Terror on the Planet of the Apes, Chapter Four

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Terror on the Planet of the Apes
STAN LEE PRESENTS:

PART 4 OF TERROR ON THE PLANET OF THE APES!

A RIVERBOAT NAMED SIMIAN

ESCAPE: THE ENNUIATION OF PROMISED FREEDOM WAS AN ILLUSIONARY IN NIGHTMARE.

ESCAPE: FROM THE CAVERN-BASED INHABITANTS, MUTANT MURDERS, S DAWNED BY NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST AND NOW CONTROLRED BY REVENANT COLONIAL BEASTS.

ESCAPE: THE THEFT OF A CLEANING SKYCRACK NOW SEPARATED FROM A HAST ARMADA OF MUTANT WAR MACHINES. AND PASSTED IN A EXPLOSION IN APRIL.

ESCAPE: THE REBELIOUS HUMAN YOUTH WHERE D DREAMS OF APODOMINATION WAS CAST HIM IN THE ROLE OF ETERNAL PATRIARCH, ALEXANDER.

ESCAPE: THE YOUTH WHOSE ALLEGIANCE TO JASON HAS BEEN HANDED HIM TRAPPON: THE LAYGLASS THE PATRIARCH LEADER OF THE STRIKE-TORN INTERGALAXIC CYCLE, RECENTLY RESTORED FROM THE MUTANTS BY JASON AND ALEXANDER.

AND WAKKO, FIRST-LIEUTENANT IN BRUTUS' ORRILLA SQUADRON OF THE REVENANT TERRORISTS, A BRIEF ALLY TO JASON AND ALEXANDER WHILE TRAPPED WITH THEM IN THE MUTANTS ARENA-PIT - BUT NOW DETERMINED TO RESTORE THE FORMER STATUS QUO...

NO CLOSER HUMAN -- OR THE LAYGLASS' BEINGS TASTE THE SKY! OUR NEW DESTINATION IS BRUTUS' ABSURD, ENORMOUS...

AND I'D ADVISE YOU NOT TO DEViate FROM IT.

ESCAPE: A STRANGE SKYBOAT CLEANING THE PURPLE MISTED AIR OF THE RADIOACTIVE - WASTE ZONE. A SKYBOAT WHOSE CONTROL WAS ONCE AGAIN SHIFTED HANDS. ESCAPE: A RETURN TO THE PRISON OF NIGHTMARE.
ANYTHING YOU SAY, LAWGIVER...

...BUT YOU WON'T MIND IF I DO IT RATHER AGGRESSIVELY, WILL YOU--?

JASON PUNCHES THE CONTROLS--

--AND THE SKY-BOT LAUNCHES INTO SWERING CHAOS!

WHAT THE--??

CHANK!

HE'S DOWN JACE--AND SO'S HIS WEAPON!!

SO YOU'D BETTER TRY TO PULL THIS THING OUT OF ITS DIVE--

--WHILE I KEEP WARKO AWAY FROM THE WEAPON!!

FRAUGHTLY SCRAMBLING ACROSS THE PITCHING DECK, ALEX DIVES--

--AND THOUGH HE MANAGES TO GRASP THE LASER PISTOL...

YOU'RE TOO LATE, TRAITOR--!
ALEX! TRY TO HOLD ON TO...

UHNN-!!

FAR TOO LATE!

SPWOK!

--AND THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL GET IT IS FROM A DISTANCE!

JASON DUCKS BELOW THE SCORCHING STREAM OF LIGHT...

AND ONCE AGAIN THE SHIP REELS THROUGH THE SWIRLING NAVE WEAVING AN ABSTRACT COURSE TOWARD A GROUND OF CHARGED AND TWISTED RUIN...

SHRAM!

SPRAET!

--LEAVING THE CONTROL DIALS WELL OPEN...

ALEX--HE'S GOT THAT THING AIMED AT ME AGAIN! HE'S GOING TO FIRE--!

OOOPH!!

NOT IF I CAN HELP IT, PAL!

THUS, WHILE THE STRANGE RAIDERS OVER THE SHIP'S DECK...

THE WEIRD CRAFT ITSELF PLUMMETS DOWNWARD ON A COLLISION-COURSE WITH DEATH.
Then the desperate sounds of conflict are sliced by a sudden quiet. The hammering voice of the lawyer...

"Please... stop your fighting! Can't you see what you're doing?"

Can't you see that we're going to...

Skrash!

The sound is awesome in fury, a thunderous cacophony of impacting steel and rock, a grating shriek of cataclysmic horror and irrevocable doom.

The aftermath is softer, no more than the roaring rush of air feeding flame...

Until, that is, a lone figure slowly stirs...

Oh... no... all of them... all dead...?

His name is Jason...

And he rises a stark figure of seething rage highlighted against the blistering conflagration...

Except the gorilla—he's still breathing...

Still living...

A crackling, whispering sound which is heard by no one...
...AND ALMOST INVOLUNTARILY HE FEELS THE POROUS WEIGHT AROUND HIS HEAD.

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, WARKO -- YOU AND THE REST OF BRUTUS' FILTHY GORILLAS -- IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOU THAT ALEX AND THE LAWGIVER ARE DEAD --!

BUT YOU'LL PAY FOR IT, YOU STINKING BEAST! YOU'LL PAY WITH YOUR Hairy SKULL SMASHED INTO...

YOUR EMOTIONS, JASON, ARE EVIL. THEY HAVE CONVINCED YOU TO HATE WARKO'S IDENTITY AS GORILLA... WHEN YOU SHOULD DEPROLEH HIS CONDUCT AS TRANSCEDEED.

HIS UNCONSCIOUS BODY POSSES LITTLE THREAT. JASON... WHAT PURPOSE WILL BE SERVED BY KILLING HIM?

AT LEAST IT'LL PREVENT HIM FROM KILLING US WHEN HE WAKES UP...

WE'LL BE MILES AWAY FROM HERE BY THE TIME WARKO REVIVES. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET THE LAWGIVER BACK TO THE CITY... AND THEN SIT BACK AND WATCH AS BRUTUS AND HIS BAND ARE LOCKED UP.

YOU WIN, ALEX -- BUT I WISH I HAD YOUR FORTH IN THE LAW...

...BECAUSE IT STOPPED WORKING FOR ME THE DAY MY PARENTS WERE MURDERED BY GORILLAS LIKE WARKO.

DO NOT LET YOUR HATRED BEND YOU TO MERcy OR YOU WILL NEVER KNOW THE PEACE OF CONSCIENCE. IT IS TRUE THAT WARKO THREATENED TO KILL ME, AND HE WAS WRONG TO DO SO...

BUT I HAVE HEARD YOU THREATEN TO KILL HIM. THEREFORE YOU ARE EQUALLY WRONG. YOU HAVE ALLOWED YOUR EMOTIONS TO TRANSCEND YOUR MORALITY. YOUR EMOTIONS WANTED TO BELIEVE THAT YOUNG ALEX AND I WERE DEAD...

...AND THEY HAVE ALMOST FORCED YOU TO THE ACT OF MURDER.

AND IT'LL PREVENT YOU FROM EVER GETTING A FAIR TRIAL, JASE. THERE WON'T BE AN APPEAL HUMAN ALIVE WHO'LL BELIEVE YOU DIDN'T KILL BRUTUS' WIFE IF THEY FIND OUT ABOUT THIS.

--ALIVE AND KICKING, JASE. AND NOT TOO SURE TO SEE THAT THE LAWGIVER'S RIGHT.

THUS, ARMED WITH TWO LASER PISTOLS SALVAGED FROM THE BLAZING WRECK OF THE SKYCRAGT, THREE INSIGNIFICANT FIGURES BEGIN THEIR LONG TREG THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN ZONE.

PEACE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, BUT ONLY AT THE EXPENSE OF MANY. THIS NIGHTMARE THE HUMAN FEELS HE HAS FALLEN SUBSERVIENT TO THE TWO ARES WHO WILL SOMEDAY DECIDE HIS FATE...
Given the circumstances then, it is not so unusual to find Jason adopting the lead. After all, it allows him isolation from his two companions...

Come on—I'm anxious to put those miles between us and—

Run while you can!! It's one of the great-death beasts!

What the--?!

...allows him too to pass safely beyond the range of a grotesque predator—a predator whose momentary indecision was more than counteracted by its subsequent zeal.

Correction... krzzz

...whatever a "great-death beast" is looks like just another one of the things we faced in the arena-rut.

You all right, Lawsiver? I think so. If you could just help me out from under the beast...

...it was one of the great-death beasts...
YOUR SHOULDER, LAWGIVER...

Fortunately, it is nothing serious, Young Alex. I was injured by the beast's talons. However, had his fangs pierced my skin, I might be in considerable trouble. For the great-death beasts were spawned in the mutative rays of the Holocaust, and these mutative rays are transferred by the injection of their saliva to the bloodstream.

BUT AS IT IS, ALL I'LL NEED IS A SIMPLE BANDAGE...

AND THIS, MOMENTS LATER...

There you are, Sir. Do you think you can walk?

Oh, of course... of course I can walk.

Yeah—but where to?—the forbidden zone extends to all horizons.

OR HADN'T YOU NOTICED...?

We're lost.

IT WOULD SEEM THAT BRUTUS, HOWEVER, IS ANYTHING BUT LOST. THE RUTHLESS LEADER OF THE SECRET RENEGADES AND OFFICIAL PEACE OFFICER OF THE CITY—HAS UNERRINGLY LED HIS COMPLEMENT OF CITY PEACE-KEEPERS DIRECTLY TO THE CAVE OF THE INHERITORS...

SQUADRON, HALT! DRONE, I WISH TO SEE BE-ONE.

VERY WELL—but the rest of your gorillas will remain where they are...

...under penalty of death as mandated by the Supreme Be-One.
These gorillas are my subordinates, and duly appointed representatives of the city. Since when has Be-One decided to accord such little respect to those in my command?

Since a band of gorillas assaulted our cavern yesterday and expelled four dromes.

I see very well... escort me to Be-One.

Tell me... this assault yesterday... were there two others involved... a human and a chimp both young...?

Gestalt commander Be-One will divulge all that you are permitted to know.

A railcar awaits us just ahead.

Then a hurtling journey through labyrinthine tunnels...

...And Brutus is conducted to the immense cavern-receptacle of the inheritor gestalt commanders...

Mutant drone Ex-usher the gorilla Brutus forward...

...And instruct drone Ex to delay all interruptive communication input until otherwise commanded.
WE MEET AGAIN, BRUTUS—AND SO SOON! DO YOU WISH TO REPORT YOUR PROGRESS?

GREETINGS, RE-OBER. ANY END OF OUR AGREEMENT IS PROCEEDING WELL...

MY DOUBLE-IDENTITY SERVES OUR MUTUAL OBJECTIVE MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN WE HAD HOPED. AS LEADER OF THE AMNESTIZED TERRORISTS, I HAVE INITIATED A CAMPAIGN OF METHODOUS SUBVERSION AMONG THE INTEGRATED CITY.

AND AS OFFICIAL PEACE BROKER, I HAVE CONVINced THE POPULACE THAT A YOUNG APE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF MY WIFE...

TRUE BY HAVING HATER OF THE HUMAN ELEMENT, I HAVE BEEN TO WEARN THE CITY'S UNITED STRENGTH, RENDERING IT SUSCEPTIBLE TO YOUR IMMINENT INVASION.

HOWEVER, MY ACTUAL BUSINESS HERE CONCERNS THE AFORESIMENTIONED HUMAN. HE HAS ESCAPED AND ATTEMPTS TO DISPROVE THE CHARGES OF MURDER--

WE KNOW BRUTUS. HE HAS ALREADY BEEN HERE AND HAS RESCUED THE LAWGIVER.

YOU MUST GIVE ME SOME DRONES—IMMEDIATELY!

THE LAWGIVER—THEN WE MUST STOP THEM, IF THE LAWGIVER RETURNS POWER, OUR ENTIRE PLAN WILL COLLAPSE.

AND SOME OF YOUR WAR-MACHINES—AS MANY AS YOU CAN SHARE.

TEAR, BRUTUS—YA BLEW DA WHOLE CAPER, YA UGLY MUG.

MUTANT-DRONE DEE—PROVIDE THE GORILLA WITH A CONTINGENT OF DRONES AND MACHINES, AND BE ADVISED THAT THE ORDER DOES NOT IN ANY WAY COUNTERMAND PAST OR FUTURE ORDERS PERTAINING TO THE EVENTUAL ANNihilation OF BOTH THE HUMAN AND APE POPULATION.

REQUEST GRANTED, BRUTUS, BUT WE WARN YOU. FURTHER FAILURES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

WE ARE BRAINS AND YOU ARE BRUTUS. IF YOU FAIL US AND BETTER SHOOF US.

ACKNOWLEDGED. LITLIE-DEE, AND BE-THREE. THANK YOU AND BEWELL.

YOU BETTER BElIEVE IT, DEE—ON YER WAY OUT TELL DAY STUPID DRONE EX TO OPEN UP DA INLET AGAIN.

NEXT ISSUE: THE LONG-AWAITED CONCLUSION OF TERROR ON THE PLANET OF THE APES.
CAN'T BE POISONOUS IF THE SHAGGY CREATURES ARE DRINKING IT. THEY MAY BE DUMB, BUT I DOUBT THEY'D COMMIT SUICIDE.

NO KIDDIN' JAMES--NOT THE WAY WE'VE SEEN THEM STRUGGLE AGAINST those INHERITORS CHARACTERS.

RIGHT NOW, I SUGGEST WE WASH THE PURPLE MIST FROM OUR THROATS...

...UNFORTUNATE THAT OUR MERE PRESENCE MUST FRIGHTEN THE POOR CREATURES OFF. EXTREMELY SKITTISH, AREN'T THEY...? I DON'T BLAME THEM, SIR--WHAT WITH THOSE MUSH-FACED INHERITORS ALWAYS TRYING TO SWATCH THEM--!
Well, there seems to be at least one brave fellow among the lot. Seems to be curious, doesn't he?

...But I suppose it's safe enough to bathe my wound in.

Hmm! Water's rather bitter tasting...

Urg-urg!

Luckily it's not too deep to--

Wha-??

The current too strong for me--!

Seeing the lawyer swept off his feet, Jason and Alex lunges forward to his aid.

...joined, for some inextricable reason, by the toad-shaggy creature.

But all hopes of rescue swiftly drown in the implacable grasp of the underwater current.

Strain as they might, all four find themselves helplessly sucked forward--straight toward a submerged tunnel. An underwater corridor bored into the very side of one of the river-girding mountains...
Wild Panic assails each of them. Bravely, they struggle for handholds on the mossy tunnel walls... and when they realize that any resistance is futile, a new panic floods them with livid horror...

Then, abruptly, they surface... and gasping, gurgle... they gulp the precious air...

But the respite is a brief one...

Hold your breath--we're going under again!!

This time the surface is non-existent...

The question is torn from Jason's mind... replaced by a shimmering stream of bubbles...

...for the tunnel is stuffed with madly rushing water... an irresistible vortex which sucks them downward, battering and scraping them against the tunnel walls, sweeping them forward through hell with some unknown force, but what force... what could possibly create this vortex--?

...bubbles signifying the lawsayer's loss of air.
Then as the lagerth's body limply succumbed to the inexorable current, Jason glimpsed a reflective surface above...

...until at last two heads breche the surface in spray...

— Whew! If this tunnel hadn't widened when it did...

— Never mind that, Jase—I just swung that log over here before we get swept away again!

—I don't know about our shaggy friend here, but I'm in no condition to swim another stroke—!

...and limbs bursting, he grasps the lagerth's scales—desperately claws his way upward, fighting the forward vortex every climbing inch of the way...

— To greet air... cool, sweet precious air...

Well, it looks like we finally slammed into some luck, eh, Alex? As long as we've got this log, I don't care how strong the current gets.

Bite my tongue, Jase—The good news isn't quitting—!

There's light up ahead! The tunnels coming to an end—!

Yeah... Unless this tunnel decides to narrow again...

Urg! Urg!

But...

Easy on the ecstasy, Alex. I wouldn't count on the news being that good...
IN FACT, ONCE WE GET OUT OF THIS TUNNEL, I WOULDN'T EVEN COUNT ON THE RIVER...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, JASE...?

UHMMPH!

I MEAN THAT THERE'S LIGHT OUT THERE, BUT NOTHING ELSE! THE RIVER JUST SEEMS TO...

A WATERFALL!!

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS--EVER SINCE WE STARTED HEARING THAT ROAR!

HANG ON FOR YOUR WATERLOGGED LIVES--

--DISAPPEAR!!

THE MYSTERIOUS CAUSE OF THE VORTEX: A HALF-MILE TUMBLE OF RAGING TURBULENCE AND FROTH...ALSO KNOWN AS--

--BECAUSE WE'RE GOING DOWN!!

AND THE BOTTOM'S A LONG WAY OFF!!
THEIR IMPACT is lost from view, an insignificant splash into the far greater fury of cascading torrents...

AND FOR A MOMENT THERE IS NOTHING... nothing but gravity’s violent roar of water, mercilessly pounding water...

MORE THAN SERENE the lake is a glittering sheen of bright promise, carved in a lush valley of equal splendor. It is a glossy jewel in a setting of verdant life...

I MUST SAY I’m glad to be here... but I don’t think I’d want to make the journey again.

Yeah, sure it’s weird—being washed through a mountain clear out of the forbidden zone...

But I wonder why this lake isn’t bigger. You’d think it would overflow with all that water constantly gushing into it. Unless there’s a drainage point somewhere...

THERE IT IS—at the far side of the lake, another river, Alex. And no way of telling where it leads...

...but since we can’t go back up the water-fall, our best bet is to build a raft and take it down the river. Too bad I lost that mutant weapon in the water. Would’ve been handy for cutting down logs.

AUGUST 24: THE LAWGIVER smiles, grateful for the common peel, which has sealed the bitter dichotomy between apes and Muman...
The tracks lead up to the river. Peace officer Brutus.

None sir—the first set of tracks just vanishes into the water.

Very well, sergeant. We'll return to the site of the crash now.

Warko—you incompetent fool!!

You were with the primitives. What were their plans?

J—just to return to our city... with the living!

Silence! Then as far as you know, they must have travelled up that river—back to our city?

Yes—Brutus—!

Impossible. The undercurrent is too strong to go upriver; they could only have gone downstream.

Is there a way to circumvent the river?

Yes—a passage through the mountains.

And where does that lead? Mutant-drone eggs?

To the river—society—if one survives the river itself.

Good. That is the route we shall take...
WE SEEM TO BE MAKING HELPING US NOW—INSTEAD OF TRYING TO MURDER US... WHICH REMINDS ME... HOW ARE YOU FEELING, LAUGIVER-SIR?

OH, JUST FINE, YOUNG ALEX—JUST FINE.

IT'S SO PEACEFUL HERE THAT I CAN ALMOST FORGET THE IMPENDING WAR.

WAR—?!

LOOK—A SETTLEMENT ON THE RIVER—!

Urg! Urg!

YOU SAID IT, LAUGIVER...

AND JUST LOOK AT THE SUGAR CANES!

YES—OF COURSE. WHY DID YOU ASSUME THE MUTANTS TOOK ME CAPTIVE—AND INCARCERATED ME?

WHY DID YOU THINK BRUTUS DECEIVED ME INTO LEAVING OUR CITY AND ENTERING THE FORBIDDEN ZONE—?

PADDLE CLOSER—THEY SEEM FRIENDLY ENOUGH...

HOWDY STRANGERS! YOU JUST IN TIME TO SET AN CHAW THE EVENIN' FAT—!

SO POLE THAT SILLY CHIEF OF YORES ON IN HERE—AND GET SET TO GET!
WELL COME ON, FOLKS -- NO REASON TO BE AFRAID. WE'RE AN EASY-COMIN' BUNCH OUT HERE -- NEVER SHOT NO ONE NONON FOR NOTHIN' LESS THAN BEIN' CROSS-EYED!

ALEX, DO YOU GET THE FEELING THAT THIS IS A THING OF STRANGE...?

JACE, I ALREADY LEFT THAT FEELING FAR BEHIND.

WELL, NOW THAT YER SATISFIED I AIN'T ABOUT TO BITE Yore EARS OFF... I'D LIKE US TO LISTEN T'YOUR NAME.


WELL... GLAD TO MEET Y' And i Guess i Seem To Be CHEWING Y'HEAD, OF COURSE...

UH... 0-Glad to Meet You, Gunpowder... But... You seem to Be Chewin' Me, Inadvertently, Of Course...

SPOONNY, NO WONDER-- WITH YER BONES STICKIN' OUT EVERY WHICH-WAY YOUL' FOLKS'GONNA' CHUPPENSKY--?

THE NAME'S GUNPOWDER, AIN'T LAD... 'TIL YA CROSS ME LEAST-WAYS, AN' OF COURSE WE GET ALONG HERE--!

UH... TELL ME, MR. JULIUS -- If I WINDED MYSELF IN TROUBLE, I SPECUT WE ARE HUMANS AN' APES, YORE.

WE AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' AGAINST HUMANS OR APES, IF WE WINDED WIT ME...
"THE LAWGIVER"
WELL, MAKE UP YORE MIND, FRIEND. DO I CALL YA "THEE" OR DO I CALL YA "LAWGIVER"?

AH... WELL! LAWGIVER WILL SURFACE.

WELL, LAWGIVER, I WANT YA TO GAZE YORE EYES OVER YONDER AND TAKE A GOOD LONG GREEN LOOK AT JULH PRIDE AN' JOY.

WHAT YER SEEIN' IS THE "SUHIAN". THE SLICKEST DANGED KEEBOAT ON THE WHOLE O'THIS HERE RIVER! A REAL BEE-YOOTY, AIN'T SHE?

BY THE BY, LAWGIVER... JUST WID GETS THESE LAMS THAT YOU BE GIVIN' ALL THE...

WHOOAA... WAIT A MINUTE JUST WAIT ONE DANGED MINUTE HERE BOYS...

WILL YA LOOKIE HERE. JUST A-SETTIN' AND A-SNOOZIN' - PEACEFUL AS A RUNNY-NOSED BABS.

NOW AIN'T THAT SWEET? AIN'T THAT JUST THE SWEETEST DANGED FOSE YOURE EVER DID SEE...?

KINDA MAKES YA WONDER, DON'T IT...? KINDA MAKES YA WONDER WHAT TO HAPPEN...

-- IF' YA WAS TA TAKE THE BABE'S CRADLE AWAY!

WHOA--?

GUNPOWDER JULIUS--!

WHY YOU DIRTY, SLIMY, GREASE CHICKEN-PUCKLIN', RIVERBOAT-KISSIN', SPIDER-HUGGIN' SON-OF-A-MANGY KEELHAULED--

WUNK!
"PEST!!

SWAK!!

THAT ALL YOU GOT TO SAY FOR YERSELF?

Yeah.

Then I 'spect it's--

--MY TURN!!

SWOK!!

LAUGHIN', I WANT YA TO MEET MULL BEST FRIEND, THIS HERE IS STEELY DAN. HE'S KINDA MEAN AN' MAD AN' ORNERY NISSEL--BUT HE AIN'T MUXE AS PUNKY AS ME!

AH LAUGOVER, YOU CAN INTRODUCE YOUR FRIENDS OVER SOME O' THE BEST MASHED MIGAEO YOU'LL FIND FROM ONE END O' THIS MIGHTY RIVER TO THE OTHER!

GUNPOWDER, YOU OIMBERZ PLEASANT ENOUGH, IT'S THAT PUNCH O' MURGZ COULD FLATTEN A MULE!

YA AIN'T NO SLUGGISH YERSELF, DAN!

SO I'VE NOTICED, REWIND ME NOT TO GET TOO FRIENDLY WITH THEM, JUST MIGHT REGRET IT.

NOW WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, DAI' SLEEPIN' LIKE THAT--YOU KNOW YA WAS SPORED TO BE WATCHIN' OUR BOAT--!

AW, COME ON, JULIUS--YOU KNOW DANGED WERE THAT NOBODY'D DARE STEAL OUR RIVERBOAT.

HEY ALEX--LOOKS LIKE SHAGGY WANTS A DRINK.

YAG--!! I DON'T BLAME HIM...

I COULD SWEAR THIS WAS ALL A DREAM.
IT'S THEM, ALL RIGHT... SEATED AT A TABLE...
AND THEY SEEM TO HAVE MADE FRIENDS WITH THE INHABITANTS OF THE SETTLEMENT.

Mutant-drone ess... Are you in direct contact with be-one?

Of course. Our headpieces are functional extensions of be-one—as well as of the other gestalt commanders.

Then tell him to dispatch the war-machines he promised would be placed at my disposal.

Immediately.

They will take several hours to arrive, Brutus...

I fully realize that. Drone ess, I'm not stupid. Contrary to your pompous misconceptions.

I do not plan to launch the offensive until dawn. At which time there will be sufficient light... and at which time they will still be asleep.
WELL, ON ACCOUNT OF NO STORY THAT TALL COULD BE A TALL STORY, I GUESS WE BETTER BELIEVE EM, DAN. SO HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO—WE'LL TAKE EM HOME RIGHT ON THE SIMIAN WHARF. SAID STREET DANK WE NEVER TRIED FLYING A RIVERBOAT UP A WATERFALL BEFORE—IT OUGHTA BE FUN!

I'LL DRINK TO THAT GUNPOWDER JULIUS—!!

BAD NEWS, BOYS—! I WAS CHASIN' A POLLOTO UP A TREE DOWNRIVER AND CAUGHT AN EYEFUL OF THE WEIRDEST LOOTIN' DUDERS YOU EVER DID SEE—BUNCH O'MEAN-EYED GORILLAS TOO—!!

BRUTUS—PROBABLY THE MUTANTS? BUT WHY WERE THEY TOGETHER—??

I HEARD 'EM SAY THEY WAS GONNA ATTACK US AT DAWN!

OH THEY ARE! ARE THEY? WELL, WE'LL JUST-SE About THAT!!

DAN—GET EVERYBODY TOGETHER—AND DON'T GO DRAGGIN' YOUR SNOOZE TAIL ABOUT IT' TELL EM TO BRING TORCHES AND SHOVELS!

WE'RE GONNA DIG US A TRENCH THAT I'LL AVOID—THIS MIGHTY RIVER—AND WE'RE GONNA FILL IT WITH THE DANGEREDEST—SURPRISE ANYBODY EVER GOT—OK—MY NAME AIN'T GUNPOWDER JULIUS!

SHARP!

UFF!!

OH—I DID I DOZEE OFF—!!
Night passes, and shortly before dawn... A bizarre armada of war-machines arrives into Brutus' temporary encampment...

Excellence! The troops have arrived with ample time to spare...

Instruct the troops to stand ready.

Very well, Brutus.

Y'know, for a fellow as scruffy as you, Alex, ya did some mighty neat diggin' out there tonight!

Thanks, Scotty Dan, but did you see the way that even scrappier caught on to what we were doing...

Consarned nuisance! What do they want to attack us for? Skippy, Scrum, eyes sinnerin' sons-of...

Eyes sharp, boys! There's dust a-kickin' on the horizon!

Yep, that's them all right—less'n we're about to get hit by a twister.

Think it'll really work, Julius?

Work...? Why you just get yore unbelievin' little tail aboard the simian and I'll show ya how it'll work...!!
YOU'D BETTER STAY HERE, LAWRENCE—SIR, FROM WHAT YOU'VE SAID, THE MUTANTS WANT YOU DEAD JUST AS MUCH AS BART'S DOGS... AND IF THEY'RE TOGETHER, YOU HAVEN'T...

STOP YORE SAWN' AND JUMP ABOARD, ALEX—THE SIAM'S JUST 'POTIN' TO GET HER FEET WET.

UREL URG

YEAH ALEX—EVEN SHAGGY'S READY TO GO.

THIS, LESS THAN A HASTILY POLED MILE UPSTREAM...

THERE THEY ARE, TAGE—WITH A BUNCH OF WEIRD MACHINES THEY USED TO CAPTURE SHAGGY'S FRIENDS...

I SEE 'EM, ALEX.

BUT WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT IT, DAN—?

...Cuz it won't be much danger lower! A five-thousand-pound dumb-bore and stupid right into our trench...

...and match pace with 'em along the shore...

WE KEEP QUIET...

WHAT'S THAT UP AHEAD...?

...and match pace with 'em along the shore...

MUTANT-DRONES ESS AND VEE—INVESTIGATE THE DEPRESSION...
IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN EXCAVATED QUITE RECENTLY—PERHAPS FOR USE AS AN IRRIGATION SYSTEM.

OR AN INTENDED DETERGENT TO OUR ADVANCE. WHAT OF THE BLACK SUBSTANCE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DEPRESSION...?

NO--THE DELAY IS TOO COSTLY. BESIDES, THE SUBSTANCE LOOKS HARMLESS ENOUGH...

IDENTIFICATION IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT ANALYSIS BRUTUS. DO YOU WISH ONE MADE?

YOU READY WITH THAT DANGEROUS TORCH, JASON?

READY, JULIUS.

THEN TOUCH IT TO THE BAG ON THE END OF THIS BLAMED ARROW...SOS I CAN--

"FIRE IT!!"

HALT...!

WHRR-ANK

HALT THE TANKS!!

WHRR-ANK

BUT THE DRONE'S NOISY CRY OF WARNING SOUNDS FAR TOO LATE... FOR THE COLOSSAL FLAMING ARROW HAS ALREADY BEEN LAUNCHED FROM RIVERBOAT TO LAND, AND NOW PLOWSMITHS WITH DEADLY ACCURACY STRAIGHT FOR THE...
DID YA EVER SEE A BULLSEYE SO ALL-FIRED BLASTED PURTY, DAN-2?! BE HARD TO RECOLLECT ONE, JULIUS...

--- AND THE "BLACK SUBSTANCE" WHICH KILLS IT--A SUBSTANCE OTHERWISE KNOWN AS GUNPOWDER.

THAT MUSTA STUCK A BIGGER CRAW IN THEIR THROATS THAN THEY'VE EVER CHOKED ON--OR MY NAME AINT GUNPOWDER JULIUS!!

WHOOOO-EEEE!!

BUT AMID THE SMOKING FRAGMENTS OF RUIN...

COME ON--FORWARD!! THE TRENCH CAN'T HURT US NOW!!

WE ATTACK AS PLANNED--!!

FIGGERED THEY'D KEEP A-COMIN'...

--- EBUG?

CHOPPED FREE, THE CATAPULT WIPES FORWARD--HURLING THE GUNPOWDER KEG INTO A SIZZLING ARC WHICH CUTS THE AIR...

AS I WARNIN' YA... DUES THAT ARROW O' YOURS WAS NOthin' BUT A SWEET TOOTHICK COMPARED TO THE KEG I'M ABOUT TO TOS...--RED BUT THE DUCK LEAPIN'--I WANT A NEW PART ON THAT SMELLED-UP Hairy HEAD--SITUP FROM YORE SHOULDERS--!

BUT WHAT ARE YOU--
...AND LITERALLY DEMOLISHES THE GROUND.

FHWM!

BLAST IT, THAT'S ENOUGH OF THIS LONG-DISTANCE TANTRUM—TIME TO LEAVE THE SHAMAN FOR SOME HONEST-TO-HELLRAISIN IN-FIGHTIN'!!

TAKE THIS MUSKET JASON—AN' I'LL BE HONOR OR DIE UNDER HERE! YA AIN'T GOT A CHOICE, BOY!

THE BATTLE IS BLOODY AND VIOLENT. JOINED BY RESERVES FROM THE SETTLEMENT, THE INHABITANTS OF THE KILLER SOCIETY VIRTUALLY ANNihilate AN ATTACKING FORCE ALREADY DECIMATED BY TWO EXPLOSIONS...

...AND ROUTED BY SUPERIOR NUMBERS. THE ALLIED GORILLA AND MUTANT ARMY RETREATS IN HOWLING PANIC...

...LEAVING A MERE HANDFUL OF GORILLAS. BRUTUS IS CONspicuous AMONG THEM...

THE HUMAN—!

...A SHOT WHICH MISSES ITS INTENDED TARGET...

SHAGGY—!!

AND SIGHTING JASON, HE LINGERS FOR ONE FINAL SHOT...

WHAK

BLAM!

...AND SHAMAN!
THAT WAS BRUTUS...!
BLAST HIS STINKING SKULL OPEN!
KILL HIM!

EASY JAGE, THERE'S NO SENSE IN...!
EASY NOTHING, ALEX! MURDERING MY PARENTS AND HIS OWN WIFE WAS JUST THE BEGINNING! HE'LL GO ON MURDERING UNTIL HE'S MURDERED!

DAMN IT-- KILL HIM!!

BUT NOW THE KILLER'S THE LAST STRAW, ALEX...
HE'S KILLED SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T EVEN UNDERSTAND WHY HE HAD TO DIE...

AND FOR THAT, ALEX, I'M GOING TO RUB BRUTUS' NOSE IN HIS OWN BLOOD UNTIL HE DROWNS.

SUNSET: WOUNDS HAVE BEEN CLEANED AND DRESSED, BUT THE PAIN REMAINS. BARELY AN ASSAULT HAS BEEN REPELLED, BUT THE ATTACK IS REMEMBERED, AND NOW WORDS ARE SPoken...

-- PRAY THAT THE CREATOR OF ALL WILL SOOTH THESE WHO HAVE SURVIVED, AND WILL BLESS THOSE WHO HAVE FOUND PEACE...

...I KNOW.

...ONLY IN DEATH.

AMEN.

AMEN.

...BUT THE SILENCE SAYS IT ALL.
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