

A SPACE SAGA BY MICHAEL ZUMMO

# d'mok revival



# DESCENSION

2 *Michael Zummo*

**d'mok**  
**revival**  
DESCENSION

By

Michael J. Zummo

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D'MOK REVIVAL: DESCENSION

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*This book is dedicated to my father, Samuel Zummo.*

Even when science fiction wasn't something you typically pursued, you asked to read my manuscripts and offered to provide feedback. You took interest in something I love and became a part of it. You never cease to amaze me, and continue to teach me what it means to be a father. Thank you for your love and support, Dad. Words can't express what your time and dedication mean to me.



## **Author's Note**

Here's the final book of the Nukari Invasion Trilogy. It's hard to believe. In less than a year and a half I've taken a project originally written over a decade and brought it to market.

Thousands of copies of *D'mok Revival* have been sold. I've learned so much, met so many terrific people and fans. Rhysus Mencari isn't the only one who's gone on a journey.

As always, I want to thank the amazing fans of the series, and all those who have posted reviews and comments. Feedback is essential to my development as a writer, and to the evolution of the D'mok literary universe. Please keep it coming!

This book would not have been possible without the love and support of family, friends, and professionals. I would especially like to thank: Samuel Zummo, Elizabeth Zummo, Patrick Conley, my son Derek, my amazing editor Arlene Robinson, the talented 3-D illustrator Glenn Clovis, Nathan Sawtelle, Morgan Walker, Susie Lavender, and Kathleen Jenks-Grobben. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Without further ado, allow me to continue this journey!



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## **Prolog**

She paraded through the command deck, head held high, shoulders square. Her many medals of distinction rattled loudly from the sash draped across her chest. Anyone who dared look at her knew she was in charge. If they had a problem, her escorts, two hulking Grizel beasts, creatures of her own arcane design, would deal with them. Few challenged the rabid-looking, purple-furred behemoths and lived. Gifted with nature's most fearsome defenses: serrated bony plates from its back and appendages, overgrown paws with retractable claws, and fanged snout evolved to tear flesh, even a heavily armed opponent wouldn't last long.

Stopping before a shiny metal door, she saw her reflection and smiled.

*Utter perfection.*

With the exception of a slight wrinkle in her Nukari uniform, which she fixed with a quick tug, looking back at her was the epitome of her kind, and nearly the most decorated officer in the Nukari fleet. Her personal sense of style evolved the tired dress uniform beyond its stodgy roots. She was particularly proud of her short-cropped, aggressively jagged hairstyle, something traditionally worn by high-ranking men. Her menacing blood-orange locks furthered the hairstyle's flair. She wore it better.

Completing her fierce look, two lip rings connected to elaborate earrings by hand-beaded strands of silver. The ornamentation was an heirloom passed down through the women of her line. Such things were once a long-standing tradition for Nukari, but had become passé. Keeping it alive set her apart from others, but also connected her to a long line of proud and powerful women. She held that bond sacred, something she planned to pass on to her future daughter.

But for now she wasn't a mother; she was a conqueror. The weaker, less-evolved alien races were just the beginning. The real target was total domination of the chauvinistic, overly confident, and weak breed of man who led her people.

"Reporting for our scheduled meeting, Admiral," Kajlit'ga said in her most formal tone.

She stared with wonder at the nameplate on the door, which read "Admiral's Ready Room." Someday, and soon, it would be hers. She tingled at recalling her rapid ascension to power, all thanks to her beasts. But she was no fool. Along with her rise came many

enemies, even among her kind.

Glancing casually across the command deck she looked for any evidence of dissention, any shred of malcontent. Finding none, she smirked again. Not one dared to look up, much less at her.

Of course, the Gizel beasts most likely contributed to that. She recalled when they first emerged from the artificial womb. Even she felt some initial intimidation. Her mother frequently preached, "Once you know the right buttons to push, you can tame anything—man or beast."

It was something Kajlit'ga now took wicked pleasure in doing. Looking over her demonically beautiful creations, a sense of power filled her. Now tamed, they obediently executed her every command: which reminded her of another who followed her every desire.

"Come," the admiral said, deadpan, as the doors opened. She sauntered inside, leaving the beasts to stand guard.

A birdlike woman with pearlescent feathers stood quietly by the window, head bowed, eyes downcast. The admiral sat quietly behind his desk, staring stoically through thick-paned windows into space. Freight ships trailing cargo zipped madly by. In the distance, construction continued on a mighty ring-shaped structure.

Kajlit'ga paused, taking in the impressive view. Though beyond her comprehension, the technological marvels of her people amazed her. Psychology and genetics were her forte, but sights like this piqued her interest in the finer details of astrophysics and contemporary computing technologies.

Looking back to her latest toy, she wondered if

someone like herself would someday usurp her power, as she had done his.

“Admiral,” she said, along with a mocking dip of reverence.

When he didn’t respond she looked to the bird-woman standing quietly beside him.

“Still have him in his happy place?” she sneered.

“Yes Master Kajlit’ga,” the bird-woman replied with reverence, eyes still downcast.

“And his mind—quiet?” Kajlit’ga said coolly.

“Finally. He has offered little resistance today.”

“Stodgy old codger, far more tenacious than I expected,” Kajlit’ga said. “Still, nothing that you can’t manage?”

The bird-woman nodded, still not looking up.

“Good,” Kajlit’ga said, sitting on the sofa across from the admiral’s desk. “Now, for today’s business.”

She pulled out a tablet-shaped device, cleared her throat, then spoke with authority. “Log: reflect the following conversation with Admiral Laduk’na.”

A list of topics and supporting data scrawled across the screen.

“Field operations continue to encounter resistance. De’Genico Omura on Argosy has ordered a complete withdrawal. It appears Commander Whemel has lost control of the situation. A trend of failures for him, which I wholly anticipated. Reinforcements are currently en route to remedy the situation. Side reports confirm Rhysus Mencari was sighted on the world during the latest ordeal.”

The display updated with the profile of her nemesis. Even with abilities like her beasts, how this

Human achieved such success escaped her.

“He continues to complicate our operations. Had Whemel been informed of our interest in Mencari, he could have taken steps to capture him. Information has been relayed to all field commanders. If this opportunity arises again, we will be ready.”

Though, Mencari wasn't the only Human with abilities.

“In addition, the so-called Nurealian terrorists that attacked our minor installations and tested my beast forces turned out to be *Humans*, like Mencari, but in disguise.”

She called up another profile, of a prisoner formerly in their care. He had light green skin partially covered with large brown scales, and square, hazel pupils. The short, crew-cut hair reminded her of something Nukari boys wore before coming of age. His whole appearance was a ruse, of course. Their medical tests confirmed it.

“We captured a Nurealian named Anrik, who shared the super-abilities of my beasts. We were able to interrogate him and gain substantial insight into the Humans' Coalition.”

She felt deep wrinkles of disgust across her face as she reviewed the details of Anrik's escape. “His comrades, along with Mencari's forces, freed him. Though my beast teams sustained heavy losses, the battle data has already been incorporated in my training regiments. Meanwhile, the war tribunal is also working on how best to leverage the information learned from Anrik.”

Anticipating her need, the tablet displayed a dark world covered in purple oceans, and mighty landmasses covered in patches of brown and black.

Surrounded in a field of junk, thick rings of space debris orbited the planet. Information spiraled off the image, presenting key data and status updates.

“It appears our field commanders are attempting to draw Rhysus Mencari out. They’ve entered the second stage of their plan on the Nexus world of Ruul. We will see what fruit their efforts bear. If their former efforts are any indication, it will be a miserable failure.”

She took a deep breath, and cleared her mind of the bumbling fools within her ranks. They would be the first to go when her ascension into power was complete.

“If significant resistance continues, the war tribunal prescribed a combined tactical assault using our mercenary allies, our armada, and my beast armies. It’s their belief such operations will adequately throw our adversaries into the chaos needed to exert our full control. I will proactively begin preparations in the event this direction is need. Do you sanction this course of action, Admiral?”

When he didn’t respond, she glared at the bird-woman, who, in turn, gazed with piercing eyes at the admiral. He replied flatly, “I concur.”

With a smile, Kajlit’ga continued. “Very well—Admiral. Despite our challenges, the greater majority of our operations continue unfettered. We’ve made significant progress securing key worlds such as Keros, along with critical natural resources.”

Her display updated again, with data concerning the construction project. The images captured were a sad representation of the architectural beauty outside the window.

“The gateway to homespace is on schedule. After the construction phase is completed, its dual reactors will be brought online, and a testing phase begun. A transmission from homeworld reports the Leviathan and forty supercarriers are preparing for the transfer here. In the meantime, our existing forces continue drills in the Heran Cluster, awaiting further orders.”

A silvery-blue emblem shaped like two interlocking stars with the Nukari emblem etched in the middle appeared on her screen.

“One final issue to address, Admiral,” she said with growing anticipation. “I’m—honored—that you have recommended me for promotion to vice admiral of the fleet.”

A tickling fluttered in her chest. Nothing seemed beyond her reach. Once she was vice admiral, if anything tragic befell their glorious leader she would have unadulterated authority over the entire operation. Not that she didn’t have it already. Her authority just lacked official recognition.

“I *accept* the responsibilities, and pledge myself to the advance of our people and our cause.”

“You’re a fine example of a Nukari,” the admiral said, surprising her, then he added, “I’m proud to serve with the finest we have.”

A burning filled Kajlit’ga. Was that mockery from her minion, or did the bird-woman intend to put on a show for the record? Kajlit’ga certainly didn’t command that the admiral say such a thing.

“Thank—” she stuttered. “Thank you, Admiral. I’m proud to learn—from your example.”

## **Author Bio**

Michael Zummo was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1974. Some know him as a software developer, others as a usability expert, still others as a board and video game designer. One little boy calls him father.

From his earliest days he was enthralled by computer games, specifically the Sierra On-line adventure games. They inspired his sense of exploration in strange lands, and interactive storytelling.

In 1996, he graduated from Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin with a double degree in computer science and communications.

Throughout his winding career in interactive marketing, video game design, and creating user interfaces, each adventure held the same root. What motivated him wasn't just understanding people and crafting digital interactions, but rather, taking people through an experience—on a journey—to be his true passion in life.

Writing has become his ultimate vehicle for this passion.

