

## One Wild Ride

“Hold on to your helmet, Jita, it’s going to be a wild ride!”

I never thought it would come to this. After all my training and years in the space flight academy I never considered the thought of being in this predicament. But, hey, who doesn’t like a good ol’ asteroid storm? You heard me right. Not an ambush, not a black hole, an asteroid storm. “Being a space pilot is the greatest honor one can contribute to the galaxy,” they said. “You are so lucky to have made it through training and into the service,” they said. Well, whoop-de doo, now I’m going to die. My robo-pup, Jita, has been through hell and back with me. From aiding the IGSF (InterGalactic Space Force) on special operations missions to helping the kid cadets with flying lessons, she’s had my back. But now, all Jita is going to be is some flattened metal dog food. Each turn is such a roller coaster.

“Jita, hit the accelerator. We just need to make it out of this storm. I don’t care if the Gilbatron takes a hit!”

“I’ve already punched it, this is as fast as she goes Davi!” Jita barked. “We can’t take much more damage or we’re going down!”

Yeah, so back about us dying, looking pretty promising. Swerving the Gilbatron upward to dodge another flying rock, my stomach suddenly aches with great pain. My body never seems to enjoy flying. Throughout the early stages of my cadet training, I struggled with space-sickness. The first lesson I ever had I threw up all over the control board.

“Davi!” my pilot instructor said. “You’re never going to be a good pilot if you keep this up!”

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Ever since I felt the embarrassment and criticism of that teacher, I decided I would never perform poorly because of pain or weakness. Yet here I am, complaining about being space-sick in an asteroid storm.

“Only a couple more clicks and we’ll be home free, Jita. Keep firing the blasters at the big ones, we won’t be able to dodge them!

“I’m on it, boss!” Jita growled. “I want to live as much as you do!

*Two more clicks.*

“Watch out!” Jita howled.

The cyber engine takes a direct hit and the Gilbratron deteriorates before our eyes. Fuel blips drop at a rapid rate. Spacecraft is losing speed.

*One more click.*

“Even if we make it out, our ship won’t survive. We’re done for! Jita, take my hand!”

“Sir, your ride’s over!” Jita jeers.

“What did you say?”

Slowly, the depths of the galaxy fade from stary white to calm blue skies.

“Sir, please, there are people waiting to get on.”

I look at my pilot’s uniform and it has changed to a grey sweater with a brown liquid seeping through my left wrist sleeve.

“Where am I?” I asked in complete perplexion.

“You passed out on the Gilbatron Space Adventure and threw up in your sleep and now you won’t get out of your seat! There are hundreds of people who have been patiently waiting for their turn and you refuse to wake up! Do I need to call for security to remove you?” the woman fired.

“No, no, I’m sorry. I’ll be on my way” I mumbled.

As I walked towards the exit, I can't help but reflect on how real my space adventure was. Everyone is looking at me as if I was a lunatic. Their glaring stares seem to pierce an even stronger blow than that of the asteroids. I just want to go home. I wish I really was lost in space.

“Hey!” the roller coaster employee called. “You forgot your toy kid!”

“Oh thanks.” I replied hesitantly.

I didn’t know I had won anything today. As I walk closer to the Gilbatron Space Adventure 3000 entrance, I see a small stuffed robotic space-dog with a smile wider than anyone I’d seen all day.

“Thank you.” I offer. “I’ll be on my way.”

“No worries.” The woman jokes. “Just try to get yourself cleaned up, okay? I don’t want any other visitors freaking out about our rides.”

*Oh, right. I forgot. My space-sickness.*