

From the Collected Works of Ebu Tahir ibn-i Hilfan

Translated by Xavier Chiltean of the Dreadnought Valor

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Fehrat 12, 3221

As I am writing on this page, I am stranded on the planet Keltr'an; thanks to the combined efforts of Tlpenan scavengers and a giant Sk'rak. I have never seen a creature this menacing with such voracity; its teeth are big enough to chew through a dozen handens with ease. A couple of soldiers from the Dreadnought Crespin and I took shelter in an old bunker that is made to last a couple of thermonuclear terraforming explosives. Though that doesn't mean we are safe, I will sleep a bit better, knowing that there are tons of Gresk steel between me and that Sk'rak.

Our ship blindly followed a distress beacon, deceitfully sent by the Tlpenan cruiser and torn to shreds as soon as it entered the atmosphere. The Tlpenan didn't care about the living; they just wanted to salvage whatever metal we have. Majority of our crew of 2600 people died before they could scream.

The one thing that blew up the Tlpenan's plan, along with their ship, was the Sk'rak. The irony is that it only wanted the flesh and blood in the wreckage. Tlpenan's were just a side dish.

I don't know how long we'll be here or if we can survive this. I'll continue to write as long as my mind holds up, but even now I hear the shriek of the Sk'rak in my head.

The night is young, and the beast is restless.

Fehrat 14, 3221

For two days we scavenged whatever supplies we could find and brought together. We lost five soldiers, five friends to the deadly poison of a Lyneen, hiding beneath the shallow sand. The deceiver is quickly dealt with but I wished it was a Y'ktek, instead of a Lyneen so we could eat the remains. But it seems Eelean, the Goddess of Luck has left us to our fate.

It seems like the beast is keeping us alive for a feast in the unknown future. It knows we are trapped and it's guarding the only exit out of here. This Sk'rak is no ordinary beast; it has intelligence, albeit a limited one. It will attack us once it feels hungry again. With that size, I'd assume it won't take long.

As my calculations suggest, we'll run out of rations in at most three days. We will probably try to escape before malnutrition deforms us all.

May the Gods and Goddesses shine their light upon our future.

Fehrat 16, 3221

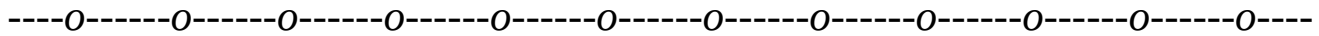
The escape plan was a failure. More than half of us are decimated by the damned beast. I don't think we'll be alive by the tomorrow moon. Only a handful of people remain around me and I am now the leader of us.

Thankfully I am the only one that can read so that you, my reader, can know the true fate of the people of the Dreadnought Crespin.

I was wrong. The beast is a lot smarter than I initially, and imprudently, thought. Not only it's waiting for us to move; it burrows and lays traps in the sand. My egotistical assumption led to our death. For that, I am sorry.

I see now that there are two choices in front of me. One would be living the lie that I started and lead everyone to their inevitable death. The other option is to tell the truth and leave everyone to their miserable ends.

In death, I'll answer to Daenir and burn for the crimes that I committed here.



Translator's Notes:

- *Fehrat was used in the pre-archaic era of the Empire as a measurement of time. 3221 represented the Earthen year and Fehrat was one of the 12 slices of a year. This is later changed by the Grand Imperial Inquisitor Hakan the First to the system that we currently use.*
- *Today, the planet Keltr'an is known today as Arcuna 1992.*
- *There are very few sources that tell the atrocities Tlpenan committed and this memoir is considered the earliest one. We still have little to no knowledge of Tlpenan culture, other than they were scavengers.*
- *A Sk'rak is known today as Terra-Worm VI and it is generally a human-sized, surface-dwelling worm that can move under surfaces like rolling sand. What Ebu Tahir ibn-i Hilfan describes in this memoir is probably ten to twenty times bigger than the Terra-Worms we know. To this date, we haven't seen a Terra-Worm VI in those sizes in the entire universe.*
- *Handens are the only known species that have no mutation-capable gene; what Ebu Tahir ibn-i Hilfan described is the same species that we see all the time.*
- *Dreadnought Crespin was one of the earliest rogue ships. For more information, please read Homes of The Past, A Through Look at the Precursor Spaceships by Farthad Acclins.*
- *Gresk steel is one of the primitive durable metals that has been used in shelters and ships.*
- *Lyneen is one of the mysteries of the universe; they are known to be a hunter class plant species that spews out deadly toxins that melts proteins, and the remains of the unlucky being feeds the plant by dissolving right in front of it. We have no record, drawing or a sketch that describes what a*

Lyneen is. Some think they evolved to another hunter plant species, and some think that they have been eradicated.

- On the other hand, a Yk'tek is a well-known hunter plant that is also nutritious in the experienced hands. It is also considered a delicacy in some parts of the universe.

- "Gods", "Goddesses", "Eelean, the Goddess of Luck" and "Daenir" are parts of a blasphemous belief that the Grand Imperial Inquisitor Ulvean the First saved us from. This is one of the only works that has been permitted by the Grand Imperial Inquisitor Beir XVIII for posterity's sake.