

SPACE CHEESE

IN MONTEREY, NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM

Warning: Due to the Cheesy nature of this story, parental discretion is advised.

by Tim O'Regan

Commander Jim J. George jr. stared through his EV binocs. George was a respected member of the United Alliance Kingdom Confederation Empire Coalition Juncture Union's hallowed Space Army, and Commander of the SAS Kihlumal, which was only a few lightyears away right now, waiting for Jim's command to attack the orbiting ships.

Right now Jim was standing on the snowy mountains of the planet Vooga Ooga XI. He and his small band of elite warriors were waiting for the enemy to come into sight. His officers surrounded him, waiting for his command to attack, or that the enemy had not yet been located. The answer was obvious when Jim George dejectedly shoved his EV binocs into the hands of an aid standing near.

Jim ran a hand through his wavy brown hair, burped loudly, and turned to the mousy little man next to him, Calvin K. Cooper. He barked, "Cal, gimme some tea... with cream, too. We've gotta kill a li'l time, boys," he said, addressing all those around him.

"They might have been alerted to our trap, Commander. We might have to abort!" Sergeant Sam S. Stevens' teeth chattered a bit as he spoke.

George threw his subordinate a glance, and was forced to concede the logic of the young man's suggestion. They had been waiting for hours for the Kiwi to come into sight, but those sadistic, hated, gigantic veggies (or fruits...Jim didn't care) weren't there. The UAKCECJU had cracked a diplomatic code, and discovered that a valuable shipment of plant fertilizer was being transported along this route. The UAKCECJU and the Kiwi Powers had been engaged in a horrid galactic war for several decades now, and the chance to take out a key shipment was too good to pass up.

Jim J. George jr. had sent some scouts out, and they had found the perfect ambush spot, which is where they were now. And now it seemed that it wasn't such a great spot after all. Jim sighed softly. Vooga Ooga XI was a very important planet, and they had just lost Bingy Boingy Beta to the Kiwi Powers last month. They could not afford to lose another.

George was about to sip the tea with cream that Cal had just handed to him, and go off to the holo projector to take a spin in a nice crimson 2154 'Coup, when he heard sounds of a battle.

Jim's ears perked up and he ran over to get a clear view down at the ambush site...but nothing was happening down there. Suddenly, he heard a distant scream of one of his men, in his death throws. Although it was normally difficult to tell where sounds were coming from up in the mountains, with all the echoes, this sound was clear enough. It was coming from over and behind the ambush point. Jim George quickly realized why the Kiwi were so late...they were preparing their own ambush, and it had just been sprung!

Jim grabbed the arm of the Lieutenant nearest him, who's name was Ted T. Tickner the Third, and yelled, "Ready the men and grab your weapons! We're being attacked! Alert the media! Tie your shoes! Don't forget to floss! And make your beds!"

With that, George grabbed his sidearm and started running up the mountain with his officers struggling to keep up. They quickly arrived at a small plateau, which George ran across and looked down in horror. He saw hundreds of Kiwi charging up the mountain side, Electric Seed Guns (or ESGs) blazing with deadly energy, and with a seed, that if placed right, would transform it's victim into another horrible Kiwi.

George jumped off the plateau and started sliding down the mountain to aid his out gunned and out numbered men. Jim fired his Weed Killer Laser (or WKL) gun as he slid, taking out many Kiwi and turning them into nothing more than dead plants. Then, Jim saw a new pack of Kiwi starting up the mountain so he stopped his slide down the mountain, grabbed an Arsenic Grenade from his belt, and pried the pin from it with his teeth. Then he tossed the deadly explosive into the horde of Kiwi. It exploded on impact, covering each Kiwi with arsenic, killing them, and spraying Kiwi-green plant parts everywhere.

Then Jim George saw the caravan full of Plant Fertilizer, and radioed his men to zero in on it and destroy it, knowing that if they all died, at least they will have done major damage.

He watched as his men swarmed around the caravan and used their headmounted flame-throwers to toast the supply shipment. There was a huge explosion as it blew up. Jim threw his arm up in jubilation, and as he did this, the Calvary arrived, riding Snow Camels, with rapid fire Acid Guns mounted on each of the Snow Camels' sides. They quickly sent the remaining Kiwi forces fleeing in fright, choosing to fight another day instead of taking a hit of acid. Jim smiled; Vooga Ooga XI was theirs!

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Admiral Phruti Tootee slammed a juicy fist down on his organic console. The console, which was Carbon-based, and quite alive, made a vulgar sound and started organizing its internal repairs. But the Admiral ignored this. He had just received word that the Kiwi Powers had just lost Vooga Ooga XI and a major fertilizer shipment. He snapped, "Vidphone Admiral Yumi Tummy at once!" Since all intelligent plants in this quadrant of the galaxy spoke Kiwese, the FruitFone responded instantly and put a call to Admiral Tummy, via the Grapevine.

Admiral Yumi Tummy was in charge of the Kiwi Powers' ship cultivating planet, Apricot Prime. There they grew the finest in space faring vessels. The planet's location remained a secret to the United Alliance Kingdom Confederation Empire Coalition Juncture Union, but the word would get out eventually.

Admiral Tummy's face appeared on the FruitFone's screen almost immediately, and smiled, saying, "You're looking Unripe and Juicy today, Phruti." It was a customary greeting to older fruits, such as the two Admirals.

"You look yummy, too, Yumi," Tootee returned without much enthusiasm. "But we have a big problem. The Space Army managed to destroy our Fertilizer shipment on Vooga Ooga XI, and then proceeded to ambush our vessel in space, and destroy it as well. They control the planet now. We need to step up production on ships!"

Tummy's face turned to fruity-horror. He gasped and yelled, "What?! We had the Redwood 3 standing guard there, and several smaller ships like the Bamboo and the Tulip 7! How did they destroy them?!"

Admiral Tootee replied, "The details are still sketchy, but we do know that they have gone to be with the Gardener."

Yumi Tummy bellowed something unintelligible, grabbed a FernChair, lifted it above his head, and chucked it against the VineWall. Then he yelled, "Dammit, Phruti, they'll all die for this tragedy!"

"I know they will, Admiral, and you hold the key to their defeat. We must include the MegaPolitron on the next batch of SuperFruitenators."

Tummy inhaled quickly, or as quickly as a plant could. "You must know that we haven't even begun testing it, let alone modifying it for use on any ships!"

"Yes, I do know that, my friend, but it must be done. The war isn't going too well, and besides, I received authorization to do this from Kiwi Command months ago. I was to decide if it was to be deployed early, and I have made my decision." Noticing his friend's worried expression, he added, "Fear not, Admiral. I have the utmost confidence in you and your Genetiteers. This is the weapon which will bring us to victory over the UAKCECJU, and that's all that matters."

Admiral Tummy took on a solemn expression and nodded. "Very well. We'll get to work, and I'll keep you updated. Tummy out."

Admiral Phruti Tootee allowed himself a private, evil grin, and then walked out of his quarters. He could use a nice root massage by a beautiful Rose.

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Commander Jim J. George jr. leaned back in his chair. He was in his private office, eating unintelligent Kiwi, like most humanoids liked to do since the war broke out. He'd seen people in the ship's mess hall making their Kiwi dance around and talk, so they'd be more fun to eat. Suddenly, his comm beeped and a message flashed on his mini-terminal. He slapped the receive button and took another bite.

Admiral Doug D. Danson appeared on the small screen, smiling beneath his sloppily trimmed beard. Jim thought the man looked silly without a mustache. In fact, others might go so far as to say that he looked "Amish", but George would never even think such a thing of a superior, since it was such a gross insult. "Commander, we have news."

"Goodie," Jim murmured as he cut off another piece of Kiwi, violently, and pushed it in his mouth.

"We've cracked the Kiwi Powers' diplomatic code, as you no doubt know, and we just intercepted a message from Admiral Tootee, your old nemesis, to an unknown world, which we found out by

translating the text, is the ship cultivating planet of Apricot Prime!”

George’s ears perked up at this. He knew that the Space Army had been searching for months to find the planet, and it looked as if they finally had. “Really? What’s this have to do with me?”

“You are going to destroy the research department, Commander.”

Jim George dropped his Kiwi at this. “Uh, you must know that they will probably have at least ten ships guarding that place!”

“Eleven, according to our scans, but don’t worry, you’re going in covertly. Dressed as a Kiwi, you and your team will infiltrate the research and growth department, strap it up with explosives, and blow the place to Kingdom Come. We’ve found out that they’re growing a new weapon, called the MegaPolitron, which can penetrate our shields easily. It must be taken out, and it’s your job. We’ll send you the specifics later. Have fun,” Admiral Danson said with a smile. “D-cubed out.” Jim George just sighed anxiously.

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Captain J. P. Kengarū and his ground forces’ leader, General B. Luddy Mayhem stared at the screen through their insectoid eyes. On screen Admiral R. Mahgedonn was saying, “Now is the time to strike, and strike we will!”

Captain Kengarū asked, “What’s happened, Admiral?”

“The the United Alliance Kingdom Confederation Empire Coalition Juncture Union has just conquered Vooga Ooga XI and their defenses are weak. Furthermore, we suspect they used the diplomatic code we supplied them with, and found out the location of Apricot Prime, the Kiwi’s ship growing facilities. Now it is time to attack, and show that the Katydid Council will not be staying out this glorious conflict. It’s been much too long since we’ve had blood on our claws!”

General Mayhem gave an insectoid screech of happiness and then asked, “Will we be choosing sides, Admiral Mahgedonn?”

“Not yet. We, of course, want to see this last as long as possible, so we can have as much fun as we want. When it looks like one side is losing, we’ll strike the other. The United Alliance looks strongest now, so we’ll attack Vooga Ooga XI. Your ship will command, Captain Kengarū, and you, General Mayhem, will lead our ground forces. You’re to leave immediately for Gooey Ooey III and meet the Winged Warrior, the Big Bite, the Bzzzzzz, the Splat!, the Web of the Dead, and the Grassy Hopper to make a simultaneous jump. Got it?”

“Yes sir!” The Captain saluted with 3 of his appendages.

“Good. You and General Mayhem can plan the details of the attack. Everything is at your discretion, Captain. Please create mass destruction and general havoc; R. Mahgedonn out.”

Captain Kengarū turned to Luddy and said, “General, tell Major Bloh to prepare her men.” Captain Kengarū folded 4 of his arms, and made an insect-grin. “Remember this day, General. Our victory over the UAKCECJU begins here and now. We’ll take Vooga Ooga XI alright....but we won’t stop there!”

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Hel T. Fude pretended to sip some warm liquid plant food in the seedy little bar named Fruit Deluxe. The bar was anything but “deluxe,” but its patrons were loyal...and well connected. The planet’s name was Prune Omega Four and it was a major stopover point in the Kiwi Powers’ section of the galaxy. And, as it turned out, Prune Omega Four was just 7 hours away from Apricot Prime.

And, as it turned out, Hel T. Fude wasn’t really Hel T. Fude. He was Commander Jim J. George jr., of the SAS Kihlumal, and he was here with Ted T. Tickner the Third, one of his Lieutenants, and Bob B. Babbage, a demolitions expert. The rest of his elite team was waiting on their ship, which was a tenth-rate bulk freighter that looked to be about a quarter century old. Jim, given the opportunity to name it, had Christened the ship Fool’s Pride.

Jim sighed lonesomely and wished he was back on the Kihlumal, which was being commanded by Lieutenant Commander Cynthia S. Stonewall...his protege. *Actually*, he thought, *she’s probably blown the ship up by now*. She’d found endless ways to make him look like a fool for expounding her so highly, but it never seemed that she was at fault...the galaxy just found ways to spite the both of them.

Whatever problems Jim had with the budget that the Clothiers on his ship got, he had to admit that

they sure could make a mean Kiwi. *Well, every Kiwi is mean, but I'm surprised at how realistic we look*, Jim mused as he glanced at his Lieutenant and Babbage. They were spitting images some Kiwi prisoners on the Kihlumal. Although the suits could be taken off easily, the flesh was actually semi-organic. But, best of all, it had shielding, which would prevent the humans' DNA from being scanned, and had a uniform DNA of its own so everything would appear normal. *But, boy do I feel like an idiot*, Jim thought with a small grin.

Then, the door to the Fruit Deluxe opened, letting in powerful rays of visible light. Most of the light in the bar was ultra violet light, which plants preferred. Seeing, through the Kiwi costume's eyes, George could see fine, and with the visible light, it was even easier. Now he could see who was at the door...his contact. His contact was yellow-brown colored, with a stem on the top his head, and a trench coat, which didn't do enough to hide his pear-shaped form. Actually, he was a pear, so he didn't seek to hide his pearness, only his obesity.

The fruit seemed to recognize Jim and his colleagues, and waddled over to sit down next to them at the bar. Jim gave his contact a second glance, trying to quell the smile coming to his lips. He wouldn't tell the fruit, but a pear wearing a trench coat circa 1930's Earth was quite silly-looking.

"The Apricot is ripe today, my friend," said the pear, confirming his identity.

"The Apricot will be carefully harvested, my friend," Jim said, according to his directions.

The fruit smiled, juices dripping from his mouth and onto his dark gray trench coat. Then he pulled a cardcrystal out of his deep pocket, and handed the slime-covered device to Jim. "Here are coordinates, pal. Everything you need is also in there. Good luck."

With that, the pear got up and left.

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Cynthia S. Stonewall sat lazily in Jim George's command chair. She liked command, but she couldn't force herself to relax, somehow. Perhaps that would be easier in 5 hours, when the first of 8 SAS ships showed up to offer additional assistance to the SAS Kihlumal. The first to arrive would be the SAS Death in a Bottle, and that powerful warship should really make her feel at ease. It was one of the most powerful ships in the fleet...but for the moment, Cynthia had an unshakable feeling of premonition, as if something was about to go wrong for her...again.

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Captain J. P. Kengaru's insectoid eyes scanned the space around him. There were six other ominous-looking ships hanging out in space besides his own. They were all primed and battle-ready. And so were the insects aboard them. It was time to take this war into high gear.

Captain Kengaru turned to his Flight Officer and asked, "Is the course set in?"

"Yes, sir," the man said, hissing as was usually the case with mosquitoes.

Kengaru swiveled to his Comm Officer and asked, "And all other ships have checked in being ready as well?"

"All six have confirmed, Captain," the bee said.

"Very well. Give the countdown at five, and then we launch simultaneously at warp 12." Kengaru sat down and allowed himself a slight smile in anticipation. It would be a day to remember for all insects.

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Jim J. George jr. watched with a hidden grimace as three large Kiwi tortured a chimpanzee ruthlessly. They kept on calling the chimp "human" and mocking it. The chimp obviously had no idea why it was being tortured, but this didn't seem to stop the Kiwi. Getting sick to his stomach, Jim decided that he shouldn't eat any more Kiwi. But this private revelation for Jim was obviously unnoticed by the three Kiwi guards, so George tapped impatiently on the desk.

One of the Kiwi looked up, and what crossed its face was probably embarrassment, upon seeing the rank pin on Jim's Kiwi uniform. "Sorry to interrupt your activity, gentlefruits, but I'm in a rush," Jim said, keeping his voice commanding, yet understanding...even though he didn't.

"Yes, sir! Sorry, sir! Right away, sir!" a jumpy, and large Kiwi, having ensign rank, said, running over to his console. Without so much as checking out Hel T. Fude, a.k.a Jim J. George, he slapped the button which opened the high security door. Jim and his small band of men, dressed as personal servants, confidently walked through the door and into the main complex.

Safely inside, Lieutenant Tickner glanced over at Jim, and smiled. They were in, and now all they had to do was plant the bombs and get off the planet before they blew.

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Lieutenant Commander Stonewall was asleep in the Captain's chair. Over on the side of the bridge was Jim J. George's bed, which she had consciously chosen not to sleep in. It was commonly referred to as the Captain's Cot, and was standard issue on all starships. Captains were not allowed to leave the bridge, as they must always be around when something strange and exciting happens. The smelly urinal on the other side of the bridge was a further testament to a Captain's necessary devotion to duty. She snored loudly, and mumbled a few names of good-looking, male ensigns that were new on the ship. Acting-Ensign Vinny V. Valdaro shook his head softly, while playing around on his console. If *he* were Captain, he knew he'd sneak down to the holocenter and play some video games.

Vinny glanced over his shoulder and noted that though Lieutenant Commander Stonewall was still young and good-looking, her room-shaking snoring had probably ruined many relationships. Smiling, Vinny turned back to his console. He started charting courses that would put the ship into a neutron star, just to see the computer show an example, via the holo projector, of the massive death and carnage such an action would make. Then suddenly, the view screen flashed blue-white and seven ships dropped into normal space. Simultaneous screams from across the bridge woke LC Stonewall with a start. "Shields up!" she squeaked as the ship design became apparent.

The battle for Vooga Ooga XI had begun.

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Jim George glanced around at the bustling hallway of the ship growing plant of Apricot Prime. He was nervous, but was careful not to let anyone passing by know it. Inside the door he was surreptitiously standing by, Babbage was strapping up the explosive. They had placed ten of them, and there was only one to go after this one was finished.

Suddenly, eight security guards rounded the corner and burst into the hallway. They came in Jim's direction, and looked like they weren't about to be stopped.

Jim slid inside the door and ran down the small access hallway, motioning for the two men stationed near to follow him. He turned the corner, yanked open the door and announced, "I think they're on to us. They've got security guards combing the halls. We'd better just set up the last bomb right here, and get the heck off this planet!"

"Man, that means our explosion won't be as cool lookin'!" Babbage moaned.

"Will it still take down this growth plant?" Jim asked.

"Sure. Three would've worked, but since we had the time, I wanted to set up a twelve tiered explosion, just for the hell of it." Bob responded.

"Oh. Well, we'll have to settle with eleven. Let's move, boys!"

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Above Vooga Ooga XI, the space battle was not going well for the SAS Kihlumsal. Death in a Bottle had not yet arrived, and Stonewall didn't have the battle experience she would've liked. But, the Insects had even less, because they hadn't been at war for years like the Space Army and the Kiwi Powers had been.

"Launch our remaining four squadrons of fighters, immediately!" LC Cynthia S. Stonewall yelled to Peter P. Pomlinstein at Tactical.

"Right away!" He responded. Four squads would not do much to turn the tide of the battle, but it would help cause some damage, and maybe stall until the Death in a Bottle arrived.

The viewscreen showed the fighters launching from the ship, and heading out to destroy they insectoid fighters coming at them. The minifighters were outnumbered at least three to one but they

held up pretty well. The Kihlumal itself, though, was taking considerable damage because it had five ships attacking, down from seven. Two of the insects' ships had been destroyed, but they still had plenty of firepower.

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Jim George watched with the rest of the team as a huge series of explosions went up. The huge, billowing, mushroom clouds penetrated the cloud barrier, and rose above to be seen by all those in orbit.

"Wasn't that fun?" Babbage exclaimed, punching a fist into the air in victory.

"It was a blast...let's get outa here!" Jim said, moving his hoverchair over to the console, and using his hands to send the ship into warp. He used his human hands because they had gotten rid of their Kiwi outfits.

They would be back to the Kihlumal in less than two hours.

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The SAS Death in a Bottle pulled into normal space and coasted smoothly, while slowing down only slightly. Aboard, Captain Xavier X. Xavier was chewing on a piece of kiwi (it was a rumor amongst the crew that Xavier chewed on parts of *intelligent* Kiwi), and resting his bulk in the Captain's chair like a king.

"Do a scan or somethin', you worthless scurvy dogs!" he yelled across the bridge.

The man at the engineering console had the lack of intellect to say, "Shiver me timbers!" in a terrible accent that sounded quite a bit like Xavier's.

Twisting his meaty neck around to see the ensign who made the remark, Xavier yelled, "To da brig with him!" while turning red in anger.

"Aye," muttered one of the security officers, under his breath.

"Cap'n! We have a distress signal from the SAS Kihlumal!" The comm officer yelled, preventing the captain from taking another bite of kiwi.

"No yelling on the bridge, you fool!" Captain Xavier screamed. "Now, repeat that last to me in an 'inside voice,' or I'll make ya walk the plank!"

The officer grumbled a little, but he repeated the message in a calmer and quieter voice.

"Okay, that's better, mate! Now, we'll head to the SAS Kihlumal at a quarter speed and ask'em what they want!" Xavier commanded, loudly. "Get this boat movin', you hogs!"

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"Lieutenant Commander! The SAS Death in a Bottle has arrived!" the comm officer shouted to Stonewall over the din of battle.

"Excellent! Contact Captain Xavier and tell him to get his pirate butt over here and get his hands bloody!"

"Yes, ma'am!"

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"Captain Kengaru! Another ship has joined the battle, and it is considerably larger than the Kihlumal!" someone yelled across the bridge.

"Break off the Splat!, the Bzzzzz, and the Winged Warrior to attack it and destroy it!" Kengaru yelled.

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"Captain Xavier!" the comm officer whispered softly but urgently.

"Speak up, boy! You're raspin'!"

"The insectoid ships are breaking formation to attack us!" the officer said a little louder this time.

"Matey, you've got yerself a sore throat! Go down ta sickbay and get da Doc to put a few leeches down your throat!" Xavier boomed, shoving his bulk further into his Captain's chair. Xavier then opened up a new case of 140 proof Kiwi Ale, made from fresh Kiwi. He took a swig, fully intending to get as drunk as a skunk while on the bridge, and burped loudly, making an ensign faint at the vulgar sound. He was about to take another swallow when the comm officer interrupted again.

"I don't have a sore throat, sir! And we're being attacked!"

"Son, how does ya know if ya have a bloody bleedin' throat or not, aye?" the captain asked.

"I don't have a sore throat, sir!" the man yelled.

"Avast, son, how many times does I have ta tell ya?! No yellin' on the bleedin' bridge!" the big, red bearded man boomed. "Prepare the plank!"

"But, sir!" he said, quieter, yet urgently.

"What is it, laddie?"

"We're being attacked!"

"Really?! Oh, they make an old man's heart glad! Avast! Blow them out of the bloody water, mateys! Lord, I do so love war!" Xavier bellowed, jumping to his feet, spilling ale on his uniform, and excitement from his veins.

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Stonewall glared out the viewscreen. She saw that the Death in a Bottle was joining the battle, taking on three ships. The Kihlumal would normally be able to whip the two ships attacking it now, but in its crippled state all the could do was stall for time.

Suddenly, another ship dropped into normal space. She gasped in glee - it was the Commander. Jim J. George was back, in his old, decrepit-looking bulk freighter. But, it wasn't really all that old, and it was anything but weak. As Jim's ship, the Fool's Pride came closer, it's hull slid off to reveal a sleek, heavily armed battleship. On it's first fly-by, it crippled the insectoids' command ship, and on it's second, destroyed the ship next to it. It's gigantic guns blazing, turned to face the three ships engaging the Death in a Bottle. The insectoids, seeing this, turned thorax and ran.

Apricot Prime's ship growing facilities were gone, and Vooga Ooga XI was still their's; it was a glorious day for the UAKCECJU!

-The End-