

Delirium

“The Wicked.” A sinister voice hisses into the ethereal.

“The Blasé Sniper.” A disinterested voice replies.

“A Treasure Hunter.” A Jovial voice barks.

“A Chieftain under Heaven.” A humble yet wise voice speaks in a soft tone.

“A demigod” A noble voice rings through the darkness.

“The Sage.” A mystical voice whispers.

“Oh what a fate, these poor heathens lost within the madness of the ethereal plane. I hope they forsake hope. For they’ve run out of time, let delirium reign as the supreme law of the land. For there is never enough time.” The darkness muses so gaily.

The shrieking of multiple beasts tears through the jungle as a golden retriever dashes through the jungle floor his brown coat with a black t-shirt, navy traveling jeans, and backpack soaked with the wet atmosphere of the rainforest. He turns and points two pistols behind him as he keeps running firing a hail of bullets trying to keep the pack of beasts away. The pack is unrelenting, one of the beast comes into the view of his bright green eyes. The tiny hip sized beast was an oddity like no other. It had a black and brown hide with multiple spines protruding from its back and head. Its tail appeared to be a spear from he could assume and its head appeared to be armoured with what looked like a plate on the top of it with two holes for ears. It snarls loudly and continues to chase after the retriever going to bite the back of his legs. The retriever looks up and grins as he holds up his arm and his sleeve rolls down revealing a grappling hook. He aims and fires the mechanism it clamps around a heavy limb of one of the trees. He jumps and uses his moment to reel himself up to the limb and the clamp releases itself and slides back into place. The pack of beasts circles the tree jumping and clawing at the base of the tree in anger knowing they can’t reach their prey. The retriever chuckles and reaches into his back pack and pulls out a smoke grenade. He pulls the pin and throws it down it explodes creating a thick white cloud allowing him to run along the limbs of the tree hopping to the next tree then another gaining distance. After ten minutes of this he finally stops and leans against the trunk of the tree panting heavily. He pulls a water canteen and takes a few loud gulps of the rejuvenating fresh water. He wipes his muzzle and caps the canteen and places it back in his bag as he thinks to himself.

“Ok, ok, I’m out of danger for now, but where am I? What were those things? How did I get here?” These thoughts flood into his head like a waterfall. He looks around and sees a rocky outcrop off in the distance. “If I get to that outcrop, I can get a scope of what I’m dealing with.”

He grunts as he stands stretching a bit before running along the wet moss covered limb of the tree. He jumps from limb to limb causing water to fall on the forest floor below. He gets

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closer to the rocky out crop now taking view of the strange formation it was it. The stones were a brown colour and their formation looked to be massive boulders stacked on one another carelessly while at the top it formed a kind of arrow head. He wondered on the oddity before a low distinctive bang broke his concentration. He stops on the limb and ducked behind the wet trunk.

“That was a rifle shot. I can’t tell the calibre. Where did it come from?” His heart starts to race and his adrenaline kicks in his senses on full alert. There was no way to catch scent here, too many along with the recent rain made it nigh impossible. He breathes softly and slowly peeks his head cautiously around the trunk another shot is fired and he quickly goes back behind the tree.

“The shots are being fired up wind. Nowhere close to me.” The retriever thought. “but the shots are coming from those rocks. I need to get up there. I need to get some information.”

He comes from behind the trunk and stealthily makes his way along the limbs of the trees until finally he reaches the base of the rock formation. He pulls one of his pistols from its holster and grins as he holds up his arm and fires the grappling hook upward it attaches itself to a piece of rock high at the top. He jumps and slowly rappels himself up to the top of the formation. He clutches his favoured pistol, his Beretta 92SB semi-automatic in his paw. He grips the ledge where his hook clamped down and hoists himself up. He instantly rolls behind a rock as the clamp unfastens itself and whirs back into its position on his wrist. He slowly looks around the rock and views an orange furred wolf with a black jacket on in baggy jeans firing a modified sniper rifle down range. The wolf stands up quickly and repositions himself and peers down the scope aiming down range and firing again. The retriever hears the death shrieks of those beasts that were hunting him previous. Now upon closer inspection the wolf has two neon green tails that flick around along with his normal orange and white tail. The retriever also sees that in this wolf’s large pointed ears sit two headphones. He couldn’t believe it,

“This guy is in a fight for his life and he’s jamming out to music.” Finally silence that gunfire has stopped as the wolf turns and sits down behind the rock and takes a grey magazine out of his ammo pouch in his jacket and slams it home in the butt of the rifle.

“That should last me enough fight.” He says to himself in a blasé tone before resting for a moment shutting his green eyes listening to his music. The retriever takes a soft breath before standing up and turning to the wolf and says.

“Hey?” The wolf’s ears instantly turn and he jumps up brings his rifle up to his eye ready to fire. Out of instinct the retriever instantly points his Beretta and pulls his Remington out of its holster aiming at the young wolf. Each one hesitates for a moment not wanting to shoot. Is this other fur a friend or foe? The pause was heavy until the retriever asks calmly.

“Do you know how you got here?” The wolf slowly shakes his rifle implying no. “I don’t know either so how about we relax and put the guns down?” The orange and white furred wolf nods and both furs slowly lower their weapons and somewhat relax. Both sets of eyes remain locked on the other.

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“My name is Doggett, what’s yours?” Doggett asks. The wolf slowly sits back down on the rock and replies. “My name is Wolfy.” Doggett does the same and holsters his pistols and sits down on his rock. “So you don’t know how you got here either huh? Do you remember anything before that?” Wolfy thinks for a moment and says.

“The last thing I remember was doing a job in New York City. I completed it and was awaiting instructions from my boss. I heard my ear piece click on and then blank. What about you?”

“I was Thailand investigated some underground ruins for the British Museum. I was searching for ancient Buddhist relics, I found a very old temple complex but no relics. After my final sweep I headed back out of the underground ruins to the mouth and then a flash of blinding white light then I woke up here.” They both sit and think at the information all that could be understood is that something or someone wanted us here for what reason they didn’t know. After a couple of moments of silence, the two furs heard a loud war cry and bellow from the forest below their rocky highpoint. Wolfy’s eyes widen with joy as he takes his rifle and peers through the scope looking for the war cry. Doggett quickly comes up behind him.

“What’s down there?” He asks trying to peer down through the canopy as the sound of steel bashing against thick hide pierces the forest as another bellow could be heard shaking the leaves of the canopy. Wolfy peering through his advanced sight and focuses his reticule and sees a rusty furred fox with brown hair wearing camo pants and a drenched green hoodie running through the understory slashing at the face of one of those massive horned creatures. The fox jumps over a log and grabs a strange red gripped pistol from its holster on its right thigh and fires a few shots at the creature. Wolfy takes his eye from his scope and slings the rifle on his back.

“We have to help him.” He says before running off the arrow point of the rocks into the lower canopy below as his neon tails grab a limb of a tree swing him forward so he lands on another limb begging to follow the fox. Doggett blinks and can’t help but chuckle before running off the arrow point firing the grappling hook letting it clamp down on a tree limb following Wolfy’s path after the fox. The fox breaks left and notices he’s running along the banks of a river. The current was picking up and there was a break in the trees. He could hear the thundering sounds of a water fall before him amidst the grunting and panting of the beast behind him it salivating at the thought of consuming him. He grips his sword tight in his right paw and just before the land stops he turns quickly and jumps grasping the beast by one of its horns using the momentum of its charge he throws himself upward. He grasps the hilt of his sword with both paws and comes back down with a ferocious slash downward along the beast’s heavily armoured face. The sword cuts through the heavy plates along the beast’s face like a hot knife through butter. It squeals in pain before it falls dead its head split in half with its ebony blood running down the bank into the river. Max grabs a big leaf from one of the plants growing on the embankment and cleans his blade of the ebony liquid as Wolfy and Doggett land about ten feet away from him. He turns to them immediately and quickly drops gets into a defensive stance his blade close to his body his legs firmly planted on the ground. Doggett and Wolfy hold up their paws up showing they didn’t mean to cause harm as Doggett yells over.

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“Do you remember anything before you woke up!?” The fox shakes his head and yells back in a serious tone.

“I remember walking into a tavern somewhere in Yorkshire. I ordered a room for the night and when I went to sleep I woke up here!”

“We’re all in the same boat, someone or something placed us here. We have a better chance of survival if we work with one another.” The fox slowly begins to relax easing up from his defensive stance allowing the two other furs to approach. Wolfy walks up casually and asks.

“What’s your name?” The rusty furred fox looks at him with his piercing sky blue eyes and says calmly.

“My name is Max. What’s yours?”

“My name is Wolfy and this is Doggett.” Wolfy replies as Doggett walks up extending a paw to Max in a pawshake. Max shakes his paw and says cordially.

“Nice to meet you both, now let’s get-“ his sentence was cut off by a loud piece howl of rage as the rain forest erupts with the sounds of a horde. The three furs turn to see hundreds of those tiny horned beasts charging at them in a fiery rage as Max has killed their queen and mother. The three of them gulp and turn behind them seeing as it was the only way out. They bolt over the waterfall diving into the massive pool of water below saving themselves from being ripped to shreds. They swim back up to the surface of the water making their way to the bank climbing up as they see the horde shrieking and snarling loudly at them as they turn back into the understory trying to sniff another way down to their hated prey. The trio shakily make their way up the embankment to firm ground. They lay on the soft grass panting heavily from the ordeal in a tiny opening of the forest. They lay there for a while recuperating their strength before Max’s ears point up hearing the forest around them begin to rustle. He snaps his fingers getting his comrades up as they dart behind some trees near the opening. Doggett pulls out his favoured twin pistols as Wolfy remains calm waiting for his moment. Max places his left paw on the hilt of his blade and listens. He growls softly showing his white fangs as they trio hear the broken conversation.

“When I find them I’ll kill him.”

“We must delay we’ve been searching for hours now.”

“Don’t worry we’ll find them.”

The conversation continues as Max turns to Doggett and Wolfy and the three nod as the same thought enters their minds.

“These people must be looking for them. We need to get any info from them then eliminate them.”

With the plan already subconsciously formed. Dogget takes a deep breath and holds his Remington close to his chest before peeking out from the side of the trunk and firing a single shot down range at one of the targets. A loud bark is heard then a furious snarl of pain.

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“Hey are you alright Lang! Why you son of a bitch!” A sharp regal voice snaps. In an instant Doggett feels his body lifted up and pulled toward the voices at speed. He rips through the understory shredding through the plants until finally he opens his eyes and sees himself hovering in front of another trio of furs two with wings and a grey furred wolf clutching his upper arm where the bullet grazed through his black and red Asian styled clothes and skin. The fur holding him up psychically was a strange sight. He had piercing emerald eyes and pink mohawk. He had the physical appearance of a stoat but with a long whip like tail with a pink tail tuft flicking angrily around. He was wearing a black t-shirt and jeans with a sword on his right hip. His fur was a creamy colour and he had two long pointed fangs protruding from him upper jaw and a pair of emerald wings. He turns and sees the other winged fur. He was orange fox from first appearance but upon further inspection it was clearly not the case. He had nine tails with strange cyan celestial markings along his face. He had a pair of deep blue wings and was wearing a long midnight coloured robe and bright pink eyes. The stoat like fur growls and flicks his paw forward bringing Doggett close. He balls up his fist and punches him right on the cheek sending him back through the understory back to his comrades. He grunts and rolls along the forest floor past the edge of the forest where Wolfy and Max were hiding. He quickly rolls and stands up wincing in pain holding the right side of his face. Max turns to his comrade he bares his fangs in a snarl as he unsheathes his sword and takes a step out from the tree and sees the stoat like fur charging through the understory with an emerald rapier in his left paw. The two swordsmen lock eyes and the stoat leaps at Max and dives forward going for a lunge to the lungs. Max pivots on his left foot paw sidestepping the lunge and going for a slash across the side. The stoat with fast feet quickly recovers his footing and turns to block the side slash as the sound of metal on metal rings through the trees. Doggett barks angrily and aims his Beretta and Remington at the stoat going to gun him down. Just as he was about to pull the trigger a surge of lighting cracks through the trees at him causing him to roll to the side as the grey furred wolf jumps down from a low lying limb his purple eyes surging with lightning. He thrusts a punch forward firing another crackling arch of lighting at Doggett before charging at him going into a flurry of punches at kicks. Doggett rolls out of the way of the lightning strike then quickly getting to his feet and beginning to block and side step the furious assault. Wolfy stays hidden near the edge of the forest. He brings the scope up to his eyes waiting for a chance to end the enraged wolf's light. He flicks his ear as he hears a whoosh coming at him. He turns quickly seeing nine balls of flame hurtling at him. He starts to back pedal as his neon tail slap away the balls of fire as the nine tailed fox slowly holds out his right paw and black orbs appear in the air around his body sending forth a hail of arrows. Wolfy eyes open wide and dives behind a tree letting the needles stab and shatter against the thick trunk. He pulls his grey reloader out of his sniper and grabs a blue glowing magazine and shoves it into the bottom of the rifle reloading it. He peeks out and starts firing blue glowing bullets at the fox. The fox brings up a barrier but sees the bullet fly through it with ease. He ducks behind a trunk as well and holds a fire ball in his paw and starts hurling them at Wolfy as the two engage in a fire fight. The battle lasts for several minutes, steel on steel fist on fist bullet on the arcane. Neither side willing to give ground to the other. Martial skill on martial skill. The battle spills back out of the forest heading toward the pool of water as the trios continue their clash. Max and the stoat pant heavily as both are lightly cut and scarred along their arms and face. They grip their blades tightly and both dash going for the kill. Just as the blades

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cross one another each fur instantly feels the immense power of gravity force them to the ground. They groan in pain as they feel the weight of the world pressing down on them. Then the faint sound of laughter could be heard as Max painfully turns his head and sees a snowy furred wolf in royal blue robes skipping merrily up to them with a bright smile on his face. The wolf was in perfect shape, his body was that of the gods it looked so pure. His movements were fluid and seemed to echo through time as images of past could be seen in a silvery ethereal looking energy. The snowy wolf says cheerfully.

“Well, Well, Well, my siblings and I didn’t expect this to happen. We thought the six of you would ban together to survive not kill one another.”

“Who the hell are you?” Max snaps trying to force himself to his feet but to no avail. The snowy wolf chuckles and responds playfully.

“Why I’m one of the furs that brought you here, you silly fox. And I must say this tournament is going to be so much fun to watch.”

“Tournament? What are you talking about?” The stoat snarls softly.

“Now Prince Silvian no need for that and I’ll tell you everything if all of you promise not to attack me. Agreed.” The six furs nod slowly and the wolf waves his paw and the gravity normalizes allowing them to breath and get to their feet.

“Now tell us what is all this why did you take us from our homes?” The grey furred wolf asks cautiously.

“Well Lang, its actually quite simple. You see, I’m no normal white furred wolf with magical abilities. I’m a god from a long dead pantheon none of you have heard of. You see we gods get rather bored watching all of you go through your lives no matter how tragic or boring they maybe. So my siblings and the other gods came together and agreed on a tournament that happens every three hundred years. Each god or goddess chooses six furs of their choosing with interesting skills and or abilities and makes a team. I chose all of you. We place you on a plane of our choosing and bring all six of you to one place and then send you on your way.” All six furs stare at the wolf god speechless. The nine tailed fox glares at the wolf and barks out full of rhetoric in his voice.

“Who gives you the right to do this and what makes you think we’ll even go along with your game and join the tournament. For all I care I could just leave.” The wolf laughs out loud heartily before saying.

“You either go through the tournament or all of you die. If you try and leave Zenion then you kill yourself and everyone else here. Are you willing to risk all of your lives because of your pride?” Zenion opens his mouth to speak but quickly goes silent looking down at the ground.

“So we have little choice. Go through the tournament and possibly die or die right now to a god or those beasts.” Doggett says holstering his pistols and fixes his brown coat. The wolf smiles and nods.

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“Correct, though to tell you the odds you have a fifty percent chance of living an even lesser chance winning the tournament. So now the big question is are the six of you going to be a team and go through the tournament or are you going to fight me and inevitable die?” The six young furs look at one another knowing they have little choice. They nod and Wolfy says causally turning his music on high with a smile.

“We’ll go through your tournament and we’ll win just to spite you. Hehe, after all anything is better than being bored.” He chuckles as he places his sniper rifle on his back. The wolf gives a grin as he sees his team ready to go forth on a grand tourney. He snaps his fingers and the exhaustion of their bodies instantly vanishes along with their previous wounds. Doggett looks down and sees his back full of extra ammo along with Wolfy’s relouders inside there as well. The wolf turns around and extends his claws and thrusts them forward and the fabric of space stretches as he rips open a silvery portal about the size of a door open and holds his paw forward inviting them to go in.

“Be warned you will go through worlds different then your own and each one of you will face challenges that you have never dreamed up but above all remember you guys are a team so you better get to know one another and become fast friends because the teams that can’t die off quickly. Good luck.” He says with a smile on his face. Max and Silvian turn to one another and nod as they sheath their blades and walk through the portal. After then came Lang and Doggett both of them cautious around each other as they walk through the portal. Then the last pair Zenion and Wolfy look at one another and bow their heads courteously before they enter the portal. When the last pair walks through the white wolf god grabs the ends of the rift and shuts it behind them. He snickers softly before opening another portal.

“Let the grand tourney begin.”