“Uh.....I’m Captain Rick. Day 3 on the newly discovered planet **Ultron.** I can see...er rocks ... land...er”. “Damn ...... Do I have to do this everyday, Nat ? What am I supposed to tell a computer screen? I snapped. “Sir the video log is mandatory for every Captain, you know that. Describe your experience of this place,” said Natalie. Natalie is from planet **Myros** & has been my second-in-command & friend for three years now. We’re explorers , not scientists. They should leave these rocks to geologists. She smiled,” I agree sir, but you still have to fill the video log.” Just then I heard something scurry away about 2 feet from us. “Nat, did you hear that?” “Yes ,sir”. She had her gun in her hand & safety lock down. I followed suit. We crept forward, slowly, ready to shoot at the slightest hint of danger. We came up to a crater which had a spaceship that had crashed right in the middle. The spaceship was tiny , about the size of a drone. Suddenly,I saw a form scuttle behind the ship. **“HEY** ! We’re from the **RSS Nebula**. Get out where we can see you!” A tiny creature came outside with its hands up in the air. It was small, completely blue but was human- like in appearance. “ Nat , is this a citizen of Io?” “ You’re right sir, but this planet does not lie near any of their trade routes. How did he end up here? Do you think he knows of the ...........?” I understood her question. Planet Ultronhas large deposits of diamonds which had been discovered yesterday. If word of this got out, every thief within 10 light years would be here in a jiffy. “Let us find out, shall we?” I said. “We will not hurt you. Tell us why you are here. He picked up a broken metal box & held it up.” Is that a broken *translator* ? Oh great! Now we won’t even know what he is saying," sighed Natalie. “It's ok”, I said," The ships log will tell us what we want.” I went to the ship & tried to get it open. The alien seemed to understand what I wanted as he hurried over to help me. He gave instructions on the key pad & the log opened. We saw his ship being blown off course by a meteor belt & then saw him lose consciousness. His ship had continued to drift off course for days until it crash landed here. By the end of the video the screen was dulling & suddenly a small blast was heard from the front of the keypad. The alien groaned. “Sir, I think the memory chip got fried,” said Nat. The alien held up a small burnt microchip. “Hmm.... Without the ships log, no one will believe his story. Especially with the deposits on this planet. He would be put right into prison for trespassing on a planet under RSS jurisdiction. There is only one thing we can do. We’ll help him get off this planet.” “But sir, our satellites will surely see his ship, I’m sure it has already been spotted as it crashed.” “No, Nat our satellites are not active yet. Some technical glitch that’ll get sorted tomorrow. This little guy needs our help. Won’t you help me?” “Of course, I’ll help you. An innocent creature should not be put behind bars”, she smiled & I grinned back in response. I couldn’t have asked for a better partner. She was ready to break about 30 rules the RSS for this. We helped repair the ship’s engine & sent the alien away. He seemed really happy to be going & rally grateful to us.

Weeks passed by & we were transferred to Io for restocking ammo & other necessities. **Blaze** my third- in- command had convinced both of us into going on a trek to the Snow mountains with him. As we went deeper into the mountains, the weather got worse, the wind blew harder & harder until standing upright became an exertion for us. I tried to shout above the wind, “We have to turn back. The path is getting icy & dangerous. If our ropes get cut ........”

“So long Sir & Madame! “ Blaze suddenly shouted from afar. “Finally with you 2 dead, I’ll get the chance to become Captain!” I couldn’t believe my ears. He had led us to a trap, cut off our ropes & escaped with the GPS. The wind & snow didn’t allow us to see beyond a foot in front of our faces. “Sir the Snow Mountains are a labyrinth of tunnels. We’ll never escape without GPS!” shouted Natalie. “That creepy lowlife! He fooled us completely “. Bright lights flared up & a huge spotlight fell upon us. A loudspeaker blared, “We are here to help you. Come aboard the aero jet”. A huge aero jet materialised in front of us and its door fell open. We walked in to find the controls manned by tiny blue aliens. They looked exactly like the alien we had saved on Ultron. The alien we had saved stood up to greet us. In his hand he had a translator. “Sir I am the Commander of Defence of Io. We were testing our new aero jet under extreme conditions when we heard voices. We have recorded the entire conversation you had with the man who left you here to die. We will make sure that he is punished Sir. You and your comrade need not worry”. “I don’t know how to say thank you for all........” I began but he cut me off, “Sir, you are a kind man; you helped me when I was in dire need. This is the least I can do.” Nat & I looked at each other with the realization that we had just escaped death because of one good deed done weeks ago.

I walked on the grounds in front of the academy. Natalie caught up with me. “So what’s the verdict?” I asked. ”Oh Blaze is going to stay in jail for a very long time,” she replied. “Good, we need good men in the RSS, not power hungry fools.” “ Sir the next exploration ship is starting a month later, are you ready or do you think it’s time for a vacation?” “Vacation!” I exclaimed, “Exploring is my ideal vacation. I’m ready for anything.”