

The Yar'Zanti Invasion 6: Rifts

By

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"This has been an utter screw up from start to finish!" Groused fleet admiral Gala, her green colored helmet hid the look of disgust on her three eyed face. "It was you're people who screwed up and caused the ark to crash. It was also you're people who did not properly round up the humans. Now, they're being hunted by the very same animals that came from our home planet leaving less for us!" Each strident point she made, the officer aimed a finger at fleet admiral Zenk who had been silently listening.

"Now admiral, I think there's enough blame to go around." Admonished fleet admiral Migirk sitting across from Gala. Like the other admirals, she wore her green armor proudly. Her plates were nicely shined and her patches were neatly applied.

"That's being too generous," Gala sarcastically replied. "If her teams had taken care of the ark and not lily-gagged about worrying over the humans, then, things would have never gotten this far!"

"I think that's a bit unfair admiral," finally spoke up Zenk. Her voice had a steady tone. "If I remember right, the ark was in your zone. You also have the same people as I have. People who are just as qualified to monitor and maintain that relic of a ship."

"Don't try shifting the blame on me," angrily retorted Gala.

Zenk just shrugged a few of her shoulders. "I'm not shifting the blame, I'm just stating the facts. You're people, not mine, were tasked with towing it along. The council had expected your people to put it into a parking orbit. They were supposed to leave it there until we had time to figure out what was inside."

"Agreed," muttered another green armored female sitting at the head of the table. "However, I feel this conversation about assigning blame is counterproductive."

"Yes grand admiral Zinnair," the other officers replied in near unison.

"What we should be worried about now, is how the newly introduced species are effecting this world. Plus, their impact

on the ecology system? Finally, how they are effecting the free humans," evenly stated Zinnair.

"Our satellites are reporting the avian species seem to be moving the fastest. They've been spotted near the southern regions of south America, Africa, and even in Asia. The larger species are having a slower time spreading out. Our cities in the old American south have had to take measures to protect themselves and their human slaves. Many have reported that ion fencing doesn't seem effective enough against a few of the bigger beasts." Zenk emotionlessly reported as she read from a computer pad.

"I feel at this point, we should crack down on the use of humans right now before we lose more," added Gala in a hopeful tone.

"Not again," someone in the back muttered.

"Your point is once more noted," evenly responded Zinnair.

"No maam, I think the time to discuss it is now," pressed Gala.

"I think we've discussed it more than enough," added Zenk. "We're not going to harvest the humans while they're still alive. They should at least be able to live out their lives, even as slaves, before they're reborn."

"If we had euthanized them and wiped their memories, then we would not be in the situation we are in now. Instead, you chose to coddle them. To use them as slave labor. Heck, you even tolerate a few running free. Now, with those monsters from yar running about, our supply of fresh humans may be in jeopardy," insisted Gala.

"Your points are again noted," dismissively responded the grand admiral.

"No, we need to deal with this now! Not tomorrow, not next month, we have to do something now." Gala was becoming more and more animated. Before long, she was standing with two of her hands pressing against the table.

"Sit down," pushed back Zenk.

"No, I will not sit down. This situation has gone on far too long. You all are too weak to do what is needed! To control the humans the way they need to be. To conquer and terraform this planet to our needs. Finally, to instill discipline within the ranks," nearly yelled Gala.

"That is enough," Zinnair ordered Gala.

"No maam! If this inept body won't do what's needed then I will on my own," spat Gala.

"You've gone too far admiral," heatedly yelled Zenk.

"No I have not! It's time for all those who agree with me to leave," loudly proclaimed Gala. She turned around and strode from the room. A few of the green armors, both sitting and standing in the background, got up and left with her. The other remaining officers watched aghast as the fleet admiral rebelled against the council.

"This is not good," whispered Zenk. "Not good for any of us let alone the humans."

"I agree fleet admiral," interjected Zinnair. "Send out orders to stop them and anyone who sides with her. Everyone start making sure you're shoring up your forces. Also, if you even suspect there's a pocket of humans near your base get them now."

"Agreed," the others responded. Zenk quietly hoped she could get a hold of as many humans as well. She did not want them turned into thralls or slaves.

Less than thirty minutes after fleet admiral Gala left the Yar'Zanti ruling council meeting.

Deep in the heart of Kentucky sat what had been the United States army base known as Fort Knox. The base had been both the repository of America's gold and also home to numerous armored tank divisions. Yet, when the Yar'Zanti conquered earth, Fort Knox was one of the main targets they destroyed. They overwhelmed and smashed all attempts to fight back.

Close to two years later found Fort Knox abandoned and overgrown. Beautifully manicured lawns and training fields were choked full of weeds and unkempt grass. Every building, both stone and wood, were burnt out husks. Tanks and other armed vehicles littered the grounds, each showed signs that their armor was easily defeated by a Yar'Zanti cannon bolt. While scattered across the old battle field, were the wrecks of combat helicopters which had tried to stand up to the aliens.

In the heart of the instillation sat the gold deposit building. It was designed to be impregnable. Yet, its ruins

showed the Yar'Zanti had little trouble destroying the structure.

Outside the destroyed base landed four wide boxy Yar'Zanti transports. Ramps on the vehicles opened up and out streamed numerous yellow armored infantry soldiers. All in all, over two hundred came out and lined up in squads of fifty. Behind them hovered two mech transports. Each opened up their six bottom doors and twelve mechs were softly lowered to the ground. Their pilots began to move the humanoid machines around to stand behind the soldiers.

"Capture team to over-watch," called out the group's commander. The voice sounded over one male Yar'Zanti's mech radio. Ado calmly waited and listened to commander Niki communicate with command.

"Go ahead Capture team," responded a female Yar'Zanti.

"Do you have a video of where the humans are," Niki calmly responded.

"I'm focusing the closest satellite on your location now. Switching to deep thermal. Yes maam, I see a large group deep within the ruins of the depository."

"How deep?"

"I see them down over fifty feet below ground. I think they're in one of the fortified chambers."

"Can't we just get one of the bombers to drop a few bunker busters on them," eagerly suggested a female mech pilot.

"No, command wants them alive for labor," the commander softly derided.

"Aw... it would be much easier just to collect their bodies then to take them alive. They'd be reborn much faster that way."

"No, the captain wants them for slaves. Alright, everyone line up and move out. Mechs first, troops supporting," Niki ordered the group. With that, the mechs turned and lined up. Afterward, they carefully began to stride past the waiting troops.

Within his cockpit, Ado reached out his feet and grasped his mech's locomotion pedals. Lightly pulling the right pedal caused his machine to turn and face the right. Then when he pressed both forward, his machine started walking forward. Meanwhile, he grabbed a joystick with a lower arm and bent it to

the right. Doing that caused his mech's torso to twist in that direction.

Ado peered through his canopy where he aimed his mech. At the same time, he used his rear eye to gaze at the screens behind him. They showed a view from his rear camera.

Twisting back to center, Ado peered at the devastated rusting tanks surrounding him. They caused him to remember his old human life as Brad Miller. Yet his martial Yar'Zanti training caused Ado to focus on his task. He peered over to a screen to his left and saw a real time thermal video of the area. He could see his capture group in relation to the humans. Then he noticed what seemed like a small warm dot off to his left.

Ado activated his machine's own thermal camera and banked his mech's torso to the left. Within the thermal, he tried to peer at where he saw the dot. Twenty mech steps later he got close enough that he could see the dot was a human trying to huddle behind a tank. The person appeared to be holding a rifle in their hands.

"Commander, I have a contact at three-zero-zero relative. They appear to be a human scout," Ado reported.

"Got it ensign. Lieutenant, send a few soldiers to take care of them. I don't care how."

"Yes commander," reported the officer in charge of the infantry.

Up in his cockpit, Ado watched six soldiers break off from the main group. They quickly crossed the ground towards where the scout hid. As soon as the human saw they had been seen, they tried to run away. Yet, the Yar'Zanti chased after the scout. One stopped and took aim with his rifle. He aimed and shot the human in the back. Yet instead of a killing bolt, the soldier fired off a stun bolt. That caused the human scout to fall unconscious.

One of the soldiers crossed over and reached down to pick the human up. The female Yar'Zanti easily lifted the limp body and slung it over her upper shoulder. Then she carried him back to a waiting transport. There two more soldiers took the sleeping person and put them inside.

With that, the group continued to make its way towards where the humans were hiding. Peering at the over-watch video, Ado figured the group thought the fortified room they hid in

would protect them. Yet, his experience told him that they could easily blast through the concrete surrounding them.

"Group two, I want you to encircle around the back and make sure none escape that way. Group one, I want you with me. We'll make the initial push," Niki called out.

The ensign was part of group two and promptly followed his group's leader. The pilot of that mech, a lieutenant Hordak, had once been Ado's brother back when they were human. Yet between the two, Hordak had been a Yar'Zanti for four more years than Ado.

Unlike his once brother, Ado had been human when the Yar'Zanti conquered earth. He had seen firsthand their barbarity and was even a slave at one point. Later, he was part of an insurgent cell which tried to fight back against the aliens before Brad was slaughtered.

Now as the Yar'Zanti, Ado saw things from the other side. He, like the others, felt that earth was still his home planet. Not human but a Yar'Zanti home world.

With that background, Ado felt no hatred towards the humans. He distinctly remembered the trials he went through. Thus, he was fine with treating them well while they were still human. In his mind, Ado knew that sooner or later they would be reborn as Yar'Zanti.

However, Hordak represented the other group of Yar'Zanti. Despite having once been a human, the lieutenant only saw the invasion from the alien side. Plus, he had lived with them many years prior to the invasion.

The Yar'Zanti who thought like Hordak had a much more colder disposition towards the humans. They cared little for them and wanted to speed up those people's transition to Yar'Zanti. This group was even willing to break their culture's taboo of murdering them. It was ok to kill a human during battle or if they were breaking a Yar'Zanti's order. However, if the human was doing nothing wrong and following their instructions, it was forbidden to kill them. Especially if you wanted to rebirth them into another Yar'Zanti.

Being a part of the platoon for over four months now, Ado had seen them each casually murdering humans. He had heard his fellow pilots discuss how the humans were nothing but scum polluting what was theirs. At one point, it sounded to him as if they saw their human memories as Yar'Zanti memories.

While Ado followed Hordak to their assigned position, he pondered commander Niki. She was like all Yar'Zanti in that she had been a human before being reborn. During his short time with the one-oh-first Dark Ranger scouting platoon, he was able to quietly learn a little bit about her past.

What he learned was that out of all the members of the Dark Rangers, Niki had been a Yar'Zanti the longest. That close to thirty years ago she had been a house wife living somewhere in the south. The few times Ado heard her speak English, he noted a deep southern accent. Plus, by some of the things she mentioned, he figured that she had lived as a human for at least fifty years.

Once reborn into the matriarchal Yar'Zanti society, Niki felt the power and authority she never had as a human. That, as a human, she had been beaten by her husband who himself had been a prominent member of the Klu Klux Klan. Yet once a Yar'Zanti, she worked hard to ignore that past. By the time Ado joined her platoon, she barely had any regard for humans. She only cared enough to make sure their bodies were intact enough to be reborn.

"Everyone fan out. Search the ground with thermal to make sure there's no back entrances," Hordak ordered them.

Ado moved his mech off to the right and began searching the ground. Yet all his sensors showed was solid earth for over sixty feet. With that, he looked up and kept an eye on the land around him.

Serving beside his brother showed Ado that Hordak truly followed Niki. Since being reborn, Hordak had only served in the Dark Rangers. While there, he soaked in everything she said. Everyone in the platoon had done the same. The only reason Ado silently disagreed with that was that he was the only one who had been human recently.

"If you see anyone escape, I don't care what command says, kill them," Hordak added after a moment. Ado heard the others eagerly agree with him.

"Commencing the round up," commander Niki called out. Ado started searching the land for escapees. He silently hoped none would come this way and be murdered.

On one of his rear screens, Ado used his tail to set it to the combat feed coming from the other group. While he continually scanned the land in front of him with his main eyes,

Ado occasionally peeked at the screen with his rear eye. He could see that they were using a sudden overwhelming attack. Any who raised their weapons against them was rapidly shot. He even noted that the soldiers were being lazy with their shots killing many non-combatants.

Then abruptly someone in his group fired a shot. Ado peered over to see that they were taking out a small cluster of humans trying to escape. Each was skillfully blasted by a narrow beam from the machine's light guns.

After thirty hectic minutes, commander Niki called the operation a success. He listened as she reported that they had capture eighty living humans and had another thirty dead. Ado moved his mech back to the main point and stood guard over the newly captured humans with a few soldiers. From his cockpit he could see their horrified faces.

"If you try to escape, we will not hesitate to shoot you. Stay where you are and you will live," Ado warned the humans over his machine's exterior speakers. It felt good to speak English again. He did not get to do that all too often as part of his platoon. Especially as commander Niki disliked them using human languages.

Niki called for a harvester to come and clean up the bodies. Within a short bit, an oblong ship slowly descended from the air and hovered over the battle field. Ado watched as every human they killed was teleported into the vessel.

Each body, Ado knew, would be preserved and examined. Then once the ship arrived at the main processing center, the bodies would be placed within gestation tubes. There the processing system would first repair and rebuild their broken bodies. Afterward, they would be slowly transformed into Yar'Zanti. Just like Ado and all the others in his platoon had undergone.

After a short bit, a few extra waiting transports moved close to the captives. Then under Ado's gaze, the soldiers forced every human up and loaded onto the transport. Afterward, Ado casually moved his mech away from the spot and back towards the others.

"Commander Niki, it's time," announced an authoritative female voice over their open tactical frequency.

"Aye captain," Niki eagerly responded. "You heard it girls, do it!"

Ado was a bit confused. He had not heard of anything special happening after their capture operation. Yet, he began to notice something startling. A few of his platoon mechs turned towards his machine, one of them was Hordak's.

"Ensign Ado, I'm sorry but you cannot come with us," Hordak dispassionately informed his once human brother. "You've got too weak of a heart to follow us."

"Huh," Ado uncertainly questioned. Abruptly, alarms began sounding inside his cockpit. Each warned of an incoming attack.

"Goodbye," Hordak evenly responded before he open fired.

Ado just had a second to respond. Yet before he could do anything, not only had Hordak started shooting, but a few other mechs behind him joined in. Suddenly his weapons were blown off and his main power plant was destroyed. Without thinking, Ado reached above and below his seat then pulled cords with both sets of arms. Suddenly, the top of his mech blew off and his ejection seat rocketed out with him along for the ride.

Ado soared high up into the air away from his destroyed mech. Yet as he flew, he worried that the others were going to use him for target practice. Once he reached the top of his ejection arc, a huge orange parachute deployed. Quickly thinking, Ado reached down to his belt and pulled out his hand gun. He aimed downward and waited for the others to shoot at him.

Instead of continuing to go after Ado, the others turned their focus on the soldiers. From high up in the air, he could see that most of the foot soldiers were siding with Niki. The few who weren't were running away as fast as they could due to the overwhelming numbers siding with her.

Ado soon grasped how the breeze was pushing him away. At first he still thought Niki's soldiers might go after him. Yet, with the rebel group controlling the rest of the mechs, Ado grasped his was the only one destroyed.

By the time Ado reached the ground, the mech transports had picked up the rebelling Dark Rangers. At the same time, the rebel soldiers hurried into their own transports and followed behind. Afterword, there was only just Ado and a small handful of Yar'Zanti left standing there.

"What're we going to do," asked a female enlisted soldier. The others stood behind her peering at him. Ado was the only officer among them.

"I'm not sure gunnery sergeant," wearily responded Ado. "Do any of you have something we can use to get in contact with command?"

"Can we trust command sir," hesitantly inquired a male corporal.

"Good question. But I can't believe that everyone would side with that rebellious bunch," Ado added.

"Agreed," the gunnery sergeant responded.

"Think there's anything salvageable in what's left of your mech sir," asked another male.

"Don't know, but let's look," Ado responded leading the group away. Everyone had their weapons ready in case the rebels came back to attack at any moment. After fifteen minutes, they arrived back at the smoking ruins of Ado's machine. He and a few others climbed inside it. Yet the cockpit was pretty burnt out. The only thing they could find that still worked was the thing's emergency transponder.

"We've got a choice, activate the transponder and risk attracting the rebels or hike the two hundred miles to the nearest base. A place that could be controlled by the rebels," Ado summed up to the group.

"Either way we're exposed to attack. Plus, if that base is held by the traitors, who knows where else we could go," chipped in the gunnery sergeant.

"I say we take our chances with the transponder," chimed in another female lance corporal.

The others agreed and Ado climbed back into the ruined cockpit. He dug through a few panels and uncovered the emergency beacon. The thing had its own power supply and could last weeks on its own. With a few twists of wires and screws he was able to get it working. After that, he briefly dug through the burnt interior trying to find anything salvageable. He hit pay dirt when he uncovered a metal box of simple rations.

However peering at the group and the amount of those bland tasteless bars, he knew they would not last long. Ado decided to send two pairs into the uncovered base and find anything edible inside. At the same time, he and a female corporal grabbed everyone's canteens. He planned to fill them at a stream they saw thirty minutes away. Finally, Ado left a few soldiers with the gunnery sergeant. They would guard the beacon and look for rescuers.

After being stranded for six hours, the group was rescued by a transport piloted by a loyal Yar'Zanti. As they flew away, the pilot informed them that over a third of the Yar'Zanti forces had rebelled and joined fleet admiral Gala. After that, they proclaimed themselves the Clan and promised to take as many of the humans as they could.

Later back in Chicago, Ado was able to get in contact with Victae, the Yar'Zanti who used to be his human wife. She was just as dismayed at the situation as he was. They found that their daughter Darnada was still loyal to the command. Yet their older son, Aziz, had sided the rebels.

What had started out as a unified force was rapidly splitting apart. Whole Yar'Zanti bases switched alliances to Gala. Some of the mother ships up in space also changed sides and then began attacking the remaining loyal Yar'Zanti. In the end a civil war suddenly erupted for control over earth and the remaining humans.