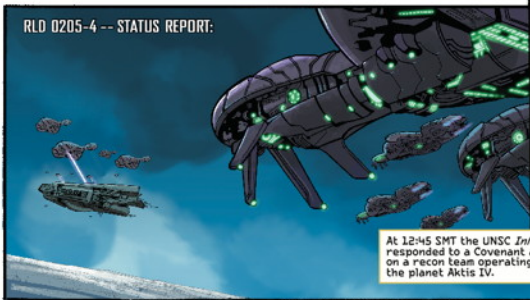


AKTIS IV  
2558-07-20 0637 SMT



RLD 0205-4 -- STATUS REPORT:



At 12:45 SMT the UNSC *Infinity* responded to a Covenant attack on a recon team operating on the planet Aktis IV.

Jul 'Mdama's Fleet was lying in wait, concealed below the opaque substance covering Aktis IV's oceans.



Seven hours after initial engagement, the Fleet's lines continue to block *Infinity*'s path.

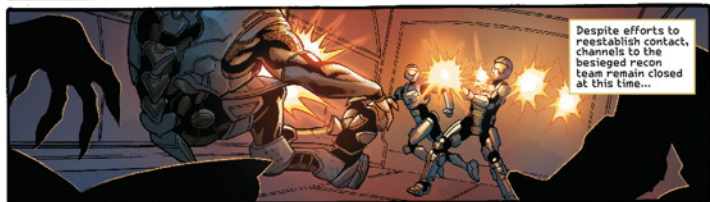




On the ground, Commander Palmer's team has established a defensive position within a recently unearthed Forerunner structure.



Shortly after *Infinity* received this message, however, all communication was lost.



Despite efforts to reestablish contact, channels to the besieged recon team remain closed at this time...



WE GOTTA MOVE, THORNE!

WHAT'S IT LOOK LIKE I'M DOING, RAY?



NOT SURE HOW LONG THIS'LL HOLD.

I'LL WARN THE OTHERS.

COMMANDER PALMER, THIS IS THORNE...





MORE COVENANT!  
THEY'VE PUSHED  
US ALMOST ALL  
THE WAY  
BACK...

AT LEAST  
TELL ME YOU  
PICKED UP  
HOYA ALONG  
THE WAY.

AFRAID  
NOT.



DAMMIT.

JUST  
HOLD YOUR  
CURRENT POSITION  
AS LONG AS YOU  
CAN. I'LL CHECK  
IN SOON.



YOU GET THIS TRANSLATION GRID  
WORKING, I'LL TAKE BACK EVERYTHING  
I'VE EVER SAID ABOUT YOU,  
GLASSMAN.

WE MUST  
BE IN SERIOUS  
TROUBLE IF  
YOU'RE MAKING  
THAT OFFER.



THE GRID'S  
FULLY FUNCTIONAL,  
BUT BEFORE ACTIVATION,  
I NEED TO DECIPHER THE  
COORDINATES OF EXIT  
PORTALS.

LAST TIME,  
I CAME OUT THE  
OTHER END STARING  
DOWN THE BARREL  
OF A HUNDRED  
COVENANT GUNS.

THERE'S NO  
GUARANTEED SAFE  
EXIT, OF COURSE, BUT  
CERTAIN WAYPOINTS  
ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE  
OVERRUN BY JUL'S  
TROOPS THAN  
OTHERS.

WELL,  
HOW THE  
HELL ARE WE  
SUPPOSED TO  
FIGURE THAT  
OUT...



"...WHEN WE STILL DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON UP THERE?"

ANOTHER TRAITOR?

...THEIR NUMBERS ARE GREATER THAN I'D IMAGINED.

COMMANDER 'MDAMA, I RECOMMEND YOU RETURN TO THE RETRIBUTION UNTIL WE'VE ROOTED OUT THE REST OF THEM.

NONSENSE.

BEFORE WE DETAINED THIS HERETIC, HE TRANSMITTED THIS MESSAGE ACROSS THE ENTIRE FLEET.

...*flit*... I AM SALI 'NYON. I SOUND THE CALL TO ALL TRUE BELIEVERS. JOIN US AS WE RISE TO DEFEAT THE IMPOSTOR 'MDAMA...*flit*...

HIS DEATH WILL MARK A NEW ERA OF GREATNESS FOR THE COVENANT. A RETURN TO OUR GLORIOUS...

