

Excerpt for Project at Booklife

Raid At Fawneg

A strange man opened the gate to the front yard.

Little Natha lived in a housing tract on Seenan, an earth-like planet of star system Seenak. He was ten years old and looked out the bay window.

"Mom, come quick. There's a shaggy-haired blond man walking across our lawn."

Mother looked. The man was attired in a tattered purple cloak and hood, the clothing style of the most elite branch of the Rieceh, the akare'. The blond man would pronounce it a-kar-eh rie-eh-say. She knew it from a briefing given to Space Defense families. She ran to the front door, locked it and shouted to Natha. "Run next door and tell Marco's mother to call Pro- Tech-Serv. Then find a place to hide."

Fawneg is the largest moon of Hafmaas, the gas giant in the star system Seenak. On Fawneg, the Seenan Space Defense had established a southern base. It was about to be blown up.

At the main missile base, a junior officer, Staffal Voson, Staffal being roughly equivalent to captain, sat alone in the command bunker and stared along the plane of the ecliptic. A moment later, his display showed a fleet of unscheduled ships approaching Hafmaas. The screen flickered and went blank.

When the screen came back on it showed his living room. Staffal Voson stood up, the blood drained from his face. His wife and two of his three kids sat against the living room wall. His wife was naked. Her face contorted in pain. Ensnared around her, a knotted synth rope tightened at the hands of a scraggly-haired blond man. His clothing told Staffal Voson his family was hostage to the Rieceh akare'.

Staffal Voston's wife held a brave calm as every move of the knots scraped blood from her skin.