

# TEXT ADVENTURE

*'ATLAS  
SHIT'*

by  
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## 1

September, 1943.

“We’re all of us here aware that the invitations to this party were issued on a strict, SECRET NOFORN basis.”

Plinth Mold cleared his throat, resumed his speech.

“*Plus ça change*. But this gathering is hardly idiomatic basement protocol. Look around you. We’re none of us newcomers. *Old basement hands*. In fact, I would have to admit that the cultural fragmentation so often prophesied by our elders settled into equilibrium before many of us were even born.”

“Peed my mind, waiting.” Albert Lunsford looked as if he were having trouble controlling himself. He nodded rapidly, admitting to the commonly held misunderstanding. Perhaps he agreed to quickly.

“Those of us not from the United States should consider ourselves lucky to be here.”

Silence.

“This is not Russia; this is not China; this is not the place where they’re tearing down the wall. We attain to a higher standard.”

“Do these steps only if you really need them,” added Lunsford. Certain now that he had regained the upper hand.

“Excuse me, Albert, but I would appreciate it if you could pipe down and hold your remarks until after I’ve finished speaking.”

“First, state your assumptions,” retorted Lunsford. “I’m sick of your aimless pontificating in service to nothing at all.”

Plinth ignored the challenge. Albert always said too much.

## 2

December, 4063.

“It’s not yet clear if our ship is fast enough to manage the proposed maneuver. Here. Analysis?”

Piotr peered into his console before turning back to face the crew.

“We’ll want to divert additional resources to navigation and propulsion.” When there were no objections, Piotr continued the logical progression of commands.

“Team! Retrench assumptions! Gazes rearward!”

The RAGNAROK continued to drift in space.

The Rainbow Bridge loomed on screen, claiming a sizable portion of screen real estate. It was, in Piotr’s words, frighteningly beautiful. For their part, the crew still hadn’t responded to anything they had heard or seen. As was their usual mode, they continued to perform their duties in admirable silence.

Piotr consulted his leaf.

“Load the couches,” he said, leaning forward in his captain’s chair. “Cushions first.”

### 3

September, 1943.

“Through the visionless aether,” continued Plinth Mold, “Beyond the mortal line of sight.”

“Same old basement politics,” laughed Albert Lunsford. “This one goes out to all the teen mothers in the house. Risky behavior. Blind, irrational exuberance.”

“Atlas shit,” concluded Plinth Mold, and shrugged, accidentally triggering a squeal of feedback from his microphone. The error was captured, distributed. Throughout the basement, genres were born.

“Objectivists on break,” cracked Lunsford. “Competence sitting on the can. However will we get by?”

Plinth could offer no reply. He sat down in his seat just as dinner was finally being served. He could see now that there would be no getting through to his companions around the dinner table. You just couldn’t argue with dead weight.

He observed in himself the silent acknowledgment that he was not accustomed to surrendering so easily.

At length, he noticed the older boy, Thomas Bright, coolly monitoring the conflagration. Eye contact. A knowing look. This would be one to watch. Possibly, to remove from the board.

Anyway, it was his party. Let these people brush him off as a child. None of it mattered.

Plinth Mold stabbed a piece of cake with his fork.

### 4

December, 4063.

“Nine thirty-five. Physics packages away!”

Piotr shouted commentary into his commlink as a barrage of couches were ejected from their tubes. His narrative was terse, but complete. He had learned to avoid excess detail when dictating to ship’s logs. Mostly, he figured, a result of reading and enjoying Orwell. He made a private note to examine this influence more carefully when time allowed.

The couches went about their work.

In short order, the Rainbow Bridge collapsed. Its perimeter imploded and light rushed inward, inscribing perspectives unimagined. Piotr steered the ship manually, passing through the required stages before the Bridge could rebuild itself from its involuntary, fettered circumstance.

By now, the action had become as second nature. In fact, Piotr had contributed the initial papers outlining the methods involved. But something about this transition seemed off. Was it the framing? The timing? Something. Piotr jumped back in his seat as an unknown face filled his viewpoint, edging out all other objects on the main screen.

“Piotr Bright. Age seventeen. Captain of his own mother.”





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