

# Off Course.

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The storm clouds rolled in slower than they expected, they were seeable at dawn but they lingered at the edge of the mountains until mid-day. Everyone in the little oasis town in the SignPost desert planet was sick and tired of heat. It never rained there, only the small lake that seemed to never dry up. No one knew how it got there or how it stayed sitting in the life sucking heat radiating from the sun, without boiling or drying up. There, in the town of Mirtle Bay, was the only water source for planets. SignPost was one of twelve planets that circles the hottest sun known to man, Swelter's Star. The people who got stuck here were from the 2071 disaster that happened exactly twenty years ago, today.

Eight passengers were sent, in secret, to explore beyond the 1944 quadrant. But, the supreme court of Galaxy was still working on the peace treaty between the Hilldhiuf and humans. Hilldhiuf was a disgusting species that loved to pester humans, and their passion for blowing up our ships was next to impossible to stop. Hilldhiuf creatures weretwenty four and a half centimeters tall, with green-blue goop hanging, dripping, dribbling down every inch of them. Their bright yellow eyes made people have the feeling of sinking, and their mastery of invisibility, their timing and their sneakiness was impeccable, and finally their trickery was dumbfounding humans left and right. Enough of them let's get back to the story.

When the supreme court scheduled a time to sign the peace treaty, the Hilldhiuf didn't have to sneak in because they already had access to the building. So, they prowled into the ship

control deck and made the SS14 go off course into the deserted and desert planet SignPost. That's how we got there.

There has been no communication between the eight of us and the supreme court, we'd be gone by now. I am Tristin Wavorsworth the seventh passenger to be selected for the 2077 classified mission. This is my story about how I got onto this godforsaken planet of dried up waste.

Not everyone likes to fly into space, it's like flying on an airplane some people get sick. That was me, I was fourteen and my family was going to Tabuti, a tropical planet just off the Tropicaliti galaxy. My mother, a sturdy lean woman with inky black hair loved old music like Taylor Swift and Blake Shelton. My father, a hard working man, tall, and muscular with curly blond hair liked to play zero-gravity golf, and my sister, the youngest of the family, she was 7 years old with straight blond hair and dark eyes. She carried her small stuffed rabbit named floppy, everywhere she went. I was Tristin, the boy that no one liked, I was 14 and into everything everyone else wasn't, my spiky black hair, almost stood on end as if I was being electrocuted, I was tall and skinny, very skinny. I loved to tinker on things like old ships and aged cellphones.

5...4...3... A man with a weighty voice started counting down. 2... 1... We took off. I felt dizzy. Up, up we went. It came up, and out. Everything that went in me spilled out, when I say all of it, I mean all of it. It was everywhere, on the stark- metallic ship. Again, up, up we went. It came up and out. It all came out seven times on the 43 hour flight. It was horrible.

Then it happened, they said the turbulence was bad, but I knew it wasn't turbulence. Something was failing. The engine kept stuttering, then I felt it. We were falling. I was thrown to the back of the ship and a shard of metal slipped into place at the base of my neck, and I felt the warm blood slip down my neck. I heard it before I saw it, something smashed into the side of the ship and started sucking all of the passengers into the void of whatever planet we were getting close to. I gripped onto the toilet handle so I didn't get thrown out. I glanced at the hole and my stomach turned over, my mother's screams filled my ears as I shot a look at my family being thrown out one by one. My sister gripping the top of the leather seat, her legs flying closer into the void. She was screaming, her tears streaming down her face. She was reaching for something, as I followed her outstretched hand, I saw her stuffed rabbit tied to the seatbelt. Then her screaming stopped. She was gone. Then I was sucked into unconsciousness.

When I came to, I was coughing and it wouldn't stop. Opening my eyes, there was so much smoke. As I stood up, debris was everywhere, the singed, bent metal on the roof was caving in. The ship was completely turned over, cracked and shattered windows lined the sides, letting bright sunlight in. There was mumbling in the background, low, and just out of earshot. I saw a large hole in the side, while I walked toward the space, I noticed the planet we were on, Nutino, a rainforest planet. If my knowledge in geography was right, Nutino was justice of the Tropicaliti galaxy. It had four dense rainforests filled with the most dangerous animals in space, such as Faeries who lure you into their caves and then eat you, and sea Sirens who entice you to

the water with their immortal beauty, and drag you under to drown you. Other than the four jungles, the planet was complete ocean.

I had to squint at the bright sunlight in the clearing. The space and destruction that the ship made when it crashed into the canopy was breathtakingly sweeping. I searched the ground for something to contact someone, anything. Then I saw it, I reeled back as my eyes filled with tears, my younger sister's rabbit, named Floppy. Picking up the old toy, I took a quick glance around and through the dense brush, and I saw bright yellow eyes staring at me. There were millions. But I was sure hallucination was the reason for it. Knowing that all of the ships have an emergency escape pod on them at all times, I started looking through the ship and around the clearing for one. After what had to be two hours I found one, and I needed to leave because it was getting dark. So I opened the hatch and climbed into the space for one person. It was pretty simple, a steering stick in the middle, a large grey button for liftoff and a smaller blue button for wheels and wings. It started up, and I was in the air, thank goodness there was a GPS (Galaxy Positioning System), on board. I landed on the nearest civilized planet, sold my ship, and with that money bought an apartment. It was a shoddy room of a house. The brown flower wallpaper was peeling, some to the ground, a petite window rested on the dusty frame, the view was disgusting. A haze of dust and sand coated the brown market, everything on this planet was brown. A month passed and I had blown all the money I had off of the ship on food and things I didn't need, and I learned that I was on the desert planet Zepton, it was dry but humid at the same time.

A knock sounded on my door, and when I opened it a ragged old man let himself in as he pushed me out of the way.

“Hey-” I stuttered as he cut me off, the old man walked around, inspecting things and wiping dust of the tops of all the things I bought.

“Hey kid, you got the rent you owe me?” I gawked at him. *Rent? Oh, I completely forgot about rent! What do I say?*

“Uhh, you know, my mother is um, out. Why don’t you come back tomorrow?” I muttered he approached the door. The man grumbled as he said, “You better have money tomorrow... Or else.” He grabbed the door handle,

“Or else what?” I snapped back before I could think, he shot a bitter look in my direction as I put my head down and let him out of my appartement. That night passed and I couldn’t sleep, he would be knocking at my door early tomorrow. So I decided to pack all the things I needed and leave the apartments. I dug through every garbage can looking for an old electronic map, finally after looking in a dumpster behind an a-1 Electronic shop. I ran, and hid in multiple towns, cities, villages and such for seven years. and the I saw it, a large hologram showing in bright blue and red letters, **“COME JOIN THE G.A.M.M.A, IT’LL BE GOOD FOR YOU!”** G.a.M.M.a means: Galactic, airforce, Marine, Militant, army. I knew it was the job for me. The base was, thankfully just on the other side of the town.

When I opened the doors, everyone looked dumbfounded. Of course, i was a tall, skinny, boy (of sorts), who looked naught like a fighter. I was just as ragged as the old man at the apartments. I had not had a shower or changed clothes in seven years, I hadn’t had sleep or been warm since I was 14. I was 21. I hadn’t talked to a single person since the man at the apartment knocked on my door. I was denied entry into the army seven times, before they let me in, so they could turn me into their little guinea pig. Over the course of 3.5 years I had fourteen

tests done on me. I had changed. I was strong. I looked more normally sized. I looked like a man, not the boy who signed up for the *army*. I was Tristin Wavorsworth. They told me I could choose, go home, join the airforce or join the army. I contemplated leaving many times but I decided to join the airforce. By the reason of, I didn't want any more people to suffer the loss of family, friends or even people they've never met.

*I was thrown to the back of the ship and a shard of metal slipped into place at the base of my neck, and I felt the warm blood slip down my neck.*

I was put in a class for dummies, but I learned quickly, I practiced every night, making sure I would advance faster than anyone else. The teacher reminded me of the old man at the apartments, he was old, of course, his beard was flecked with grey, which stood out on his dark beard. He wore the same thing everyday, Grey turtleneck sweater and black joggers. The classroom was small and hazy, for chairs we had brown couches full of holes.

*I heard it before I saw it, something smashed into the side of the ship and started sucking all of the passengers into the void of whatever planet we were getting close to.*

After a week of the four week class, I had been told to advance into a hands-on training seminar. It was definitely harder than the first one but I pushed on. I made sure that my mind clamped onto all the information.

*I gripped onto the toilet handle so I didn't get thrown out.*

I zipped through the second one, and got pushed up to the second highest level. I failed two times, it took me 7 months to complete the stage. That's when the student's started on me, they threw one of my books out of the window everyday.

*I glanced at the hole and my stomach turned over, my mother's screams filled my ears as I shot a look at my family being thrown out one by one.*

The people at the base were terrible, there was at least four brawls that took place in the cafeteria every night. During the classes they would throw things at me and call me a dork, but I shoved it off. Those people usually stayed in the courses for three or four years. Three of the four fights ended up with broken bones, on *special occasions* one would come out dead. Mothers and fathers came to see their sons and daughters who died, fooling around, with red puffy eyes, tears staining their faces.

*My sister gripping the top of the leather seat, her legs flying closer into the void. She was screaming, her tears streaming down her face.*

The week before the exams, all I did was study and study. Sometimes we were allowed to fly the ships during the after hours, but we frequently did it only during class. Then assessment week started, I finished everything before anyone else, two weeks later the awards ceremony started. Everyone was anxious to see their marks and find out who got the Gliese Tau Cetie memorial award. I was just out of reach of the highest possible stage I could get to.

*She was reaching for something, as I followed her outstretched hand, I saw her stuffed rabbit tied to the seatbelt.*

The ceremony room was large enough for hundreds of thousands of people. It was decorated with camo streamers, the wall were lined with photographs of passed recipients of the Gliese Tau Cetie memorial award. That award meant that you were the best of the best at whichever subject you participated in, airforce, marine or military. Then the waiting came to a close as the head of the G.A.M.M.A. walked onto the large stage set up at the front of the room.

*Then her screaming stopped. She was gone.*

I was probably the most excited person there, my mind was fully conscious. I was ready to become an airforce hero, saving lives.

*Then I was sucked into unconsciousness.*

The hole commemoration was a blur of clapping and names I've never heard of until, "Tristin Wavolith!" the tremendous clapping from the profs was full of pride, my smile was full of honor. "You are highest in your class, congratulations on passing every level with honors." he handed me a rolled up piece of paper, and a plaque with my name on it, it read: **VALEDICTORIAN: TRISTIN WAVORSWORTH.** My face was beaming with dignity.

An hour went by, and everyone was bored, they all slouched in their seats whispering to people around them, but not me. Finally they announced that they would say the winner for the Gliese Tau Cetie award, "The winner for the Gliese Tau Cetie memorial award is," The man glanced up at me, and a flutter of excitement zoomed around me, " Klaus Zazulack, congratulations!" The head of G.A.M.M.A. shook his hand and took many pictures with him. almost instantly a large photograph with Klaus' face on it was put up beside the past beneficiary. Klaus was a average height man, whose face was slightly squished and pushed to far up which gave him a slight roll of skin under his lower lip. He was one of the smarter tyrants. My face's expression turned the polar opposite of pride when Klaus quickly glanced at me during one of the pictures, and gave me a sly grin, followed up by a snicker.

Since there was no other awards I was an *Honorable Mention*, along with six other people. My face was on fire, by the time the ceremony ended. All of the men in Klaus' *group* were snickering at me and wacking me with their diploma sheets.

Late that night fourteen brawls took place, six people died, horrible, gruesome deaths, the other eight had a few broken fingers and arms. I tried to sleep that night but my thoughts were crowding my head, *that award was mine, Klaus doesn't deserve it, I have better grades than him, I will get revenge.*

I became I pilot for the SS4 Shooting Star, the fastest rocket in the west galaxy. I was given a crew of seven people, not the best pilots, fighters or engineers but they would have to suffice, meanwhile, Klaus' crew was made up of all his oppressors, apparently they were that most highly trained *weapons* on the base. a little over a week after the ceremony, I was sent on my first mission, guard the Supreme Court Planet, while they sign a whole bunch of random document together, no one paid any attention the the Supreme Court any more because every planet, every *single* planet has its own government. They were there just to be representatives for foreign, wild creatures.

I was sent to five other missions during the course of a year, none of which were dangerous, we just had to sit around this big purple and blue planet.

Finally on the seventh mission my crew and I were sent to explore past the 1944 quadrant, it's past anything we've gone to. The 1944 quadrant was the bleakest part of anything. If a living thing went in, they would disappear out of existence. We took off at the break of dawn, and made our way to the Miisuagiii galaxy, which was the farthest outwards any human has survived. Somehow, the Hildhiuf got to the mainframe of our ship from the Supreme Court of the Galaxy. They got there by sneaking into the control center, I learned that later in life.

It was just like the rocket malfunction when I was a boy, everything was falling. But we were trained soldiers, prepared for anything. Parachutes, rations were all packed into small compact bags, as well as instahomes and water jugs.

I have been living on this scorched planet for thirty three years, today, we have lost all hope of ever succeeding to contact the Supreme Court of the Galaxy. If anyone finds this journal then I hope you aren't also stuck on this planet and are able to leave. My name is Tristin Wavorsworth and I died thirty three years after we plunged into the land of SignPost.

*Triston Wavorsworth*

