Priest was pierced.

“This is my mercy to you foul beast,” The Man pushing his sword home several times and then left the vampire to die on his chair. Now The Man opened the windows so the freezing air blew in and left the cockpit shutting the door behind him.

Thus The Master Priest began to freeze and as he did so realised the cockpit would be his icy tomb.

“Is he dead?” I Nesta hoping.

“Yes, it is time we returned to Planet Rhegid and prepare the downfall of Augustus,” The Man seeing vast armies and armadas.

“We have many prisoners,” Zagor Blue Skin.

“Give them substance and tell them they can have the fort, they can make their own government and rule themselves,” The Man and many penals overheard and it went about them a fast whisper. The Man was giving them not only life but freedom and their FEAR of him vanished.

Nesta’s diary.....”I wasn’t in a hurry to marry The Man, he had wars to fight and I didn’t want to frighten him off. But what I was making sure was that he had an intelligent partner so read as much as I could about life. No one was going to say I

was a jumped up courtier, I was going to get the ordinary citizens to say I was kind and just and with Tintagel the Clone as a teacher I couldn't fail.