



SCRAPLOOTAS

COLLECTION 3, SMUT INCLUDED EDITION

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The Tau and Blue

"Status report, Shas'Vre."

"Assimilation of the gue'la on this world is going smoothly, Shas'El. We have only experienced minimal resistance from the warriors positioned amongst the civilians. We will start relocating them to reeducation camps by the end of the day, sir." Shas'Vre Pan'zah shuffled his hoofs subtly. Shas'El K'Lem P'rer pretended not to notice.

"Excellent, Shas'Vre. How much longer until we can integrate this planet into our sept?"

"Within the month, Shas'El. If nothing goes awry."

K'Lem P'rer turned smartly to face his bodyguard and personal aide, "If nothing goes awry? Are you expecting complications then?"

"Well, sir, interrogating compliant gue'la revealed that most of their warriors are off further west from our landing point, fighting off another invasion. Be'gel, sir."

The Shas'El exhaled sharply. Greenskins. The very thought of the putrid race set his teeth on edge, "What have our scouts reported?"

"It seems to be a tribe of Be'gel—"

"Only a single tribe? I was expecting at least two to a full Waaagh if they had to divert nearly all their troops to the warfront."

"Well, the first complication would be that they have a titan."

"What."

"You know, one of those large mobile fortresses used by those strange gue'la covered in spikes?"

"I know what a titan is, Pan'zah. I was expressing my incredulity at its presence."

Pan'zah shrugged, "There's no evidence to suggest that they're working in tandem with Chaos."

"Good, so there is still hope for this world." The Shas'El turned his attention to a datascreen with reports filling in from various Kau'ui, trying not to think about the implications. Orks with a titan... This was a scenario he recognized. But it couldn't be. That was years ago and on the opposite side of the sept.

"You said 'first complication,' so there are more?"

"Yes, Shas'El. The titan has Tau technology crudely welded to it, sir."

"Scraplootas? We've landed on the same world as the damned Scraplootas?"

It could be no other tribe. Shas'El K'Lem P'rer had been there. Fought against their insane masses. He was just a Shas'Ui then, but the thought of those ambushers and their titan yelling all sorts of nonsense still gave him shivers. It was a Tau colony world, not an outpost or a conquest. A single tribe had taken on an entire Uash'o and nearly won, if they didn't get bored and leave or something. You couldn't tell with Orks.

"Very well. I accept this challenge, we will prove the might of the Tau over these scoundrels yet."

"One last complication, Shas'El. Which I think you should see for yourself." Pan'zah uploaded new video to K'Lem P'rer's datascreen.

The screen was fuzzy, as if seen through electrobinoculars, but between all the thuggish beasts darted a lithe form, clearly grayish-blue, clearly Tau, possibly female.

"My god, they kept slaves? Look how poorly they treat her! Nothing to wear but scraps of metal and rags!"

"Sir, they all wear scraps of metal and rags."

K'Lem P'rer ignored this comment, "And she's so skinny! I won't stand for this, starving her and forcing her to work for these brutes!" He placed his fist in his upturned palm with resolve, "We will go and save her before we march on the Be'gel. All of their Tau slaves."

"She appears to be the only one, Shas'El."

"No doubt she could also provide vital intelligence about the weaknesses of this tribe. They aren't immortal."

"I said she was a complication and not an asset for a reason, Shas'El."

"And finally we will show that the power of the Tau'va triumphs over savages even in disparate conditions. Like a titan."

"She seems happy, Shas'El."

"What? Impossible. It must be some sort of mistake. Sto'khom syndrome or something."

"Yes, Shas'El."

"Assemble a La'rua of our stealthiest warriors. I want them in and out before the Be'gel notice."

"Yes, Shas'El."

"In fact, I want to personally commend them when they return from their mission. In fact, I want us to go out and accompany them so we can be the first ones to congratulate them on their return."

"Does that 'we' include me, Shas'El?" K'Lem P'rer gave Pan'zah a look. "...Yes, Shas'El."

* * *

Blue was on the outskirts of camp, happily tinkering with a truk. She was trying to modify a railgun into some sort of extra temporary acceleration system. Mr. Squig circled around her while grunting contently to a tuneless beat, and then abruptly stopped.

Blue looked up from her work to see Mr. Squig looking around, sniffing, scanning the area with its shootas. Blue subtly reached for her shoota as well. She rolled under the carriage of the truk as the stealthed fire warrior reached for her, missing grabbing her leg by an inch. Mr. Squig opened fire and so did she, but her light shoota did minimal damage to the stealth suit.

"What are you doing, Fio'La? We are here to rescue you!"

"We have no time. Take her before she can alert any guards."

The truk was lifted from over Blue, and in the twilight she could almost make out the outline of at least three of them. And they had shot down Mr. Squig. She opened fire again, bullets ricocheted off the inclosing Tau.

"BIG MEK, HELP! SNEAKY GITZ ARE TRYING TO STEAL—" She was zapped by some sort of stun gun and blacked out.

Blue vaguely remembered being carried away in the arms of a battlesuit as the sounds of her comrades firing upon the Tau echoed behind her. There was also something that sounded like Boris roaring. She even thought she heard Zizzbitz calling out her name.

* * *

Blue woke up in a bed. She jolted upright and looked down on herself. Her clothes and armor were gone, replaced by some sort of robe. She looked at her hands, eight fingers all accounted for, but clean. No grime, no dirt, no grease, no oil stains. Her spanner was on the stand by the bed, but in a similarly horrid state, nearly gleaming. What kind of madness was this? They even removed the claws she had nailed on her hooves, which were also cleaned and manicured. Never had she felt so uncomfortable with the condition of her body. What would Warboss Urtlyug say? She looked like she'd been muckin' around all her life. Her hair even got a trim.

The small room she was in was mostly empty. Beside her stand and bed there was a comfortable looking chair and a deactivated datascreen. Besides the door, the only other possibility for escape was a vent that blew fresh air into the room. But it was so small, even a grot would have trouble squeezing into it.

As Blue contemplated fitting herself through the vent anyway, the door opened. She turned to see a stately looking Tau in full regalia standing in the doorway.

"The sensors in the room indicated you were awakened, Fio'La. I hope your rescue was not too traumatizing to you, but the Shas'Ui assured me you were too panicked to escape with them willingly. Even opening fire on them!" He gave a hearty laugh that Blue immediately disliked, "You are on an Orca class dropship and I am Shas'El K'Lem P'rer. What is your name?"

Blue carefully kept her distance as the Shas'El entered the room, "They call me Da Blue Grot, but I call myself Blue most times."

"Ah, those Be'gel took you so long ago that you've forgotten your own name? What a pity. I'm sure that with your diligence, you would have risen high in your caste." He gestured for Blue to sit in the comfortable looking chair as he looked toward the datascreen which started filling with tables and reports.

"What did you do with my clothes and armor?"

"We burned the rags you arrived in away as we cleansed your body. I assure you, it was necessary. They may have been diseased. Your tool was cleaned and returned to you though, as you can see."

Blue approached the comfortable chair. It reminded her of a squig with a back mutation. She tested it warily with a hand, her palm sinking a good four inches into the cushions. She sat down and was basically consumed. It felt like melting. Blue couldn't help but think the Warboss or Boris would enjoy this more. Boris especially because he had those... never mind.

"Comfortable?" K'Lem P'rer turned to smile at Blue, but immediately turned back. "Forgive me, Fio'La Blue, but your robes are in disarray."

"What's it to you, ya git?" Blue crossed her legs and arms anyway.

"Never mind. Now, we don't expect anything from you, saving you was for the Greater Good, but if you have any information about that tribe of Orks, the 'Scraplootas,'" he looked over his shoulder slightly, and then completely turned around to face her, "We would be very grateful."

"You expecting me to squeal on me mates or something?"

"Your mates? But those horrible greenskins were keeping you captive!" The Shas'El's eye twitched slightly as the face of his aide floated up mouthing "She seems happy" from the depths of his brain.

"I'm more captive now than I've been in years, ya git."

"That's not possible, our reconnaissance indicated that they were ordering you around! My goodness, how far have they broken you?"

"They didn't break nothing. Big Mek and Warboss order everyone around anyway." She shrugged somewhat ineffectually, "I'm just another Ork."

"No, you are Tau. You are no Ork."

"I'm plenty Orky! I can feel the WAAAGH, ya git!"

"I am a Shas'El! Not a git!"

Blue tried to sit up in the chair but failed. It might have been a trap after all, "Oh, am I rumplin' yer shortz, ye dumb git?" K'Lem P'rer turned away quickly again, "Can't face me proppa neither, eh?"

"I suppose I will have to get Shas'Vre Pan'zah to assign you to a reeducation camp. I was hoping it wouldn't come to this, but you are further gone than I had assumed. You will not enjoy reeducation." This last sentence carried a certain menace that actually somewhat worried Blue.

The Shas'El strode quickly to the door, "If you decide to change your mind at some point before we land, perhaps we can work something out." It opened, blocked off by a barrel and a cardboard box.

"What's the meaning of this? Who put these here?" He looked around into the corridor as Blue escaped the confines of the chair finally and scrambled for her spanner.

The top of the barrel popped open, revealing the face of an Ork. "Oi, we found Da Blue Grot!"

"Greenskins? On board? But that's impossible!"

"Wuz damn 'ard gettin' aboard, dat's fer sure!" The barreled Kommando struggled to pull a gun out of his container as the boxed Kommando got up, facing the wrong way.

Before K'Lem P'rer could shout for alarm, he was hit on the back of the head with a spanner. The Kommandos stood in front of Blue and saluted best they could. She may have been smaller and weaker than them, but it was always a good idea to treat a lucky charm nicely.

"Whut's you wearin'?"

"Dunno, but it ain't proppa. Can't move around in these." She squatted down and started tugging at the finery that the Shas'El was wearing. "Help me get these off this git."

"Should we krump 'im?"

Blue shook her head as she pulled the fancy dress pants on. "Would be too easy on a git who has only mucked about. No point in validating his life by having him die on a mission." The git didn't even have a weapon on him. "Let him wake up and know that he's failed."

There was a crunch and a shudder as the craft lurched to a halt, as if grabbed out of midair. Blue could hear the engines straining.

"Den we should tell Boris not ta stomp on dis craft, eh?"

Big Mek Tinka himself was in the dropship alongside a few other Kommandos. They were keeping the Tau at bay, and had basically barricaded off the hallway that Blue was in with metal sheets pulled from the walls and floors. She jumped up and tapped the Big Mek on the shoulder, "You came for me!"

"Of course, ya git. I woulda crossed the galaxy fer ya. 'Ow many good luck charms like you am I gonna find? Where'd you loot dose nobby clothing from?"

Blue was dressed in full Shas'El regalia, undeniably fancy even to an Ork. The clothes were a little tight around the hips and chest, "Looted it from some dumb git. Let's go." The two Kommados that found her were hauling the comfortable chair with them.

"Kay, when I give da word, Boris will krump dis dropship and take us 'ome."

Blue shook her head, "We'd be stompin' them while they was still weak. They only brought their sneaky gitz with them. Let them go, and they'll be back with many more gitz for a proppa Orky fight. And then we can krump them."

"Ya gonna 'ave ta explain dat t'da Warboss."

"And I'm sure he'll want a proppa fight since these humies we've encountered are mostly weak and small and not fun to stomp."

"Fine," he turned to the Kommandos, "ALL ROIGHT YA GITS. WE IZ LEAVIN' DIS PARTY FER NOW." He shouted into a little device pinned to his shoulder, "BORIS, CUT US LOOSE BUT NO STOMPIN'."

The claws of the titan closed on the Orca, ripping large holes into its sides in the middle of the shootout. The Orks and Blue pressed forward and grabbed hold of the claws. The claws then retracted and allowed the critically damaged ship to chug along for a bit before its engines petered out as it crashed unceremoniously into the ground. Boris then turned around, farted out a few grots to splatter on the broken craft, and left. Mini earthquakes followed in his wake.

After an hour or so of searching, Shas'Vre Pan'zah found the battered and bruised body of Shas'El K'Lem P'rer in the dark and debris. He was still breathing. He was also stripped to his underclothes. Amusing. Pan'zah grabbed the tattered and dirty robe and covered the Shas'El with it.

He coughed and stirred, "Status report, Shas'Vre?"

"We've crashed landed. The Orks grabbed us out of the sky, took that Fio'La back, and tossed us away like rubbish. Rescue will be here in before sunrise."

"We're going to have to tell the Shas'O, aren't we."

"Yes, Shas'El. You will, Shas'El."

"I'm telling you, retrieving that Fio'La will be a priority from now on."

"Let's decide that when you have clothes again, Shas'El."

"We'll crush them with our superior forces and firepower. We will end those Scraplootas. For the Greater Good."

"Of course we will, Shas'El."

K'Lem P'rer started to lose consciousness again, "Those Orks were really something, weren't they, Pan'zah?"

Shas'Vre Pan'zah imagined the promotion he would receive in the near future, the Shas'O would probably grumble as he received it, still shaking his head about the previous Shas'El...

"No shit, Shas'El."

Vacation Lost

Zielt hated his job. He often believed that he had died whilst unconnected to his soulstone at some point in his long life and this was Slannesh's way of torturing and toying with him, for there was no greater torment the Warlock could imagine than being the personal aide of Farseer Vaedrisa. Even in her absence, their ork obsessed leader never failed to infuriate Zielt. For some reason or another (there was always something wrong when it came to that one!), Vaedrisa had become mopey and depressive over the past few days, with her presence on the bridge of their craftworld limited to her wandering onto the bridge aimlessly with her hair unkempt, unbraided and frizzy, sighing obnoxiously, and then wandering off again to parts unknown. Now Zielt had been perfectly content to let her mope, a few short doses of the infuriating Farseer being far preferable to her constant presence, but as her personal aide, the other Eldar were beginning to look to him to fix the whole mess.

"Aren't you going to go talk to her?" a Pathfinder by the name of Xilloc asked, finally addressing the squiggoth in the room after yet another dynamic entry and exit by their disheartened Farseer.

"And what sort of Warp-infested monstrosity would have possessed me for me to do such a thing?" Zielt responded in classic Zielt form.

"You're the one she likes talking to the most. That's all I'm saying," the Pathfinder countered.

"And I do not enjoy talking to her. This is an utter victory for me."

"Then why do you keep doing it?" Xilloc shrugged. "You could just keep your mouth shut about the whole ork issue and let our dear Fanseer's little hobby slide if you really hated it that much."

"Because I enjoy being right, Xilloc. And I would hardly call chasing a band of filthy greenskin brutes across the galaxy in a desperate bid to court their affections 'a little hobby'. This is the first time in over a century I have awoken without a perpetual headache and I am going to relish every moment of this prosperous bounty I have been gifted, not squander it for the sake of a Pathfinder's sensitivities." Zielt responded smugly.

"Oh Isha, here he goes again..." the veteran Ranger rolled his eyes.

"And what exactly is that supposed to mean?! You wouldn't understand! You are not trapped within your own craftworld with the woman! You are at least afforded the respite of fresh air and a walk planetside!" Zielt snapped back.

"Right, right, the grandiose agony of our brave, valiant Warlock knows no end. Truly, to be Zielt is to know naught but eternal suffering!" Xilloc gesticulated melodramatically as he continued his sarcastic rant "You want to know the extent of my 'respite'? Rooting through the garbage of those 'band of filthy greenskin brutes' for anything of value like some sort of scurrilous Mon'keigh! That's right, I trained for centuries to attain the noble rank of Pathfinder, only to become a glorified scavenger. And let me tell you, brave Zielt, if you think what the greenskins keep is disgusting, wait until you see what

they leave behind. Why, I remember one time I stepped in what I pray to every piece of Khaine was a pile of squig droppings and was unfortunate enough to discover a discarded mug ‘upgraded’ in standard ork fare amongst the droppings. Now, I was not about to go anywhere near such... absolute sewage until I heard Vaedrisa’s voice echoing through my head, informing to recover the blasted thing, because clearly it was a great relic that would prove vital in the further understanding of our unwitting pawns. That’s right, our wise and powerful Farseer extended her mind and soul across the cosmos, invaded my head, and ordered me to recover a filth encrusted cup that not even an ork deemed worthy of keeping. And you want to know what I did? I. Did. My. Warp. Damned. Job. I didn’t complain, I didn’t argue, I just grabbed the damned thing and tried to touch it as little as possible during the remainder of my reconnaissance. I think Vaedrisa keeps the wretched thing in her room and drinks out of it now.”

“Why did they throw the mug away? I thought their Warboss collected the things...” Zielt gulped, feeling himself cowed into a verbal corner once more.

“Why does he collect them in the first place? Why did those Freebooterz loot that titan instead of stripping it down and building a gargant? Why did they adopt a tau for Eldrad’s sake?! Because they’re orks! Nothing they do makes anything approaching sense. You should know this by now.”

“Y-Yes, well–”

“Well nothing! Do you, in your wisdom as infinite as your dreaded suffering, know WHY exactly I do my job without complaint?” Xilloc challenged.

“You’re going to tell me anyways, aren’t you?”

“Of course I’m going to tell you, you Mon’keigh brained oaf! I root through sewage so disgusting that even the filthiest, smelliest species in the entire galaxy considers it garbage for Vaedrisa because, despite how humiliating and repulsive my task is, it is better than fighting and potentially dying. Tell me, how many times have you had to ready yourself for war since we’ve associated ourselves with this orkish tribe?”

“W-Well–”

“Exactly. Now tell me, what do you think would happen if our beloved Farseer stopped being a Fanseer and decided to cut ties with her beloved Scraplootaz?”

“Well, we would undoubtedly have to fight our own battles.”

“Finally, the grand Warlock sees. Now I don’t know what your incomprehensible intuition is telling you, but I do not believe we have the numbers to mount a strong offensive, nor do we seem to have the luck those orks seem to possess, if your incessant griping is anything to go by. Say what you will about our Farseer and her... idiosyncracies, but she does the best job I have ever seen keeping the craftworld out of combat. Now, are you going to go talk Vaedrisa out of her little depression or are you going to continue to be a stubborn idiot and ready your Witch Blade for the inevitable war?” Xilloc challenged “Either way, you better get going, either to Vaedrisa’s room or to the armory.”

“I... should go.” Zielt muttered, defeated once more.

“Whatever.” Was all the unhappy Warlock got in return.

Zielt slunk down the hallways skulked down the halls of their craftworld, nursing his thrashed ego. Why did he have to be the one to fix everything? Why did he have to be the one to suffer through the Farseer’s tomfoolery? Probably because he was the only one who could, Zielt reasoned. That’s right, everyone else was too spineless to object to Vaedrisa’s folly, it was Zielt and Zielt alone who had the mental fortitude to act as the craftworld’s intellectual compass! Bolstered with newfound purpose, Zielt gingerly knocked on the door to the Farseer’s private quarters. He could have sworn he heard her shout “What’s so special about her that I don’t have?!” before going immediately silent, but the door was thick and her voice muffled further by what he presumed to be a pillow.

“You do not have permission to enter, Zielt.” her words now clear but dreadfully cold, especially so for Vaedrisa.

Ignoring the fact that he never even announced it was he, Zielt pressed on. “Farseer, if I may be so bold as to request your counsel, we must discuss the future of the craftworld.”

“I am in no state to make such judgments, Zielt. I am not even able to discern the motives of simple orks.”

Zielt sighed. He knew what he must do, but that didn’t mean he had to like it. “That’s because the orks are nothing more than foul savages. Dumb brutes that don’t even have the good graces to follow instinct beyond indiscriminate killing, that Urtylug fool being the dumbest and the biggest brute among them. The entire craftworld over would be much better off if we disentangled ourselves from such animals as hastily as possible.”

Zielt stood in a brief silence, wondering what the severity her reaction would be. He then heard the sounded of determined footsteps, the snapping of clasps, and finally, the smooth rush of the doors to her quarters gliding open. There stood Farseer Vaedrisa, hair braided perfectly, adorned in immaculate wraithbone, and her face a mask of professionalism, framed flawlessly by her glasses.

“Shortsighted thoughts like those, my dear Zielt, are why you are but a Warlock and I am the Farseer. The orks are a valuable tool for us to use and exploit, so long as we can understand them. I know, you claim there isn’t much TO understand, but that is where you are wrong. There is most certainly, as the orks themselves are wont to put it, a certain ‘brutal cunning’ to these strange peoples. First and foremost, I will ignore your baseless slander of the good Kaptin Urtylug, for instead we must examine your most fallacious statement, wherein you proclaim that orks are ‘dumb brutes that don’t even have the good graces to follow instinct beyond indiscriminate killing’. To this I offer the most glaringly obvious counterpoint: the tau. The next area of inquiry the craftworld must investigate is the ‘Blue’, as they have come to call the young child.”

“The tau? Are you sure about this?” Zielt was beginning to have second thoughts.

“Without a shadow of a doubt.” Vaedrisa responded confidently without missing a beat. “After all, she is the one thing that the Scraplootas have not ‘indiscriminately killed’, as you so eloquently put it.”

Zielt sighed once more and followed his Farseer. He reminded himself of Xilloc's words. As painful as this was, it was less painful than a bolter round to the chest.

"Oh, and one more thing." Vaedrisa added, adjusting her glasses and still striding confidently without deigning back to look at her aide. "Thank you. Had it not been for your immensely ignorant and foolish advice, I may not have ever seen the solution that rests so clearly before me now."

Zielt grinned despite himself and his impending suffering. He reminded himself it couldn't really be called a vacation if it was permanent.

Blue and Farseer Go Wider

Warlock Zielt was perturbed. Perhaps perturbed wasn't the best word for it. Imagine the sound of a faucet. A dripping faucet. The drips are inconsistent and random so you can't anticipate the next drip, but still constant. You want no more than to tighten the valves and finally be rid of the faucet, but you can't. It's in your boss's personal bathroom and you certainly aren't allowed anywhere near there. But you hear it. And it is unceasing. You hear it at work, at home, in your car, in the shower... Every day, all day. For months, years even. All these drips dropping into an ever larger bucket of utter annoyance, threatening to one day spill over... That is but a taste of what Zielt felt.

"Farseer, may I play daemon's advocate here?" He tried not to look irritated, an act he had nearly perfected. His left bottom eyelid was the only thing that betrayed him.

"Of course, Zielt. It's why I keep you around. Your adversity to new ideas and your constant negativity are both charmingly quaint and quite useful as feedback. I often proofread my plans as I'm telling you off." Farseer Vaedrisa was concentrating very hard on the static of the viewscreen. It was funny what got you to psychically tuned. The previous Farseer had to hum Imperial battle hymns to herself.

Zielt rolled his eyes the tiniest amount. Ah yes, this old song and dance. "I am honored to feature so heavily in your thought processes, Farseer." Was she going to use the child or the Gyrinx this time?

"Well, it was either you or that child, and I'm not a very good babysitter."

"Truly honored, Farseer." He cleared his throat, interrupting whatever snark Vaedrisa was about to throw at him, and continued, "What use would interrogating the Tau have?"

"That is what you take issue with, Warlock? Out of all of the other things that I am currently trying to do, you choose to take issue with the most sensible?"

"The Tau isn't even an Ork! I thought you'd try that Threegrot one first, or the Big Mek."

The Farseer waved her hand in annoyance, not breaking her eye contact with the viewscreen, "But therein lies the rub. The Tau isn't even an Ork. So what's going on? Does this not intrigue you? Don't answer that." Zielt shut his mouth again. "The way I see it, the Scraplooties are a weapon given to us by providence. If the fate of the Craftworld is to rely on such a weapon, it would be foolish not to inspect it as thoroughly as possible. But what first? The scope? The trigger? The barrel? Parts that we are familiar with, if not this exact style or version? No. First let us inspect the seemingly superfluous piece that does not seem to fit, the piece that we do not understand. Let us understand it, and let us see how the weapon functions without this piece."

There was the dripping faucet again. Warlock Zielt never knew if Farseer Vaedrisa really had the good of the craftworld first and foremost in her mind or if that damn Ork obsession came first. Sure, that's what she said, everything she did was actually for the good of the Craftworld. Staring at static for hours

on end was done for the good of the Craftworld. The way she stuffed her face with sweets once a week was also done for the good of the Craftworld. But with the Orks, he couldn't help but wonder...

"And you are convinced the Tau is that piece? As opposed to the Titan, the WAAAGH enslaved Chaos Daemon, or maybe Threegrot?"

"She is the anomaly. The other pieces are accounted for."

"Including the Titan?"

"Especially the Titan."

The Warlock furrowed his eyebrows, "So we have to go take her?"

"I prefer to see it as borrowing. But yes." The Farseer was also hoping that she was more... civilized. She wasn't exactly prepared to take on a creature with an overly chaotic mind.

That bucket threatened to spill over, and Zielt held it back with fingers placed on his temples. "Very well, Farseer, your will will be done."

* * *

In a hammock somewhere in Boris's right arm, Da Blue Grot dreamed of Tau.

Many faces, the slits between their eyes flaring as they laughed. They were children. Only children. They didn't know any better. They really didn't.

"CASTELESS BITCH."

They kicked at her and pushed her to the ground. It wasn't their faults. They understood not their own cruelty. If she was lucky, when the old Tau came over to break it up, she'd only be bruised and slightly bloody. If she wasn't, she'd be coughing up blood for the rest of the day. It wasn't her fault either. She didn't mean to.

Her mother was of the Earth Caste. Her father... well, her mother swore that her father was of the Earth Caste too. But no one else knew who he was and her mother refused to tell. The omission was damning. If he was truly of the Earth Caste, a Fio'Vre or a Fio'El, maybe, a bastard child would certainly be dishonorable, but nothing bad would come of it. The way her mother refused to confirm or deny allegations could only mean that her father was of a different caste. Probably some hot-headed Shas'La that caught her fancy. Or worst, a casteless. If confirmed, he, she, and their misbegotten child would be thrown out of the caste system, to beg and die in the streets of some colony world. Their crime was grave, they placed themselves before the Greater Good. It simply wasn't tolerated. The Tau equivalent to Romeo and Juliet has the cast cheering at the suicides of those selfish cross-caste betrayers of the Greater Good. Even the allegations were enough for the Earth Caste to send Blue's mother into the streets. And there Blue was born. She was found on the doorstep of the local orphanage soon after; a spanner and a note explaining how the child was of the Earth Caste were tucked into her basket with her.

It wasn't very pleasant at the orphanage. She was the only Earth Caste there, everyone else where Fire Caste children, war orphans. Perhaps they would have treated her better in different circumstances, but the rumors had outlived her mother. The other children wanted nothing of her, save when they were looking for someone to bully or tease. It was all fun for them. They practiced teamwork drills and honed their hand to hand combat on Blue. They didn't think that there was anything wrong with any of it. In fact, the old Tau even warned Blue not to fight back, as it would just provoke them, and the Shas'Saal were going to be better fighters than she was as a Fio'Saal.

But maybe there was some validity in the claims that Blue was not all Earth Caste. She took the beatings but it pained her to act meek, to just curl up into a ball until the other children lost interest. She wanted to fight back. She even had her spanner, a simple but strong little thing that belonged to her mother. Blue had tried it out. It would work as a proper weapon and she could hold her own. But she didn't dare go against the wishes of the old Tau. She didn't want to put herself before the Greater Good like her mother was accused of.

But one day enough was enough. Blue singled out the ringleader of her tormentors and challenged him to a fight. One weapon of any type was allowed. He chose his flashy gun that induced minor electric shock. She chose her spanner. The fight was brutal and short. Firing twice, he assumed Blue would crumple like she had done before. Instead, she gritted her teeth through the pain and closed the gap between them, knocking him flat with the spanner. Then, while he was still stunned, she raised the spanner over her head, and all of her fury, all of her frustration and desperation came out at the same time. She struck once, twice, again and again. She could almost hear her former tormentor begging for mercy, but she didn't relent. She couldn't relent. She kept going...

* * *

Blue woke up with a jolt. Her body was covered in a cold sweat and she was panting hard. So much dark blue, on the ground, on her spanner, on her. It would have been merciful if only he had... No. That was behind her now. She was an Ork now. Not some Tau git. It wasn't her fault either. Children understood not their own strength...

Something was wrong. Blue sat up and started looking around while catching her breath, she realized she wasn't in Boris anymore. There wasn't that constant creaking and moving about. She was in a proper bed, and not just a hammock. Mr. Squig was nowhere to be seen. At least she had all of her clothes.

She finally noticed the Farseer at the foot of her bed, also trying to catch her breath while wiping at her face.

"What the zog?"

"Greetings, Da Blue Grot of the Scraplootas. I, uh, hope your dreams have been... I'm not fooling anyone, am I?" She adjusted her glasses and tried to get her hair under control. Damn thing always got worse when she was up to psychic shenanigans, frizzling everywhere like that.

"You was in my head?"

"Ah, so you could tell. How interesting, what gave it away?" The Tau, being a non-psychic race, weren't very good at telling when they were being mind probed. Generally, they would think it as a dream of some sort, or nightmare.

Blue got up on her knees and shuffled closer to the Elder, "I DON'T get dreams like that. Not now, not never. I ain't a Tau. I'm an Ork."

Well that explained it. Were these memories repressed? With all of the grievous bodily harm that goes on in a normal Orky day, why was this a prominent memory? Also, what a peculiar distinction. She didn't think herself half and half or a Tau amongst Orks, but a fully fledged Ork? When did she get so close to the Farseer? Was she always this mad?

Vaedrisa pushed Blue back a little, "Relax, Blue I don't mean any harm, I was just trying to understand you better, a Tau in the middle—"

"I AIN'T A TAU, I'M AN ORK." Blue lunged and had her hands around the Farseer's neck before she knew what she was doing.

She was thrown back. Farseer Vaedrisa's hair stood on end as the air around her crackled with psychic power. This was not going to plan, just like everything else about this damn Tau. "Okay then. Ork. You've made your point, now let me make mine." Blue crashed into the ceiling above the bed, painfully. "I am in control here. Never touch me again." She set Blue down again gently, and then added, "Unless I allow for it."

The Ork and the Eldar glared at each other as Vaedrisa's hair slowly unfrizzled.

Then the Farseer suddenly smiled, "Okay, good, now that that's over and done with, perhaps we can continue?" She tried patting down her hair to little avail, produced a clipboard out of nowhere, and started scribbling furiously. Blue looked confused.

"Well, I was going to include a physical examination, but I guess that's out of the question right now, so I guess we move on to the interrogation. Or interview, if you prefer."

"What do you want, ya git?"

"Lovely. Now, how old are you now?"

Blue wanted to yell at the Eldar more but found herself answering instead, "Why's that matter? Ten-ish?" Vaedrisa wrote that down.

"Tau reach adulthood in roughly ten years. And yet, you're clearly still adolescent."

"Well, that's a zoggin' mystery right there." Blue shrugged, "I guess grots don't grow old." She had meant to insult the Eldar in the middle of all that, but it didn't happen.

The Farseer's eyes brightened, "Really? That's a fascinating fact about Orks that no one's ever mentioned before!" She balled her fists and waved them in small circles, "How do you avoid overpopulation then?"

"Ah, because grots get krumped all the time. But we really have too many of the gitz."

"Oh. Well, that's not as amazing as I thought it would be." Vaedrisa pouted and picked up her clipboard from her lap.

"Oh, and you're a right git," Blue said lamely.

"That's nice, dear. Anyway, so I'm assuming you haven't realized you are a few shades bluer than the average Tau."

Was this Eldar daft? But instead Blue looked down at her hands. "What." She didn't notice any changes in her skin. Of course, she hadn't really been keeping track.

"Is there any particular reason that they call you Blue?"

Oh so she was blind and daft. "For Orks, Blue's lucky, of course. And they think I'm lucky." The Farseer wrote a lot on her clipboard, a fact that bothered Blue. And her mouth wasn't working right.

"So you're literally turning bluer because they think that makes you lucky?"

"Maybe that's how the WAAAGH works." Why all the questions? It wasn't like she knew the zoggin' answers.

Why was she answering anyway?

"So what is this Waaagh, I mean, to you?" The Eldar had of course careful records about these things, but it was never from an Ork's perspective. This was important work Vaedrisa was doing. For posterity.

"I dunno, it's proppa Orky, you know? The WAAAGH surrounds us and flows through us, binding Orks together in proppa warbands so's we can get to fightin' and krumpin' and winnin' in the WAAAGH."

Vaedrisa tried to hide biting her lip every time Blue said the word "WAAAGH." The way Blue said it was just so amazing. Better than she could ever enunciate it, with all its throaty spittle spewing goodness. She cleared her throat and continued, "Now, do you think your past has anything to do with how you are now?"

There was still something very wrong here. Blue just couldn't place what. "Why should it? It ain't coming back any. And I'm an Ork now. Not some Tau git. Didn't even krump him properly." She didn't mean to let that slip, "I mean, of course I krumped him proppa. I'm an Ork through and through."

"Uh huh." The Farseer looked down at her clipboard. She had basically filled three pages with copious notes and the Tau was becoming increasingly aware of the intrusion. It was time to wrap this up.

"Uh, just one other thing. Can you say Titanloota for me?"

"Titanloota? Why?"

"N-no reason." Not as glorious as coming from the Warboss himself, but it would do.

"What the zog is up with this place? Why the zog does it all feel so strange?" Blue tried to get up from where she was sitting on the bed and found she couldn't.

Oi.

"Anyway, I think our time is over."

Ya.

"Do you hear something?" It was echo-y and slow.

Git.

"That was a good chat. I'll catch you again someday?"

Get.

"What is all this, ya daft pointy 'ead?" Blue made out the first few syllables.

Up.

Vaedrisa didn't answer. She got up and started walking towards the door. Was there a door to this room before? What had she been sitting on?

Quit.

Suddenly the gravity in the place reversed and Vaedrisa and Blue went tumbling towards the ceiling.

"-MUCKIN' ABOUT."

The Big Mek had flipped Blue out of her hammock. "NOW GET UP BEFORE I KRUMP YA. OI DON'T BELIEVE IT. SLEEPIN' IN LIKE SUM SOFF GIT. WE GOTS WORK TA DO."

Blue held her head for a moment as the room settled. The Right Arm of Boris. Mr. Squig, her tools, her workshop. Everything was there. She could move around fine. There wasn't any weird Eldar. No bed, no questions. Blue did her best to push all of that out of her head. No more muckin' about. If Big Mek had to wake her up, she must have slept in really late. There was work to do. She grabbed her spanner.

"Farseer!"

Vaedrisa groaned. Everything hurt.

"Farseer, are you alright?" That was Zielt's voice.

She took her helmet off, it slipped out of her hands. What a disastrous exit.

"This mission got out of hand." Ahh yes. Classic Zielt. Let's say the whole mission got out of hand when only the last few seconds got out of hand.

"What are you talking about? That worked, didn't it? Went off without a hitch."

"Several of our Warlocks are bleeding out of their ears. But yes. Let us consider that a total success." Win a decisive victory and he'd still be worrying about the casualties. But perhaps it was necessary. Someone still needed to care about those sorts of things.

Vaedrisa sat up and rubbed at her eyes. "Well, I made it back with my invaluable information about the Tau and her relationship with the Orks. And I'm alive, despite projecting myself a few hundred thousand kilometers through space to connect a psychic bridge with a non-psyker and only a handful of Warlocks at my disposal to amplify and augment my power. I'd say nothing went terribly wrong." She looked around. Strange, where was everyone? Everything? She wasn't still in a dream, right?

"Are you sure, Farseer?" And what was Warlock Zielt doing above her?

"Yeah, I'm positive, Zielt. What's going—" She looked up. Zielt was looking up at her too. Only difference was his feet were on the ground.

The Farseer stood up on the ceiling of the chamber.

"Oh zog it."

Blue and Farseer Go Wilder

Note: This is an... “alternate ending” to Blue and Farseer go Wider and is also NOT FUCKING CANON!

Blue looked confused. Something was wrong.

"Well, I was going to include a physical examination, but I guess that's out of the question right now, so I guess we move on to the interrogation. Or interview, if you prefer."

Something was definitely wrong. Blue wiped at her forehead. Why was she so warm? "What do you want, ya git?"

"Lovely. Now, how old are you now?" Blue wanted to yell at the Eldar more but found herself rubbing her thighs together unconsciously instead. The Farseer pretended not to notice. "Blue, answer the question, if you can."

"About ten years, why?" It was really getting uncomfortable. What was going on?

"Well, Tau reach adulthood in roughly ten years. And yet, you're clearly still adolescent." Her skin was more supple and her body wasn't as fully built, though that superb Tau musculature was already well developed. Vaedrisa watched droplets of sweat meander down the squirming girl's midriff and licked her lip a little. "How peculiar."

"That's a zoggin' mystery to be sure." Blue shrugged, pressing her thighs together and releasing them. She just couldn't get comfortable. She shifted her hips. When did her pants get so wet? Why was she so hot? Without much fanfare or sense of decency, Blue stuck her hand down her pants, trying to reach what felt like an unscratchable itch.

The Farseer raised an eyebrow, "Something wrong, Blue?"

"You pointy 'eaded git." Blue curled up on herself, her eyes shifting between menace and want, hand still reaching deep into her pants not sure what to do, "What did you do to me?"

"What did I do? I didn't do anything." Vaedrisa bit her lip and smiled, it was cute, almost. So helpless and ignorant. "Would you like a hand?"

"Zog off." Blue used two fingers and stroked up and down, that helped, a little.

The air between them crackled, and even Blue's hair stood on end. The feelings intensified. Blue rolled over and grabbed at the sheets of the bed with her free hand, mouthing insensible words. "What's wrong with me?"

"We could still go through with that physical examination, if you want."

Blue looked into those conniving eyes and relented. It was too much. It really was. "Fine."

It really would be a shame to not exploit this possibility, Blue had a very nice body. Most Tau did, but Blue had an extra cut to her look from not always eating right and living with the overly physical Orks. She took off her top and Vaedrisa nodded her head a little. Not bad. Blue's breasts weren't very large but they fit nicely on her muscular frame. They were topped off with perky looking nipples. The Farseer wondered briefly if licking them would leave blue stains on her mouth like some sweets did.

Blue then undid her belt and took off her shorts, a thin trail of fluid connecting them to her crotch extended and then broke. And despite the warmth of her body, she suddenly felt a little cold, exposed. She'd been undressed around the Orks before, usually when her clothes and armor needed repairing. And none of them paid her any heed. But the way this Eldar stared at her, hungrily, almost, made her feel vulnerable, yet not afraid. She was...

"Embarrassed?"

Blue shook her head. "Alright, get on widdit."

Vaedrisa marveled at Blue's hips. Her waist was nothing delicate, but her hips gave it the illusion that it was. They transitioned into equally powerful thighs, before tapering off into thinner shins and hooves. The Farseer's eyes then went back up. Blue was hairless from the neck down. Unlike Eldar with their modest amounts of body hair, Tau had absolutely none. And despite her neglect and lack of personal hygiene, she was almost pretty to look at down there, smooth and all tucked away. Of course, that may just be Tau physiology. These were gaps in the Eldar archives. Gaps that Vaedrisa would fill.

"I'm going to be inspecting you manually. Don't hit me or anything." Not that Blue was in any condition to lash out at the Farseer.

Vaedrisa actually took the test somewhat seriously, she started with Blue's head, checking her hair, traced the Y shaped slit in the middle of her face, and examined her eyes. She stuck two fingers in Blue's mouth and Blue licked at them, her tongue moving desperately. The Farseer then pulled those two fingers out and held them to the ambient light above. Even her saliva had a bluish tinge. Interesting. The Farseer then surprised herself and stuck those two fingers in her own mouth.

Blue raspberry?

The physical examination pretty much disintegrated from that point on. They were kissing. The Farseer on top of Blue. She awkwardly bumped her nose into Blue's nasal slit, but in all of the intensity, they didn't even notice. The Farseer's hands moved in erratic patterns on Blue's body, tracing lines and tracking angles and following curves. She wound up at Blue's crotch, rubbing up and down with broad strokes and all her fingers, refusing to settle in and concentrate on the one bit that Blue desperately wanted her to.

"Q-quit muckin' around."

"What's that, Blue?"

"Get rid of this strange feelin' already, ya git." She gritted her teeth, the constant tension must have been overwhelming. And Blue still wasn't allowed to touch the Farseer.

"Alright then, Ork." She produced a short length of Wraithbone.

Psychically charged, Wraithbone could take on just about any attribute as long as a psychic concentrated on it. It could feel hot, cold, longer, thicker, textured, bumpy. But right now, Vaedrisa did her best to concentrate on vibration. She placed the Wraithbone gently against Blue's crotch.

Blue arched her back, dug her heels into the bed, and pulled at the sheets. Bright lights appeared behind her eyes. Far from discomfort, it felt... Good. Really good.

"I didn't think you'd be a screamer, Blue." It was nice and throaty, guttural almost. Even when so predisposed she still managed to be Orky. Vaedrisa bit her lip.

Blue was far too preoccupied to respond. Vaedrisa started moving the Wraithbone up and down, sliding it against her increasingly soaked lips, lingering here and there when she saw fit. Toe curling pleasure. Blue came. Was it just her, or did the whole room shake?

"That... What the zog was that?"

"Feel good? Excellent. Now, Blue. Here's the deal." She stuck the Wraithbone into Blue, causing the Ork to moan. "I'm going to keep asking you questions, and for every one that you answer fully, I will reward you. Every time you resist and for all the time you waste, that strange feeling from before will get stronger and stronger. Are you ready?"

Blue wanted to shake her head, that she'd take it. But that feeling, that ache, was back. And the vibrating Wraithbone could only do so much to calm it.

"Alright, pointy-headed git," Blue gasped due to sudden increased intensity, "I'll answer your questions."

"Very good." The Farseer suddenly smiled, "Okay, good, now that that's over and done with, perhaps we can continue?" She tried patting down her hair to little avail, produced a clipboard out of nowhere, and started scribbling furiously.

* * *

A few hundred thousand kilometers away, a bunch of warlocks watched the psychic manifestations in awe. In order to ensure the fidelity of the psychic bridge, they kept the image of whatever the Farseer was doing focused and clear. Needless to say, what the Farseer was doing was very focused and very clear.

"What is this, Zielt?"

"Some kind of mental assault, I-I'm sure." He absentmindedly wiped away some blood from his nose.

"Should we really be watching this?"

"We must, mustn't we? For the safety of the Farseer."

The other Warlock saluted and the whole room broke into smiles.

For the Farseer. For the Craftworld.

Snekkit in Operayshun Blow It All ta Zog

Snekkit shifted uncomfortably in his hiding place. He was a big nob in a tight space, but as a kommando, he wouldn't have it any other way. He and three other kommandos were hiding within the hull of a space hulk that was chasing the Loot-hava, no doubt trying to loot their titan Boris from their much smaller vessel.

Their mission: to infiltrate the pursuing vessel and blast the zog out of it in every way possible. Urtylug himself had told his head kommando to send an elite strike force for the task and Snekkit was lucky enough to be chosen! He knew it was a good idea to pay that funny shaped little blue grot a visit today, the Big Mek's wrath be zogged. He tried his best to stay still, but he was too excited to keep at it for very long. He knew he was feeling what his mentor Rockeata called "da frill of da hunt". He had to be, because all kommandos felt it, right? And he was a kommando, after all. That wasn't always the case for Snekkit, however.

Not too long ago, he was just your average nob, whose only job was pointing and shooting, with the pointing part only being for overachievers. But that all changed once the Boss looted that titan and said all boys had to be either sneaky or train under the Boss himself and become one of his dreaded "swashkrumpas", agile orks who relied on speed and mobility over brute strength. All the rest of the nobbs and the few stormboys they had left went with the Boss, figuring learning how to dance and fight at the same time like the Boss did was better than training to be a kommando, but Snekkit wasn't your typical nob. Day in and day out he listened to Rockeata, the veteran kommando and the oldest ork anyork knew, tell stories of past hunts and operations. He always wanted to be out there with Rockeata, on kommando missions or on hunting soo-far-ees. He didn't even know what a soo-far-ee was, he just knew that Rockeata liked them so they must be good. He even tried to eat rocks to be dead hard and dead patient like Rockeata was, but they always gave him a toothache and chipped his teeth in ways that he couldn't even use them to buy some fungus beer at the Toe Jam (named for its location in Boris' toe, a setting known for its abundance of fungus). But he was a nob. And everyork knew nobbs couldn't be kommandos. Besides, he was too handy at being shooty to waste anywhere else. At least before they lost all their boys and Urtylug came up with the cunning plan of being an entire army of sneaky gits.

"Zog it, Snekkit, kwit russlin about, you'z gonna get us caught!" Torkka whispered harshly.

"An' take off dat silly giddup, you'z ain't foolin anywon, ya git." Kargg added in.

"You'z gits jus dunt apreesheeate da kunnin ov my plan!" Snekkit riposted.

"Oh yeah? Who evva 'eard ov a bush on ship, 'uh? No wun, dat's who!"

"Dat's wut makes it so kunnin!"

"Dat's wut makes it so zoggin stoopid ya big klumy git. You'z gonna get us all killed. We'z lost enough boys as it iz fanks ta 'kunnin plans', we'z dunt need ta be losin anymore!"

It was true. The infiltration plan that Rockeata and Urtylug had concocted involved flying between a bunch of space rocks that the space hulk was too big to sneak through and leaving a few kommandos stranded on those rocks, ready to jump aboard when the hulk crashed through those rocks. The plan had been successful, except for the poor kommandos who jumped to early or too late and got smeared against the hull of the massive vessel.

“You’ll see! You’ll all’z see! I’z ded sneaky an’ trained under da grate Rockeata ‘imself!”

“Quiet you gits an’ get redy! We’z got companee!” The fourth and final kommando, Muldybakk, hissed, “An’ let me do da talkin!”

An orkish patrol four strong – three slugga boys and a nob leader – was passing through the corridor they were hiding in. They stopped when they came across the sight of a blue barrel with the word “kommando” scrawled across it, two sets of green fingers and a dirty pair of boots sticking out from a piece of metal paneling, a single ork standing guard, and finally, a bush as big as a nob, complete with a mohawk, chainaxe and dakka sticking out of it. The nob leader approached the lone ork suspiciously.

“Wut da zog iz you doin here all by yerself...”

“Da name’s Bakkymuld, an I wuz heer inspektun sushpishus aktivitees!”

“Iz dat so, Bakkymuld?” he said the name as if it were a curse, “An who exacktee told ya ta stand gard, den?”

“Fingsmasha, sah.” Muldybakk said without missing a beat, the nob’s eyes becoming slits of suspicion. There was always one Fingsmasha in every tribe, no matter the size.

“Fingsmasha is a roight clever git, boss. If’n he finks sumfins up, sumfins proolly up.” one of the sluggas chimed in.

“I’z didn’t ask fer yer openyun ya lousy grot!” the Nob reprimanded, enunciating his words with his powerclawed fist atop the offending ork’s head, accidentally killing him. He then continued with his interrogation, “So den, Bakkymuld, ya fink sumfin’s up?”

“Sumfin’s deffuhnitly up. Proolly dose zoggin panzee Scraplootas we’z chasin. Dey’s roight sneaky, dey is. Dey kuld be talkin to ya an you’z still kuldn’t spot ‘im. I’z gonna need ta see tha Warboss immediately about dis.”

This particular nob was well known amongst the tribe for being right clever, some even claimed he might just be a weirdboy. Something about this ork in front of him made him wary, so he pressed on with his questioning, thinking up a particularly devious question.

“Who iz da warboss, den?”

“You’z meen you’z don’t know?! I found da Scraploota! Get im boys!”

“Any git who tries ta get me is gonna get get BY me, ya get it, ya gits?” He barked before continuing, “I’z askin you if YOU know who da warboss iz. An ya betta answer reel kwick.”

“Uhhh...” and with that Muldybakk raised his dakka to fire, only to have his head shorn clean off by the swing of a chain axe. The nob roared with laughter.

“Serch da korridor boys, dere kuld be more!”

Hearing that, Kargg sprung into action, smashing one slugga flat with his metal panel before getting cut down and shot to pieces with excessive glee, but not before Kargg sank his knife deep into the skull of the last slugga boy. Soon after, the nob found Torkka hiding in his lucky blue kommando barrel, trying to appear as small and invisible as possible. By the time he noticed the nob noticing him, the nob had already started burning him to cinder in his own barrel.

“I fink dats da last of em, boys. Good job all around.” the nob declared to no one in particular, pleased with himself and his fresh bounty of teef. He was about to leave when a certain bush coughed.

“Wait wun zoggin minnit, bushes don’t grow on ships!” the nob said in confusion, turning around to face down the intruder.

Now that he found himself in a jam, Snekkit tried to think about what Rockeata would say in this situation. He’d probably tap that funny tan “soo-far-ee” helmet of his and say something “In order ta katch da beast, you’z must first fink like da beast, an’ den you must fink like da trickiest an’ cleverest of all da beasts, an’ den you’z gotta eemahjun dat yer some git who’z tryin ta kaptcha wanna dem beasts an’ afore ya know it, you’z a roight hunta you iz” or “Ta dafet da enemy, you must get in da ‘ead of da enemy, but wiffout bein a weirdboy. Why’z else do you fink so many bosses put skulls on deir bosspoles? It’z ta get in deir ‘eads!”.

Snekkit never really got what he meant by that, but Rockeata always said it with such confidence that there was no way he was wrong. Maybe just hearing those words enough times without knowing what they meant was enough to make Snekkit at least half as Rockeata. Maybe.

“Yes dey do, or else I wouldn’t be growin heer.” Snekkit finally stated calmly.

“Bushes dunt talk eitha! You’z gotta be one weirdbush ta be talkin like dat!” the nob countered.

“Well’z maybe I’z not talkin at all an you’z just a crazy weirdboy.”

The nob gasped in shock at the thought, before coming to a realization, “I’z kan’t be a weirdboy kuz my ‘ead ain’t splodin!”

“Well neetha iz mine.”

“You’z don’t even got a ‘ead!”

“All da more reezon I kan’t be a weirdbush. I ain’t got no ‘ead to asplode.”

“You’z got a fine point dere ya do...” The nob was beginning to have his doubts about this bush. There was something about it that he just couldn’t put his finger on...

“Aha! Yer dakka an yer choppy! Try an explain dose!”

“I’z a bush ya git! I’z grow fings.”

“Wut kinda bush grows dakkas an choppyz?”

“Da kind dat grows in a ship an talks.” the bush reasoned.

“Dat duz make sense, it do.” The nob stated, finally satisfied. He started to wander off again before he turned back around with an exclamation of “Wait one zoggin minnit!”, making Snekkitt tense.

“You’z a bush dat grows dakka an talks, right?”

“We just went over dis, zog it!”

“No, no, I’z beleev you. It’z jus dat da boss needs ta see you right away! Follow me an’ dunt let anywun else near ya!” The nob rushed off excitedly with his new leafy friend in tow.

The warboss wanted to loot that mega mega armored nob the Scraplootas had, so he needed all the edge he could get. A bush that grew dakka and could grow in ships would be a great boon for the tribe, though they’d have to do something about the cough. No telling what would happen if a bush like that got sick. At the very least the boss might be able to trade it to those Scraploota gits for their nob. Either way, there was no way the boss wouldn’t reward him for his cleverness today. Soon, he reached the ship’s boss hut and barged in.

“Boss, boss!” He shouted excitedly, out of breath from the run.

“Wut iz it, ya lousy git?! Kan’t ya see I’z busy tryin ta catch dese slippery Scraploota gits.” the boss shouted back, his anger matching the nob’s excitement.

“Lookit wut I found boss, mebbe it kin help!”

“Wut da zog iz dis supposed to be?” the warboss said as he inspected the weaponized foliage.

“I’z da big bush, boss!”

“Wut da zoggin zog wuz dat?!”

“Dat’s just it, boss! Dis bush talks an’ grows dakka!”

“It grows dakka?” the boss sought skeptically.

“It grows dakka!” the nob assured enthusiastically.

“I’z grow’z dakka.” the bush confirmed calmly.

“Yes... yes... Dis mite be just what we need ta take da fite to dose Scraplootas.” the Warboss mused, “Lure dem in wiff some stange dey seem ta love so much, and den krump da lot of em! You’z gettin a promotion, m’boy! Dat much is fer sure... wut’d you sey yer name wuz agin?”

“Da name’s WHRRRGRLLBLLGLBGUHGHH-” the nob tried to say through a throat full of chainaxe.

“Wut da zog kinda name iz dat you lousy... git?” The boss trailed off, seeing his nob dead and no more big bush, but rather a mohawked nob wearing some kind of shawl with the Scraploota logo on it and smoking a cigarette.

“Ya trecherous tree! I’z dun’t have time ta krump some git like you! You’ll par fer dis! You-you-” the warboss immediately stopped talking when Snekkkit ripped off his shawl, revealing piles upon piles of stikk bombs, rokkits, and even some looted meltabombs strapped to every inch of his body, all wired to a big red button labled ‘zoggin big red buton’ he was holding in his hand.

“Sorry, boss.” Snekkkit said, “I’z a Scraploota.” he took a deep drag of his cigarette and exhaled a cloud of smoke. “an’ a Scraploota pays fer nuffink, ya hear!”

Snekkkit pressed the zoggin big red buton.

* * *

Urtylug and Rockeata looked at the crews of mekboys salvaging the scrap left behind by the space hulk that just blew up behind them.

“Zoggin big boom, at leest.” Urtylug said, taking a pensive sip of squig tea.

“Roight propa ecksploshun.” Rockeata agreed distantly. “No wun wuz betta at blowin fings up den Snekkkit. It ‘ad ta be ‘im who did it. Looks like Operashun: Blow It All ta Zog was a sukcess.”

“At leest ‘e went out orky.” Urtylug tried to reassure his elite kommando.

“I shoulda been dere wiff da git.”

Zizzbitz hobbled up to the duo with a somber look on his. “Hate ta tell ya dis, Rockeata, but we kuldn’t find ‘im in da scrap. Luks like da ecksploshun took ‘im.”

Rockeata sighed. “Of kourse it did. Dat git wuldn’t be anywher else but da fick ov it. An ‘e neva did lern ta plan ‘is exit stratuhgees... It’z gonna be ‘ard ta find wun ta replace dat boy. ‘E may not ‘ave been da sneakiest boy I ‘eva did train, but ‘e tried zoggin ‘ard. An ‘e was da only wun in dis entire getup who knew ‘ow ta properly respekt dose olda an wisa dan him. Da lousy git.” Rockeata rambled off, chewing sullenly on a bit of spacerock.

Urtylug looked over at Rockeata leaving before turning back to Zizzbitz. “Neva seen da old basserd so sour afore.”

“Dat Snekkit nob wuz ‘is proteezay, even afore da Titan Run.”

“Troo, troo.” Urtylug agreed, taking another thoughtful sip of his tea. “Guess I neva really realized ‘ow much dat nob followed ‘im around. Kinda like you an Blue.”

It was Zizzbitz’s turn to sigh. “Speekin of, I betta go tell dat wun da news.” Zizzbitz dismissed himself and headed towards Boris’s Room, as the Loot-hava’s massive cargo bay turned titan holding bay and workshop had come to be known.

He may have never liked the nob for always nicking his lucky grot and endangering her out in the field, but Snekkit was Blue’s favorite ork aside from Zizzbitz himself for those exact same reasons. When Zizzbitz got to Boris’s Room, all the orks were happily milling about after such a massive victory for such a small price. Orks and grots alike were buying and selling foods and beers, broadcasting music through Boris, getting first dibs at the scrap, having a right old orky rukuss. Still, it wasn’t long before he spotted her. Despite her diminutive size, the blue Earth Caste Tau girl stuck out like a sore thumb amongst all the massive greenskins. He found her zipping about amidst the legs of unattentive orks and slipping through the many gatherings of grots, giggling and running amok, her pet squig Mr. Squig in tow aboard his Squigkopta: an orkified Tau Drone. Zizzbitz did his best to catch the hyperactive little bundle of blue.

“Catch me if you can, boss!” the diminutive honorary ork taunted between laughs.

“Zog it, Blue, stop fer a minnit! Dis iz important!” Zizzbitz gasped, struggling to keep up.

“Not until ya catch me, boss! Them’s the rules!”

“Zog it ya springy little grot...” Zizzbitz huffed. He needed to get him a new leg. Maybe one with wheels. Red wheels. Exasperated, he came up with a plan, “Look! It’z dat weerd Farsee!”

Blue gasped and froze in her tracks and began to look around frantically. “Zog! Where! I hate that git!”

Using his opening, Zizzbitz lept forward and scooped Blue up in a single massive hand, ignoring Mr. Squig crashing into Zizzbitz’s shoulder and tumbling out of his squigkopter. Blue squealed with delight as he set her down on the shoulder of a nob sitting nearby.

“Alright, alright, I give. You’s win, boss!” Blue giggled “So what was so zoggin important, anyhow?”

“Lissen, Blue, it’z about Snekkit an’ da Operashun.”

“He really krumped dose gits good! Best zoggin kommando dere is! ‘Cept for Rockeata, mebbe. Even then, he’s still my favorite.”

“Roight. About dat. Snekkit iz...”

“Snekkit is what, boss?” She asked, eyes wide and innocent in rapt attention.

“Well, ‘e’s...” This was going to be harder then he thought.

“He’s what?”

“I’z what, Zizzbitz?” the nob Zizzbitz had set Blue on inquired, turning to look at the Big Mek and dragging a hand through his grimy mohawk.

“Y-you... you’z alive ya crazy git! Snekkit iz alive!” Zizzbitz exclaimed in shock.

“Of korse I’z alive. We kuldn’t be havin dis konvershayshun othawise.”

“Oiy Rockeata! Oiy Urtylug! Snekkit’s alive! I found dag it hidin roight unda our noses!”

Snekkit craned his neck more to meet Blue’s gaze “I fink da Big Mek lost ‘is marbles.” Blue nodded in agreement.

Soon, the room was an even bigger mess of revelry and noise, as Rockeata and Urtylug rushed forth to personally congratulate Snekkit for his “Flawless exakyooshun of a kunnin and darin scheme of daring kunningness, as per keepin ta Scraploota tradishun”, much to the enjoyment of all the orks surrounding the affair. Snekkit proudly told his story and, looking at all the orks enthralled by his tale, begin to feel a little bit like Rockeata.

“So ya gotta tell us ya git, ‘ow da zog did ya manage ta avoid dat ecksplosion?!” Rockeata pleaded, clapping his beloved pupil on the shoulder.

Snekkit ran his hand through his mohawk again as he looked up, contemplating something. Finally, he just shrugged and said “I jumped it.” as if that explained everything. Then he gasped with realization and exclaimed “Oiy Boss! I nicked sumfink fer yer trophy case afore I left!”

Urtylug waited expectantly and eagerly as Snekkit wrestled with a bundle of leather. This would be the first time in his entire career the warboss had looted an ork mug. He couldn’t wait to drink from it and further mock that git who thought he could loot Boris the Titan from Boss Titanloota himself! He could only stare in confusion as Snekkit offered him the skinned face of the warboss. Blue tried to stifle her giggling, seeming to have caught on to something the rest of the tribe missed, as the whole cargo bay went silent.

“Daggit Snekkit, wut da zog is dis? It’z not even ‘is whole ‘ead!”

“But you don’t kollekt da ‘eads, Boss, you only kollekt da mugs. So I got you ‘is mug.” Snekkit explained. Blue, unable to contain herself, howled boisterously with laughter that soon proved to be infectious until the warboss himself laughed loudly and openly.

“Zog it, Snekkit, you’z a roight git, throo an throo.”

Zizzbitz' busy day

It had been a very productive day for the Scraplootas. They were in between jobs after having just finished a raid on a small Tyranid breeding world that had been very recently colonized. Some pointy head wanted the rocks or some other inane thing, the boyz didn't care to remember. A handful of the smaller Tyranids had been caught, and Fizzgutz was very busy smacking them around with 'Da buk', and explaining to the creatures that they must 'repaint' before Gork & Mork, or be brutalized in a fashion so cunning that their hive mother would feel it. While he was doing this, the chained beasts were getting alot of attention from Blue, who was busy putting some gubbins and bitz together on their heads and backs to make em more orky and more usable. The bigger of the captives was getting a fine shoota hoisted onto its back by some grots and another was having a few choppas attached to its face. Zizzbitz couldn't be more proud, but he had work of his own to do. There was a particular project he had been working on in secret for some time now, one that was about ready to be finished after he got his hands on some new shiny gubbins that he needed from the last humie battle.

He lumbered past, and gave Blue a pat on the head and as he winked, telling her to keep up the good work and make sure the captured tyranids were carrying all the dakka their legs could lift. She beamed at her mentor and nodded vigorously and began work again twice as enthused. Zizzbitz entered his private workshop tent and hoisted his creation onto the table. It was half of an engine from some humie troop carrier, and had some of those fuel tanks from the pointy heads, and plenty of good old fashioned orky gubbins with three rockets recklessly attached to the back. Zizzbitz got to work, using a crate of bitz he'd had Blue put together yesterday. He began tinkering like a madman.

This was going to be his magnum opus, he just knew it. He was going to do as few orks had done before. He slaved away tirelessly for three days, chopping up shootas, choppas, gubbins, bitz, and fitting them all in over and over. He added two handles that came around the side and fit into his hands, both with two buttons each. His right hand had a proppa shoota, and his left hand had choppa launcha like Blue had helped him learn to make, and it was being fitted more and more, Squig leather buckles and belts and straps a plenty attached. Last but not least of course, as much of it was painted as red as possible. Zizzbitz fell asleep at his work desk, and when he awoke, he had some red paint on his face a bit from the way he slept, but the paint had dried on his creation.

It was time. He strapped it onto his back, and took the controls in his hands, and walked from the tent proudly exclaiming that he was finally done with the 'flydakka'. He ran over to where Blue was putting the finishing touches on one of the Tyranid captives. A basket on the back that would allow her to ride on it around the camp or carry materials, complete with a remote control.

She barely noticed him before he scooped her up, and shouted gruffly in her ear 'Blue ya gonna think this is right proppa in just a minute, and you gonna know dis is why I'm da top mekboy roun' here'

He hastily put an extra couple of straps around her torso and crossed his arms to have his right hand in the left control and right hand in the other, to give him a tight grip of Blue to his chest. He turned on the ignition and took off. Zizzbitz was flying, and holding Blue, zipping around the campsite as the Grots and Orks gazed in awe. He zoomed up and around Boris, eventually landing on one of the towers on

his back, and then taking off again, cackling maniacally. Blue was thrilled, and Zizzbitz was awarded much merit as 'da fastest Ork in da sky' by the tribe. It was a very productive day for the Scraplootas.

Derknitt's Crusade

Derknitt found his life turned upside down, quite literally. He hated the 60-Second Market. Do you KNOW how hard it is to stay hidden when everything changes every 60 seconds?

"Dat Blue runt jus' ain't right." he thought to himself.

Not like Fizzgutz, now THAT was an ork he could get along with, until he started beating him with that damned book of his. Said it helped with "da lurning pro-cess" Whatever that was, it just taught Derknitt not to ask what was in the book.

Derknitt jumped to a nearby cable as a cart of explosives and a screaming grot flew through the air, "Serves da git roight, not nailin down dat cart o' his, stoopid runt."

Another step of Boris sent Derknitt off balance and crashing to the floor. Now, unlike those other kommando gitz, Derknitt carries a lot more bitz and britches, for an ork, that's saying something. He spread out his "Cape o' not splatterin meself on da floor" (an orkified cameo shawl) and rolled into a jump grabbing another cable and crawling his way past "Fast red repairz".

His brief appearance and lack thereof left a few grots stunned. "Now datz dextruz dat is." one mentioned.

"Dextruz ain't very orky iz- Ow! What da zog?" Another said as a spherical object bounced off his head. Picking it up he noticed it was labeled 'Not da sneaky wun' the gretchin was just about to question it before his lack of jaw, and coincidentally head left him speechless. The other grot quickly got back to work.

Derknitt crawled through a ventilation shaft he found. "Dat blue fing ain't gunna get da best o' me dis time. I brought me belt dis time I did! Me britches won't be fallin' down anytime soon!" he thought to himself as he reached the end of the shaft.

He can hear the blue one tinkering with whatever she was building. He caught the words "cage" and "I can hear you coming" but didn't think much of it. He WAS the sneakiest ork in all of Titanopolis after all. No one else was sneakier! Upon spying blue he grinned savagely to himself and leapt through the opening. With a cry of WAAAAAGH! he brought his knife "stikkemgud" down on her skull as hard as he could.

Well, until Blue disappeared and Derknitt skidded across the floor. He glared at the hologram. A small beep was heard and a cage fell from above, trapping poor Derknitt. To make it worse, Blue herself stepped out with a grin.

"Never learn do ya?"

Derknitt howled and cursed at her before he reached for his belt and took out his trusty "throwy-fing" and chucked it at her. Blue, taken by surprise only barely managed to dodge it, leaving her a small cut on the shoulder.

"Why don't ye die ya damn dirty... not-ork!" Derknitt growled pressing himself against the bars.

Blue responded by thwacking him across the face with her spanner, grabbing one of his teef. "Thanks for da fungus beer!" she said with a laugh as she left.

Derknitt growled again. "Fizzgutz ain't gunna be happy about dis he won't..."

Knights of the Octagonal Table

Derknitt sure had his work cut out for him. All over Titanopolis all sorts of weird things happened all the time and the puny little grots could hardly handle anything themselves. Derknitt was tired. Derknitt was angry. He was too busy keeping things proppa orky to deal with the blue git, who had been garnering more of his hatred by the day as of late. He needed time to plan, to come up with a way to prove she had to go or just get rid of her. But he had no time. All his time had to be devoted to the all too important job of keeping the titan proppa orky. With a sigh and a growl, he rolled out of his hammock, picked up his choppas and headed out to meet with the grotocracy's bigwigs to be briefed on the current state of affairs throughout Boris.

Derknitt approached the door into the council chamber, he stood up straight, breathed deeply, and walked in. The rundown was the usual, and Derknitt reluctantly committed today's duties to memory, more or less. Another weirdgrot has exploded into a daemon of some sort, some of the folks in the left leg were having hallucinations of some corn man or something, and weird noises were coming from the right shoulder a day ago and a couple of grots were missing. Derknitt was particularly pissed at having to travel between locations so far apart, and so he turned to go as he needed to be on his way and the council moved on to their next order of business. Just as he reached the threshold of the door, one of the more reserved members of the group eloquently proposed the institution of the arena for entertainment featuring live feastings from the new tyranid captive. Derknitt froze in his footsteps. He was hit by inspiration. A brilliant idea formed. After his pause, he set off twice as quickly for the most important mission of some time.

Within a matter of hours, Derknitt had gathered 8 of his most trusted grot underlings and brought them before the council. He knew that what he sought would require their cooperation, yet he still took a rather commanding tone, one of righteousness and unwavering demand. He spoke to them of using these grots as knights for Mork, to solve the problems throughout the titan that kept him so busy, his mission needed crusaders. After much debate, it was agreed, and 8 of the 20 some odd nids that had been looted were brought into the titan to be used as steeds for these knights. The gubbins on their head keeping them perfectly complacent unless commanded to attack. These knights were to meet around an 8 sided table to discuss plans and tactics for patrols to solve the issues of Titanopolis, and to regale one another with the tales of their bravery. And so was born the noble chapter of crusaders for Mork, the knights of the octagonal table. And so also was Derknitt delivered from much of his anguish, and much of his time freed. He still patrolled the titan, keeping things orky as only a true ork can, but now he could rest a bit easier, and spend a bit more time figuring out how to topple the blue grot.

Daily Grind

(Inside the daemon core room)

Korresh was having a bad day, for you see, in the life of a hungry daemon there is nothing worse than being cut down in your prime. One moment he was the proud demon rattling across the battlefield in his titan body, blasting and stomping across worlds, razing cities, and feasting upon the souls of the dead. This was all true, up until the point that a tribe of seemingly insignificant green skins found their way into his body. Klanking, rattlings, stabbing, and killing their way through his insides. Killing his crew and denting his interior.

His last memory of the outside world was the sound of an earthquake. No... It couldn't have been an earthquake. He knew that sensation far too well from his own rumbling across the fields of war. Nay, for this was an earthquake inside of him. Twisting and churning its way through his insides like an intestinal cramp that would make a daemon of Nurgle giggle with glee, hundreds of squigs frothed forth from his venting system.

They quickly surrounded his core, the source of his very essence, they bit, grabbed, and tussled at him. Korresh shook, lashing out with psychic bursts of energy but for every vanquished squig, a dozen more took its place. It was seemingly never ending until some of the squigs started glowing green. Somehow beginning being able to resist his lashes, these WAAAGHsquigs held him back with the echoes of bellows of orks around them.

"FOUL GREEN ONES, RELEASE ME FROM THIS PRISON OR I WILL DEVOUR YOU ALL."

With Korresh's psychic emanations cut off from the outside, the only response he got was in the form of an upside down squig that began unceasingly licking his forehead.

* * *

(In the head)

Butting Heads

"This council session is now open, we will start with important business, then each sector will have their turn to voice opinions and concerns, and we will have free questions at the end."

The Gretchin looked around the room at the eight councillors in front of him. Two representatives from the legs, one from the entertainment sector in the left, one from the commercial sector in the right, and two from the joint sectors of the legs. The lower torso had a factory owner representing them, the upper torso an important civil servant. The left and right arms were each represented by a swingeer, and were sitting on opposite sides of the room.

The rest of the room was filled with note takers, a journalist from the Titan's news radio office, a variety of factory owners, and some curious Grots who were on break and popped in, wanting to see what the high life was like.

"Now, to begin, the shortage of steel plates in the factory sector. I understand that the..."

"The representative from the left arm will now speak." The head of the counsel sat down as a surprisingly well kept Gretchin, adorned with an innumerable number knives, small axes, and other generally point/sharp things stood up in front of his peers at the table.

"Thank you councilor... *eherm* We of the left arm would like to motion for the reallocation of grotpower to our sector. The increasing demands of keeping Boris in working order is becoming taxing for-"

"Rubbish!" An equally well kept but infinitely more frustrated Gretchin, with a shoota bigger than his entire body propped up next to him, shot up from his seat across the table. "We all know that the left arm is doing just fine. You installed a new motor on Boris's main saw last just last week, where as we've been barely able to keep the Gailgun batteries running at all! If anyone needs more Grots its the right arm!"

The representative from the left arm immediately fallowed up with a retort "We upgraded the motor because the old one had broken! Perhaps if we had more Grots It wouldn't have needed to replace it in the first place!"

"Maybe if you weren't so busy playing with knives it wouldn't have needed replacing in the first place!" Their banter had the ease and timing of a well practiced play.

"The idustial sector has been short staffed for months! The Warboss just keeps ordering bigger and stupider crap and our current workforce isn't enough." A third counsel member had jumped in, this one short and grimy, years of oil, grim, and grit staining everything about him from his skin and close to his personality. "The production of weapons and machines for our boys is more important than the needs of some stupid ass gits who can't help but spasm over every shooter and choppa they come across!"

"How about I personally show you just how 'Important' Shooters are!" the counsel room was ablaze with anger, each counsel member passionately stating their argument while yelling over the others.

"Gentlemen please, this is no place for conflict. We are supposed to be deciding the future of Boris." The counselor was the picture of stoicism among the carnage that was the counsel table. "We must set aside our quarrels and look to what is best for our society. Save your your wrath for the battle field where it is needed, for now we must think of a solution to this staff problem."

As rational and calm as he was, the counselors efforts to assuage the raging representatives was for not. If something wasn't done soon the situation would only escalate and the bureaucracy that has lead Boris to prosperity for so long could come crashing down around him.

"OI Y' STOOPID GITS! What're y' go'n on about!? GET BACK TA WERK BEFER I KRUMP DA LOT A YA! ...stoopit grots... I swear I'm da only sane one on dis whole dam fing..."

The entire counsel is silent. "Motion to re-adjourn."

Motion carried.

* * *

(In the right arm)

"And what do YOU do?"

The Head-Councillor did his best to hide his boredom, on his tour of Boris' right arm. He was already sick of having to swing around on all of these muddled wires, and he felt it was entirely beneath him. But votes were at stake, so he had to show his face.

"Oi'm in charge keeping ar' shootas clean and firin' proply, boss- I mean, 'ed Councillor."

"Fascinating. And do you enjoy your job?"

"Why yes, oi do indeed. Can't never get bored of workin' wit shootas, ser."

The shine in the Gretchin's eyes showed that he wasn't lying. Not that he had enough of a brain to lie anyway, thought the Head-Councillor. Blasphemous as it may seem, he was utterly sick of these hellish industrial corridors, he just wanted to get back to his comfortable office and do something nice and clean. Anything, even studying the daily oil distribution graphs seemed like a more interesting prospect that spending more time in this hellish place.

Still, it wasn't like he had much of a choice. If he was to keep his seat, he needed morons like these on his side, especially with the Councillor of the commercial sector hanging on his coat tails. He knew that if he was to put one foot wrong, he'd be down in the industrial sector breathing in smoke for the rest of his life. Best to just keep a friendly face. It'll pay off.

"Now, you mentioned this weapon here..."

* * *

(Still in the right arm)

Da Blue Grot continued working up a storm throughout the ded-shooty alfa section of the arm. The Shootists had payed good teef for her work, and she wouldn't let Tinka down now. A sharp kick vaulted her back far enough to view her creation. What once been an intimidating relief of some 'umie git now showed Gork (or maybe Mork) lifting bullets toward the open feed for one of Boris' huge guns. Satisfied, she began fiddling with the medley of pulleys connecting her to the wire.

"C'mon Mr. Squig, we're done here." she said, pulling the final lever and beginning a rapid descent. Suddenly realizing the horror of his situation, he gave a violent start. The movement proved too much for his position. As Blue slid down the wires, the squig flies past her, followed by a scream. The squig tugged furiously on the ignition as it fell.

Below, a grot had dropped his slight protection and was preparing for a climb. He'd get up there and krump 'em good! Or he might have, had the hefty Mr. Squig and drone not bounced off of his head. The drone sputtered, and Mr. Squig lets out a growl as the the rotors carry him through the air. Pulling on the brake, Blue jumped onto the platform where the grot is and collected the few teef that had been knocked out.

The poor grot was knocked silly by the impact. He'd barely gotten out a word before she was over the edge again, cheekily calling back up. "Always keep yer eye on the squig, zog-fer-brains!"

* * *

(In the hip)

Grot-mek of da groteptus Mekanikus

Climbing down to the foundry level in Boris, Finkle had his new assignment. Amongst the swaying furnaces and sliding piles of scrap, an important looking grot was shouting at the team pouring shell casings "NO, NOT LIKE DAT! POUR IT QUICKA, OI... OI UGLY, YEA YOU, YOU WIV DA FACE WAT YOU DOIN?"

Finkle edged nervily closer to the head grot and offered him a data-slate, he snatched the metal plate from his hands and sniffed as he squinted at the runes drawn in grease paint. "Yow have been assigned to da Bloomery by da wisdom of da council of finkin fings, long may de guide us. In dis Gork'z Bloomery wez make iron and iron accessories. Da work is 'ard un ugly butz we dois it betta dan eny over of da ova free blast furnacez in Boris. Yea seems loik this is yor furst day on da job. Mi namez Senior-grot-mek Thud da first or to you, Forge Masta. Ya' got a lot ta lern boy, but we'll look afta ye' coz ya find us fair and hard workin lot here and you'z turn arund in 45 years find yourself a supervisor. Coz I fink yus a kleva boi you's go far 'ere. Keep ya nose clean an yors mouf shut and we's guna have no problems." He smiled and offered a blackened hand.

Finkle met his grip and looked him in the eye and then smiled. "So, er boss. Whut yu wantin me doin now?" Finkle rung his hands nervously together,

"Well as its yor first day I fink you need to make the tea for da lads." smirked Thud. "Firs you's find da big pot, den ya grab ya squig, den boil it. den ya ring da big bell and da ladz come an get da tea, Simples." Thud pointed him in the direction of a grubby kitchen annex listing against a bulkhead in the opposite corner of the foundry. Looking returned to shouting at his work gang, Finkle scatched his head and got on about his new found responsibility.

After much fighting with the squig he found bouncing round the corridors, finally subduing it with a large spanner and dragging it back to the kitchen he looked around for the pot he was supposed to use, after a good hour he still couldn't find it so he scraped with an old can of GROTOLA a mega-bolta shell clean and filled it with grey-brown water that spurted out of a pipe marked "WARTA" some time later he dropped the squig in and waited for it to come up to the boil.

A large, scarred and greasy grot came to see what he was doing "So you da new tea grot huh? - Dun' worry yus self about Thu, hes a good hart but a little distracted, he likes his tea wiv a dash of mota oil and sturred wiv a rag, like dis." He motioned Finkle to the cupboard above a hole in the floor, "You wanna use da' oil in da' yella tin, yea dat one." he grinned.

Finkle was quite pleased with himself by the time he had finished, the tea had gone a pleasing sickly green-purple. He raised a massive hammer and stuck the bell with all of his might, and to his delight the work-grots were slowly starting to assemble around the pot dressed in home-made lead lined aprons and wealding masks staring at him, clutching assorted tin mugs, cups and mortar casings.

"Wher' ma tea?" demanded a particularly dim looking grot.

And then he realized what he had to do, Finkle smiled his toothiest smile and started pouring the tea into their cups with a ladle he had bashed out of a bucket. After all one-hundred odd coal shovelers, porters, cleaners, rakers, had been served and the pot was empty he felt quite pleased with himself. First day, first job well done and no muck ups.

The foregrot from before came in and slapped him heartily on the back, "Con'gratz neu boi, welcom to da foundry!"

He sniffed the pot and poked the squig, he smiled again. Finkle didnt like this grots smile. "Errr, were you find dis' squig mate?"

"Dunno jus bouncin' around da' corridor."

"Dun' you know a weird squig when you see one? Oh dear oh dear oh dear, what have 'ave ya done?" Finkles heart sank as the impact of the words sank in, he felt a bit sick, had he messed up his first day of work, would they feed him to the orks?

"AHAHAHAHAHAHA, Boss is gunna have a good laff' at dis, I wunda wen da firs O' da boyz start growin horns an stuff. But didn't yow notice he wuz takin da piss, you know like get me a left-clawed hamma? Or a bucket of stripy paint? Or a long weight? Dunt worry 'bout it, last time they asked him to taste da molten iron, so's we know if its cooked."

"Yer anyway that silly grot fell in, but we'z did make a lot of funny lookin metal from dat, so not a total rite off."

* * *

(In the right leg)

"Oi, wot'z dat flashy place over there"

"Oh dat? Da grotz call it a 'kuhseeno'. S'like a place fer tradin' teef. Cept dere's no krumpin'."

"Tradin' teef wifout krumpin'. Dat'z not orky at all!"

"Ya'd fink dat, but it iz! Da grotz in dere are like a bunch uv little morks! Wif just some fancy scratched bitz uv metal or a truk wheel they can have most uv yer teef before ya know it."

"But... can't ya just krump 'em? Dey'z grotz."

"Zog me, I tried. But dey have deez paperz sayin' dey're allowed to and stuff from da boss. So I wasn't sure if I should krump 'em, or da bass should, or maybe even I should krump meself."

"Dat'z zoggin' unfinkable. Some git takes yer teef, ya krump 'em. Simple."

"But it'z not! Dey even took me teef before I lost 'em!"

"Dat doesn't make a squig of sense."

"Dey have dis system. Ta play gamez fer teef, ya need ta trade teef in fer little bitz dey say rep...reperz...are teef but not."

"Ya'z been drinkin' too much squig beer."

"Maybe I haz. But in dere, dey got deez choppaz... and flashy bitz uv dakka... zog me, it was hard ta concentrate on me losin' teef."

* * *

(Still in the right leg)

"Dat slippery grot. I oughts krump 'im fer bein' so-"

"Fine, but you must fill out sections A, C, T, and G to apply for krumping."

"Er...can't I jus-"

"Seeing as this is the 'ead Councillor, a fee of 580 teef is required. Your dakka and choppa, should it be used, will have to be submitted for review by the respective departments."

"Listen, I just wantz ta kru-"

"We can't forget about your size, either. You are at least five times larger than the councillor and have moderate armor as well. As such, the councillor shall be given adequate shielding and an entourage of grots of his choosing. Weaponry shall be matched if and when you submit it."

"But...um...I-"

"Please report back here on the 15th to return these forms, the 17th for weaponry submission, and the 21st for finalization. With any luck your krumping will be within the next few months. Don't count on it though, the councillor is a very busy grot."

"...da zog just happened..."

* * *

(Continuing to be in the right leg, in the Git Pit specifically)

Gladiator Grot

The smell of blood hung thick in the air of the gutworks. Durk sat before the gate cross legged, prepared to go out and make his appearance and fight for more glory, and more teef. Since the council had put together the arena Durk knew it was for him. He wasn't like the other Gretchin. He had instincts, cunning, brutality. He was called 'the smallest ork in duh tribe' by some Scraplootas. He sat calmly and breathed deep, the anticipation felt like static to the other combatants but to him, it was a light rain.

The sirens whirred, the gates went up, the crowd roared and snickered. Durk arose and tread carefully unto the center of the complex, raising his twin choppas in the air. They were simple buzzsaws on the end of short sticks, but he liked them, he'd always liked them.

The second sirens began to wail, the fight had begun, the gladiators took their ready stances and the clash began. There were 6 of them in the ring, and the fight was conducted as an every man for himself battle. Durk licked his cracked lips and turned on his choppas.

He spun gracefully around the battlefield, dodging, ducking, weaving, rolling, and parrying in an arc through his foes. Lopping off a head, then whizzing through an arm, blocking a hammer and buzzing right through a couple of legs. They were fodder to him. None could even land a blow on the graceful green killing machine. Within a matter of minutes, everyone in the ring was in pieces save for Durk. Another match won. Again now, he raised his choppas into the air. The crowd screamed in approval. Durk turned away now, walking as calmly from the fray as he had entered it to collect his reward of teef in the gutworks.

* * *

(In the head, probably)

"What's dat? You want to know da longest a single Grot has stayed in da 'ead office? I think I have the documents around 'ere someplace."

The Radio-Journalist from 102.5 Boris FM, Korckuk, followed the Grotocrat down the corridors of the library. He'd not been a journalist long, and he felt that this could well be his big break, that he had stumbled onto a story that would get him promoted right up to the top.

As far as the Grots in Boris were concerned, there had always been a Head Councillor. And there had, that was true. But the story that had been held from the populace was that the Head Councillor changed, and changed often. Such a thing had never been considered before, but as Korckuk trudged slowly by the seemingly endless set of books and records, he realised that his little theory may indeed hold water.

"And 'ere we are, the book of the 'ead councillor." The wise looking grot passed the book to Korckuk.

"Thank you, you've no idea how important dis book is to me."

He opened the book. Looking at its first page, he saw what he thought was the census, names, names, names, names, stretching long into the past. The names each had a little date alongside them, and it was this date that was important. Korckuk had got his big break. And he was about to break the entire conspiracy wide open.

Eldar Blues

As a general rule, Orks don't get many visitors. You'd have to be right daft to come knocking on their door, because they're Orks. It's like using the tongue of a Carnifex as a pillow and expecting to still have an upper body when you wake up. As dumb ideas go, you really have to try to go dumber. For example, you could be, oh, two pointy-headed gitz knocking on the door of Orks.

"I have absolute faith in Farseer Vaedrisa's abilities."

"Alleed, why the sudden affirmation?" The other Pathfinder shifted in his armor nervously.

"No reason, I just felt the urge to say that, answer that unsaid question between us."

"You mean in regards to us coming out here to a world in the middle of nowhere, barely armed and heavily undermanned, all to visit a group of bloodthirsty Orks that will sooner kill us and loot our bodies than look at us?"

"I have absolute faith in Farseer Vaedrisa's abilities." Alleed repeated.

Lennithe thought for a moment. "I also have absolute faith in Farseer Vaedrisa's abilities."

Having just sent word by one of the smaller ones, a grot, Lennithe recalled, they were waiting on the outskirts of camp, hesitant to venture further in. They eyed various suspiciously placed barrels and bushes, and notably one prone Ork holding up a sign that said "I IZ DED" on it, apprehensively. Especially the prone Ork, who kept lifting his head to make sure they were still there. Soon enough the Warboss approached. Wearing a Commissar's hat, swinging his massive Power Klaw, with an Ethereal's dress draped over his shoulders along with two grots, and mugs littering the rest of his body, Warboss Urtylug was a peculiar but definitely intimidating sight. For some reason your mind focused on the mugs as the most intimidating part when you saw him.

He was flanked by a strange bunch, but what else was new with the Scraplootas. On his left walked a weird skinny Ork that swayed to and fro, chattering to himself, and a large Ork with a mohawk holding a multibladed chainsaw contraption. On his shoulder sat what was possibly the grimmest looking adolescent Tau Lennithe had ever seen. On the right of the Warboss was an Ork dressed in what seemed to be Priest robes to some Chaos God, holding a book of some kind, and an Ork that darted around between cover in a camouflaged cape and cowl, trying his best to not look conspicuous. The other Orks popped out of their hiding places in bushes and barrels, and that one prone Ork got up and tossed the sign away. All of the sudden, the two Pathfinders were surrounded.

Warboss Urtylug looked at the two Eldar from over the rim of his mug. He took a long and soffit-soffish- sofff- nobbish sip of his Squig tea, hopefully projecting the air of having better places to be and better people to see, and said, "Whut youz pointy-headz want?"

"Warboss Urtylug Dursnik—"

“Urtylug ‘Titanloota’ Dursnik.” Alleed chimed in.

“Yes, Warboss Urtylug ‘Titanloota’ Dursnik, we are an envoy from Farseer Vaedrisa, who wishes you well.” Lennithe and Alleed bowed as low as they dared.

“Aw no. Not dat git.” Urtylug dropped his mug, which was deftly caught by one of the grots on his back, and placed his palm on his forehead, “Da last time dat git had us doin’ fings, we wuz neck deep in dose udda pointy-headed-gits fer dayz.”

It was probably one of the quickest routings of that large an army of Dark Ones in Eldar history. The Orks had put them in such disarray that the Dark Eldar literally did nothing but land, panic, and take off again. The titan helped. The Tau on that world had no idea the Dark Eldar had ever been there.

“Yes, but you were able to collect fabulous ‘mad lootz,’ were you not?” Alleed was laying it on thick.

“Shure, but dat ‘ad nuttin ta do wid da pointy-headz. Da mad lootz wuz all from da grayskins on da plannit.”

“But without our Farseer’s instructions, you wouldn’t have landed on that planet at all, correct?”

“I nevah finked uv it dat way.” Urtylug rubbed his chin before shaking his head. “Anyway, whut are youz ‘ere fer? Beside a krumping?”

“Farseer Vaedrisa would like to recommend a course of action.” Of course she did. That’s all she did all day every day.

“Does it involve dose pointy-headed emoboyz?”

“No, actually, it does not. Instead, we wish that you join the ruinous forces on a world not far from here.”

“Whut? Join da wossname?”

“The Chaos forces are looking for mercenaries to help subjugate the populace. They will allow you to plunder as you will.”

“And whut’s da big trick dat git’z got up ‘er sleeve?”

“At a certain point, which you will recognize, you will have the chance to betray the legions of Chaos, and plunder their armories and vehicles as well.”

The Warboss gave a low whistle, “Now, Oi like da sound uv dat!” He turned left and right, looking at his gathered boyz. Nobody seemed to object, not that they would have a choice. Chaos had some pretty Orky loot. Especially the red angry ones. “Alroight den, tell yer git dat we’ll do it. Which world izzit?”

Lennithe handed over a communicator, “Tell your navigators to set your coordinates for this world. It should only be a short jump away.”

“Okay den, fanks.” Urtylug pocketed the communicator and Lennithe started to object when Alleed started pulling his partner back.

“Anyway, we should get going, it was nice dealing business with you, Warboss.”

“You too, I fink.” Urtylug extended his meaty hand, and after a quick mental back and forth, Alleed ended up shaking it awkwardly. The circle of Orks opened up and the Pathfinders walked as quickly back to their Nightwing as they could without looking like they were running.

“I liked that communicator.”

“And I like not having my head bashed in and being left for dead.”

* * *

They reported back to the mothership, the Farseer was waiting for them. “Welcome back, Pathfinders. I trust everything went as planned?”

“Yes, Farseer. The Orks will take the bait. They will head towards the same world the Blood Jaguars are projected to land on within the week.”

“And yet again, they will prove their might in most glorious combat.”

Lennithe wondered what was so glorious about dropping a Titan from up high onto unsuspecting troops below.

“Lennithe, you may go. Alleed, I want you to come to my personal quarters.” Vaedrisa turned and started walking away. Alleed gave Lennithe the largest smile he could manage and quickly followed along. Some Eldar have all the luck.

* * *

A little while later, Lennithe caught up with Alleed again. “So, how was that?”

“How was what?”

“Well. It was so good it was wiped from your memory?”

“What? Oh. You mean with the Farseer? Oh no. It was nothing like that.” Alleed shrugged disappointedly, “Turned out, all she wanted from me were my memories of shaking that Warboss’s hand!”

'Umie Huntin'

"We're seriously goin' through wid this?"

"Quiet, Blue."

"I'll quiet down when we're done bein' daft."

"Ere, et dis. It'll calm ya down. Dun wonders fer me when we wuz sneakin' around da desert world, krumpin' 'umies an' mirages."

"This... is a rock." She gave Rockeata a look, "I shouldn't be surprised."

The Kommandos were camped out just outside a clearing on this jungle world, and Blue was starting to get annoyed. The heat and humidity was one thing and the bugs were completely another. The air felt ten or twenty pounds heavier than normal and she swore a mini waterfall was starting between her butt cheeks. Squatting to avoid sitting in Gork-knows-whut didn't help matters any. A few of the Orks had taken off their helmets to sit on, but with the spiky bit Blue's helmet had... Well, it wasn't exactly an option.

"I'm tellin' you, there's no zoggin' way this'll work."

"Which wanna us iz da Kommando 'ere? Now shut yer trap or I'll krump ya like da grot you iz." Rockeata gave her a not very light tap on side, pushing her over. Into the Mork-dun-wanna-know-whut.

In the middle of the clearing, surrounded with leaves where the rest of the jungle floor was suspiciously clear, was a cloth bag. It was obviously full of sticks and stones and bugs and whatever else they could find on the jungle floor that didn't try to poison them. Sticking from the middle of the bag was a crudely made sign that read 'SPESS MAREEN FUD'.

This was Rockeata's cunnin' plan to catch some fat 'umies. Well, part two.

Part one came running over momentarily. A grot fell over his own feet into the clearing, whimpering. Behind him the jungle echoed with gunfire and calls of "KILL THE GREENSKINS" and "EXTERMINATE THE XENO" and a few shouts of "FOR THE EMPEROR." The grot whimpered and looked around, not seeing the Orks that promised they'd be waiting for him here. He only just picked himself up again when the top half of his body splattered to a bolter round. The space marines then crashed into the clearing themselves, four of them.

...And seeing that the object of their pursuit lay dead at their feet, they calmed down as quickly as they could, and then scanned the clearing. The leaves, the fake rations pack, the SPESS MAREEN FUD sign. Blue shook her head. There was no way. There was absolutely no way they'd fall for it. No way.

"Look brothers, a rations pack!"

Gork be praised.

"Hold, Brother Bernard, take another look at this layout. It seems too convenient. This may be a trap."

"I agree, Brother Bailey, let us first disturb the leaves, they may be concealing treachery!" The marines shot into leaves with a splash.

"As expected, quicksand. we must be cautious when recovering these rations, brothers." They walked carefully into the clearing to the edge of the quicksand and started considering retrieval.

"Do we get ta krump them now?" Blue watched intently over the bolder she was hiding behind, she was itching to try her new invention.

"You eat dat rock yet?"

Then Mr. Squig flew by from opposite end of the clearing, followed by shouts and gunfire. He dumped his payload of gray powder into the quicksand and disappeared into the canopy before the Space Marines could draw a bead. Part one b.

Four Chaos Marines burst into the clearing.

"TRAITOR MARINES."

"LOYALIST SCUM."

"QUICKLY BROTHERS, WE MUST SECURE THE RATIONS PACK BEFORE CHAOS CAN CORRUPT IT."

"WE WILL CAPTURE YOUR RATIONS PACK FOR THE GLORY OF CHAOS."

"GLORY TO THE EMPEROR!"

"DEATH TO THE FALSE EMPEROR!"

The clearing exploded with bolter fire as three marines from each side gave covering fire for the fourth Marine that waded into the quicksand, which was looking quite gray and was slowing.

"WHAT TREACHERY IS THIS?"

"WHAT HAVE YOU LOYALISTS DONE TO THE QUICKSAND?"

Both chest deep and halfway to the rations pack, the two marines were stuck in the quickly solidifying cement.

"NOW, YA GITZ!" In the momentary confusion, the Kommandos from all around opened fire, and Blue hammered her big red button home.

Steel netting, which took zoggin' fereva to weave, shot up from the dirt around the two groups of marines. They were lifted up into the air, a mess of limbs and bulky packs. Swinging back and forth, the two nets eventually collided with each other with a crunch and got entangled. Loyalist Marines breathing down the necks of Traitor Marines and vice versa, with neither group able to do anything about it.

Firing stopped. The marines weren't in any position to discharge their firearms, and the Orks were all too busy laughing. Six marines in the air, dangling. two more entrapped in now tightly packed cement. The rations pack lay there, covered in gray powder but otherwise unmolested. With nothing else to do, the Marines began shouting threats at each other and the Orks to add to the wonderful cacophony.

It was a good day to be a Scraploota.

Scraploota Sortie

“...an’ dat was da fourth time I killed a squiggoth in single combat...”

Blue shifted uncomfortably in her seat. Rockeata droned on, rattling off another tale or even the same one as the last as Snekkit listened with rapt attention. This was the part she hated the most. The waiting. Scouts had killed some space marine scouts and spotted a small task force moving in on the location of their base camp, where Urtylug and Tinka were busy sorting through the loot and fixing up Boris. Snekkit had stolen the little honorary ork away when Tinka wasn’t looking for the sortie that was assembled and Blue had been more eager to tag along and krump some gits with the turret mounted on Snekkit’s broad shoulders, but she had always hated this part. Snekkit may have been able to sit still and listen to Rockeata while they waited in ambush, but Blue wanted nothing more than to shout and holler and shoot and loot like a proper ork.

“...dat little encounta taught me ta neva leave me ammo in me back pocket...”

Blue curled up into a ball on the little platform she was situated in, the leafy camouflaged tarp providing adequate shade from the sun. She tried to imagine the occasional jostling Snekkit provided was the rhythmic rumble of Boris or the gentle hum of the Loot-hava, but it just wasn’t the same. In Boris or the Loot-hava, a good fight could be days away and there was plenty of time to muck about and relax, but out here there could be fighting to be had just seconds away and the anticipation ate her up inside. She sat back up and sighed, trying not to draw too much attention to herself. Otherwise, Rockeata might live up to his name and try to give her another rock to gnaw on to “calm her nerves”. Instead she decided to clean her various guns yet again to keep herself occupied as well as polishing Snekkit’s shoulder armor. She even went as far as to brush and toy with his signature mohawk until Snekkit lazily swatted his hand in her direction, signaling to her that she was being a nuisance.

“...so I looked ‘straight in da eye an’ said ‘I may be a ‘ard’eaded brute, but you’z a pansy eldar git’ an’ den I headbutted ‘im, right den and dere, and ‘is whole head jus’ splattered an’ broke ta bits like when you’z accidentally step on a grot, ‘elmet and all...”

Blue sighed and fidgeted again and looked about the tree line they were hiding in. She took off her helmet, inspected it for any scuffs or smudges she could polish out and upon finding none, polished her helmet anyway and put it back on, only to repeat the process a few minutes later. She was about to start pestering the grot perched similarly upon Rockeata’s shoulders in a big fancy lookout box when a hushed whispering started filtering through the ambush party. This was it! Those stupid metal humies were about to wander right into their trap! She could hardly wait! Unlike those squishy humies or those tau gits, Space Marines always put up a fight instead of falling over in the first swing on a chainaxe. And they never cheated and got back up after you killed them like those sleepy zoggging metalboys. She glanced over at Rockeata’s grot, Skopeshot, his eye trained down a minuscule orkified tau rifle that Blue had built for Rockeata at Snekkit’s earnest request, a slight grin crept onto her face.

“Psst” she whispered, deciding to pester him anyways.

“Shuts it, you. It be’s fightin time.” Was all she got in return.

“Bet I’s gonna get more than you’s.” the petite blue ork taunted

“Yer on.”

“Loser buys squigpies. Deal?”

“Deal’s, you sorry excuse of’s a snotling. I likes mines nice an’ crispylike.”

“That’s nice, seeing as you’ll be payin for the zoggin things.”

That order of business settled, Blue turned her attention to the clearing just as the space marines rounded the bend into view. She could hardly contain her excitement as she saw them. Featherheads! They must be looking for Boris, seeing as those ones hated him something fierce. Of all the space marines to fight, these were her favorite, because they were so easy to rile up. There was a good twenty or so of them, but they were no match for the fifty strong kommandos and their uncountable amount of grots.

* * *

This particular detachment of the Blood Jaguars had been hunting the Scraplootas for some time now and had finally tracked them down to this planet, trying to get their hands on their quite literally infernal titan and destroy the heretical machine. Their orders had been to send forth a small task force that could quickly discover the location of the Emperor-class blight upon their chapter as well as deal with any threats the orks might throw at them. The Blood Jaguars were confident their small strike force, lead by Sergeant Huitzil, would be more than enough to deal with any straggling orks they might find, given their years of training specifically to the task of destroying the foul greenskins.

But the Scraplootas were not conventional orks.

They had been following the clearing made by the orks and their path of destruction for a few days now with no real presence of actual orks to be noted. The sergeant stopped, some sixth sense of his, honed by years of ork hunting on Tenocit, alerting him that something was amiss. The ground beneath them started shaking and rising, giving way to grots. By the Emperor! Dozens and dozens of grots, buried in the ground beneath their very feet! They had just barely begun to react to the new threat when the trees figuratively exploded with orks and gunfire. Damn it! Where were their scouts?! They were supposed to be running amongst the trees and covering their approach! Of course, nothing could prepare Huitzil for the sight that awaited him.

* * *

Blue was currently having the time of her life, as she did every time Snekkit took her out on sorties. After the digga grots had ambushed the Featherheads, everything flew into a rage around her in a cacophony of shouts and gunfire, her own voice and dakka contributing cheerily to the mix. Skopeshot was firing as quickly as he could, and quite accurately for an ork, with over half of his shots hitting their targets, and some of those even hitting somewhere important with one in particular knocking one of their beloved two-sided chainswords right out of the hand of one hapless space marine. Now that

Snekkit was charging up close to tear things apart with his trusty chainaxe, it was time for Blue's favorite part. She grabbed a device she had made to emulate Boris's big booming voice and shouted.

"OIY YA LOUSY BEAKY FEATHERHEADS! YOUR EMPRAH'S A LAZY GIT AND THAT LITTLE BORIS OF YOURS IS NOTHIN MORE THAN AN OVERGROWN METAL GROT!"

Blue quickly put the Borisian Booma down and gripped her turret tightly. She loved taunting space marines because they didn't even know how to yell properly and with their go-to insult being "Filthy greenskins", they usually didn't know how to respond to a blue ork calling their beloved emperor a git. This band was no exception, with all the remaining marines pausing for the briefest of moments before redirecting all of their efforts on reaching Snekkit and his offending grot, struggling against the green tide of grots all the way. She could even see the one helmetless one's eye twitch and mouth froth as he uttered an endless stream of raging incoherence, punctuated by few key swears such as "YOU... YOU THRICE HERETICAL DOUBLE XENO! I SHALL END YOU!"

Blue could only giggle.

* * *

Sergeant Huitzil had had more than enough! None of this was going according to plan and now one of the Scraplootas – a tau child (a CHILD!) posing as an ork, no less! – dared insult the sacred Sun-Emperor and most cherished Chapter Master in the same sentence?! Even if he were to die this day, even if he were to fail his chapter and his Emperor, he would see that this, this abomination is brought to justice! He saw his men get cut down by the hail of gunfire and grots alike, but he would not falter, for his goal was in sight. The blue blasphemer would face justice by his hand and his hand alone. Everything else, even the grots chewing and stabbing at his armor, was a blur to the Black Rage Huitzil now felt. Using the last of his momentum, he shoulder barged against the large ork his target was roosted upon with all his might, sending the ork sprawling and the tau sailing across the battlefield. Huitzil stepped forward to claim the crumpled bundle and his justice.

"You do not even deserve to be sacrificed upon the altar, pitiful tau." he said, reaching down to grasp her. She mumbled something unintelligible against the ground.

"You'll have to speak up, little tau." he taunted once more, lifting the little Earth Caste up to face. Huitzil wanted to look her in the eye when he killed her. He wanted to enjoy the look of fear on her face and relish his last moments of life. What greeted him was the coldest stare he had seen in his life.

"I said I ain't no zoggin tau, zog it! I's an ork! Always an' foreva!"

With an enthusiastic WAAAGH from the tau, Huitzil felt something sharp dig into his throat with such force that he fell flat on his arse and lost his hold the little tau girl. Sputtering and coughing blood, as he tried to dislodge the cylindrical object, he heard it begin to fizz ominously. Before Huitzil's brain had enough time to properly assess the situation and put two and two together, it was promptly severed from his body at the neck and flung in a hundred different directions.

Blue holstered her handkannon, dubbing it a success, and muttered a low "Lousy git" as she brushed some of the humie brain matter off of her helmet as the rest of the Scraplootas swept up the last

remaining space marines. Snekkit then surprised her from behind, hoisting her up by the waist and turning her several different ways until he finally found the right combination that made it to where the lucky little grot was right side up and facing them.

“Zog it, Blue! Ya ‘ad me worried! Da Big Mek woulda krumped me fer sure if I’d gone an’ wrecked ‘is favorite grot!” Snekkit fussed over Blue, licking his massive thumb and wiping it against her face, trying to clean her up to the best of his ability.

“Knock it off ya overgrown git, I’s just fine, see? I couldn’t call meself a right proper ork if’n I couldn’t handle a stupid humie.” Blue giggled as she pushed his hand away. “Sides, I’m lucky!”

“Zoggin right you iz!” Snekkit perched his favorite grot gunna on his shoulder as they walked back to camp. “Didja see ‘is ‘ead asplode like dat?! You isn’t a weirdgrot, iz you?”

“I made it happen ya git!”

”You IZ a weirdgrot”

“Not like dat, you git! With me handkannon!”

“You’z GOTTA make me wanna dose!”

“Only if you loot me one of these beaky heads. They’ll look right flash on the front of the bike I’s got in tha works. Oh, and run us up next ta Rockeata! I’m hungerin for some squigpies...”

It was a good day to be a Scraploota. Then again, most days are.

Sooner or Later

It was long past midday, and Big Mek Tinka Zizzbitz was still asleep. Urtylug usually did not tolerate such indolence. He figured that everyone else should be up before he was, anything else was muckin' about and punishable by a good krumpin'. But not Zizzbitz. Urtylug knew he could count on the Big Mek to be around when he was needed. Zizzbitz actually seemed to have a sixth sense about that, anything blown up or fried or borked or fallen apart, he would be there cobbling up a fix before anyone could even go report to him. At any rate, Zizzbitz literally slept with one eye open. That prosthetic eye of his constantly streamed images into his brain, and the Big Mek could be roused at a moment's notice. But Urtylug almost never did that. Not even when they got into early morning fights or raids. The reasons were three fold.

Zizzbitz would be up as soon as anything broke anyway, if groggy and downright cranky.

Urtylug's own mentor, Waarakton, had once said "A good mek boy ain't one dat's always busy an' ain't one dat's always muckin' about. Da first never gets nuffin finished an' da second never gets nuffin done. A good mek boy iz sometimes busy, sometimes muckin' about. An' da best mek boy iz seems ta be always muckin' about, but gets busy real fast."

And Zizzbitz had one time saved Urtylug's life.

Orks barely have any hierarchy. There are grots, there are boyz, and there are warbosses. But all boyz are theoretically equal, and the Warboss is always one good krumpin' away from being replaced. Orks don't have any proper familiar bonds either. They have tribes and WAAAGHs, but both are easily banded or disbanded, joined or left. They have no fathers to revere or overthrow, no brothers to support or betray. When the Ork to your left gets his leg blown up and can't walk anymore, that's his problem and actually benefits you, more to krump for yourself. Sure, there is some community in a tribe, but a mekboy is as likely to fix as experiment on or sabotage completely your truk, and a painboy is as likely to as fix you up with a prosthetic as experiment on you while you're under. Every Ork for himself would dissolve a tribe or even a WAAAGH quickly, and having so understood the community structure of Orks somewhat, many a human and Eldar alike have concluded that Orks are really not that big of a threat. Without necessary hierarchy, the infighting would eventually ruin them. And they repeat their findings to themselves as their worlds are overcome by the green wave.

Here's the thing. Everyone knows that Orks can be brutal in their cunnin', but few realize that there is cunnin' in their brutality. They recognize that you can krump far larger enemies and loot far grander prizes when you work together. They may scatter when they get their shares of the loot, but they're just as likely to band together for more krumpin' and lootin', even without a hierarchy, even without familiar or any real bonds holding each other down. That's how Orks like it and that's how Orks do it: Chaotic faceless green masses working together for a singular goal, fightin', krumpin', lootin', and winnin'.

As such, after being told how to tell a good mekboy from a bad one, not-yet-Warboss Urtylug went looking for a first mate in the pits of the Loot-Havva. If he was going to go and krump Gennarul Waarakton and become the Warboss of the Scraploot, Urtylug was definitely sure he wanted a good Mekboy as a second hand man. It was about the loot after all. Orks came and go, but the Warboss's loot

lasted forever, even if the Warboss didn't, and he was going to need someone he could trust to keep all of the loot and the equipment in working order at all times.

After going through the majority of the Mekboyz in the ship, he found Zizzbitz in the middle of being krumped by a nob for muckin' about. Not that the nob was doing much of anything. The then-mekboy had simply turned his back to the nob and was picking his nose, waiting for the nob to finish kicking at him. It was probably still a good krumpin' by any standards, Zizzbitz was just too lazy to give the nob the benefit of groveling or fighting back and showing that he was indeed quite sorry for mucking about and the nob was in the right for krumpin' him. Urtylug liked that style, it was easy to tell who was in control of the situation here, and it might not have been proppa Orky, but well, Urtylug wasn't completely proppa Orky either. He intervened and krumped the git nob good.

"Oi, whut's goin' on here, Mekboy?"

Zizzbitz put his hands on his lower back and stretched, pretending he wasn't covered in bruises, "Not much, ya just interrupted me afternoon massage iz all."

"I could continue for dat git if ya want."

"Nah. I'm all loosened up now anyhow." Zizzbitz nodded at Urtylug in thanks, "So, ya got sumfin' for me ta do? Tell a grot in my workshop, an' I'll get to it sooner or later."

"Why iz you muckin' about when other mekboyz 'ave their hands full?"

Zizzbitz shrugged and looked at the bigger Ork in the eyes, "Why do the other mekboyz 'ave their hands full when dere ain't nuffin ta do?"

"But it' ain't Orky to be muckin' about like dis."

"Den give me sumfin' ta do, ya git."

"I got nuffin fer ya ta do."

"Den dere you go. We iz done 'ere. Whut else do I 'ave ta do 'sides muck about?"

Urtylug smiled despite himself, this was the mekboy he'd been looking for. "Well, den, I got a proposal fer ya. 'Ow would ya like ta be my Big Mek when I'm Warboss?"

"An' when's dat?"

Real snappy this one, "Ask a grot in my workshop, ya git, I'll get to it sooner or later," Urtylug was real snappy himself.

The Mekboy nodded his head, not bad, "Alright den, if you ken get alla dese nobs off my case, I'll do alla ya mek work for ya, and we can go over all dat Big Mek and Warboss talk some more sooner or later, sound good?"

“Den we got ourselves a deal. I’m Urtylug Dursnik.” He spat into his hand and extended it.

“I’m Tinka Zizzbitz,” Zizzbitz spat in his own hand and accepted Urtylug’s.

A deal between Orks meant grot fart all until it was time to collect, most times.

* * *

In the middle of battle with Dark Eldar, Urtylug felt his power klaw failing.

It was a lucky hit by one of those sneaky gits. Urtylug did shoot him in the face for it, but the damage was done, and now he might as well have slag where his choppin’ arm was. It did not abate his lust for war, but he was getting hit more and more. Suits him right for wading into the thick of it to krump more of those pointy-‘eads. It was the first clash with this particular group of Dark Eldar, and many of the Orks had underestimated their opponent. Nobs were being taken down without much of a dent in the Dark Eldar forces. Urtylug felt himself get heavier, and a blow from behind forced him to his knees. He watched in a detached manner as a Dark Eldar prepared to execute him with a particularly nasty looking sword. Ah well. At least he went down fightin’ and krumpin’. A proppa Orky end. Shame about never becoming Warboss.

Before he could lunge at the Dark Eldar in one last act of defiance, it, and everything around it was blown to bits by a rocket from the sky. Urtylug himself was also knocked on his back, but he was quickly up again. Another blast sent another group of Dark Eldar flying. It was a good sized rocket, stuffed so full of explosives that it did more dropping to earth than rocketing. Urtylug waved to the stormboy above as he made another pass, this time dropping off an Ork with a launcher.

“Whut’s da big idea, ya git? Dyin’ before I’m Big Mek.” It was Zizzbitz.

“I wuz just testin’ ta see if ya remembered, iz all.” Zizzbitz helped Urtylug up, and they both started shooting into the Dark Eldar around them.

“Whu’ts wrong wid ya power klaw? Too ‘eavy for ya?”

“Some git got a good hit on me, and it ain’t workin’ no more.”

“I fink I see da problem.” He fired off the launcher again to clear some breathing room, “Hold dem off an’ I’ll fix ya up proppa like.”

Fixes in the middle of battle were never quick and always temporary, often breaking again before the battle was through. But Urtylug felt his power klaw jerk back to life only a few moments after Zizzbitz started, and it felt like it was about as good as new. Zizzbitz stopped working on it just in time for Urtylug to catch one of the Dark Eldar and crush its head with it.

“Dat’s some nice work dere, Mekboy.”

“Only da best for you. Now ‘ow’s we go and regroup with da uddas?”

“Waarakton’s orders?”

“He wants alla ‘is Swashkrumpers an’ Kommandoz back. Need ta go back an’ plan out strategy I fink. Dese pointy-‘eads are a right cunnin’ bunch, and da Warboss wants us ta be as equally cunnin’ but more brutal.” Zizzbitz loaded another rocket into the launcher and fired it off, clearing a path back to the main group of Orks, “After you den, ya grot?”

Urtylug smiled at the Mekboy and charged into the quickly closing hole made in the Dark Eldar forces. Smashing in those pointy helmets with one hand and perforating body armor with the other, Urtylug was having a grand old time. Sure, maybe this wasn’t proper winnin’, but they would eventually. Orks always fought until they won. If they seemed to be retreating, it was just because they were done with winnin’ for the day, and would be back later.

And Urtylug would have lost his head while thinking that thought right there and then had Zizzbitz not pushed him out of the way. A Dark Eldar Dracon, with a large bladed trident like weapon snarled at Urtylug, clearly upset he didn’t kill the Ork in one blow. Urtylug bellowed out his own challenge and prepared to fight with the elite warrior.

They exchanged salvos, both of them dancing out of the way. The Dark Eldar then began his assault, first swinging low and then high. Urtylug jumped over the first and ducked the second in anticipation, closing the gap between them two, getting his power klaw in range. The Dracon choked up on his weapon and used it like a spear as Urtylug got closer, these hits Urtylug either parried with the power klaw or dodged out of the way. Then, seizing an opportunity, the Ork smashed his power klaw down, only to hit the dirt as the Dark Eldar hopped nimbly away and out of the range of Urtylug again. Seeing an opening, a Dark Eldar to Urtylug’s left then stabbed some kind of powerblade into the Ork’s side, to the hilt, holding him in place. After crushing its head and helmet with the power klaw, Urtylug concentrated all his might into removing the blade, unable to fight with it in his side. The Dracon leisurely walked towards the Ork, spinning the trident-bladed weapon in his hand. He was promptly blown to bits by a large rocket.

Gasping slightly, Urtylug looked over to Zizzbitz to thank him, but saw the Mekboy was in poor shape. That first slice with the bladed trident had taken out Zizzbitz’s left eye, and blood was pouring from the wound. “Oi, Zizzbitz, we got ta get you ta a Mad Dok, an’ fast!”

“It’s just an eye, nuffin special. I got a spare anyhow, iz proppa engineerin’ on Mork’s part, as I see it.”

“Nah, we gotta get you patched up. Enuff muckin’ about.”

With only the frontline left and a grievous wound each, the two stumbled back into the Ork forces.

Urtylug was patched up quicker than Zizzbitz, seeing that he didn’t need any prosthetics and krumped any painboy that suggested he did. He went to go see how Zizzbitz was doing with the Painboss. Entering the Medikal Ward, he found them arguing over the procedure. Zizzbitz was trying to design his own eye, and the Painboss didn’t see anything wrong with the eyes he already had. Zizzbitz’s head was swathed in bandages, with only his right eye poking through, no doubt the work of an overzealous nurse grot. He waved as Urtylug walked into his field of vision, “I see you’re still alive, ya git.” His voice was slightly muffled.

“Disappointed? Now whut’s da ‘old up ‘ere?”

“Painboss says I gotta take one uv dese eyes, an’ I know da Mekboy dat makes dese. I might as well try seein’ wid a rock.”

“Just get one fer now an’ replace it later.”

“I ain’t trustin’ dese mad doks wid my ‘ead twice, if dey gotta put me unda, it’s only ‘appenin’ once.” Zizzbitz had a point. You could wake up without a head if they got absentminded and overly excited.

“Den walk around like a right git wid a ‘ole in ya ‘ead den, see if I care,” Urtylug’s expression then softened, “Anyways, about dat battle today—”

“Whut? Iz you getting’ soff? ‘Ow do ya expecta become Warboss if ya not ded ‘ard?” Zizzbitz was probably smiling under all those bandages. It was hard to tell.

“I wuz gonna say dat launcha uv yours wuz proppa Orky iz all, almost enough dakka fer da moment.”

“Almost?”

“Never enough dakka.” To which Zizzbitz frowned, but nodded. It wouldn’t be proppa Orky if there was enough dakka. Time to put that on the to do list.

“Anyway, ya git, when iz you gonna be Warboss? Gonna need good gubbins fer dis new eye uv mine. And I won’t find sumfin’ like dat in scrap.”

“Sooner or later, Zizzbitz. Sooner or later.”

* * *

And it was sooner or later that Urtylug found himself contemplating his relationships over a nice mug of tea in the hallway by Zizzbitz’s door. They were both busy these days, being Big Mek and Warboss and all. Never much of a chance for a nice long chat these days. He watched a grot with its arms full teeter towards the Big Mek’s door and shouted out, “Oi, whut you think yer doin’?”

A blue face poked over the top of the box, “Not much, Warb-Kaptin. Just deliverin’ some fresh gubbins to Tinka’s room.”

“Well, da git iz sleepin’, so do dat later.”

The door to the room opened, “Not any more, Kaptin,” Zizzbitz then turned his attention to Blue, “Alright ya git, whut didja find?”

Urtylug shrugged and turned to go do other Kaptin things before turning back. “Big Mek.”

“Yeah Kaptin?”

“When do ya think you’ve got time ta muck about?”

“‘Ard ta say, Kaptin. Always sumfin’ new for the Big Mek to do.” Zizzbitz smiled though, “I fink I can find da time to muck about later today.”

“I’ll have a mug uv tea waitin’ at my Kwarters. We got lootin’ ta discuss.”

“Alright den, Kaptin. I’ll bring da monocle an’ top’at.”

“You do dat. See you later den, Zizzbitz.”

“See ya sooner, Urtylug.”

Gettin' Things Rollin'

Blue was making her way back to the Mek shop, with the arm load of scrap she'd bought off some boys with her excess teef. She had some good bits from a hover tank she wanted to try to use in her Drohn Shield to make it good for smakkin' gits. She reached her personal corner and walked by Mr Squigg, who was lieing lazily on the floor. Dumping her load on her work table, she pulls out some schematics and pours over them.

"If I c'n hook the hover pad gubbins to the outer shell, and run it on low, it should make the shield a little stronga, and then rig a pressure trigga to blast in on hi when it use it to krump somethen'..."

She plucked the converted Tau drone from the wall, and pried the metal casing open, and began to work on the insides. As she continued to work, she started hearing a sound, subtle at first, but gradually growing louder. She didn't pay it any mind at first, but it was constant and growing steadily louder, distracting her from her project. What was it? Stomping? No, that wasn't it, it sounded like several feet hitting the ground in unison. What was the word? She curled her mouth thoughtfully. That was it! Marching.

A growl from her pet caught her attention, and she turned to look outside to the ship's hold. What greeted her sight was several Grots, marching in unison. They kept getting closer to her hub, then all at once came to a halt, turning about face in her direction. Blue was overcome with unease. Ten, fifteen, there must have been nearly thirty Grots at her doorstep. Normaly Grots didn't intimidate her at all, but with these numbers, they could probably krump a Nob without much difficulty. She started to reach for her shoota on the wall, when a lone grot moved forward from the rest of the group. He was smartly dressed in a fitted uniform, complete with hat, and had an uncharacteristically commanding presence.

Blue tried to hide her fear as the gretchin walked inside.

"Whatcha want, ya git?" She spoke in a harsh tone, so he wouldn't get any ideas about who was boss.

"Call me Pa'mmol." the Grot answered. "I've come fa bussiness."

"Bus'ness?" she said, calming down a bit. "What kina' bus'ness?"

The Grot reached into his coat and produced a rolled paper. "I want ya ta build this." he explained, handing it to her.

She took it and unfurled it. On it was a somewhat crude, yet admittedly detailed blueprint for a small tank. She looked over it silently for over a minute. "Well?" Pa'mmol said expectantly.

"No sweat." Blue retorted. "I could build this in ma sleep." The design wasn't anything too complicated. Building it would take a little work, but it looked like fun.

"Glad to hear it." Pa'mmol said flatly. "'Cause I want twenty of them."

Blue jerked her head up. "Bwuwhahuh?!" she gargled in bewilderment. "Twenny'? Ar ya daft?! Do you have any idea how much scrap that'll take? Not to mention how much teef it cost!"

Pa'mmol raised a hand and snapped his fingers. Two more grots walked in carrying a heavy metal case. They plopped it down on the floor, and one opened it. It was full to the brim with teef. The sheer volume mesmerized blue, there could be over a thousand teef in that case.

"Is this sufficient?" Pa'mmol asked.

Blue turned to him slowly. "How soon do ya need em'?"

"Take your time." he assured. "I came to ya cause I heard you did propa quality. Don't want to muck that up. My boys will assist ya in getting together any scrap y'll need."

"How'd you get all this anyhow?" the blue grot said skeptically.

Pa'mmol adjusted his hat. "Through sacrifice, perseverance, an some right propa motivation. We as a group have no interested in dying meaningless deaths just cause we's grots. We came to the conclushan to form this here battalion, and by pulling our resources, aim to make it a reality."

Blue couldn't help but be impressed. It was likely this grot was the reason the others could unite in such a way. She looked at the print again, then at the teef trunk. She gave an enthusiastic shrug.

"We best get started then." She said. "You lot! I'm gonna tell you what I need, and I wan ya to get it fast!"

Pa'mmol gave the slightest of smiles, then turned to his men. "You 'erd 'er boys, look sharp!"

* * *

Fire and debris rained down on all around them, as Pa'mmol moved his troops forward. The Killy' Fox came to a halt, as he surveyed the battle field with his eye-scopes. A group of Chaos marines that had been ambushed by Kommandos in the distance, however they were regrouping as some armor support was moving in to join up with them.

He wasn't having any of that.

"All squads, fowad'!" he bellowed into his speaky box, as the five contingents of 4 tanks each surged forward, cutting down any stray marines they happened upon unchallenged.

"Second and third squads, circle round eastward, box them in! I dun wanna any of these gits coming out alive!"

* * *

Marco cursed as he fended off another Kommando with his power sword. Outmaneuvered, by orks! He had ordered his men to fall back, and they were fighting desperately to keep from getting surrounded.

He saw in the distance a squadron of allied tanks making their way to his position. His forces were breaking away from the mob and managed to find some cover. Soon they would make for their armor and counter attack these savages. He looked at the tanks hopefully, then watched as they all simultaneously erupted in to flames. His eyes widened as one flipped over.

Over the horizon he saw them. Five, ten, a whole bloody battalion! They wheeled in from all sides, and he realized to his horror that all paths of escape were cut off. In the distance he could just make out the tank commander's voice. "ON MOI MARK." the one sitting in the black tank bellowed, hand raised

Marco slumped in defeat. "Outmaneuvered..." he muttered.

"FIRE!!" Pa'mmol roared, swinging his arm down as the battalion's guns flamed in unison. The whistling screeched in Marcos' ears.

"By Gretchin-" his last words not audible as steel rained down on their position, splattering his men and himself into a gory mess.

Tank Commanda Pa'mmol looked at their handywork through his scopes. Satisfied, he took out his speaky box.

"Keep movin, ya gits, we got more work to be doing!"

And so the Tank Battalion got rollin', lead by a most brilliant Cammanda. By orc standards, at least.

Dok Gitstitcha

Deep in the bowels of Boris a morbid Whaaagh! can be heard almost singing in unison accompanied by the rumblings of ruinous power. If one were to be foolish enough to follow this sound to its source they would find themselves in the experimentation room of the Scraplootas' Pain Boss, Dok Gitsticha, where many curiously still alive decapitated grot heads suspended from the ceiling in cages can be found.

No one is entirely sure when Dok Gitstitcha joined up with the Scraplootas, nor where he came from. Whenever he is asked about his past or what happened to his previous warband he simply shouts "THEY WEREN'T SQUIGGLY ENOUGH!" and resumes work without answering any more questions. It is noted that he seems rather more easily agitated and more likely to conduct impromptu surgery if he has been asked about it recently.

(To some boyz)

"GENTLEBOYZ, LOOK AT DIS, I HAVE GRAFTED THIS SQUIG TO A WEIRDGROT!"

"...uhhh, why'z you did that, boss?"

"BECAUSE I CAN. HAHAAHAHAHAHA!"

"....kill....me...."

* * *

(To the same boyz)

"GENTLEBOYZ, LOOK AT DIS! I HAVE GRAFTED SQUIG LEGS TO ME 'EAD!"

"Why squig legs boss?"

"BECAUSE EVERYTHING NEEDS SQUIG LEGS!"

* * *

(When attending to the daemon core)

"FOOL! I AM RAGE INCARNATE! YOUR BLOOD SHALL DO LITTLE TO WHET MY APPETITE BEFORE THE FEAST TO COME! I SHALL RIP YOUR EYES FROM YOUR - WAUT! WHAT IS THAT YOU'RE POURING ON ME!?"

"T'be honest wiff ya, I'z don't much know meself. Let's see 'ow dis works on ya!"

"IT SMELLS AWFUL!"

"Dat's cuz I peed in it ya silly git!"

"STOP THIS IMMEDIATELY!"

"Okay."

"...really?"

"Nah. Let's try dis one next!"

"RAAAAAAGH!"

* * *

(To Blue)

"Zog it, you tiny blue git! I need dose bits!"

"Nothin's for free, Dok, I's gonna need some recompense."

"Well what do ya zoggin want, I'z in a hurry! I'z got a zoggin amazin' idea an I don't want to be forgettin like last time."

"You'z make me summa that dead killy burny acid juice for me and I's give ya all tha tau bits you need, deal?"

"Deal, now hurry it up!"

"Fine, fine, hold ya squigs already."

"I'z trying but dese WAAAsquigs iz just so squirmy! Dat'z why I'z be tellin ya ta hurry you lazy grot!"

* * *

(To Blue, after getting decapitated and walking around on the squig legs he grafted to himself previously)

"OIY! BLUE!"

"Whaaat do you- what tha zoggin zog is you?!"

"It's me, Dok Gitstitcha! I'z need ya ta help me wiff buildin a new body!"

"Now why the zog would I do that? You's zoggin adorable!"

"Quit muckin about an' 'elp me ya git!"

"Oh Mr. Squiiiig, I found you a brand new friiiiend..."

"Oh Gork help me, I'z gotta leg it!"

Da Minitrukk Job

Every ork aboard the Loot-hava was supposed to be working on Boris and getting him ready for the upcoming job. Farseer Vaedrisa had hired the Scraplootas to remove a bunch of sleepy metalboys from the planet they were now orbiting and had told them to be extra prepared, so the Boss had put Tinka Zizzbitz and all his mekboys (including the Big Mek's favorite cobalt colored grot) to work making Boris extra flash. As such, the Mek Shop was abandoned, save a few mekboys poking their heads in for extra tools and supplies for the task at hand and a collection of shadowy shapes creeping along the walls of the shop.

A band of four gretchins had snuck their way into the Mek Shop when the mekboys weren't looking with a very specific goal in mind. They slunk past piles of scrap and half finished warbikes to the back of the shop, where their prize awaited them. Sectioned off from the rest of the Mek Shop, a smaller workstation labeled "Blue's Korner" was guarded by twin posts where decapitated gretchin heads in various states of mutilation hung. This was where what the gretchins sought sat: a miniature, grot sized wartrakk, in perfect working condition after its umpteenth rebuilding. Their orders had been clear and explicit: make sure Blue wasn't allowed to use her toy. Whether they stole it or simply wrecked it didn't matter to Derknitt, so long as Blue didn't have it, he'd pay the grots more teef than they could hold. Being a clever little grot, Blue had removed a piece of the trakk, something she called a 'key', making the vehicle so that it could only work if you either had the key or knew how to rearrange the wires beneath it. The grot tasked to hotwiring the trakk hesitated before ducking under it.

"Wot if she sees us?" he hissed worriedly.

"Shut yer gob and theys won't finds us, you git!" the leader of the gang hissed back, smacking the offending gretchin upside the head.

Muttering, the gretchin slid under and began tinkering with the insides while the rest stood lookout for any stragglng mekboys or even worse, Da Blue Grot herself. The gretchin boss could already see it now, riding his very own wartrakk, drinking the finest fungus beer teef could buy, and maybe using the rest of his teef to buy his way out of the Grotocracy and retire some place nice. He heard Boris's shoulders had a lovely view come fighting days. He was so lost in his daydreaming that he almost didn't hear the screaming of his gretchin mechanic. Two of the other gretchins grabbed their thrashing partner in crime and pulled him out from under the trakk, they inspected their fallen comrade for wounds. After a thorough investigation, they realized he had no face, with what was left of his skull gurgling and fizzing, producing thin green wisps of smoke. It had been a trap all along! They readied their weapons and began looking for the hiding place of their assailant. Sure, she may have been lucky, but there were four of them! – three of them! – and they were prepared for her.

* * *

Seeing the gretchins hunt for her made it hard for Blue to suppress the giggling she felt building up inside of her. They were pretty clever, rooting through barrels and looking under piles of junk for Blue. They lost one of their own to carelessness and her acid bomb already; there was no way they were going to lose another. But sharp as they were, Blue was that much sharper. See, she knew they would

look every which way for her, under bikes, inside scrap piles, one even dared to look inside Zizzbitz's personal room, but not a single one of them looked up. One hand holding her dakka and the other gripping the bottom of a modified Tau Gun Drone, Blue and Mr. Squig descended on the Squigkopta with a hearty WAAAAGH, no longer able to contain herself.

For most orks, aiming is more of a vague belief than any concrete concept, but for Blue, the ability to line up a shot and take it came naturally, even when she wasn't paying much attention to where she was shooting. She took out the leader first, as he was the only one armed with a gun. Bullets ripped through his diminutive frame and finally ventilated his skull with a spout of blood. The other two tried to group together as she released her grasp on the Squigkopta and pounced on one of them, beating him senselessly with her trusty spanner and laughing with innocent, unadulterated glee as the final intruder lost his nerve and ran in sheer terror. After the grot beneath her stopped moving and the thwacks of her spanner got more and more wet, Blue arched her back and craned her head backwards, affording an upside down view of Mr. Squig chasing the final gretchin, his Squigkopta puttering and whizzing faithfully.

Satisfied by the sight, Blue gave the grot corpse a few more good whacks for good measure. Once that got boring, she moved to grab her tools; a small buzzsaw attached to the end of a short pole the length of her forearm and some pliers. The heads would make a great addition to her scarepole and the Grot teef wouldn't be worth much, but they would be enough to buy herself two mugs of fungus beer, one in celebration of today's victory and one to bribe Tinka to ignore her "mucking about". Humming a little diddy to herself, she headed out to get back to working on Boris. She could retrieve the mangled corpse of the last grot later, in the meantime she'd let Mr. Squig play with his new chew toy until she was done with the day's chores. Maybe then she could get to the bottom of the sudden increase in grot assaults on her Bluetrukka...

Da Funstikk

Wadda drag it iz being blue...

"Fings be different taday"
Oi hear erry blue grot say.
Mekgrl needs sumfing taday ta calm 'er down.
And though she's not really sick
Dere's sumfing she goes to pick
She goes runnin' for da shelf where she keeps da blue grot's lil' helpa
An' it helps 'er on 'er way, get's 'er through 'er buzy day

* * *

Blue visited Git Sticha hoping he might have insight in certain parts of her unorky biology... that she later put to use in a certain machine...

"You'z fulla holes, Blue! You'z just gotta plug em is all!"

"BLUE GROT! I FINK DAT IF YA STIKK SOMETHIN' IN DERE, YOU WILL BE FEELIN' RIGHT PROPPA IN NO TIME!"

"Dunno dok... but if ya say so..."

-some amount of tinkering later-

"ZOG ME! It really worked."

* * *

Da Shop was quiet. Tinka had gone off to the casino, hoping to win big. Mr. Squig was off harassing some grots in the alley. Blue had the whole place to herself. She made her way to the special hidey-hole constructed just for this. It was dull purple and housed two things: A soft mat fungus and her 'lil funstikk' She trembled a little. Not out of fear of discovery. No, this place was safe from that. She trembled in anticipation.

She was Da Blue Grot, yes, but she was different in more ways than that. She had squishy bitz that the others didn't. Bitz that tingled and burned in ways that mere dakka and choppa could not hope to stifle. She'd asked Tinka, other grots, the boss, everyone. But all they would say was stop muckin' about an' get back ta buildin'. So build she did.

The funstikk felt right in her hand. It was so much smaller than the dakka she regularly tweaked, but when it went off, it kicked her harder than Boris's biggest gun. It had three sections. Each twisted in alternating directions, pumped back and forth in against the others.

She had put all sorts of bitz on it. Soft bitz that tickled her in just the right way. Buzzing bitz that made her melt on the inside. Squirmy bitz that curled up and in to reach the most sensitive gubbinz. And sparky bitz that made her shudder and gasp with exhilaration.

She could wait no longer. She stripped quickly, removing her makeshift armor and pawing softly at the most ungrot-like parts of her body. Within moments the feeling that she barely understood was flowing through her. Like a warm, implacable WAAAGH charging through her body.

Reclining carefully on the mat, she began lightly sucking on the funstikk's tip. It didn't need much. Her thighs already felt like someone had spilled a mug of squig beer between them.

With barely a thought she lowered the funstik to her lower lips, activating the contraption with a sharp twist. It corkscrewed slowly forward. She savored the feeling, sighing deeply as it tugged its way deeper inside. She no longer had control of her body. What had just been a slight pleasurable tremor before was now uncontrollable spasms in full swing. Her back arched, her legs twitched, a low constant moan was punctuating her movements. And still her hands moved as if bewitched. She stroked and pulled her squishy bitz as the funstikk was pulled in and out of her.

An errant squirmy bit caught on to the especially zoggin' good bit of her nethers and sent her spiraling further into the pleasure. The first one was coming. She could feel it. The WAAAGH had taken up arms between her legs, and was raising the kannon that only she could feel. That she wanted to feel. That she *needed* to feel.

And there it was. Before she could even take a breath it hit her. It ricocheted up through her generous hips and made her brain go fuzzy like a good pint of brog. And it didn't stop there. Once, twice, four times the great kannon fired before the WAAAGH settled inside her and she stopped bucking her hips against the funstik. She was content now, and quickly drifting off. What was... two hair squigs, twisted... pointy-eared... and then she was asleep.

* * *

An unknowable distance away, a certain farseer removed her sight from the warp, cheeks aflame. It was for knowledge. To better understand. But these reasonings could not explain the pleasant heat she had felt while watching...

The Rodeo Incident

Smoke billowed out of the titan's joints and gunports and into the red sunset sky above the warcamp. Boris's shadow stretched off toward the mountains under the setting sun and most of the boyz below were retiring to the burroughs, wiping the sweat off their brows with blackened fingers.

A few scrap piles had dwindled down to meager heaps throughout the day's activities and the mekboy's bits were strewn about their sheds. One ork in particular, however, was still hard at work as usual. His grim practises usually persisted for as long as fresh subjects were available and the horror stories the gretchin tell of Dok Gitsticha suggest that he may never even sleep. Today, however, the doktor's klinik had been eerily empty and his unusual absence had the gretchin more on edge than ever.

Sparks sprayed over the Mad Dok's shoulder like electric blood as he applied the welder, accompanied by piercing screams that distorted the senses. This dreadful cacophany had filled the titan for most of the day, much to the displeasure of Boris' resident grots. By now, however, the Mad Dok's work was complete and Gitsticha pulled back his welding mask, fondly regarding his day's labors.

Through precision, determination, and a lot of Snotling glue, he had successfully grafted several waaasquigs onto the infernal core at the heart of the Titan. No one is sure how these squigs came to inherit their warp-negating properties or their green incandescence, but when the Grotocracy heard of a possible solution to their containment problem, work began almost immediately.

Gitsticha stood back and admired the writhing mass of agitated squigs surrounding the pulsating demon core. It looked good, he thought to himself, as he reached for his toolbox to begin reintegrating the core and returning the titan's power supply. The mad ork turned to reach for his spanner when his legs disappeared from under him and he was sent hurtling across the chamber. Sparks flew as Gitsticha's one mechanical leg screamed against the metal floor and he slammed against the far wall. He scratched the side of his head with his powerclaw and looked up, the lenses in his optic implant jittering for a moment before whirring into life and focusing on his assailant.

"Zog me." whispered Gitsticha.

On several twitching legs, the Demoncore struggled for balance as the volatile squigs worked off the sedatives. Snorting and snarling, the gaggle of waking squigs righted itself and charged at an open hatch. Gitsticha swiped for one of its flailing limbs but missed by an inch as the roaring mass of squigs crashed through the metal and out into the warcamp below.

The ensuing chaos claimed the lives of several gretchin, Gitsticha's personal assistant Kreev, destroyed numerous work sheds, and knocked through the walls of every building in its path, including Blue's room where it was finally subdued by several boyz after they found Blue standing on top of her pile of bits and beating it with her spanner.

After hearing plans for a 'demon core saddle', Gitsticha has been denied access to the Titan by the Grotocracy.

The Grot

The Grot Means Business

Muffled noises... lights... the only thing he could tell for sure through the bag was the truck's motion.

And then that stopped as well.

Two thumps. Muffled speech. Someone grabbed him, jerked him roughly out onto the... stone?

The straps around his limbs tightened, secured. They were making sure he couldn't move. Finally, the bag came off.

He was disoriented at first. And still gagged. But slowly, the world came into focus. In the distance rose the grand shape of Boris. An image fast distorted by a grubby green finger curling downward.

"Welcome back to the world, Mr... oh, it doesn't really matter. Orks in your situation don't have much use for names, do they?" A pause. The grot was lighting up a squigar, taking his time.

"Yes, well, on to business." Another pause. A puff of smoke. A ruminative look at Boris. "An amazing thing, isn't it? And so many grots like me, everyday, working to keep it moving. All for the glory of the waaagh." Another puff. The little bastard was /smiling/.

"That's what we let orks like you think, at least. But the reality is so much more. Boris works because of /us/, Mr. Ork. The grots. When he moves, it is thanks to us." Another puff, a chuckle now.

"But you probably don't care about that. No, you're wondering about why you're here." The grot didn't look so amiable anymore. He motioned to his compatriots and two hefty pieces of metal appeared. A few sharp cracks later, the grot was at (painfully reluctant) eye-level with the ork.

"You have done a thing, Mr. Ork. A thing that caused me to get acquainted with you. And, finally, led us here." The squigar is cold now, placed in his front pocket. The grot is all business now. Through the delirium, a feature stands out. The grot's left eye is a scarred mass of flesh.

"The grotocracy is a well-oiled machine. And you happened to be a fairly large wrench in that machine. Large enough for the 'eads to involve me. I've already said that it doesn't matter who you are. It also doesn't matter what you did. All that matters here is teef. And a very hefty some was paid for this job." That smile again. Cold, unfeeling. Unorky. "A little extra won't hurt, though. Take him to the dentist boys."

An unyielding cord was looped around the ork's neck, pulling tight. The gag was removed, but he could make no sound. Again the grot gestured to his posse. Luckily, it did not take them long.

The grot was back again. He held two objects in his hand. One was a small sack. The telling jingle made it all too clear the contents were not rightfully his. And certainly not willingly given. The other was a jar. And inside it, a malicious looking squig.

"Beautiful, isn't she? A truly remarkable specimen. She rarely gets out, though. We rarely have to deal with orks unruly enough. But the grots up top made it abundantly clear."

The squig itself wasn't very large. It was actually quite small. The real menace was in its head. Every so often a slight flicker or... shimmer in the air would appear in front of it. But looking closely, the shimmer resolved itself into needles. Hundreds of them. Moving in and out almost too fast for the ork eye to see.

"And so we come to the close of our meeting, Mr. Ork." The squig was out of sight now, being affixed to the ork's head. "You will not remember us. We will not remember you. This is goodbye. To everything." The grot adjusted the annoying strip of cloth hanging from his neck. "But don't worry. You'll be your orky self in no time." Another chuckle. "Well, not exactly yourself."

A snap of the fingers. A wink, from that scarred mess of an eye. The ork barely felt the squig's teeth as they dug in. But he still saw the that wink, for a few moments. And then he remembered nothing.

* * *

The Grots Herd Themselves

The Grot sighed and shook his head, puffing slightly on his squigar. He was too short for this shit. Before him was an Ork, another one, the crude yellow paintjob on his armor did a piss-poor job of hiding the fact that he was from a different tribe. Under a slightly different light, his true colors were revealed. Red and blue, to be specific. An interloper. There were more and more of these gits recently, the Grot mused that maybe this was the universe's way of re-establishing its will and status quo after the windfall of a fluke the Scraploot managed to pull off. Or maybe it was only now that they were brought to his attention, that previously the grot immune system of Boris had expelled them without his knowledge.

As an up and coming member of the Grotocracy, sometimes you have to knock a few heads and crack a few eggs to show you mean business. He would be doing catering for the council later, Tyranid omelets. Hopefully they didn't kill the council, but well, if it did, that worked for him too. And there was this.

"Wake him up, boys."

The Grot took the squigar out of his mouth and blew a nice large smoke ring while the other grots he had brought with him beat the Ork on the head with clubs. If it took the Ork out, more beatings would definitely bring the Ork back, right? The interloper stirred after a few minutes, and tried to reach up to touch his head, and found he couldn't. The Grot had slashed the Ork in a few specific places so he couldn't stand or use his arms, ten-donz the painboy called them. Not making proper preparations beforehand had given the Grot this limp of his, making him move like an old git when he still considered himself plenty young.

“Oi, whut’s da meanin’ uv dis?”

“Hello, git.”

The Grot limped over, fully dependent on the cane he had commissioned from a certain Big Mek’s grot. It seemed to just be a length of pipe, but the handle could be unscrewed to reveal a blade, a proper squigstikker. It had cost him a bunch of teef, but it really paid for itself with all of its usefulness. It was extremely sturdy so it krumped well, and could easily be used for choppin’. It just wasn’t shooty, but then again, shooty wasn’t exactly the Grot’s style. Shooty was loud and unpleasant when all you needed was a quiet word and a quick knife.

“You think you can waltz into my titan and muck up the place?” He leaned his cane on the Ork’s leg, right where the slashed tendon was. He smiled as the Ork groaned in pain. The Grot did not consider himself to be a petty grot, but he was not above exacting revenge for his own disability on every one who pissed him off.

“Where’s yer grot ‘erda. I ain’t talkin’ ta a bunch uv gitz.”

“Oh, but you will talk to us, interloper,” the Grot savored the word, he had learned it listening in on those nice little chats the Warboss had with the Eldar git, “You’re going to sing us a merry little song.”

“Don’t fink so. Get me yer grot ‘erda, I’ll talk wid ‘im an’ everyfin will be ‘unky-dory, you’ll see.” At which point the Ork cried out in pain as the Grot leaned even more weight on his cane, practically drawing blood with the o-ring.

“No, you will talk with us. Who sent you? Who was it?”

“I AIN’T... GONNA... SAY NUFFIN,” the Ork was barely able to get the words out, fighting through his pain, “NUFFIN TA YOU GROTS.”

The Grot shook his head and sighed again, flicked ash into the Ork’s face and limped back. This sort of disrespect really zoggled him off. Not that he was going to show it to the Ork. Grot herder this, grot herder that, like the grot herder was the brains of the operation and not just some git who thought he was doing things right and was bullying grots for no reason.

The Grot took another draw of his squigar to calm down before before turning back around, “That’s just too bad. This is down right disrespectful and I don’t think I should have to put up with it. We are Orks too, just because we’re small doesn’t mean we aren’t just as important.”

At least this one was a proper Ork this time, a bunch of the other gits had already cracked by now. The Grot gestured at his companion waiting on a grotbike to wheel over. They hooked the Ork to the back of the bike.

“I hope a nice long ride through the countryside will help change your mind, if you survive. See the sights, get some fresh air...” The grots flipped the Ork over together, “I also hope you like eating rocks.”

"I'll get you fer dis, ya git. I'll go ta yer grot 'erda and 'e's gonna krump ya good fer dis. I'm pra'ticully a nob!" Defiant to the last. Or maybe he just didn't realize what was about to happen.

With surprising agility the Grot jumped in front of the Ork one last time, "Listen, you sonuvabitch. I don't think you understand. There IS no grot herder in the Scraplootas. Sure, Fizzgutz tries and all, and we play along, but he isn't a proper grot herder," he blew foul smoke in the Ork's face, "What you've seen is a coordinated effort with grots, by grots, for grots. No Orks involved. You want to find the secret to the Scraplootas and all of their loot and fortune? What keeps the Titan alive and well? It's us grots. Grots as far as the eye can see. And you know what's the secret to us Scraploota grots?"

The Grot pulled the Ork's head as close to his face as possible, "WE GROTS HAVE NO HERDER. WE HERD OURSELVES."

* * *

"Evening, Mad Dok."

Gitstitcha didn't turn around. He didn't need to, the voice was unmistakable. No other grot spoke low Gothic like that.

"'Ello Grot. Whut'll it be dis time?" He pretended to rub some of the dried out blood from his saw with a rag. It was strange, he refused to be addressed in any other way. He was The Grot, and The Grot only.

"Oh, nothing much, just the usual."

That shuffling, The Grot's right femur hadn't set properly after it was broken, not that Gitstitcha had been allowed to set it right or replace it. No. The Grot had specifically asked him to keep the break how it was. He wanted to remember his slip up. He wanted a constant reminder. Claimed that it was going to keep him sharper in the future. That clinking, that was The Grot's cane. It looked like a regular length of pipe, but The Grot held onto it and kept it close like a weapon, making it highly suspect in the Mad Dok's eyes. Gitstitcha didn't want to know anything about it or the caked bloodstains it spontaneously grew. And of course, there was that dragging sound.

Gitstitcha counted to three and turned around, bracing himself. It wasn't that bad this time around. Just a grot with his arms at odd angles, they were clearly broken at least three times each. The grot whimpered every time he was so much as nudged. And The Grot was doing quite a bit more than just nudging him.

"Well Dok, do you think you could fix him up?"

"Dis it? Ya usually show up wid worse."

Gitstitcha bent down to do a first inspection of the grot. Dark bruises but no skin breakage. Whatever, or more likely whoever, did this was careful not to do anything extreme. Gitstitcha didn't keep an eye on The Grot, unlike most grots that dealt directly with him. Gitstitcha knew he was too important to

whoever employed The Grot to be threatened. And it was possible that The Grot himself held Gitsticha in high esteem. But that didn't do anything to make the Mad Dok feel less intimidated.

"Oh yeah, it's not my personal case. It was handed off to me due to the... untimely demise of an associate." The Grot chuckled. It was perhaps one of the wrongest things Gitsticha had ever heard. "You see, this one here," he shook the grot that the Mad Dok was inspecting, causing the poor thing's eyes to water with pain, "he's got quite a bit of fight in him."

"Dat's sumfin'." Not much fight left in him with his arms in that condition. From what Gitsticha could tell, there were three breaks on the grot's right arm and four breaks on the grot's left. They were clean, like they were placed by the edge of a table and then subjected to quick blunt force trauma.

"Do you think you could fix him, Mad Dok?" The Grot repeated, more weight in his voice this time.

"Ow fast ya want it?"

"How does having him back at work tomorrow morning sound?"

"Dis kinda fing don't heal overnight ya--"

"I said, how does having him back to work tomorrow morning sound?"

"Dis git'll be in incredd- incredab--"

"Incredible." The Grot interrupted.

"Yeah dat. incredible amounts o' pain."

"I think that would be acceptable." He put a firm hand on the poor thing's neck. Its eyes opened as wide as possible. "Wouldn't you agree? That that's acceptable?" There was a quick and short nodding of the grot's head. Gitsticha didn't know who was forcing the movement.

"Then everything is fine and dandy, yes? You have consent and everything. Do what you need to Dok. I'll be waiting." The Grot limped outside and lit a squigar outside the door of the Mad Dok's Klinik.

Gitsticha lifted the grot as carefully as he could onto his slab. He took out a small and dense sandbag labeled "Annisfetik." The grot looked up at the uplifted bag grasped in the Mad Dok's hand, then looked back at the Mad Dok's eyes.

"Sorry ya poor git." The sandbag came down.

The surgery was quick and mostly uneventful, it was a credit to how clean and professional the original injury was. Metal bars now lined the thin bones in his arms. Moving them would be possible, but almost too painful to imagine. The Dok would actually recommend either putting the grot down and training another, but there had to be some reason for this. After all, usually they went for the fingers first. This grot had a talent that made him too valuable to lose, the Mad Dok summarized, but he was still a grot, and thus not above punishment.

Gitstitcha was wiping his hands down as The Grot walked back inside. "So it's done?"

Gitstitcha nodded, "Yeah, but at leas' let da git rest da night."

The Grot laughed. This was now the absolutely wrongest thing Gitstitcha had ever heard. Far worse than the chuckling.

"Of course," he said, rubbing away a tear that hadn't formed, "Of course, we aren't that cruel and unusual. What do you take us for? Monsters?"

Gitstitcha laughed a little despite himself. Two more grots came in with a stretcher, and loaded the still passed out grot onto it, the metal bars in his arms clearly visible underneath the muscle and skin. Gitstitcha shuddered at imagining the grot's next day, or week. Or month. And then he'd have to come back to get the bars removed. And he wasn't free of trouble just because his arms couldn't be broken anymore. He still had legs.

The Mad Dok shuddered again and shook his head. He needed a break. Maybe he'd go talk with the Daemoncore. That always calmed him down. Maybe some fungus beer for his nerves.

The Grot whistled as he limped away, what a wonderful day to be him.

* * *

The Grot was certainly busy these days.

"Da zog are you doin'?"

He currently had a politician by the throat. Metaphorically. Okay, it was mostly literal. The string neck leash thing The Grot was holding on to was the only thing keeping the politician from falling to his death into an exposed pit of open gears and machinery. It was funny how many of these were accessible when you knew where you were going.

"Why don't I tell you a story. Do you like stories?"

"Alright yer point's been made, pull me back in!" The politician had his hands around his neck, trying to keep himself from asphyxiating. What was the point of these neck leash things again?

The Grot's fingers relaxed a bit and the neck leash slipped a little. "Do you like stories?"

"Yes. Yes I like stories. Please tell me one!" The gears below suddenly splashed with liquid and a warm stain spread through the grot's pants.

"I think you'll recognize this one. Once upon a time, an enterprising and devious little grot joined up with the Scraplootas after his warboss got krumped and saw his chance at power. With his 'Grots First' ideology and his sneaky looks, he rose quickly through the ranks of the Grotocracy. He became very popular with the everygrot... And then, seeing all of the wonderful things the Grots do on a daily basis,

he decided maybe we don't need the bigger Orks. So he starts talking about revolutions and taking over the Titan and going out and being 'grots serving themselves' and other funny business."

"Is it da revolution talky bits? I can stop da talky bits."

"You see what this politician grot did not understand despite his clearly astute nature was that we grots of the Grotocracy are not actually in charge. We do not hold any actual power. We are simply facilitators. We make sure that the internal workings of Boris go on smoothly without any situations or bumps that would cause Boris any trouble. Because a happy and content Boris is a happy and content Grotocracy. What this git didn't know was that the Nobs haven't gone down into the inner workings of Boris ever not because they don't care, but because they've never had a need to go into the inner workings of Boris. And the Grotocracy would like to keep it that way. Any attempts to change this status quo is going to be met with extreme resistance because any change would involve discontent Nobs and that would just be no good at all." The Grot smiled, "Much like trying to stop the spinning of these gears with the body of a grot."

"You wouldn't! You can't! I'm a high rankin' grot!"

"Do you know why this works? You know why we're content? Because we don't serve the Nobs. In all of your time here, you've missed the big picture. The picture that we are a nob. We don't serve Boris. We are Boris. Goodbye, sir."

The Grot's arm was getting tired at any rate. He needed to stretch it out, take a walk, call maintenance to clean up that nasty stain when Boris went to sleep.

On to the next assignment.

Scraplootas Vs. The Rustboyz

The Rustboyz cheered as the gut buster's enormous projectile ripped through the Hellstorm Cannon of the puny humie Titan. The warm glow of the resulting explosion fell across the Scrapkrusha's huge ork Kaptin.

"Yuh, yuh! Looks like we got it, boyz! Now let's blast it with da soopagunz!" Kaptin Krumble shouted down his speaking tube. "You gits wanna dig through the scraps an' find some real flash, duncha!?"

Krumble grinned at the hoopin' and hollerin' of his krew and burst out laughing as he heard the thundering 'dakka' of the soopaguns. The boys had gotten a little excited and began firing before the guns were even locked on to the enemy. Half of the massive shells riddled the forest with craters, the other half ripped through the enemy Titan's torso.

The Scrapkrusha shook violently as the rival Titan unleashed a retaliatory volley from its own dakka array. Screams of dismay and panic filtered up through the shouting tubes.

"Kaptin! We got 'is big killy blasta, but 'e's still got all that dread shooty dakka!", called first mate Deffgut, "'E's got a lot of it, too!"

The Kaptin took a deep drag of his cigar, and thought for a moment. He listened to the hundreds of screaming gretchin trying to make repairs and put out fires below, in the belly of the great Scrapkrusha. Finally exhaling the smoke, he walked up to his viewing window and peered across at the gigantic metal human. The rival machines were letting out a loose bullet or two in the lull, but without coordination the great payloads either missed entirely or only grazed their target.

"We can't let this great git win, Deffgut. What'll the boyz think if they see a great big humie beat a proppa orky Gargant? It might encourage a madboy or two to try it on his own." Kaptin Krumble squinted at the teeming mass of gretchin clambering to repair the hellstorm cannon. His eyes widened and he stepped back in shock.

"Deffgut, you see that? Is that a blue grot over there?" The Kaptin rubbed his eyes, He squinted through the smokey glass again, but the blue grot was gone. "Nah, no way. Grots is proppa green."

Deffgut was about to question his Kaptin when the great whooping clarion alarms sounded. The belly gun was ready again, and the panicking orks were once again cheering. The Kaptin grinned as he picked up the tube.

"Alright boyz, this one's gotta count! Don't miss now! If they start shootin' us up again, a bunch of panzy gits is gonna be diggin' through my Gargant lookin' fer new scrap to nail onto their metal humie! Who wants that?" He waited for the resonating "WAAAGH!"s and "nobodies" and the odd madboy's cry of "grot-dakka" or some nonsense git phrase. He listened to the reverberating clicks of the gut buster lining up it's shot.

Across the forest, his great foe had begun walking forward, spraying flame from it's great maw. It's pace gradually picked up until it was at a full run (or, at least, the closest to a full run a Titan of it's size could get).

"Just makes it easier, boyz. FIRE!"

As the Gargant tilted backwards from the recoil of the great cannon, Boris raised it's great choppy arm as if to block the shot, huge chainsaws revving.

"What's 'e doin', Kaptin?" Deffgut shouted.

"Those gits! What's their pl-" the Kaptin began shouting, but trailed off as he looked out the window. Boris was close enough now that he could see into the many windows lining its cathedrals. As he had scanned each window, he had come across an odd sight. A blue, noseless grot sticking her tongue out, directly at him.

He had noticed her exactly as the choppy arm had collided with the gut busters projectile, which was also the same moment a great blue flash nearly blinded him as void shields flickered into life, localized to only the Titan's hand. The projectile exploded harmlessly against the blue glow, and the choppy bits swung low in front of the Gargant. Kaptin Krumble and Deffgut pressed their faces up against the glass to look at it.

In one swift motion, the choppy arm dug into the belly gun of the Scrapkrusha, ruining it, and began climbing upward, ripping through floor after floor of thick scrap armor. Krumble pushed Deffgut out of the way and dove to the floor just as the chainsaw teeth came ripping through the floor slicing through the roof.

As Krumble clambered across the floor and looked down, the smoking gash nearly cleaving his beautiful Gargant in two, a mighty voice boomed out from the enemy titan.

"Ya's got one more chance, gitz. Surrender, or I'll scrap ya fer me gubbinz!"

The mighty Kaptin Krumble, the Rust Reaver, the Kaptin who made a dozen Gargants from the scrap of Imperial Titans, stood up, dusted himself off, and walked over to the window. He tossed his cigar out of the new hole in his bridge and took a deep breath before letting loose a mighty, but noble shout.

"I've considered your offer, an' have this to say."

He bent over, faced away, and dropped his trousers, revealing his green, warty buttocks to Boris and the entire watching crew. A swift kick of his foot pressed a button labeled "EMERGENSY" and the body of his Gargant exploded, propelling the head into the sky. Mechanical legs sprouted from the base of the neck to catch it on the landing, luckily out of range of Boris' dakka. It hastily scrambled off into the distance, smoking and clanking as pieces of the tiny, misshapen, and scarred head leapt and bounded over the horizon.

Inside Boris, a blue grot looked at her pet squig. "Say, innit that Dok Gitstitchas gig?"

Da Karhold Job

The city of Vladstock was burning. Thousands of screaming Imperial Citizens swarmed the streets, climbing over wrecked vehicles and their own dead in a desperate attempt to flee the ravening hordes behind them, but the warriors of Chaos are not so easily evaded.

The PDF were well equipped and very well trained by Imperial standards. Among their officers and commanders was many an Imperial Guard Veteran, and the Governor himself a former General who had commanded his men under the skies of a dozen worlds in the Emperor's name. In every mountain pass, in every plain, from city to city the Karhold Planetary Defense Force bled the Chaos armies for every foot of ground, but it would not be enough. For not even the most disciplined, loyal, and fierce soldiers could stand against the legions of Traitor Guard, Chaos Mutants, and corrupted Astartes arrayed before them.

There were simply too many.

Planetary Governor Alexander Rikeman considered this fact in the depths of the command bunker he had ordered built beneath the Governor's Palace when he first assumed the world's throne. The screaming horde of Heretics was tearing up through the center of the main continent, with lesser elements tying up forces elsewhere on the planet's surface, preventing them from being re-deployed to reinforce the primary defensive line.

He could not have prepared better, he knew that much. He had built up infrastructure and military in equal measure, funding new reactors and factories as well as great walls around his cities and fortified bunkers to relocate his PDF bases to. In his time in the Guard he had learned just how vital such preparation could be in determining whether a planet stood or fell.

His would fall purely out of ill luck.

There would be no escape, no reinforcements. A great howling Warp Storm cut them off securely from the outside, he wasn't even sure if his distress call had gotten through. The people of his world were trapped with the invaders for the duration, and that was looking to be a very long time.

The situation appeared to be utterly hopeless when the small Space Hulk entered the system.

"Sir, the ship is hailing us. They appear to be Orks."

Alexander buried his face in his hands "Excellent. That's EXACTLY what we need now."

"Well sir, it's a fairly small ship. There can't be THAT many of them on-board. They might even attack the Chaos forces instead of us."

Alexander sat up suddenly, memories of a particularly brutal campaign against the Tyranids flooding back to him. Maybe, just maybe... If they made the Chaos advance falter, if they bought just a little more time, it might be the difference between victory and death for Karhold.

"Put them on, I have an idea."

An aide pressed a button and the holo-projector before him fizzled to life, displaying a massive Ork dressed in tattered patches of armor, presumably from defeated foes, and draped with dozens of coffee mugs and the remains of a Tau Ethereal's formal robes. He didn't look quite like the other Warbosses Alexander had encountered in his career, but he figured that there were likely to be exceptions to any rule in such a big galaxy.

"Good afternoon, Warboss. What brings you to this system?"

"Dats Warboss Urtylug Titanloota Dursnik to you, ya' Umie' git. An' don't you ferget it."

Titanloota? As in a looted Titan? Could he still have it in his possession? Alexander disliked seeing such a mighty War Machine in the hands of Xenos as much as any loyal Imperial, but even a small Titan would be of immense help. "My apologies, Warboss Titanloota."

"Dats better. Now, we was goin wiv' Gromkills Waaagh! to fight dem Tau gitz, but we came out ere'. Dem Blood Axez gitz keep sayin' dat a good Freebota' mob can work for Umiez an' still be Orky, an' I'm willin' to give it a go. You got any gitz need krumped good?"

Amazing, just amazing. A Freebooter Warband with at least some Blood Axes branching out into working for Humans for the first time, and possibly in possession of a looted Titan or Gargent, appearing here when he most needed it was nothing short of miraculous.

Then again, there had been several miracles on that Tyranid campaign to, and the hand behind them turned out to be far from the providence of the Emperor, he gritted his teeth as he recalled several ghost-readings of ships at the furthest edges of the system just before the Warp Storm sealed them away from the rest of the galaxy. Well, if this was the path those meddling, arrogant bastards deigned to present to him, he would damn well take it, but he would also keep the handful of Shadowword tanks that the PDF had acquired from a Rogue Trader close behind any Engine they fielded, call it fire support.

He put on his best diplomatic smile, which was probably sufficient to appear diplomatic to an Ork if not a real diplomat: "Warboss Urtylug Titanloota Dursnik, you have come at an extremely opportune time for 'Krumping Gits', as you put it..."

A Business Proposition

Administrator Vileska Seranda strode surely down to the conference chamber of her administratum building with intense purpose, trailed by a her personal secretary and a slew of armed soldiers. Takkov III was soon to come under siege by a Chaos Warband and the Planetary Governor had tasked her specifically with seeking aid. Their PDF was strong and the Warband was thankfully a minor one, but Takkov was by no means able to handle the horrors of a band of fallen space marines drunk on the powers of the Warp all on their own. And with such little loyalist space marine presence in the area, Seranda was forced to turn to alternative measures. Thankfully for her, Takkov III was situated near Krumpus Bay, the legendary space station and meeting place of all sorts of dregs of the galaxy. Rogue Traders, orkish tribes (mostly hailing from the Freebooterz clan, but there was a sizeable amount of Blood Axes and Deathskullz in the region as well), Eldar Corsairs as well as Dark Eldar of all varieties, mixed race mercenary bands, and anything else that manages to slip through the galactic cracks that dominated this sector in lieu of any form of actual authority. This is also where Seranda had the misfortune of growing up until she clawed her way into the service of a Rogue Trader and finally came to “retire” into the services of the Planetary Governor. Using contacts from her former life, the Administrator was able to get word out of her plight without the forces of Chaos catching wind, and received word back of a band of ork Freebooterz that were willing to fight for their cause. For a price, of course, but then, nothing ever came free in this sector.

Upon hearing of these “Scraplootas” and their acceptance of her offer, Seranda set immediately to work gathering up as much information as she could about them, from the most outrageous rumor to the verifiable facts, and what she had found intrigued her, to say the least. For starters was the undeniable truth that they did indeed possess an Emperor-class Chaos Titan, as their warboss’ name of Urtylug Dursnik Titanloota suggested. Everything beyond that, however, was mere rumor and hearsay, though it was amusing hearsay. Things like them being so sneaky they could infiltrate the ground itself, that they could destroy Space Hulks with but a thought, and that they managed to take on a Necron Tomb World. The administrator’s personal favorite was the little rumor that they were so lucky, some of their tribe was actually blue. Well, it was about time she separated the fact from the fiction of these Scraplootas she thought to herself as she sat down at the table where the deal was to be struck. She knew the importance of first impressions, so she had made sure that her guests were kept waiting until she prepared herself with her retainer of veteran guard a dozen strong, bolstered further by two ogryn among them to give her entourage a little more size presence that she knew as one of the only things orks respected. After she got everything situated, she called for the servitor to allow them entry.

It seemed her business associate was either very dumb or very confident, as the warboss had only brought three orks with him, five if you counted the two gretchin that clung to the boss, two of what she identified as kommandos and what Seranda surmised to be a mechanic, most likely the Big Mek if her knowledge of orks was right. While the two kommandos stood guard on either side of them, the Big Mek and Warboss Urtylug took two of the many chairs laid out in the conference room as one of the warboss’s two gretchins poured some sort of foul liquid in what looked to be an upside down Necron skull with a handle and other orky bits crudely welded to it. Well it looks like at least one of those rumors is true. Seranda could’ve sworn that the skull still glowed faintly green and had an almost depressed air about it, but she was too focused on the tiny little tau child that the Big Mek had hauled from out of sight and dumped unceremoniously atop the conference table. She was covered in various

nicks and bruises that one would expect to occur when living with orks, but didn't look particularly mistreated. On the contrary, she seemed rather well off. Dressed in a grimy orkish breastplate and weathered leather pants covered in tools and patches, she actually looked well fed and even rather muscular, more so than most tau the well traveled administrator had come across, which was admittedly few. The child didn't seem to pay much attention to the room she was in, giving it a cursory inspection and then opting instead to busy herself with shining her spiked helmet or playing with the little squig beast (was it... wearing goggles?) she had with her. It looks like another of their rumors had some validity to them. Noticing that the Big Mek was glaring at her angrily, Administrator Seranda recollected herself and went on with the negotiations, lest the one about them blowing up space hulks with a stare prove true as well. So much for first impressions.

"Greetings, Warboss Urtylug, and welcome to Takkov III. I trust you had no problems slipping past the Warband."

"Dem Chaosboys is always underestimatins orks. We'z gonna help you stomp em with our titan!" Urtylug took a smug sip of his drink, before staring her dead in the eye and adding "So long as da pay is good."

"Right to business, then. Much better than dealing with a Rogue Trader. I was thinking we could--"

"Me an' me boys get first jump at da Chaosboy loot." Urtylug interrupted "An' everything else I'z put in da contract."

"Contract?" Seranda repeated incredulously.

"Aye. Me contract. Lookit 'ere if you would please." the warboss stated in a professional tone (for an ork) as he handed her a grimy slip of paper with crude handwriting and egregious misspellings on it. As Seranda read the "Kontrakt", she found it was more of a checklist of demands, specifically for:

- "Dem armory bitz from yer mek shops"

- "Mor dakka"

- "A tacks ov dakka an bitz"

"Wait, a 'tacks', as in a yearly tithe?" Seranda questioned.

"What else would it be ya git? Normally we ask fer summa da boyz, too, but you ain't orks so you ain't worth da trouble. Consider it a discount, seein' as we get ta krump more Chaosboys. Now get ta signin if ya want our help."

Seranda sighed, as a whirlwind of questions danced in her head. A tax? Where in the Warp did orks learn about taxation? Would they even remember to collect? Is this how they ended up with that tau of theirs? Why did their warboss have so many mugs? Regardless, she signed the grimy scrap of paper and handed it back to the orks, dismissing them. She noticed that the Big Mek, with another glare towards Seranda, simply hauled the little tau over his shoulder as she continued to remain uninterested in current affairs as an ogryn voiced his wonderment at how remarkable the warboss's handwriting was. Seranda could not even begin to think of all the ways this was a terrible idea, but what else could she do? Tarkov III would fall without outside assistance, and these orks were the only ones to answer

the call. And with a titan at that. She couldn't think of anything the planet had that was valuable enough to bother fighting a titan over.

"The Govnah ain't gonna like this one. Not one bit." Seranda's secretary warned her.

"Then I will have to remind him that he is alive enough to dislike this. Now if you will excuse me, I need a damned drink after... whatever that just was." Seranda said, retiring to her personal quarters.

"Sure thing, Vils, I'll take care of the mess like I always do, you just go sleep off that hangover you're about to give yourself like you always do." Her longtime friend chuckled, heading off towards his desk.

The moment she found her room, Seranda grabbed the fullest bottle of the most alcoholic liquid she could find and drained it. First chaos, and now these bizarre Freebooterz had to go and make a headache out of what was supposed to be an easy job. Overseeing PDF drills, ensuring the foundries were running at max efficiency, ensuring these orks don't just get bored and decide to murder everything. The next few weeks were going to be anything but easy. She collapsed on her bed and allowed her weariness and the alcohol to overtake her and dozed off.

Fucking orks.

* * *

Afterthoughts

"No."

"Look, all I'm saying is—"

"I know what you're saying and I'm saying it's absolutely idiotic."

"I'm not saying it would happen, just that it could."

"And I'm saying you're full of grox shit. Orks? Absolutely, we literally just saw that. Eldar? Sure, I guess. I mean, they'd probably opt to manipulate instead, but maybe it could happen. Dark Eldar? Totally, it just wouldn't look pretty. At all. Chaos? I don't know, maybe? I doubt they'd go out of their way, but they're not ones to turn down free cannon fodder. But Necrons? Really? That's where I draw the damn line. There is and will never be such a thing as a Necron Tau. Their whole Em Oh is just 'shoot it until it dies and then shoot it some more' for Emp's sake."

"You don't remember that time we got stuck in that necron tomb during that dig site job?"

"You two faced a necron tomb?!"

"Less faced and more ran the Warp away while everyone else died and then ran some more. Now shut up, Guardsmen, can't you see I'm in the middle of a heated debate with my associate here? Anyways, I absolutely remember that nightmare. I also remember green glowing automated skeletons shooting people until they died and then shooting them some more."

“But what about Mike, huh?”

“...which one? Mike or Fat Mike?”

“Fat Mike.”

“...New Fat Mike or Old Fat Mike?”

“Uhh... Old Fat Mike. Definitely Old.”

“That’s right! It was Old Fat Mike that they turned into a necron! What’d the dataslate call it again? Pariahs?”

“Yes, now shut up, Guardsman.” Cutting him off before he could say anything else “Anyways, all I’m saying is there could be a tau pariah out there.”

“Nope. Dataslate said it only works on humans for some reason. Something about genes? Fuck if I remember.”

“But what if someone rigged it to work on tau?”

“And who’d have the time, tech, and resources to accomplish such a pointless feat?”

“Oh I don’t know, maybe undying robot skeletons.”

“And WHY would they do it, exactly?”

“Warp if I know, why did orks take one in?”

“That’s not the same at all! Orks do all sorts of nonsense. Necrons all follow some sort of set plan. Every single one of them we bumped into reacted the same damn way. Orks, not so much.”

“I’m just saying, maybe. You never know.”

“Tell you what, we run into a necronized tau, I pay for drinks that night. Deal?”

“Deal.”

“Good. Now with that nonsense settled, let’s grab some of that fungus beer before these Scraplootass leg it. Haven’t had any of that stuff since our Krumpus Bay days.”

“You drink greenskin sludge?!”

“For the last time... wait, what is your name, anyways?”

“It’s... it’s Michael, ma’am.”

“Yeesh, really? Well good luck with that one, Mike.”

“Try painting yourself blue. It worked for ‘Da Blue Grot’ over there.”

“Wouldn’t hurt to hedge your bets with a little Gork and Mork worship on the side, either. If the Big E can’t help, maybe the Big Greens can.”

“Emperor preserve me...”

Rosncranz and Gilnstrum Live On

There were many forces that the Scraplootas fought against and sometimes for, but the one that they liked to stomp the most was the Dark Eldar. However, the Dark Eldar had cleared out of the sector, much to the rejoicing of a certain craftworld, and all of their stragglers had been krumped good. So the Scraplootas had to turn elsewhere. Their second favorite force to stomp was Chaos. But this requires further explanation.

The sector that the Scraplootas haunted most of the time was relatively free of major installations of either Space Marines or their Ruinous counterpart. Sure, there were the Blood Jaguars, but they were just one faction of over a dozen that the Scraplootas dealt with regularly. Similarly, the forces of Chaos was only represented in one faction. A bedraggled Chaos Warband, flying under the Undivided banner.

There used to be a major Chaos installation in the sector, on a world now dead or dying, ruined by the fighting that had occurred there. The final battle, in which the Blood Jaguars finally broke the Chaos legion and the Scraplootas made off with their Titan, did not occur without consequence. In an act of desperation, the Chaos Lord enlisted the aid of any Chaos forces in the Warp that could receive his psychic broadcast. Three warbands responded, two warbands of World Eaters and one of Iron Warriors. Arriving too late, they touched down on the ruined fortress world and summarized the situation, promising to avenge their fallen brethren. They all assumed the Titan was either scrapped or easily recaptured from the Orks and the Blood Jaguars had taken heavy losses and their homeworld would be easily overrun. They were mistaken on both accounts. Soon three warbands became two, then one. Every so often they were reinforced by another warband. Word Bearers perhaps or Emperor's Children, would arrive in the sector, spat out of the Warp lost and confused. They would scoff at the woes of the bedraggled warband, reassure them that if they were doing it right, a bunch of greenskins and loyalist scum were nothing against the might of Chaos. And so, underestimating their enemy completely, the Warbands would engage the Scraplootas as two and retreat as one. Another Warband would be spat of the warp, and the cycle would repeat. The Blood Jaguars were also a handful in their own way, but this isn't a Blood Jaguar story. This is a Scraplootas story. So it's time to quit muckin' around.

* * *

"Shas'El, we are being hailed by two stranded soldiers, they appear to be Chaos marines."

Shas'El K'Lem P'rer shook his head and clasped his hands behind his back, "Pay them no heed, Shas'Ui. Continue on."

He stood on the bridge of his Lar'shi'vre Class Cruiser with Shas'Vre Pan'zah by his side. This was a proper force this time, when they fought with the Scraplootas, the Orks would know the fury of the Tau and the might of the Greater Good.

His second in command coughed slightly, "Shas'El, we know the Scraplootas engaged with Chaos forces here. They may be able to help us track down the greenskins before they leave this world." Like the last five worlds that their Tio've had landed on. If there was one thing that could be said about the Scraplootas, it was that they were quick with whatever objectives they had.

"Hmm. You may be right Pan'zah, very well, we will acknowledge them. Shas'Ui, bring them up on the viewscreen." The two marines were clearly of different factions, one with silver and black armor and the other covered in red.

"Hail, Tau warriors," the silver and black armored one said, "Do you mind if we hitched a ride?"

The Shas'El blinked, "What?"

"Well, I was talking with my compatriot here, and after some discussion, we came to the conclusion that you're probably here for those Orks we fought not a while ago. Mostly because, if you were after us, not only are you late to the party, you would have blasted us already!" The laughter from the Chaos Marine's vox was harsh and unpleasant. Also somewhat nervous. "You aren't actually after us, right?"

"Fortunately for you, it seems, we are indeed after the notorious Scraplootaz," The Shas'El studied his fingertips briefly, "If you are willing to point us in the direction they went, we would be much obliged, otherwise, we will continue on our way."

"Yeah, that's the thing. We've got a good bet to where they went. You see, we were doing a raid on the local inhabitants, loyalist scum, you know how it is, and the Orks came out of nowhere and destroyed most of our raiding party and stole what vehicles they didn't destroy. So we're kinda stranded here. And it's a pretty good bet that they headed over to our main camp, to 'krump the rest of us' or what not, right?" The silver and black one nudged his companion, who jerked to attention.

"BURN MAIM KILL BURN MAIM--"

"No, Gilnstrum, we're not raiding anymore."

"Well, forgive me for trying to keep up appearances as a World Eater. We have a reputation you know."

"But they're just a bunch of Tau, we're not even going to be fighting them." The Shas'El and Shas'Vre exchanged glances.

K'Lem P'rer cleared his throat, "So where is this main camp of yours, Chaos Marine?"

"Well, we could give you directions, or you could let us aboard and we can personally direct you guys so you won't get lost!" The silver and black one gave a thumbs up that looked more violent than it was probably meant to be.

"I do not think we will miss a Titan."

"Well, yes, but, well..."

The red one, identified as Gilnstrum, spoke up "But if we're with you, our brothers will know that you are their allies, and not there to reinforce the Orks." He nodded.

"Most likely." The silver and black one said.

"It's very probable."

"I give it over 50/50."

"Somewhat likely, at least."

"At least they'll pause before they shoot at us."

"Definitely maybe."

The two Tau turned to each other and started a brief conference, with Pan'zah mostly nodding the whole time.

"Tell me, how far away is your encampment?"

"Not that far, maybe two hours travel by vehicle." Gilnstrum nodded helpfully at their ships.

"Very well, we will unload here." K'Lem P'rer nodded at his aide, "Prepare the artillery. I will personally aim the markerlight."

Pan'zah gave a quick salute as the Shas'El turned back to the viewscreen. "Understand this, Chaos warriors, we will honor your pleas for hospitality, but we will only transport you as far as our gunships go. If you want to reunite with your brethren, you will have to travel the remaining distance yourselves. I will not have my warriors suffer your potential treachery."

The two Chaos Marines turned to each other and shrugged. "Okay."

"Yeah sounds about right."

"Traitor Legions, doing their traitor thing, being treacherous, it's a reasonable assumption."

"We don't blame you."

* * *

About an hour and a half later, Shas'El K'Lem P'rer signaled his force to stop. The bulk of the titan was formidable even at this distance. Its massive guns recoiled loudly, and its thunderous footsteps could be heard even at this distance. But even as some disquiet broke out from his warriors, the Shas'El remained poised. They were a distance away and basically camouflaged in the mess of shrubs and discarded barrels and boxes. They would strike the Titan before the Orks were even aware that they were there. Then the rest of the greenskins would be simple to mop up. Of course, they had to first locate that brainwashed Tau slave and confirm her safety.

"Soo..." The silver and black one spoke up. He and his companion had suffered through a bumpy ride on the back of a tank. "I guess this is where we get off?" K'Lem P'rer paid them no heed. "Cool. We'll

get going then, thanks for the ride." They got off and started jogging towards the Chaos encampment currently under siege.

"Shouldn't we be shouting? You know, 'Death to the false Emperor' or something?" Gilnstrum was always up for some shouting.

"Well, we have a ways to go, and we don't want to run out of breath. And it would be poor form to give away the location to those Tau chaps that just so kindly gave us a ride over so we have some chance of getting in with the action."

"I guess that's true." Their voices trailed off into the distance.

The Shas'El wasn't seeing the Tau in his macrobinoculars. Strange, the Fio'La was usually darting around the feet of the Titan, amidst the rest of the shorter Orks, doing various repairs and sundry things for the maintenance of vehicles and whatnot. The shrubs and such moved slightly in the wind as K'Lem P'rer frowned. There were fewer proper Orks fighting than reconnaissance reported too. And furthermore, he didn't feel any wind--

THUNK

The Hammerhead that the Shas'El was stationed on tipped over with a dull thud. The anti-gravitic units had been removed and there were two Orks on each unit trying to figure out how to control them as they rose up into the air. The air around the Tau burst with the sound of gunfire, Kommandos that had been hiding in the shrubs and barrels and boxes revealed themselves and quickly overwhelmed the gathered tau gunships, jamming the doors to the Devilfish troop transports and disabling the Hammerheads that had no room to maneuver or fire safely.

Crawling out of his gunship, K'Lem P'rer took stock of the situation, only one Devilfish was able to deploy, and the Shas'La were not doing well. Orks were pulling metal and guns off his crippled Hammerheads. And then he got smacked on the back of his head.

"We were runnin' out of workin' anti-gravitic engines. Thanks, ya cowardly git."

In his quickly fading conscious, the Shas'El saw a pair of scuffed and dirty Tau feet move from behind him. He struggled to turn his head upwards. It was the Fio'La, nearly in reach. She was smiling, her face and spanner splashed with dark blue. Yes. She was accepting the Greater Good. She was not just removing his battle gear. K'Lem P'rer went unconscious with a smile on his face.

* * *

A little while later, two out of breath Chaos Space Marines stopped jogging right about around the outskirts of the Ork forces, hidden from view by a few well placed bushes and shrubs. These did not contain Orks. The Marines were experienced enough to check first.

"All right then, once we've caught our breaths, we'll charge in all yelling and screaming and scare those grotlings and gretchin into thinking we're not just two more Marines!"

"Yes! As soon as we catch our breaths." The silver and black one sat down and started fanning himself uselessly with a hand.

"Oh, come on, Rosncranz, that was just a short run. You can't possibly be all that tired."

"Unlike you, we Iron Warriors have more than just muscle and bones under our armor, we're iron within and iron without, y'know."

"I know for a fact that you've only had a few fingers and toes replaced."

"Still, we're better at short bursts of activity, and not long distance running. Give me a moment." As Rosncranz was getting up, a few disenshipped anti-gravitic units buzzed overhead, overloaded with metal and guns.

"What do you think that means?"

"I don't know. But it does look like the Orks are leaving now."

The Titan had actually turned and was now starting to walk away. A ragged cheer came from the battered bunker that was all that remained of the Chaos encampment.

"Do you think we've scared off the Orks with our approach as unexpected reinforcement?" Gilnstrum was absolutely giddy at the possibility of being heroes for once.

"Somehow, I doubt that, Gilnstrum," Rosncranz said, "I have a feeling we'll be getting an earful from the commander, though."

* * *

Shas'Vre Pan'zah sat in the Shas'El's personal Piranha Skimmer, his face squarely in his hands. The Fio'La hurried about rescuing the warriors trapped inside the Devilfish. The Shas'El was being treated for a nasty bump on the head. He was also wearing nothing but his underclothes again.

"You should have seen it, Shas'Vre, that Fio'La led the Orks on a Kauyon, it was tactically brilliant."

"I'm sure Shas'El, but haven't we gone over what we're not supposed to stop anywhere with an excess of shrubs and boxes and barrels?"

"But there's no advantage to being out in the open. It's not like we could have predicted that the Orks would have hidden in ambush around us."

"...Of course not, Shas'El."

"Anyway, now we will be prepared for the next time we encounter these wily Scraplootas. Clearly that Fio'La is leading the Orks to victory and slowly changing their ways to the Greater Good!"

"Yes, Shas'El."

"Now all we have to do is get in contact with them and establish proper diplomatic connections so we can reintegrate her into the Tau'va."

Pan'zah looked at the majority of their fleet's Hammerheads and Devilfish, stripped of armor, armaments, and even engines. They were little more than metal boxes now, "Yes, Shas'El."

"This is going well, Shas'Vre. I can feel it in my bones. The glory of the Greater Good will prevail."

"...Of course, Shas'El." Pan'zah finished the ending of his report to the Shas'O in his head, "I believe he is completely and utterly unfit for command." It tied his report together nicely.

* * *

Somewhere not too far away, Snekkitt, Rockeata, and Blue were taking turns retelling their escapade and mocking the Shas'El with his looted combat suit. It was another brilliant ending to a day in the life of the Scraplootats.

Rockeata's day to shine

Today was Rockeata's day to shine. The Boyz had been hired to take out a small unit of them grey gits and some fancy truk they had. The Scraplootaz however, were preoccupied with all of the bits from another job – in particular a couple of massive shootas they had gotten from the humies, which were being attached to Boris' right arm with gusto by the grots and mekboyz. Considering this, Rockeata Brugg and a squad of a few boyz and a heap of grots were dispatched to handle the job since the unit was so small (only about 9 of them). Rockeata had hatched quite a brilliant plan for this mission. His stealth was the cause of the trust the others put in him, and he was going to prove he was the sneakiest ork boy in the tribe this time.

It was night, and the boyz crouched on a craggy ridge overlooking the gray gits that were camping below. Two of them stood guard, and the rest were sleeping aboard the tank. Rockeata sank his metallic jaws into a particularly juicy rock, squinting at the camp, deciding from which direction to make the strike. The rock, much to his pleasure, tasted like fine squig. Most rocks do. He had overheard someone say that once when he was young, and ever since he was pleased to find that rocks really do taste quite fine, though few of the other boyz agree – and even then it is probably just for the sake of not arguing with him. One of the guards turned to the other and they began walking in the same direction to the other side of the tank. This was his window, he gave the signal and pulled out his pack. From it, he drew an enormous purple tarp, instructing everyone to get under it, and follow him as they marched silently towards the tank.

They crept up, more quietly than the vacuum of space it seemed, and settled right up along the tank. Rockeata almost giggled at what was about to come. He pulled out a special piece of gear he had Zizzbitz fix up for him, made of some super springy and glowy gubbins, he was told that with a good hundred of these he could lift Boris' leg – but one would be enough to flip the tank. He nestled it in the dirt under one of the treads, snickering a bit, and then pressed the button, jolting the tank up a few feet on one side – then he threw off the tarp and him along with a couple of other boyz put their hands under the tread and pushed extra hard, flipping it over onto its back, crushing the grey gits on the other side. Then came the important part. He leaped up top, onto the metal underbelly, and cut out a hole with his choppa and dropping in a couple of explodin bitz. He jumped down and walked off a bit, then heard a resounding and pleasant couple of explosions, oily black smoke creeping out of the punctured hull.

Rockeata cheerfully chomped into another succulent stone, beaming at his victory, and telling the grots to head into the ship through the top of the hull and make sure that everyone was proppa ded. Rockeata congratulated himself on another success. He had the boyz get to work tearing off the armor and gubbins from the outside of the tank. It sure was a fine one, nicer than any he'd ever seen. In particular he was eyeing a few of the side plates that looked particularly tough. He decided he would take some for himself and so he got to work trying to chop off a few pieces. Much to his surprise, his choppas could hardly scratch the side plates. Rockeata looked skeptically at the plates now, determined to have them. He did the orky thing, and ripped them off with his hands, which was still rather difficult, but he had plans for these as well. Soon their work was done, and the camp was destroyed, and all the bitz of the tank loaded up to be taken back to the camp.

Upon returning to the camp it took quite a lot of work from Zizzbitz on the plates, eventually resorting to one of the super hot choppas that the blue grot had put together to cut them into proppa orky shapes. Most shootas were fairly ineffective against the plates too, Zizzbitz found, and he was audibly aghast at their resilience. He continued working with them of course, making Rockeata a right proppa suit of armor that covered alot of his body, and was painted a dark purple to help him stay sneaky. The scrap bitz were filed and worked together to make a ded killy set of new jaws for Rockeata, they cut right through rocks like a choppa through a humie. Rockeata was right pleased with his new protection, and his orky new eatin bitz.

Zizzbitz's odd mood

Big mek Tinka Zizzbitz was in an odd mood.

So as the ork walked along the gouged trail of Boris as the Titan-Ork slowly cut a path through the small human city, he was barely paying attentions to his surroundings. Choppy and shooty ideas floated through his mind, even as he passed a pile of smoking squig corpses. Charred earth and bits of glass crunched under his peg leg as he traced his way around a fallen support pillar. A human body squished when he stepped on it, and Zizzbitz absently muttered “’Scuse me.” and kept walking. Truly, he was lost in thought.

This trance-like state ended when a distant explosion echoed through the ruined buildings, barley auditory over the cacophony of Boris’s slaughter. Zizzbitz’s head snapped around, looking towards the origin of the faint sound. Executing a neat turn on his peg leg, he began walking towards the source of the explosion, ignoring all else, not speaking to anyone.

“Hot damn, tinhead!” The blond ganger remarked, staring at the smoking remains of several orks and grots. “That thing is the most beautiful piece of jury-rigging I’ve ever seen!”

The tech-priest beamed, or would have beamed if his face had been human enough to do so. “The Omnissiah granted me his blessing in order to assist in the defeat of that walking double-heresy machine!” The cyborg loudly proclaimed, “With his assistance, it was mere folly to fashion a grenade launcher from a lasgun and household appliances!”

“Shush, tinhead!” The redhead ganger hissed, racking the aforementioned weapon in her lap. “If the greenskins didn’t hear the explosion, they’ll hear /you/!”

“Come on, honey, they’re probably all worried about that robot of theirs.” A man in a commissar outfit slid up next to the blond ganger. “Of course, they could always be hearing a different kind of battle, if you know what I mean...”

“Shut up, Max!” The blond and the redhead barked simultaneously. Then a large green hand suddenly picked up the grenade launcher out of the redhead’s hands.

“’Dis is some good dakka,” Tinka muttered, rolling the makeshift weapon in his hands. The design was muckin’ about a little, and it could always use more dakka, but that could be fixed...

“TECH-HERETIC!” somebody suddenly screeched. Tinka dragged his eyes away from his new toy and saw a mek-humie being pinned to the floor by a girlie and a commissar-humie. He then looked down at the other girlie, who was looking up at him with a strange mix of fear and fascination. She ‘as a metal eye like me, Zizzbitz mused.

“Tell ya wot,” The mekboy announced. “Since I’m in a good mood, an’ you gits ‘ave given me some free dakka, I’ll let ya go.” The one-legged ork turned and exited the room, muffled curses and accusations of desecrating one of the Emperor’s sacred war-machines followed.

* * *

A grot spasmed wildly, then exploded. A cheer went up from the assembled group of orks, and Zizzbitz hoisted the now properly orky “Zizzbit’s Patented Elektrical Bomb Launcha” onto his shoulder. “’Dat Mek-humie made some good dakka,” he mused. “Maybe I should try to find ‘im again.”

Rosncranz and Gilnstrum Get Fed

"Be wary of elderly folk in professions where practitioners do not usually live to grow old." A common saying in many different cultures, it has almost universal appeal amongst mortal races because it rings with truth. But does it apply when your entire culture is in one profession and all the practitioners are thousands of years old? Should you be wary of them at all?

Of course, new Chaos Space Marines are created and ordained every day, but these never seem to integrate as fully into the brotherhood, or at least the twisted version of brotherhood, that the Chaos Space Marines share. They also tend not to last as long, and the overwhelming majority of Chaos Marines are the same as the ones that fought in the Horus Heresy. Just look at the Thousand Sons. Those mounds of dust haven't gone anywhere in all of their innumerable battles and years of war. I mean, at least I don't think they dust every recruit they get. It would be odd to have them all geneseeded and surgically fixed up and then disintegrate them to avoid mutation. Of course, that's something Tzeentch is all over so you never really know. Perhaps it's all a part of a grand plan. But from what I've seen of those bird brained schemers they tend to do a lot of pretending that things were working the way they planned it.

Once, when we actually had most of a full regiment of those rubric marines as allies and their leader as our joint Warbands' Chaos Lord, the guy never once told us what he was thinking and ended up cackling "Just as planned!" even as the Orks were pulverizing his face into something that resembled a run over and stomped on genestealer. We still have one of those empty shells around. Not much of a conversational partner and he needs to be wheeled all over the place after the psyker lord bit the, well, dust. He looks sad all the time now, even when I try to cheer him up. It may just be his helmet though. He doesn't exactly have much behind that. Anyway, what was I saying?

Oh right, so my original point was that most Chaos Space Marines seem to fall under the category of "Unmitigated Badass" simply because we've lived so long in a mostly untenable situation that is best described as "perpetual warfare" or "only war." And yet, I really don't think that's the case. At least, I don't feel like a badass. I asked Gilnstrum if he felt like a badass, and after pshawing me and reminding me that he was a World Eater and that World Eater was a proper noun that was synonymous with the phrase "total badass" he admitted, no. No, he didn't feel like a badass much.

Sometimes he'd do something awesome, like twist around in a full circle before nailing an enemy combatant in the face with a round from a bolter he was shooting with one hand while enraged, but then he'd end up feeling quite lame because he'd turn around to ask "Did you see that?" and there would never be anyone behind him to answer him. Or else it was just another loyalist guardsman who was too busy whimpering and crying and unloading his lasgun into the air to notice. Those guardsmen get everywhere. Strolling through a city with a raiding party, it is impossible to even turn a corner or open a door or lift a rock up while looking for usable goods without finding another one huddling in fear.

If only our cannon fodder were so numerous. We have basically no slaves or cultists to speak of. Really, all we have are other Chaos Marines. And believe me, they get really peeved when you call them cannon fodder. Like thrown-out-of-a-cruiser-in-midflight peeved. Let me tell you, that one hurt. At least they came back for me. And the berserker did sheepishly apologize and spend the rest of the

night repairing the hole he'd made in our craft. Of course the guy then died a week later fighting with the Titan that those Orks have. He was one hell of a fighter too. He sat back up and waved a weapon vaguely in the air after the Titan had stomped on him. He didn't quite survive the second time that massive foot came down. At least he tried. His fellow Khornate berserkers went the same way, against incredible odds, but it didn't look really badass. It looked somewhat foolish. Also like overkill.

But yeah, I've really never felt quite badass in the thousands of years I've been an Iron Warrior. I mean, sure, there were numerous badass moments, and I've certainly felt the joy of kicking ass and taking names, or even skipping the paperwork entirely. But I've never felt like a walking killing machine and I've never spoken completely in bad clichés without feeling extremely corny. I've also never chewed on scenery or carried around Carnifex meat hams or kicked bubblegum or whatever it is that makes people think you're a badass. I mean, I've never entirely played it safe, but I haven't exactly been balls to the walls daring either. It just never seemed like a good idea to go on a reckless charge through enemy forces just to prove I could. I mean, I know I can, what's the point of showing everyone and then getting cut down by a wayward slug from a Titan mounted railgun? I've never done the embracing death thing, which may be why I've never been too badass. Maybe if there were another Black Crusade or something. I never got to see much of the action during the last one. When I was finally going to be deployed, they called the whole thing off and I ended up in this backwater sector. Anyway, if I had to go, I'd want to fight worthy enemies, mostly so I don't end up in the books with the footnote "slain by loyalist guardsmen" or "stuck by a grot." That would be kind of awful.

Gilnstrum agrees with my sentiment, even as a World Eater, especially as a World Eater. He says he'd feel like he was letting everyone down if something mundane killed him. He personally wants to go out riding a Carnifex strapped with bombs into a wave of loyalist Ultramarines while wielding three chainswords and snorting illicit drugs or something off the back of their chapter master he was anally violating with the chapter master's own powerfist. But that's mostly his rage talking, and he doesn't actually really want to go out at all. He's perfectly fine with ripping and tearing and shooting into the guys we fight every now and then. But he wouldn't do anything rash. He was pretty beat up after that warband of Khornate Berserkers were wiped out. Okay, we were all really beat up, but I mean emotionally. It was like being back with the boys for Gilnstrum. He definitely misses the company, being the only World Eater in our current Warband and all. I tried my best to cheer him up by offering to go running through an Imperial city slaughtering civilians with him, but apparently Iron Warrior berserking just isn't the same. He apologized profusely, but I understood.

Our current Warband is mostly Word Bearers and Luna Wolves, though we have a couple of Death Guard that stink up the back of the cruiser, a good deal of Alpha Legionnaires that keep to themselves and leave by themselves on their own Raider without saying anything, two Emperor's Children that just really creep me out, that one Rubric Marine, and Gilnstrum and me. I serve as the cook of the ship. Since we have less surviving slaves than marines, we find ourselves doing mundane tasks around the cruiser or camp. Often times I made the most of impalpable ingredients that we raided from whatever worlds in this desolate sector we end up on. Sometimes one of the crew will challenge my position as cook and we end up squaring off before a panel of judges, but I always end up making a better dish.

That's not important right now. What is important and goes with my previous thesis that I keep wandering away from, is that Gilnstrum and I have been here ever since that original distress call from that Chaos Lord from whenever ago, when that Titan was stolen from Chaos right under the noses of those loyalist Blood Jaguars. Our warbands and another World Eater warband were the only ones to

respond to the call. And afterwards we suffered heavily losses from both the Blood Jaguars and the Scraplootas. But the thing was, when we left with our tails between our legs, ready to leave the sector, the Warp spat us back out in the same sector. Again and again. No matter how hard we tried, we could not break out of this wretched sector with only one group of loyalist marines, a handful of Imperial worlds defended by planetary defense forces, some Tau petering in from the neighboring sector, a bunch of Orks, one craftworld and some Dark Eldar, what seemed like a tomb world, and one destroyed Chaos stronghold, completely razed to the ground, the very earth it stood on burnt and salted. One Warband strong, we weren't going to get much done. But Gilnstrum and I didn't give up hope. And eventually a Warband of Death Guards showed up, and despite the stench we got along pretty well, that is until they started outnumbering us as our fights kept getting more desperate. Absolute slobos those plague marines. They wouldn't know proper hygiene if it manifested as a daemon and tore through their forces, leaving behind streak free shines and significantly better smelling Marines. But they were also being beaten down and destroyed, systematically sometimes. So we ended up getting reinforced by lost Luna Wolves. And then Emperor's Children, and so on. But throughout all the chaos of the changing of guard and new self appointed warband leaders, Gilnstrum and I have stayed a constant.

We go way back, Gilnstrum and I. Back to when we were both scouts before the Heresy. We were stationed on the same world, a group of Iron Warriors and War Hounds. Every week we'd get together for a game of Emperorball or what have you, and it was generally good fun. Gilnstrum had always been a dumb jock, and they all said I had the potential to become a Librarian, if I ever manifested psyker powers. Which I didn't. Those were good times. The world was at peace and most of our duties included marching in parades. Of course, we were shipped off, but Gilnstrum and I kept in touch, signed up for the same tours of duty when we could.

Right before the Heresy, Gilnstrum and I were sent out to the far reaches of the Imperium with the rest of our regiments, we were to serve as the honor guard for this prince. A sad looking man-child who complained a lot, if I remember correctly. He was the nephew of a planetary lord who didn't want the guy moping around the palace anymore. So the lord sent the prince to a far away world with a package. And both the prince and the package would stay on the world in exile. Or something like that. The prince's name was Hamtaro or something. Anyway, the exact situation escapes me after ten thousand years. We were basically at the planet when news of the Heresy erupted. Everyone else was super excited because this was apparently the big event Horus had been planning for a while now, and honestly I hadn't paid much attention at the interest meetings but I still wanted to know what the big hubbub was. In the excitement we killed the prince and commandeered the ship, turning it around and redirecting it towards Holy Terra. They kept talking about overthrowing the Imperium and even Gilnstrum was high strung and giddy about this. I personally had never been anywhere near Holy Terra, and didn't really have much of an opinion about the rule of the Imperium or the God Emperor. I guess coming from a backwater world does that to a guy. Gilnstrum had actually been in the presence of the God Emperor, close enough to see his radiance with his own eyes. He had described him as more beautiful and awe-inspiring than all of the Primarchs combined. So it was weird that he was all for overturning the guy's rule. I suppose he was swept up in the moment.

We exit the Warp to find out we had gotten stuck in a storm or something, because it was over. The Horus Heresy was over and Horus was dead and the God Emperor was mortally wounded. We were labeled as heretics, mostly because we responded to Horus's call and our legions were already declared traitor. So we left for the Eye of Terror like the rest of our forces. I don't remember it too well because it wasn't punctuated by high emotions like it was for other people. Gilnstrum still remembers how upset

he was. Anyway, I guess this means I didn't so much turn traitor as rotate slightly in one direction. I didn't so much fall as saunter vaguely downwards. A bunch of things happened after that, ten thousand years and a bunch of Black Crusades worth, but you get the picture.

Anyway, so Gilnstrum and I have been in this ever changing warband since the very beginning. We haven't even really gotten a chance to name ourselves because our numbers change so frequently. One of the Emperor's Children had said something along the lines of the Glorious Tragedians but we haven't really settled on anything. Neither of us has ever tried to take charge. It never works out well for the guy in charge. He's gone by the end of the month usually, and then there's some infighting and the ranks are switched around. Gilnstrum and I are pretty low in the pecking order, but that suits us fine. No high expectations of the guys who rank under those smelly-ass plague marines.

So yes, my point is, despite common sayings and whatnot, Gilnstrum and I are not the most badass members of the Warband. We don't even try. Yes, we're the most senior members, technically, and yes we look before we leap and yes we poke our bolters into bushes in case they contain loyalists or Orks, but in no way can you consider us elderly folk in professions where practitioners do not usually live to grow old. Okay, so yes, you can consider us that, I guess, though I still don't feel very elderly, but we're nothing to be wary of, as far as Chaos Space Marines go is I guess the point I'm trying to make. I mean, depending on who you are and what you do I guess Chaos Space Marines may be something to be wary of by default, but if you're trying to fish for badasses, there are a lot bigger fish in the sea.

The Tau before us blinks twice. She's at least let us sit upright in the netting we're trapped in, and she's given us both some of her rations, which was very generous of her. Especially because we're her prisoners... just don't ask how we got into this position. I'll just say that there is properly paranoid and overly paranoid and be done with it. Second guessing is also a horrible horrible thing to do. Gilnstrum is still upset we spent so much time arguing over something that was clearly a trap.

She scratches her head, "So dat long spiel was just you sayin' you guys ain't a great catch?"

"Of course not! We fell for your stupid trap!" Those are the first intelligible words Gilnstrum has said this entire night. I don't know how intelligent that Tau was for thinking that we'd fall for that trap, or how intelligent she thinks Chaos Space Marines are that they'd fall for a trap like that, or how intelligent we are for falling for that trap anyway.

"You could surely do better than just us. Besides, we don't have any worthwhile lootables and our flesh is probably gross tasting."

I really don't want to be bested and killed by a solitary Tau looking for a worthy fight. Though what she's doing out here by herself, and why she has such a weird accent, is a mystery. Perhaps she's one of those savage Xenoes, parents dead and raised by Tyranids or whatever. I also want to know why her definition of a worthy fight includes trapping us in this unbreakable netting. Seriously. There's no breaking this stuff. Not even with my powerfist. Not even with Gilnstrum raging as hard as he could. And he can rage pretty hard. It was really uncomfortable being in close quarters with his rage. But I guess that's to be expected.

"But I gotta come back wid a worthy opponent. Rockeata said it's fer a test of character."

"I would go so far to say that we're both quite characters, but we're definitely not certified to test anyone. What kind of test of character?"

The Tau shrugged, "We just gotta few new Kommandoz from some Freebootaz that joined up after we krumped their Warboss. Rockeata wants ta test their meddle, and not just their armor bits, their inna armor or sumfin'."

"Yeah, we aren't exactly the best Chaos Marines to be testing inner armor or mettle with. We're hard on the outside but not on the inside. Quite squishy actually. Not much inner armor ourselves."

"We do know one that would do though. A few of them."

I turn to Gilnstrum, "We do?"

He nods very emphatically, "And we could go get some of them for you if you could just release us from the netting here."

The Tau rubbed her chin and then nodded carefully. It took us about ten minutes to get Gilnstrum untangled from the netting because of all of his spikes.

We shake hands briefly with the Tau, or at least Gilnstrum does. My powerfist being far too large to shake. We exchange introductions. She calls herself Blue and she expects us to come back with a replacement catch by the end of the night. She even gives us our bolters back.

Walking off, Gilnstrum and I brofist carefully. You have to brofist carefully when you have a powerfist. No reason to risk unnecessary injury.

"So, who do you think we'll bag for the Tau?"

Gilnstrum turns to me like I'm crazy, "Are you seriously considering--"

"Well, we did promise her. And come off it, there's gotta be at least one person in the Warband that is insufferable enough that if he were to go missing no one would go looking for him."

"I'm pretty sure we'd fall under those requirements."

"Someone besides us."

A large insect chirps in the underbrush. Some animal calls in the distance.

We come up with the name at the same time and carefully brofist again.

* * *

"You said it wasn't a trap!"

"Nooo, I said that if it was a trap, it was a really obvious trap, who would make such an obvious trap, no one would fall for it if it was a trap, et cetera."

The Luna Wolf hangs upside down in the netting, absolutely furious. The rations pack filled with sticks and stones and labeled crudely with 'SPESS MAHREEN FUD' was pinned tightly to the hapless marine's chest and arms. Yes. We had set it up again, and it worked on this guy too. I actually don't know what to say to that.

"You bastards, what is the meaning of this treachery?"

"We're all Chaos Marines, remember? Traitor Legions? It's kind of in our description." I bring him down, careful to keep the net closed.

"Imbeciles! That means traitor to the Imperium! Not to each other!"

"We like being a little more literal with our descriptors."

"Release me at once and perhaps I will have the Chaos Lord show mercy when he kills you!"

"Now you see that kind of talk will not get you freed any faster. Or at all." We drag him through the denser part of the jungle.

"Can I just shoot him in the head to shut him up?" Gilnstrum was antsy to do some sort of damage this night.

"No, we can't risk brain damage. He would be less of a worthy opponent."

"It wouldn't be too direct of a shot. Just hard enough to get him to shut up."

"What are you two idiots doing this for anyway?"

"Well, you're an intolerable prick and you've done nothing but insult my cooking. Dumping perfectly good scraps that the plague marines would eat on the floor, so that they had to eat it off the floor. And our boots go everywhere man. That's pretty gross even for plague marines. Though I guess not completely out of the ordinary. Anyway, we're sending you off to become a test of character because we promised we would." We enter the clearing with the Tau.

"YOU KEEP PROMISES WITH OTHERS BUT YOU BETRAY YOUR OWN BROTHER? ARE YOU INSANE?"

"Aren't we all? Chaos Marines, remember. Insane is also an accurate descriptor. And you're not my bro, Bro."

We hook the netting to the back of Blue's truck and she waves before driving off, dragging the still shouting Luna Wolf behind her. His ill wishes and threats devolve into curses and short obscenities as he clears a path through the jungle with his face.

"Gilstum."

"Yes, Rosncranz?"

"Have you come to the same conclusion I have?"

"That this one Tau may be what that whole fleet of Tau were after?"

"Good man. Yes that, exactly. Useful information that is."

Gilstum smiles finally, not that I could see under his helmet, but I imagine he did, "So what would you do if you could recapture a Titan?"

I think I hear the equivalent of a large bird cawing but you never know with these jungles. "Give it back because I would really have no use for it and it would be more of a bother than a boon anyway?"

* * *

Epilogue

Blue entered the camp, towing the now quiet but obviously still fuming Luna Wolf with her. Rockeata waved at her with a clearly jittery Snekkitt and a somewhat nervous Big Mek. He hadn't gone to sleep yet despite how late it was.

Only one other team of grots had reported back, they bagged a fat and smelly marine that was trying to eat the sticks and stones in the fake rations pack without much success. Most of them wouldn't be coming back of course, but the ones that did were certifiably reliable Kommando Grots. Blue had gone out herself despite protest from both Zizzbitz and Snekkitt, saying she wasn't going to stand around as just a mascot. If Snekkitt was going to sweep her up and take her on missions, she wasn't going to just be a load and something to protect. And she had made it back, and relatively fast.

"Was a zoggin' good trap, Rockeata, just like ya said."

"See, I told ya. An' you fink yerself smarter den old Rockeata." He walked over and tapped the marine on the head with a half eaten rock. There was an angry barking as the marine tried to force all of the rudest things he could think out at the same time. "Ooo. Dis one's nice an' mean. Good job, Blue."

What trapping a marine had to do with being a reliable Kommando Grot was only known by Rockeata. Similarly, whatever wrestling an unarmed marine to the ground had to do with being a proppa Kommando and how it revealed someone's mettle or character was only known by Rockeata. But Blue believed that tomorrow was going to be fun and interesting regardless.

Maybe it wasn't going to be so great to be a Freeboota, but the next day was going to be another excellent day to be a Scraploota.

End of Collection 3

Continued in Collection 4

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<http://www.1d4chan.org/wiki/Scraplootas>