

JUDGE DREDD: TITAN

Pitch for an eight part Judge Dredd story

“A man, however great, has got to know his limitations.”

High Concept

TITAN is fear and hell for bent Judges. A bogeyman term, often used in Dredd's world, very rarely seen. When the inmates take over the prison planet, it's terror for Mega City One. The most dangerous, morally broken Judges are free to scatter across the galaxy, to come looking for bloody revenge on Dredd and other high ups in Justice Department.

But when Dredd and a team of commando Judges are sent, via spaceship, to retake Titan and prevent the inmates' escape in a WHERE EAGLES DARE/THE ROCK-style action movie raid, they discover something unexpected and potentially even more terrifying – the inmates don't want to escape. They want to keep Titan as their own kingdom. A separate highly dangerous autonomous power in the galaxy. And Aimee Nixon will be their queen.

The Setup

Chaos Day and the events of Trifecta have decimated Justice Department's resources, and that has made security reserves/tech help for Titan perilously low. When Justice Department loses contact with the planet the decision is made to send a small team to check out exactly why there is silence down comms channels. And Dredd is chosen to lead – pure Colonial Marines in ALIENS, this. There simply aren't the resources to send an army to Titan.

This is a stealth commando operation. Fly to Titan, land, ascertain what's happened there and get word back to Mega City One. And the failsafe option of an intergalactic moon-destroying missile strike is always there for Chief Judge Hershey. There was a breakout on Titan once before (The *Purgatory* storyline). The inmates are simply too dangerous to be allowed to return as an army against a weakened Mega City One. They could take over the city. That cannot be allowed. Dredd knows the stakes. He and his team, if trapped on the planet, will be victims of the missile too.

The Big Bad – Aimee Nixon

At the close of LOW LIFE: THE DEAL Aimee avoided Titan by giving Justice Department all the intel she had regarding the Yakuza's takeover of the Low Life. In her own way, she felt she had been treated fairly and accepted her punishment.

But when the Chaos Bug hit all bets were off. 35 million dead. Iso Cubes were in some of the affected sectors and were no longer fit for human habitation. There were suddenly too many perps for the remaining iso-cubes in the city, so some were shipped offworld to Titan where there was more room. The most dangerous perps. And that included Aimee. (Matt – if you like we could do a one-off Dredd that could run a month or so before our main storyline here, establishing this. Aimee wouldn't

appear in it – we want to keep her a surprise for the readers when she turns up in Titan. Aimee made a deal and she was willing to accept it. But Justice Department screwed her over. She's on Titan, her nose removed for breathing apparatus, stuck in hell on Earth. She was always highly dangerous. Now she's got a target to aim her hatred at. Around halfway through our story we'll reveal Aimee as the leader of the Titan revolution. And she's not just willing to run into hiding either on Earth or in space. She's intelligent. She has some big ideas.

Dredd's Team – Space Commandos

Dredd will be joined by a team of experienced space commandos (it'll be cool to design them new Judicial Space Commando outfits for this and a specific spacecraft). One member of the team is an old grizzled Judge, McIntosh – who served as warden on Titan for 10 years and helped design much of the newer areas of the colony. He knows the layout inside out, knows the security codes. Six years ago McIntosh was arrested on a manslaughter charge – he claimed that being around bent judges so long had infected him - and he will see out the rest of his days in an iso-cube. He's offered a deal to help Dredd's mission. Reduced term, not freedom. He's glad to be a Judge again. But when push comes to shove, what is he? Judge or inmate?

The Third Act Twist, And Our Ending

The assumption throughout is that the inmates want to get off Titan to lay waste to Mega City One. The third act twist reveal is that ISN'T what they want at all. Aimee's too smart for that. She says that "Mega City One is a dying city. A geriatric in its last days of incontinence and bed sores. Why would we want to return to that?" The inmates, with Aimee as their elected leader, want to keep Titan and for it to have independence. Think the war with the American States. They want to grow Titan into a planet of their own. And thanks to the biospheres they have there to grow their own crops for food manufacturing etc, they can do that).

This is ultimately a quest for Dredd that will fail, creating an exciting, threatening new area in the Dreddworld. We want to leave this story with the status quo slightly changed. Titan, and Aimee, will be a potential threat going forward. This is far more dramatic a development than Dredd returning things to how they were at the end of the story. And what this says about Mega City One is a frightening thing. Maybe Aimee has a point. Maybe the Big Meg is a dying city and evolution is taking place.

The Theme – Every Man Has Limitations

Our title has a double meaning. Dredd is as much the Titan as the prison planet, He keeps his worst excesses locked up, just as Titan does its inmates. And Dredd is ageing – one of the things I love about him. Things change, his world changes, and thank god for that. It makes for far more interesting stories than everything returning to status quo. This mission simply cannot succeed from its inception. Mega City One would have once had the force to send an army to take Titan back. The fact that they send a small team shows how Dredd's world has changed. He will be faced with an ending that is going to make him beyond angry. Titan an autonomous planet removed from Justice Department jurisdiction. Times are changing...