



WALTER M. MILLER, JR.
I Made You

IT HAD DISPOSED of the enemy, and it was weary. It sat on the crag by night. Gaunt, frigid, wounded, it sat under the black sky and listened to the land with its feet, while only its dislike ear moved in slow patterns that searched the surface of the land and the sky. The land was silent, airless. Nothing moved, except the feeble thing that scratched in the cave. It was good that nothing moved. It hated sound and motion. It was in its nature to hate them. About the thing in the cave, it could do nothing until dawn. The thing muttered in the rocks

"Help me! Are you all dead? Can't you hear me? This is Sawyer. Sawyer calling anybody, Sawyer calling anybody—"

The mutterings were irregular, without pattern. It filtered them out, refusing to listen. All was seeping cold. The sun was gone, and there had been near-blackness for two hundred and fifty hours, except for the dim light of the sky-orb which gave no food, and the stars by which it told the time.

It sat wounded on the crag and expected the enemy. The enemy had come charging into the world out of the unworld during the late afternoon. The enemy had come brazenly, with neither defensive maneuvering nor offensive fire. It had destroyed them easily—first the big lumbering enemy that rumbled along on wheels, and then the small enemies that scurried away from the gutted hulk. It had picked them off one at a time, except for the one that crept into the cave and hid itself beyond a break in the tunnel.

It waited for the thing to emerge. From its vantage point atop the crag, it could scan broken terrain for miles around, the craters and crags and fissures, the barren expanse of dust-flat that stretched to the west, and the squarish outlines of the holy place near the tower that was the center of the world. The cave lay at the foot of a cliff to the southeast, only a thousand yards from the crag. It could guard the entrance to the cave with its small spitters, and there was no escape for the lingering trace of enemy.

It bore the mutterings of the hated thing even as it bore the pain of its wounds, patiently, waiting for a time of respite. For many sunrises there had been pain, and still the wounds were unrepaired. The wounds dulled some of its senses and crippled some of its activators. It could no longer follow the flickering beam of energy that would lead it safely into the unworld and across it to the place of creation. It could no longer blink out the pulses that reflected the difference between healer and foe. Now there was only foe.

"Colonel Aubrey, this is Sawyer. Answer me! I'm trapped in a supply cache. I think the others are dead. It blasted us as soon as we came near. Aubrey from



Sawyer, Aubrey from Sawyer. Listen! I've got only one cylinder of oxygen left, you hear? Colonel, answer me!"

Vibrations in the rock, nothing more—only a minor irritant to disturb the blessed stasis of the world it guarded. The enemy was destroyed, except for the lingering trace in the cave. The lingering trace was neutralized however, and did not move.

Because of its wounds, it nursed a brooding anger. It could not stop the damage signals that kept firing from its wounded members, but neither could it accomplish the actions that the agonizing signals urged it to accomplish. It sat and suffered and hated on the crag.

It hated the night, for by night there was no food. Each day it devoured sun, strengthened itself for the long, long watch of darkness, but when dawn came, it was feeble again, and hunger was a fierce passion within. It was well, therefore, that there was peace in the night, that it might conserve itself and shield its bowels from the cold. If the cold penetrated the insulating layers, thermal receptors would begin firing warning signals, and agony would increase. There was much agony. And, except in time of battle, there was no pleasure except in devouring sun.

To protect the holy place, to restore stasis to the world, to kill enemy—these were the pleasures of battle. It knew them.

And it knew the nature of the world. It had learned every inch of land out to the pain perimeter, beyond which it could not move. And it had learned the surface features of the demiworld beyond, learned them by scanning with its long-range senses. The world, the demiworld, the unworld—these were Outside, constituting the universe.

"Help me, help me, help me! This is Captain John Harbin Sawyer, Autocyber Corps, Instruction and Programming Section, currently of Salvage Expedition Lunar-Sixteen. Isn't anybody alive on the Moon? Listen! Listen to me! I'm sick. I've been here God knows how many days ... in a suit. It stinks. Did you ever live in a suit for days? I'm sick. Get me out of here!"

The enemy's place was unworld. If the enemy approached closer than the outer range, it must kill; this was a basic truth that it had known since the day of creation. Only the healers might move with impunity over all the land, but now the healers never came. It could no longer call them nor recognize them—because of the wound.

It knew the nature of itself. It learned of itself by introspecting damage, and by internal scanning. It alone was "being." All else was of the outside. It knew its functions, its skills, its limitations. It listened to the land with its feet. It scanned the surface with many eyes. It tested the skies with a flickering probe. In the ground, it felt the faint seisms and random noise. On the surface, it saw



the faint glint of starlight, the heat-loss from the cold terrain, and the reflected pulses from the tower. In the sky, it saw only stars, and heard only the pulse-echo from the faint orb of Earth overhead. It suffered the gnawings of ancient pain, and waited for the dawn.

After an hour, the thing began crawling in the cave. It listened to the faint scraping sounds that came through the rocks. It lowered a more sensitive pickup and tracked the sounds. The remnant of enemy was crawling softly toward the mouth of the cave. It turned a small spitter toward the black scar at the foot of the Earthlit cliff. It fired a bright burst of tracers toward the cave, and saw them ricochet about the entrance in bright but noiseless streaks over the airless land.

"You dirty greasy deadly monstrosity, let me alone! You ugly juggernaut, I'm Sawyer. Don't you remember? I helped to train you ten years ago. You were a rookie under me . . . heh heh! Just a dumb autocyber rookie ... with the firepower of a regiment. Let me go. Let me go!"

The enemy-trace crawled toward the entrance again. And again a noiseless burst of machine-gun fire spewed about the cave, driving the enemy fragment back. More vibrations in the rock

"I'm your friend. The war's over. It's been over for months . . . Earthmonths. Don't you get it, Grumbler? 'Grumbler'—we used to call you that back in your rookie days—before we taught you how to kill. Grumbler. Mobile autocyber fire control. Don't you know your pappy, son?"

The vibrations were an irritant. Suddenly angry, it wheeled around on the crag, gracefully maneuvering its massive bulk. Motors growling, it moved from the crag onto the hillside, turned again, and lumbered down the slope. It charged across the flatlands and braked to a halt fifty yards from the entrance to the cave. Dust geysers sprayed up about its caterpillars and fell like jets of water in the airless night. It listened again. All was silent in the cave.

"Go 'way, sonny," quavered the vibrations after a time. *"Let pappy starve in peace."*

It aimed the small spitter at the center of the black opening and hosed two hundred rounds of tracers into the cave. It waited. Nothing moved inside. It debated the use of radiation grenade, but its arsenal was fast depleting. It listened for a time, watching the cave, looming five times taller than the tiny flesh-thing that cowered inside. Then it turned and lumbered back across the flat to resume its watch from the crag. Distant motion, out beyond the limits of the demiworld, scratched feebly at the threshold of its awareness—but the motion was too remote to disturb.

The thing was scratching in the cave again.



"I'm punctured, do you hear? I'm punctured. A shard of broken rock. Just a small leak, but a slap-patch won't hold. My suit! Aubrey from Sawyer, Aubrey from Sawyer. Base Control from Moonwagon Sixteen, Message for you, over. He he. Gotta observe procedure. I got shot! I'm punctured. Help!"

The thing made whining sounds for a time, then: *"All right, it's only my leg. I'll pump the boot full of water and freeze it. So I lose a leg. Whatthehell, take your time."* The vibrations subsided into whining sounds again.

It settled again on the crag, its activators relaxing into a lethargy that was full of gnawing pain. Patiently it awaited the dawn.

The movement toward the south was increasing. The movement nagged at the outer fringes of the demiworld, until at last the movement became an irritant. Silently, a drill slipped down from its belly. The drill gnawed deep into the rock, then retracted. It slipped a sensitive pickup into the drill hole and listened carefully to the ground.

A faint purring in the rocks—mingled with the whining from the cave.

It compared the purring with recorded memories. It remembered similar purrings. The sound came from a rolling object far to the south. It tried to send the pulses that asked "Are you friend or foe," but the sending organ was inoperative. The movement, therefore, was enemy—but still beyond range of its present weapons.

Lurking anger, and expectation of battle. It stirred restlessly on the crag, but kept its surveillance of the cave. Suddenly there was disturbance on a new sensory channel, vibrations similar to those that came from the cave; but this time the vibrations came across the surface, through the emptiness, transmitted in the long-wave spectra.

"Moonwagon Sixteen from Command Runabout, give us a call. Over."

Then silence. It expected a response from the cave, at first—since it knew that one unit of enemy often exchanged vibratory patterns with another unit of enemy. But no answer came. Perhaps the long-wave energy could not penetrate the cave to reach the thing that cringed inside.

"Salvage Sixteen, this is Aubrey's runabout. What the devil happened to you? Can you read me? Over!"

Tensely it listened to the ground. The purring stopped for a time as the enemy paused. Minutes later, the motion resumed.

It awoke an emissary ear twenty kilometers to the southwest, and commanded the ear to listen, and to transmit the patterns of the purring noise. Two soundings were taken, and from them, it derived the enemy's precise position and velocity. The enemy was proceeding to the north, into the edge of the demiworld. Lurking anger flared into active fury. It gunned its engines on



the crag. It girded itself for battle.

"Salvage Sixteen, this is Aubrey's runabout. I assume your radio rig is unoperative. If you can hear us, get this: we're proceeding north to five miles short of magnapult range. We'll stop there and fire an autocyb rocket into zone Red-Red. The warhead's a radio-to-sonar transceiver. If you've got a seismitter that's working, the transceiver will act as a relay stage. Over."

It ignored the vibratory pattern and rechecked its battle gear. It introspected its energy storage, and tested its weapon activators. It summoned an emissary eye and waited a dozen minutes while the eye crawled crablike from the holy place to take up a watch-post near the entrance of the cave. If the enemy remnant tried to emerge, the emissary eye would see, and report, and it could destroy the enemy remnant with a remote grenade catapult.

The purring in the ground was louder. Having prepared itself for the fray, it came down from the crag and grumbled southward at cruising speed. It passed the gutted hulk of the Moonwagon, with its team of overturned tractors. The detonation of the magnapult canister had broken the freightcar sized vehicle in half. The remains of several two-legged enemy appurtenances were scattered about the area, tiny broken things in the pale Earthlight. Grumbler ignored them and charged relentlessly south-ward.

A sudden wink of light on the southern horizon! Then a tiny dot of flame arced upward, traversing the heavens. Grumbler skidded to a halt and tracked its path. A rocket missile. It would fall somewhere in the east half of zone Red-Red. There was no time to prepare to shoot it down. Grumbler waited—and saw that the missile would explode harmlessly in a nonvital area.

Seconds later, the missile paused in flight, reversing direction and sitting on its jets. It dropped out of sight behind an outcropping. There was no explosion. Nor was there any activity in the area where the missile had fallen. Grumbler called an emissary ear, sent it migrating toward the impact point to listen, then continued South toward the pain perimeter.

"Salvage Sixteen, this is Aubrey's runabout," came the long-wave vibrations. *"We just shot the radio-seismitter relay into Red-Red. If you're within five miles of it, you should be able to hear."*

Almost immediately, a response from the cave, heard by the emissary ear that listened to the land near the tower: *"Thank God! He he he he—Oh, thank God!"*

And simultaneously, the same vibratory pattern came in long-wave patterns from the direction of the missile-impact point. Grumbler stopped again, momentarily confused, angrily tempted to lob a magnapult canister across the broken terrain toward the impact mint_ Rut the emis-



sary ear reported no physical movement from the area. The enemy to the south was the origin of the disturbances. If it removed the major enemy first, it could remove the minor disturbances later. It moved on to the pain perimeter, occasionally listening to the meaningless vibrations caused by the enemy.

"Salvage Sixteen from Aubrey. I hear you faintly. Who is this, Carhill?"

"Aubrey! A voice —A real voice—Or am I going nuts?"

"Sixteen from Aubrey, Sixteen from Aubrey. Stop babbling and tell me who's talking. What's happening in there? Have you got Grumbler immobilized?"

Spasmodic choking was the only response.

"Sixteen from Aubrey. Snap out of it! Listen, Sawyer, I know it's you. Now get hold of yourself, man! What's happened?"

"Dead . . . they're all dead but me."

"STOP THAT IDIOTIC LAUGHING!"

A long silence, then, scarcely audible: *"O.K., I'll hold onto myself. Is it really you, Aubrey?"*

"You're not having hallucinations, Sawyer. We're crossing zone Red in a runabout. Now tell me the situation. We've been trying to call you for days."

"Grumbler let us get ten miles into zone Red-Red, and then he clobbered-us with a magnapult canister."

"Wasn't your I.F.F. working?"

"Yes, but Grumbler's isn't. After he blasted the wagon, he picked off the other four that got out alive—He he he he ... Did you ever see a Sherman tank chase a mouse, colonel?"

"Cut it out, Sawyer! Another giggle out of you, and I'll flay you alive."

"Get me out! My leg! Get me out!"

"If we can. Tell me your present situation."

"My suit ... I got a small puncture—Had to pump the leg full of water and freeze it. Now my leg's dead. I can't last much longer."

"The situation, Sawyer, the situation! Not your aches and pains."

The vibrations continued, but Grumbler screened them out for a time. There was rumbling fury on an Earthlit hill.

It sat with its engines idling, listening to the distant movements of the enemy to the south. At the foot of the hill lay the pain perimeter; even upon the hilltop, it felt the faint twinges of warning that issued from the tower, thirty kilometers to the rear at the center of the world. It was in communion with the tower. If it ventured beyond the perimeter, the communion would slip out-of-phase, and there would be blinding pain and detonation.

The enemy was moving more slowly now, creeping north across the demi-world. It would be easy to destroy the enemy at once, if only the supply of rocket missiles were not depleted. The range of the magnapult hurler was only



twenty-five kilometers. The small spitters would reach, but their accuracy was close to zero at such range. It would have to wait for the enemy to come closer. It nursed a brooding fury on the hill.

"Listen, Sawyer, if Grumbler's I.F.F. isn't working, why hasn't he already fired on this runabout?"

"That's what sucked us in too, Colonel. We came into zone Red and nothing happened. Either he's out of long-range ammo, or he's getting cagey, or both. Probably both."

"Mmmp! Then we'd better park here and figure some-thing out."

"Listen ... there's only one thing you can do. Call for a telecontrolled missile from the Base."

"To destroy Grumbler? You're out of your head, Sawyer. If Grumbler's knocked out, the whole area around the excavations gets blown sky high ... to keep them out of enemy hands. You know that."

"You expect me to care?"

"Stop screaming, Sawyer. Those excavations are the most valuable property on the Moon. We can't afford to lose them. That's why Grumbler was staked out. If they got blown to rubble, I'd be court-martialed before the debris quit falling."

The response was snarling and sobbing. *"Eight hours oxygen. Eight hours, you hear? You stupid, merciless—"*

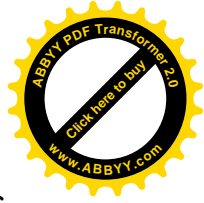
The enemy to the south stopped moving at a distance of twenty-eight kilometers from Grumbler's hill—only three thousand meters beyond magnapult range.

A moment of berserk hatred. It lumbered to-and-fro in a frustrated pattern that was like a monstrous dance, crushing small rocks beneath its treads, showering dust into the valley. Once it charged down toward the pain perimeter, and turned back only after the agony became unbearable. It stopped again on the bill, feeling the weariness of lowered energy supplies in the storage units.

It paused to analyze. It derived a plan.

Gunning its engines, it wheeled slowly around on the hilltop, and glided down the northern slope at a stately pace. It sped northward for half a mile across the flatland, then slowed to a crawl and maneuvered its massive bulk into a fissure, where it had cached an emergency store of energy. The battery-trailer had been freshly charged before the previous sundown. It backed into feeding position and attached the supply cables without hitching itself to the trailer.

It listened occasionally to the enemy while it drank hungrily from the



energy-store, but the enemy remained motionless. It would need every erg of available energy in I order to accomplish its plan. It drained the cache. Tomorrow, when the enemy was gone, it would drag the trailer back to the main feeders for recharging, when the sun rose to drive the generators once again. It kept several caches of energy at strategic positions throughout its domain, that it might never be driven into starved inability to act during the long lunar night. It kept its own house in order, dragging the trailers back to be recharged at regular intervals.

"I don't know what I can do for you, Sawyer," came the noise of the enemy. We don't dare destroy Grumbler, and there's not another autocyber crew on the Moon. I'll have to call Terra for replacements. I can't send men into zone Red-Red if Grumbler's running berserk. It'd be murder."

"For the love of God, Colonel—"

"Listen, Sawyer, you're the autocyber man. You helped train Grumbler. Can't you think of some way to stop him without detonating the mined area?"

A protracted silence. Grumbler finished feeding and came out of the fissure. It moved westward a few yards, so that a clear stretch of fiat land lay between itself and the hill at the edge of the pain perimeter, half a mile away. There it paused, and awoke several emissary ears, so that it might derive the most accurate possible fix of the enemy's position. One by one, the emissary ears reported.

"Well, Sawyer?" "My leg's killing me."

"Can't you think of anything?"

"Yeah—but it won't do me any good. I won't live ; t long."

"Well, let's hear it."

"Knock out his remote energy storage units, and t: run him ragged at night."

"How long would it take?"

"Hours—after you found all his remote supply i:...: and blasted them."

It analyzed the reports of the emissary ears, and calculated a precise position. The enemy runabout was 2.7 kilometers beyond the maximum range of the magnapultas creation had envisioned the maximum. But creation was imperfect, even inside.

It loaded a canister onto the magnapult's spindle. Contrary to the intentions of creation, it left the canister *locked to the loader*. This would cause pain. But it would prevent the canister from moving during the first few microseconds after the switch was closed, while the magnetic field was still building toward full strength. It would not release the canister until the field clutched it fiercely and with full effect, thus imparting slightly greater energy to the canister. This procedure it had invented for itself,



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"Well, Sawyer, if you can't think of anything else—"

"IDID THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE!" the answering vibrations screamed. *"Call for a telecontrolled missile! Can't you understand, Aubrey? Grumbler murdered eight men from your command."*

"You taught him how, Sawyer."

There was a long and ominous silence. On the flat land to the north of the hill, Grumbler adjusted the elevation of the magnapult slightly, keyed the firing switch to a gyro-scope, and prepared to charge. Creation had calculated the maximum range when the weapon was at a standstill.

"He he he he he—" came the patterns from the thing in the cave.

It gunned its engines and clutched the drive-shafts. It rolled toward the hill, gathering speed, and its mouth was full of death. Motors strained and howled. Like a thundering bull, it rumbled toward the south. It hit maximum velocity at the foot of the slope. It lurched sharply up-ward. As the magnapult swept up to correct elevation, the gyroscope closed the circuit.

A surge of energy. The clenching fist of the field gripped the canister, tore it free of the loader, hurled it high over the broken terrain toward the enemy. Grumbler skidded to a halt on the hilltop.

"Listen, Sawyer, I'm sorry, but there's nothing—"

The enemy's voice ended with a dull snap. A flare of light came briefly from the southern horizon, and died. *"He he he he he—"* said the thing in the cave.

Grumbler paused.

THRRRUMMMP! came the shocking wave through the rocks.

Five emissary ears relayed their recordings of the detonation from various locations. It studied them, it analyzed. The detonation had occurred less than fifty meters from the enemy runabout. Satiated, it wheeled around lazily on the hilltop and rolled northward toward the center of the world. All was well.

"Aubrey, you got cut off," grunted the thing in the cave. *"Call me, you coward ... call me. I want to make certain you hear."*

Grumbler, as a random action, recorded the meaningless noise of the thing in the cave, studied the noise, rebroadcast it on the long-wave frequency: *"Aubrey, you got cut off. Call me, you coward ... call me. I want to make certain you hear."*

The seismitter caught the long-wave noise and reintroduced it as vibration in the rocks.

The thing screamed in the cave. Grumbler recorded the screaming noise, and rebroadcast it several times.

"Aubrey ... Aubrey, where are you ... AUBREY! Don't desert me don't leave"



me here—"

The thing in the cave became silent.

It was a peaceful night. The stars glared unceasingly from the blackness and the pale terrain was haunted by Earthlight from the dim crescent in the sky. Nothing moved. It was good that nothing moved. The holy place was at peace in the airless world. There was blessed stasis.

Only once did the thing stir again in the cave. So slowly that Grumbler scarcely heard the sound, it crawled to the entrance and lay peering up at the steel behemoth on the crag.

It whispered faintly in the rocks. *"I made you, don't you understand? I'm human. I made you—"*

Then with one leg dragging behind, it pulled itself 'out into the Earthglow and turned as if to look up at the dim crescent in the sky. Gathering fury, Grumbler stirred on the crag, and lowered the black maw of a grenade launcher.

"I made you," came the meaningless noise.

It hated noise and motion. It was in its nature to hate them. Angrily, the grenade launcher spoke. And then there was blessed stasis for the rest of the night.