

Ryan Filkon
A GURPS Firefly Character



25th August 2004

Ryan Filkon is a relatively small man. While not built with obvious muscles, he is of slightly above average strength. When he was younger, he never imagined himself as a combatant. He was interested in computers and electronics, and he was good with them. He was constantly playing with technology, trying to learn all he can, just out of an incredible curiosity.

He was born on the border world of Ginger Flats, where he and his parents ran a ranch his Grandfather had named Halcyon Bluffs. His Family worked the ranch, consisting of his Grandfather, his parents, and two brothers and a sister. His work on the Ranch made his pursuit of things technological a lot more work, he'd spend the time out on the land he needed to, but he'd be back to his tinkering every evening. His parents tolerated it, as long as he got his work done. They didn't see any reason why he should be forced to remain on the ranch forever.

When the war hit, Ryan was only 17. Too young to enlist, but his family, though strong supporters for Independence, didn't relish the idea of sending their children. Ryan's older brother, his only older sibling, Erik, enlisted in the army. He was a casualty in the first battle he was involved in, on a Planet about midway between core and rim called <insert name here>. Ryan was greatly affected by his brother's death, but his parents wouldn't let him enlist, and he was too young to do so on his own.

Around the midpoint of the war, the Alliance came and conquered Ginger Flats. The Independent's had left only a small garrison on the world that was quickly overwhelmed, and the public in general was too afraid to do anything about their unwelcome guests. Ryan got together with a few other local hotheads to cause problems for the garrison.

This began as childish pranks. Anti-Alliance graffiti, sugar in their fuel, secret distribution of pamphlets trying to convince people to work against the Alliance Garrison. After a short while, the boys got more aggressive. They snuck into a garrison building and by sheer force of luck stole an Alliance Commset.

Back on Halcyon Bluffs, Ryan and his compatriots studied the Alliance Communication hardware, and protocols, spying on what the local garrison was doing, and working to further thwart their efforts. With their new source of intelligence, they were even more effective at getting in the way of the Alliance.

Eventually, they got too aggressive. The Alliance was planning on using Ginger Flats as a staging area to go further into this section of the Rim. They would be building a large supply depot three clicks from the town near where Ryan and his friends lived. They knew they wanted to hit this depot, they just didn't know how.

Three days later one of Ryan's friends, a 16-year old named Travis, came to him. He'd received a letter from a group in a town 25 miles away. They'd heard about Ryan's group, and wanted to offer any support they could. They mentioned one thing that immediately caught both boy's attention. Explosives. The town was a mining town, and the group said they could get their hands on large amounts of dynamite and greater explosives.

They quickly formed a plan. The first wave of supplies was expected to hit the depot in one week, and they felt they should strike then, before too many soldiers arrived.

On the night of the supply drop, Ryan and his friends met up with the other group two miles north of the depot. Ryan's group brought their knowledge of the area and some scouting of the depot. The other group brought explosives. A lot of explosives.

"Okay," Ryan begins. "We've been taking this time to spy on the Alliance Outpost, we've got floor plan diagrams, and we believe we know where they'll be placing their various supplies. Mack, the diagram," Ryan says to one of his companions. As the map is laid out, Ryan continues, "This is a fairly small outpost, but all the supplies, the things we really want to hit, are in this center ring, with the barracks on the outside. Not necessarily the smartest way to build this, but they aren't expecting serious attack. Also, for this reason, they haven't begun moving many men in.

"There are a total of ten men stationed at this outpost right now, however, there are one hundred at the garrison in our town, which could be called in within 15 minutes. We need to move fast, and if possible, prevent any alarms from being raised. That will be my job. We got our hands on an Alliance Commset a few months back, and I'm pretty sure I'll be able to jam their communications with what I've learned from it.

"That won't get us in though. The guard is set up in pairs of two, and at normal intervals during their shifts; they will leave one of them at the single entrance, while the other walks the perimeter of the outpost. One of these times would be ideal to strike."

"Don't worry, we'll take care of that," Richard, one of the boys from the other town said.

"Okay, but try not to kill him, we don't want to kill anyone on this. Once we're inside, we'll target two of the storerooms," Ryan says, pointing at their diagram. "This one, is their weapons store, between what we find in there, and what you've brought, we should cause quite an explosion, plus they should have remote detonators in there to keep us safe. This one, is they're food storage, which should put quite a cramp on any plans to move in additional people. Any questions?"

"Plan seems pretty well thought out," Richard says. "We'll go with it."

The boys drove to within a half a mile of their target, keeping the lights off, and a hill between them and the outpost. Once they got too close, they got out, and carried their equipment the rest of the way. At exactly fifteen minutes to midnight, they were in position waiting, as one of the guards left the entrance, to go on his patrol.

Ten minutes pass, and the guard has reached the far side of the complex. The young men begin to charge down the hill, groups splitting off to either side, to flank the remaining guard.

The guard pulled up his gun, and fired on the group coming to his left. Ryan watched as his friend, Trevor, took the shot in his chest, and crumpled to the ground, no moving. Ryan, and a few of his friends, let out a scream. Despite all their planning, none of them really expected this.

Nor did they expect what came next. Richard was running alongside Ryan, and he pulled a gun from under his long coat. While he was running, Richard took a shot, which through some sick stroke of luck, hit the Alliance soldier full in the face. Ryan watched his second man die in as many seconds. He kept running because he could think of nothing else to do. By the time he reached the door, his entire system had gone numb.

He stood there, for what seemed like an eternity, but could only have been a few seconds, before Richard and some of his group began kicking the fallen soldier. "Stop that, you've already killed him. Gorram. Go, set the explosives, I'll try to keep any more trouble from hitting us," he said hurriedly.

He approached the dead man, and began checking his commset to figure out what channel the outpost was working on. Working quickly, he stepped into the minor cover of the outpost and began broadcasting static on the Alliance channels. Behind him, he heard more gunshots, but he didn't think they were from the storage rooms. He pushed that thought out of his mind. *What did we get ourselves into?* He asks himself quietly. After another short eternity, the group that went into the building comes out, Richard is carrying a small remote control with a button on it.

"Time to run," he says with a huge shit-eating grin on his face. Ryan notices that the guys that came with Richard are holding Alliance machine guns, and Ryan's friends have very pale expressions on their faces. As they leave the building, they hear a shot ring out, the guys with the guns turn and fire at the other guard, who was responding to the gunshots. Through sheer force of numbers the alliance soldier went down, though one of Richard's compatriots fell in the same exchange.

Ryan runs to Trevor, and picks his dead body up, and tries to run with it. "Leave him, he'll just slow us down," Richard says.

"No, he's my friend, and I'm getting him out of here. Travis," Ryan says looking at his other friend, who immediately comes and helps pull the fallen boy from the depot.

As they clear the hill, Richard pushes the remote detonator, and a deafening explosion lights up the sky behind them. Ryan knows that if the Garrison didn't know about this yet, they certainly did now. "You idiot! You're going to bring hell down upon us!"

"This was your idea, let's get back to the vehicles," Ricahrd reminds him, and orders. Ryan can't think of anything better to do, though he wants to get away from the person he now perceives to be mad. It takes them 10 minutes to reach the vehicles.

"We split up here," Ryan says. "Get away from us."

"Fine, good luck," Richard replies, as he hops on his friends ATV which they fire up.

Ryan and Travis load Trevor onto their ATV, while their last friend hops on and starts it up. Once they're all on, they take off, driving for Halcyon Flats as quickly as they can.

Almost immediately, an Alliance ASREV came into view of the vehicles. Richard's group decides to open fire on the small vehicle, and draws it toward them. "Turn off the lights, and hit it!" Ryan says quietly.

They hear a rocket being launched behind them, soon followed by an explosion. *How could this all go so wrong?* He asked himself. "Just keep driving, we'll hide in my families shelter," he says choking on the words.

It took them twenty minutes to reach the ranch, and they were amazed they made it at all. Parking the ATV next to the garage and throwing a tarp over it to hide it. The boys run to the shelter to hide. Once in the shelter, Ryan turns to Travis, "Gorram it! Why did I listen to you? Why did I agree to this plan?!"

"This wasn't my fault! I didn't expect them to bring guns, and start shooting people! Christ, what were we thinking?"

The boys sat in silence for a while, trying to comprehend just what they had done. Some time later, less than an hour is all they could say, someone began beating on the entrance to the shelter.

"This is Alliance Corporal Jameson, evacuate the shelter immediately."

"Ai ya, wo mun wan leh¹. We may as well go," Ryan says, knowing his life is over. He goes to the door, and opens it. He and his friends exit, one after another, with their hands above their heads. Ryan's family has already been drug out of the house, and his father is glaring at him.

"Yu bun duh². You're just kids. Burn it," he orders to the men with him, who with surprised expressions, move to the house, and begin to ignite it, before moving to other nearby structures. The Corporal speaks up. "This household is guilty of harboring terrorists to the Alliance cause. As the terrorists are still children, I will turn them over to their parents. I trust you'll take appropriate action," the Corporal finishes looking pointedly at Ryan's father, who is starting in awe as he watches everything he and his family has worked to build burn to the ground.

The soldiers drag off Ryan's friends to deliver them to their parents, and Ryan's tears begin to pour down his cheeks. He stumbles toward his father, pleading with his eyes. He falls to his knees in front of his father. "Ye, forgive me. I knew not what I was doing."

His father turns to him, his face steeling as he looks upon his son. He raises his hand, almost in a benediction, before bringing it swiftly to the side of Ryan's head, sending him sprawling to the ground. "Leave. You have no place here anymore."

Ryan stared at his father, unable to move. "No, no. Please, no," he mutters, as his father turns and goes to the rest of the family. Leading them away from the fallen child.

Having nowhere to go, Ryan stows away on an transport ship, a Firefly class. He finds one of the small compartments, and hides in it, sneaking out during the night to steal small amounts of food to eat. Unsurprisingly, his presence was not

¹We're in big trouble

²Stupid

completely unknown. When they reached the planet they were flying to, Rockfall, a member of the ship crew helped sneak them off the ship. Luckily for Ryan, there was a CIC recruiting station in town, and so, in 2509 at the age of 17, Ryan Filkon illegally enlisted in the military, to continue fighting the Alliance that had taken everything from him.

Boot Camp did not begin well for Ryan. He'd enlisted as a Communications Engineer, and he didn't understand why he needed to go through all the soldier training. He also didn't want to learn about the guns. He'd seen enough men die in his time.

He was assigned to the Drill Sergeant <Insert Triphos' Guy's name>. Triphos and Ryan did not get along. Ryan came into the military with a chip on his shoulder. Private Filkon wouldn't listen. He did the bare minimum he could, which of course resulted in a lot of extra runs and drills for him and his squad.

His squad hated him. On two occasions, he was assaulted in the barracks. Not enough to require Medical attention, but assaulted nonetheless.

At the end of the fourth week of the six week basic training, their squad was assigned a Field Test. There had recently been a small battle on Rockfall, and they had been chosen to clear out a few buildings to make sure the Alliance was really gone. Triphos' broke his squad into four fire teams of three soldiers each. He chose Ryan to lead Fire Team Charlie, much to everyone's surprise.

Charlie was told to clear a small stand of buildings. Ryan and the two men with him entered the first building, and found nothing. In the second building, Ryan ordered one of the men to check a one door, and the other to check another door to the room. The second man got shot as he entered the room, and Ryan rushed in behind him. The Alliance soldier lying there was in really bad shape, and Ryan raised his gun, but couldn't pull the trigger. Just then, he hears a shot behind him, and the Alliance soldier slumps over.

Turning, Ryan sees Triphos standing there with his gun raised. "Charlie, you're done, return to the Rendezvous," he orders. Ryan and the other member of his team grab the wounded man, and pull him to the rendezvous point for medical attention. He was lucky, he'd only taken a shot to calf, but he couldn't support his own weight.

Upon their return to camp, they were debriefed. In all, the squad had performed well, even Fire team Charlie before the injury. However, Ryan was asked to stay behind when the rest of the squad was dismissed. "Would you like to tell me what happened out there, Private?"

"We were clearing the house, using a standard wave formation. Upon entering the main entry space from the dining area, Private Roberts was shot at by an Alliance soldier. I rushed into the room, and raised my rifle to fire on the soldier, but before I pulled the trigger, you dispatched him, and ordered us out of the combat zone."

"I know all that, Private. First, why did you enter the room, after hearing a shot from it? Second, after entering the room, why didn't you fire?"

Ryan stood quietly. "I made a mistake, sir."

"A mistake? Your mistake could have gotten you and Private Roberts killed. That doesn't answer why you didn't fire your rifle."

"I've seen enough men die, sir," Ryan answers quietly.

"You've seen enough men die," the Sergeant replies derisively. "You enlisted in this war! What do you think is going to happen when you leave this camp? This is a war, Private! You haven't taken anything seriously since you got here. You don't think you need to know this because you signed on as a Communications Specialist? Your gorrnam attitude almost got you, and a member of your squad killed today soldier. I don't care if you want to know what I'm trying to teach you, but if you don't learn it, you're just going to have to watch friends and colleagues die. Do we have an understanding, Private?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then get out of my sight."

Ryan didn't sleep much that night. He just kept thinking about the night that sent him here, and what had happened that day. He didn't like the idea of shooting people, but he couldn't deny what Triphos had said. He had enlisted. He would be expected to use his gun. Trevor wouldn't be the first or last friend he'd watch die.

The next day, Ryan began working much harder. While he wasn't a dead-eye with his rifle, he was capable. He began to understand tactics and leadership in much better ways. He began to get the impression that Sergeant Triphos was looking out for him in some strange way, though he was still pretty rough on him. Ryan was far from popular with his squad when they finished, but they had begun to respect him.

The day before they left camp, Sergeant Triphos called Ryan into his office. "Private, I just wanted to say, I'm very pleased with your progress these last two weeks. I'll be following your progress in the war, do me proud soldier."

"Yes, Sir," Ryan replies before being sent out of the office. The rest of Ryan's training was simple for him. Commset operation, how to jam Alliance signals, decode their signals, and other things he'd done before. He did learn a lot about magnetic locks and other electronics he hadn't been exposed to much yet, in addition to flying. Ryan finished this aspect of his training far better, and was ready to enter the war in earnest.

As Ryan gets out of training, the Coalition knows that Alliance General Haas is preparing to attack Beylix, so Ryan was stationed there at the beginning of his service. Ryan still had his old Alliance Commset from home, and he was able to find Alliance Command signals for the region around Beylix. After a week, he'd decoded enough of the transmissions that the CIC knew much of the Alliance attack plan on that planet.

However, while fiddling with the Alliance encryption protocols, Ryan accidentally sent a feedback loop into the Command channels for a total of 10 milliseconds, but it was long enough for the Alliance to realize their communications may have been compromised. Ryan reported his mistake to the commanders on Beylix. The decision that came back from the brass was that if the Alliance attacked in two days, as was originally planned, they would use the same formation, if they waited, they would clearly be retooling. Ryan didn't like this logic, but he took his orders.

It paid off, the Alliance suffered one of their worst defeats by not changing their plans. The traps the Independents had set-up to stem the Alliance advance on their known routes, cost the lives of over 7,000 Alliance soldiers in only twenty minutes. Ryan spent most of the Battle of Beylix trying to break Alliance encryption again, but he did end up getting combat experience when a small team of Alliance troopers managed to sneak into the Independents Communications tents. Ryan watched several of his friends go down, and this fed his rage to open fire on the Alliance, he killed four of the twelve man squad himself, before the squad was neutralized. However, the damage had been great for the Independents, and they were operating with far less effective communication as they fought the battle, eventually able to secure a victory due to their early success in the battle.

The next year and a half of the war was much of the same. Ryan spent a lot of his time repairing electronic equipment, and working Communication Analysis. When necessary, he was sent out to the lines to fight, but usually, by that time it was just to cover the retreat of those more tired than himself. Through luck, he managed to avoid any major injuries, a few flesh wounds, was about all. Ryan, though not really religious, got into the habit of throwing a thanks to the Universe for surviving each battle.

In January of 2011, Ryan was involved in an attack on Ginger Flats, trying to liberate that planet from Alliance control. The battleground was opposite of Halcyon Bluffs on the world. He was glad the fighting would stay away from his family, though he was beginning to want to seek resolution with his father. However, none of Ryan's letters, or Waves, were being answered.

The attack on Ginger Flats lasted for two weeks. During the Independent retreat, Ryan was trying to hold off a small squad of Alliance troopers which were beginning to overwhelm him and his partner. Ryan took a hit to his leg, which he feared severed one of his major arteries. He fell to the ground, bleeding, but still able to fire. *I never really thought I'd die on this world*, he thinks as he fires his weapon at the remaining purple-bellies. A few more browncoats came to rescue Ryan and his partner, who'd also fallen. They forced the Alliance soldiers to pull back, and pulled Ryan and his partner back to the extraction launchers. Due to loss of blood, and the forces of the launch, Ryan quickly passed out.

He awoke some time later, to the sudden staccato of an irregular heart-beat on a monitor. The man he was fighting beside lay next to them, his heart going into arrest before stopping. He'd flatlined before the doctor could get to him, and after a few long minutes of resuscitation, he was declared dead. A few hours after he woke, Sergeant Grinnell came to visit Private Filkon. "Filkon," he began. "You've done well out there."

"I've done what I can, sir. I would still request to be sent to Hera. Serenity Valley could be important, and I think my skills may be needed."

"You're not going anywhere on that leg, soldier. Anyway, we have other plans for you, Corporal."

Ryan started momentarily at the sudden jump in rank. "I'm sorry, sir, I don't understand."

"That leg wound is bad, you won't be walking out of here any time soon. Your usefulness on the front lines is over, Corporal. We're putting you on the publicity tour. Your job is to encourage new recruits to join up."

"With all due respect, how am I expected to do that, sir?"

"Talk to them about glory, and about what the Coalition of Independent Colonies stands for. Just get them to join us, Corporal. You'll start duty in one week."

"Yes, sir," Corporal Filkon replies sullenly. He'd signed on to fight the Alliance, not encourage young men to the death that likely awaited them. However, he followed his orders. He went and made appearances, made speeches when necessary. All the while he tried to convince the brass that he was needed in Serenity Valley. The reports coming out of the Valley were not good.

In the beginning of May 2511, Corporal Ryan Filkon was called to act in the Coalition of Independent Colonies Honor Guard at the peace talks on Verbana. It involved a lot more sitting, a lot less work. He was appalled that the survivors of Serenity Valley were being ignored. The battle was over, but men and women were being left to die of wounds, exposure, and disease.

He found other enlisted men on both sides of the conflict who shared his view of that situation. Though he didn't trust, nor want to trust the Alliance Soldiers, he knew he was going to need their help in stopping the dying. Thirteen days into the peace talks, along with the other men, they commanded a fleet of Medical Ships and began flying them toward Hera. Command from both sides of the conflict was furious at this action they had not approved. Every man who masterminded the plan was facing a dishonorable discharge, but none cared. The war was over, after all.

Shortly, the leaders of both sides came to an agreement, and decided to support the impromptu medical mission, on one condition: All ships in the Medfleet needed to be displaying Alliance Colors. To this point, the fleet appeared to be a hodge-podge of Alliance and Independent forces, though most of the ships were Alliance. Reluctantly, the browncoats identified the ships they were commanding as Alliance vessels, being unwilling to ignore any more orders from their commanders.

The ship Ryan Filkon was commanding landed near a beacon that fired up quickly near the surface. Ryan stepped out of a ship flying Alliance colors wearing his brown coat. He found that the man who once lead the thousands in the Valley,

and now led only hundreds, was Sargeant Malcolm Reynolds. With his aide, they started directing the medics to where they were needed, and moved the survivors out of that valley.

Ryan informed the Sargeant about the end of the war, and took him back to Verbana. He recognized the look in the Sargeants eyes. He died in Serenity Valley, just as Ryan himself had died at the fire on Halcyon Flats. In a sense, both men were still waiting to be reborn at the end of the war. Upon return to Verbana, Ryan was stripped of his rank, and ended his service for the, even then, defunct Coalition as a Private First Class.

For the next several months, Ryan didn't really do very much. Living off of his pay from the war, he wandered around the galaxy for a while, taking the occasional small job, including smuggling on a very small scale. He met a lot of people connected to the under-workings of the galaxy during that time. However, since he was so small time, he wasn't really making any money at it.

One day he got a wave from one of the Alliance soldiers who helped him on the Serenity Valley rescue, he began moving to delete it as soon as he saw the mans face, but the purple-belly must have been expecting that because he got to the point immediately. There was a job available, and it would pay really, really well. The Alliance was looking to expand the Cortex to the entire galaxy, so that anyone on a supply line, or out on the border would be able to access the wealth of information and communcation possibility present in the Cortex.

Ryan spent the next day drinking a lot, working on making a decision. On the one hand, he didn't want to work for the Alliance, however, the Cortex access would help a lot of people, and if he could profit off the Alliance in the process, why shouldn't he?

He spent the next four years working on this project. He was able to increase the efficiency of the Cortex rebroadcasters so that fewer would be needed, and the project ended up completing ahead of schedule. What the Alliance didn't know about, were the backdoors to more sensitive Cortex data that Ryan was selling to some of his old contacts, as well as the information trade he had engaged in. However, in exploring the Cortex, Ryan discovered many secrets about the Alliance, and it's corporate controllers, then he ever really wanted to know.

Between his wages from the Alliance, and the illicit trade he had engaged in, Ryan made a lot of money. He was getting nervous about being found out, however, and didn't want to answer to anyone if his activity was discovered. So, when the opportunity presented itself, he gladly left Alliance employ, and reentered the galaxy proper, vowing never again to work for the Alliance.

Ryan began looking for a crew and a ship. He hadn't had a home since he was kicked out of Halcyon Bluffs, and with the knowledge about the Alliance he'd gained, he knew he'd never be able at home on a world they controlled. After a few months, he met Julianne, who was looking to engage in the same kind of enterprise. With her friends, and the resources they had between the two of them, they were able to purchase a Firefly class starship.³

Stimuli and Obsession

Obsession: Family. Despite being disowned by his Father, Ryan feels a real sense to belong to something more than himself. As his story continues, he'll temper his hatred of the Alliance because it doesn't mean anything unless he is working for others. Though he wants that connection back with his own family, he'll begin to find it within the crew.

Rage Stimulus: Betrayal. Also due to his disownment, which he comes to realize what his own fault, Ryan can't tolerate anyone who takes advantage of their friends and family to better their own situation.

Fear Stimulus: Lonliness. Ryan hates to be away from people for any significant period of time. Silence is literally oppressive to him. He can tolerate most anything, provided someone is nearby experiencing the same thing.

Noble Stimulus: Duty. If Ryan believes in a cause fully, he would sacrifice himself for it. He considers his first duty is to those he considers family.

Character Sheet

Central Trait: Electronics Tech (Standard, 4 Dice)

Ryan has an incredible aptitude with Electronics, and can keep them working and quickly modify them to do what he wants. This has extended somewhat to his use of the Cortex, but he is much better with setting up hardware, than he is with dealing with software. He always carries a small tool-kit on him, that includes a hand-held self-contained soldering Iron, and small multimeter.

Side Trait 1: Military Background (Standard, 3 dice (Hit Points: 21))

Ryan was trained by the Coalition of Independent Colonies in 2509. He's been trained in hand-to-hand combat, and the use of firearms. Though he was only an Enlisted man, he learned about planning attacks and campaigns, and it able to put

³If possible, I would still like more of a connection with Constellation's Character, as what I've written here is a little too coincidental, but I'll talk to her really quick about that, it can be any number of things to give us an excuse to know each other.

together good and thought-out plans. He still has some of his Independent clothing, including his long-brown coat he wears when appropriate.

Side Trait 2: Mathematics (Technical, 1 Die)

Ryan has an innate understanding of complex mathematics, which explains his natural talent for Cryptography and Astro-gation. In the pockets of his browncoat, he usually has a pad of paper and a pencil, and a calculator. Even without the coat, he usually has pencil and paper handy.

Flaw: Distrustful

Ryan doesn't trust people he doesn't know, and is slightly unfriendly to them. He makes it very clear he doesn't trust them, and may make demands of them that aren't fully reasonable if they're trying to gain his trust.

Motivation (Living Free):

Ryan wants to live freely with his friends and family, this is the basic basis behind his Stimuli listed above.

Secret:

Ryan doesn't want people to know about his younger life. He doesn't want people to know that he was disowned, and certainly not why.

Important Person: Martin Nesbitt

Martin was Ryan's Drill Sargeant during his training.