ADVENTURES OF THE GALAXY RANGERS

"The Ax"
by Dan Fiorella

2nd draft

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EXT. MINING TOWN

Deserted mining complex on the planet Bardo. It is a barren and lifeless landscape. Two LONE FIGURES leave the town.

ROY(O.S.)
(to the tune of "Clementine")
Oh my darlin', oh my darlin', oh my darlin' X2-9, you went down and purged forever, blessed sorrow, X2-9...

EXT. MINE SHAFT ENTRANCE

OLD ROY, grizzled prospector, walks along, carrying his hi-tech version of a divining rod/metal detector. It gives off a BEEPING SOUND, which INTENSIFIES as they approach the mine. Roy's mechanical beast of burden, BURR-0 5000, follows, carrying their supplies. They enter the mine.

ROY
(still singing)
...In my program, on my hard disc,
Waitin' to come up on line,
Came a blackout, which did knock out,
My darlin' X2-9

INT. MINE

Roy touches the back of Burr-0's head at its eyes light up like head lights, lighting their way, as they follow the BEEPING.

ROY
Lookee here, Burr-0, this dang stick's 'bout ready to jump outta my hands, I declare! Shoot yeah!

They come to a wall of the mine. Roy puts down his rod, then removes a rock disintegrater ray gun from the Burr-0's pack.

ROY(CONT)
This is gonna be something big, I know it! I can feel it in my bones, and you know my bones never lie. You don't mine these asteroids for as long as I have and not have your bones learn a thing or two, no siree...

Burr-0 BRAYS in agreement. Roys aims the gun at the wall and begins dissolving away the rock.

ROY(CONT)
(singing)
It was portable and user friendly,
and its diodes were just fine,
'til a hacker went and whacked'er
Oh, my darlin' X-2...

Suddenly, Roy stops and stares in disbelief at what he's uncovered. It is the strange, large alien robot, the Ax.

ROY(CONT)
I'll be a son of a sidewinder! What in tarnation is that?

Burr-0 starts to go toward it. Roy stops it.

ROY(CONT)
No, no, Burr-0, don't go getting too close to it. I don't like the looks of that.

Burr-0 approaches the Ax again.

ROY(CONT)
I said get back, Burr-0! Wait, I know! Come on, let's get to camp. We can call the Rangers. They'll know what to do.

Roy starts out. The Burr-0 stays behind, and approaches the Ax, sniffing its foot. Its nose touches a button on the heel of the Ax's left foot. Suddenly, we hear the HUM of the robot ACTIVATING.

ROY(O.S.)
Burr-0, dang you! Get your aluminum hide out here now!

The Burr-0 is startled and runs out of the mine.

END PROLOUGE

ACT I

EXT. SPACE

A Ranger Cruiser glides through space, battle ready.

INT. CRUISER

Doc and Goosman are at the controls.

DOC
I don't like it. It's too quiet.

GOOSE
Shut up.

EXT. SPACE

Suddenly, a Slaver Battle Cruiser comes into sight.

INT. CRUISER

GOOSE
Crusier, ten o'clock, Walter! Take action now!

Doc fires a laser cannon.

EXT. SPACE

Ranger's laser hits the ship and it dissolves away. Just as suddenly, another Slaver Cruiser appears right in front of them.

INT. CRUISER

DOC
Piece of cake.

GOOSE
You're not through yet, Doc. Dead ahead! Evasive action!

DOC
Turbo-thruster, don't fail me now!

He frantically hits the controls.

EXT. SPACE

The ships collide, but the Ranger Cruiser merely passes through the image of the Slaver Ship.

INT. CRUISER

DOC
Whoops.

GOOSE
Way to go, Doctor.
(he turns around)
How was that test, Q-Ball?

Q-BALL is operating a new control panel installed on the bridge.

Q-BALL
Terrific! Exactly what I was looking for. Let's report back.

GOOSE
Take her home, Doc. Think you can manage that?

INT. BETA STATION BRIEFING ROOM

All the Rangers are there, with Q-Ball

ZOZO
Why are we making these floating pictures of Slaver ships?

Q-BALL
These 3-D holgrams are the cornerstone of our new pilot training program.

ZACHERY
A new twist on the old flight simulators.

Q-BALL
We can program it to create any situation our pilots might encounter. And we don't have to endanger our spacecrafts. Get the picture? Ha-ha, get the picture! That's a good one.

GOOSE
It seems to me that we should be using our time to develop new weapons to fight them with instead of playing "let's pretend."

WALDO
On the contrary, Ranger Goosman. The holographic projector will be a valuable aid in our fight against the Queen.

NIKO
Seems like we can prepare ourselves against anything with this.

GOOSE
You can simulate from here to Jupiter and back but there's no way you'll know how to react to a situation until you're really under the gun. And that's the name of that tune.

DOC
I for one welcome any gadget which will help keep my fanny out of danger.

Q-BALL
Gadget?

GOOSE
Of course you would.

The communicator screen flashes on. COMMANDER WALSH is on. The Rangers gather.

WALSH
Good-day, Rangers.

ZACH
Commander Walsh, is there an assignment?

WALSH
Not exactly. We received a radio report from the old mining station on Bardo.

A teleprinter produces a copy of a report.

WALDO
Bardo, in the Pie-san system, no?

WALSH
That's the one. The report was addressed to you Niko.

Niko takes the report.

NIKO
Me, sir?

WALSH
It's from a prospector named Roy McIntyre. A friend of your's?

NIKO
Old Roy! We met once on an archeological dig a while back. We were excavating the same planet. He's a cute old codger.

WALSH
Seems he's unearthed a strange alien robot embedded in the planet's bedrock.

NIKO
(reading)
Seven foot tall? Miles beneath the surface. In solid rock?

WALDO
How curious.

ZOZO
Are you sure it isn't a potato of some sort?

WALDO
A seven foot potato in solid rock?

ZOZO
It could be a very tough potato.

WALSH
There's nothing else pending, so you may follow it up. Over and out.

NIKO
Thank you, sir.

Screen goes blank.

NIKO(CONT)
Who wants to go? Ancient robot. How about you, Doc?

DOC
Me?

GOOSE
Hey, Doc's supposed to go with me on maneuvers tonight.

DOC
I'd love to go, Niko.

NIKO
Fine. Let's get charged up and head out.

They start to leave.

DOC
Is Bardo very far away?

NIKO
We'll be there in the blink of an eye.

DOC
I dunno, I have very fast eyelids.

INT. CHARGING TOWER

Generic charge scene of Niko and Doc.

EXT. SPACE

Ranger Cruiser glides through space, approaching Bardo.

INT. CRUISER

Niko is at the helm. Doc is manning the communicator, by the holographic projector.

NIKO
I have visual. We're approaching Bardo.

DOC
Gotcha, I mean, affirmative. I'll see if I can raise us a welcome wagon.
(on communicator)
Hello, Bardo. This is the Galaxy Ranger Cruiser calling Bardo. Anyone read me?

ROY(O.S.)
Shoot, yeah, I read you loud and clear. Get on down here. Land her back outside town. I got some grub on, we can chow down and mosey on over to the mines.

DOC
(baffled)
Right. Sounds good.

EXT. MINING TOWN

Niko and Doc make their way down the deserted main street with caution.

DOC
Not too eerie, huh?

NIKO
It is, but there's more...

She picks up a rock and holds it tight.

NIKO(CONT)
I sense a great despair. It's too vague to make out, though.

A BRAY is HEARD. They look up. Burr-0 comes out and starts nuzzling Doc.

DOC
What the...?

NIKO
It's Burr-0 5000!

Roy steps out from a shack.

ROY
Niko, over here!

They go over.

NIKO
Roy, how are you?

ROY
Gettin' along fine, dearie. I'm sure glad you could come.

NIKO
It was very hard for me to resist.

DOC
Less so for me.

NIKO
Roy, this is my partner, Ranger Walter Hartford.

ROY
Please to meet, Wally. Let's have some eats, then we'll go look at it.

Roy heads in. The Burr-O nozzles Doc.

DOC
Don't call me Wally.

ROY
Okay, Wally.

EXT. MINE ENTRANCE

They approach the mine. Niko carries a toolbox. Burr-O keeps nuzzling Doc.

DOC
Why are you here, Roy? If the mining company pulled out, what could be left?

ROY
Oh, sure, there ain't enough here to keep some big cosmic mining concern going, but a lone miner like me can scratch out a decent lining. This way.

They enter mine

INT. MINE SHAFT.

Burr-O's lights are on, as they walk along the shaft. Niko checks the readings of a meter she carries. Doc examines the walls.

NIKO
The bedrock is at least 15 million years old down here.

DOC
Maybe, but over this way it's volcanic rock.

They reach the spot, but the Ax is gone.

ROY
It's gone!

DOC
What do you mean, it's gone?

ROY
It was right here.

NIKO
Roy, this isn't some of your monkey-shines, is it?

DOC
Or some of your moonshines?

Burr-O sniffs the vacant rock and starts BRAYING. A P.O.V. shot as they are watched from behind some rocks. Niko approaches the hole in the wall.

NIKO
What's this?

Niko removes some human bones from the spot.

NIKO(CONT)
Human bones. I'm getting very strong vibes. Danger. Sadness. Destruction. A very long time ago. It'll take quite a boost to get a clear picture.

DOC
Don't let us keep you.

Niko touches her badge. She goes into a trance like state.

NIKO
Beware, the Ax.

Niko pulls her hand from the badge.

DOC
The Ax?

NIKO
Did I say that?

ROY
Wasn't me.

Burr-O nuzzles up to Doc, as Doc tries to push it off.

DOC
Go on, Nike.

She touches her badge again.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD

TWO GREAT ARMIES clash.

NIKO(O.S.)
The last great battle. The Run-dos clash with the Vaspirs for ultimate control of Bardo.

A SOLDIER speaks out, as we hear Niko say:

SOLDIER/NIKO
All is lost! Where is our King to lead the battle?

ROY(O.S.)
Where is he?

DOC(O.S.)
Hush up.

NIKO(O.S.)
The King of the Run-dos lays ill, at death's door. All grieve but one...

INT. KING'S CHAMBER

The dying KING lays in bed. His DOCTORS gather, helplessly watching. The King's Evil Twin looks on.

NIKO(O.S.)
The King's Evil Twin Brother, the Prince. The doctors can do nothing more for the King. His Twin waits to seize the crown.

MAD SCIENTIST enters with his hunchback ASSISTANT.

NIKO(O.S.)
The king summons his top scientist to make one final, impossible attempt to preserve his monarchy.

INT. LAB

Scientist is at work building the Ax.

NIKO
They will built an invinceble robot and transplant their beloved King's brain into it.

INT. MINE SHAFT.

They speak as they are being watched.

ROY
This here robot is a king?

DOC
Great. So how'd it wind up here? And where is it now?

The Ax steps out of the shadows.

AX
I am here.

ROY
Holy micro chips!

Burr-O starts BRAYING.

AX
Who are you? Where am I?

DOC
You're beneath the planet Bardo

AX
This is my kingdom? What happened to it?

DOC
You've been away awhile.

ROY
Yeah, a couple of million years or so.

AX
And my people? My subjects?

NIKO
Long gone, I'm afraid.

AX
Ha! I outlived them all! I am truely immortal. Who are you? Where do you come from?

DOC
We're from earth.

AX
Earth? Are there many people there?

NIKO
Billions.

AX
Ripe for the taking.

DOC
Come again?

AX
By what means did you travel here?

ROY
Shoot, I got my ship just over the ridge outside.

AX
I will be needing it.

NIKO
Why?

AX
So I can go to your planet and conquer it.

ROY
I don't think they'll let you do that, will they?

DOC
I wouldn't think so.

AX
Oh, I think they will. You see, I'm invincible.

DOC
Well, maybe you are and maybe you ain't.

Doc pulls his gun and fires. The Ax throws up a force field, deflecting the shots.

ROY
Oh-oh, Wally, he is.

The Ax shoots a laser blast from his hand, scattering the group.

DOC
Let's get out of here!

ROY
Burr-O, douse 'em!

Burr-O's lights go off. The group runs for the entrance. The Ax starts glowing, lighting up the mine. Its chest opens to reveal a rocket launcher. It fires after them.

NIKO
Look out!

The rocket strikes the wall. The mine starts to cave in.

ROY
It's a cave-in. Hurry, the mine's coming down.

Rocks come tumbling on all, filling up the mine.

Fade Out.

End Act I

ACT II

EXT. MINE ENTRANCE

Niko, Doc, Roy and Burr-0 make it out just as the mine's entrance seals itself shut. Niko still has the bone.

ROY
Everybody okay?

NIKO
Fine.

DOC
Okay.

Burr-0 BRAYS.

DOC
Beloved king, my eye. Are you sure you didn't leave something out of that story of yours, Niko?

Niko holds the bone up and touches her badge.

INT. DARK CORRIDOR

The Evil Twin has the Hunchback Assistant corner and holds a light saber to his throat.

NIKO(O.S.)
The Evil Twin has other plans for the King and the Ax. Seeing his chance to rule, he plans to have his brain implanted in the robot.

INT. LAB

Scientist, in surgical gown, at work. Hunchback Assistant enters with a brain in a jar.

NIKO(O.S.)
The switch is made.

EXT. KING'S COURT

The Ax steps into the room. The King's Aides shudder.

NIKO(O.S.)
Behold, the Ax!

EXT. BATTLEFIELDS.

The Ax assumes command of the Run-do armies. Using his built-in flame-thrower and energy bolts, he drives the Vaspirs off. In hand to hand combat, one of Ax's hands converts into a ax and begins swinging wildly, wiping out the enemy.

NIKO(O.S.)
The Ax leads the Run-do to total victory, and soon they completly wipe out the Vaspirs.

INT. KING'S COURT

The Ax is being waited on hand and foot by fearful SERVANTS. One Servant spills some drink on the Ax. The Ax zaps him out of existance.

NIKO(O.S.)
The Ax rules with a iron fist. His thirst for power, unquenchable.

INT. LAB

The Hunchback speaks to the Scientist. The Scientist is shocked. He slaps the Hunchback.

NIKO(O.S.)
The Scientist learns of the brain switch. He realizes what kind of monster he has created, and begins to figure a way to stop the Ax.

EXT. MINE ENTRANCE

A HIGH-PITCHED WHINE is HEARD coming from the mine. Niko comes out of her trance.

NIKO
What's that noise?

DOC
I think we should put some distance between us and here.

They run off, behind some rocks. A giant drill bit pokes through the mines entrance. The Ax bursts through, and the drill retracts back into its chest.

NIKO
How many attachments does it have?

DOC
It's like some hi-tech Swiss army knife.

The Ax starts walking off toward the ridge.

ROY
It's head for my ship!

NIKO
We have to stop it before it gets away!

ROY
It ain't going anywhere, honey. I got my ship booby-trapped so it don't get rustled.

EXT. RIDGE

The Rangers spy on the Ax as it enters Roy's beat-up second hand space ship. Suddenly, the ship explodes.

ROY
Hot diggity! See that,Wally?

DOC
Don't call me Wally.

The smoke clears, the Ax is standing in the crater of the explosion.

NIKO
It's still in one piece!

ROY
Time to haul out the heavy artillery. Burr-O, come here.

Roy takes out his neutron bazooka, an old-fashion piece of hi-tech weaponry.

DOC
Where'd you get that antique from, Roy?

ROY
My grandpappy give me this here neutron bazooka. A man's gotta protect his claim.

DOC
How many "D" batteries does it use?

ROY
It'll do the job, I reckon.

Through the sites, Roy sees the Ax turn to face them. He pulls the trigger. Sparks fly, smoke spews forth, it fires and the recoil throws Roy back. He scores a direct hit. The smoke clears and the Ax is still there. It shoots an energy bolt at them. They duck.

NIKO
We better get back to the ship and radio for some help.

ROY
My camp's closer. We can radio from there.

NIKO
Let's hurry.

They scurry off.

EXT. MINING TOWN

The Ax reaches the outskirts of town. It blasts an abandoned building.

AX
Surrender yourselves to me. I will show mercy.

His arm becomes a buzz saw and he starts destroying another building.

INT. ROY'S CAMP SHACK

Roy is at the radio, trying to get it to work. Burr-O keeps nuzzling up to Doc, and he keeps pushing it away.

ROY
Breaker, breaker, anyone out there read me?

NIKO
Do you want me to give it a try?

ROY
No, you got to know how to handle this this piece of equipment.

Roy starts hitting the top of the radio with a boot. Suddenly, the radio comes to life.

ROY(CONT)
There you go. Breaker, breaker, anyone out there read me?

EXT. MINING TOWN

The Ax suddenly stops wrecking the building. A small radar antenna comes out of its head.

AX
Ah-ha, there you are.

INT. ROY'S SHACK

ROY
(on radio)
Anybody out there?

The radio starts playing static.

ROY(O.S.)
Dag-nabit! I'm getting some kind of interference.

NIKO
What kind of interference?

The Burr-O BRAYS.

AX(O.S.)
You have earned the Ax's wrath.

Doc goes to the door to see.

DOC
It's homing in on our radio signals!

NIKO
Do you have a back way out?

ROY
Wouldn't be caught dead without one.

They head to the back, Roy gathers up some of his belongings. The Ax comes bursting through the front of the building.

AX
You shall suffer the consequences!

Doc rushes Roy out.

DOC
Get a move on, man.

ROY
I gotta get my stuff, Wally!

Roy leaves. Doc stops to fire a shot, it bounces off the Ax. The Ax responds by launching a rocket at him. The rocket blows away the rear of the building. Doc's leg is trapped by some of the rubble. The Ax comes at him.

EXT. BACK ALLEY

Niko, Roy and Burr-O are at the corner. She sees Doc. She touches her badge, and psychically lifts Doc out of the rubble. The Ax watches a moment.

AX
So you have a few tricks up your sleeve, eh?

The Ax fires a flaming arrow at Doc. Niko closes her eyes and concentrates. The arrow is stopped in mid-air, inches from Doc. Doc's whisked away, the arrow drops to the ground. Doc is floated into the back of another building. Niko, Roy and Burr-0 run in after him.

INT. BUILDING

They run over to Doc.

NIKO
Walter, are you all right?

DOC
Yeah, thanks for the lift.

Roy goes to the window to watch the Ax.

EXT. ALLEY

The Ax reveals a rocket pack on its back and lifts off, hovering over the town.

INT. BUILDING

ROY
It's started an air search for us.

DOC
I know computers and robots, and he has one rotten attitude. We have to stop it.

NIKO
How?

ROY
I wonder how that scientist fella made out.

NIKO
What scientist fella?

ROY
From your story. The guy what built the Ax in the first place.

DOC
Yeah. I'm sure he didn't get the Ax into that lava pit by asking it nicely.

Niko takes the bone out of Burr-0's pack and touches her badge.

INT. DARK CORRIDOR

HOODED MEN huddle, making plans.

NIKO(O.S.)
Plans are made to dispose of the false monarch.

INT. KING'S COURT

A MEELY-LOOKING AID speaks to the Ax.

NIKO(O.S.)
The Ax uncovers the plot and seeks revenge against all.

The Ax storms out of the courtroom, blasting everything to bits.

EXT. CITY

The Ax wanders the city, destroying everything in sight, with its many tools of destruction.

EXT. LAVA PITS

Wide area of land with many open lava pits. The Ax is chasing several men through the pits. The Scientist leaps out from behind some rocks & holds onto the Ax's left leg. The Ax is de-activated in mid-step and they tumble over into a lava pit.

INT. BUILDING

DOC
But how did he do it?

AX(O.S.)
Give yourselves up now. It will be a painless death, I promise.

EXT. STREET

The Ax unleashes balls of fire at another building. It explodes.

INT. BUILDING

DOC
Niko, look again. This thing must have some Achille's heel.

NIKO
I'll try.

Niko touches her badge, bone in hand.

EXT. LAVA PITS

The Scientist leaps out, grabbing hold of the Ax's leg. Suddenly, the Ax is deactivated in mid-step and they tumble into a lava pit.

The scene is replayed, only we are closer to the Scientist as he grabs hold of the Ax's leg, deactivates it and falls over.

The scene is replayed again, closer still, so that we see the Scientist's hand hitting the button on the Ax's heel.

NIKO(O.S.)
That's it, its heel. A cut off button is on its left heel.

INT. BUILDING

Niko's hand is off her badge.

ROY
So we hit the button and that's it?

DOC
Sure. Any volunteers?

ROY
I could distract it while you sneak up on it, Wally.

DOC
Neither one of us would last long enough to do any good. And don't call me Wally.

NIKO
So what we need is a decoy that can't get hurt.

DOC
Exactly! And I know who! Come on!

They run out the back.

EXT. MINING TOWN

The Ax riddles a store front with a machine gun.

AX
It feels great to be out and around again!

Roy steps out from around a corner.

ROY
Howdy, Ax!

The Ax turns to see him.

AX
Very good, you decided to give up.

ROY
About that bazooka blast, nothing personal,you understand.

AX
Of course.

The Ax fires a laser blast at Roy. But the blast passes right through him, striking the ground behind him.

ROY
Missed.

INT. CRUISER

Niko is beside Doc at the controls of the holographic projector. Roy is standing in front of a video camera hooked into the projector. A monitor above them shows the Ax in town.

NIKO
Now he's mad.

DOC
This should keep it busy awhile. Niko, with this control here, you can keep moving Roy's hologram around. I'm going out there and see if I can stop it.

ROY
You loco, Wally?

DOC
Maybe while it's distracted, I can override some of its circuits. But to do anything, I have to get close to it. It's too strong to do anything from this distance.

NIKO
Be careful, Walter.

ROY
Go get'em, Wally.

Doc picks up Niko's bone for a second.

DOC
I hope I make out better than our thin friend here.

Doc leaves. While Niko and Roy are busy, Burr-0 slips out and follows.

EXT. MAIN STREET

The Ax blasts Roy's image with lasers, then rockets. It gets close and uses its axe on it. Roy's image steps back some. The Ax shoots its flamethrower at it. Meanwhile, Doc is slowly working his way through the back alleys, to get behind the Ax. He starts out behind it, creeping up slowly. As he gets a few yards behind it, Roy's image suddenly vanishes.

INT. CRUISER

The holographic projector is shorting out.

NIKO
No, no, not now!

EXT. MAIN STREET

The Ax starts to look around. It sees Doc behind it.

DOC
Oh-oh.

The ax fires a laser. Doc dodges it. Then Burr-0 comes out and runs up behind the Ax. It turns and kicks the Ax with its hind legs. The Ax turns again to see Burr-0. It slaps the Burr-0 and sends it flying into pieces.

DOC
Burr-0!

Doc runs and leaps toward the Ax. Before the Ax can react, Doc rolls into its legs and hits the button. The Ax grind to a halt. Niko and Roy come running down the street.

NIKO
Doc, Doc, are you okay?

DOC
A little shaky, but okay. What happened?

NIKO
It just blew out. I'm so sorry.

ROY
Where's Burr-0? He slipped out in all the excitement.

DOC
I'm sorry Roy. The Ax got him. But he saved my life.

Doc points over to where the Burr-0 landed. Roy goes over and kneels beside it.

DOC
Shane was right. You really don't know how you'll act until the time comes.

NIKO
Shane would have been impressed

DOC
Yeah. I must have been out of my mind to try a stupid stunt like that.

Doc looks at the Ax.

NIKO
Well, you got the job done.

DOC
No quite.

Doc touches his badge. The Ax's rocket pack comes out. It flames on, and lifts off into space.

NIKO
Doc, what did you do?

DOC
If my calculations are correct, I've just launched the Ax into the heart of this planet's sun. That should dull the Ax a bit.

NIKO
Good, because I know you can't bury this hachet, that's for sure.

DOC
Leave the humor to me, honey.

EXT. CRUISER

Night is starting to fall. Doc and Niko are waiting outside the ship.

DOC
Where's Roy? If he wants a lift home he had better get a move on.

NIKO
He said he had something to do first.

Roy appears, with Burr-0 following.

ROY
Howdy, Rangers!

NIKO
Roy, you fixed him!

ROY
Couldn't very well leave him out there, littering up the place.

NIKO
You have everything? We're all set to lift off.

ROY
Yupe.

DOC
Roy, I just want you to know, I'm in your debt because of what Burr-0 did out there. If you ever need anything, just give me a hollar.

ROY
Well, I'm plum glad to hear you say that, Wally. You seem to be a whiz with machines. I was wondering if you might do me a favor?

DOC
Sure, what is it?

ROY
Hey, Burr-0, speak.

Burr-0 goes to bray, but a CAT'S MEOW is HEARD.

ROY(CONT)
I can't seem to get all the bugs out.

DOC
Okay, I'll do it. On one condition.

ROY
Anything.

DOC
Don't call me Wally.

They shake hands.

ROY
You got it, Wally.

Niko giggles, Burr-0 PURRS and Doc grimaces as they board the ship.

THE END