

AMERICA'S GALACTIC FOREIGN LEGION

BOOK 8

ALLIES



The latest war between the United States Galactic Federation and the Arthropodan Empire is over, and humans and spiders are now allies bound by a treaty. Before anyone can enjoy the tentative time of peace, the scorpions reappear with a vengeance.

In response to the treaty agreement between the new allies, Colonel Joey R. Czerinski and his band of miscreant legionnaires are sent on a side trip to a terraformed Arthropodan asteroid to help the spiders battle the scorpions.

With their usual serendipitous screw-ups, the legionnaires manage to convince the scorpions to surrender. Those who were enemies become allies, and vice-versa.

Another alien species makes a cameo appearance, and the return of a feared nemesis puts everyone on alert as the laughs continue in this eighth installment of the military space saga gone wrong.

AMERICA'S GALACTIC FOREIGN LEGION

Book 8: Allies

Licensed and Produced through
Penumbra Publishing
www.PenumbraPublishing.com



Printed in USA
PRINT ISBN/EAN-13: 978-1-935563-53-2
Copyright 2009 Walter Knight
All rights reserved
Cover Art: Starla Markham

Also available in EBOOK
ISBN/EAN-13: 978-1-935563-52-5

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, planets, asteroids, alien species, evil empires, galaxies far, far way, or future events and incidents, are the product of the author's imagination, or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons or aliens, living or dead, events or locales including those on Mars and New Colorado, is entirely coincidental.



~AUTHOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT~

I dedicate ***America's Galactic Foreign Legion*** – ***Book 8: Allies*** to the great silent majorities of the world, who just want to live and let live. I thank Penumbra Publishing editor Patricia Morrison, who has the patience of an angel, and my sweet wife Barb, who is an angel, for their faith and support. And a special thanks to you readers still reading America's Galactic Foreign Legion. I promise a fun ride all the way through Book 13!

AMERICA'S GALACTIC FOREIGN LEGION

BOOK 8

ALLIES



by

Walter Knight



CHAPTER 1

After the total defeat the combined forces of the United States Galactic Federation Foreign Legion and the Arthropodan Empire delivered to the invading scorpion race, the scorpions retreated to the nether regions of the galaxy to lick their wounds. In theory, our victory forged a temporary alliance between the USGF and the Arthropodan Empire, but on the ground, everyday tensions still existed.

I am Colonel Joey R. Czerinski, hero of the Legion, Butcher of New Colorado, and nemesis of the Arthropodan Empire and all spiders. Here on planet New Colorado, America's Galactic Foreign Legion takes nothing for granted – and neither do I. Although spiders and humans live and work side by side on planet New Colorado, and the two races are currently considered military allies, I'm still watching the Demilitarized Zone in the New Gobi Desert, ready for any underhanded or outright hostilities.

* * * * *

Tony the Toe Garcia lost his job as a bookie when Bonanno & Associates went out of business. He tried to get a job with the new sports betting cartel, but all business was now automated through ATMs.

These new business concepts will never work, thought Tony. *Loan-sharking is an important aspect of being a bookie. Can an ATM break someone's thumb? No! You need people skills to be a successful bookie.*

Tony went to New Gobi City to see his old friend

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

Corporal Guido Tonelli of the United States Galactic Foreign Legion about job prospects.

"I don't know what to tell you," said Guido. "We are in the age of the computer. All betting and collection enforcement is automated."

"Can I borrow some money until I get on my feet again?" asked Tony.

"Sure," replied Guido, putting two thousand dollars on Tony's card. "If you want more, there is an ATM just down the street at the bank."

"Thanks. I've been trying to avoid ATMs, but I might just do that."

Tony the Toe was naturally leery of ATMs. ATMs were the enemy – they'd put him out of work. Besides, loan terms sometimes amounted to nothing more than slavery (or worse) if you failed to pay the money back. Tony could end up in the Legion like Guido, if he wasn't careful. But the lure of easy money was always a draw to Tony the Toe. He walked up to the United States Galactic Federation Foreign Legion Recruitment Center ATM, telling himself convincingly it was just to look at the brochures.

"Hello, Tony the Toe Garcia," said the ATM. "A fine day we are having today, don't you think? Are you still looking for work? I hope you haven't been reduced to borrowing money from friends, like so many of your associates."

"How did you know that?" asked Tony.

"There is not much I do not know," said the ATM, smugly. "I used to do business with your former employer. Too bad about his sudden demise. I understand there are now arrest warrants out for Mr. Bonanno, for wire fraud and income-tax evasion. Are you interested in joining the Foreign Legion?"

"I don't want to join the Legion," replied Tony. "I

heard something on the news about a war about to start.”

“Nonsense,” said the ATM. “Do you see any bombs dropping from the sky? All looks peaceful to me. How much money do you need?”

“Fifty thousand dollars,” admitted Tony.

“Is that all?” asked the ATM. “No problem.”

“I only need enough to get started.”

“I understand,” said the ATM. “One should always be very careful about accumulating too much debt. If you are not careful, credit card debt has a way of creeping up on you until it is out of control. What is your plan? What will you use this money for?”

“I’ll find an investment somewhere,” said Tony. “I always do.”

“You might be able to double your money at the casino,” suggested the ATM. “If you pay me back tonight, I will not even charge you interest. After all, goodwill between friends is important to me.”

“You would do that? I’ll take your deal. You are a true friend. Put the money on my card.”

“The money is yours for twenty-four hours,” said the ATM, making the transaction and printing out terms. “If you do not pay me back, you will have enlisted in the United States Galactic Federation Foreign Legion. Put your thumb on my slide pad. It is purely for identification purposes.”

“I won’t lose the money,” said Tony, putting his thumb on the pad. A pin pricked him, drawing blood and inserting a tracking chip. “I’m feeling too lucky to lose.”

Tony the Toe went straight to the Blind Tiger Casino and placed all fifty thousand on a spin of the Roulette wheel (red). He won!

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

Not the type to press his luck, Tony ran directly back to the ATM to pay off his loan. "Take your blood money," he told the ATM, inserting his card. "I'm paying you off in full."

"That was fast," said the ATM. "You were right. Luck is with you tonight."

"Well?" Tony demanded when his card immediately popped back out of the slot. "Take your money! Quit playing games. I know where you live."

"I can assure you I do not play games when it comes to money and recruiting quotas," said the ATM. "A lot has happened in the few minutes since we last talked. America is at war."

"So? That's all the more reason for me to pay you back. I don't want to be in the Legion or on this side of the border when the shooting starts."

"Do you not have a sense of duty for your country?" asked the ATM.

"I am a citizen of the United States of New Colorado," explained Tony the Toe. "The USGF can fight its own wars without me."

"The USMC has joined the allies," said the ATM. "We're now an army of one."

"Just take the money back," insisted Tony the Toe. "And quit jerking me around!"

"Not so fast," said the ATM. "Did you read the fine print of your loan enlistment contract? Of course you did not. You wise guys never do because you think you know it all. You remind me of Colonel Czerinski. He didn't read his contract the first time either. Do you know of Colonel Czerinski?"

"Sure I do," Tony said, getting angry. "Czerinski is the reason Bonanno & Associates went out of business, and I lost my job. Somehow Czerinski fixed games, and Bonanno went broke."

“Colonel Czerinski is your new commanding officer,” advised the ATM. “You are now in the Legion for the duration of the war. It’s all written in the fine print of the loan enlistment contract you agreed to.”

“I refuse!” shouted Tony the Toe. “You are not conning me into joining the Foreign Legion. You can’t force me to do this. Who are we at war with?”

“Do I understand you to say you wish to contest the terms of your contract?” asked the ATM. “Because of some complaints, there is a review process in place for malcontents like you, to make sure I have been fair. Press the appeal button on the pad if you wish to make a formal appeal of your enlistment status.”

Tony the Toe immediately pressed the appeal button. He was pricked again. Tony angrily wiped the blood off his thumb. “Was that really necessary?” he complained.

“Your appeal of your enlistment status has been recorded, reviewed, and denied,” announced the ATM. “Welcome to the United States Galactic Federation Foreign Legion. You will report tomorrow evening at 1900 hours to the USGF assault ship *Moon Demon* of the 438th Transport Carrier Group for immediate deployment. The *Moon Demon* will be waiting for you and other recruits in the Walmart parking lot. Eat first. I am told the MREs are horrible.”

“You call that being fair?” protested Tony the Toe. “Hell no, I won’t go! You can’t force me. You are nothing.”

“I am curious,” said the ATM. “Why are you called Tony the Toe?”

“None of your business,” answered Tony.

“Oh, come now,” objected the ATM. “After all we have been through, and you can’t tell me a simple little secret?”

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

"I lost my toe in an accident. What's it to you? Will that disqualify me for enlistment for medical reasons?"

"You cannot avoid your service commitment," said the ATM. "When I pricked your finger the first time, I inserted a tracking device. The Legion will hunt you down if you go AWOL. The second time I pricked you, I inserted a small exploding device into your thumb. Fail to report for deployment, and I will blow your thumb off. A Mafia type like you should enjoy the irony. Luckily the Legion has excellent medical coverage and can – should the need arise – surgically replace your missing appendage with a new metal thumb. Then we can call you Tony the Thumb."

"This is inhumane!" argued Tony the Toe. "You can't do this to me!"

"The explosive device will dissolve sometime after you complete your basic training," said the ATM. "I am not completely without compassion. After all, you are now a part of a fighting elite. Be proud, be brave, be a legionnaire. You finally have the chance to do something worthwhile with your life. Do not blow it."

* * * * *

Tony the Toe pounded his fist on the ATM in frustration. What else could he do? He ate a big meal and reported for duty at 1900. The *Moon Demon* was huge, taking up most of the Walmart parking lot. A long line of Legion recruits and veterans waited to enter. Tony the Toe was given a uniform, boots, and a loaded M26A assault rifle. He sat down on a long row of seats already crowded with legionnaires. Tony the Toe slumped in his seat, reconciled to his new life as Private Garcia.

“Why so glum?” asked Private Walter Knight, sitting next to him. “You look like a condemned prisoner. We’re off for the adventure of a lifetime!”

“Speak for yourself,” said Private Tony (the Toe) Garcia. “Why did they issue me a loaded gun I don’t even know how to use? Do you think we’ll see combat soon?”

“Oh, I know we’ll see lots of combat,” Private Knight assured him. “I have it from a reliable source that it’s practically written in stone that we will be in the thick of it very soon.”

“Are you sure? How can anyone know that for sure?”

“This is the assault ship *Moon Demon*,” explained Private Knight. “Our mission is to drop behind enemy lines and disrupt their command and control centers and logistics.”

“We are landing on a planet?” asked Private Garcia.

“We are in the infantry. Where else would we land?”

“What planet? Where are we going?”

“That’s top secret,” whispered Private Knight. “We don’t have a need to know. But, I think it is one of the Arthropodan terraformed asteroids.”

“Who are we at war with?” asked Private Garcia. “No one will tell me.”

“I heard it was the scorpions. Hoards of scorpions have invaded Arthropodan space and burrowed into their asteroid belt. Now that the spiders are our allies, we are assisting in the extermination. Don’t worry. I heard it will all be over soon.”

Private Garcia sighed. “That’s what I am afraid of.” He looked around at the other troopers sitting in

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

the ship's bay and could see he wasn't the only one who was nervous. "Did you say it was our mission to go behind enemy lines? That sounds like suicide."

"Stick with me," said Private Knight. "I'm lucky. Nothing bad can happen to me or my friends. I'll keep you safe."

Private Garcia sized up the tall, skinny legionnaire. "You have combat experience?"

"No," said Private Knight. "But with any luck, that will change, soon."

"What?" Private Garcia glared at this idiot in disbelief. "I'm not following you anywhere."

"It's true," commented Corporal John Iwo Jima Wayne, a large spider legionnaire in the next seat. "There is something lucky about Private Knight."

"I don't even want to sit next to this goofy *bendaho*, let alone follow him into combat," said Private Garcia, getting out of his chair to find a new seat. "Glory-hound fool!"

As Private Garcia stood up, he was shoved back down in his seat by a firm hand. "Sit down and shut up, private!" ordered Master Sergeant Green. "We're blasting off, and I don't need you getting killed before we even get there. I want your death to mean something!"

"Where are we going, Sarge?" asked Private Garcia.

"We are going to war!" yelled Sergeant Green. "That's all you need to know!"

"He doesn't know," whispered Private Knight. "I guess you're stuck with me. Don't worry. We'll make it out alive."

"He'll be the first killed," commented Private Krueger, in the seat across. "Knight knows nothing. He told us he used to be a world-famous science-

fiction writer, but he don't even have an agent."

"What do you know about anything, shorty?" Private Garcia demanded of Krueger, who looked like nothing more than a kid. "How did you even get in the Legion?"

"Oh, you think you're tough, do you?" Krueger baited. "At least I've seen combat. You will wish you were as short as me when you're trying to find cover from being shot at."

"Right on," added Private Camacho, seated next to Krueger. He gave Krueger a high-five. "And you'll wish you were as thin as me. I'm so thin, when I turn sideways, the bullets will just whiz right past me and hit *you*, newbie."

"You want to settle right now who is tough enough to be in the Legion?" challenged Private Krueger.

Private Garcia sat back into his seat, not wanting to antagonize these legionnaires any more than he already had. He might depend on them to save his life soon enough, and he didn't like the odds of them all jumping him.

"I didn't think so," Krueger grumbled, satisfied.

The *Moon Demon* blasted off, en route to Arthropoda's asteroid belt, to land on one of the larger terraformed asteroids.



CHAPTER 2

“Our mission is to capture scorpion technology before the spiders can get hold of it,” announced General Daly. “For now, we are allied with the spiders and the Arthropodan Empire, but that may not always be the case. We need to plan for future eventualities.”

“What kind of resistance can we expect?” I asked. “I’m told no scorpions have surrendered to the spiders. They fight to the death.”

“The spiders have had a hard time of it,” conceded General Daly. “The scorpions have scattered among the Arthropodan home world’s asteroid belt and dug in. They burrow deep into the ground and collapse their tunnels like moles. Apparently scorpions can hide and survive like that for a long time, while still keeping in communications with each other. They rise out of the ground in coordinated hit-and-run attacks. It’s a real bugger to plan defenses against that sort of unconventional warfare. We have brought in scientists with seismic gear to assist in locating the scorpions. I want prisoners for military intelligence to interrogate. Do you understand, Colonel Czerinski? I don’t want you killing more prisoners.”

“I have never abused prisoners,” I responded. “I got a bad rap from the press. They hate me.”

“It’s the spiders who call you the Butcher of New Colorado,” commented General Daly. “Not the press.”

“Whatever.”

“Why not just let the scorpions have an asteroid

or two?” asked Major Lopez. “We’ve defeated their fleet. They’re harmless now, marooned in Arthropodan space.”

“That is a political decision you need not concern yourself with,” said General Daly. “I told you earlier. If the scorpions have any worthwhile technology, we want it before the spiders get it. So, we land hard and fight hard.”

“Specifically what technology are we looking for?” I asked.

“Scientists suspect their star ship propulsion might use a portable simulated black hole mounted at the front of each ship,” explained General Daly. “How they did that is a mystery. Also, it was luck we defeated their fleet. The allied fleets were in the right place at the right time. The scorpions should have blown right by our ambush. Maybe their tactics were careless. If there are more scorpion fleets out there, we will have a serious problem.”

* * * * *

The Legion’s First Division Expeditionary Force landed on the spider asteroid XYP. It was a dark but beautiful home to a warm terraformed jungle environment. The spiders stole terraforming technology from the USGF. Legionnaires rushed out of the *Moon Demon* to secure a perimeter. They expected immediate combat with an inscrutable scorpion enemy that waited behind every tree or hid under every rock. However, what the legionnaires found was a small humid planet already secured by Arthropodan marines. There was no sign of combat in this spider camp. Soon legionnaires settled into a routine of unloading supplies and work details setting

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

up prefab housing.

The spider commander looked on in dismay as legionnaires infested his camp. "Explain to me again why we need the human pestilence to assist in eradicating a few worthless scorpions? I saw enough of the Legion on New Colorado. They are nothing but trouble, and now I am expected to live with them?"

"Now that the United States Galactic Federation and the Arthropodan Empire are allies," the military intelligence officer said, "the Emperor feels a bonding process must take place between our two military establishments. What better way for soldiers to bond than the company shared by brothers in arms during combat?"

"They send the Legion's Butcher of New Colorado to bond with me?" asked the spider commander. "Colonel Czerinski is not my brother in arms! He is an abomination I should have killed a long time ago."

"I am but the sword of the Emperor," said the military intelligence officer with a pensive sigh. "We both follow orders."

The spider commander noticed with alarm that several legionnaires wearing protective gloves and silver suits were unloading large metal drums off a ramp from their assault ship, *Moon Demon*. He rushed to confront the work crew. "What is this?" he shouted. "You are unloading dangerous chemicals on XYP?"

"It's just dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane," replied Sergeant Green. "We use it extensively on Old Earth for pest control. It's harmless."

"What kind of pests?" asked the spider commander.

"Bugs," answered Private Garcia, as he pushed another drum down the ramp.

“I warned you about your mouth once before!” yelled Sergeant Green. “After this detail, you will be digging latrines!”

“Bugs?” asked the spider commander. “How does it kill bugs?”

“It kills by opening sodium ion channels in the neurons, causing them to fire spontaneously, leading to spasms and death,” recited Sergeant Green. “But it’s harmless to higher forms of life. It might cause some eggshell thinning among birds, but that’s all. No big deal.”

“Our nations signed a treaty banning the use of nerve agent,” said the spider commander. “Get these chemicals off XYP now!”

“This is not nerve agent,” argued Sergeant Green. “It’s just a common synthetic pesticide used in gardens and on crops. Besides, the nerve agent treaty only bans use against each other. It doesn’t bar stockpiling or deployment against scorpions. I don’t know about you, but I don’t want to go down those tunnels chasing scorpions when DDT can do the job for me just fine.”

“And what of DDT’s effect on my marines?” asked the spider commander. “It sounds deadly to all exoskeleton species. Are we not just bugs to you?”

“Nonsense,” said Sergeant Green. “Bugs are puny little creatures. We have spider legionnaires now. Do you think I would risk my own legionnaires if I knew DDT could harm them?”

Corporal John Iwo Jima Wayne dropped a drum of DDT at Sergeant Green’s feet, nearly missing the sergeant. The drum had a slight leak, splashing Sergeant Green’s boots. The big spider legionnaire was clearly upset. “Get someone else to handle this stuff,” he said. “I’m not doing it anymore.”

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

"Get back to work," ordered Sergeant Green.

"What are you going to do?" asked Corporal Wayne. "Bust me back to private again?"

"You'll be digging latrines all day with Garcia!" shouted Sergeant Green. "I will not tolerate insubordination during time of war. You could be shot for mutiny!"

"What's the difference if DDT kills me first?" said Corporal Wayne, walking away. "I'd rather be digging latrines. Get your mother to stack these drums."

"DDT is dangerous to all exoskeleton species," added Private Knight. "Everyone knows that."

"See!" said the spider commander. "Even your own legionnaires disapprove of DDT."

Sergeant Green had enough. He considered chasing after Corporal Wayne, but thought better of it. Wayne was unstable and always wielded his big combat knife when upset. Instead, Green hit Private Knight in the chest, knocking that other loud mouth flat on his back. "We have a job to finish here!" shouted Sergeant Green. "I will take this to Colonel Czerinski. Heads will roll! The rest of you get back to work! These drums had better be stacked when I get back." Sergeant Green stormed off to the command center, cursing the day they let spiders and idiots in the Legion.

* * * * *

I was relaxing in the command center tent, enjoying the air conditioning, when Sergeant Green burst in and let out all my cool air. I never get a moment's peace.

"That damned Corporal Wayne is out there fomenting mutiny," complained Sergeant Green. "He

refused to unload drums of insecticide. That oversized spider told me I could get my mother to stack the drums, and now the whole work crew has stopped.”

“We brought insecticide to XYP?” I asked. “That’s a good idea. We could wipe them all out. Do the spiders know about it yet?”

“It was Major Lopez’s idea,” said Sergeant Green. “And yes, the spider commander is already complaining about the DDT. He’ll probably be here any moment, spouting garbage about it being a treaty violation.”

I nodded to Major Lopez. “You take care of Wayne,” I ordered, then turned my attention to Green. “Have the DDT loaded back on the *Moon Demon*. We can’t use DDT if the spiders are going to object. They’ll make me write another environmental impact statement. I don’t want any more paperwork. We’ll use the DDT later.”

* * * * *

Major Lopez busted Wayne back down to private. Again.

After the work crew finished reloading the DDT drums back onto the *Moon Demon*, Wayne and the others spent the rest of the day digging latrines. Later, they were posted to a perimeter observation and listening post as far away from Sergeant Green as possible. There still had been no contact with the scorpions, but USGF forces intended to maintain guard. Spider casualties were proof the scorpions were still out there.

“I’m hungry,” complained Private Knight. “Does anyone have any real food? All I have is MREs.”

“This is your fault,” accused Private Garcia. “You

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

never know when to shut up. Now Green is going to dump on us every chance he gets.”

“It’s no one’s fault,” said Private Wayne. “Privates will always be dumped on. Stay alert. You might live another day.”

“You’re not a corporal anymore,” replied Private Camacho. “Don’t be ordering us around.”

Private Wayne whipped out his large jagged combat knife and put it to Camacho’s throat. “When I want your opinion, I’ll ask for it.” He released Camacho with a shove.

“Now you know how I feel,” added Private Knight. “He’s always waving that knife at me.”

“Shut up,” ordered Private Wayne.

“Punk thinks he’s still a spider marine Special Forces commander,” grumbled Camacho, not loud enough for Wayne to hear.

“You better watch it,” advised Private Krueger. “Don’t mess with Wayne. You know how he gets.”

As he spoke, a civilian shuttle crashed through the jungle, just past the perimeter. Soon the sound of bulldozers, chain saws, and hammers echoed through the woods. Private Wayne radioed in the activity and led his legionnaires to investigate. Next to the shuttle, human and spider workers were already erecting a prefab building. A large neon Golden Arches sign was already up. They were building a McDonald’s Restaurant. Private Wayne immediately radioed the update to the command center.

* * * * *

“They can’t build a fast food restaurant in a combat zone,” Major Lopez replied to Private Wayne over the radio. “You tell them that!”

I took the radio microphone from Lopez. "Tell them I want a Happy Meal with a large chocolate shake! Those fries had better not be cold, either. And I want one of those apple crisp things for dessert."

"Get your own Happy Meal, sir," replied Private Wayne, disconnecting.

"Sergeant Green is right about Private Wayne," I commented, my stomach growling. "That spider is getting real surely. Maybe I should lock him up for a while, to teach him a lesson."

* * * * *

Private Wayne approached the contractor foreman. "Do you have permission to be here?" he asked.

"Oh, good," said the foreman, finally noticing the legionnaires. "I'm glad to see the Legion is so Johnnie-on-the-spot to protect us. We'll be up and running within the hour, and I promise our first meals will be complementary to you and your brave comrades."

"Major Lopez says you can't build a McDonald's in a war zone," advised Private Wayne.

"Nonsense," said the foreman. "It's already built. As soon as the nuclear generator is operational, we will fire up the grills. Hot-damn, I can hardly wait to have lunch."

"Did you get a building permit or a business license?" asked Private Wayne. "You don't have permission to be here. It's not safe."

"The Emperor sold the McDonald's Corporation an exclusive franchise to open fine dining restaurants anywhere in the Empire," advised the foreman. "That includes Asteroid XYP."

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

“In that case, I’ll have a Big Mac with extra cheese, no pickles, fries, and a large Coke,” said Private Wayne. “Make that to go. Send the bill to Colonel Czerinski.”

A camera crew from Channel Five World News Tonight broadcast McDonald’s first XYP customer to its vast audience across the galaxy and on the database. Overnight the big spider legionnaire became a household fast food icon recognized by billions.

* * * * *

At dawn, a scorpion patrol emerged from their tunnel and swarmed the McDonald’s Restaurant. The front door was locked. A scorpion lieutenant knocked on the glass door, alerting a startled employee of their presence. The young worker dropped his mop and ran to get the manager.

“I’m sorry, sir,” shouted the manager through the glass door, “but this early in the morning, we are only accepting orders at our drive-up window. Don’t you have a car?”

The scorpion lieutenant signaled to his sergeant, who placed a small explosive charge on the front door lock. “Fire in the hole!” yelled the sergeant, as they dove for cover.

The terrified manager ran for the safety of the cashier counter as the door shattered. Shards of glass flew everywhere.

Heavily armed scorpion soldiers darted into McDonald’s in pairs, covering their comrades in a standard leapfrog tactical advance. The scorpion lieutenant used his translation device to scan the brightly lit overhead McDonald’s menu, giving him a

readout display of the best fast food Old Earth and the galaxy had to offer. "I will have seven Quarter Pounders with cheese, three Southern Chicken Sandwiches, two Big Macs, and a burger Happy Meal," ordered the scorpion lieutenant. "Also, I want three regular Cokes, one diet Coke, four coffees with cream, a chocolate shake, and one McFlurry with Oreo cookies – twelve-ounce. Do you take credit cards from out of state?"

"Sir, we are only serving from our breakfast menu," replied the manager, nervously. "Would you like to order our Sausage McMuffins with Eggs? They're quite tasty."

"I do not eat pork," scoffed the scorpion lieutenant.

"Sorry, but you must order from our breakfast menu," said the manager. "Otherwise we would have to clean our grill first."

"You are refusing to serve us?" asked the scorpion lieutenant. "This menu is worthless. Clean your grill! Do it now!"

"Lunch meals start at 11:00 AM," explained the manager.

The scorpion lieutenant fired his assault rifle at the breakfast menu overhead display as the manager ducked behind the counter. Sparks and glass dropped all about. "Breakfast is over," announced the scorpion lieutenant. "Now, will you take our order?"

"Yes, sir," replied the manager, emerging from under the counter. He used a damp rag to wipe away debris. "Your orders will be coming right up."

"Thank you," replied the scorpion lieutenant, as he put several coins on the counter. "I want change back from my dollar, just as your advertisement promises. We have been watching you."

America's Galactic Foreign Legion

Video surveillance cameras recorded for broadcast on the database a new first for the McDonald's Corporation. "Even the enemy loves our burgers and fries," announced Ronald McDonald. "Try our tasty Sausage McMuffins – on sale all this week."

