

## Defenders of Selen- Retreat and Protect

Ignatius slowly came out of unconsciousness, his muscles ached and he felt the pain of exposed wounds meeting the cold air entering the ship from the open hatch. His mind was clouded with a slowly lifting fog, as it did, he began to remember the battle, the rage, the creature.

The soldier.

He didn't even know what the soldier's name was or what they looked like. The artificial rage had clouded his vision so everyone he saw was the same monster that was dead next to him. The shock running through his body was the only thing that kept him from screaming and lashing out from his own failure.

But just because he failed to save one soldier didn't mean he couldn't save others. There were likely many around, even if the rage consumed them as it did him it was now likely wearing off. Hopefully some had survived beating each other to death and were now just injured. Ignatius knew what his next task was, to find as many of them on the ship and get back to base.

The ship did have a weight capacity and it was likely if his plan was successful it would be too heavy to break orbit but it could still get back to groundbase.

Ignatius pulled himself onto his feet although the rage was gone some small part of him did wish it was still there, if anything the adrenaline rush would help him remove the carcass from the ship as well as rescue the survivors instead, Ignatius had to rely on his own drained strength to carry out the first task hopefully he could recruit other soldiers to help him with the second.

As he heaved the creature's remains from the ship he took a moment to examine it. It seemed to have died from a simple stab to the neck.

"Lucky shot" he said to himself "seems to be my specialty".

He was able to get the creature's foot away from the hanger door before he felt his strength to give way "okay" he panted "I'll give it a minute to catch my breath and then start looking".

As he began to catch his breath he noticed the smell of smoke that hung in their air. He initially assumed that it was due to something burning. He had seen a vehicle get turned over on his way there so it wasn't outside the realm of possibility. But as he turned to survey his surroundings, he quickly saw the source of the smell.

As Ignatius looked to the sky, he saw the large cloud of smoke and followed its trail to the source. The mountain that dominated the skyline of the battlefield had erupted. Already he could see the ash starting to fall to the ground.

"Shit" spat Ignatius "shit, shit, shit".

Ignatius scrambled back into the ship and towards the cockpit. He slammed his hand against the button to activate communication with base, catching his breath quickly before speaking "mayday, mayday, this is Ignatius Blaeceth of the Arcona Clan. My regiment was hit by a reality perception augmentation attack. Current survivors are unknown and the volcano has erupted. I'm going to look for survivors and evact to ground base".

Ignatius didn't even wait for a response for in his mind, decision was not up for debate. He had to find survivors and he knew that none of them weren't any condition to fight after they had just beaten each other to a pulp. How could they be expected to fight any further?

*One hour he thought to himself can't risk staying out here too long.*

Ignatius rummaged around the ship for any supplies, grabbing what he could get his hands on; food, first aid supplies, water. He wanted to take more but he couldn't risk weighing himself down or being forced to choose between equipment during transportation.

After one final gear check, Ignatius stepped out of the ship before sealing it shut, making sure to have the keys with him. He tries his best to block out the pain in his body or the carcass next to him, he just had to focus on his new mission.

And with that resolve he began his search