

Hammer & Chisel
by Angelus A. Glace

The rising wail of air-raid sirens split the relative quiet of the city night. On the skyline, a tremendous tower lit up like a blue beacon, flooding the darkened streets with light and brightening the sky. A Monolith of pure, unnatural black loomed against the light, as though challenging it. More lights began to click on, shining out through the windows of so many apartments as their occupants scrambled to evacuate their homes and make their way to the blue-lit tower that lanced the sky.

A boom near the Monolith echoed down the city streets, setting off car alarms. A figure emerged from within the black tower, making the surface ripple as it revealed its form: that of a fifty-meter tall striped hyena. Its empty, white eyes reflected the towering, blue Lance in the distance, and it took another step forward, shattering the asphalt underneath its feet.

A twinkle of light blinked at the top of the Lance, and two streaks of blue light barreled down from the heights, headed right for the hyena Juggernaut. It was a pair of DAVD fighters in full combat gear. The bright light streaming from their anti-gravity engines caught the attention of the Juggernaut, which swiveled its head to follow them as they zipped past it, trying to draw its attention away from the Lance.

"This is Hammer reporting to Lance, we've successfully grabbed its attention." The black cat outfitted in the Hammer DAVD stopped in midair, hovering near the Monolith, just outside of the hyena Juggernaut's reach. A long-handled hammer with a head bigger than his own skull was clutched in both hands. He glanced to his side as his partner arrived.

"This is Chisel, looks to be a Category 2 Juggernaut. Pearl locations are chest and upper back. Ready to engage." The wolf flexed her clawed glove and readied the chisel attached to her other arm. She met her partner's gaze, and they nodded.

The Juggernaut bared its teeth at them and snarled as it turned to face them, looking back into the depths of the Monolith behind them as it did so. The shining red pearl on its back slid out of sight, but the one on its chest shimmered with malice, as did its empty eyes. It took a lumbering step forward and raised its arms, and Hammer and Chisel bailed in opposite directions.

"Alright, we're gonna keep this thing within two blocks of the Monolith. No point to us being here if we just run it across the city and let it destroy everything anyways." Hammer said into their intercomm. He flew in an arc, trailing glowing blue exhaust behind him that drew the gaze of the Juggernaut. He spun to face it, gripping the shaft of his hammer tight.

"That's not a lot of room to maneuver," Chisel replied as she got behind the Juggernaut and watched the lumbering thing turn its back to her.

"We're here to protect civilians, not ourselves. We keep it contained."

"Roger."

The giant hyena moved toward Hammer and swiped at him with a huge, clawed hand. Hammer propelled sideways, out of reach of the swipe, but the rush of wind from it blew him downwards a few feet.

"Urgh, kinda fast." He grit his teeth and regained altitude. "Chisel, are you in position?"

“Just about.” As the Juggernaut took a swing at Hammer, Chisel had zoomed forwards toward the red sphere embedded between the Juggernaut’s shoulderblades. She slowed as she neared it and braced her stop with her legs. She raised the arm with the metal claw and slammed it against the pearl, latching onto it tight. She swung her other arm in and placed the point of the chisel against the pearl. “Ready! Get over here!”

“Coming, hold on!”

The Juggernaut’s ears perked up and it snarled as it felt the landing. It reached back with one arm, stretching to rake at its back. The other took another swipe at Hammer, forcing him to alter his course to avoid the collision. The delay was just enough. Chisel shouted and fired her engines as she disengaged her claw. She tried to slip between two of the Juggernaut’s fingers but clipped one in her haste to escape. She grunted and careened in her flight, tumbling onto a nearby rooftop. She rolled and landed on her back, sliding a couple feet before her momentum stopped.

“Hey! You alive over there?” Hammer shouted into the comm link.

“Yeah, just took a tumble!” Chisel got to her feet and lifted off the ground, engines humming. “We still going for the back?” She zoomed away from the rooftop before the Juggernaut tried to crush her and the building together.

“Whatever you can get set up on!”

“Chest then, distract it!”

“Roger! You just stay alive!” Hammer revved his engines to and took off into the sky, flying several stories above the Juggernaut’s head.

“Where are you-” Chisel’s voice came in over the comms, and she stopped mid-sentence. “No no no, that move is no good against a Category Two! They’re too short!”

“Don’t worry, I got it!” Hammer reached altitude and paused to gather his wits. He could see the city spread out before him, streets packed with people and cars all fleeing towards the Lance. Directly below him were the base of the Monolith, the hyena Juggernaut, and the little blue streak that was Chisel. He took a deep breath, then exhaled, and pushed his engines to full power.

The black cat dove, plummeting, blood rushing to his head as wind whipped his face. He squinted against the air and didn’t dare breathe. The head of the Juggernaut was closing in fast. He twisted the handle of his hammer, and the head of it suddenly gained weight as the anti-gravity was turned off. He raised it over his head and hollered. “How about a piledriver?” He brought the hammer down with all the force he could muster.

Were it not for the full-body suit of DAVD armor, the force of the impact would have shattered his arms. The head of the hammer hit with a window-rattling boom that snapped the Juggernaut’s head down and made the beast stumble in place. Its soulless eyes rolled in its skull. Hammer turned in the air and blasted his jets against the ground to try and slow his plummet, but even with so much momentum expended through the hit, he couldn’t stop before he crashed to the floor near the huge hyena’s feet.

“Hammer? I told you... Are you okay?” Chisel watched him hit the ground, but eyed the Juggernaut in the corner of her vision as it reeled from the blow.

“Ghhgg... It was too short... for that move...” He got to his feet, using his hammer as a support. He twisted the handle, taking the gravity off of it. Still dazed, he floated back into the air. “We gotta get it though! Now!”

Chisel nodded and zipped to the Juggernaut’s chest and latched on again, putting her chisel in place. Hammer followed her up and ramped up his speed, his vision locking onto the head of her chisel. He pulled back his hammer, engaged the gravity, and swung.

Hammer and chisel met with a metallic ring. The chisel punched into the red pearl, sending a spiderweb of cracks out from its center. Chips of it fell off and floated to the ground. The Juggernaut howled, and in a rage it brought its fists down on the nearest building, crushing the top half of it into stone rubble and twisted steel. It lurched forward in doing so, tossing Chisel and Hammer away. They landed on the ground amid the debris.

“Was that-?” Hammer began.

“Evacuated?”

“I hope.”

“Come on, one more.” Chisel said as the pearl in the Juggernaut’s chest lost its luster. The two of them got a running start and took off again, circling around the Juggernaut’s head as it recovered from having its pearl smashed. It chomped at them as they passed, missing them both, but it spun around and swung both arms at the pilots. The hands missed their marks, but the rush of wind made the two pilots collide. They grunted and winced as their shoulders bashed together, and their engines shut off sending them tumbling to the sidewalk. They skidded to a halt, armor covered in scratches.

A shadow loomed over them, and they looked up to see a huge foot descending on them. They rolled, narrowly avoiding getting squashed, but the asphalt that was forced up around the edges of the foot threw them back into the air, and down onto the rough street again.

Chisel landed hard, and her helmet hit her claw, cracking the glass. She groaned, ears twitching, and hobbled to her feet, trying to move away from the Juggernaut as she attempted to reboot her DAVD systems. Her claw was flexing, shorting out, and the glass of her helmet was cracked and scratched from landing against it.

Hammer had been thrown in the opposite direction, and his hammer had been flung from his hands. It was laying a few feet away, and the blue lights on it were flickering. He crawled toward it and grabbed it, using it to push himself to his feet again. He could feel it vibrating in his hands as the antigravity engine struggled to remain stable, causing the hammer’s weight to fluctuate every few seconds.

The two spied one another over the tops of the hyena’s toes and ran around the back of its foot and down a street as their gear rebooted. A soft blue glow started to emit from the engine ports of the DAVD gear.

“One more huh?” Hammer glanced over his shoulder. The Juggernaut was pursuing them, and gaining.

“I never said it would be easy!” Chisel glanced back as well and grit her teeth as the ground shook under her. “We gotta get up!”

“I know, I’m trying!”

A footfall landed close enough to almost knock them down again. Luckily, the jolt was just enough to rattle their systems back to life, and cold blue flames exploded from the packs on their backs, lifting them into the sky.

"Too close..." Chisel sighed, already sounding exhausted.

"You're telling me." Hammer flew up beside her. They were at the edge of their two-block range from the Monolith, and the Juggernaut was closing in. "Blitz?"

"Risky," Chisel cautioned.

"Not more than anything else today."

Chisel smirked. "Blitz."

The pair zipped forward, damaged gear and all, and soared right past the Juggernaut's ears, making them ring with the whine of their engines. They kept going, about a half block past before stopping and spinning in place. The Juggernaut hadn't turned around yet, and they made a full-speed break for it.

Chisel went first, and in a flash she was hovering against the pearl, chisel in place, doing her best to keep steady without the aide of her malfunctioning claw. Hammer hefted his hammer, paying attention to the way the weight shifted to try and learn the timing of the fritzing antigravity drivers. Once Chisel was in place, he launched himself forward, and pulled his arms back.

The Juggernaut reached for the pearl on its back, trying to crush Chisel, but this time it was too slow. With one well-timed, well placed strike, Hammer slammed his weapon against the metal chisel, punching it into the pearl. The Juggernaut stopped and howled as the red orb cracked apart. Hammer and Chisel landed on the ground, panting as the huge hyena dissolved into a cloud of ash and vanished into the sky. The cable attached to the back of its neck was sucked back into the Monolith, which began to dissolve into the night. The two of them sat back on the curb with a sigh, their muscles sore from the rough fight.

"This is Chisel to Lance. Juggernaut down, Monolith retreating." She made her report and then flopped onto her back with a groan, splaying out on the sidewalk. "Ow."

"Same," Hammer said as he joined her in laying down. "Shouldn't we head back to base?" the black cat asked.

"If I take off again right now, I feel like my legs might fall off," the wolf replied with a groan.

"Honestly? My arms feel the same way." He realized he was still holding his hammer in one hand, and he let it go. "Short break?"

"Short break."

They laid sprawled out on the broken sidewalk, catching their breath and staring up into the sky until it brightened with the dawn.