

Corps of Other Galaxy

"Pilot"

written by

Chamberlain Ricco

973-727-9003

Chamberlain20.ricco@gmail.com

EXT: COG SHUTTLE LAUNCH SITE, SOUTHEAST AMERICA - DAY

A news helicopter flies over thousands of onlookers cheering a massive space shuttle docked on the side of the ocean. Triumphant music fills the air.

TOM (V/O)

And we're just minutes away from the launch of the GSS ATHENIA, the first human attempt to explore galaxies beyond our own. Isn't it exciting, Clark?

INT: NEWS ROOM - DAY

CLARK

Absolutely incredible, Tom. Diane?

DIANE

Stunning, Clark. Stunning. Chip?

EXT: SPACE SHUTTLE ENTRANCE

CHIP

It really is, guys. It really is. This incredible crew is only moments away from embarking on the greatest expedition mankind has ever seen.

INT: NEWS ROOM

TOM

And with overpopulation growing increasingly larger every day, I'm sure they're happy to do it.

DIANE

(Mom joke)

Thanks to them, I'll only have to wait an hour for my Starbucks

EXT: SPACE SHUTTLE ENTRANCE

The anchors obnoxiously laugh. Chip joins them, though his laugh is just a bit delayed.

CHIP

I can assure you, and all of the United Americans watching at home, that these men and women have one goal: Expanding the reach of the human race, and-- OH! Look at his!

(MORE)

CHIP (CONT'D)

Marten, get this. Here we have the captain of the GSS ATHENIA, Selena Baravaquez.

The camera pushes on SELENA BARAVAQUEZ, a tall, tan woman wearing a sleek space suit.

SELENA

Oh lord, Colonel Candor, get these men away from the landing platform!

The handsome and confident CAN pushes forward, followed closely by quiet and nerdy EL staring down at his tablet. Can nudges the reporter into the cameraman, knocking the camera over and ruining the shot.

CAN

Sorry guys, Spacemen only.

EL

(Staring at his tablet)
Ship thrusters are 0.0008% off their optimal mark. We should do another systems scan to--

CAN

El, buddy.
(Can places his hands on El's shoulders.)
Can't you enjoy one day of relaxation?

EL

I hardly see what's relaxing about leaving home for a dozen years.

CAN

That's why we had those seminars, remember? 'Love crosses the stars, memories live forever,' and all that jazz. Plus,
(Can leans closer to EL)
I need you to be cool so I can be cool, you feel me?

El finally looks up from his pad, slightly amused.

EL

Okay, I feel you.

SELENA (O/S)

Adorable, LETS GO BOYS!

Selena claps her hands as Can and El jog into the ship.

INT: ATHENIA BRIDGE

Can and El take their seats beside Selena's command chair. She points and shouts at the space-troops in front of her. El inputs code on his computer.

EL

The ship is ready for launch,
Captain.

Selena holds down her comm link.

SELENA

GENERAL TALONS, do we have the all
clear?

EXT: LAUNCH SITE OFFICIALS PLATFORM

General Talons and his colonels stand over the massive crowd of onlookers, staring straight up at the glass of the bridge.

GENERAL TALONS

You have the go, Captain. Make your
kind proud.

INT: ATHENIA BRIDGE

Selena flips switches on her pilot console.

SELENA

Alright, we're a-go.

The ship's thrusters fire, expelling blue energy against the alloy landing platform. The ship begins to shake.

SELENA (CONT'D)

(After a deep breath)
To the new frontier.

EXT: LAUNCH SITE

The ship slowly begins to rise. The crowd is frenzied in excitement and joy, all the while blown back by the powerful winds of the engine. The ship rises faster into the sky.

INT: ATHENIA BRIDGE

Can looks at El with a grand smile. He gives his friend a fist pump. El with an unsure smile.

EL
Here we go.

EXT: LAUNCH SITE OFFICIALS PLATFORM

The ship rockets higher into the sky, almost at the clouds. Soldiers clap and cheer around a stoic General Talons. He gives a respectful nod up at the ship, then turns and walks away.

EXT: UPPER ATMOSPHERE

The ship bursts through layers of clouds, glowing red as it climbs higher and higher. Blue fades into navy, then instant black with a speckling of white stars. For a moment, the ship almost appears still, floating through space.

INT: ATHENIA BRIDGE

SELENA
Prepare for Solarvelocity.

El powers a throttle forward as Can stares one last looks at the stars in front of him. The largest glimmer and expand. It leaves a dazzle in Can's eyes. He wears a determined grin.

EXT: SPACE

The ATHENIA sits still as her jets swell with power. The engine lights grow bright, then burst, sending the ship into infinity.

TITLE CARD

EXT: SPACE

Everything is black, less a few white dots here and there. After a moment, out of infinity shoots the Athenia. It comes to an instant stop before slowly beginning a drift through space.

INT: ATHENIA

The rooms of the Athenia are barren and quiet. Only a few lights have stayed on.

INT: ATHENIA CRYO CHAMBERS

A room with dozens of white and blue chambers hang on the wall. The room is quiet and still except for nitrogen smoke leaking from tubes. Suddenly, a beeping rings out. A blue light blinks on a chamber. The walls of the chamber steam with a release of pressure and the door swings open, revealing a dazed El. He wipes his tired eyes as he staggers forward to a command console in the center of the room. He stretches, yawns, and presses a single key. Instantly, every single cryo-pod opens at once. All the crew slowly exit their pods, cheerfully and tiredly greeting each other. Can hops down from the top row and jogs right over to El

CAN

Morning sunshine, how'd you sleep?

EL

Have you seen my tablet? I need to know if--

Can throws his arm around El.

CAN

Holy holy, El, we just woke up
after a three year sleep

(beat)

Let's eat some breakfast.

INT: ATHENIA DINING HALL

Can and El hold trays of classic American breakfast food as they walk to a table. Can starts eating immediately after he sits down. El examines his pancake.

EL

I hope they gave us the good syrup.
Is it--

Can freezes, a last chunk of sausage on the end of his fork. He has eaten his entire plate

EL (CONT'D)

Well, is it?

SELENA (O/S)

Okay everybody, attention!

The room looks to her at an instant.

SELENA (CONT'D)

Good morning to you all. I hope you slept well, cause we have a lot of work to do.

RANDOM SOLDIER

Work? We just freaking woke up, man.

SELENA

Yes, Sergeant Tubs, you have to work. We all do, starting with preparing our ships for a small expedition to the planet below us.

El is about to taste his pancake, but stops at her words.

EL

Already? To where? What are the geological conditions, what--

CAN

(Interjecting)

With all due respect Captain, I don't think we're ready for a full scale expedition. The men need to acclimate.

SELENA

I agree. That's why you and El are taking Pheonix Corp.

Can looks over to a table to his left. He gives the men and women sitting a look of "You wanna do this?" and they respond with thumbs up and shrugs.

CAN

Alright, we're in.

Can slaps El's back and knocks the pancake once again off his fork.

SELENA

Great. Pheonix Corp, prepare your gear and meet me in the hanger in thirty-five.

Can spins up out of his seat.

CAN

Holy holy I can't believe it. We're really doing this. C'mon!

El stands to follow Can but turns and picks up his plate.

EL

One sec.

El finally tastes the pancake and his chewing face borders on tears.

EL (CONT'D)

It's not the good syrup.

Can puts his arm around El and leads him out of the dining hall.

INT: BREIFING ROOM

Can and El stand on either side of Selena around a holographic image of a desert planet. The rest of Phoenix Corp stands around attentive.

SELENA

Scans of the planet revealed mostly desert surface, but there are sources of water scattered around the planet.

EL

Do we suspect life?

SELENA

Probably not. But this is what we're here to do, and a planet like this is perfect for your crew.

CAN

Absolutely right, Cap. So, is this a hunt... or?

SELENA

No.

(beat)

Only kill if absolutely necessary. Unless, of course, you want triple the paperwork.

Can smirks and El is frightened.

EL

With all due respect, ma'am, I can't do sextuple the amount of paperwork.

SELENA

Then keep your pistols holstered. Try to get footage.

(MORE)

SELENA (CONT'D)

Document anything you find. And please, whatever you do, don't lose any men. I don't need General Talon sending Commander Blanc out here already.

CAN

(Winks)

Can do, Cap.

Can and the Phoenix Team salute.

CAN (CONT'D)

Move out!

INT: THE ARION

Can mans the pilots chair. El is beside him, working on three screen at once.

CAN

Thrusters a-go. El?

EL

Systems are basically there, though I could use--

Can grabs the guidance handles tight as El continues to work in the background.

CAN

Sounds good. Captain, we ready?

SELENA (V/O)

We are. Men, you're taking the first steps in a new future for mankind. Try not to slip and fall.

CAN

You heard the woman. Let's make history.

The Arion rises above the hanger floor, then bursts out into open space.

EXT: SPACE

The Arion rockets toward a tan planet, stripped with brown and sparsely dotted with milky blue.

EXT: PLANET ATMOSPHERE - DAY

The Arion roars down through blue skies, slowing down as it nears the tan, rocky surface.

INT: THE ARION

El plays with his screens.

EL
Landing commencing. Take her in
slow over the rocks.

EXT: PLANET SURFACE

The Arion hovers above the rocks and sand, blowing wind all around before gracefully landing on the stony surface.

INT: ARION EXIT PLATFORM

The crew gather their gear as Can readies his blaster pistols and El powers up his analysis system. The ship platform expels steam as it lowers and Phoenix Corp begins to exit the ship.

EL
The nearest oasis is 12.3 clicks
away. That should give us a great
chance at tracking any signs of
life on the planet.

EXT: ARION LANDING SPOT

Can and El are now off of the platform and out on the solar sands.

CAN
Life?
(Can looks around with a
raised eyebrow)
I bet thirty bucks nothing lives
here. The oxygen isn't even stable.

EL
So says the scientist.

Can gives an "I guess" grunt.

EXT: CLIFF EDGE

Phoenix Corp stands atop a cliff overlooking a distant watering hole. El swivels his head about, scanning the environment, while Can stands above him. Through El's scan view, we see him survey the land in front of the watering hole. He see's nothing.

CAN
Any luck El?

EL
Sadly, no. Though, there is remarkable foliage around the oasis. I'd love to get a sample of the--

PHEONIX SOLDIER (O/S)
Hey. Hey!

A soldier points his rifle behind some rocks. He's clearly startled. El pushes past Can and to the Soldier.

EL
No, Booker, wait!

BOOKER fires a shot and El winces. He stands in between Booker and the rocks, his hand held palm up. Others soldiers have also now raised their weapons.

EL (CONT'D)
You can't just--

El turns to look at the disturbance and his face goes white. A four foot, furry, plump creature spouting eight legs, four eyes, and two massive walrus fangs, stares wide eyed back at El. El looks as though he's about to break, but turns confident with words.

EL (CONT'D)
We are here to learn. Stay back.

El activates his scanners. The creature scuddles slightly, showing it's horrible fangs but never engaging. His scanner beeps.

EL (CONT'D)
There. Now, slowly back away.

Phoenix Corp slowly lowers their rifles as they back away. El walks through them back to Can.

EL (CONT'D)
You know, that actually went kinda-

Can's eyes go wide and his pistols fling forward. A twenty-foot tall lizard-like creature with rippling green and brown scales leaps from the rocks above down on a trooper. It shakes him in it's teeth before tossing him off the cliff. Can leaps up with his rocket boots, catching the trooper as the rest of Pheonix Corp takes fire at the monster. Can lands and puts the soldier down.

CAN
(to El)
Yeah, it's going great.

Can rockets into the air and begins blasting the beast.

EL
It WAS going great!

El grapples up to the rock the creature came from. As Phoenix Squad barely evades the beast, El begins his scan. As he's scanning the beast, he see's Can fly in, blast the creatures head, then get knocked away by a massive claw right into the spot El was perched. The two collide and tumble back on the rocks.

CAN
El, what are you doing?

EL
Researching! Before you tackled me.

CAN
Can't you see? That thing is a killing machine. Write that down.

EL
We have orders NOT to kill. We're here to study!

CAN
Dude, if this is about the paperwork, I'll do it.

EL
No, Can, it's the mission. If we tear apart the first world we get to, what's to stop us from decimating any planet we want?

A Phoenix soldier is thrown up onto their rock. Can checks on him and turns back to El.

CAN
We can discuss ethics later. This thing needs to go down.

Can turns and rockets into the air, initiating another hail of fire upon the creature. El stares for a second, then springs into action. His scanners activate attack mode and analyze several of the beast's weaknesses. A square around the neck blinks brightest.

EL

Can!

(El holds up a silver
sphere.)

Go for the neck!

Can nods back. El clicks the sphere and chucks it directly at the beast's neck. Can swoops down, fires, and blows up the sphere, sending an explosive electrical shock that knocks the beast back, spazzing. Can lands directly in front of where it topples over, covering all the troops in dust. Can shields his eyes, then looks back to see the beast is not only back up, but unharmed.

CAN

(to El)

That didn't work!

EL

Hold on!

El reactivates his attack mode, and as he's zooming in on another weakness the beast pounces up on his rock. El stumbles back and falls. The beast gives a mighty roar.

CAN

EL!

Can won't make it in time. The beast rears it's mighty claw and El braces for the worst. Suddenly, an arrow flies into the beast's neck. It sits still for a moment then explodes, releasing a purple dust that covers the beast's face. The creature wobbles as its eyes roll back then topples down off of the rock. Can jets up onto El's level and runs over to him.

CAN (CONT'D)

Holy holy man, are you okay?

EL

Yes, but there's--

UNKNOWN PERSON

A yote! A yote!

Can slowly raises his cautious hands as the unknown person walks forward, aiming another arrow directly at Can's own neck.

They look human, but their body has been modified to appear hawk-like. They're covered in feathered dress, with larger than human eyes and sharp, jutting facial features.

UNKNOWN PERSON (CONT'D)

Jim baka. Jai yo.

The unknown person continues to speak in his strange language. Can looks back and forth between the stranger and a curious El.

CAN

El, buddy, you wanna fire up that translator?

EL

It's working, but needs time to process the entire language.

CAN

You gotta have a few words?

EL

Okay okay, uhh,
(beat)

Tuka-- tuka wanna

The unknown person immediately points his weapon at El.

UNKNOWN PERSON

Tuka wanna? Tuka wanna?! Baliki tai
lo! Baliki tai tuba!

EL

(frantic)

No, no! Tuka nochicki wanna! Tuka
nochicki!

The unknown person lowers his arrow.

UNKNOWN PERSON

A chat.

The person extends their arm and pulls El up to his feet.

EL

(Grateful)

Bak chu

UNKNOWN PERSON

(Respectful)

Malama "KEETO"

EL
Jam ba. Malama "Lafayette".

CAN
Ok I get that one. What are you
saying?

El turns back to Can and the stranger gives him a questioning
look.

EL
His name is Keeto. I told him we
are explorers from another world.

CAN
And?

EL
He has invited us to dinner.

END OF ACT 1

EXT: VILLAGE ENTRANCE

Phoenix Corp and Keeto walk up to a large rock with intricate
buildings carved deep within. The group enters up a stair
case that leads to a main street carved into the rock. At the
end is the largest building. El walks side by side with Keeto
and Can stays close behind.

EL
(Conversational)
Book tan chee?

KEETO
(Laughing)
Bah no ton. Bala co coca.

CAN
Jeez El, if only you could make a
girl laugh like that.

EL
That's-- That's--
(El realizes that might be
a solid point.)
I asked if he owned that house, and
he said everybody lives there.
These buildings act like a market
for all to share.

Can watches a group of children run and laugh past him.