

Angular Trifecta {Pilot}

Written By: Edmund Alexander Sims

## Boyd Arc

What really bothered Enderbrook Boyd was not so much the fact that the power continued to go out incessantly so much as it was the realization that the Power Authority had taken away his right to complain. Ceres actually fell under the jurisdiction of Mars Bloc, and with their blessing, people began to leave the dwarf planet in droves - taking a generous government subsidy along with them for their troubles. Months would pass before his number was called, but he was even more concerned about the distant future and the financial sting that would arise from out of this present bait and switch.

Every night like clockwork, the power would go out at right about the same time, but the thing was that the duration of the blackouts was increasing. Saying nothing of this being unbearable, it was becoming impossible to plan around the inconvenience. What had once been a nightly one hour occurrence had now upped the frustration to a daily four hour annoyance. And like clockwork, Boyd watched a female technician leave the Power Authority at the end of her shift with no other urgency than the desire to not accrue any overtime. Actually, he had been watching the woman for months now in advance of being able to make this one move.

"Oh, my fault!" Boyd blurted out almost prematurely of him turning a corner and walking forcefully into the technician to cause a collision which jarred the woman's backpack loose from her.

"No worries," the technician said - accepting of the apology while watching Boyd kneel down awkwardly in his trench coat to pick up the gear and hand it to her. Almost in stride of the incident occurring, she was right back on her way.

The intent was for Boyd to project a gentlemanly trait that would deflect attention away from the purpose which was to swipe the technician's codekey. His ultimate prize, however, was unforced entry into the Power Authority.

Blowing that place up probably did not make a whole lot of sense as far as solving the problem of these rolling blackouts was concerned, but at least Boyd's displeasure would be made known. Amazingly, the technician's credentials that were embedded on the codekey gave him access to Inner Corridor. Familiarity or not, for him to have been down this deep within the complex must have meant that he belonged there, so none of the significant concentration of Mars Bloc troops paid his appearance any undue mind.

It was not until after Boyd physically entered the ring-shaped Inner Corridor that he realized why. The troops were not concerned with keeping people out. Honestly, who would dare? Their aim

was meant to keep whatever that was on the opposite side of the wall from where he entered...in.

Not that Boyd needed additional reasons to break out the Duzo-16/7 charges - but the gigantic photochromic plant which sat where Ceres' core was supposed to be would have been a pretty good one.

Janette Arc

The cruel joke of Ceres was that the dwarf planet was already occupied by the time that Mars Bloc decided to move in. The harsh punchline happened to be that it now needed to support dual ecosystems in order to protect one set of inhabitants from the other.

"You've done everything that you can," Burdlit Giz - the reptilian (in appearance) Carriveaua operational general comforted. "The Deew remains dormant."

"But it's not enough," Janette Ueberrhein - the Human engineering team lead replied without turning around in her chair to leave the attention of the view-screen that highlighted various readings which were stabilized but still left the woman feeling uneasy. She pointed out as much, "These rolling blackouts continue to occur because of the Deew's energy demands. We feed it; it sleeps, but it's requiring more and more for this pattern to continue. I'm almost thinking that we need to resort to a trickle-type charge in order to ween the Deew off of the constant infusions. It'll be too powerful to flash freeze otherwise. I should've seen this earlier."

With a sigh, Burdlit could sense Janette's weariness from working nonstop hours that continued well after she left the Power Authority, so he suggested, "Get some rest. You'll be able to think more clearly when you come back to it."

Not necessarily nodding her agreement but too tired to argue - Janette disconnected her slate computer from its console connector which effectively shut down her station. After placing the device in her backpack and taking her codekey in hand, she got up to leave.

The transport module ride from Inner Corridor down near the core of Ceres on up to its surface had her in a daze of contemplation - so much so that when Janette turned the corner from exiting the entrance to the Power Authority, she accidentally collided with a man who was walking along the sidewalk. Previously fascinated by thoughts of the past and future, this startling jolt shook her back to the focus of the here and now.

"Oh, my fault!" The man cried almost chivalrously as he labored downward in his trench coat to help pick up Janette's gear that had gone flying during the unusually blunt impact.

With the belongings retrieved, Janette shook off the occurrence - stating, "No worries," and continued on her way.

Upon arriving at her living unit which was less than six city blocks worth of walking distance from the Power Authority, Janette noticed that the codekey which she had been holding loosely in her

left hand was no longer there. Where was her head as of late? Oh right - trying to figure out how to save Ceres from the voracious Deew.

Luckily, codekeys were tied to GPS, and Janette could track the location of hers from her slate computer. Unfortunately, chivalry was absent because she could not have left the Power Authority without it, however its movement was headed toward a destination of Inner Corridor!

"That son of a bitc-."

Burdlit Arc

For once, the problems could not be attributed to the government. This time around, it was the fault of the developers who saw the potential of Ceres' water-ice content, disregarded the vegetational crevice that resided where the core of the dwarf planet was supposed to be, and ignored the initial warning signs from the missing and dead first colonizers with a coverup.

On the contrary, Mars Bloc had been quick to respond when they learned of the 'issue' that lie beneath the surface of Ceres. There was no hint of pride and no time to place blame when needing to call in Burdlit Giz. The reptilian (in appearance) operational general and his Carriveaua race, in particular, were quite experienced in dealing with the growing epidemic of Deews popping up around the universe.

"You've done everything that you can," Burdlit comforted the Human engineering team lead - Janette Ueberrhein. "The Deew remains dormant."

"But it's not enough," Janette pleaded. "These rolling blackouts continue to occur because of the Deew's energy demands. We feed it; it sleeps, but it's requiring more and more for this pattern to continue. I'm almost thinking that we need to resort to a trickle-type charge in order to ween the Deew off of the constant infusions. It'll be too powerful to flash freeze otherwise. I should've seen this earlier."

Maybe, but Burdlit could tell that Janette was exhausted and suggested, "Get some rest. You'll be able to think more clearly when you come back to it." He, too, could use some more of that coffee mixture with the French vanilla creamer. The way that it made him feel all jittery was amusing if not quite addicting. His own exit came shortly after taking one last glance at the gigantic Deew through the transparent windows of Inner Corridor.

Burdlit did not get all into the science of everything because Janette was more than qualified to deal with those matters. He was more of a facilitator and, where that did not work, a warrior. When she needed a solar sail to bring an alternate and amped up source of power to the planet, the operational general got Mars Bloc to make it happen. If the vile Deew started to sprout and grow out of control, he would do his military best to have a bonfire at the core with that plant.

Funny, Burdlit had not even taken a sip of his coffee with it being too stifling hot for his tastes, and yet his eyes were deceiving him as the cup danced about its saucer. Then the ensuing explosion

nearly dumped the scalding hot beverage in his lap had not the same turbulence thrown him from his seat! A ceresquake?

Rolling away from the Deew's luminescent foliage as it punched through the walls and floor of the Power Authority mess hall - seeking an alternative component of carbon-based life forms to subsidize its advanced photosynthesis, Burdlit scooped up his laser rifle. He really should switch to decaf....