The Falling Embers

Chapter 1: The Origins

The Red Empire. The powerful nation that is always pushing forward and looking to conquer. Even the sound of its name makes some shiver. Its economical and military might along with its government make it a power none can stand against. However, this dominant nation wasn’t always the way it is now.

Long ago, it was once a simple Mars colony, which was made up of outcasts sent by their nations to explore mars. The people always dreamt of someday living beyond the borders of the colony, in control. However, a group known as the “Reds” exploited this dream, and rose to power.

Over time, as more colonies formed around the area and more and more technology was put towards Mars, the small group grew in strength. They had gained power around the small Martian territory, and turned its beauty into war machines. The land was stripped and its resources taken. Earthly nations didn’t mind to speak or silence the movement, as they believed it wouldn’t last.

The nations did nothing as the Reds grew in power. The Red Empire had noticed this ignorance of these nations, and used their technological advantages. They began with the attack known as the “Expanse of Terror.” The Empire crept their way across the red planet, conquering all they saw. However, even after taking Mars, it could never quench their thirst for more.

They sent fleet after fleet to Earth and the Moon, stopping at nothing to achieve their goal of conquering all they could see.

After the Moon was taken, they pushed to Earth. Some nations embraced this new power, but most banded together to oppose it. Over many decades of non-stop fighting, it wasn’t enough to stop the Vincens. Only the United States stood against it, but even it was losing its grip.

Chapter 2: The Present

The year is 2154, a century since The Red Empire formed and began its expansion. The United States is still in the war for freedom, but is losing ground.

As soon as people are of age, they are drafted into the military to serve their country, although it is only proving to help stop an invasion.

Tensions were also at a high as the presidential election concluded, with Mike Retter announced as the national leader. He has been speaking about the fight they will give The Red Republic. “Freedom is not optional! It is no longer a matter of who is going to let us; but of who is going to stop us.” President Retter had said that at his inauguration speech. He spoke out against the Republic, striving to bring hope back to the people.

That was all before DC was destroyed in a bombing raid. It was a huge blow to the nation and its people. Many were killed on that day, and much hope was lost. That was around a year ago, and they’re still searching for people or bodies to recover.

“Hey, wake up pretty boy… Hey Lieutenant? Lieutenant!” I was startled out of my daze, and realized where I was. Washington. We’d been sent out to secure the area and set up a military base. Nothing had been around this area since the bombing though.

“Keep preparing the AA rounds, never know when those filthy dust breathers will come for round two,” said LtGen Larry. He was the head of the marines sent out for this operation. He had a strong hatred for the empire. His father was in the army when the Red Empire began its expansion over earth, and after he was lost, he promised to finish what his father had started.

I continued preparing the rounds into the ammunition belt for the cannons. I was so focused on what I was working on that I hadn’t noticed everything go silent. The birds, small animals scampering; all silent. I stood up to look around, but all I saw were my comrades staring off into the distance.

Chapter 3: The Return

I stood there in shock for a minute. I hadn’t expected them to return. They hadn’t assaulted the East since they attacked DC. Their main target had seemed to be the San Francisco area of the West Coast.

“Man the artillery and AA cannons!” shouted the Lieutenant General.

I finally jumped into action, loading the ammunition belt into the cannon. They were pushed by land and air. I could see the strike aircraft and heavy bombers approaching.

It finally clicked to me that they were pushing to take the rest of DC. They had destroyed it for us to lose hope, and had prepared to launch an assault in the time we took to recover the broken pieces. This lit a small spark in me, a fire.

Our artillery began to barrage their ground assault tanks and armored vehicles. I began to turn and aim the AA cannon at the sky, directly at the RB-33 Raider pitched down towards us. They were very strong, sleek edged slow jets. The bombs were held within an internal bay, and they could pack a punch. Its two huge 137 mm cannons could wipe out a building with a pull of the trigger. It was going in for a guided bomb hit.

I took deep breaths, carefully aiming. Its bay opened, and the guided bomb was released. As I saw the fin of it emerge, I took a shot. Any hit to its armor would be useless, it was too strong. I watched the shots move fast up and prayed.

The round hit the bomb as the jet pulled off. Shrapnel exploded everywhere, and a piece flew into the jet’s engine, detonating it. It erupted into a large fireball, careening towards the ground and becoming a huge fireball. The gunners provided anti-air fire continuously without a tire, watching each bomber fall before releasing a payload.

The battle seemed to go on forever. Few bombers made it past the wall of shrapnel from the flak and dropped their payload. We tried to shoot the bombs midair, but the attempt was futile.

“KEEP FIRING! KEEP THOSE DIRT BARRELS AT BAY-” said LtGen Larry, but was cut off as a bomb impacted around 15 yards from him. It detonated, and a large cloud of dirt and pieces of metal flew everywhere. My head was ringing, and I sat stunned. I stood up, slowly walking over to where the Lieutenant General was, but the ground rose up to meet me suddenly.

Chapter 4: Salvation

I woke up, dirt in my mouth. I was confused as to what had happened. When my head finally cleared, I slowly stood, stammering around the area. Everything was silent. The bombers were gone, the AA guns emptied from the extensive fire. I tried to speak, but couldn’t.

I continued limping around the desolate area, searching for any sign of life. What felt like minutes of walking, I found out were over an hour. Just when I was going to give up hope, I saw a corner of something sticking out of the ground. Sliding the dust and large stones off of it, I carefully examined it. It was a document.

It began with the words, “In Congress, July 4, 1776. A Declaration…” It was the Declaration of Independence.

This hadn’t been seen in years. Seeing it now took me by surprise, the world around almost seeming as though it didn’t exist. Only this moment did. This gave me hope. A group of men that had come together to declare independence against one of the most powerful nations at the time. I read it closely, reading again and again the first words. “*WE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*” I read one more time, this time only to the words, “*Blessings of Liberty.*”

These founding fathers have made a huge difference in the world. We will follow in their footsteps. We will reclaim and restore liberty. We will win, someday…