

JOVIAN WOLF

EXCERPT ONLY

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September 7, 2022

EXT. SPACE

An asteroid half-consumed: a fragile shell opened on one end, gutted and exposed to space. The curving inner walls are stippled with the lights of civilization.

SUPER: ROCK ELON MUSK

A ship, bulky with freight, thrusts out of the shell. Slipping past it, to the interior are five floating bodies, as black as space, as still as death.

They are IMMORTALS.

EXT. ROCK ELON MUSK - INNER SHELL

A boot crunches against regolith. Another. Another. Sunlight spills over the edge of the rock, drawing long shadows from the five soldiers. Their golden sun-shields conceal their identities. First in the line is LIEUTENANT MAJOR JAMES PINE (20s, male, American). He points with his rifle.

PINE

Airlock.

Amid the surface of the asteroid, eight curved panels spiral open. Light spills out from within.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - AIRLOCK

The Immortals gather. Sun-shields retract and their faces are teased through their helmets. The hatch closes. Lighting switches to a deep red. Fans whirr to life.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - TUNNELS

Eight sided tunnels of polished silica. The Immortals crouch-walk along two adjacent wall sections, their JW-15 (a futuristic UTS-15 inspired rifle) at the ready.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - PLAZA

Above is a glittering concave dome that follows the natural curves of the asteroid's shell. Buildings of delicate glass

reach from dome to rock. Low-gravity water spouts dance amid a central plaza. Children play and laugh. Pine steps between two prism-like buildings.

PINE
Capacitors.

PINE'S HUD (Heads up Display): AP Rounds (red) changes to Capacitors (yellow).

MASTER SERGEANT BEN HUNTER (20s, male, Caucasian) is one step behind Pine.

HUNTER
Bad guys ain't rolling capacitors.

Pine pulls the stock of his rifle tight to his shoulder.

PINE
Just give me first trigger pull
when you defect.

Hunter grunts amicably.

PINE
Saint?

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - TUNNELS

SERGEANT AARAV SAINT (20s, male, Indian), unscrews an access panel. Saint plugs a fiber-optic into the wall.

SAINT
Inserting AI picks.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - PLAZA

Pine moves, his rifle at low ready.

PINE'S HUD: Three children are outlined in green. One COMBATANT is outlined in red. Text reads: Positive ID.

Pine stops, holds up a fist.

PINE
Eyes on.

Hunter stacks behind him, rifle at high ready. Two more stack behind them. Saint responds over communications (coms).

SAINT (COMS)
AI's in.

PINE
Go dark.

The Plaza goes black.

PINE'S HUD: The plaza displays in Infra-red; the red outlined figure runs.

PINE
Target bolting.

Pine and Hunter give chase. The combatant fires a HM-32 (inspired by the Kel-Tec SU16c) behind himself while fleeing.

PINE
Move...move!!!

HUNTER
No angle.

The combatant flees through a SUBMARINE STYLE hatch which closes behind him.

PINE
Gone warren.

Pine and Hunter stack at the door. SERGEANT TOMO KAZA (20, female, Japanese), joins them.

KAZA
Fixing boom.

Kaza sprays foam around the inner seal of the hatch.

KAZA
Set.

Kaza rolls off the door, holds a DETONATOR in hand, and stacks next to Pine.

PINE
Pop.

Kaza pulls the trigger on the detonator. The foam around the hatch explodes. It's bright and loud. For a moment, there's nothing but white and the tinnitus of blown out eardrums. White like a developing polaroid:

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - RESIDENCE

A human shape moves. Gunfire. The brightness resolves into Pine, Hunter, Kaza, and one more, crouch walking through the room, muzzles flashing.

A combatant spasms on the ground, capacitor pulsing against his chest.

PINE'S HUD: The combatant is outlined in red, text reads: Negative ID.

PINE

Not him.

A TAPESTRY depicting a tree growing from an asteroid sways with residual movement.

Pine holds fore and aft grips on his rifle, uses the barrel to brush the tapestry to the side, revealing rough hewn rock.

SERGEANT SHEAMUS REESE (20s, male, Irish) shines a flashlight over Pine's shoulder.

REESE

Give a tunneler a shovel.

PINE

Quiet.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - ESCAPE TUNNEL

Pine slides into the hole.

PINE'S HUD: Echolocation view of the tunnels reveals a rock tunnel splint into two directions. Microphone style audio waves pulse in HUD when looking down the right tunnel.

PINE

This way.

Pine clicks on shoulder and rifle mounted lights. Pine advances quickly and quietly. The path becomes narrow. Pine squeezes ahead. The path widens and ends with a sealed hatch.

PINE

Kaza.

KAZA

Cave's too tight for boom.

Pine points two fingers back the way they came.

PINE
New path.

SAINT (COMS)
Wait.

PINE
For?

The hatch opens. Saint, on the other side, nods.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - COMMERCIAL STREET

The street is tall and narrow with glass above. Glowing 3D signs provide illumination. Pine runs through an advertisement for CELESTIAL SHORES -- a beach scene with stars instead of sky.

A CLAYMORE-LIKE BOMB is imbedded in the advertisement. As Pine passes, a light blinks. Hunter passes the bomb, the light blinks faster.

KAZA
Bomb!

Kaza throws a PATCH KIT at the wall. It expands like a metallic parachute to smother the bomb, muffling the boom and letting only a trickle of light leak around the edges.

Pine has the slightest of reactions before advancing.

PINE
Left.

A hydraulic hatch hisses. Pine rams a JAM-SPIKE into the crease of the door, stopping it. A holographic shark swims circles in front of the doorway. Pine passes through:

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - AQUARIUM ENTRANCE

Ocean below, blue sky above. A whale breaches the surface. Past the whale, a combatant seemingly runs across the water, turning to fire his HM-32.

Pine pulls trigger. The body falls and skids, hovering over the water.

Pine approaches. To the right: whale spray.

PINE'S HUD: The combatant, backed by waves, is outlined in red, text reads: Negative ID.

PINE
Not him.

HUNTER
Always another.

They continue, their journey across the water ending when a desk fades into view. A RECEPTIONIST hides behind the desk. Pine pauses.

The receptionist points frantically. Pine already advances before the receptionist speaks.

RECEPTIONIST
That way...that way...!

Doors fade into view and slide open. Deep blue beyond. Pine enters. The other four Immortals follow.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - AQUARIUM EXHIBIT

Under the sea. A school of mackerel swims out of the video wall, across the open air as holograms, and into the adjacent video wall. Dolphins give chase, herding the mackerel into a fish ball. A docent's voice over plays in the background.

DOCENT (VO)
For the past hundred years,
Delphinus truncatus have been
using AI interfaces to negotiate
fishing right of ways with mega-
trawlers across the Earth's
oceans.

As Pine moves along the wall, a SAFETY GRID fuzzes into view.

PINE'S HUD: Echolocation view shows the room to be smaller than it appears. A fuzzy outline of a human holding a rifle crouches beyond the room's gentle curve.

Pine holds up a fist, stops. Hunter stacks behind him.

PINE
(whispered)
Flash.

Pine holds both grips and aims. Hunter unbelts a grenade, underarm tosses it so it rolls around the corner.

HUNTER
(whispered)
Out.

Turtles swim across the back wall. A bright FLASH OF LIGHT fills the space. Pine advances quickly, fires twice. Around the corner, a body falls, spasming on the ground.

PINE
Not him.

The wall where mackerel form a ball EXPLODES inward. The shockwave slams Pine and Hunter into the wall. Kaza screams -- missing an arm. Smoke fills the space. The sound of gunfire. Pine struggles to a kneeling position, aims, fires. Through the hole:

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - CAFETERIA

A half-dozen militants hold cover behind overturned vending machines. Glass shatters and boxes of CHUNKY SOY DELUX and VAT-TUNA spill out onto the floor.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - ACQUARIUM EXHIBIT

The Docent continues narrating in the background, with distortions.

DOCENT (VO)
Just another example of what's possible with Entrepreneurial Corporations at the helm of our Solarian Government.

Reese backs up against the side of the hole.

REESE
Blist'n trap!

Reese peeks his rifle around the corner and fires several shots.

PINE
Hunter!

Hunter lays unresponsive. Bullets ping the wall around Pine, one of them striking Pine's shoulder.

Across the room, Saint kneels over a one-armed Kaza who continues to scream.

PINE
Unlocking kill.

PINE'S HUD: Capacitors (yellow) changes to AP Rounds (red).

REESE
About blist'n time.

PINE
Advance!

Pine surges forward into the hole, firing. Reese turns and follows. Saint stabs Kaza with a PAINKILLER STILLETTO.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - CAFETERIA

Three combatants flee. Pine explodes the head of one of them. Reese fills the back of another with bullets. The third escapes between two INDUSTRIAL REFRIGERATORS. Bullets ping off steel in pursuit as Reese lays on the trigger.

Pine holds holds a fist up.

PINE
Hold.

Reese screams and fires.

PINE
Hold!

Reese stops. The refrigerators are riddled with bullet holes.

Pine looks between the refrigerators. Scrape marks on the ground; they have been recently moved. A hole in the wall narrow enough one would have to turn sideways to squeeze through.

PINE
Widening the hole.

Pine thumbs the trigger on a grenade and tosses it between the refrigerators.

PINE
Out.

Pine turns, back to refrigerator on the left. The explosion is loud. Debris and smoke blast past. Pine turns back. The hole is now wide enough to go straight through. Pine advances. Reese follows.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - ACQUARIUM EXHIBIT

Saint kneels and looks down. Kaza hyperventilates.

SAINT
Backing up Kaza.

Saint reaches behind Kaza's neck, opens a black guard to reveal a small red pull switch. It clicks when activated. Saint stabs another painkiller stiletto into Kaza's shoulder. Kaza's breathing slows. Saint walks to Hunter, pauses.

INT. ROCK ELON MUSK - SURFACE CORRIDOR

Walls and floor of polished stone inset with ceramics. The ceiling is glass with a clear view of stars beyond.

Pine and Reese emerge from a smoldering hole in the wall, sweeping both directions with rifles.

PINE
Clear.

REESE
Clear.

SAINT (COMS)
Too late for Hunter.

Pine doesn't react.

REESE
Anyone else lost contact with
command?

PINE
Doesn't matter.

PINE'S HUD: Echolocation shows movement past the arc of the hallway. Text: 80m.

PINE
Advancing.

Pine and Reese move with controlled haste.

SAINT (COMS)
Covering flank.

PINE'S HUD: Text: 70m.

PINE
(whispered)
Nearing solution.

Pine speeds up.

SAINT (COMS)
Danger above!

Pine stops, glances up. A BULKY SHUTTLE flies silently towards glass. It slams through the glass, crushing Reese. All along the corridor, glass shatters. Atmosphere purges to space, throwing Pine and Saint starward.

EXT. ROCK ELON MUSK - OUTER SHELL

The surface of the rock is regolith, dotted with impact craters. Bands of light from non-decompressed corridors criss-cross. Pine and Saint spin out of control.

PINE
Grapples!

He aims.

PINE'S HUD: Spinning -- the rock, stars, the rock, stars.

Pine fires, jerks to a stop.

PINE
Solid anchor.

SAINT (COMS)
Solid anchor.

Light flashes on the surface.

PINE
Mag fire!

Pine is clipped in the left shoulder. Blood spray becomes crimson hail.

PINE
Hit.

Pine releases the rifle, a tether links it to suit. Pine slaps a patch kit over the wound, straps the left arm down. Pine grabs the rifle one-handed.

PINE
Still up.

Pine reaches the surface. A figure flails starward.

PINE
Saint?

SAINT (COMS)
Catastrophic suit fail...backing
up...(static)

Pine races across the surface, taking bounding leaps. Ahead: A TECHNICAL -- oversized MAGNETIC CANNON in the back of a pickup sized ORE HAULER. The barrel swings towards Pine. Pine shoots first and the gunner's chest sprays blood out front and back. A second target runs. Pine chases, heart racing. Pellets of freezing blood escape the suit patch.

PINE'S HUD: The fleeing target is outlined in red. Text: TARGET IDENTIFIED.

Pine aims and fires. The target's head pops.

Pine approaches, slowly, breathing heavily, still trailing blood. The frozen crystals drift away like a trail dispersed by kinetic wind.

PINE'S HUD: Urgent, flashing text: EXTREME BLOOD LOSS.

Pine kneels at the corpse. Each breath is a gasp and each word a struggle.

PINE
Taking DNA.

Pine stabs the corpse with a stiletto. Blood from the device is injected into a reader. After a moment, the screen displays: DNA transmitted.

Pine stands on unsteady feet for a moment before collapsing back to a knee.

PINE'S HUD: Urgent text: CARDIAC EVENT IN PROGRESS.

PINE
Backing up.

Pine reaches up, reveals the secured switch at the base of the skull and triggers backup. Pulling away as Pine's body falls to the surface of the asteroid.

A flight begins, away from the surface, bouncing off a REPEATER SATELLITE, the stars blurring into streaks of light until another repeater is passed, and another. One after another, the stars extinguish, blocked from view by a monolith as black as space. The blackness grows until nothing is seen. A pinpoint of light like a star grows as a hatch slides open. The flight is continuous:

INT. TROJAN COMMAND - HANGAR

A dozen TROOP TRANSPORTS are parked. Suited NAVY CREW tend to fuel hoses, inspect landing struts, cart ordinance, and otherwise fill the Hangar with activity. But they are never pull focus and the flight continues:

INT. TROJAN COMMAND - CORRIDOR

Austere is the architecture. Two armored immortals walk in silence. Past them men and women wear simple SECOND SKINS -- protection against vacuum of space. The flight turns a corner and passes an open room with soldiers working out on LOW GRAVITY EXERCISE MACHINES. Around the next corner two soldiers share a laugh. A door looms ahead. The flight continues through the door:

INT. TROJAN COMMAND - REBIRTH CHAMBER

Pine, comatose, lies in an open REINCARNATION POD filled with goo. Pine startles awake, sitting upright and yanking a BREATHING APPARATUS free. Pine gasps for air.

Pine lifts his RIGHT HAND and looks at it with suspicion as his trigger finger clenches. There's something off about him, like he looks like a brother of the version of himself we saw from the caves.

Just like Pine seems to have been reborn, so too the rest of the squad are here: Kaza screams in the background like PTSD. Pine ignores this scream and focuses on steadying his twitching finger.

KAZA (OS)
My arm! My arm!

After several attempts, Pine gives up on steadying the finger, and forms a fist. Pine stands, moving like someone fresh from a car accident. In the background, Kaza stares at two intact arms.

HUNTER (OS)

Oh blist, look at Reese!

REESE steps out of his reincarnation pod. Like the rest of the squad, the attire is clingy beige trunks and tanktop.

REESE

I must'a died off all the ginger
in the belt if they reprinted me
anglo. (laughs)

Hunter mimes a finger-gun at his mouth and cocks his thumb.

HUNTER

Eat a bullet next deploy and see
what the lotto gives you.

Everyone laughs, except Pine, who plays it cool.

PINE

Reese, you're going to return that
body to its previous owner in
pristine condition.

The laughs continue. Saint tongue-in-cheek recites an anthem in the background:

SAINT

At the end of the war, you'll be
set free/until then, every cell in
your body belongs to me.

Meanwhile, everyone climbs out of their pods, inspecting their hands, stretching, and generally seeming uncomfortable in their own skin.

PINE

Fifty-first, report to nerve-
rehab.

END SAMPLE