

**F.A.R.M.**

Inspired by "The Ant & The Grasshopper"  
Retold by Christopher Howard Wolf

PAGE ONE

Panel One - Ext. Deep Space - Timeless

Amid the inky darkness of space, we see foreign PLANETS and STAR SYSTEMS. All seems peaceful and still.

CAPTION: In space, no one can hear you yawn.

Panel Two - Ext. Deep Space - Continuous

We now see the same setting as a SPACE SHUTTLE moves through the shot. This shuttle slightly resembles a GRASSHOPPER, and is quite sleek - obviously built exclusively for speedy transport.

CAPTION: The thrill of seeing dying stars and newly formed planets wears thin after a while. This is especially true when you've been completely lost for the last twelve hours.

Panel Three - Int. Shuttle Cockpit - At That Moment

We now see CAEL, a tall, lanky, unkempt sort of fellow. He is garbed below the neck in a green FLIGHT SUIT that vaguely resembles an insect's exoskeleton. He sits at the helm of the ship, and is absently strumming a WOODEN guitar-like INSTRUMENT. A VOICE crackles from a nearby SPEAKER on the console.

VOICE: (from speaker) Cael, listen... Just come back now and everything's forgiven. The missed concert dates... the breaches of contract...

CAEL: Not going to happen, boss.

Panel Four - Int. Shuttle Cockpit - Continuous

Cael looks up at a PHOTOGRAPH clipped to the corner of an overhead DISPLAY PANEL. The photograph depicts a beautiful YOUNG WOMAN, smiling at the camera.

VOICE: (from off panel) You're killing me! Just because some groupie tells you to blast off, you actually go and do it?!

CAEL: She wasn't just "some groupie". You know that.

Panel Five - Int. Cockpit - Continuous

Cael takes the photo down and studies it, not with sadness or contempt, but with a look of acceptance.

VOICE: (from off panel) Right. She was *the* one. Sure. Come back and I'll introduce you to the *next* one.

CAEL: No way! I've had my fill of the "fairer sex", thank you very much.

PAGE TWO

Panel One - Int. Cockpit - Continuous

Suddenly, the speaker crackles. A NEW VOICE emanates from it. Cael seems moderately interested.

VOICE: (from speaker) You're a real \*zzzkkktttt\*

CAEL: Awww. Sounds like we've got a bad connection...

VOICE: (from speaker) \*kksshhh\* ...If you receive this... \*zzzttt\* return to these coordinates... \*zzzttt\* waiting for your arrival...

Panel Two - Int. Cockpit - Continuous

Curious, Cael now speaks to the new voice.

CAEL: Hello, out there. Unwashed intergalactic vagrant here, requesting directions to the nearest quadrant in which one might procure a stiff drink.

Panel Three - Int. Cockpit - Continuous

Cael seems frustrated as the new voice continues to drone on.

VOICE: (from speaker) ...If you receive this... please return \*zzzttt\* coordinates... we are \*zzzttt\* for your arrival...

CAEL: Bah! A recording.

Panel Four - Int. Cockpit - Continuous

Cael returns the photograph to its previous place, talking now directly to it.

CAEL: Guess we'll have to have a close encounter, love.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert Planet (planet side) - Moments Later

Cael's shuttle is now approaching this planet with a desert-like SURFACE. He is still far enough away that we can see a pretty good portion of the sphere.

CAEL: (from ship) I know what you're thinking, love. Distress call from a remote desert planet - I must be stupid. Not like I have anything to come back to, right?

PAGE THREE

Panel One - Ext. Landing Strip - Later

We now see a desolate and dilapidated LANDING STRIP, complete with a small, yet high-tech TERMINAL in the background. Cael's ship has landed here. Cael stands near the vessel, now wearing a sleek HELMET with large EYE LENSES that obscures his face. It naturally resembles the visage of a grasshopper. Cael also happens to be wearing the guitar-like instrument across his BACK. A VOICE emanates from his ship's open HATCH.

VOICE: (from ship) Seriously, Cael. Your fans are rioting in the streets. There are so many fires..

CAEL: Nice try, boss. You and I both know my demographic doesn't have a long-term memory.

Panel Two - Ext. Landing Strip - Continuous

Cael points a single finger into the air as if revealing some crucial clue.

VOICE: (from ship) Just... Just tell me where you are.

CAEL: I'm on a planet.

Panel Three - Ext. Landing Strip - Continuous

Cael forms a circle with his hands.

VOICE: (from ship) Cael..

CAEL: It's round!

VOICE: (from ship) CAEL!!

Panel Four - Ext. Landing Strip - Continuous

Cael walks off into the desert.

CAEL: Bye, now.

VOICE: (from ship) What? Where are you going?

Panel Five - Ext. Landing Strip - Continuous

As Cael progresses, his shuttle sits idly in the background.

CAEL: I'm looking for someone to annoy.

Panel Six - Ext. Landing Strip - Continuous

The shuttle now sits alone.

VOICE: (from ship) Hello? Hello!? I'm smashing your platinum albums! I'll do it!

PAGE FOUR

Panel One - Ext. Desert - Moments Later

Cael now walks amid the seemingly endless sands. He also casually strums the instrument. The only landmarks here are the occasional oddly-shaped and entirely alien STONE FORMATIONS.

CAEL: Sand, sand, and more sand. *Stellar*.

SFX: (instrument) ♪

Panel Two - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael looks around casually.

CAEL: Too bad, a little danger would've livened things up.

Panel Three - Ext. Desert - Continuous

We see a close shot of Cael's face plate as a FIGURE is reflected in his EYE LENSES. The STOCKY, CHUNKY, SHORT figure is back-lit far enough away to be a mere silhouette.

Panel Four - Ext. Desert - At That Moment

We now see a close shot of ARTHOR's face, looking back at Cael. Arthor is the stocky figure reflected in Cael's lenses. At this moment all we can see is Arthor's FACE PLATE, a vaguely ant-like visage with eye lenses similar in size to Cael's. Cael is now the lanky, tall FIGURE in Arthor's LENSES.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor now HUSTLES away from Cael. Not running, but nonetheless hurrying through the sand. Arthor is a short humanoid being. It is difficult to see true physical nature due to the LARGE, CUMBERSOME suit of protective ARMOR Arthor is wearing. The suit resembles a commingling of steam punk and World War Two era gear. A large HELMET atop Arthor's head wears ant-like radio ANTENNAE, and Arthor also wears a large BACK PACK. Cael waves to the fleeing Arthor from the background.

CAEL: Hey! I come in peace. Take me to your libations.

Panel Six - Ext. Desert - Continuous

We are back with Cael now as he slings the instrument over his shoulder once again and looks rather put out by the whole situation.

CAEL: Far-space hick.

PAGE FIVE

Panel One - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael CROUCHES, as if preparing to LEAP forward. His FOOTWEAR hums.

SFX: (footwear) Zzzzeeee...

Panel Two - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael LEAPS into the air, obviously assisted by some sort of technology in his footwear as he SOARS higher than one might expect a person to be able to.

SFX: (footwear) Pt-chuuuu

Panel Three - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael suddenly LANDS in front of Arthor, sending the stocky being SCREECHING to a stop, about to fall face-first into the sand.

CAEL: Hi. I'm Cael.

ARTHOR: Gahh!

Panel Four - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor is now SPRAWLED OUT on the sand. Hideous, scraggly TUBERS have spilled from the back pack. Cael offers a HAND to Arthor.

CAEL: Didn't mean to spook you. Heh... Okay, that's a lie.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Instead of taking Cael's assistance, Arthor busily scoops up the tubers and attempts to return them all to the back pack. Cael continues to hold his hand out, feeling even more slighted, now.

CAEL: Wow. Those must be really good.

Panel Six - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor has gathered most of the tubers, and holds one out as if studying it.

ARTHOR: They are repulsive.

PAGE SIX

Panel One - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor slowly stands, impeded by the weight of the pack. Cael stands nearby with his hands on his hips.

CAEL: You know, you're kinda rude for someone sending out distress calls... whoever you are.

ARTHOR: I am called Arthor. That message is meant for our Queen, and you are quite obviously *not* our Queen.

Panel Two - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael jokingly leans on Arthor's SHOULDER as they walk, setting them both slightly off-balance.

CAEL: So what're you folks doing all the way out here on such a low-rent sphere?

ARTHOR: We are workers... clones... left behind while our Queen searches for a more hospitable planet. We fear she may not return.

Panel Three - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor abruptly PUSHES Cael away.

CAEL: Ooph!

ARTHOR: I do not have time to speak with you any longer. I must continue to gather fresh genetic samples before the freeze.

Page Four - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael is now stopped as he watches Arthor walk off into the distance.

CAEL: I'm guessing you don't have any of my albums.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael stands amid the sands and folds his arms in frustration.

CAEL: ... Hick.

PAGE SEVEN

Panel One - Ext. Desert - Moments Later

Back with Arthor, Cael suddenly LANDS nearby, as if he has leapt into the scene. Arthor does not hesitate.

CAEL: Alright, so if those things are so bad, why do you want them?

ARTHOR: \*sigh\*

Panel Two - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael jokingly starts to CLIMB onto Arthor's back.

ARTHOR: We replicate our provisions from sample plants. Unfortunately the only selection available ranges from bland to appalling.

Panel Three - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael is now fully riding piggy-back on Arthor's back pack.

CAEL: Hey, you're pretty strong.

ARTHOR: Please do not ride me. There is no time.

CAEL: There isn't time before...?

Panel Four - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor pivots. Cael starts to slip off.

ARTHOR: Before the freeze. I told you this.

CAEL: Oh yeah.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael falls into the sand, having been dumped off.

CAEL: Awp!

SFX: (falling on sand) Chuff

PAGE EIGHT

Panel One - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Still on the sand, Cael sits Indian style. In the foreground, Arthor presses onward.

ARTHOR: Return to your vessel and leave before the freeze claims you. It is impossible to predict exactly when it will arrive.

CAEL: Sure...

Panel Two - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael points back to where he and Arthor came from, still sitting on the sand.

CAEL: You know, we could just ditch this place... Might be fun, eh? No more slaving away on a sand ball. That *has* to suck.

Panel Three - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Arthor looks back, only for a moment, as if some fleeting concept of freedom has pass through.

ARTHOR: I will not leave the colony. To lose one is to doom all.

Panel Four - Ext. Desert - Continuous

We now see over Cael's shoulder from behind as Arthor continues to walk away from him.

CAEL: I hear you.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert - Continuous

This is largely the same image, but Arthor is even farther away.

Panel Six - Ext. Desert - Continuous

This is once again the same image, and Arthor is disappearing into the distance. Cael calls after.

CAEL: You'd probably just bore me to death, anyway! This has already been the dullest day of my life!

PAGE NINE

Panel One - Ext. F.A.R.M. Hatch - Later

We now join Arthor, approaching a half-buried HATCH that presumably leads to a passage below. This hatch is obviously weather-beaten and quite old. Despite its age, it still seems secure.

A sign nearby reads:

F.A.R.M.  
FULLY AUTOMATED RESOURCE MODULE  
HATCH 114-K

Panel Two - Ext. F.A.R.M. Hatch - Continuous

Arthor reaches the hatch. A slight CRACKLE of static electricity arcs between Arthor's antennae. In response, the hatch OPENS.

SFX: (antennae) Fzzt!

SFX: (door) Fwsshhh...

Panel Three - Ext. F.A.R.M. Hatch - Continuous

Arthor STOPS seconds before entering the hatch and starts to turn around. Cael calls from behind.

CAEL: (off panel) Hey! Arthor!

Panel Four - Ext. Desert - At That Moment

We now see Cael as he lands, having leapt once again to close space between him and Arthor. He is still some distance away as he holds up his instrument.

CAEL: Cherry wood! This instrument... you could replicate a whole grove of cherry trees from it, I bet.

Panel Five - Ext. F.A.R.M. Hatch - At That Moment

We see a shot of Arthor's expressionless face plate.

ARTHOR: Cael...

Panel Six - Ext. Desert - At That Moment

Cael continues to walk through the sand, holding his instrument aloft as a TREMENDOUS BLIZZARD rolls in quickly behind him. He seems completely unaware of the impending doom.

CAEL: You can have it. The thing's brought me nothing but frustration.

PAGE TEN

Panel One - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael is suddenly overtaken by SHEETS of HAIL and SNOW. He reels forward as if propelled by a strong wind. He holds a death grip on the instrument as he loses all other semblance of control.

CAEL: Eaaaghh!

Panel Two - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Everything has become one large whiteout, save for Cael, who is lying across the ice-covered ground, quickly being blown across its surface. His exoskeleton and helmet are quickly icing over.

CAEL: Nnggh... \*gasp\*... f... freezing up...

Panel Three - Ext. Desert - Continuous

Cael is now suddenly near death as he tries to lift himself with weak, ice-heavy arms.

Panel Four - Ext. Desert - Continuous

As Cael slumps down again, we can see Arthor braving the storm and walking toward his body.

Panel Five - Ext. Desert Planet (planet side) - Timeless

We once again see a pulled back shot of the planet itself. Now, however, most of the surface is covered with STORM CLOUDS and sections of ICE.

PAGE ELEVEN

Panel One - Ext. Desert Planet (planet side) - Timeless

The planet now becomes blurred, more of a ball of light than an actual planet.

Panel Two - Ext. Desert Planet (planet side) - Timeless

The blurred image has now actually become little more than a glow amid darkness.

Panel Three - Int. Sterile Room - At That Moment

We now see the glow of a FLASHLIGHT, shining straight at the viewer, from Cael's POINT OF VIEW. Arthor is holding the light.

Panel Four - Int. Sterile Room - Continuous

We now see a shot of the room. It is very antiseptic and devoid of anything other than a METAL TABLE upon which Cael is SITTING UP and a few CABINETS. Arthor stands near Cael, still holding the lit FLASHLIGHT in his face. Cael's helmet is now REMOVED.

CAEL: Whoa! ... That was nasty. Where...?

ARTHOR: You are inside the F.A.R.M. This is one of our medical units. You fainted, but will obviously recover.

Panel Five - Int. Sterile Room - Continuous

Cael is now weakly getting up from the table. He leans on Arthor, who now freely gives support.

ARTHOR: That was the freeze. I am sorry, but your vessel has most likely been destroyed.

CAEL: Uugh... *stellar*.

Panel Six - Int. Sterile Room - Continuous

Standing on his own now, (but still shaky) Cael follows Arthor to a closed DOOR.

ARTHOR: Don not worry, the F.A.R.M. is capable of sustaining you as well as the rest of us.

PAGE TWELVE

Panel One - Int. Sterile Room - Continuous

Arthor stands by the door, facing Cael. As the door OPENS, Cael has his HAND over his FACE.

SFX: (door) Pssshh...

CAEL: Fainted. Heh! Do me a favor... don't tell the other guys...

Panel Two - Int. F.A.R.M. Center - Continuous

Cael follows Arthor out of a DOOR here, presumably exiting the previous room. Cael looks around in wonder as Arthor begins removing the ant-like helmet and face plate. At their feet is a floor of SOIL, and the walls are covered with vibrant VINES.

ARTHOR: I do not understand...

Panel Three - Int. F.A.R.M. Center - Continuous

We now see over Cael's shoulder from behind as he surveys the surroundings. The F.A.R.M. center could easily rival any roman city. A bevy of small, yet beautiful WOMEN in futuristic WORK CLOTHES are tending to several rows of other-worldly PLANTS.

Panel Four - Int. F.A.R.M. Center - Continuous

We see Arthor's face as SHE looks at Cael. With the helmet and face plate now gone we see that Arthor's true visage is that of an adorable, yet tough young WOMAN.

ARTHOR: What are "guys", precisely?

Panel Five - Int. F.A.R.M. Center - Continuous

Cael puts his hand to his brow and lets out a sigh of disbelief. He seems neither overjoyed nor distressed by the notion of spending an unknown amount of time with a veritable sea of females. Instead, he seems as of yet unable to sort out whether this is a blessing or a curse.

CAEL: ...Stellar.

Panel Six - Int. F.A.R.M. Center - Timeless

We now simply see a shot of Cael's instrument leaning against the base of a blooming CHERRY TREE.

CAPTION: F.A.R.M.

CAPTION: Inspired by "The Ant & The Grasshopper"

CAPTION: Retold by Christopher Howard Wolf

CAPTION: (insert further credits)