

## Chapter 1: It all started here

**"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."**

**Corinthians 13:11**

**Location: Planet Mojave, Box Canyon Plateau, Firebase Atreides**

**Time: 09:25 HRS, Local Planetary Time CY2022**

Now you are asking yourself, "How the fuck did I end up at the ass end of the galaxy on a dust ball of a planet, on a plateau in a box canyon, preparing to take on a battalion of some very angry spiders?" To be honest, I am asking myself the very same question.

However, to understand all this, you need to understand everything that got me here in the first place. Now when I tell you all this, for starters you need to understand that I am a DAT, a Dumb Ass Tanker, so some of this will sound "Barney-style" but bear with me.

My story begins back in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Location: Terra, Sol System**

**CY1997, Fort Knox, US Army Armor Training Base**

The year was 1997, it was the 12JUN1996 and I just graduated Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky and was getting ready to go on leave after school before being assigned to my first Armor Unit. Little did I know how that day would change my life, forever.

Our planet, Terra, mostly called Earth by its inhabitants, was visited by our first extraterrestrials. They arrived in a Battle Cruiser, not to wage war but to recruit. There were two warlike species on the ship; well, better for me to say two species that made war their planets' specialization. There was the feline-like race known as the

Katuo'katuo' and the canine race known as Cerberians. Now, even though I said they were feline and canine they were not really bipedal walking cats and dogs. However, many of their biological features resemble traits seen on the two major domesticated species on the planet Terra. They came to our planet to recruit our military forces to join the Galactic Empire military forces. Not only to recruit us, but to make our planet the third authorized planet and species that can train and equip military forces for galactic warfare.

Our planet was hit by a tidal wave of social, political and military unrest with the sudden appearance of our new "friends." I think friend might be too strong of a word, maybe partners? Well, I am a DAT, so trying to sort those out things are not in my wheelhouse. Well, OK, pretty much anything that doesn't deal with either shooting or blowing something up is out of my wheelhouse.

As part of our induction into the Galactic Empire Military Forces (GEMF) Terra needed to do implement infrastructure changes that did not sit well with many of our planet's citizens. First, our planet would be required to have one central political structure, a single world government. The concept of old national identity to be replaced with a global identity of being Terrans. Well, to say the least many countries, such as the Arab and other Middle Eastern countries didn't like this change because it would replace their religious governments with a secular government. Of course, this would require a single military force command structure as well.

*Yes, you in the back, yeah you raising your hand. What about the United Nations? Well, as hard the United Nations tried to be a world government it fell short mainly because unlike Western governments such as America, UK and Australia there*

*was no direct way for citizens to be part of the governmental process.* So, a new Terran Federation needed to be formed that encapsulates (yes, even DATs know what that word means) the ideals of Western governments on a world scale. All this had to happen in 90 days to meet the time standards of our visitors.

Now I really don't know what exactly happened during those 90 days but we were going to hold the first world election on 02NOV1997. Now, being a DAT, all this is way above my pay grade, all I needed to know is who to salute and who to shoot. I like keeping things simple like that. Meanwhile, the Empire wasted no time waiting for us to sort out our global politics. The Imperial Corps of Engineers built a space elevator with its anchor located in Australia. Now I thought our Engineers were good, but these guys had that thing built in in 72 days! I guess there are no unions in the Empire.

After the world election I got a special birthday gift in November: my first Terran Military Forces Order.

2LT Alexander R. Tambascia  
100932666  
2/272 Delta Troop, 86BDE

DTD 15NOV1997

ORDER:

Rescind order that reads "assigned to 2/272 Delta Troop, 86BDE Armor Platoon Leader"

Now reads "assigned to Terran Military Forces Armor Division, 13<sup>th</sup> Legion"

REPORT TO:

Terran Military Forces Training Base located in Queensland Australia NLT  
30NOV1997 0700ZHRS

PERSTEMPO EVENT: D

All travel receipts will be submitted via Defense Travel System (DTS)

Separate Lodging Authorized

Separate Rations Authorized

Car Rental Authorized for 90days in country

This is a lawful order, failure to comply can result in UCMJ actions being taken

And there it is, I am no longer part of the United States Army, I am now part of our new Terran Military Forces. At least I get to spend Thanksgiving with the family before heading out to the stars.

## Chapter 2: Hurry Up and Wait

**“Hurry up and wait”**

**-Drill Sergeant Price, Fort Sill 1990**

**Location: Terra, Sol System**

**CY1997, Terran Military Forces Training Base Queensland, Australia**

I woke up on the transport bird heading back down from orbit on my flight to Australia. I could hear the engines ramping up to slow our descent to the ground. The bird shook violently as the engines fought the physics of gravity in our descent. Of course, I was too worried about holding my breakfast down to be scared, however it seemed that many were exactly the opposite on the flight. After the ride calmed down on approach, we heard from our cheerful pilot, who took great pleasure in our discomfort on reentry heading down to Australia.

The landing was a combat dust off approach, basically the pilot aimed down at a certain point at full throttle, then at the last-minute he fires the retro rockets at full burst to bring the bird to a “soft” landing. Although for us “cargo” we ended up having our stomachs in our throats and headaches from the blood rushing to our heads from the ordeal. Once the bird touched down the boarding ramp dropped and we could feel the intense Australian heat rush into the relatively cooler transport. It was about 1300 hours local time. My body was still set to Boston time. Luckily, the orbital transport took only four hours to travel from Boston to Queensland. As I walked down the ramp, I had to raise my arm to cover my eyes from the way too bright Australian sun. I was gushing sweat as soon as I reached the base of the ramp. There was a Chief Warrant Officer