



John Raw (41, drover foreman)

*Patience, you say? Oh, I know patience.
When every step's a torture, it's the one thing you learn.
You learn to tread carefully.*





Every morning, the excruciating pain returns. Each time you wake up, you want that morning to be your last – and you wonder what’s keeping you alive.

When you do, finally, get up, you hobble off to play leader to all those young, healthy people. At least by now they’ve stopped staring. You hate them all, but unfortunately you need their help – at least if you’re to follow through with your plan. And, well, they need you as well. Ah, the paradox. The healthy needing a cripple to get by.

To be honest, they’re probably too afraid of you to get rid of you. Those disgusting smiles, that revolting laughter.

Every morning, you walk down the corridor to your office. *Clop, step... slide the stick... pain... clop, step...* There are no stairs and that’s just as well. Steps were invented to torment you. The only staircase you’re willing to face is the one that leads to the basement of your hacienda, because that’s where the interrogations take place. The interrogations that you lead. You’re very good at it, one of the best; after all, you’ve had tons of practice with the masters of the art.

I know how to be patient – if I want to. I mean, I’m in no hurry, am I? It’s not as if I’m on my way to some pretentious party. Or if I’m being eagerly awaited by applauding crowds and beautiful women. Not anymore. The Alliance made sure of that, in the depths of prison darkness.

You stand in your basement cell, waiting for the next interrogation to begin. You stretch your deformed neck, first in one direction, then in the other; the familiar snap, followed by the familiar ribbons of pain snaking their way down through the tangle of muscles between your shoulder blades.

Why do I do it, when it hurts so much every time? Why does one have an eternal need of suffering?

You sit in your office and tell them what needs to be done. They probably think you’re completely ruthless – and they’re right. You are ruthless. You have your mission, and that mission is the only reason you’re still here. Sometimes you have trouble still believing in it.

Those around you can, at least, lead a happy life, all thanks to you, the cripple. And sometimes, just sometimes, you almost feel as if you’re enjoying life as well.

Almost.

You slowly drift into sleep. Halfway between consciousness and deep slumber, the nightmare catches up with you once again. All of a sudden, you’re surrounded by light; you see yourself in an empty room, tethered and bound... And then you’re awake once again, jolted back into the present.

That’s it for today. Other days are not as merciful.

You run your tongue along the empty sockets in your jaws, then get out of bed and back to work. In the early morning, you might be able to fall into a dreamless sleep.



Your character:

You're a wreck, a parody of a man, and you know it. You despise yourself as much as you despise others. Some of them may earn your trust, appreciation, even, but your friendship? Never. You know nothing good would come of that. You're well aware of the fact that everyone sees you as a bitter old bastard, though it's true some people actually genuinely seem to like you. *Ah, well, they've probably got a thing for cripples.*

Your mission is clear and you are determined to finish what you have started. After all, it's the only reason you're still here. You've got nothing left except hatred for the Alliance bastards who had you tortured and crippled; you have nothing but hatred for their kind. You know how to hide it, though, because you can wait.

Sometimes, just sometimes, you wonder if all those innocent people you share your home world with are not perhaps more than future collateral damage. Sometimes you even think that perhaps they should be spared.

But not often enough.

Your past:

You grew up on one of the inner planets, back when they were still independent. Your childhood was wonderful and your education thorough; you were surrounded by friends. Your father was a high-ranking officer in the military and you followed in his steps. You were young, handsome and full of promise – girls would do anything for you and you knew how to take advantage of it.

Your father died on the first day of the attack. He was in the front lines; they didn't bring back anything except his dog tags and brown coat. You served at the headquarters at the time, a cadet of twenty years, and every day, you would receive desperate messages from all fronts, reporting the vast numbers of Alliance troops. Still, your worlds stood their ground for a long time, even though the losses were severe. Then, moments before your governor and commanding general surrendered, a few ships slunk away in secret. The men and women they carried on board knew there was no future for them under Alliance rule. You were one of these men and on that day. Your lifelong fight began.

Around that time, some twenty years ago, you met three people that turned your life around – **Mary**, **Michael** and **Joseph**. You fell in love with Mary – you loved her more than anyone in the world. You looked up to Michael and Joseph became your best friend.

One woman and three men, however – not something that could end well. Although you tried the hardest you could and gave Mary your heart, in the end she chose Michael.

It wasn't an easy time. Mary's decision was hard on you, and as for **Joseph**, he seemed to be taking it even worse. You can still remember what he looked like in those days – as if he was ready to die.



Mary and **Michael** got married and seven months later, a little girl was born, **Sophie**. She was beautiful. And although you would've loved her to be your own daughter, at that point you had already come to terms with the way things had turned out.

Sometime around then, you also got yourselves an Alliance prisoner called **O'Connor**. There was nothing special about him back then, he was one of many, but he would return to play a larger role in your future life.

The war dragged on for years; always fighting, always on the move. The victims were many and one day – Sophie couldn't have been more than three – Michael died in a fight. Both Mary and Sophie took the loss bravely, but you knew you had to take care of them. To little **Sophie**, you were Uncle John and Uncle **Joseph**, and you loved her as if she were your own.

The fighting went on for several more months. You were low on rations, low on medicine; even so, you always somehow managed to evade any Alliance troops that came your way. In the end, however, they sniffed you out as well.

The plan was that you and Joseph would hold positions with your troops, covering the others' retreat. Then, as soon as everyone was safely out of the way, you would cover each other while you made a getaway to the last remaining ship. And it worked for a while. Both you and Joseph managed to hold your ground for a long time, and the losses were low. Then, at some point, the connection was lost. You sent a messenger to Joseph's camp, but the soldier came back saying that the other position had been abandoned and that the Alliance was quickly advancing. *There wouldn't be enough time to board the ship.*

For a moment, you almost panicked, but then, with great restraint, you managed to regain power over your feelings. The only option left was a counter attack – the only thing that had a chance of stopping the Alliance soldiers. **Mary** and **Sophie** would be able to get away and you would get a chance to avenge **Joseph**. Making your decision, you gave the order and your loyal men rushed forward.

It might have even worked. And for a while it did, but then, all of a sudden, a bullet went through your leg. You couldn't run; your men lost you and then you were surrounded by Alliance soldiers. You didn't give up easily – you managed to take a few of them down with you; then, however, another bullet sunk into your crippled leg and you lost consciousness.

You woke up feeling nothing save for a throbbing pain in your leg. Darkness was everywhere and you had lost all sense of time. Too scared to move, you lay still for a very, very long time. Then, at some point, you started screaming, hoping for the nightmare to end.

Over the next six months, you would long for these moments to return.

As a Browncoat officer, you were entrusted into the hands of the best of the best. They tore your skin into strips; they pulled your fingernails out; they fed electricity into your body and did many other terrible things to you. It took you five minutes to start screaming and five hours to start talking. In five days, you've told them things you hadn't even known.



Sometimes they would lock you into a cell so small you couldn't move. Your wounded leg had gone lame. Darkness became something to fear – as did light, because light mean pain. And the cycle went on and on, *light, darkness, light, darkness...* You're not entirely sure what kept you from going insane. And then, one day, six months later, they released you, just like that. The war was over and your old life with it.

A ceasefire had been signed and the Browncoats had laid down their weapons. The Alliance promised to stop all military operations and issue a pardon to everyone who gave in. In a prisoner exchange, you were released and swapped for ***O'Connor***, and the difference between the two of you couldn't have been greater. You were a wreck, unable to walk without the support of two men; O'Connor was well-fed and completely healthy.

Life's not fair.

There was no glory to your return, only pitying looks, silence and averted glances. The disgust of your old friends was poorly disguised. Is this what gratitude looks like?! You had nothing, nothing left – only memories of the horrors you had lived through and a cold, burning hatred.

There were some, naturally, who had never stopped fighting, even after the war had officially ended. They knew the ceasefire was only temporary and continued waging a secret war. You joined these men. Sometimes you would hunt down an Alliance officer or messenger, or some other Alliance man, and you would interrogate them. Interrogation was *your* responsibility. *After all, you were the one with the most experience in these things.*

A few years later, you were sent on a mission, probably because your own people had become too scared of you. Be that as it may, the mission made sense, and you agreed to go through with it. You were to relocate to a newly terraformed moon that had a good chance of being one of the first to be attacked if the Alliance was to start a new war. You were given a team of hard men who were done doing ugly things and a herd of cattle – a drover foreman being the ideal cover in this corner of the world. *What a lovely retirement gift for the cripple! A herd of cattle and he suddenly becomes the most respected man in the system. How wonderful.*

And that was how, twelve years ago, aged twenty nine, you became the organization's agent on Moon. Your mission is clear: in case of war, defend yourself at all costs, aiming to do as much damage to the enemy as you can.

One of the first people you met in the newly emerging settlement called Moon were ***Mary*** and ***Sophie***. Sophie must have been about seven years old at the time. She immediately recognized you and, with a child's eagerness, threw herself around your neck. Not even a blink, no questions about your changed appearance asked. She has been kind to you ever since and, even today, still calls you Uncle John. Sophie is the only person you truly care about.

As for Mary, she treated you well too, but the bond between you was gone. *Not that you wouldn't mind rekindling it, mind you, but you get where she's coming from.*



Then there were the others – one **William Taylor**, a rich trader who cared about nothing save for money and power, and **Caroline Grey**. While you had no intention of going anywhere near Taylor, Caroline was different and you soon became friends. You admired the way she was able to get along with just about anyone and soon she also became the one people turned to when they wanted a conflict settled. It had become a necessity – conflicts had started to crop up pretty quickly.

Around the time your haphazard band of Independent immigrants arrived on Moon, so did a group of rich, highly conservative Alliance settlers. The herds of cattle they brought with them were so large that even your pedigree bulls were nothing in comparison, and they were led by a man called **Chang**, whose bodyguard was none other than **O'Connor**. You couldn't believe your eyes when you saw him. Is the man going to follow you to your grave?

The conflicts between the two groups were many – not a week passed without your men fighting theirs. They drove each other from the pastures and brawled in the streets, often incited by a young hothead called **Ian Nest**. Nest had come to Moon with you, but had no idea about the true nature of your mission.

Then, about six months later, a miracle happened – a mysterious illness broke out among the Alliance settlers, affecting mainly adult men. In a few weeks, it looked as if it might smite them all, but then Taylor, *that son of a bitch*, offered to get them medicine. It wouldn't be cheap, off course, but, well, *that's the least he could've done*. You knew from **Caroline Grey** that the majority of the Alliance families believed the illness was an omen and wanted to leave Moon; **Chang**, however, had talked them out of it. You also found out he'd managed to raise enough money for the medicine. That wouldn't do – you had to be quick.

When darkness fell, you sent your men for **Chang**. To your surprise, they returned quickly, and even brought the money Chang had raised with them. They hadn't run into any trouble; **O'Connor**, Chang's shadow, had been gone that night. *Never mind, you were ready to step into his shoes and take care of Chang in the morning... In the basement of your hacienda, of course*. Early in the morning, your men took Chang's body away in a sack and buried him behind the city perimeter.

Soon enough, people started looking for him. The general consensus was that Chang had stolen the money and got the hell out of Dodge; you were the only one who knew the story's real ending. Over the next few days, several men succumbed to the disease – which people had begun to call 'Chang's' – and in two weeks, most of the Alliance settlers had left. O'Connor stayed.

The years passed by. You told your people what to do and took care of your duties. About three years ago, some smugglers almost kidnapped **Caroline Grey**, but this girl they call **TJ** had apparently saved her. **Mary** left Moon a while ago, but still sends **Sophie** messages once in a while. The little girl, now a young woman, has caught the eye of more young men that you find comfortable, and now lives with **O'Connor**. He takes care of her as if he were her father, probably because she reminds him of Mary. *You're not too thrilled about that.*

About a year ago, rumors started going around that the Alliance was calling to arms once again, and the social atmosphere became oppressive. As if that wasn't enough, Moon's old governor died and a new one had to be elected. For you, this election was crucial – in a situation like this, you desperately needed to have the governor on your side. That's why, when **Caroline Grey** told you she was thinking of having her son **Benedict** elected, you thought it might work. To be honest, you'd always thought



Ben was a young, overconfident and somewhat arrogant young man (and you've not changed your opinion since), but you knew he was respected among the younger generation. Alone, that would have not been enough, but when you found out one of the other candidates was Taylor, you decided to put all your influence into Benedict's election. **Caroline's** thoughts on the matter were the same – although she'd usually gotten along well with everyone, she and **Taylor** had recently been arguing. Anyway, persuading the other candidates to support **Benedict** wasn't too hard, and, in the end, he was elected. As a governor, he's weak. You know you're not the only one who has influence over his decisions, but at this point, that doesn't really matter.

It was around that time **Father Joseph** appeared on Moon. When you saw him, you couldn't believe your eyes – you'd taken him for dead. You waited to see if he would volunteer some sort of explanation of how or why fact he's still alive, but he never did. You even tried breaching the topic once yourself, but got into a terrible argument. You can't remember what either of you said exactly, but the words were full of bitterness, disappointment, reproach and a sharp hate. You haven't spoken a word on the topic since, but you'd still quite like to find out what had happened back then.

Sometime around the election, **Taylor** bought a small herd of genetically manipulated cattle off-planet and brought it to Moon. Obviously, something like that doesn't go unnoticed. You know very well that your men oftentimes don't keep to their own pastures. They may even, at times, bring a little souvenir from one of their nightly trips. But that's the way things are; serves that upstart right, anyway.

The situation is becoming more serious. Over the past few days, you have been receiving vague messages about the Alliance's military and diplomatic operations. You don't know any details. And, as if that wasn't enough, a couple of your men are down with Chang's disease, which has appeared for the first time in twelve years. You've asked **O'Connor**, the only capable pilot for miles around, to get the necessary medicine – you didn't have much choice and you had to act quickly. You thought about asking Doctor **Allen**, but you weren't too sure about what he would say. He is, after all, **Taylor's** ward. You're still waiting for the medicine to arrive.

You are heading to the meeting at **Benedict Grey's** hacienda with much on your mind. **Joseph** has been invited this time as well, so you know you'll run into him, and you're desperate for the medicine to arrive. You also have a nasty feeling that **Taylor** is plotting something behind everyone's back.

Your relationship with the Alliance and the Independents:

As complicated as your life may have been, this is the one thing in which you know where you stand. You've been fighting the Alliance since you were a young man, and it's the Alliance who has turned you into the cripple you are today. You live for revenge. In your mind, you've never laid down your brown coat, though, of course, you've been keeping those politics secret for the past twelve years. The mission you have been entrusted with is very straightforward: in case of war, stop the Alliance in any way possible. Out here, no one will come to your aid. Your assignment is to play for time, so other Independent planets can get ready for war. Everything here depends on you.

Lately, however, you've been asking yourself if you have the right to let innocent people suffer for your personal revenge. You came to Moon with a group of tough men not afraid of hard and dirty work. Most of these, however, have families now, and are living a peaceful, content life. Still, you know that if you gave the order, they would do as you say. In the past few days, you have found yourself wondering whether you should give the word right then – this is your war to fight and your



responsibility to decide when, where, and how. Be that as it may, you know one day you will be the day. Yet maybe the years have affected you, too. You're not quite ready to admit you're not as absolutely sure about this as when you started; you do actually care about some of the people you've met here.

Your relationship with the others:

Benedict Grey: You helped elect the governor and often give him advice. You have to be careful, though – if he thinks he's being manipulated, he flips and does the exact opposite of what you're trying to get him to do.

Sophie Troy: Sophie calls you Uncle John, but she might as well be your own daughter. You believe she honestly and truly cares about you and you won't let anyone harm her.

Caroline Grey: Moon's radio operator. You admire her ability to get along with everyone. Sometimes, though, you feel as if she would agree with anything just to keep out of conflict.

- This is either character and in some cases it can be played as a man named Carl Grey. The gamemaster will inform you about that at the start of the game if this is a case.

Mark O'Connor: A pilot. Your paths have intersected at strange times, but your encounters have always been brief. You will never trust anyone who's worked for the Alliance, but now you need him to help you get medicine for your people. O'Connor also takes care of Sophie.

Father Joseph: Joseph used to be your best friend. For over fifteen years, you thought him dead. Now he's back... and he's a priest.

Ian Nest: The local teacher. As far as you're concerned, he's just a windbag, but you like his open and straightforward opinions.

TJ: A hero, the girl who saved Caroline Grey. She's quite violent and a bit simple, but it's definitely a good idea to have her on one's side.

- This is either character and in some cases it can be played as a man named Talbot. The gamemaster will inform you about that at the start of the game if this is a case.

William Taylor: An upstart who does has never done anything but cause you problems. You've never liked him and you never will. You didn't spend all your life fighting just so people like him could take the helm.

- This is either character and in some cases it can be played as a woman named Wilma. The gamemaster will inform you about that at the start of the game if this is a case.

Gideon Allen: The young physician is a bit of a mystery. He's Taylor's ward, but, at the same time, a close friend of Benedict's. One day, he'll have to pick a side – and when that day comes, you'll be there to help him pick the right one.

Mary Troy: A woman you once loved like no other. Now you take care of her daughter, Sophie.



Michael Troy: Your first commander and role model, but also a rival in love. When Sophie was born, he was Mary's husband.

Chang: You killed him with your own hands to get rid of the Alliance settlers on Moon.

In-game:

(Joseph) *You fell in love with Mary – you loved her more than anyone in the world. You looked up to Michael and Joseph became your best friend.*

(Sophie Troy) *Mary and Michael got married and seven months later, a little girl was born, Sophie.*

(Joseph) *The only option left was a counter attack – the only thing that had a chance of stopping the Alliance soldiers. Mary and Sophie would be able to get away and you would get a chance to avenge Joseph.*

They tore your skin into strips; they pulled your fingernails out; they fed electricity into your body and did many other terrible things to you.

(Mark O'Connor) *In a prisoner exchange, you were released and swapped for O'Connor, and the difference between the two of you couldn't have been greater.*

(Sophie Troy) *She has been kind to you ever since and, even today, still calls you Uncle John. Sophie is the only person you truly care about.*

(Mark O'Connor) *O'Connor, Chang's shadow, had been gone that night. Never mind, you were ready to step into his shoes and take care of Chang until morning... In the basement of your hacienda, off course. Early in the morning, your men took Chang's body away in a sack and buried him behind the city perimeter.*

(Benedict Grey; Caroline Grey) *That's why, when Caroline Grey told you she was thinking of having her son Benedict elected, you thought it might work.*

(Mark O'Connor, William Taylor) *And, as if that wasn't enough, a couple of your men are down with Chang's disease, which has appeared for the first time in twelve years. You've asked O'Connor, the only capable pilot for miles around, to get the necessary medicine..*