

(LSWC)

Solid Objects Cast At Goblins

A Short Story

By Cadbury, The Beaver Who Lacked.

To heroes deceased yet still so alive.

“If I have seen a little further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants.”

“O'Brien: Major larks true pepper.

Kira: *What?*

O'Brien: Let birds go further loose, maybe. Shout easy play.

(Cue spooky music)

Kira: Chief, you're not making any sense.

O'Brien: Around the turbulent quick.

Kira: Erm...

O'Brien: Well... close the reverse harbour.

Kira: *(Shakes head)*

O'Brien: Well a... ankle... try, sound. Reset gleaming. *(Pause)* Dinner to bug.

(O'Brien starts to retreat)

Kira: Chief, wait!

O'Brien: *When?*

Kira: Chief!

(O'Brien escapes on turbolift)”

-- *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine “Babel.”*

“I seem to be a verb.”

-- R. Buckminster Fuller

“Where in shitting crikey is my nose?”

-- Chris Morris

“Tip. This is the wixy old Willingdone picket up the half of the threefoiled hat of lipoleums fromoud of the bluddle filth. This is the hinndoo waxing ranjymad for a bombshoob. This is the Willingdone hanking the half of the hat of the lipoleums up the tail of the buckside of his big white harse. Tip. That was the last joke of the Willingdone. Hit, hit, hit!”

-- *Finnegans Wake*

“Clue.”

-- Sherlock Holmes

Solid Objects Cast At Goblins

General Donald Sinclair Davis sat inactive in front of the hand crafted Cuban mahogany desk in his private office at his residency. Miles away. He stared openmind through an bulletproof windglass at the scenic ocean-side splendour. Indifferent. Unafraid, now.

A stack of documents sat afront him, there. His duty to read through – decide, or not. But, ignoring them, he pressed a special button above his left tit and activated his internal radio system to check the national radionews.

“Two-hundred and fifty-nine people have been killed in Aspen, Colorado today after a riot over a packet full of marshmallows. The popular ski resort was on a slippery slope after a child ate the last piece of Elk for approximately 200 Kilometres and then proclaimed loudly 'now you're all *fucked*,' in an arrogant and sem-I provocative mannerr. It is not yet known at this time what else happened, or why” informed a female voice in the unmistakable tone of a newsdrone.

“Jesus...”

“Also today, the Russian Mafia have seized Boulder and announced that thay intend-to-revive there Yugoslavia, renaming it accordingly, as of the first Tuesday of next month. This is Zoe Smite for KNYBCFGHJKLMOPQV-GEOFF News on the FAFF radio network.”

“God almighty... enough of this” General Davis scorned. He immediately tuned out and eyed the folder stack before him. The usual lot of “just because we could” black project documents, of course. About 23 of them this week. Picking up the pile and thumbing through a couple from off the top, he paused at a file titled so absurdly that it piqued an interest exactly contrary to his usual disinterest in these particular duties. “*What?*”

“All Alcohol In Colorado 'used up' by OPERATION: PEDESTRIAN SUNBEAM offshoot [REDACTED]”

“*Redacted?*” He couldn't believe it. What could “they” have gone and done this now that was so wrong that they'd have to hide it from even *him* – the ranking Officer assigned to overview these projects -- privy to every sick little detail. Controller of half-of-everything. But now in the dark about something. The special phone clicked off the hook and began ringing.

“Yes?” answered almost at once a male, French-American accent.

“Who's got PEDESTRIAN SUNBEAM?”

“Sorry?”

“Don't fuck with me” General Davis returned sardonically. “Who's got it?”

“One moment, please.”

“Thank you kindly.” The line clicked over and Donald muscled-up his most stern, gruff, southernly accented tone for Herring, whom he knew would now appear at the other end.

“Herring.”

“Hwhy are you not taking your calls directly? Hwhat is this?”

“Ah, General Davis... presumably you have acclimated yourself to one of the most recent?” Herring sounded all witty and erudite. A Washington type that Davis just felt like chinning – especially at this right now kind of moment.

“No further than the 'redacted' in the title...”

“Open it. Go on. Don't be afraid. I'm sure you'll find the contents most suitable for a man of import – and distinction – such as yourself, Darnold.

“Hwhat is this, Hehrring?” The text on every single page was blacked out. Redacted totally, utterly and completely.

Herring laughed and hung down at the other side.

“What in the *fuck*?” Davis slammed his end also and stood abruptly – stomped out of the room. “Have my vee-hickle prepared atonce” he shouted at his secretaries face. “Full entourage.”
“Yes, sir. Of course. At once.”

Does a General's Secretary usually live in his house with him?

At an underground facility both nearby and at the same time far away, 5 teams of 5 times 5 elite guard armed with FN P-90's and Time Grenades stood nervously outside its extraordinary enclosure. But it knew that they were there. Of course it did. It could *see* them – *and* hear them.

“It's been acting strange, lately” commented one guard to another that happened to be close near. “I don't like it. It's never been this quiet before.”

“Sshhhhhh! Shut up!” It can hear us through the walls” returned the guard in a harsh whisper. “How?”

“I don't know, but it can.” And then, from inside the enormous, heavily fortified maximum security cell came a distinct but muffled thudding. “See... I told you, man.”

Non-Lithuanian Pyrotechnic Display.

Not so meanwhile, Captain Spine Lucifer of the USS *Cerveza* paced back and forth in his ready room, drinking 21st Century flavoured synthohol heavily – and pondering a most savage quandary indeed. “What to do? What, exactly, to do, here?” He slid a pad from his desk and observed again the brief Star Fleet Intelligence instruction.

Unknown temporal disturbance causing random effects on time-line. Terminate current objective and return to Star Base 23 to rendezvous with the Enterprise. Priority One communication end.

Captain Lucifer growled and launched his empty glass into the ceiling, blowing it up. “This is bullshit...” he muttered, unlocking a secret compartment in his desk filled with pornographic holodeck programmes and *genuine* Wild Turkey Rare Breed Bourbon. Getting up, he selected another glass and poured himself a quadruple smash.

Gone.

He poured himself another, then nearly spilt it up his own nose as his door contraption emitted the beeping sound indicating someone was present there. “Come.” Wiping his face, he stealthed his bottle back into his magic draw and pushed it closed.

The door slid open and Lieutenant Thomas Eugene Paris entered through. “Captain, may I speak with you?” he asked, rather sheepishly – obviously nervous about something.

“Of course, Lieutenant, please... erm. Please sit down.” Lucifer was swimming. “Would you like a drink?” he asked, pouring himself another.

“Captain are you *drinking*? You're on duty!”

“Siz the bezt time for it, Mr. Paris. Will you join me? Your secret's safe wiv me, if my secret is, urm, well... If my secret is safe with ye.”

“You know what, Captain, I think I will” Paris accepted, shocked that the Captain was slurping so visibly whilst on duty. His stomach rumbled as Lucifer re-removed what he did recognise as *genuine*, ultra-high grade Kentucky Bourbon. Thee Captain selected Paris a glass and poured it full of that gold.

“Now, Lieutenant, what seems to be the disturb, here? What's wrong?” Lucifer tried to hide his surprise as Paris snatched the glass off the table and downed a triple in one swoop, before pouring himself another without asking any permission.

“You know I'm fond of 21st Century cinematography, right?” blurted Paris after rubbing his warmed-from-booze chest.

“Right...”

“Well, let me explain. Do you remember a 20th Century sci-fi epic called *Star Wars*?”

“I do, yes,” replied the Captain. “The original trilogy is one of my favourites of that era,

actually. Why do you ask?" Although still drunk, and stoned, Lucifer was now regaining his earlier lack of composure.

"Who do you remember it as being written and executively produced by? Do you recall?"

"It was George Lucas, wasn't it?"

"*Exactly!* But check your Star Felt record archives... Look at what has happened!" Paris cained the rest of his drink in excitement. "This stuff is amazing, you got any more?"

Captain Lucifer removed another bottle from his stash and crossed it across the desk to the Lieutenant. "Here. Help yourself" he beamed. "Computer, cross reference and list all entries pertaining to George Lucas and the 20th Century work of art *Star Wars*."

"Cross referencing" began Majel Barret, "No entries pertaining to George Lucas or *Star Wars* present in database."

"*What?*" retorted Lucifer in mock astonishment.

"I told you..."

"Shut the fuck up, Paris."

"Yessir."

"Computer... who wrote and produced the original *Star Wars* Trilogy?"

"Dr. Terry Melanson, CEO of Melansonfilm."

"Majel, thank you. I'm under strict orders to not inform you of this, Tom, but please review this pad." Captain Spine Lucifer threw it toward him and Paris butterspilt. Picking it up off the deck, the Lieutenant's eyes widened as he read the text.

"Skin up, Mr. Paris. That's an order."

Mime

The Legends sat in hell, glowing and transparent like dead Jedi. Huge. Towering so. They knew all about it, you see.

"How long?" questioned The Robert Anton Wilson of The One Thompson.

"Soon, I think. Why don't you ask Phil? I mean, shit, he knows more about it than I do, right? You know more about it than I do." Hunter lode a pipe of *Datura Stramonium* and took the fruit therefrom.

"Perhaps. But I already asked Dick. He's in one of his non-responsive phases. I can't work with him – not if he won't speak."

"*Again?* Well why don't you just fucking beat it out of him, damn it? He'll cave. He always does..."

"You mean like you did in the 80's and 90's?" Wilson watched Thompson closely for a reaction. Then both men began to laugh uncontrollably.

"Robert, *fuck you, and* your foul experiments! You're a god damned Cardassian, I knew it. Come on, you bastard; let's go and ask Dick about the Joycemonster -- see how long we've got."

"It's being held by the United States Military somewhere in Colorado. Underground. They got him back as a green, 70ft Goblin this time" replied Philip Kindred Dick, blatantly.

Thompson instantly drew his light sabre. "Dick you fucking *Sorcerer!* Where are you? Show yourself!"

"I'm over here."

Wilson smiled as he scanned the flames and scorched earth, and smiled even more when he noticed the can of Strongbow on the bookshelf. "He's in the cider! Look, there!"

"No that's *my* cider" replied Thompson.

"Guess again, Robert" boomed Dick, omnipotently. "All those years of working for Rockefeller has made you dim." Hunter S. Thompson's copy of *A Scanner Darkly* expanded rapidly and morphed into the tall, bulky frame of P.K.D, who then jumped down from the bookcase and slapped the flames from his clothing. "Listen very carefully," he began. "Because we don't have much time."

"Fucking jumped up little spider!"

At this moment General Donald Sinclair Davis' limousine driver pulled to a halt at the gateoffice. And after showing their credentials, the whole entourage was waved through the hole in the fence without incident. The site was small and they drove straight into the tunnel leading to a sub-surface entrance, heavily blast-fortified and protected by armed gunmen. Huge metre thick doors ground open slowly, revealing a spiffing, high-tech par Kha'ak* – guards everywhere. The convoy, consisting of one armoured stretch limousine, two bikes, and two armoured SUVs parked. General Davis, bald, overweight, but confident and powerful physically and mentally stomped from his limo, headed straight toward the facility proper. Stopping and turning back, he pointed menacingly at his men. “Wait hyear! All of you. I'll handle this personally. Do you understand me?” Nobody answered as he strode to the lift.

“General Davis?” asked the tall, slim liftguard of African American descent.

“Correct, son. I presume you've been told to expect me?”

“You could say that, Sir” grinned the guard. He remembered the General -- remembered that he was a man of honour. A man you could respect, *and* trust. “I've also been instructed to escort you below ground. Won't you follow me, General?”

Davis followed the young man into the lift. “Hwhere have I seen you before, Airman?”

“At Cheyenne, Sir.”

“Oh, that's right, that's right. King, isn't it?” The General made eye contact.

“Sir, I'm honoured you remember, Sir” spilt the guard, swelling with pride. “Just as it was an honour to serve under your command, General Hammond... No, oh god, sorry... I mean General *Davis*. Please excuse me, Sir.”

“At ease, Airman. At ease.” Hammond hid his smile like the professional he was, and the lift stopped. “Hyere we are.” The two men walked into the crudely furnished porch, only to be greeted by Senator Herring, whom they both considered to be of a most *despicable* character.

“General Hammond. I did not expect you so soon. Is there a problem?”

The *arrogance* of this man, thought Davis. He smiled and approached him. Then, extending his right hand – just as Herring extended *his* right, Hammond spread the nose over the face with a swift, unexpected and utterly viscous left straight, grounding his target instantly. And, as Herring began staggering to his feet, Hammond rushed forward, grabbed the black, slicked-back hair, and loosed a sickening knee landing square on the jaw – knocking the Senator out cold.

King laughed so hard his stomach began to pain. He had never seen anything so spectacular before in his entire life. Is the man a general or an Anderson Silva? But then he frowned as Hammond began searching the unconscious Herring's pockets. “Sir... are you *robbing* his wallet?” What's happening here? he thought to himself. What's going on?

“Found them” replied Davis, somewhat out of breath. “No. I was looking for any documents relating to Pedestrian Sunbeam – some sick operation these pigs have concocted, as I'm sure you're already aware. I knew he'd be stupid enough to carry them about his person, and he was. Now, let's see...” he said, unfolding the papers:

OPERATION: PEDESTRIAN SUNBEAM PROJECT BRIEFING:

Soul now stable within Goblin. Violent and absurd behaviour curbed with Alcohol, Cannabis and Star Trek: The Next Generation DVD's. Subject appears happiest and most malleable when copies of Ulysses and Finnegans Wake are placed randomly throughout enclosure, so we have done so. Several copies have been devoured and several others defaced in barbaric and inexplicable fashions. One Librarian has been maimed, and 23 guards have been destroyed. Current project rating is “success.” Further funding has been allocated and proposed expansions of project cleared for preparation.

* This author just made an obscure reference to X³: REUNION.

“Show me your garden...”

Decado, “The Ice Killer,” was dead no longer. Buckled, he gripped the earth without understanding. His once-flying-so-high-within-the-void spirit had felt the screaming and the hyperalgesic tension of genetic re-amalgamation. But he did not understand why, or where. “Must you have...” Decado gritted his teeth. It couldn't be happening. The Source had sent him, and through his anguish and pain he did not notice the rest of The Thirty in attendance beside.

“Decado, friend. It is I, Acuas. Do you hear me? We are brought back. A great evil us upon the land.” Acuas, tall and yellowbeard, bent down and covered Decado with a spare cape.

“*Acuas!* Is it really you? Where am I? Decado could not yet properly open his eyes.

“We know not yet where, or when, Brother. Only that we are here, and must act very soon.”

“Do you bring with you a Thirty?”

“We are with you, Decado.” The voice was of Balan.

The Thirty gathered forward. Decado – sight returning -- recognised Serbitar, Katan, Balan, Acuas and Abbaddon. Source Priests he had once known and fought beside in the dark times long ago. If he knew the others, he did not remember them at this time. The Ice Killer stood upon weak knees. “Please, tell me everything you know.”

The immediate, innermost five seated themselves in a semi-circle around Decado, their white capes trailing behind them in increasing winds as the rain began to fall. A lightning forked at the loam, followed by the immediate bellow of deep stormthunder – and all slanted their eye as the precipitation really dove down.

“You have been chosen to lead once again against the impossible, Decado” began Acuas, raising his voice mid-sentence against the rising storm. “It is as such as when Abbot asked you to show him your garden. Do you understand?”

“I understand,” replied Decado. “When do we begin?”

“But you must know,” cut in Katan, “that this time, instead of hundreds of thousands; we face hundreds of millions.”

All were solemn and silent momentarily as a tongue of lightning illuminated their world again, the proceeding thunderclap almost deafening to behold.

“How can we?” cried Decado, trying to wipe the now pelting water from his eyes. “How can we possibly hold against so many?”

“Another of your lineage has been sent...” interjected an unknown Priest. It was Dardalion reborn. Founder of The Thirty. His face no longer young and gentle. “Look.” And as The Ice Killer followed his gaze, he saw the dark, wind-torn figure -- silhouetted briefly by another lightning -- situated atop the hill, seemingly oblivious to the direct onslaught of nature – swords of Night And Day provocatively drawn as if to dare it. “Your great grandfather, *Skilgannon The Damned*. Reborn.”

Nobody dared speak.

Where Silence Has Lease

“I have a question Sir.”

(Picard answers) *“Yes Data, what is it?”*

“What... is... death?”

“Oh, is that all? Well, Data... You're asking probably the most difficult of all questions. Some see it as a 'changing' into an indestructible form -- forever unchanging. They believe, that, the purpose of the entire universe is to maintain that form in an earth-like garden; which will give delight and pleasure throughout all eternity. On the other hand there are those who hold to the idea of our blinking into nothingness (Picard clicks his fingers), with all of our experiences, and hopes, and dreams... merely a delusion.”

“Which do you believe, Sir?”

(Picard smiles, pauses a moment, and then exhales slightly)”

*

“Merely throwing myself into the part, **Watson...**”

The USS *Cerveza* was already at Star base 23. The Captains and senior staff of the *Enterprise* and *Cerveza* both occupied the briefing room. The discussion was heated.

“Lucifer, *damn it!* Think about what you are saying.”

“I am thinking, Picard. I am thinking *very* carefully.” At age 25, Spine Lucifer was the youngest Captain in Star Felt. He was a drunk – and a stoned, but Star Felt tolerated him since he seemed to function better that way – and since he de-cloaked two Romulan Warbirds planning to destroy DS9 by simply blowing himself out of an airlock without a spacesuit and bladder-emptying on them from above.

Picard sighed. “I was just wondering if it would be at all possible for whoever is writing this ridiculous script to try and at least display a basic understanding of science. And could it please be *slightly* less absurd? I mean it. No children on the bridge. I'll go back to doing fucking *Shakespeare* on Broadway if you do not avast with this bromidic *non-sense!*”

“Get a hold of yourself, Jean-Luc. What's the matter with you? It's not *that* difficult to understand. Humanity evolved elsewhere. We don't even come from “Earth,” as we – as you -- know it... we were brought there. We come from what you know as “Terra 10,” originally; the world where human beings truly evolved.”

“*No!*” shouted Picard. “I will not believe it!” His mostly bald head was bleaming perspiration now. “Mr. Spiner... What do you make of all this?” he asked, finally.

All in the room turned their attention toward the Android.

“I believe it is at least feasible, Sir – theoretically.” The Lieutenant Commander stood.

“Explain.” Captain Picard folded his arms standing, as did Captain Lucifer sitting.

Data approached the main display in the Star Base's briefing room. “Assuming, momentarily, that the theories in *Stargate: SG-1*, the semi-fictional novels of Darwin, and the digital universe of *X³: REUNION*, are, indeed, correct – that humankind did indeed evolve on the planet we call Earth; then we have no proverbial leg to proverbially stand on, Sir. All the data suggests that what we know as humankind evolved on another world and was introduced to Terra 10 – “Earth” – at a later date.” Brent Spiner stroked his beard and sipped at his pipe intellectually.

Kouncillor Troy's khunt was wet. “*She had a soggy valve for writers...*” “Captain, I request a moment alone with Captain Lucifer.” Picard regarded Troy carefully. He had come to trust her judgement over the years.

“Very well, Kouncillor. Captain Lucifer?”

Spine Lucifer was staring at Troy, who was now rapidly changing shape, becoming another person entirely before his very gaze. “Well I'll be damned if you don't look a bit like Audrey Hepburn in her prime all of a gosh-ridden sudden!”

“*What?*” asked Dr. Berverly Crusher immediatas.

“Very nice!” shouted Lucifer, excitedly. “Yes. *Very* good!”

Nervous glances were exchanged amongst both ships senior staff.

“LOOK OUTSIDE!” he exploded erroneously. “The *Enterprise* has gone snapped!” And as every-person looked in surprise Captain Lucifer promptly tucked his erection into the waistband of his undershorts before properly cracking under their accusing re-attentions. “ALL HANDS; *ABANDON SHIP!*” The berserk Captain then flung his chair back behind him and leapt over the table, smashing head first, vertically, off a bulkhead – almost breaking his neck.

Lieutenant Wharf sighed and looked at Riker, who was trying, unsuccessfully, to not reveal any amusement.

Lieutenant Commander Data looked down at the slumped-on-ground Lucifer. “Technically this is a space station, Sir,” he informed jovially. “And might I add that I find your behaviour most

extraordinary and really quite fascinating, Captain? I am an Android, Sir. When everyone's attention was diverted I noticed that you..."

Lucifer cut him off sternfast, mid-sentence "keep it to yourself, Lieutenant."

"Of course, my apologies, Captain."

"He hit that bulkhead pretty hard, Dr. Crusher, why don't you escort him to sick-bay? Mr. Wharf... go with her. Commander Data and Lieutenant Paris, I'd like a word with you both in private." The Captain of the *Enterprise's* accent rang out with a poetic British clarity unheard of for most supposed Frenchmen.

"Nice of you to assume command, as always, Picard..." Captain Lucifer mumbled under his breath as Wharf and Crusher walked him out the door.

"I would not have had to, had you not once again proven yourself *incapable of sharing* it, Lucifer. You leave me no choice but to relieve you of duty and report you to Star Fleet command on the grounds of *insanity!* Issuing false evacuation orders... tricking the senior staff – and leaping a bloody 'bout and crashing yourself into the bulkheads! Why, if I didn't know any better, I'd call you a *Q!*"

"Oh, *Picard...* Oh *Mon Capitan, Mon Capitan, Mon Ca-pi-tan!* How *well* you know me..."

Everyone in the room gasped.

"*Q!* I should have recognised *your* mischief!" blasted out the now furious Picard. "Mr. Wharf, Dr. Crusher... get away from it!"

The room stood aback, aghast.

Capatin Lucifer clicked the fingers of his right hand in-toward the air and in a flash of light changed into the definite form of a one John De Lancie. "Now you listen closely, pathetic humans... I'll say this only once. In the darkened, blackened and twisted past of your *ghastly* species, in a year your kind most commonly refer to as the year two-thousand-and-eight, a people called CERN, of Geneva, will activate a device they call the 'Large Hadron Collider,' or 'LHC,' if you are what they call an 'American.' This will set in motion a series of events, leading, Picard – and the rest of your miserable race -- to the very temporal anomaly that you are all meeting at this very Star Base to converse!"

"*Ridiculous!* I am *well* versed in humanity's history, Q, why haven't I heard of any of this before?"

"Captain," interspoke Data, wisely, "If, indeed, the Q entity is saying what I believe it to be saying, then no record would ever necessarily have to exist. Clearly, it is we that the Q has warned – and we that will go back, breaking the temporal prime directive – to avert disaster, Sir."

"*Magnificent!* Won't you see it, Picard? Won't you see it, Lieutenant Commander Torres, Lieutenant Paris, Lieutenant Commander La Forge and Commander Chakotay? *Will you not see it?* This machine of yours answered the question before *you*, its creator could. The created overstepping the creator! Oh *Humanity...* What does that then mean for thee?"

"*Have you ever been to the engineering level?*" Councillor Hamann asked. "*I love to walk there at night. Quite amazing. Would you like to see it?*"

"*Sure,*" replied Neo.

"Enough of this, *Q,*" interrupted Will' Riker. "We would... we would have gotten it in our own time. We are just not as fast, is all. Everything was under control." The Commander glanced at his Captain for reassurance.

"That's right, Number One, that is *exactly* right. We would have gotten it in our own time, Q, and everything was, indeed, under control! What more do want from us? What more do you *expect* from us? That we now be as swift-minded as our *machines?*"

"Ah, Jean-Luc. Commander Riker... What *is* a *machine?* And what, I put to you all; really is *control?* Q clapped his fingers and in the flash the environment was transformed.

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The cell wall blew out asunder, huge flames flowing along and corridor roasting to death the surrounding guard afore their brief scream.

“What the *fuck*?”

“General get down!” replied King in haste, levelling his FN-P90 along and toward the blast. One other almighty boom went through and knocked both men to knee, shock-blasted ceiling-plaster leaking at them now.

“Jesus *FUCK*, Airman! H-what are they keeping down here? A *UUARGH!*” A colossal, gargantuan explode deep within the facility under-rattled their current room like a small rodent-cage falling down a long-stairs – furniture and-of-course objects flying off-place as the lighting shattersmashed down in rain.

“Sir it's the Goblin...” whispered King through darkness. “They went *too* far. They... they got a famous writer in it, see. I can't remember his name...”

Distant and dampened machine-gun fire with voices sang, proceeded by its ungodly roarings.

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The Thirty were spirit-soaring now beyond the behind-the-hill of their stop. Masses gathering in their hundreds of millions, aimlessly, toward this impending scenario. Zombies, no doubt; but not undead, *per say*. They were the ills of humanity, conglomerating here for the fight. Every occupation represented, every *non*-occupation represented -- all straight from the darkest hells of material existence.

Skilgannon, protecting the lifeless, laid-to-ground bodies of The Thirty's loosed souls, heard the din-rumble of the swarming encroachment. Millions. Beckon a blinding scintillate from above, as, indeed, an unknown twin of sky-vehicles doth appear and plough death-beams into the front-line yonder.

The Thirty returned to shell, stood – and drew their weapons. For it had begun.

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She subconsciously flattened a quif on the left side of her short, straight, beautiful auburn hair before rapping against his unlocked basement door and pushing it open. “Mulder?”

“Scully, Hi...” Special Agent Fox Mulder stood behind his cluttered desk in front of the famous “*I WANT TO BELIEVE*” arrectangle, reading a document. He removed his glasses. “Thank you for coming on such short notice.”

“I'm used to it. What have you got, Mulder?”

“*Definitely* an X-File, Scully. Kill the lights. I want to show you something.”

Agent Scully flicked the switch and stood, arms folded, as Mulder thumbed a video screen on with the remote and pressed play.

“Apparently recorded yesterday at an as of yet 'undisclosed' military installation in Colorado. Look closely...”

“Mulder where *on Earth* did you get this?” Scully watched on in a combination of shock, horror and astonishment as three giant, towering, semi-translucent figures armed with light sabres walked straight through several walls and swiftly dismembered a number of armed guard before an explosion rendered the camera inoperative. “Oh my *God*, Mulder. That was even crazier than the Dr. Shiro Zama and colleagues murder tape.”

“It was leaked to me through shall we say 'unofficial Bureau channels.' Recognise anyone?”

“No. Should I have?”

Mulder rewound and freeze-framed on a relative close-up of the trio in action then turned back to his partner.

"I'm sorry Mulder I still don't recognise any of these men." she replied candidly – squinting her eyes in an effect of added effort.

"If we can call them men, Scully..." Agent Mulder sat down behind his desk and pointed to the screen with a Biro. "The central 'entity' in this frame – wearing the Ernesto 'Che' Guevara T-shirt, is a one 'Dr.' Hunter Stockton Thompson. You must know that name, right, Scully?"

"It does sound familiar..."

"He was a famous counter-cultural author and journalist with a sort of 'cult' following. He died of an apparent self-inflicted gun shot wound to the head on the 20th of February, 2005.

Scully frowned at that momentarily without really knowing why. "Who are... or should I say 'were' the other two?"

"I'm glad you ask... I'm glad you ask. The entity on the *our* left hand side, a novelist; is Philip Kindred Dick."

"Oh... I read some of his books as a teenager! Is that really him?" she looked closer with interest. "

"He died in 1982 five days after having a stroke."

Agent Scully didn't reply.

"On the right is Robert Anton Wilson," continued Mulder. "Another famous writer."

"Let me guess... this man is also deceased?"

"Correct. January 11th, 2007."

"So what does all this mean, Mulder? Where are you going with this?"

"Come *on*, Scully. Are you saying you see absolutely nothing unusual about this case?"

"Other than the fact that...(?)"

"Other than that."

"Well then no. I honestly can't say that I do, Mulder."

Mulder smiled, picked up a Biro; then aimed at the calendar and threw it at it as if they were dart and dartboard. "What's the date today, Scully?"

The calendar read: *SUNDAY, September 9th, 2001.*

"The Elm that whimpers at the top told the stone that moans when stricken. Wind broke it. Wave bore it. Reed wrote of it. Syce ran with it. Hand tore it and wild went war. Hen trievied it and plight pledged peace. It was folded with cunning, sealed with crime, uptied by a harlot, undone by a child. It was life but was it fair? It was free but was it art?"

-- *Finnegans Wake*

"And turn then now at their armies there yondfast! They do not, any of their number, carve even one single-sided Jungian cartouch on any existing ground-tree! Sickle Giffards, Merchant-Heathens, off-spring of made-redundant Minors tall with plastic Jesuits. *Three!* Their Piracy uninhibited by neither ethics nor morality! Come to this as it may when wing draw strongline in the grass and stand on fight like what USS *Cerveza's* nipping-shuttles dunne when they burnt up *their* crowline with mystical beamfires, as, even now, we can heard. Only once upon a time, in a galaxy far, far away cast we along dead authors from a hell with electronic battle-weapons aswing, to chop, chop chop them all the *fuck* up!"

Thompson tapped Wilson on the shoulder and whispered "*Fucking hell, Robert, Joyce didn't really talk like that, did he?*"

"*Joyce didn't, no*" replied Wilson in an equally discrete tone. "*But Joyce was Jesuit educated.*

The Goblin, although possessing Joyce's soul, only learnt how to read and write reading Ulysses and Finnegans Wake – and by watching lots of Star Trek.

“How could you know that?”

“The Thirty told me. They've been in telepathic communication with it since it busted loose.”

The green behemoth carried on with its motivational battle-speech to the meagre few troops before it. “Less of we than of them, I am know. Of yes. An' in undersoon gunsoldiers, brought here by vehicle of sky and of H'wheel, will add to our impending troubles and consequential abashment!” An F-23 fighter jet shot overhead, proceeded by the distant air-rumble of black helicopters. Yet, still, the monster continues on un-afazed. “Yine noble and valiant, prepare your sabers! Prepare your courageousness! Release the war otters from their cagehousing! The time is...” the missile swoosh and subsequent explosion cut the Joycemonster off.

The small force panicked and scattered, though none suffered so much as even one scratch. Three trucks full of troops pulled up on the grass behind the green giant, and it turned on them before they could even unload. It's eyes turned red and it cocked its head back, before releasing a hideous electronic sound so volumous and piercing that even the monster itself fell to the ground and covered it's ridiculously massive ears. The windows on the flipped trucks were shattered and the heads of all men inside popped.

“Oh *fuck!*” Thompson vociferated over the racket of gunfire and bombfall. “This is turning into a fucking war zone! Wilson! Dick! To me! We'll fall back to those trucks and collect up all their weapons and ammunition. We'll make our last stand there.”

Both agreed. And they all ran into the bloody squelching brain-mess, crunching on-floor skull biscuits as they sprant to take up position.

“We'll save our strength,” bellowed Phil. “We'll use up all the ammo and then go in with the light sabres...”

Skilgannon The Damned sat under a tree trying to block out the chaos surroundings. For once, he did not feel like fighting. He cursed in a long forgotten language, twice.

“A greeting again, *Laddie.*” offered a deep, familiar voice.

Olek jumped to his feet and span round in a total surprise, finding The Legend, young again, standing stout with *Snaga* in hand. His pupiless eyes shone a bright white.

“*Druss!* It cannot be!”

“It can. Though this is Druss The Legend, but not Druss The Legend. And you are Skilgannon The Damned, but not Skilgannon The damned. We have been granted special characteristics for our task, old friend. Take my hand.”

Skilgannon took the hand of Druss and his head immediately shot back as his eyes shone a bright white light into the dark, cloudy skies. Druss let go as the unknown powers surged. “One more time, *Laddie?*”

“One more time *Druss.*” answered The Damned. “One more time.”

The Thirty, led by Decado, were all huddled nearby in some sort of final Source prayer as they approached them. Or maybe they were conducting their form of magicianry? Olek had seen Source Priests do similar things in lifetimes past. Such contemplations are immaterial now, he thought. As is almost everything in this material realm*. “Look, *Druss...* There's thirty-one of them, not thirty.”

“But one of them, other than Decado, is not a Source Priest” noted Druss.

That is because one of us, pulsed Serbitar to both men, is the son of The Damned. Decado. Reborn, as are all here.

Get out of my head, Priest, responded Druss, telepathically.

The Thirty-One rose again for the last time ever.

“My apology, old Legend,” replied Serbitar through flesh. “Olek Skilgannon” he said turning to The Damned. “Meet the son you never knew. Decado.”

The Damned nodded. “Son.”

** A Paradox!*

“Father.”

*

“Captain. We are being hailed.”

“On screen, Mr. Wharf.”

“Aye Sir.”

The main viewer became activated.

“Captain Picard. This is Captain Freeman Hagbard Celine of the USS *UFO*. I will not allow you to attack the Joycemonster or its supernatural forces. Disengage and break orbit *immediately!*”

The view screen fell black.

“Kouncillor Troy?” enquired of her Picard.

*

“Hot iron in my nose...”

“Manic bird song.”

Their convoff of tank had stopped along the road. Volley after volley they let go into the Goblin. But it had conjured adequate shielding and the shells just fulminated against the power-bubble. *“JESUITS!”* it screeched, shooting thermonuclear mega-zaps from out its eyes, destroying up all the mobile artillery to gone. The infantry neared close. The beast held out both palms, shut its eyes – and blammed fireballs down onto their lines, incinerating thousand. A shuttle-craft wizzed by and launched two torpedoes into the multitude strong, precipitated by an phaser phire.

The horrendous burning, melting, screamage. Death. Numbers thinned by the 1000.

*The **Thirty-Three*** charged the mercenary-peasant front. They had left the Military to the Goblin and the heavily armed bus-stashed trilogy, who do indeed hold their own. Skilgannon's great grandson, “The Ice Killer,” legged fairly ahead, clearly on a berserk. Mere yards from tide he twisted heel suddenthen – and span backwards swords drawn into it. He hat them like a loosened Helicopter main-blade, severed heads, arms, shoulders and spilt blood and gut *spat!* The other thirty-two piled in in an triangular stabwedge. Advanced speed, power and accuracy of the team ensures a massive decapitation ratio. The bright white capes of the Source Thirty stained in a total crimson utterly within seconds.

Snaga was lodged mid-peasant. Druss span out and reverse-reversed to diagonally obliterate an adjacent skull in half. *Snaga* one handed at side, he shoulder barged an immediate, and smartly stabbed another in the neck with a knife in his free end. He stabbed another in the ribcage, leaving the wound and the blade there.

Men were falling vastly every around.

The Damned wove majestic silver-sword-webs making a fall to any near.

Hundreds and thousands dimmed in the smells of gore.

*

The enemy put the final components in place for their makeshift Large Hadron Collider. It was constructed primarily out of all the DVDs that aren't being sold according to this rise of sarcasm and the film downloading counter-industry we as a species seem to be enduring yesterday and today and tomorrow. For fuck's sake. The Q and Star Felt Intelligence and that Joycegoblin three all knew that it was it that had disturbed the timeline, weeks before it was in many timelines activated. The legitimate Large Hadron Collider of CERN was of no concern, concern, con**CERN**.

*

The Legend flat-sided his axe and smacked the jaw of his most recent attacker 30 yards back into his own comrades. He kicked another man over, then readjusted and drove *Snaga* down over his head with both hands and split in half another. Corpsage now thick to high in over a half a mile in radius. The Thirty slaughtering hundreds a second, The Three also doing as much as inhumanly possibas. This scale of culling never before seen.

Thompson and Wilson lay prone at either end of their tipped lorry, firing on auto into the encroaching. Dick preferring to snipe on semi, solitarily, inside nextbus. They all had M4 Carbines. Each entity putting a bullet in every oncomer for the busy last while. A naked woman with a samurai sword broke through the defence-fire and ran toward the holdout. Phil took her in his sights, held his breathe, and then blew her brains out through the back of her cranium in a short, red cloud. Thompson sprayed a man with a stick in the chest, throat and face then reloaded. Robert Anton Wilson covers, smashing a man's pelvis with a stray round and intentionally putting down five others. RAW grunted and pushed himself up off his belly, stepping back behind the vehicle.

"I'm out." he called to the other two. "I forgot my fucking glasses! Damn it all to hell! Cover me. I'm going in!" Hagbard drew his light sabre and triple front flipped into their rank, hacking about 25 people to death upon land.

Dick and Duke laid down intense cover fire as Wilson Yoda-flew about among them all.

"There's *too* many! I'm almost out" shouted Dick. "This is it..."

"End this, Q! People are *dying* down there!"

"You end it, Jean-Luc."

"I will not disobey the temporal prime directive!"

"Then Star Fleet will have never existed and humanity will destroy itself before it ever becomes spacefaring."

The Joycemonster and the 33 Gemmelian heroes perish in the nuclear shockwave... The trio reassigned to hell.

"Humanity's future can either be secured or strangled depending on what you decide now, Picard. Will you fire, or won't you? *To be, or not to be, that is the question.*"

*Wilson whistles Lennon's Imagine in hell.
And this author starts to sing...*

"All Good Things..."

And just remember, in the future, French people speak with an English accent.

