

Ideals & Conflict

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And this one is finally done!

The Sergal perched atop the warehouse, proudly admiring his work. Down below, the walls of the abandoned warehouses on the street had been coated in shades of purple and orange, blending nicely with the plants and foliage that had overgrown the area. Both slogans and artwork projecting their message.

'Paint the world in color!'

'Make Your Mark: Project Greenlight!'

It was already evening and the daylight was fading fast. Today was done, but Aeon knew tomorrow, there would be time for more paintings. He'd even managed to touch up on some of the tattoos on his body with the small batch of LIQUID he'd found. For now, he'd have time to scavenge some of the warehouses for materials before heading back to the museum.

He was packing his materials into his backpack when noises below cause him to duck behind a pile of crates. In this world of conflict, it never paid to be too cautious when it wasn't possible to tell if friend or foe. Peering out from his hiding spot, Aeon soon caught sight of the intruder.

A German shepherd, one outfitted in a Kevlar vest and slacks, colored in blue and white. But what really gave it away was the distinctive helmet, though it was very worn out and looked like it barely fit the dog.

"Great, Crushpuppies..."

Aeon watched as the G-shep examined his artwork, sniffing at the walls. She was probably sniffing out the LIQUID that had been mixed with his paints. A frown spread across the G-shep's face as pulled out a spray can and begun defacing the artwork.

"Grrr..." Aeon snarled, fists clenching. He wasn't about to just stand by and let some Crushpuppy ruin his day's work.

That was when he spotted the fallen signboard, bearing the BLFC corporation logo and slogan. It was nicely positioned, leading straight down to the G-shep's position. Aeon grabbed his skateboard and took a running start. Leaping onto it, he used the fallen signboard as a slide.

Karin had been occupied with blanking out the Project Greenlight message and only heard the scraping sounds too late. The Crushpuppy could only stare in shock as a flying Aeon drove the wheels into her helmet, knocking it loose. The Sergal summersaulted backwards as his foe hit the ground.

"Grrr..." Karin rolled to a kneeling position. She whipped the side of her jaw with the back of a paw, noticing the blood there.

"Scram puppy. That's my work you're messing up!" Aeon growled. He reached for his belt and drew a combat knife, one he'd scavenged from a warehouse earlier.

In response, the G-shep pulled out a pistol from her holster and pointed it at him.

"You're the one who should scram Cheddar head! You know what they say about bringing a knife to a gun fight...argh!"

Aeon had leapt the short distance and knocked the pistol away with a second knife in his other hand.

"You bring two."

"I hate a wise guy." Karin huffed.

She slide under Aeon's next knife swing and kicked his ankle from behind. As the Sergal stumbled, Karin rammed him to the ground with her shoulder. Aeon lost one of his knives as he hit the ground face first. On instinct, he immediately rolled to the side.

The Crushpuppy's foot stomped down where his neck had been moments earlier. Aeon thrust his foot out, knocking his opponent to the ground. He then scrambled back, putting some distance between the two.

"Hump, not bad. At least you're not such pushover like the last one." Karin growled, pulling herself to her feet.

"I grew up on the streets. You learn a thing or two from doing that. Unlike you lot!"

"Is your leader still feeding you about how LIQUID should be used for good? It's too dangerous to be used in the hands of anyone! Not yours, not those psychedelic LIQUID guzzling nutcases either!"

Karin snatched up a fallen pipe and swung it at him. Aeon managed to dodge the first swing, but the second one caught him at the side of the head and smashing him to the ground. His opponent pounced, pinning his body down with her knees. She immediately locked down his knife hand and begun punching him in the face with her other hand.

Grunting, Aeon ripped a paint spray can from a holster with his free hand and let her have it in the face.

"Garghh! What did you do?!" Karin stumbled back, coughing and spluttering.

"I'd really have loved to have given you the LIQUID in the mouth." Aeon struggled to his feet, nursing his bruised jaw. "You're lucky this can's just the regular paint. The LIQUID one is..."

That was when the Sergal found himself lifted up and hurled into a warehouse wall.

"Back where it belongs! With us!"

Talin was a rather massive hyena, one in a green tanktop with the 'SNUG life' slogan scribbled across it. He now held the spray paint canister and cracked it open.

"No! Don't do that!" Karin dashed across the street and drove a punch at the hyena. "LIQUID is a curse that must be forgotten!"

However, she was unable to stop him from swallowing most of the contents. Karin's punch had contacted with his jaw and pushed the hyena back against a wall.

Calmly, Talin reached up and grabbed the G-shep's wrist, pulling her arm away.

"Uh-oh..." Karin found herself staring into the hyena's hypnotic-looking eyes, with the greenish paint-LIQUID mixture still dripping from his jaws.

The hyena dropped the now empty paint canister and licked his chops.

"Yena smash!" Talin swung the G-shep by the wrist, slammed her a couple of time against the ground and then hurled her across the area. The Crushpuppy crashed into a pile of trashcans, moaning in pain.

Meanwhile, Aeon was just recovering from the earlier attack when he found the shadow of Talin standing over him.

"What the..."

"You have more LIQUID! GIMME! GIMMEEE!" Talin grabbed the Sergal in a massive bear hug.

"Hey! I didn't consent to hugs!"

"WHAT? CAN'T HEAR YOU CHEESE WEDGE!" The hyena squeezed harder.

"Dammit! What is it with Sergals and cheese jokes...gargghhh!" Aeon choked.

"This wouldn't be happening if you bunch had just gotten rid of all the LIQUID in the first place!" Karin came running and leapt onto the hyena's back.

She got her arms around his neck, putting him into a chokehold. Talin's grip was unrelenting, but as he struggled, Aero began to wiggle himself free.

On the building above the three, a huge billboard creaked. The bindings gave way and the huge mass came down...right above the struggling trio. They realized it at about the same time.

The massive words 'BLFC Corporation' were falling right towards them.

Karin released her hold, kicked off the hyena's back and ran. Aeon had finally managed to wiggle out from the bear hug and scrambled away on all fours. Talin was much slower, but held his massive arms out to block off some of the falling debris as he too ran.

The next few seconds were nothing but deafening crashes and dust.

When it finally settled, the three looked up from their hiding places. They were bruised, battered and covered in dirt. But alive at least.

However, up above on the building where the billboard had been, a figure stood glaring down upon them.

"Who..." Aeon stared.

The figure on top of the building was a dog-like creature, but dressed in a uniform unlike anything he'd ever seen. No wait, he had seen something like this. In some old books and photos. He'd been born after the regime's collapse, but these were just like in the stories he'd been told.

"The Sons of Brometheus?" Karin glanced up from her hiding spot. "Are they active again?"

Talin had meanwhile decided that there was no more LIQUID to be found here and darted off, giving the figure on top of the building an angry glance. He did make the point of screaming obscenities and flipping the bird at the figure, regardless if he could hear him or not.

Aeon too decided he had way overstayed his welcome. The Sergal's good fortune was that his skateboard had been thrown close to his hiding spot. He got onto that and sped down the street. Süz probably wouldn't be too happy, but he had to let her know.

Karin was left watching as the figure disappeared into the shadows.

"Big Brother...Utopia...Never Again." She muttered. "We will erase the past, even if it means erasing you too."

As the shadowy figure departed, he dusted off his paws.

"All you poor little ants, you know not what you fight for. How disappointing. How disappointing, indeed..."