

First impressions are important. Beyond the boundaries of conversation, they can take a more physical form. This can be more true for some parties than others. Before the first words are shared, if even that—whether for those regarded with less respect and influence, or being beyond their notice entirely, scorned or ignored...and the circumstances in which the latter is someone worse.

Such were the ways of many an interaction at these dimensions. The tiny figure had relied again on what words alone couldn't grant him. Before anything, it was the rumbling. Right through his bones as he stood at where dirt gave way to tarmac. And the fumes like a lower layer of clouds at his diminutive level, had given him pause, their choking scent reaching his nostrils soon after as the world had darkened around him.

This first impression had almost left him flattened in the mud.

The second, soon after, had been to run.

It was serving him fine enough, but what were the plans for afterwards? His legs were already aching, his breaths squeezing painfully through his chest as he stumbled over ground that appeared to stand against him.

The rumbling hadn't stopped since he'd started.

A root seemed to breach the earth almost under his feet, sending him to the ground, still conductor to that ominous vibration—but he scrambled to his feet and powered on as best he could —by his standards.

"Run, run, run," the deep voice had cackled, back when the thrum of its owner's 'ride' hadn't drowned it out. Not that it could overshadow the energy that the tone alone carried—those words, that *one* word had been echoing in his head since he'd took off.

Skittles' gaze skittered about, searching for cover where he knew there was none. It was only safer here given that the alternative would be trying to outrun his pursuer on the main damn road. His every step was so loud to him, mingling with the repeated echoes of that cursed word. He could only keep struggling on, at a pace that was approaching a slug's.

All the detours he'd taken—to the best of his flagging ability—and he still couldn't shake him off? For someone who was used to being overlooked—in more than one way—he was certainly the man of the moment here, and it wasn't a comforting thought. He was losing hope, and a mixture of that and his growing exhaustion did him in early (by whatever extent, given the futility of the matter that had weighed on him from the start). With a grunt of pain he collapsed, his vision blurring. The ever-there elemental rumbling continued, earth and air alike in unrest. He dared take the chance for a deep breath.

Which was when it built to an overpowering, piercing crescendo, and he had scarcely a second to dive aside before the blur rushed in upon him: a smoking behemoth of glitz and glam that roared across the clearing, the grass bowing before it, and fetched up against a tree, leaning there like no funny business. If not for it spewing black mist like the blow had knocked its motor for six.

Skittles cowered, coughing under the assault to his lungs, vision, balance...every time he felt the situation would let up on him. And with how hard he was shaking, it was growing a chore to even put two connected thoughts together, let alone fling any impulses to his tortured muscles. Fortunately for him—in whatever sense it could be called ‘fortunate’--he wouldn’t have long left to try.

Given how his attention was captured by the practical explosion that rocked his world. He curled up into himself, hearing snatches of sounds around him as the earth rolled over. The quieter hum of the motorbike a way off. Settling dirt and leaves, followed by...almost silence. Skittles was aware of the heat, and *too* aware of it increasing. The slight rustling of...*something* being arguably worse than utmost quiet to deal with.

Gasping for breath, the scant amount not loaded with dust and smoke, the sprawled tiny stayed still for a moment, his head under his shaking arm. Being able to take said moment didn’t help ease the unease, funnily enough. Not at all. Then he girded himself, as best he could, and looked up at what awaited him.

And up...and *up*...

They were boots. Striped black and purple, with spiked studs arranged in an almost claw-like fashion at the tips. For all his bluster earlier, the giant was unsettlingly still as he let himself be looked over to the extent that his victim could manage. But the fire had cooled, by no means dimmed entirely. It cast its playful shadows still: in the heavy, scalding breaths that ripped through the summer air; the legs that practically rippled with muscle, so evident even behind the reptilian covering; the massive hands, one resting on a knee, the other holding a drink can of some kind, fingers drumming away on leather and plastic both with barely-repressed excitement...

“That’s right, little guy...drink it in! Get a good look, ‘cause you’ll be *real* familiar with it real soon!”

Skittles’ first impression, this time around, face to face—or, rather, face to boot—wasn’t as spurred by frenzy. Funny, given the rather clear implications of those words, but his mind was more on how loud the voice behind them must have been earlier, to ring out over the roar of his ride.

Which implied plenty for what kind of figure was currently casting its shadow over him. Despite the sunlight still shining, he couldn’t help shivering. It was hard to make himself try to look. But he had to, for his own sake, so the monolith could shift into some semblance of recognisable before it blew his brain to pieces.

What he could make of the legs were shades of green, somehow more eerie alongside the purple gloves in their bright hues. The latter even looked to be in the pattern of scales. It sure as hell wasn’t the sight of someone looking to sit and smell the flowers. Was he even regarding something that could comprehend such a thing even to scoff at it, given how beastly that shape looked? He couldn’t tell, what with the glare of the sun and the blur of both the distance and of his vision—

But he'd get up close and personal, very soon. The tree trunk-sized fingers that darted with freakish speed around his body made sure of that. They ground him roughly into gloved palms, and didn't give him the slightest reprieve to breathe before raising him what seemed like over two-stories' worth of exposed skin and scaly jacket both, all gaudy leather and lean muscle—

Up to the titan's eyes. Upon first frantic glance it looked like the head of some sort of crocodilian, and his conviction towards the 'monster' he'd envisioned grew stomach-swirlingly strong. Then it came to him as a helmet and things started to try to rearrange themselves more clearly. Only to snap right back to off-kilter with what looked like a skull patterning it alongside lurid splashes of purple and green. No help coming when a soft click could be heard, the top portion yawning wider—

And pulling back, the hint of a human face springing up in its place that still seemed to carry quite a hint of reptilian aura to it. That being *before* his grin widened, flashing wickedly sharp teeth.

"Heh...I knew it! Knew I smelled somethin' sweet! Only thing is..." His breath was like a furnace blast as he leaned in, eyes narrowing. "If ya taste the same kinda way..."

Then, without warning, his tongue lashed out, squishing against Skittles' flailing legs before dragging its' hungry, languid way up across his chest and face. The wet surface squished into him, moulding to the contours of his dangling body as if desiring to coat every bit of him. Something harder than the moist flesh bumped along his body too, the overall feeling of repulsion stopped him dwelling on that individual aspect. As the tongue pulled away, its owner smacked his lips. Although his eyes were hidden behind the visor, they were so clearly growing lidded as well.

The kicking and thrashing from Skittles had been, well, kicked off from the giant's initial comment alone. It didn't weaken the lazy grip. Nor did it escape his captor's notice.

"Wriggly lil' guy, huh? Hope ya keep it up on the way down!"

Just not in the sense Skittles likely intended.

Those jaws then opened, revealing the dark, slippery hellscape beyond: fangs laced with silvery saliva, framing a long, lazily-rippling length of muscle beyond. Steamy breath spilled free, further thickening the heated air. A lone piercing shone bright in the stinking shadows, still far from reassuring in its lone vigil; its slight ups and downs on the reddish-pink carpet were sickeningly hypnotising to Skittles as he stared into the pit.

He'd make proper introductions soon. A jolt of pain marked his unceremonious entrance, the giant's finger flicking him forwards, past the pearly gates and onto the slimy welcome mat. He fetched up just behind the piercing, and almost fell over it as he lurched around, his instincts driving him away from the yawning pit that loomed at the cave's rear. The sight of it, dulled as it was in the here-and-there drool-pearled darkness, burned eerily behind his blinking eyes as he fought his way forward.

It was quite the endeavour. The mouth had closed partway, leaving little room to orient himself; the giant's spit coated his clothing and made every movement a slog. Skittles was practically wading through the spongy grounds. It was like wrestling a wave...which was *before* it started to lurch and dance, slapping at and curling around his flailing form and eliciting thrumming notes of satisfaction through the sickly air around him.

And yet, he'd found his way back to the opening, whether by his own ability or by being permitted it for his predator's amusement—the latter seeming more likely—and the arrangement of shining stalagmites before him gave him immediate pause. Just being near them was disconcerting, and it threw a wrench in the works of whatever haphazard plan of action he'd been following. If he tried to worm his way back out between them, that was practically asking for them to—

SNAP

—And those exact pearly whites joined their partners above in one swift motion, their vicious sharpness burned into the mind of the helpless snack as he tumbled backwards from the force. Skittles brought his hands to his ringing ears, only for his yet again upset balance to rip them away as he slumped sideways. Saliva splashed up over him, clingy and gooey. Further disoriented, he was even less prepared for what rumbled up over and *through* him, booming in the air and forcing him flat to the fleshy floor.

“Even if ya tried bucklin’ up, that wouldn’t help ya when ya ride with the gator!”

The words beat their way into his ears, leaving an ache in his head that lingered. Their meaning was more delayed, and resounded a feeble chime in his mind while it was dealing with the cacophonous chuckles resounding around.

Oh, gator, okay, he thought for one confused moment before everything tilted again, the piercing hitting him in the stomach and saliva spattering his falling form. His clothes were starting to drag him down. Far from an end to the test of balance, however. Nothing compared to what streamed in through the open jaws.

There was no chance. It was too late for him to even try holding onto something, much less the silvery stud that glinted now in a taunting matter, still so visible against the rushing, sugary tide that swept through the mouth. There was no fighting it, and next to no enduring it, Skittles coming up short in both regards, spluttering at the taste of sour lime that drenched his own tongue.

It all washed over him. The splashing of the greenish fluid, and the muted snorts of laughter that stilled sounded so horribly loud despite the storm of sweet liquid, and the heavy yet casual meeting of the throat muscles below and behind, hungrily funnelling the fluid away, waiting for the struggling snack caught in the tide...

In no time, he was in the sickly thick of it, the dark curtains folding possessively and crushingly around him and squashing him down into the shuddering abyss. The thunderous ***GLLLRCH*** weighed as heavy on his ears as the pressure did on his frame.

If vying for a grip in the biker boy's maw was hard enough, trying to do so in the dizzying downward onslaught of slick muscle that was his gullet was an unimaginable challenge. The tightness of it all left little room to even move a muscle. Fluids squished through his fingers as he tried to clamp down on anything. Instinct alone drove his desperate clawing, his oxygen-starved brain having little hand in the proceedings. It lasted an age in his mind, the vicious pressure that drew him into the depths, suffocating and near bone-breaking, until he felt he'd pass out, drown—

In a way, Skittles was relieved when a ring of muscles eased open around his body, squeezed him through in one last nauseating motion, and dumped him into a more cavernous space that, while still enclosed, offered some degree more ease to his mind. The mess of thick slop around his lower body, clingy as it was as he got back to his knees, wasn't enough to distract him for one oddly soothing moment. Room to breathe a touch longer, and the air to spend on...what?

The thing about these brief moments allotted for calm was that they were, well, *brief*. Life itself had little ground to grant those who were smaller, given how the most otherwise unnoticeable things had far more of an effect on people that found said things overlooking *them*, instead of the other way around. Including such natural aspects of living as digestion. Because, of course, it was bearing down on that fragile, fracturing barrier. Resounding away with mechanical purpose, the space was constantly moving. The air was thick, and bit at his lungs as he drank it in. His eyes were starting to water.

If the soda cascade had been tricky to slog against, then this sickly mixture was like a bog to his already aching limbs. He struggled on, guided more by the general idea of where he'd fallen through than due to any sight his bleary eyes could grant him in this rancid darkness. Acting on the most rudimentary logic: where he'd come in, he could get out. Of course, discounting the way of climbing to the sphincter, prying it open, and literally the entire backend of the process. Before he even tried to reach for it, he knew it was futile, and yet the basic pest that was self-preservation hadn't granted him a break yet.

It was punctuated in a way by the smaller, yet still sizable deluge that plunged through the portal, artificial flavour stirred into the grimy mix. The bubbly fluid soaked into his already drenched clothes, weighing him down alongside the muggy atmosphere outside and inside his head. His hands fell away, and found their gradual way around his shivering body.

He collapsed promptly afterwards at the ear-splitting **UUUORRRPH** that stole away the already scant air in the sac that wasn't tainted by gastric fumes, rocking the room and its occupant. So much louder than the continued churning around him, it sent a stab of genuine pain through him as he whimpered from the force of something so everyday and otherwise out of mind. For those of greater dimensions.

Like aftershocks, two more muted vibrations shook Skittles' stinking prison, splashing the sickening soup over his body and making him slap his hands over his ears again, wincing. He didn't bother trying to get up again, even as his skin started to tingle from the fluids touching them. It was hard to think straight. It hurt. It was dark. All that shone for him was the

most muted light off the rippling walls, and the sheen of the enzymatic broth. It looked and felt deeper than before.

It could have been the lack of oxygen, or the lack of any fear that hadn't already been expressed, or the lack of anything else to do, as useless as struggling would be outside of some further amusement for the giant...but he found himself wondering how it could have otherwise turned out. An ideal ending, or a lead-up to such, that would make him feel like he'd gone out strong. A feeling of having went down fighting. Any kind of basic acknowledgement from the guy who was going to boil him down into nutrients. Some small mercy before those tiny lights faded from his sight for good.

He didn't even get *that*. What must have been the predator smacking his gut didn't even seem done to tease his victim at all—and if it were, it was clearly an afterthought. The guy was just caught up in his own self-satisfaction. Nothing more to give the roadside snack that he'd chased down. And in his state of complete and utter exhaustion that had long since kicked his terror to the curb, Skittles couldn't find it in him to care.

The increasing churns and kneads of moist stomach muscles around him had faded quickly to background noise, almost welcoming to the tiny snack in his fractured state of mind. He sank into the thickening mess of acid and chyme like it was a warm bath, feeling as if he were being conveyed into a better place by the mechanisms of the giant body. Even as his eyes closed, the more soothing image wasn't entirely superimposed over his grim fate. And even then, the mental sheets were still unruffled.

It was all coming back to his predator. That biker that had sent him down with his drink, no fanfare or anything. His thoughts were jumbled and slipping and sliding, and so many were overseen by that damn toothy smile. In so few did he feel himself as any kind of living, breathing entity. And what did that tell him?

More than what his own senses were granting. What he heard past the gurgling and sloshing of the bubbling cauldron around him was a distant voice snapping at the 'hunk of junk' followed by a sudden change in gravity that would have snapped him to attentiveness maybe a minute or two ago, and then a gradually building new layer of vibrations that growled, steady, between the more haphazard wet jostling of the muscles around him. The deafening blend of the stomach's unending tremors and the giant's booming breaths coupled with the lack of his own aside, he'd have asked what the guy expected, leaving his ride to bash its own brains out with the help of a tree, and all. The matters of true importance. But whatever.

This first impression was a strong one. In the sense of encountering and being promptly admitted to greater strength, with no means to fight it, it said all it could about his place in the world and his way of serving it. A fate that gave him less fear than it should have, perhaps in part to its speed in falling upon him.

The second would be beyond him, once his eyes closed.

And after the non-stop thrill ride that had been the past few moments, he wasn't really opposed to that truth.

Not that he had a hand in the matter, regardless.