

Moonbase Attack (1998) (Story by Dave Walsh) PG: AS, AL

A UFO Story

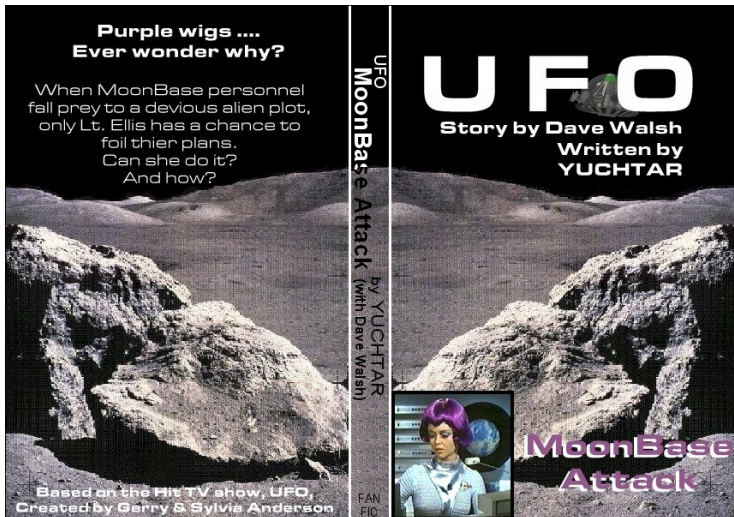
Finally! The real reason MoonBase women wear those purple wigs!

MoonBase Attack

Story by Dave Walsh

Written by Yuchtar

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(Miss you, Dave!!!)

There was an aire of excitement permeating the recycled atmosphere within the dome of MoonBase. SHADO personnel were preparing for the first day of fully operational status. They all knew why they were there, and the alien threat was real and frightening, but they were all young enough to still feel a little bit invincible and they were on the Moon, after all.

Lieutenant Gay Ellis was laughing with her friends. The purple coloured wig she wore was the source of the merriment.

"Oh, very fashionable," Lieutenant Nina Barry commented. "All the rage on Earth now, is it?"

"Perhaps with Barnum and Bailey," replied Lieutenant Joan Harrington with a chuckle.

They all giggled and Ellis struck a pose with her hand fluffing the wig. "Well," she said with mock arrogance. "I like it and I wouldn't expect you bourgeois twits to appreciate it." She flung the violet locks behind her and walked away with her nose in the air. The others giggled harder, which made Ellis break down a little too. She sat at her console while the others took their stations as well. Captain Desica ran them through another drill, in preparation for the moment their sensors became active.

"Commander Straker on line, Captain," announced Lt. Harrington from the Communications desk.

"Good morning, Commander," Desica said as he tuned into the video link.

"Captain," Straker replied, a hint of anticipation glinting in his steel grey eyes. "Ready for the big day?"

"Yes, sir. We're chomping at the bit here, Commander."

"Won't be long now. SID is on line and active. How much longer before your sensors are operational, Captain?"

Captain Desica turned to Ellis and put the question to her.

"Fourteen more hours, sir," she replied.

"Good, good," Straker said. "Why is your hair purple, Lieutenant?"

"What? Oh, sorry, sir - it's a wig. I thought it quite smart." She had forgotten she had it on.

"Not strictly regulation, though, is it, Lieutenant? Don't wear it on duty."

"Yes, Commander." Ellis blushed deeply and the other women suppressed giggles as Desica glared at them.

They all had a giggle about it later, but it was damned embarrassing at the time, especially

coming from Straker whom they all considered quite attractive.

Oh, well, she was off duty now and quite frankly, knackered. Ellis fell asleep as soon as her head hit the pillow, not having bothered to change clothes - or remove the wig.

"This is Space Intruder Detector," boomed the ominous voice. "Alien craft detected. Grid 4, Sol 6." It was the first time SID had ever actually detected anything and everyone at SHADO HQ was stunned.

"Contact MoonBase," Straker demanded.

"I've tried, sir." Lieutenant Ford answered.

"There's no response."

"Communications are down?"

"I don't think so, Commander. It seems to be working, but no one is answering."

"What do you mean, no one is answering?"

"There's no one responding, sir."

"Can we get a visual?"

"Coming in now, sir."

The video screen crackled to life and the scene it revealed looked to be from some horror film. HQ fell silent as everyone gazed at the scene. Voicing the fear everyone else was too frightened to utter, Ayshea asked, "Is everyone dead, sir?"

"I don't know." Straker reached for a phone and dialed Colonel Alec Freeman.

"Hmm?" came the sleepy voice.

"Alec, how quickly can you get a team up to MoonBase?"

"Hmm? MoonBase? Ed? Why? What's happened?"

"It looks like the crew may be dead, Alec. We don't know."

"Dead?!" Alec sat upright, suddenly quite awake.

Gay Ellis awoke with the red alert lights blinking on and off. "What the bloody hell?" she mumbled as she dragged herself out of bed. Nina was in the bed next to hers and Ellis shook her. "C'mon, Nina - let's go see what's up." She got no response. "Nina?" Ellis checked for a pulse, which was slow, but steady. She tried shaking the other woman again, but could not rouse her.

Frowning, Ellis left the living quarters only to find other crew members lying in the halls, collapsed at their stations - everyone on MoonBase was unconscious! She worked her way over to the com port and radioed HQ.

"Gay!" Straker called. "You're alright!"

"Yes, sir, but everyone else seems to be ... well - in a very deep sleep, Commander."

"Deep sleep?"

"Yes, sir - they're alive, but I can't wake them."

"What happened, Lieutenant?"

"I - I don't know, sir - I was asleep."

"Colonel Freeman is getting a team ready to launch. They'll be there as soon as possible. Can you hold things together, Gay?"

"Yes, sir."

"Keep communications open."

"Okay, Commander."

"There's a ufoe in the area of MoonBase, Sir!" Lieutenant Ford proclaimed. "SID says it's ... hovering ..."

"Hovering?"

"Yes, sir."

"Gay. Lieutenant Ellis - still there?" Straker was quite concerned and didn't like the silence.

After what seemed an hour, but was really only moments, Ellis came on line. "I've seen it, Commander." She was zipping up a space suit. "It's hovering, sir. I'm going out to take a look." She pulled on her helmet and locked it down.

Straker was tempted to tell her she would do no such thing, but he knew damned well it was necessary and he admired her courage.

She used a portable sensor to scan the hovering ufoe. It was emitting some kind of signal - steady and repetitive. Suspecting this may have been in some way responsible for the crew's condition, she decided to take it out herself.

Back inside, she found a rocket launcher. "Commander," she said to the image on screen. "The ufoe is emitting some signal - I think it might be causing the situation here. Have I your permission to eliminate it from here?"

Straker was shocked. Ellis wanted to blow it up herself? Could she do it? She was SHADO trained, he told himself - of course she could do it. With a grin of admiration, Straker answered in the affirmative.

Ellis took a deep breath before heading back out. She couldn't find a tripod, so balancing the launcher against a large rock, she turned the key to activate the launcher. The ufoe was still hovering - spinning in place and emitting that repeating signal. It was almost beautiful, the shining alien object suspended in space with the stars as a back drop ... She almost hated to destroy it. She took careful aim as the ufoe pilot evidently spotted the threat. A beam shot out from the alien craft and

shattered part of the rock Ellis crouched behind. Trying hard not to think about how close that had been or how quickly it might fire again, she pulled the trigger and fired. Luckily the rock shielded her from the debris of the blast.

Her sigh of relief was cut short as, startled, Ellis noticed a hissing sound and realised her suit had been punctured. Automatically, her hand went to the hip pocket for a patch kit, but the pocket was empty. Fighting panic, she headed for the dome airlock hatch.

Luckily, she had not been too far away, although she was none the less gasping for air by the time she made it through the hatch. A technical crew were right there to help her, though, seemingly unaware that they had been all asleep just moments before.

Back up in the control room, Desica was trying to comprehend what Straker was telling him, when Harrington announced a small formation of ufoes coming in. The Interceptors were launched and most of the spinners destroyed. The rest were handled by SkyDivers on the surface.

"Were it not for Lieutenant Ellis, MoonBase would have been destroyed and Earth

compromised, Alec," Straker was saying to a still somewhat sleepy-eyed and bewildered Freeman.

"But how did she withstand the alien influence?" he wanted to know. Straker wanted to know that too.

Several days later, Dr. Fraser turned in his report of the situation.

"You're saying it was the wig?" Straker wanted to know.

"Yes, sir." Fraser answered. "You see the alien craft was emitting a radio signal that interacted with the Human nerve center. It induced sleep. Why Ellis was unaffected was puzzling until I analysed the unique wig she had been wearing. The nature of the synthetic fibers, combined with the particular dye used to achieve that distinctive colour, worked as a barrier against the sonic resonance. It's a wonderful case of serendipity, Commander!"

"Yes, it is that, doctor. Thank you. Alec! Issue a command decree - All MoonBase operatives on duty are to be wearing a purple wig."

"Ed, I really don't think they're going to like that - is there any way to get the same results with a different colour dye?"

Fraser shook his head, and Straker frowned - he knew he would feel pretty damned silly in a

purple wig. "Alright, Alec, amend that to at least 30 percent of all operatives on duty - someone has to be protected!"

Luckily, most of the women thought the wigs fetching and volunteered to wear them, making the unusual wigs an integral part of their regular MoonBase uniform.

The End