

Hell From The Skies

*Parts of this story have been translated to English for clarity

Silent and still aflame from atmospheric entry, they glided in the moonlit sky and braced for impact. Their smash into the earth kicked soil dozens of feet into the air and their skid took out small trees, bushes and one unfortunate deer that was caught unawares.

Then there was a pause.

The dust and smoke hung in the air mixing with a light fog off the mountain, and this blanket made the already silent night seem even quieter.

At length a side hatch to the craft opened releasing a large gush of stale smelling swamp water, along with it several empty cans of beer. The Larger of the Two stood at the opening and surveyed the area. Being first officer and in charge, he then scaled down the craft's ladder and tested a leg on the ground before fully committing. His balance was always wobbly on earth's surface. He looked down at one of the cans by his feet and realizing it was empty, he kicked it away. These cans, and others like them, were a large reason why they were crashed here in the first place.

The Larger of the Two stretched, then put his arms out to balance himself while he walked over to a bush and relieved himself.

There was a second sound from the craft as chief mechanic Purple but Mighty also came to the door and climbed down. "I told you you were flying the old bird too low," he pointed out to his friend. "Gravitational pull is a cold heartless judge. But, what do I know. I am a mere mechanic. A bolt torquer, propulsion enhancer."

"I hate terra firma," The Larger of the Two answered, spitting on the ground. He looked at his partner. "Think you can get this tub running again?"

Purple but Mighty let out a loud belch then relieved himself against the side of the still hot aircraft. His urine hissed and gave off a foul smell as the proteins in it burned. "Think so, with enough gum and spit," he answered. "The trick is to do it before we give some vanquish therapy to the locals, or the local bears eat us. Besides, I 'll bet you a dozen Rainbow eggs it's just flooded, and once the flange reciprocator airs out we'll be back on course. We just need to wait it out, is all."

"Do you mind?" The Larger of The Two pointed at him urinating on the aircraft. Purple but Mighty finished up and took little notice. "Also, we are not to engage or be engaged, so none of your "vanquish therapy" while we are here," The Larger of the Two reminded him. "We need to get out of here before anyone knows we've landed. "We, as they say, are behind enemy lines. Without permissions or any knowledges of Cosmo Command." He had more to add, but his mechanic was now vomiting by the side of the vessel.

"Close that door before more water gets out," The Larger of the Two directed then sneezed. "I think my allergies to this degenerative palnet are acting up already."

“As soon as the world stops spinning, ‘ole boy,” Purple but Mighty answered as he wiped his mouth with an arm. He too was wobbly on his feet and made his way up to close the door then came back down.

The Larger of The Two pretended to hold a gun and made a sweeping gesture around him. “Set phasers to stun.” Then he talked into an imaginary communicator. “Recon One to Cosmo Command, if you can hear us, we have crash landed onto planet ‘shit hole’ due to elevated gradient slopes and beer consumption. We may be stranded here for days or even years, in which case we shall marry the locals and become rulers to these primitive beings, taking care of business and teaching them our ways and language. Perhaps even find some of our earlier lost scouting parties. If you get this message, send a flange reciprocator. Of the non-flooded variety.”

“And beer!” Purple but Mighty chimed in.

“And beer,” The Larger of the Two added into his hand. “Recon One over and out,” and he flipped his imaginary communicator closed and pretended to stow it in his pocket. “Come to think of it, I never took my phaser when I came out. It wouldn’t be a bad idea as we aren’t sure exactly on this rock where we are. You have yours?”

“Nope. Needed to piss too bad,” Purple but Mighty answered and also took in his surroundings. “After that crash, there’s nothing within fifty miles of here,” he added. He analysed their position. They were on a hill of sorts. There were trees and boulders, and they had crash landed across a small service road. A trench in the spaceship’s wake now made the road impassable. A potentially bad scene if one wanted to go unnoticed

before they got mobile again. He walked to the front of the aircraft and found a remnant of the deer sticking on the hull. He touched, then tasted it. "Well, except this."

The Larger of the Two shook his head and raised his voice. "What are you doing. You looking to get the dose? I'm hungry too, but we need to stay away from any foods to be found here. You'll be sitting on a wing on the way home IF and WHEN it doesn't agree with you," he warned his friend as he sat down. Earth gravity sucked. He then added, "How long before it starts again if its just flooded? Jeepers Jellyfish I just need a second till she all stops spinning."

"Not long, but long enough," Purple but Mighty answered, throwing the bit of deer flesh halfway towards the bushes The Larger of the Two stood in front of. He then pointed up to the starry sky. "It's probably safe to eat. Hey, I bet I can spot home before you can," and he sat down too.

The two looked up at the stars and their sitting soon evolved to laying. Conversation traced their path from star to star, then slowed altogether before they inevitably both fell asleep. Or passed out. The line between fatigue and inebriation tend to blur when you are out of the range of Cosmo Command.

"Wake up!" The Larger of The Two hissed an unknown time later. "We got company!"

“Shit!” Purple but Mighty was trying to regain his senses and it took him a moment to realize he was stranded on planet earth, the genital wart of the galaxy. He wiped spittle from his cheek and his mouth tasted like something had died in it.

By the time the two were back on their feet, the high beams of the school bus were upon the crash site. The Larger of the Two jumped behind the bush he had just pissed against. With nowhere to go, Purple but Mighty leaned back against the aircraft and blended in with it with the best impromptu camouflage he could muster while still drunk.

A half hour before, fifty-year old Eddie Sweeney had been fighting fatigue as his bus chugged up and down the mountains. Half filled with the returning elementary aged attendees of the Summer Gospel Children’s Musical Camp, he still had two hours before he got everyone back to the school for drop off at eleven pm. For the third time that night, Abba was explaining how the winner would take it all as Lord Nelson, his black lab with a graying mouth, slept beside him at the start of the aisle. Both Eddie and Lord Nelson were enjoying the rare quiet from the kids.

Now, Abba was turned off and mostly everyone were wide awake as they searched for signs of what had caused the fire burning across the night sky. He suspected a meteor, and it had looked close. That could mean money. He had woken Miss Ruby, the music teacher and only chaperone to these generally unruly heathens, just in time to see the flame go over the next ridge. A few of the kids had woken up when he hollered to her, including the round one named Harold. Not that Harold was necessarily worse than any of the others, he just happened to be a tattletale, bully, and

fibber. The fact he was the son of a guy that used to push Eddie around when he was a kid only brought more attention to it.

The bus crested the ridge, and Eddie geared down to a crawl. Everybody was awake and looking out their windows along the countryside for anything out of the ordinary. As much as Eddie disliked Harold, he had to admit the little prick was attentive, for it was he that yelled out there was a small glow down the side of the mountain.

As fortune would have it, there was a small service road branching off the main one that would allow Eddie to get the bus closer.

"If we get stuck or broke down in here, we'll both get fired," Miss Ruby leaned forward and warned Eddie. Having taken the seat right behind him, the forty-year old was now close enough for him to smell her perfume, and Eddie felt his cheeks flush. Her tone told him she was just as excited as he was.

"If that there's a meteorite, we'll have enough cash we won't have to worry about these shit jobs anymore anyways," Eddie promised her. This had the possibility to be Eddie's big break to come out with the money and maybe even the girl.

Harold overheard the exchange. "I found it!" he protested. "What about me?"

Eddie looked at Harold in the mirror and smiled. He was gonna get his alright. Harold would be lucky to not be walking out of here. Eddie ground the bus gears even lower and the bus vibrated as he made his way along the rough unmanaged road, swerving around potholes and large rocks. As the bus got lower and closer to the patches of orange, scattered low level fog covered parts of the road.

He saw the silhouette of the ship but not the trench across his path until the last moment, jamming the brakes and almost driving into it. The bus lurched to a halt on the loose gravel, and the kids and Miss Ruby gave off shouts of bewilderment and terror. Eddie glanced in his main mirror at his passengers and asked if anyone was hurt. Realizing they weren't, he promptly warned them to be quiet. He looked at the crash site in front of him.

Ruby leaned forward towards Eddie. "What is it?"

"Not sure," he admitted. He reached down for his bat and flashlight, both of which he always kept by his seat then creaked the door open and stepped out. The light was faint and wouldn't last much longer. He should have angled the bus better to light up the aircraft. Keeping step with him with a slight lead Lord Nelson was just as bewildered, with a great many more scents in the air than he was accustomed to. Eddie lifted his blue mesh ballcap, under which tussled dark hair fell out so he could scratch his head. Both man and dog stopped walking and again took in the site in front of them.

A sixty-foot long aircraft sat rutted in a trench that originated from far in the darkness. At first Eddie had figured this was a military jet of some kind. But it was unlike anything he had ever seen in magazines before.

"What is it?" Miss Ruby hollered again from the safety of the door of the bus.

Eddie didn't reply. He was too busy examining the aircraft. Then, he petted Lord Nelson on the head. "What do you think, boy." Lord Nelson's eyes weren't what they used to be, but he smelled something in the air he didn't like. He growled into the darkness.

“What do you see, Eddie?”

“Stay there,” was his only response as he and Lord Nelson then went closer to the aircraft. They climbed the small mound lining the trench to get closer. The vessel was tubular, twenty feet in diameter, and had four wings, two per side stacked above each other. It was hard to tell which end was the front, but Eddie figured it was the end dug most into the ground.

It was eggshell white and still warm to the touch when Eddie tapped on it with first his bat then a cautious hand. A few parts of it were still smoldering. Strange symbols lined the aircraft, one being a picture of what Eddie thought could have been a crude jellyfish. He wondered if it could possibly be one of them UFOs. In which case he, Lord Nelson and Miss Ruby were rich. The bratty kids were shit outta luck. He just had to figure out a way to get in and claim it before Uncle Sam took over. He scanned the airship over, and found the lines framing the same hatch The Larger of The Two and Purple but Mighty had exited less than an hour before. They walked over to it and while Lord Nelson branched off on a new scent Eddie stopped just three feet away from where Purple but Mighty stood motionless, blended in almost perfectly with his surroundings. If it were daytime, Purple but Mighty would have undoubtedly been seen with the result of someone getting some vanquish therapy. As it were, the darkness, fog, and smoke gave him the ability to remain virtually undetected. Except for the damned dog if he got too near.

Eddie took notice of the wet soil at his feet and gently kicked, then picked up one of the empty cans. If a dead whale could take a piss, this would be what it smelled like, he thought. He prepared to give the spaceship a whack with the bat and hadn't noticed

Lord Nelson smell and become preoccupied with the slight piece of deer carcass over to the side. Lord Nelson was about to take a bite of the meat when he noticed a slight rustle in the bushes before him. Eddie stopped short of hitting the ship harder when he heard Lord Nelson growling at the bush. He walked over towards the dog.

“Whatcha got boy? If anyone’s behind that bush, you’d best come out now before Lord Nelson goes in after you or I give you a mouthful of this here hickory.”

Nothing.

“Last chance. Here in ‘Merica, a man’s got a right to protect himself, ain’t that right Lord Nelson? Last chance,” Lord Nelson growled an octave deeper with added gusto at hearing his name spoken. He had given shake downs to enough partridge hiding behind bushes to realize it was go time and trembled with anticipation.

“I warned ya. Go get ‘em Lord Nelson!”

Lord Nelson didn’t need to be told twice. With the blind ambition only a dog can have, he leaped into the bushes with the full intent of being superior in every way to what he expected was a partridge behind it. He quickly came face to face with First Officer The Larger of the Two and realized he had made a terrible mistake. This wasn’t just a partridge.

It may not have been the first time a dog and octopus squared off, but it was first for these two. Before Lord Nelson could properly plant his feet and get situated, he felt four arms wrap around him and roughly slam him on his back on the hard earth. The wind knocked out of him, another arm wrapped around his mouth, making it almost impossible to regain his breathe as he received a shot of ink to his face.

Eddie walked around the bush trying to get a clear view with his flashlight, but there was too much movement and the lighting was too dim. With the commotion going on behind the bushes, Purple but Mighty was able to ease the hatch of the spaceship open and go inside. He swam to the bridge and grabbed a phaser. He caught sight of the case of remaining cans of ale and grabbed two more on his way out.

Now that he was sufficiently armed, Purple but Mighty yelled for attention as he was leaving the ship. All Eddie Sweeney could hear was a clicking sound coming from behind him. He turned just in time to see a staggering two-foot tall octopus fire a green laser pulse at him. Then Eddie saw nothing. Unconscious, he fell backwards into the same bushes behind which The Larger of the Two and Lord Nelson were fighting, almost landing on them.

Lord Nelson tried to break away from his own fight to assist Eddie, but he so packaged up all he could do was squint and maintain his shallow breathing, facing his own mortality. As he continued to squirm he could hear the remaining people on the bus screaming.

Purple but Mighty sat on a rock and drank his beer as he watched his cohort finish taking care of business, then stunned Lord Nelson also with a laser pulse when he had a good shot.

The Larger of The Two glared at Purple but Mighty. "Thank god you took your time, old buddy. I was afraid you may rush and injure yourself or suffer the indignity of missing out on a delicious cold beverage. Of which I will ascertain you have a spare one for your first officer."

“But of course, old chap,” Purple but Mighty replied. He threw his comrade the other can. “I didn’t kill him, did I? Old fella’s heart can’t be too good. I got him right in the bread basket.”

The Larger of The Two looked down. “Alive for now, it seems. Leave him for the bear.”

“Bear? Christ, I’m starving. Let’s take him with us. Or even the big one in the bushes. Good eating on that.”

The two then turned their attention Eddie.

“We get caught taking something off this dump we’ll likely get shot. Jeepers Creepers, if they even figure we’ve been here in the first place we are likely to end up in quarantine again,” The Larger of the Two pointed out.

They then turned their attention to the muffled crying and shushing from the darkened bus. The shrieks from within it got even louder as they teetered their way over.

“Just one, we’ll have it gone, bones and all before we get back,” Purple but Mighty reiterated, but The Larger of the Two wouldn’t even acknowledge him.

On the bus, Miss Ruby was close to losing control of the kids, not to mention herself. The moment was surreal, and she thought half giddily to the pigs on her childhood farm when slaughter season came and it was them, not her, standing on the wrong side of the fence. She wondered if the pigs smelled the protective wooden fence, like she could smell the plastic seats around her. Miss Ruby then shook her head and

looked around the bus for any type of makeshift weapon and settled on commandeering a violin from the Harold kid which she held as a makeshift club. She had urged the kids to do the same, helping them prepare themselves similarly. One kid on the bus was having an especially loud meltdown and she had to shake him and threaten to throw him outside if he didn't shut up.

"Watch this, 'ole boy," Purple but Mighty said as he handed The Larger of the Two his phaser.

The kids huddled together behind Ruby as they watched the two small dark shapes outside the bus size it up. There was a clicking sound between them before the smaller one leaped and plastered itself along a window, its suction cups secreting a slime as it slowly explored its way along the glass and frame. Any restrained panic now gave way to absolute pandemonium as the creature (it reminded Miss Ruby of an Octopus but was hard to tell in the dark) started to ooze its way through an inch-wide gap in a window opening. Kids fled in every direction as it ebbed in like never ending playdough being squeezed through a child's fingers.

Miss Ruby ran at it and swung the violin with everything she had. The blob recoiled back after the initial strike it received, then continued oozing inward. Miss Ruby clubbed at it again and again, slowing the creature's pace with each strike. The violin clanged and whoomphed as it also struck the much harder window and roof, its pieces chipping off as she repeatedly swung.

The violin's strings cut through her hands, little droplets of blood flying everywhere. The advancement of the creature finally halted. Sensing possible victory,

Miss Ruby's frenzy increased, and she now screamed every swear word recessed in the back of her mind as she condemned this thing back to hell. The kids were so shocked at her language they momentarily forgot their current situation and looked at each other sheepishly. By now the violin was in tatters, the wide body splintered off and shards attached by the strings swinging everywhere.

The creature then began withdrawing from the window and a moment later Purple but Mighty fell to the ground. "I don't know what the heck her problem is, I was just having some fun is all," he rubbed his tender arms with other arms while glaring at the bus. "No wonder nobody wants to come to this garbage pile."

"Imagine," The Larger of The Two rolled his eyes. "C'mon, lets see if we can get the ship fired up," and they made their way back to the aircraft.

As suggested, the aircraft had indeed been flooded, and it started up without a kink. Now fully submerged in water in the small bridge, the droplets of Ruby's blood on Purple but Mighty had dissolved and made the water around them smell like an exotic restaurant.

The Larger of the Two's stomach growled too loud for Purple but Mighty to miss and he pushed the subject again.

"Just one, 'cap. The other's likely wont even know it's gone. That's how primitive they are, just unruly savages. And nobody at Cosmo will know. Nobody cares anyways. No harm, no foul."

The Larger of the Two didn't respond as he piloted the spaceship off the ground. Dirt fell from its body and wings as it straightened out.

From inside the bus, the kids jumped and cheered at the spaceship moving. Miss Ruby smiled, starting to take notice of the stinging in her bloodied hands, and wiped tears from her eyes. As soon as it were safe, she would go out and check on Eddie. She wasn't sure if she could figure out how to drive the bus or not, but it would be light soon enough, and if they had to walk out of these cursed mountains, so be it. Hope and life had been yanked away from them, then given back. Actually, taken back. They were warriors, all of them.

Miss Ruby laughed out loud, bending down and hugging the kids.

The spaceship was now fifteen feet off the ground and rotating sideways.

It was Harold that shouted next. "Miss Ruby, it's landing back on the ground!" Miss Ruby and the children in the bus watched in horror as the ship gently set itself back down.

In the bridge, the Larger of the Two had reversed the throttle and looked at his chief engineer. "Ok, just one. Ahh, Mother of Pearl. Let's get one each."

Purple but Mighty smiled. "I love you, 'ole boy. The ones in the big case are fresher."

