

C.S. of Borg

Thosl said, "You will not go back to the Monster Squad. Your time and mine with them are done. There is nothing owed or yet to be paid with them. Know when to let something to go."

"You know nothing of honour yourself snake." Shisen said.

She glared at him. "Speak not of me with such contempt. Your kind is best known for frightening birds out of the human's fields. I have a suggestion of where you can place your honour, but I'm sure you can guess it."

Shisen poked a finger under his hat and presumably into his head since the hat never came off not even when his head had spun through the air away from Sojanna. "I suppose that I just might have to thank you for getting me out of there."

"Yorghi, the real snake among our former midst, collected most of your pieces in anticipation of your reformation. I have no idea what she intended to do afterwards. Maybe had I not been so hasty in my departure she might have driven off and placed your pieces someplace safe."

"That was what we had discussed. Then I would assuredly have gone back to regain my honour from that _sphinx_."

"I truly love how you use honour and revenge interchangeably..." Thosl said before raising her hand up in warning. "Something approaches--borgs. <Half mumbled.> Kleese back down and do not follow them."

Thosl began to cast a longish spell and a short one. Shisen paused then began his own two short spells. Thosl finished her first spell and a rectangle of the forest changed. The edges of the rectangle shimmered with blue light. Through it they both could see a pair of black cyborgs with white markings, ribs and spinal columns. Shisen, cloaked in his magical armour, his gauntleted hands glowing with an unusual deep red light, ran through the mystic portal at the borg on the right. Thosl was glad those borg were stupid enough to travel along the ley line. She completed her second spell as she passed through the mystic portal.

Everything came to a standstill. Shisen was caught practically in mid-air in his stride. The borgs each had one leg or the other in the air mid-step. Thosl ran as hard as she could at the borg on the left. She just closed the intervening gap as the spell ran out even with its ley line extended duration. Appearing out of nowhere from the borg's perceptions, she unleashed her crimson gaze on her target twice before it even noticed her. It had no effect. The ripple of her time slip still a factor, she took a wide swing and punched the borg with all of her might before it had even half turned its head.

Shisen ran toward his chosen opponent. Thosl

appeared out of nowhere behind the other borg and attacked it. Both borg had their attention focused on her. Shisen closed in. The borg half turned toward him as he threw his first energised punch and connected. Thin chips of the borg's armour flew, leaving a scrape along the chest highest curve. The borg swung back and Shisen parried the blow. Shisen made an ineffectual swipe at the borg which retaliated with an overhand swing that Shisen blocked. He punched the borg square in the chest creating a fine web of cracks in its smooth surface. The borg struck out with a short jab that Shisen pushed aside before he punched the borg in the lower right flank. Blades sticking from the borg's finger tips raked across Shisen's mystical chestplates when he failed to parry the swipe. Shisen's next punch was blocked and the borg slipped on a patch of ice or something. It pitched forward. Shisen took advantage of it and walloped the borg with a power blow that sent it sprawling on its back.

Thosl tried to punch the borg, but it blocked her. A weapon on its right shoulder roared to life. The slugs ripped into her chest, but it was merely bothersome. It blocked another of her blows and blasted her from some kind of nozzle on its right forearm. Whatever it was seared her flesh a second time. She punched it in the head again barely harming it. In a strange manoeuvre she'd never witnessed before, arms out for balance, it raked down her belly with one of its feet. Thosl grabbed the borg by its left wrist and tried to heave the borg off of its

feet. It was too heavy. It burned her wrist with two of its fingertips and then blasted her with that light nozzle on its right wrist again.

Shisen leapt on top of the borg. He started a rapid series of blows, which the borg could barely defend against a quarter of. The borg had begun to hum loudly near the end of the flurry of blows. Suddenly it and Shisen shot into the air. Not expecting such a thing to happen Shisen fell off of the borg. He crashed to the ground. It didn't hurt him, but he was ill prepared for the borg to come careening by in a whoosh of steaming hot air. The borg raked him with long serrated claws, which it did not have before, sprouting from the back of its hand. It spun him around. He was struck again from behind and again that hot rush from the borgs flying apparatus. Shisen's armour collapsed in a dull flash and straw leaked out of his side.

The borg shot Thosl again. Thosl leapt as far as she could away from the borg. It fired on her twice again as she tried to run instead of doing something to defend herself. She made another leap but failed to time it to miss another laser blast. It shot her again and she dropped to the ground and stopped moving. The borg adjusted its aim to finish her off. Four balls of some kind of crackling energy slammed into the borg and threw it backward. Pieces of its armour exploded out into the air. Before the borg crashed into the ground it was slammed by another four blasts and another four more. It crashed

to the ground 30 ft away from where it had been standing.

Shisen was ready for the borg to come flying in. His first swing was a miss. The borg stuck its long serrated blades into Shisen's chest and lifted him off of his feet. He punched the borg turning the eye in the skull pattern on its chest into a web of cracks. The borg ripped its claws out of Shisen's chest in a spray of straw that sent him tumbling along the ground. Shisen was getting to his feet when there was a trio of explosions one right after the other. The other borg went flying past him but not under its own power. It was shot twice again in mid-air. His own borg turned up its thrusters and rocketed off as its partner struck the ground finally.

Shisen saw Thosl lying on the ground. She wasn't moving. The other borg was being blasted again. Shisen could see it being struck by a volley of four energy blasts. While still airborne it was struck again and a third time again. Its armour exploded into dust before it even hit the ground. Protected as such by someone he couldn't even see Shisen made a run for where Thosl lay. There was a pair more explosions and a third different explosion as the borg itself exploded. Shisen turned and watched its pieces cartwheel through the air.

Shisen looked over Thosl. She wasn't in good shape. Her body was covered in burns. His spell on his hands sputtered out. He tried to wake Thosl, but she didn't even make a noise. Shisen looked up. He could hear a

vehicle approaching. He readied a long distance attack spell. The vehicle came into sight. It was a hovercycle. Its rider was a large bulbous figure with a mass of tentacles. The four largest tentacles trailed behind the hovercycle as it flew through the air. The other four tentacles were each holding a strange weapon with a long spiral grip that the tentacles were wrapped around. Shisen stopped with only the last word of the spell left to go. He hoped this being wasn't a bandit.

The being on the hovercycle holstered its weapons. Shisen's mouth strings were open and ready to finish the spell. The being stopped a short distance away. It said in American, "Whoa there friend. I am here to help. You and your companion have gotten yourself into a mess."

Shisen said, "I fear my friend is dead. I cannot rouse her. What can I do to tell?"

"What do you mean what can you do to tell? Can you hear her heart?"

"I am not like her, where is her heart?"

"It'll be in her chest. Turn her over and listen to her chest. I'm no doctor but to that would stand to reason."

Shisen did as he was told. He told the tentacled being, "I hear it."

"Then she isn't dead. Where were you headed?"

Shisen did not know what else to do. He said, "We were headed to meet up with some of our compatriots."

The being asked him, "You wouldn't happen to be from the Monster Squad? <Shisen nodded.> Heading to

meeting General Max? <Shisen's mouth unsewed itself and he slowly nodded his head.> Well, that's where I'm headed. We better give the General a call and ask for backup."

Shisen closed his mouth for a moment then said, "We have no radios, please call the General."

The being pulled out a radio and called for help. The person on the other end said a big, green, six-limbed robot would be along as soon as possible. While they waited the tentacled being introduced itself. "My name is Master Sergeant Neodore. I was asked to leave the Monster Squad Second String to join the First String, non-monster that would be. Apparently I'm to replace a GB as heavy hitter. You know, a Glitterboy. Well, it's an honour to be thought of so highly for an old gunslinger like me."

"I am Sergeant Shisen and this is Sergeant Thosl."

Neodore tried to carry a conversation, but Shisen unusually did not know what to say. He was terribly worried about the basilisk, one of the few beings to consider his well being. It was long moments before they could hear something large tromping toward them. Coming in low, four legs moving it along, and two arms in the air as if they held weapons, came the robot. It had weapon turrets along its length and something large on its back. It came to a halt. A voice over a loudspeaker said, "I guess I have room for that little dragon in here. Hold on."

A hatch on the side of the robot, underneath of a turret opened. A human with dark brown skin and orange hair stuck his head out of the hatch. Shisen told him, "You have to come closer. She will be very heavy to lift. It may take all three of us."

Without closing the hatch the pilot went back wherever inside and sidled the robot up to where Thosl lay. He reappeared and stepped out of the robot. As carefully as they could manage they hefted the basilisk's body up off of the ground. It took all they had to get her to the lip of the hatch. Neodore thankfully was in the front. He used his tentacles to haul himself up into the hatch. He filled most of its smallish frame. He wriggled about and got most of his tentacles behind him. He said, "I hope this thing is in park, or off or something. I don't want to knock us stumbling forward."

The pilot was next into the hatch. He had to get there by letting go of Thosl. She sagged in the middle on those fluid hip joints. Shisen was left outside holding her legs, her tail lolling about. They got her through the hatch to about mid thigh. The pilot and Neodore had to get out. The pilot got back in. Neodore took Shisen's place. He wrapped his tentacles around her shins and pushed while the pilot pulled. They got Thosl into the robot.

The robot led the procession to the camp with Shisen sitting on its back. Neodore followed behind it on his hovercycle. They arrived quickly with the robot trampling through the woods as swiftly as it did the open

spaces. The pilot knew well where he was going and made a beeline for it. Max had Captain Miles O'Brian, the leader of the M.A.S.H. Team, there already. Rad went into the robot and came out alone carrying Thosl in his arms. The muscles in his arms bulged but he didn't seem to be having any trouble. He carried her over to a table that Captain O'Brian had set up. Rad shook his head, "Get some support under there. This isn't some wilting violet."

They propped weapons containers under it. The table collapsed onto them when Rad lay the basilisk on it. Captain O'Brian looked her over a moment. "I haven't the slightest clue what to do. See these burns. It's been how many minutes since the call came in. Normally these would be healing on their own. I don't know anything about dragon death. This dragon is still breathing, but is otherwise unresponsive."

He poked her in the shoulder. Nothing happened. "I suggest General that you get on the horn to somebody about some mystical healing."

Max rubbed his hand down over his mouth. "I don't know who to call. Nim is supposed to be offworld."

Neodore spoke up, "General, get in touch with Colonel Throk, he has been successful in such areas. I could radio him if you'd like, sir."

"Please do, Master Sergeant. I don't know the Colonel."

Neodore blinked and waved about the tip of one

tentacle. He pulled a radio off of the bandoleer slung over what amounted to his very narrow, steeply sloped shoulder. He brought the radio to his beak with one tentacle while twisting a knob on it with another, "M.S. Neodore to C. Throk, do you read me? M.S. N. to C. T. Come on, Jackie, sir."

The radio beeped three times and Neodore squawked his twice. A voice came over the radio like a roll of thunder. It demanded, "Do not tell me you miss your mommy, soldier."

"Colonel, we have a medical emergency. A dragon, wait, no a basilisk is down."

"Thosl, from the first string? I thought that deserter was dead."

Max demanded the radio. "Good afternoon Colonel, this is General Sterling. That 'deserter' is one of my soldiers now. We need your medical assistance."

"I'm sorry General, I cannot do anything. I cannot heal magical creatures like dragons."

"Cannot or will not Colonel?"

"Cannot. Hold on, General... I can send over Sergeant Pokeri. Perhaps he can be of assistance. What is your location?"

Max got things organised and then there was nothing to do but wait. An hour later and Thosl was still in the same condition. Finally Master Sergeant Pentax came over the radio announcing the approach of a dark purple-black dragon by air. The dragon flew into the camp and

settled down carefully to the ground. It was long and low slung to the ground. Long spikes ran down its spine and others stuck out from the sides of its neck. It had a long straggly beard sprouting from its chin. It blinked at everybody, cleared its throat, and said, "I am Sergeant Pokeri. Where is the injured female?"

Neodore waved a tentacle in Thosl's direction. Pokeri said, "I'd never figure to see you again so soon, 'Dore."

Neodore shrugged his tentacles. Pokeri went over to the table and sniffed Thosl from top to bottom. He nudged her with his nose and pawed the end of her tail. He said, "I pronounce this... a dead, basilisk. <He laughed.> Sorry, been wanting to use that for ages. This is gonna cost someone. It is going to take me out of combat for a fair number of hours, maybe days. You sure you want her fixed up?"

Max stepped up, "Yes I do. Sergeant Pokeri, I'm General Sterling. If your Commanding Officer has a problem with this tell him to talk to me."

"The Colonel won't have a problem. I'll have the problem, when I end up like this and there's no one to help me. What do I get out of this?"

"I won't put in a bad word about you to Nim if you heal my basilisk."

Pokeri huffed and mumbled something. Pokeri began to cast a spell that went on for a half a minute. He concluded and said, "Your basilisk is restored."

She didn't look any different. Chris asked, "Why doesn't she appear to be healed? Those burns look the same as before."

Pokeri replied, "Lesser species often don't have the fight in them. Their regenerative powers are weak. Slow."

"I would teach you of slow, night-wyrm, if I did not hurt so." said Thosl slowly with her eyes still closed.