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**INTERSTELLAR AGENT:  The Space Spies**

*A Spy-Fi Adventure Novelette Series*

Series One – Book Two – Vol. 1

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**In the next eBook adventure of** ***INTERSTELLAR AGENT*…**

**INTERSTELLAR AGENT:**

**THE SPACE SPIES**

**Lacnar, the Interstellar Agent, is given an assignment by his immediate superior that he must go to the planet Earth to get the nations of Earth to help them unite and defend itself against the enemy –- the Ultra-Centaurians. They are a common threat to both Earth and the Centauris of Centauri-5…**

**For the moment, the Interstellar Agent is being held for questioning, at the Air Force Academy’s infirmary… Meanwhile, the Ultra-Centaurians are launching a SURPRISE INVASION –using Spy-Surrogates…**

**PREVIOUSLY…**

**From “RED SCARE”**

**\*\*\*\*\*\***

          Lacnar slowly awakened —groggily— from a brief, foggy-haze.  He did not completely open his eyes.  He kept them partially shut, so the others (his captors) would believe he was still unconscious.  While they were partially shut, he was able to move his eyes carefully around the room, without moving his head.  To the others, it would appear as if he were in R.E.M.-sleep; that his eyeballs were just moving around while “unconscious”.  He was able to see (from his perspective) that he was in some sort of sterile, hospital/infirmary-type environment.  He noticed he was lying in a relatively-comfortable elevated bed, covered in white sheets.  He could vaguely see an electronic monitor to the left of him (he deduced that it may be attached to **him**) to read his **bio-functions.** He realized that he was in no danger, as long as he remained still, and continued “appear” unconscious.

He saw the cocoa-brown-skinned female tech-sergeant outside the observation window, along with her captain supervisor.  They appeared to be discussing **him**.  He saw their lips moving intermittently and they would return their observations to **him**.  He laid still.  He closed his eyes completely, wishing he was back on his Mini-Cruiser, taking a long nap in his sleep-cocoon.

Outside of his room, in the Observation Area, the tech-sergeant and her captain were discussing Lacnar’s status...

“We took a blood sample from him”, stated the tech-sergeant. “We’re waiting for the results to come back for that.”

Her captain nodded understandingly.

“We’re also checking to see if his red skin-color is either some sort of **paint**, or **food coloring**.  That couldn’t **possibly** be his **real skin color**.”

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

Out in space, leaving Mars’ nearest moon, a Battle-Cruiser was approaching close to the vicinity of Earth.  It was cruising at a moderate speed, closing in the distance of millions of miles from Earth, in order not to be detected by possible sensors, monitors, and satellite-trackers.  It was massive.  It was large enough to equal the size of fourteen Earth-type aircraft carriers in length and width, from end to end.  It was able to get close enough to Earth —within a few million miles— without being visually detected, but close enough to launch any necessary probes they wish to launch for further investigation.

Inside the ship, there is a Command Center.  In the Command Center, in front of the observation viewer, there are two silhouetted figures, wearing black leathery military-dress uniforms.  The uniforms are reminiscent of the Earth-type Gestapo uniforms of the Nazis, although much more **intimidating**.  The figures were standing over a heavily-lighted, multi-colored control board —with lighted square buttons and small levers.

“We are in position, Star-field Marshal”, said one of the two.

Their accents were similar to a “Military-Dutch” annunciation.

“Very well”, responded the other.  “Launch the probes…one by one.  Make sure they reach all the designated targets on the planet.”

“Yes, immediately, Star-field Marshal.”

The launch was made —one by one, as ordered— of bell-shaped capsule-type probes, by high-speed rail-gun.  The size of one bell-capsule was just large enough to fit one man inside each.  The launches of each of the bell-caps were fast enough to break through all the layers of the Earth’s atmosphere without danger of “re-entry burn”.

They streaked across the dusk sky; one behind the other.  Landing and nearly crashing onto the beaches below, peppering different locations around the world.  Afterburner jets came out in spurts; automatically slowing their descents; only enough to prevent damage to the outside and inside of the craft.  One such bell-capsule crash-landed at a beachhead near Colorado Springs, with a significant “THUD”.

One moment later, the smoke was clearing.  The capsule, tilted slightly on its side, resembled a fallen giant acorn.  The flames were dying out.  The hatch of capsule ejected away with an explosive “FLASH-BANG”.  Smoke and sparks briefly erupted from the opening of the hatch.  Then a black-panted leg and black shoe-boot stepped out of the opening, followed by the rest of the figure.  The figure was dressed in a short, black Euro-styled trench coat, crossed with a shiny black rain-slicker.  It wore dark, wrap-around sunglasses.  It had a clean-shaven, moderately-tanned bald head.  It stood almost six and a half feet tall.

The figure appeared to be **humanoid** in form.  Its skin looked semi-smooth, even-toned, and flawless.  It seemed to have an **athletic build**.  It displayed a blank expression on its face.  It showed no emotion.  It cracked no smile or expression of anger.  It simply looked around, slowly, patiently surveying the area where he landed.

Shortly, another humanoid figure (same as the first) moved in along side of the first.  It also appeared to be surveying the area.  Then a third figure appeared, and then a fourth.  Each of them from their own separate bell-capsule; scattered about the beachhead.  They all turned to each other, as if for confirmation.  Then they turned away from each other simultaneously, as if “message received”.  They all walked in linear formation; then they fanned out, in unison, as if with a specific purpose —to find something ...or, some**-one.**

**1**

 Lacnar, lying in the sterile-white infirmary bed, used the slits of his eyes to view both the cocoa-brown-skinned tech-sergeant and the Air Force captain she was currently speaking to; presumably about Lacnar himself. He perceived as much. He made sure not to let them aware of his viewing them. He made believe that his was still unconscious; lying very, very still; not opening his eyes fully.

 Lacnar used his peripheral vision and allowed his eyes—without moving his head— to move around the inside of the infirmary room he was in. The room was isolated, off-white, appearing almost (but not quite) *antiseptic-looking*. He gathered that he was the only patient in the room. *“Why?”* he thought. He began to realize something suddenly… something familiar. He had experienced this situation before… on **another** world… on **another** **mission**. He almost started to shiver at the *mere feeling*. He wasn’t being kept there, simply because he was physically injured to unconsciousness; nor was he being kept there just for “routine observation”. He came to realize that he was being kept there ***for study***.

 This feeling and/or realization Lacnar had, returned horrifying memories of the few times he was captured; not just on previous missions. He was once a soldier, as well as an agent, of long ago during the Great Centauri-War, in the Centauri System. Here on Earth, combat-veterans of wars past would call it PTSD, or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Momentary flashbacks of traumatic events during combat would often change a person from one state into another. One can be changed from being meek and peaceful, into becoming a *killing machine* or just *abusive*. One could also be changed from being “happy-go-lucky”, into becoming *clinically-depressed*; even to the point of being *suicidal*. In Lacnar’s case, it helped to his advantage. In addition to his covert operations training and espionage training, he received “special-therapy” to help treat his “fight-or-flight” panic mentality. This enabled him to deal with this situation, calmly and coolly, in order to devise a plan of possible (or probable) escape. It often saved him each time in those events when he was captured. He was sure it would help save him this time once again. He remembered one major point in aiding his escape: *Always assess the current situation before making a move*. He reminded himself to do just that.

 Outside of the isolated ward-room, the rest of the conversation between the Air Force captain and the tech-sergeant continued…

 “Do you want me to keep an eye on him, Captain?” the tech-sergeant asked.

 “No, that’s okay”, responded the captain. “Have Lt. Michelle Mitchell come see me by the Security Surveillance Room, please. It’s very important, OK, Tech-Sergeant?”

 “As you wish, sir”, answered the female tech-sergeant. She then walked away, briefly looking back behind her, into the isolated infirmary room where Lacnar was “sleeping”. She then got onto the walkie-talkie, selected a channel, and spoke to her trusted cadet squad-leader to get her the two security-men the captain requested to carefully guard Lacnar’s room. She then continued to walk away, contacting the lieutenant as the captain requested. The captain remained by the room momentarily, although he kept out of sight.

 Inside Lacnar’s room, Lacnar covertly noticed that the tech-sergeant and the captain were nowhere to be seen. *“They must’ve decided to relax their guard on me”*, he thought. He decided this would his chance to relax *his* guard, as well. He looked around a little more freely around his room, to see if there was anything he missed. He noticed that there was a hand-held device placed on the pristine, white-sheeted bed, just within his reach. It was a remote control device to the flat-screen television screen, wall-mounted, high above, across from him, in the wall corner. He deduced that it controlled the TV in front of him. It resembled the same device he often used on his *own* *home planet*, the drop-ship that transported him, and inside his Mini-Cruiser which he landed on Earth, taken by the U.S. Air Force.

 He immediately reached for the remote and began operating it. It took him a brief moment to read the words and numbers on and underneath the push-buttons. To Lacnar, they looked like strange glyphs, only momentarily; the collar-translator device helped him transcribe what they were meaning. He was therefore able to operate it with immediate success. He pointed it at the TV in front of him. Universally, he understood that the large red button turned the TV on and off; he pressed it. Amazingly, the TV screen opened up for him. He relaxed and sighed with restrained delight. He studied the device control-face again seeing something else he recognized… the “up”-triangle and the “down”-triangle next to, and just underneath the “on/off”-button. Lacnar deduced that those triangle buttons must change the channels. He began pressing them, while giving himself a moment to find if it one of the channels featured a “news-of-the-day”.

 As Lacnar settled on the channel that sufficed him, he used his collar-translator device to help him understand the Earth language that was giving him the news of the area, of the nation, and around the world. It was fuzzy, at first, considering that the double-tazer shots given him could have damaged the circuits in his collar-device. Fortunately, for him, his collar-device was insulated from the attack, so it was still operational. Lacnar took notice of something that was ***above*** the TV; something that did not belong; something else that was also familiar to him. His eyes seemed to “zero-in” on a small, yet noticeable dark, circular lens. He once called it, years ago: “the one-eyed robot-head”. He recognized it as the all-too-familiar surveillance spy camera. If he wanted to continue to pretend that he was unconscious, his cover was now already **blown**.

 *“No matter where I go…”*  Lacnar thought, *“…nothing changes”*.

**2**

 The cocoa-brown-skinned female tech-sergeant walked in to the Academy’s Security and Surveillance Room. She asked one of her “watchers” watching the many surveillance view-screens about the progress of the “patient” (which was also code-speak for “prisoner” or “detainee”).

 Another female (African-American) was also in the surveillance room. She was Lieutenant Michelle Mitchell, the one the captain asked to see, and the tech-sergeant was supposed to contact.

 “Any change yet?” asked the tech-sergeant.

 “Oh, yeah, TSgt”, responded the surveillance security airman. “He’s stirring, alright. He appears to be watching TV in the room. Oh, he noticed the camera in the room, above the TV. It didn’t take ‘m too long ta spot it. Judging from his fighting style in the underground hangar…”.

The airman referred to the previous footage displayed from another camera, recording the fight in the hangar.

”I’d say …**Special Ops**, maybe… probably **ex-military**, fer sure.”

 “Let’s not jump to any conclusions, Sgt. Sikes”, responded Lt. Mitchell. “He could just be some kinda conspiracy-nut-military-wanna-be. Keep watching him. Lord knows we don’t need any more crazies like *that* running around… Thank goodness he didn’t come armed with an assault rifle.”

The tech-sergeant turned to Lt. Mitchell: “Oh, Lt. Mitchell, Capt. Logan wants to see you right away. He wants you to meet him here.”

 “Well, TSgt. Hamilton”, answered Lt. Mitchell. “You can contact Capt. Logan and let him know I’m already here…ready and waiting for him.” Lt. Mitchell quickly turned to Sgt. Sikes: “I sense a joke or a wise-crack coming from you, Sergeant. Don’t you dare”, she smiled slightly, pointing toward him as though he were a misbehaving child.

 Sgt. Sikes replied with a short laugh, “Ma’am, yes, ma’am. I wasn’t gonna say *anything*.” He still maintained eye-contact with his monitor screens. Lt. Mitchell and TSgt. Hamilton left the room to go outside the door to wait for the captain, as the sergeant and airman security-cam watcher were left to their work.

\*\*\*\*\*

 Inside the isolated infirmary room, Lacnar was using the remote to change the channels on the TV, checking similarities on the different cable and local news stations, regarding recent events. The news reports all covered the same story — or variations thereof. Still wearing the collar, he was able to transpose then translate what was being said and what was being lettered on-screen. The story they all seemed to be covering was “the falling capsules from the sky”. They all initially dismissed the event as “a mass of falling space debris”. However, they were unable to explain the fact that they were all capsule-modules. They did not seem to have an “immediate” answer for it as to why or, what they really were.

 Then there came a similar story, as they referred to it: *“…This happened just hours after a flying object soared through the sky...”.* They cut to footage of amateur video of Lacnar’s Mini-Cruiser coming into the Earth’s atmosphere, with smoke-trails coming from behind it, at a steep-inclined speed. *“…Experts, as of yet, have not determined whether these two events are* ***linked*** *or* ***related.*** *All we know so far is that* ***both*** *are* ***strange coincidences****”*.

 There was even some footage of the “space debris” captured by NASA, as they were checking and monitoring for other anomalies. This was unexpected. On CNN INTERNATIONAL news, there was footage shot from everywhere. Some footage of the falling capsule-modules was shown from Turkey, from France, from the United Kingdom, and even from Russia. As if on cue, they had cut to a timeless on-the-spot interview by a reporter – on camera – to the Russian prime-minister about whether or not he believed in U.F.O’s, of which he replied, “Yes, I do”.

 Lacnar, in response to what he had seen, replied under his breath: “Oh, no. It has started already. I have to get out of here”. He threw down the remote on top of the bed and quickly threw back the covers away from his recently-covered legs. He noticed that he was only wearing his issued light-grey, boxer-brief skivvies, matching tee, and nothing else. He started frantically looking around the room for his clothes, which he could not see. He then rushed to, what appeared to be, a closet and slid open the door; it was bare; with just a few hangers hanging on the clothing-rod. He quickly scanned the floor of the closet *…nothing!* He stood dumb-founded, searching his brain, trying to determine how he got where he is, and that “they” (whoever “they” are) must have taken away his clothes – except for what he currently has on. “Where do you think you’re going, there, ‘soldier’?” boomed a familiar, authoritative female voice.

**3**

 The booming, familiar, authoritative voice was of the female tech-sergeant who helped capture Lacnar. Lacnar spurred a short pivot toward that familiar voice in alerted-response. Lacnar’s eyes narrowed on her, studying her, ready to translate everything she would say at any time. He noticed another female figure in the room. It was Lt. Mitchell, standing directly behind her head of security department, TSgt. Hamilton. Lt. Mitchell saw his reaction and recognized it as potentially dangerous.

 “TSgt. Hamilton”, said Lt. Mitchell, “that’s all for now. You can go. I’ll be fine.”

 “Are you sure, ma’am?” asked TSgt. Hamilton with concern.

 “Really, you can keep an eye on our cadets and see how they’re doing?”

 “Yes, ma’am”.

TSgt. Hamilton left right away. Lt. Mitchell then continued with the patient, Lacnar.

 “I’m Air Force Lieutenant Michelle Mitchell”, said the lieutenant with her arms cradled into each other, confidently. “And you are…?” She waited patiently, hoping for an immediate response from her captive.

 “I…am…Lacnar. Where…are…my *clothes*?” his voice was translated into her language, enabled by his collar-device.

 “Just…**Lacnar**? Nothing **else**?”

 “Yes… *just Lacnar*. Where…are…*my clothes?* “

 “We’ve taken them.”

 “Why?”

 “For *analysis*.”

 “There just…*clothes*.”

 “We’re analyzing them anyway.”

Lacnar remained silent and looked into space for a moment.

 “What for, may I ask?”

 “That is yet to be determined”, she fired back.

After a moment, Lacnar replied, “I see you choose your answers carefully. I would expect no less.”

 After realizing he was getting nowhere, Lacnar went back to his infirmary bed. He plopped on to the bed, sitting up, and pulled the sheets back over his exposed legs and feet. He propped the pillows up behind his back and under the back of his head, rested one arm behind the pillow behind his head while resting the other arm at his side above the sheets. He got comfortable and stared past her across the room. Lt. Mitchell calmly and confidently walked up to his bed and stood at the foot of the bed, with her arms folded —while eyeing *him*.

 “So…Lieutenant Michelle Mitchell…what do we do **now?**” Lacnar asked rhetorically.

**4**

 Elsewhere on Earth, those “spy-surrogates” that came out of the capsule-modules on the beaches near Colorado Springs, Colorado, somehow managed to enter the outskirts of the city. They were walking —as if they had plenty of energy— at a steady pace. They were not tired at all. They travelled using railways; public transport; taxicabs; whatever way possible. Always, they were able to maintain their upright posture and almost “military-disciplined” manner; never slouching; never looking at anyone.

 They seemed to have an **inexhaustible** amount of funds. Using a small, generically-marked card in their possession (about the approximate size and dimensions of a credit card), they were able to purchase railway tickets; obtain public transportation passes; run up credit in transport-cars —without question from anyone. All of this occurred at different parts of the metro area. Was this a **multi-expedition**? Could it be a **manhunt**? Or, was it *an* ***invasion****?*

 This sort of “mass-transit” was happening —not only in the metro area; not only in the state of Colorado; not only in major parts of the country; but also in different major parts of the world. In particular, the “spy-surrogates” were in capital cities and key parts of the world, simultaneously. Some of them travelled by airlines —utilizing the same exact type of “credit” card; sitting in First Class or Business Class— so as not to be disturbed by anyone. What was disturbing, in this case, was that when a flight attendant asked one of them if they wanted anything, they would simply turn to them calmly (still wearing what appears to be dark, wrap-around glasses) and either shook their head “no”, or waved them off. When the flight attendant would give any of them an instruction —such as: fastening their seatbelt, for instance, they would calmly turn to them and nod, showing acknowledgement; never uttering a word or a grunt.

 A few of them arrived in New York City. A few arrived in Munich and Berlin, Germany. A few arrived in Leningrad, Russia, and near its capitol. They all each did something quite similar— they checked into slightly out-of-the-way motels or inns, using similar “credit” cards, arriving with no luggage or baggage of any kind. The check-in clerks who check them in would think it was strange; however, as long as they were “paying customers”, they could care *less*.

 Each of them would check into their respective rooms; in some cases, escorted by a bell person. They would be let in by electronic key-cards. The bell person would non-chalantly expect a tip, and the “surrogate” would tell them (through an automated voice from the “surrogate’s” light-flashing-activated collar): “Your gratuity is on the credit card”. And the bell person would (although chillingly) accept his word, give him his key-card, and walk away. Each of the “surrogates” would go into their rooms, shut the door; look around the room with its comfortable bed, flat-screen television (state-of-the-art), and all its amenities. Instead of sitting on the bed, or in the chair(s) to relax, each of them would go into their walk-in closets, close the door, turn and face the exit door, and stand there quietly and immobile.

\*\*\*\*\*\*

 The next mid-morning in Washington, D.C., a shiny, black, Lincoln Town Car —Signature-Series— arrived at the gate of the Pentagon. A security guard, at the gate, came from inside his guard-post to greet the driver. The occupant inside the back of the Town Car, the window was instantly rolled down with a push of a console-button by the driver. The occupant was one of the mysterious-looking, dark-glasses-wearing, bald-headed “surrogates” who arrived the day before. He was expressionless, just as the others, but looked on as the guard was doing his job.

 The guard checked the I.D. wallet of the driver. The guard confirmed that the driver was an authorized driver of dignitaries, White House personnel, Pentagon employees, personnel and liaisons. The guard went to the rear door of the Town Car to the “surrogate” occupant to check his identification. Without a word, the “surrogate” held up a similar I.D. wallet showing his “identity” and classification as “top secret liaison to the Pentagon”. The guard immediately checked them both in, waved them off and admitted them through the gate.

**5**

 Back in the isolated Infirmary Quarters of the Air Force Academy, Lacnar was on his back, partially sitting upright, with his arm behind his head to help prop it up comfortably; staring between the TV and window to the outside —looking at neither; just staring into space, and thinking about getting back his clothes. Suddenly, as though his “silent prayers” have been answered, the door swung open right on cue. Lt. Michelle Mitchell walked in, holding a set of freshly-folded clothes, a pair of thick, gray knit-wool socks, and black, shiny, patent-leather dress-shoes with thick rubber soles. She approached the foot of his bed and moderately “plopped” them down at the edge of the bed. She paused and stared at him, waiting for him to properly acknowledge her.

 “A-hem!” Lt. Mitchell grunted audibly, still waiting for a response from Lacnar.

 Lacnar surprised her by turning to her, with frowned, narrowed eyes —as if annoyed. He knew she was there. He simply pretended not to care, nor initially notice-to-acknowledge.

 “Are you...*waiting* for something, Lieutenant?” Lacnar inquired snidely.

 “I brought you some clothes”, responded Lt. Mitchell.

 Lacnar quickly made his way over to the set of clothes placed at the end of the bed, and began inspecting them.

 “I had your other clothes measured so we could get the right fit for your new clothes”, continued Lt. Mitchell. Meanwhile, Lacnar continued to fruitlessly inspect them once again; then having a perplexed look on his face. “I hope that they’d fit you alright”, she added.

 Lacnar held two of the three pieces of clothing in both his hands, looking —from being perplexed to being angrily-annoyed. The sky-grey mock-turtle-neck he was holding scrunched in one hand; a pair of air force-blue slacks was scrunched in the other. He looked at her, speechless for a moment, awaiting an explanation that he would hope to accept.

 “What is THIS?” asked Lacnar angrily. “WHERE ARE *MY* clothes? These are not mine. Where are mine? What have you done with them? My *cumber-belt*. My **bag?** **Where are they?**” He angrily threw down the items.

 “As I told you before”, responded Lt. Mitchell, “they’re being analyzed.”

 “**For what?**” boomed Lacnar.

 Lt. Mitchell sighed, “We’re checking the *material* from which your outfit is…constructed. We’re checking for *contaminants*. We’re trying to find out who you are working for …and who put you up to wearing that ***ridiculous costume***. We want to find out if you are a terrorist working for some organization.”

 Lacnar angrily huffed and puffed —annoyed and frustrated with both her implications and her interference.

 “We’re also checking that skin and blood sample we took from you, while you were unconscious”, continued Lt. Mitchell. Just as she mentioned the “skin sample”, Lacnar frantically checked his arms, his wrists, his fingers, looking for any nicks or scrapes or sudden skin irritations. He found one. It was on his forearm. There was a pink-like discoloration spot where two to three top layers of his skin were taken from close to his wrist. He also noticed that there was an area, a few inches further down his arm, was a small, circular mark with prick-mark in the middle. The raised spot was feeling rather irritating …like a cut, scrape, or a scratch. His hand instinctively reached over to gently rub near the irritated area —as if it were a bad itch that could get infected if he scratched it.

 Lacnar looked at the female lieutenant with contempt. He could not say a word at the moment. He immediately became defensive…

 “Why did you do that?”

 “It was the only way we could be sure”, Lt. Mitchell responded. “To find out and verify who you are.”

 “You could have just *asked*. I would have *told* you.”

 “Told me what? That you’re a *terrorist?* An *extremist*, maybe? Or, maybe one of those *crazy right-wing militia-men*…hmm?”

 “I barely understand what that means. But, I assure you, I am none of those…things, Lieutenant.”

 “Then, who are you?” fired back Lt. Mitchell. “Why are you here, then?”

 After a brief moment of silence, he sighed. He realized he had no choice but to tell her who he is, what he is, and his mission…

 “As I told you before…my name is Lacnar. And I am an **interstellar agent** from the planet **Centauri-5**.”

 Lt. Michelle Mitchell sighed, folded her arms, and looked away briefly with disbelief.

 Lacnar continued, “And this is a matter of…how you say… ‘National Security’?”

**6**

 Inside the area, at the Academy, where they conduct forensic-styled research, the pathology examiner was checking the different artifacts obtained from the alien called Lacnar. Master-Sergeant Deborah Nichele (who prefers to be mostly hands-on) noted each of the items in her electronic notepad. She had picked an appropriately lengthy table to lay out all his obtained belongings. His cummerbund-belt with all his secret tools was neatly laid out and outstretched, exposing its secret pockets and tools. His small, black backpack; his injection-device; his earbud; his wrist-locator-device; his gloves; his partially-cut-open bodysuit; his boots.

She listed, what appeared to be one pen-light (which was actually a pocket laser), among an array of other things. A few seconds later Lt. Michelle Mitchell walked in, checking on the master-sergeant’s progress.

 “Were you able to examine the items we got from our…intruder?” asked Lt. Mitchell.

 Still looking back and forth between the items and her e-notepad, the master-sergeant soon turned around to see Lt. Mitchell face-to-face…

 “We’re making some kinda headway, anyway”, the master-sergeant answered.

 “Well, what do you have?”

 The master-sergeant glanced back at the layout on the table, resting a hand onto the table next to the items and the e-notepad, and holding up some of the items, as she would introduce them, to the lieutenant…

 “So far…we have what looks like a small, *pen-light*… a cummerbund *‘utility-belt’* that would make **‘Batman’** proud… some kind of ‘wrist **GPS**’ device… an *air-pressured hypodermic* with some *yellow fluid* in it. Could be an unknown ‘pain-killer’ or stimulant he injects himself with… and a cigarette case of some kind. He’s definitely a smoker… although I’m not familiar with this brand of **black** cigarettes, at all…”

 “Did you find anything out about the suit he was wearing?”

 “You mean like…’what material is it made out of’?”

 “Yeah.”

 “Well, *it’s rubbery*…but it’s not *rubber*.”

 “Well, what is it then, Master-Sergeant?”

 “I did have a chance to micro-examine it, aside from just touching it and looking at it with the naked eye… and it looks like some sort of ‘unknown’ synthetic-blend similar to the properties of Mylar, Kevlar, and a porous, breathable material we haven’t been able to figure out yet.”

 She picked up the e-notepad and showed Lt. Mitchell the results she transferred from the molecular analyzer computer…

 “We examined it under the molecular analyzer and it came up…**’unknown fiber materials’**.”

 “’Unknown’?” parroted Lt. Mitchell.

 “Mmm-hmm…” nodded the master-sergeant. “Unknown.”

Master-Sergeant Nichele set down the tablet, picked up the pen-light device, and held it up in front of Lt. Michelle Mitchell…

 “Oh…and here’s something ***else*** that’s interesting, Lieutenant”, continued Master-Sergeant Nichele. “Feast yer eyes on ***this***.” She pointed the pen-light at a far-away metal plate, which was worn, beaten, scratched, and had a few charred holes in its face. Lt. Mitchell faithfully stood directly-adjacent behind the master-sergeant, attentively awaiting her demonstration. MS Nichele carefully eyed over her object she was holding and pointing at the “target” (as though it were a magic wand).

 “Let’s see now. How does this work again? Oh yes.” She immediately twisted the front of the pen-light (oh so slightly) to her right, with her other hand.

They both could hear a faint clicking-sound, as if twisting a small dial. Then, abruptly, came a loud whine and bright, phosphorous, luminous, continuous beam of light erupted from the tip of the pen-light. The pen-light instantly felt warm and vibrant in her hands —as if it were alive and wanted to escape from her grip. She instinctively recoiled as though it were an automatic pistol weapon that gave a “kick” when fired. The beam traveled straight to its target…the metal plate, like a guided missile. It took approximately a second and a half before it instantly exploded onto the plate, searing a bright, yellow-orange hole into and through the plate before dissipating. After the burning hole cooled, it resembled the similar holes left in areas around and near it. Their natural response was suppressed shock-and-awe, mixed with a solemn moment of silence.

It took them both a brief moment to gather themselves before continuing with the analysis. The master-sergeant placed the pen-light laser quickly into its appropriate pouch of the cummerbund utility-belt. She immediately stared at it, as if it suddenly became a live, dangerous animal —ready to bite her hand if she placed it anywhere in front of it again. The lieutenant looked at the same object the master-sergeant was looking at; then looked at the master-sergeant. Neither of them said a word. Lt. Mitchell decided to break the seemingly-awkward silence.

“Say, Master-Sergeant”, Lt. Mitchell laughed nervously. “It’s not a **snake**… it won’t **bite** ‘cha.”

“It sure felt alive, though”, responded the master-sergeant. She took a breath and exhaled. “Either this guy is an **elaborate terrorist-genius**… or… an **elaborate super-spy**.”

“I would say, closer to the *‘super-spy’* part”, concurred Lt. Mitchell.

**7**

Lacnar sat up on the bed, fully-dressed, resigned to the apparent fact that he must stay in the infirmary room for further observation. He was also resigned to the fact (or possibility) that he may never be able to wear the clothes that he came in again, and must —at least temporarily— wear the clothes he was just given. He was watching the news channels once more, looking for any “update” on the “falling orbs” out of the sky.

Just as he was changing channels on the remote he was holding, he caught another international news channel that was breaking news. At the same time, he was noticeably annoyed by coincidentally noticing the same robotic camera lens, staring at him like the proverbial watchdog, as he is watching the television screen. The breaking news he caught was odd. There was a bald, olive-skinned man wearing dark glasses that nearly wrapped around his head, with a black, bug-like appearance. He was walking down the Pentagon corridor halls, dressed in an all-black suit, black form-fitting gloves, black polished shoes, and a black, beltless trenchcoat. He may have been a Secret Service agent, or some other government agent, accompanied by colonels and generals and chiefs-of-staff, working at the Pentagon.

Lacnar noticed, as the bald-man (with his entourage) stopped at a hallway checkpoint to show his credentials, that the bald-man was carrying an all-black, shiny (but not glossy) metallic briefcase in what appeared to be his left hand, as he showed his “credentials” with the other. The breaking news showed that elsewhere, the same identical-looking, olive-skinned bald-man was seen in Berlin, at their equivalent of a German Pentagon, getting out of a black **Mercedes-Benz** *S-Class Brabus* stretch-automobile; he was also carrying an identical black metallic briefcase, as he showed his “credentials”. The same was true at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia —walking with the State Secretary, et al.

Lacnar started to see a pattern. He also recognized something grossly familiar about these “men”; although he could not recall at the moment. He changed the channel once again to another international news station, which contained the same breaking news. The news hounds seemed to notice a pattern as well. The analysts and pundits were giving their observatory verbal remarks that it could be a pattern, and that “something BIG was probably happening”, but they did not know *what* at this time. Lacnar followed the “UP”-arrow on the TV remote, coincidentally landing on a local Colorado news channel. It showed two olive-skinned bald-men, dressed and looking identically the same as the others —carrying the same, black metallic briefcases, getting out of a black Lincoln Town Car, arriving in Colorado Springs, at one of the major government contract facilities, showing their Security Clearance “credentials”.

Lacnar was immediately disturbed —and greatly. His eyes widened with angry fear. What he saw “sparked” his memory as to who (and what) these “men” where. A frightening thought raced through his mind, but he thought it impossible.

*“The Ultra-Centaurians must know that I’m here on Earth. It’s already started.”*

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Lt. Michelle Mitchell entered the Surveillance Room. She was at the ready —semi-relaxed— where the staff-sergeant and female tech-sergeant were monitoring the audio and video equipment, watching Lacnar, for them to give them updated information on his latest “activities”, if any.

“How’s our ‘patient’ doin’, guys?” asked Lt. Mitchell upon walking in.

“He’s stewin’, brewin’, an’ watchin’ TV, ma’am”, responded the female tech-sergeant.

“Yep”, responded the staff-sergeant in concurrence, acknowledging the lieutenant without turning his eyes away from the monitor-screens. “He’s *glued to the tube*, ma’am.”

“Lieutenant, ma’am, you may want to see this”. The female tech-sergeant respectfully got the lieutenant’s attention, reacting the immediate “breaking news” on their overhead flat-screen TV.

The lieutenant, the staff-sergeant, and the tech-sergeant all gathered around the flatscreen TV to get a good view of the latest breaking news. It was the same news that Lacnar was looking at on his TV in the Infirmary Room…“the falling orbs”, as the electronic media was calling it.

“This doesn’t have anything to do with our *guest*, does it?” asked the tech-sergeant, eyeing at the staff-sergeant, the lieutenant, and the TV news reports.

“The two incidents *couldn’t possibly* be related, tech-sergeant”, responded Lt. Mitchell. Then after a beat, the lieutenant suddenly became enlightened. “However, it couldn’t hurt to step-up our security alert status.”

She turned to the staff-sergeant to give an order…

“Staff-sergeant…put the entire academy personnel on ‘elevated alert’ —Condition: ‘Yellow’.”

“Shouldn’t we notify the captain, first, ma’am?” asked the staff-sergeant respectfully.

“Absolutely”, responded Lt. Mitchell, sarcastically. “Notify the captain that Lt. Michelle Mitchell is putting the academy on ‘elevated alert’ status. Let’s bother Capt. Renard about every little thing we have to do. Do you wanna notify the captain every time you wanna take a PISS, *TOO?* Let ME worry about notifying the captain, staff-sergeant.” She reissued the order: “CONDITION: ‘YELLOW’.”

“Yes, ma’am… *Condition: ‘Yellow’*.” The staff-sergeant immediately began going through the listed procedures for CONDITION: YELLOW, as ordered.

“Tech-sergeant…”, called the lieutenant, getting the tech-sergeant’s attention. The tech-sergeant perked-up in affirmed response. The lieutenant continued…

“Get your best security cadets on ready-status. We don’t know what’s *about to happen*, but we’ll need to be on the ready when it ***does***.”

“Yes, ma’am”, the tech-sergeant answered promptly.

The tech-sergeant immediately put on her cap (also known as a “cover”), checked her pistol and available ammo-cartridges, and exited the surveillance room; off to assemble her cadets. On one of camera-views —without alerting any of them— the camera showing the private infirmary-room where Lacnar resides (or kept), would show as being “un-occupied”. Lt. Mitchell continued watching the “breaking news” about the falling acorn-like orbs. She began thinking about what her next move would be. The staff-sergeant had just finished the final, listed procedure for elevating the alert-level.

Lt. Mitchell looked away from the TV as soon as a commercial appeared. She turned her attention to the multi-camera view screen and on the private infirmary-room camera, zeroing-in on and panning the camera view with the directional-control toggles. She noticed something was odd —or off.