

LASTChancePUBLICATIONS

白 武 器 的 知 道 者

written

by

Dave Clark a.k.a Dust

Copyright © 2005 David Clark June 2005

第 一 部 曲：

知 道 者



第 一 部 曲 第 一 集

In episode 4..

"So there's death at every turn?"

The young Ranger Headwire learns about attacking a base from the experienced Ranger Dante. A future career plan begins to form in his mind.

"All patrols this is OSN Technician Unit 683, we are going to be taking the Deployment points off-line for some routine maintenance. Re-spawning will not be possible for approximately twenty minutes. All caution to be taken during this time."

"Right, you all heard that lads, lets just take it easy for the next twenty mins. No unnecessary risks, that includes your trick jumps Head." Called Dante over Comms channel seven, the three Mercs confirmed his message, although Headwire did it with a degree of disappointment.

This was not an irregular occurrence during peacetime patrols. With the Deploy points off-line, re-spawning was not available. This meant that if they were to suffer life threatening damage they would in fact die. Headwire and Dante were completely unmoved by this though, because on almost every patrol the Deploys went off line for *urgent* work and they were very certain of never meeting any hostiles.

Although Headwire did stop his trick jumps he was still boost jumping about quite happily, still some way ahead of Dante.

"So tell me some cool stories of you and Knight attacking the node room" he called over Comms.

"Ha! You make it sound like an adventure"

"That's 'coz it is"

"Ok, well probably the story I tell the most is when we were in a battle against H.O.Corporation, HOC as most Mercs know 'em. Was couple of years back now, we were on another G-Class planet, like this one and had to retrieve two Artifacts. The battle had been going on for maybe an hour at this stage."

"That long? Wow" Headwire was genuinely surprised; most Artifact battles lasted no more then thirty minutes at the most.

"Yea, well it was a bit of a stalemate with the energy and both our base and theirs were locked down pretty tight. Closest me and Knight had got to a cap was Knight getting outside the node room before he was taken out. Anyway, we were both getting really tired and even more determined to get at least one Arti out. So we decided to go through the same entrance together."

"Normally you go in different entrances?"

"Yea, means we don't die together if some Gunner gets a lucky shot." He said with a smile "Anyway, this time we decided to go through the same teleport, one after the other. I go first, course they got a mine on it, so I get blown up. Knight comes through and revives me, I heal up on the go and we leg it down the corridor towards the node room. Met a Tech along the way but two frag 'nades took him out. At this point we get a call on the Comms saying that the enemy attackers had somehow got both our Arti's out and were heading back to their base, being chased of course."

"Shit, so now you had to get at least one Arti out or they would get full control."

"That's right mate, the pressure was on, not only did we have to get an Arti out but we had to do it this attack. After clearing the corridor of about five turrets and reviving each other at least twice each we reached the node room."

"So you were lucky you didn't both die together or you wouldn't have been able to revive."

"Yea well fortune was definitely with us. We entered the node room on a platform, looking down on the node itself. The room was packed full of turrets and Force-walls, mines and trip wires, I'm talking full on defence. Two defenders keeping an eye on everything as well."

"Bloody hell, so did you work out what turrets to take out and blow them then go for the Force-walls?"

"No time for that, at the same moment that we entered the room so did the two enemy attackers, both carrying Artifacts."

"No way!"

"Yep, if they passed through the node it was over."

"What did you do?"

"We dived in mate, full on assault. I chucked frag grenades at the node as Knight launched EM blasts from his Lance at the turrets. The turrets opened up, the Gunner and Tech opened up, a shit storm to be honest. Anyway all I remember was my 'nade blast took out both the Rangers, literally on the node."

"On it!"

"Yea they dropped and so did our Arti's. I don't know how I didn't get shot to pieces as I dived off the platform, through the node and sprinted out of the room. Returning our Artis and picking up one myself. Then as I'm running I look back and see Knight has done just the same."

"You returned both your Artis and got both of theirs out too!"

"Yep"

"Then what?"

"Well we ran, dodged and boost jumped like men on fire all the way back to our node room and capped, game over."

"Wow, that's what I'm talking about." Headwire could barely contain his excitement. "Attackers rule. You stopped them capping, returned your Arti's and capped both theirs to win. I wanna do just that."

Dante laughed "Well you could Head, you got what it takes I reckon."

"Really? Ah, but Chance wants us to be a midfield only Merc team. Says that there's more work for midfield Rangers"

"Well he's not wrong and there's no shame in being part of 'The Four', the best midfield Merc unit around."

"Yea, I guess." Headwire said as he boosted over another large rock ahead and went out of Dante's view.

"But I tell you what I wouldn't mi....." Headwire's communication stopped abruptly.

"You wouldn't mind what?" Dante enquired, then again when he received no reply "Headwire? Head? Can you read me?"

. . .

Headwire sat in the crouched position he had landed his last jump in. He was completely still, with his eyes fixed straight ahead. One hundred yards ahead, on the very top of the Border fence sat a blue Ranger. He was balanced perfectly in a crouch, his toes on the top of the wire. The Ranger had his sniper scope up to his eye and was looking through it, pointing his rifle, directly at Headwire.

"Headwire?" came Dante's call over the comms again. Headwire didn't answer; he simply stared straight ahead, fixed on the sniper. Behind him he heard the sound of a boost firing and then Dante landed into a crouch just beside him. Placing his hand on Heads shoulder he looked at him.

"Headwire, what's up?" Headwire still didn't reply. Slowly Dante traced Headwire's stare to the Ranger sitting on the fence, sniper rifle still trained on Headwire. The Ranger was wearing a typical blue Mining Corp Ranger suit

and Dante was just able to pick out the JBC Mining Corp logo on his chest plate. On his left arm, just above the elbow, there was tied a red piece of cloth. Dante's eyes fixed on this piece of cloth.

Him. So he has returned from exile. As Dante considered the situation Headwire finally spoke.

"Are...the...re-spawn points....still...offline?" fear and anxiety gripping every word. Dante considered switching his comms to open channel and enquiring but any movement may provoke the sniper to fire.

"We will have to assume they are." Dante paused then continued "Don't worry Headwire it is illegal for him to fire his weapon at us during peace time." Dante said trying to calm Headwire.

"Isn't it illegal to...cross No-Mans land too?" Headwire asked. Dante considered this question, although his knowledge of the law was not one hundred percent he did know that the law stated that no mining Corp Mercs could lay foot on another's land once borders had been established. It would seem that the opposing Ranger also knew this. By perching on the top of the fence his was still not breaking the letter of the law, most likely those that drew up this particular law never expected anyone to be able to cross No-Mans Land.

How did he get up there? Dante asked himself as he glanced quickly at the Border area.

The Border had been setup mutually by both Mining Corporations at the time that JBC landed. Both Corps had erected a twenty-foot high fence two hundred yards apart. Although there was a chance that a skilled Ranger would manage to jump this, the Ranger having the highest jump of the three classes, the fences were not the only obstacles. In between them was No-Mans Land; in this two hundred yard gap both Corps had buried a massive amount of mines running the entire length of the border.

Not only did he jump over the first fence, he also managed to avoid setting off any of the mines. Mines he could not have seen. Finally he jumped onto the top of our twenty-foot fence.

Headwire was sweating a lot now as the tension caused by staring down a rifle barrel refused to release him. He had been holding his crouch position for some time and muscle fatigue was creeping in. Only a few seconds had past but it felt like hours. Still, he didn't dare move in case he triggered a shot from the sniper.

"Who...is he?" Headwire asked. Dante thought about his answer carefully.

"A JBC Ranger, I guess he is patrolling"

"Why...is he still...pointing his rifle at me?"

At that moment the Ranger lowered his rifle and held it loosely across his body, barrel pointing to the floor at his side. He remained looking at Headwire and Dante and then in one swift motion he flipped backwards off the fence and landed in No-Mans Land. He turned his back on the rangers and began to sprint towards the JBC fence.

Both Dante and Headwire looked on, anxious to see how the Ranger managed to cross the minefield. To their disappointment the Ranger produced his grenade launcher and fired a smoke grenade slightly ahead of him, then proceeded to disappear into it.

Headwire let out a long sigh.

. . .

Chance and Kaio were waiting for Headwire when he emerged from his debriefing in McGregor's office.

"So what happened Head?" Chance asked as the three men walked towards the mess hall.

"We met a Ranger, me and Dante. He was from JBC"

"Met him? How?"

"He was sitting on our border fence, pointing his sniper rifle at me"

"What?" Chance said in surprise "On our border fence, how did he clear No-Mans Land?"

"No idea, when he left he covered his route with smoke. Dante says he's never heard of anyone getting through No-Mans Land, not without a couple of Juggernauts"

"Well I know of some of the Mercs currently on contract with JBC. None of the Rangers are that skilled though as far as I recall."

"He had a piece of red cloth tied to his left arm but otherwise he was nothing special" Headwire said without much expression. Chance and Kaio exchanged concerned glances, then Chance put his hand on Headwire's shoulder and gestured to the entrance of the mess hall they had just reached.

"You've had a rough morning kid, go on and grab yourself some lunch and we'll join you in a sec." He said. Headwire nodded and walked through the doorway.

Chance watched him walk towards the forming queue for lunch, noticing the absence of Headwire's usual confidence in his step.

"He's gonna have trouble dealing with today's events, it's already beginning to sinking in."

"Yes, he will need to get into some action soon to stop any fear that might arise from facing a gun with no respawn backup."

"You'll sort something out?"

"Yes and I have just the thing to make sure he's willing to participate." Kaio replied with a facial expression, which for Kaio came very close to being a smirk.

Chance turned to face Kaio with a serious look on his face.

"A red cloth, Crying?"

"Crying" Kaio, confirmed. Chance looked down at the floor in consideration.

"So he's returned from exile. JBC must've signed him very recently; he is gonna make things a little more interesting in midfield isn't he." Chance remarked with a note of concern, then he looked at Kaio again "do you have any idea how he could have crossed No-Mans Land, twice?"

"Hmm, he could have had a device which can pick up the electrical signatures of the mines and then map them out for him."

"Well I've never heard of anything like that." Chance said "but then neither have you". Sensing his partner was holding back he pressed him.

"What do you really think?" Kaio looked at Chance for a second before answering.

"ESP" he said.

In episode 6 of
6 WAYS TO LOSE...

"Reckon the kid is probably gonna be shook up by this for a while."

Chance is worried that Headwire may have some difficulty facing guns again. Can Silver's past help the kid to recover his courage?

"At the age of sixteen we had to journey from our village alone, deep into the deadly Vangrian Jungle, armed only with a knife and seek out the largest and deadliest creature living within, the Gargant."....