

The Amazing Galaxy-Man
by Brent Bunn

Preface

In a galaxy not so far away, so close in fact, that you are currently in it, there lived a peculiar man in shades that no one ever had much faith in. In his old, rundown spaceship he traveled the stars with his cat Stevie by his side seeking adventure and fame as a self-proclaimed "space man," and in his travels he had seen things both amazing and terrifying. He had done great things to be sure, but people saw him only as a bad egg and a delinquent because of his reckless lifestyle and never-take-anything-seriously personality. He was truly an enigma, a man of mystery. No one knew his real name, his exact age or even the color of his eyes, as he never took off his legendary black shades. This is a story of discovery, adventure, rebellion, defying the odds, companionship, the importance of self-expression, and above all, having fun. This is his story. He is The Amazing Galaxy-Man!

Chapter 1

Though no one knew for sure where Galaxy-Man came from, he now resided on a planet of wheat called The Breadbasket. It orbited

a red hypergiant called The Colossus, named for its incredible size. What'd ya think it was named for? For comparison, it was about 9 billion times the size of Earth's sun. You'd think the solar system would be truly enormous, but no. A grand total of three planets orbited The Colossus: Charbraxis, the coldest, most distant planet, Beaverball, the solar capital and awkward middle planet, and lastly, The Breadbasket, the innermost planet, though it still orbited at an incredible distance from The Colossus. Because the planet orbited so far away from its star, seasons lasted roughly 1,500 years there, so its northern hemisphere was in a sort of perpetual state of summer. It was a perfect place to grow wheat, but beyond that it was a pretty uninteresting planet. Galaxy-Man lived amidst amber waves of boring unfortunately. It was like Kansas if it were a planet, but somehow even more monotonous and uneventful. Living there was about as exciting as playing a text-based waiting room simulator in slow motion.

The entire world was owned by only a handful of people. There were shareowners, and there laborers. The shareowners didn't actually have any involvement in the wheat itself, but collected big checks each month simply for owning the land. Most of the shareowners didn't actually live on the planet itself, but those that did lived in luxurious vast mansions. The laborers lived

nomadic lives endlessly circling the planet, harvesting and replanting crops.

Galaxy-Man's estranged father was a particularly wealthy shareowner who resided on the planet. He lived in a small town called Spunky Hollow. He had the nicest house in the whole world and he took care of it. He was also a collector of antiques and other finery. He owned vast collections of vintage items, books and anything else considered valuable. One day he had the bright idea to see just how the wheat was harvested, so he packed his bags and traveled with the laborers. After 6 days, 12 hours and 18 minutes, he died of boredom, and also he had a heart attack. Having never written a will, his next of kin inherited his vast fortune, his next of kin being his son, Galaxy-Man, otherwise he'd of never left him anything.

For the past few years Galaxy-Man had lived with his cat in Spunky Hollow with stuck-up neighbors who absolutely despised him. His neighbors were always comparing him to his father, whom they saw as a great man. Galaxy-Man was not his father's son, they were nothing alike, never were. He saw him as nothing more than a greedy business person with no style. Galaxy-Man found that having a lot of money made life boring as he never had to work for anything. He quickly gave his crop shares to his money-grubbing neighbors and gave most of his vast fortune away to his best friend, Hamilton, as he wanted nothing to do with it. He

was now a poor man who just happened to live in a house with 15 bathrooms.

Today was a very special day indeed for Galaxy-Man. The long-awaited StarFighter Episode VII had just hit theaters and it's a pretty big deal for Galaxy-Man. He was as happy as a dog with two tails. He had been ready for this movie for quite some time. He woke up with a big stupid grin on his face, took a quick shower, ate the world's fastest bowl of Cap'n Crunch, and exploded out of the mahogany double-doors of his abode. Galaxy-Man had always-messy, medium bushy black hair that had never once been brushed, and his skin was pasty pale and white as a toilet. He wore his usual, superhero-like getup that day: his trademarked red headband with circular yellow "G" emblem, a bright silver necklace, his padded red vest with black thermal long sleeve undershirt, a cape that was red on the inside and black on the outside, a thick brown belt with circular belt buckle with the Galaxy-Man logo which is a minimalist black and yellow image of a barred spiral galaxy, black bell-bottom pants and shiny black leather boots. His most prominent feature however were his legendary jet black sun shades which he has never once been seen without, not even one time.

He stood on his porch and smiled big as he thought about the wonderful day ahead of him. There was one problem though, he had no money to buy a ticket, but that's okay, he had a plan.

He started strolling across the street. Along the way he saw his neighbor, Dr. Etsuka Fukunaga, an historian and curator at the Spunky Hollow museum of history, checking her mail. "Good morning, Ms E.!" said Galaxy-Man with a cool grin. "You're lookin' lovely today. Makin' me feel basic."

Galaxy-Man always called her Ms. E. as a term of endearment, though she never really liked that name.

She gave him a sort of sneer. "Someone woke up on the right side of the bed," she said somewhat coldly. Whenever she spoke you could tell English wasn't her first language. No, she spoke much too clearly. Every letter was clearly enunciated, like an Asian automated phone line.

Etsuka was a very intelligent and knowledgeable woman, but also snobby and conceited. Still, Galaxy-Man usually treated her with respect and kindness. Having been close friends with Galaxy-Man's prestigious father, she despised Galaxy-Man with a passion and wanted nothing but to see him fail. She, along with most of the town, saw Galaxy-Man as nothing more than a delinquent who'd never amount to anything.

"I'd love to stay and gab with ya," said Galaxy-Man, "but I've got a movie to catch."

"Have fun," said Etsuka very insincerely.

Galaxy-Man had no time to dawdle. He was on his way over to his best friend's house across the street. His friend's name was

Hamilton Beach of all names, no relation to any kitchen appliance moguls. He was the nicest, sweetest person in the world and never did anything wrong. Never once did Galaxy-Man ever see him angry or raise his voice. His parents were both deaf and could only communicate with sign language, so as a kid they used to let him spend time with Galaxy-Man, who is about 10 years older than him, to be around spoken language more, and the two quickly became inseparable, though, Hamilton doesn't like leaving the planet with Galaxy-Man when he goes adventuring. Not being able to speak with Galaxy-Man directly, Hamilton's parents didn't see him like everyone else did. They thought he was weird, but ultimately a nice guy, if a little on the silly side. In hindsight, Galaxy-Man wasn't the best person to leave your kids with. From a young age he smoked pot, took pills, he drank heavily, he was lazy and unreliable, he frequently stole things he didn't need like sticker machines and item divider bars. He and Hamilton were two completely different people, and yet they were the best of friends. Hamilton was a very devout Christian and strongly believed in God, which is interesting because Galaxy-Man was an unwavering atheist. Hamilton went to church every single day as if he were Ned Flanders or something, and though he was Christian, he kept it to himself and had never once asked Galaxy-Man to come to church. He had different beliefs than Galaxy-Man, but was also very understanding and

respectful to others who didn't think the same way as him.

Galaxy-Man was lucky to have such a good person like Hamilton as a friend. Even so, Galaxy-Man constantly teased and pranked him. He once broke into his house and stole all the marshmallows from his Lucky Charms, he once replaced the wicks of his dinner candles with firecrackers, he frequently stole his mailbox, and on one occasion he even put cat poop on the blades of all his ceiling fans. It was amazing that they were friends at all with all the things Galaxy-Man did to him. Galaxy-Man always made up for it though. He knew Hamilton better than anyone and always knew just how to make him smile.

Galaxy-Man walked up to Hamilton's porch and knocked on the door, but no one was home sadly. Galaxy-Man beat on the door like it owed him money.

"Yo, Hamilton! I need money for the 'Sode VII! Where you at, man? This is important stuff!" There was no answer. "Guess Godboy went to church early today," he said to no one in particular. He stepped off the porch, grabbing Hamilton's hummingbird feeder on his way down. He started chugging it down like someone dared him to as he strolled around to the side of the house. "Mmm, sweet like Paula Deen's blood," he said in a laid-back voice. He came to some garbage cans and threw Hamilton's homemade bird feeder in the trash after he drank the last bit of his sugar water like the wild savage he was. He climbed onto the can and

pulled himself up to the roof. From the roof he hobbled his way over to Hamilton's bedroom window. He gently opened it and crawled inside.

Upon entering he stumbled slightly and fell over, putting his foot through Hamilton's pricey Ikea nightstand and breaking it along with a lamp and little totem pole that sat on top of it. He freed the table from his boot and made his way to Hamilton's chest of drawers. He opened the top drawer. Inside were fresh socks, loose change, store brand antacid tablets, peppermints, keys, gloves, a Swiss army knife, SPF 60, an empty prescription allergy medication bottle, a photo of Galaxy-Man and Hamilton together at a Christmas party, and also a "The Best of Bread" CD case that Hamilton kept his money in. The universal currency of this time being 2x4 Lego bricks called "profit." There's quite a story behind that actually, but I won't be going too deep into that I'm afraid. One profit, depending on where you go, has about as much buying power of a Euro.

Galaxy-Man helped himself to 300 profit, which was way more than he actually needed. He left a note simply reading "New StarFighter. That is all. I'll pay you back when I can... unless I forget. Er, what were we talking about again?"

Galaxy-Man then walked down stairs and out of the house, leaving Hamilton's front door wide open. He headed back across the street and into his backyard, which was a complete disaster

compared to everyone else's. Galaxy-Man's two biggest fears were centaurs and lawnmowers. The latter of which made him very anti-cutting-the-grass and thus his yard was as wild and overgrown as the jungles of Madagascar used to be. Stevie, his cat, was sleeping in the sun inside an old plastic shopping basket. She didn't have a care in the world. She was lazy even by cat standards, but accompanied Galaxy-Man on all his wacky misadventures throughout the galaxy.

"Wake up, Stevie," said Galaxy-Man, "Episode VII!"

She crawled out of her cozy basket and let out a very big yawn. The two trudged through the tall grass over to Galaxy-Man's most prized possession (after his beloved sunshades of course,) his legendary spaceship, the Star Whomper. It was roughly as big as a double-wide trailer and about as luxurious. It resembled an old timey wooden pirate ship, though, the masts and sails didn't serve much of a purpose out in the vacuum of space. It had certainly seen its fair share of action. It was covered in dents and scratches; it was a miracle it worked at all. Though the inside and outside were made of some sort of dense wood, it was also layered with another material to withstand the harshness of space. The two walked up a wooden gangplank up to a old screen door and sort of a metal sliding door behind it.

He walked inside and sat in a red and gold throne at the captain's helm, which was in a small wooden room piled with odd

treasures and trinkets. All the dials, buttons and computers looked rather intimidating, but he seemed to know what he was doing... somewhat. He hooked up his Walkman into the ship's stereo system and played the original Star Trek opening theme song on his mixtape. Stevie quickly walked over to the nearest cardboard box for a nap. Galaxy-Man let out a loud excited yelp as he set sail for the wild black yonder.

Chapter 2

According to Galaxy-Man, the Star Whomper was the fastest ship in the galaxy. The ship's engines worked by warping the empty space around it, sort of like an air bubble rising up through a pond. The engines received their incredible power by tapping into what's called the "field dimension." It's a dimension of space that's chock full of exotic energy just waiting to be harnessed. Since it constantly pulled in energy from a practically infinite source, the Star Whomper could theoretically run forever assuming nothing broke. The weird thing about field energy is that the only known way to capture it is by the power of a very particular brainwave pattern that some animals could possess given the proper drugs, though few actually did. In fact, the most important part of the Star Whomper was a large brain kept in an aquarium wired to the engines, an elephant's brain to be exact, living in a simulated reality. Galaxy-Man's tech-savvy friend back home, JupiterRay, designed the virtual world in which the brain lived. It was actually an online video game that anyone could log on to. The elephant's name was Eli and he wondered the world helping or hindering players. So, in short, intergalactic space travel is possible by warping space-time using the brainwaves of a drugged elephant who lives in a video game to pull energy from another dimension; it's pretty simple stuff really.

Along the way, Galaxy-Man stopped at a way station for salt and vinegar chips and a slushie. He was very partial to Sunkist slushies actually. With his overly salty chips and his frozen soda treat, he was on his way to Cinetron 16, the moviegoers planet. He could've easily gone to his local theater, but the seats were better at Cinetron theaters, and Galaxy-Man was picky about where he sat. Most importantly, each of the seats there had two armrests, none of that shared armrest, no-where-to-put-your-drink hooley.

Galaxy-Man was becoming more and more excited by the second. He could barely contain himself. He was as happy as a tornado in a trailer park. He was so worked up in fact, that he had to put on some smooth jazz to calm his nerves.

"Hello ladies and gentlemen," said Galaxy-Man in his sexiest weatherman's voice, "this is your local on the 8s. Looks like we got a 95% chance of smooth grooves, baby."

Stevie opened her eyes slightly and let out a tiny meow.

Galaxy-Man got up from his throne and started softly dancing as he slowly boogied his shirt off. He whirled and swayed across the ship over to a pile of miscellaneous junk and started digging around. "You seen my back scratcher, the one that looks like a little rake?" he asked Stevie.

Stevie just yawned and rolled over, not a care to give.

The Star Whomper was positively filthy. It looked like a thrift store run by raccoons, and smelled about as nice.

"Here it is! It was underneath the Uncle Sam hat I jacked from that fat kid. That was the best Christmas ever."

He scratched to his heart's content. Too long had his back gone unscratched. "Oh, that's so much better!" he moaned loudly.

Just as he was happily itching away at his back, the Whomper was hit hard and he was knocked to his knees. Stevie quickly hightailed into the kitchen area of the ship and crawled into a cabinet. That was where she always ran to when things got hairy. Stevie was something of a fraidy cat.

"Oh my science, what the Mama Jama was that?" He got up and walked over to the window. Outside was an alien spacecraft mounted with laser cannons. They were space piratas, Mexican space bandits. They were mean, they were nasty and they liked their sauce hot. They pillaged and plundered any spacecraft they could pick up on their space-radar. A space-radar was sort of like a regular radar, but used waves that traveled faster than light. Their spacecraft resembled a work van complete with orange stepladder and air hoses on top and an igloo cooler mounted on the back. "Dang it, I don't have time for this horse malarkey!" yelled Galaxy-Man.

They fired another laser of the ship and Galaxy-Man fell all the way to his back. "Grrr, looks like we got a 100% chance of I'M

PISSED OFF!!" He rushed over to the controls and maneuvered the ship into firing position. On the front of his ship were two powerful laser cannons that Galaxy-Man had painted to look like a goat's eyes. There was apparently a joke behind that, but Galaxy-Man was too drunk when he did it to remember what it was. With a crooked grin and sweat beading in his brow, he grabbed a joystick with both hands and not-so-carefully aimed the cannons at the piratas. "How bout a little laser eye surgery!?" he yelled.

Still very shirtless, Galaxy-Man opened fire and an epic battle ensued, all to the tune of sweet, smooth jazz. Hundreds of deadly laserbolts danced across space like Gradius on hard mode, and Galaxy-Man was sweating like a horse trying to read. He fired like there was no tomorrow, stopping only to take the occasional swig of his orange slushie. "How many Mexicans does it take to get to the center of a Tootsie Pop? Juan!!" He landed a crippling blow to the enemy ship and the piratas fled, shouting horrible obscenities in Spanish, though, in space no one can hear you swear so it was pretty pointless.

"Yeah! You mess with the goat and you get the horn! Unless they're born genetically hornless... which they sometimes are." The battle was over and the day was won. To celebrate, Galaxy-Man cracked open an ice-cold IBC root beer from his secret stash. Normally Galaxy-Man would get completely sauced before

seeing a movie, but he wanted to be good and sober this time around so he could remember it, plus he didn't want to get kicked out of the theater yet again. He hadn't drank or done any hard drugs in several weeks actually.

Stevie crawled out from her cozy cabinet and stretched.

"Thanks for all your help, Stevie," said Galaxy-Man sarcastically. He smiled and laughed as Stevie brushed up against his leg. "Want some IBC? Here you go, man." He poured some root beer into Stevie's bowl and she lapped it up like fresh cream. "Don't ever change, Stevie."

A short while later, Cinetron 16 was in sight. It was a planet of extremes: harsh deserts, biting tundras, dense jungles, molten lakes of fire and brimstone, boggy swamps, rugged mountain ranges, deep canyons and windswept plains, all within miles of the visitor center. This made Cinetron 16 the perfect place for making blockbuster movies. The planet's entire economy was based solely on movies and movie paraphernalia.

With Kenny G. blaring at an unreasonably high volume, he entered the planet's atmosphere at an incredible speed. He was going much too fast. What in the world was he thinking? "Hang on to your butt, Stevie. We're going down!" Bathed in flashing red light and sweating profusely, Galaxy-Man pushed buttons, pulled levers and did anything he could to bring the vessel to a safe landing, stopping only to stuff his maw with tater chips. "I

could sure use a good one liner about now!!" he yelled as he neared the surface, crumbs spewing from his mouth when he spoke. The Star Whomper came careening toward the ground and hit hard, like an iron train hitting the side of a mountain. It slid a good 100 meters through a gritty desert. It was a miracle it stayed in one piece. Once the ship had come to a complete crash, a tiny parachute deployed from the ship's rear, too little too late.

Galaxy-Man's throne had fallen backwards into the floor along with the man himself, though, his slushie remained unspilled despite all the jostling. He and Stevie were a little shaken up, but ultimately okay. Galaxy-Man stylishly rolled backwards onto his feet, not spilling a drop of his beverage. He walked over to the exit and pushed a button to open the metal door.

He undid the latch to the screen door, opened up and poked his head outside to see where he was. He was in a desert a short ways from the theater. "Looks like we're a little late, Stevie. Wanna just walk from here? Beats paying two profit for parking. No thanks, man."

And so Galaxy-Man and Stevie began their mile or so trek through the blistering desert.

"Jeez, it's not that hot" said, Galaxy-Man, though he was sorely mistaken.

"No really, it's kinda balmy. It's actually pretty pleasant."

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