

Play Date

Max approached G'lishi and asked him to come along with him for a meeting. G'lishi shifted forms to his much improved elven child and went with him. They came to a small clearing where about five or six trees had been sheared off close to the snowy ground. Max said, "I don't think you've had the opportunity to meet with Staff Sergeant Beth. She wanted to have a conversation with you. I guess not about anything in particular, but I thought that now might be a good time."

Max told G'lishi to stay put and went around a tree on the other side of the little clearing. He was there a moment and then came around the other side followed shyly by a being that G'lishi knew instinctively but had never been in contact with before. It was a satyr. A girl satyr. She was about the size of a human woman, like the few G'lishi had seen in the city of Tolkeen. She wasn't wearing any clothes, but he didn't know anything about satyr clothes so this must be normal.

Max hesitantly put a hand to her back and tried to hurry her along. Her furry legs looked sturdy and steady, and her cloven hooves bit right into the thin packed snow. She had blue eyes that almost seemed to glow they were such a bright sapphire colour. Short pointed grey horns stuck out of her forehead. Her reddish hair almost touched them. He could smell her

very distinctly, but not with his nose. The scent wasn't like another dragon, but it was strongly magical.

Max said, "Well, you two talk. I uh, have other things to do."

Staff Sergeant Beth spoke in American, "Hi, my name is Beth. I'm a Staff Sergeant with your recon team."

Her voice was sweet but a little bit husky. It seemed it would be good for being both gentle and also commanding. G'lishi asked if she could speak faerie. She replied in faerie, "Let's walk. I have to look around my area for a bit."

The Prattling

G'lishi was intrigued by the scent of the Satyr. It was, different. Not that he was old enough to be bored with life yet, but this was definitely something new.

She introduced herself, and G'lishi nodded.

"Sergeant is higher than Corporal, and twice higher than Private. I'm a Private. That means I listen to you even though you're not my boss, right?" G'lishi cocked his head for a second, then asks, "Do you speak Faerie? I speak Faerie better than American. R.C. speaks Faerie, then he taught me American."

"What area is your area?" G'lishi asked, but he continued without letting her answer. "Dryads stay in the area around their tree, but you're not a dryad. You

are a satyr." G'lishi frowned for a second while continuing, "I don't understand satyrs except that they like to have fun. I like to have fun too." With an exaggerated shrug, clearly not a natural gesture to him, he added, "Rad likes to have fun, and sometimes the others do, but not very often. They're all serious all the time. Will you have fun with me?"

"I'm having fun already," she said.

Later, because she never had a chance to answer G'lishi returned to the subject of satyrs, asking again about what area was hers, what do satyrs do for fun, where they live, what they eat and so on. He waited for answers this time after asking the questions all at once.

"It's not the area that I own. It's the place that I am supposed to patrol. It's work. We've covered a bit already. I never find anything on these missions. It's all rather boring. Most of this is boring. But, we're doing a good thing."

G'lishi looked at her with a bit of curiosity. He sensed she was stressing something, but it was so obvious to him that he didn't quite get it. "We're defending our territory against bad humans who want to kill everyone," he sort of answered, sort of asked. That's what everyone else has told him is what's happening, he'd never even thought of questioning why they were fighting the fight.

"That's right," she agreed.

"What do satyrs like to do? I thought everybody knew that... Um, well, obviously we like to... dance. Yes dance!"

Beth started to do a jig and then raising her arms out like wings she spun around and around. She stopped and asked G'lishi if he could dance and he tried to show her. She laughed and said, "I can help you to dance. It's a spell though so you have to want me to cast it on you. I wouldn't do it to someone in the army if they didn't want me to."

G'lishi's eyes grew wide with excitement, and he nodded. "Yes, magic is good, and I want to learn."

He tried to pay attention to what she did, with the idea of trying to duplicate it later, until he got too caught up in the dance to pay attention to anything else. Music, bright and full of trumpets, horns, and strings filled the air. G'lishi watched as his arms and legs moved on their own. He danced to the beat of the music at a fairly quick pace.

At first he did it in mostly the same spot moving side to side. Then she stepped in and grabbed his hands. They began to dance around in a circle. She picked up the pace as the music did. Soon she let go of him. He circled one direction while she danced the other. She spun around gracefully even as she circled suddenly breaking from the tune and moving in contrast to it.

G'lishi carried on along with the music. She was

nimble and ethereal as if she barely touched the ground. Her lissome form and captivating eyes only added to the enchantment that had nothing whatsoever to do with magic. He kept turning his head to watch her as she whirled and sashayed and pranced.

Her hair flounced and waved. Her breasts bounced and swayed. It was like another dance going on, but it didn't mean any more to the dragon. She pirouetted with her arms above her head her hands making gestures.

Nearby there was a sudden loud wet sound like something bursting. A flash of damp heat blew past them turning the snow straight into water that splashed almost a foot up from the ground.

Beth stopped dancing, her breast jiggled briefly then came to rest. She turned to G'lishi, "What was that."

He didn't get a chance to answer right away.

Death on Two Legs

There was a tremendous thundering roar the likes of which G'lishi had never heard before. It shook through the air. The ground began to shake violently. A huge reptile, bigger than G'lishi at full size, came tromping into the area at a furious pace. It ran on two powerful massive rear legs with scythe-like claws. Its arms were short and stubby but had dagger-like claws. A long tail whipped about behind it. Its head was huge and it had

jaws that dwarfed G'lishi's by more than three times. Its teeth were similarly large, curved and razor sharp. It smashed straight through a tree like it was nothing and headed straight for Beth.

Beth shrieked and turned to run. She took off like a shot as fast as she could go but it wouldn't be of any use. The dinosaur was much faster. She weaved through the trees and it just ran right through them, wood flying out in wicked sprays. G'lishi danced on helplessly unable to break free of the spell. The dinosaur snapped at Beth with its humungous jaws. It just barely missed her. She leapt to the left, and circled around back the way she came, again just barely dodging the snapping jaws. The dinosaur let out another roar that shook the trees as it skidded to a halt and turned after her.

Beth ran screaming past G'lishi and the spell terminated suddenly. G'lishi stopped in mid-step. He turned as the dinosaur barrelled down on him, the earth rocking with every step.

As the dinosaur paralleled with him G'lishi let out a blast of fire that hardly scorched the side of its head. It ran past for a moment and then skidded to a halt. As it turned G'lishi shouted at Beth to run or hide. The great beast took the shout as some kind of challenge and roared back as it took only three lightning quick steps to come back to G'lishi. G'lishi was moving out of the way. Still, its head came shooting down, jaws widening as it went. It snapped him up before he could even blink. Its

razor sharp and incredibly hard teeth sank into G'lishi's transformed flesh. One of his feet fell to the ground severed by the scything bite. G'lishi howled in pain. The teeth closest to his face were sunk through his upper chest.

The terrible thundering monster tossed G'lishi to the ground to try for a better bite; one that it could swallow. G'lishi let his transformation slip. The dinosaur brought one of its massive feet forward to pin his legs. G'lishi twisted as he changed back into his full-sized true form. The monster's foot couldn't clear G'lishi's phenomenally fast gaining bulk. The name of the thing attacking him suddenly came to him. It was called a T-Rex. G'lishi got to his feet as the T-Rex took two quick steps backward out of his way. It didn't wait though.

G'lishi stood on the stump where one of his feet should be. He raised his arms to ward off the T-Rex as its jaws came snapping for his neck. The shifting of his weight caused him to stumble. The T-Rex missed his neck but sunk its sword-teeth deep into his flank ripping out a huge chunk. Beth was on the radio screaming, "Run away! Run away, G'lishi!"

That massive head darted in again. G'lishi knocked it aside and staggered to the right. The T-Rex was tenacious and not content with the piece it had ripped out. It dropped it as it tried to strike again. It bit into G'lishi at the base of the neck. G'lishi felt terribly wounded. Unbidden his brain told him "grievous" in

American. Beth was no longer on the radio. The T-Rex held on tight, but G'lishi moved and thrashed about. Trees were felled and the heat softened earth churned up underneath of the effectively equal sized combatants.

Overhead, dark roiling clouds began to fill the sky in the blink of an eye. No less than twenty lightning bolts seared down out of the sky in a blinding flash. Fallen trees burst into flaming ash. There was an instantaneous air shattering staccato of thunder bursts. One of the bolts scorched the T-Rex in the middle of the back. The mark was no bigger or worse than G'lishi's flame burst earlier. The T-Rex was startled by the noise, so much greater than anything it could make was. It let go of G'lishi and backed away.

From somewhere G'lishi could hear Beth shouting, "Get away from him."

It was a cry that was angry and frightened, but also commanding. He couldn't tell if she was talking to him or to the T-Rex.

G'lishi positioned his feet underneath of himself and leapt into the air, wings unfurling. He flapped with all of his strength up and back away from the dinosaur. He began casting a spell. The magic built and formed to his will. He finished his casting and a sort of mist formed around him. The mist settled upon him and formed into grey and white patches. The patches were like the shifting of the colour of cloud above him. He circled the T-Rex and started another spell.

G'lishi unleashed the spell on the dinosaur. It had begun pacing, and almost immediately it stumbled. It caught its balance and swayed about looking at the ground as if it had just seen it for the first time. Not yet satisfied G'lishi launched into a third spell. He tried to affect the T-Rex directly but the spell didn't work that way. The T-Rex stumbled away from where it had it come to a stop. It turned and roared at that previous spot. It roared again and again at the spot. It stamped about in a drunken little circle as it roared.

G'lishi flew in circles above the ensorcelled giant lizard. Angrily he began to rain fire down on it. The flames burnt scorch marks into its skin. It alternated between roaring at the empty space that refused to succumb to its might and roaring in G'lishi general direction as he circled overhead. Out of the corner of his eye G'lishi caught site of Beth make a break from her hiding spot. She ran back in the direction that they had come, back to his camp. G'lishi flapped his wings and unleashed a blast of fire at the dinosaur.

The flames burned a mark into the monster's chest. The thing roared its dislike of the treatment it was receiving from something that was food just a moment ago. G'lishi pegged it again. The creature darted forward suddenly as G'lishi was taking aim for his next shot. G'lishi unleashed the flames. Suddenly the great beast was airborne, the fiery ejection streaking past it. It's leap propelled it right past G'lishi on a trajectory higher

than G'lishi's position. G'lishi turned to attack it from the rear.

The T-Rex landed heavily. The ground shook and it cracked and collapsed beneath the thing's massive weight. It stumbled out of the holes it had made. G'lishi hit it again. The monster was not dying quickly enough. G'lishi began to try and blind it again. It staggered around knocking down trees and roaring, often at the location of G'lishi's fear spell's release. G'lishi paused a brief moment to examine the mottling of his skin. It kept changing patterns very slowly. It was no wonder the beast below seemed to pretty much still be able to see him.

A pair of mini-missiles came shrieking in. They exploded against the T-Rex's right flank staggering the beast. A Flying Titan streaked by higher up than G'lishi was flying. There was another high whining sound. A larger missile collided with the T-Rex in a burst of plasma. G'lishi let loose another fiery bolt scoring it on the end of the flailing monster's nose. The Flying Titan circled around and fired another pair of mini-missiles. R.C. sure had become a better shot wherever he had been. The minis hit the T-Rex in the neck.

Another large missile came streaking in from the other direction. It moved a lot faster than any of the others had. It slammed right into the T-Rex's head driving itself deep into the dinosaur's eye and then exploding a fraction of a second later. The T-Rex crashed

to the ground. It raised its ruined head from the ground and let out a terrible roar. Then its head dropped back to the ground. From out of the thin black trees came a robot that G'lishi had seen a couple of times. It was one of Max's robots. It walked right up to the fallen T-Rex's head and levelled its railgun. Max fired a pair of bursts into the dinosaur's head to make certain it was dead.

R.C. came in for a landing and after a moment G'lishi moved to join them on the ground. G'lishi landed on the other side of the fallen T-Rex. Still plenty angry, he ripped into the dinosaur's throat. The taste was good and not just for the revenge. After a moment he stopped, turned to the others, and asked if they wanted to eat some too. Max opened the front hatch of his robot. He looked at G'lishi, "Um, not right now."

R.C. removed his helmet, but it wasn't R.C. It was a dark-brown skinned human. He had a broad face and a wide nose. His hair was a dull orange colour, and he had some on his chin. He sort of looked like Nim but not exactly. Nim had brighter hair, and hair under his nose instead.

G'lishi offered some T-Rex meat to the stranger too. He shook his head. "No, thank you." he said.

The New Guy

After eating, the stranger was still around, G'lishi

turned on his see aura, and detect psionics powers and peered at the stranger, assessing the newcomer psychically. His aura was that of a completely normal human like those on the streets in Tolkeen. He had no great personal power like Rad. He had no spots of different and dead colours like Max. He had no psionics. Seeing that he was being watched the man said something to Max and then came over to G'lishi walking slowly with his hands open and empty at his sides.

"G'lishi, right? We haven't met since the first day. I'm Private 1st Class Anthony Riley, Recon Squad."

His voice was average but sounded cracked or splintered. He was dressed like a biker with leather pants and a heavy leather jacket studded with metal. He was also wearing biker gloves and blocky "engineer's" boots.

"Recon squad?" Confused with the American term G'lishi thought hard on that one, then gave up. "What's that mean?"

"It's the scouting work." Anthony said.

"Oh. Max is teaching me to do that." G'lishi paused for a second, putting 2 and 2 together. "Is Beth on your squad?" Remembering that she was around too, G'lishi looked around for her. "Where is she? The big lizard didn't get her, I made sure of that--but I lost her during the fight."

G'lishi looked down at his regenerating foot, it wasn't started yet as his body concentrated on the more

important torso wounds. Deciding that he didn't really want to walk or fly, he looked back at Anthony and asked, "Did you see her? Is she okay?"

Anthony put his hand to the radio headset at his ear, "Beth, come in 10-4A."

"This is Staff Sergeant Beth. Is it over yet? Is G'lishi okay?" she replied.

"It's over. Roasted that dino real good. I'm talking to the dragon right now. He's the worse for wear but he's still talking." Anthony said.

"If your whole job is scouting, and Max is a big boss, are you going to teach me now instead of Max?" Remembering how the man handled the fight, G'lishi adds, "I guess you more than scout, your missiles hit well."

"That's right. I'm the extra muscle in the squad," he said before his radio let out a long beep. He answered it, "P.1C. Riley."

The radio said, "Ride back in, we have a mission pending."

Anthony replied, "Understood M.S." To G'lishi he said, "I have to go."

G'lishi nodded sagely and said, "Understood P.1C. Riley." in his best unconscious imitation of the man. "I will see you later."