

“Let’s move, people,” a man shouted. He held a plasma rifle in one hand and waved with the other. “Two ships inbound – let’s go!”

Men and women ran past him – they weren’t in uniforms, and they weren’t members of the Colonial Army, they were just people who lived here.

The corridor they were in wasn’t wide, but it was long. They’d chiseled it out with their bare hands to get to the cavern deep inside the mountain that had become their home.

A little boy peeked from around a larger rock against the wall, and the man with the rifle shouted at him, “Michael – you can’t be here. Go find your parents!”

More people poured in between them, distracting the man so he couldn’t see whether Michael had done as he was told.

“Come on people, let’s move!” The man shouted again. “They’ll be here in no time. Find a wide spot in the corridor where you’ve got some cover, and get ready.”

With that, the man ran toward the daylight at the end of the corridor. “Hold the line, people,” He shouted as he ran past the men and women crouched along the walls. “It’s all on you to keep the people in that Cavern alive.”

Deciding that it wouldn’t be any safer in the cavern than it was around all these adults with plasma rifles, Michael crouched behind a rock and hid in the shadows of the corridor.

“Colonial Army forces one hour out,” came a voice over the numerous com radios people had carried into the corridor. “Invading forces have landed and are presumed inbound.”

Anything else the voice over the com might have said was broken by the first shots ringing outside the corridor. Michael covered his ears to try to muffle the plasma fire, explosions, and cries of the adults. He watched down the corridor to where the invaders would be coming through, and saw nothing but people dying and the shiny metallic armor of the people who had come to kill them all.

“We’re all going to die,” Michael thought to himself. He closed his eyes and buried his head between his knees, looking up only to see why an invader had chosen to stop in front of him.

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“They’re leaving,” one of the men in the control center said as he looked at the display monitor. It showed one after the other of the invaders as they walked across the parched soil of the planet back to their ship.

“Of course they are,” said another woman. Blood stained the chest of her shirt. “The Army is on its way.”

“Late as always,” said a third man behind the monitor console.

“How many did we lose?” The first man asked.

“Too many,” said the woman. “It’s going to take some time to figure out who. They weren’t exactly gentle on the people in the corridor.”

“At least the kids are safe,” said the first man.

“Oh my God,” the man behind the console said breathlessly.

“What?” Asked the woman.

The man at the console pointed up to the display, where the picture had focused on a little boy walking in between two of the invaders.

The woman looked stunned. “Can you hit him with a tracker?”

The man behind the camera moved some buttons and switches, and a small white projectile fired from the surveillance camera and impacted on the boy’s back.

“We’ll find him,” the woman said.