

# Three On One

By Gus Prouty | 3636 words

I should have never come in today. This was the first thought that went through Tim's mind as the creature came lumbering into view. I could have taken the day off; I never take the day off, god why didn't I take the day off? He stammered at himself as this unreal scene unfolded before him. No one had said anything about something like this. Tim wasn't really the news at 6 type, but he figured something like this would make its way around quick enough. Apparently he was wrong. He got up slowly and made his way to the window, he wanted a better look.

It still hadn't sunk in yet, he wondered if it ever really would. A giant monster was making its way towards the office building. This shouldn't be real, couldn't be if he recalled high school physics correctly. But then he figured no one had told the monster that yet. He was one of the first to notice the creature, his cubical had its opening oriented towards the window and he happened to be gazing of into the distance pretending to be deep in thought when the thing came limbering out from the horizon. But as he stood at window gawking others took notice.

"What are you doing?" the cute woman who sat in the cubicle a head of Tim's asked as she returned from the water cooler. Soon enough her gaze followed his and she dropped her water. This drew the attention of others, which drew in even more until soon everyone on this floor was solely transfixed by the creature. The reactions were mixed. Some ran screaming as soon as they saw it cramming into the elevators or scrambling down the nearly fifteen flights of stairs that lead back down to the earth. Others started making calls, trying to warn family or get in touch with someone who knew what the hell was happening. Still a few were like Tim, walking to the plate glass windows that made

up the wall of the building and simply staring. Feeling that maybe if they looked at it long enough it would change into something that they could fit into their view of what reality should be.

Tim's boss came out about five minutes after Tim first spotted the thing. "All right people pack it up; we just got a call from the city. They're telling every one to evacuate something about a biological threat that..." his words stopped first because he saw that over two thirds of his staff had already left and then because his eyes fell upon the thing that made them leave. "Jesus crist" was all he could muster before sprinting for the exit himself. Still Tim could not make his legs move an inch. He was locked in place.

The monster was much closer now, such that Tim could now very clearly define its features. It reminded it of old picture he used to see in books as a child. Of dinosaurs walking on their hunches dragging their tails along the ground. It fit this description rather well except for three things. Its arms were much bigger, looking for lack of a better term almost human. Its head resembled a bird's with a huge beak instead of the normal teeth one would expect. Finally Tim couldn't remember any of the dinosaurs in those pictures being this things shade of robin's egg blue. By this time the thing was standing in front of the building.

It turned towards the building, its head being almost level with Tim's floor. Tim waited this was the part in the movies where the monster smashed through the cardboard building and kept going. But despite knowing this Tim still could not move. Some of the others had started backing away as it approached but now appeared to be locked in place as well. However as he waited the blow never came. The creature seemed to be looking at the building intently and then it dawned on Tim. It was looking at them.

It was the eyes that got to Tim. They were bigger than his head and the deepest gray Tim had ever seen. The creature seemed to be examining them as intently as they were it. As it looked at him Tim felt no malice in its gaze. Despite everything in his rational brain telling him that it was about to kill him, Tim could not bring himself to do anything but stair back up at the great beast that stood before him.

The gunfire ripped through the silence as easily as it did the window. It tore a line from one corner of the building to the other, cutting a diagonal swath through the glass. For its part the monster didn't really seem to mind being pelted with fire and Tim could hear the rounds ping harmlessly off of its hide. Standing directly in front of it Tim was protected from the fire but the women standing a few feet to his right was suddenly torn apart in a spray of red. As his mind tried to process what just happened a great explosion threw him form his feet and coated him in a fine mist of debris. The irony hit him almost as hard as the floor. He was still going to die; it was just going to be the noble military trying to valiantly kill the monster that was going to kill him.

Tim didn't know how long he lay there but it must not have been too long. Because as he struggled to return to his feet he noticed a change in the creature, its eyes had hardened and its gaze had shifted to the attackers. Tim followed and saw three helicopters looming in for another assault. The closest one didn't even seem to be aiming directly at the creature anymore. Its missile raced towards one corner of the building, Tim spotted another person, a man who he recognized from around the office, someone whose face he saw almost every day. The missile was heading right for him, he was going to die. Tim shouted out but his voice was lost in the explosion. Yet the man remained. The monster had moved his hand to intercept the blast shielding the man from harm.

Tim suddenly felt his feet carrying him towards the man. “It...that thing just saved me” the man stammered too shell shocked to move. “I think I’ve seen enough,” responded Tim shoving the man towards the stairwell door. “Ok everyone lets get out of here!” Tim had barley recognized his voice, it had never sounded so bold before. Whatever spell the creatures appearance had cast on the workers on this floor, Tim’s voice seemed to break it and soon everyone who could still move was making their way down the stairs.

The creature, Tim could hear as he made his own escape, was busy fighting the helicopters. Two had already exploded before he had even reached the stairwell door. And as Tim pulled the door shut behind him the last he saw of the creature was it crushing the final chopper in its hand.

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James still couldn’t believe his orders. If this hadn’t come down from the commander himself, had he not seen the footage with his own eyes. Hell he had seen the footage and he still barley believed it. He and his squad were after a giant freaking monster. As he sat in the cockpit of his copper his mind was still trying to process the earlier briefing. Apparently the thing was first sighted when it made land fall on a small island off the coast. The only thing on the island was a military base which was promptly caught with its pants down. Lucky for them, the thing apparently only wanted to go for a walk and it avoided them for the most part. However high command still flipped out and scrambled what they had to track the creature, which as it turned out, was making a b-line for the city. The top brass being the people they are lined the coast with more infantry then some small countries.

It wasn't enough.

When the thing emerged from the surf it paused, apparently to take in the sights, all but asking the forces to unload on it. They obliged, opening up with everything they had. But, and this is the part that has James spooked, the thing just walked through it. The assault didn't even phase it, it didn't even do enough to piss it off as it reportedly just stepped over the tanks as they continued to fire uselessly up at it.

This is where he and his squad came in, they were the back up, in case the thing made it into the city. Their helicopters could maneuver around the buildings better any land vehicle and they packed more of a punch to boot. The crackling of the radio crashed his current train of thought. The hellie that was doing high altitude recon had seen it approaching, the thing was finally here.

Straining his eyes as best he could James didn't see anything, but he trusted his men and so, he gave the order to get into position. They stopped hovering and activity took off, following the pilot who had spotted the thing. When they arrived James got his first real look at the creature. Best he could see, it looked like a dinosaur, with the armor of a crocodile and the head of a bird with a giant beak instead of a normal mouth. To top it off it was a light shade of sky blue. This is crazy, he thought. The thing couldn't even be written of as some giant animal, it was too different, too strange. There really was no other word for it, it was a giant monster.

It currently seemed to be admiring its reflection in a skyscraper. "Looks like we have a premadona on our hands" one of his men quipped over the radio. Even with all of the static from the transmission James could still pick up the amazement in his comrades voice.

“Well they probably don’t have any mirrors wherever this thing came from.”  
another pilot replied. This man seemed to still be in disbelief of the whole situation.

“Stow the chatter, people, we have a job to do. Full ordinance has been authorized and collateral damage is acceptable as long as we can bring that thing down, so fire at will.” James finally spoke into his own coms system soliciting various acknowledgments from his squad. James switched the safeties off on his weapons and moved his chopper in for the first strike.

This autocannon tore to life as it blazed a path across the front of the building. The pilots tried to concentrate their fire but there was only so much they could do and the building was tacking almost as much punishment as the creature. The building at least was showing sighs of damage, as best as he could tell the rounds, 30-mm depleted uranium armor piercing slugs, were simply bounding off this things hide. These were rounds that routinely tore through tank armor and yet they might as well be rubber bands for all the damage they were doing to this monster.

James was getting pissed now, this thing wasn’t even acknowledging them, and the bulk of its attention still seemed to be focused on the building. Well let’s see you ignore this you scaly basted. He thought as he let the first of his six missiles fly. It seemed the squad mates had the same idea and there were soon three missiles flying towards the monster. However these proved to be even more inaccurate than the previous cannon fire.

“God damn it, if the brass actually thought before they acted they would have given us some heat seekers, not this manual aim shit.” James muttered as he watched two of the three missiles tilt in their flight path and explode harmlessly on either side of the

creature. Only serving to further destroy the building, the one missile that did strike its mark at least seemed to do some visible damage. Actually drawing the first blood of the battle. But even that was barley more than a cut.

Still the creature failed to really react as expected. It started to turn before seemingly getting distracted by the new holes in the building. James capitalized on this distraction and had his squad fire again. And yet again the missiles were less than accurate. Though this time it looked like only one would miss its mark, veering towards the corner of the building. Then the thing raised its hand to block the stray missile. All three explosions are drowned out by the unholy roar that rips from this thing as it whips around.

The pilots scrambled. Two going high while James went low. This proves to be his saving grace as he watches a bolt of god damn lighting fly from the monsters beak and vaporize his squad mates. James, panicked and desperate, acts on a half formed hunch and moves up hovering at eye level with the creature, he positioned himself directly in front of another building. At first he thinks that he was wrong, overestimated the things intelligence, but then the next bolt dies in its throat, what more after realizing what James has done it extends its arms to cover as much of the building as possible and waits. Waits for James to make his move.

James isn't really thinking about much, he just opens up and fires missile after missile as fast as they will go. He doesn't think about what this gesture says about the creature, about the fact that he is essentially using the people he was sent out to protect as human shields, about what will happen when he runs out of ammo. All James thinks

about is pulling that trigger, even long after all of his missile have been fired. Right up until the moment the creature's claws close around his cockpit.

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His head was foggy. He couldn't think straight. After his grate growing he could barely remember anything. What was his name? He did have a name; deep down in the currently blurry corners of his mind there was an image. No it was a memory of someone, someone important to him, a friend, that part he was sure of. But that friend had given him a name something he held in almost equal importance, at least he would if he could remember it.

He took another look around the strange landscape before him. All he could recall in recent memory was the blue, vast, dark, and deep. The occasional spire or pit being the only thing to interrupt the vastness of his world. But he has left that world behind. Now he stood before huge monoliths, vast spires gleaming in the fading light from above. He had never seen anything so tall before, the structures easily three or four times his own height.

As he approached the nearest one he saw his own image looking back. His brain took a second to process this fact. Was this another of his kind? No, he remembered something like this from his youth. That time was still a blur, but pieces were starting to come into clearer focus. Something like this had happened before, and there was a word, something attached to this, something his friend had told him. Reflection, he was looking at his own reflection in the shiny surface of the huge structure. His beaked head looked back at him as he studied himself. As his eyes adjusted he could suddenly tell that there



were things behind the surface. In the dark spot created by his own shadow tinny creatures looked up at him. Then he recognized, people.

His friend was a person, just like them. But his friend was not here, he would have sensed it if he was, still it was nice to finally see something he clearly recognized. He stood there just looking for a moment, trying his hardest to recall what kind of person his friend was. He only had a vague idea of what kind of person his friend was, but even with just that he was compelled to seek this friend out. It was what drove him up from his world and onto the surface in the first place. It was this desire that told him to continue moving he had to find his friend and the sooner the better.

Just as he shifted to begin to continue his journey the wiring started. It was the notice that caught his attention first. Next came the stinging, this was a familiar sensation. He recalled his first emergence from his world onto the sandy shores of this one. These strange creatures had met him there. They were small at least compared to him but they were fierce things. He was used to most things fleeing from his great size but not so with these creatures. A huge number of them lined the shore and as he paused to take in this new place they attacked. Spraying him down with strange fire. They pelted him relentlessly, but despite their best efforts, did little more than sting his skin. He was a bit perturbed but was planning on moving along anyway. He only hoped these creatures would lose interest in him once he left the area. The creatures continued to pester him to no effect until he was well past their location. Now it would seem that they had found him once again.

As he turned to face his attackers, a resounding explosion struck his chest. This one actually hurt a bit, managing to break the skin, if only just. These creatures were

different from the ones before, they could fly. His attackers before had been squat things that hugged low to the ground. These things darted around him with an irritating wiring sound. They let loose another volley some kind of projectiles that resulted in more explosions. They seemed to have poor aim as only a few actually hit him. The rest flew past him and collided with the building behind him. As he turned to go his eyes fell upon what was left of the building.

Huge holes were blown open in the previously pristine surface. Behind the new openings lied only death. Pieces of what had only moments before been the people inside dotted the openings, staining everything a deep shade of crimson. He felt anger building up inside, his friend wasn't inside but he could have been, and if a person could be someone as great as his friend then they did not deserve to be killed like this. Suddenly something popped into his mind, the words were all he could hear for a moment.

"I know buddy, if you were big and strong like that I'm sure you'd make a great guardian of the universe." The following laugh echoed within his mind. His friend's voice, this was the first he could recall of it, and he certainly intended to prove his words right.

He would get his chance soon it would seem, another projectile sailed towards the structure. He extended his hand and the thing exploded against him instead of the structure. A great cry ripped from him at this, not of pain but anger. He could already feel his power moving, gathering in the back of his throat. Rising with his fury until he could barely contain it, then he no longer could and the great bolt of lightning ripped from his maw and arched across the sky. It caught the two higher-flying creatures and they both fell burning from the earth.

The final creature seemed to panic at this and darted down, hovering in front of him at almost eye level. He felt another blot growing within him, but then he saw where his target was positioned. The blast died in his throat and his anger only increased. The creature was right in front of another structure. If he fired his bolt then he would surely hit the structure as well as the creature. He was caught. With no other options he extended his arms to the side. Trying to protect as much of the structure behind him as he could and roared, his invitation for the thing to do its worst.

It obliged, launching all of its projectiles, each slamming into his body in quick succession. Still none did any serious damage, not even the one that struck him in the side of his face. Then it seemed as quickly as it started the barrage stopped. The small creature still sat there hovering before him as if it hadn't realized that it had stopped firing. He took his opening. Launching forward he snatched the thing out of the air with his hand, crushing it and throwing it to the ground.

In this final act something inside of him had changed. His memories had begun to resurface. He wasn't sure if it was the rush of battle or the surge he got from using his bolt that did it and he truly did not really care. He could finally remember the face of his friend, he knew who he was searching for in this strange new place. A place that was slowly becoming less new as old memories resurfaced. Memories from when he was small, of places and people, and of a name. Something his friend had given to him that he knew he would treasure for all his days. And with this new knowledge, Keravno turned his great beaked head towards the setting sun and began his search once more.