

Situating The Situation

by

Vixyy Fox

“It’s all about situating your bum into the right angle of the dangle, if ya know what I’m say’n,” Brody told his rider. “For a instance,” he drawled, “You got a boney butt that I can feel even through your saddle and the armor plating but that’s not necessisarily a bad thing.”

Tiger punched him on the arm. “I don’t have a boney butt!”

She was a Fox with good ears and a nice figure for a Genmod. Brody, on the other hand, was full human and in top physical shape as all the ‘one man tankers’ were since strength still held a factor in doing what they did.

“Well you’re sure not a Bunny Butt,” he countered, knowing it would set her off. “Old Hank has a Bunny rider and she’s just as soft as a spring time hug, is what he tells me. He also says she keeps him pleanty happy too, if you know what I’m say’n.”

He and Hank were the only two One Man Gunplatforms (OMG’s) left out of the group of sixty they’d come in with five days ago. Mostly that was because they’d agreed early on to separate from the main body and fight on their own from the flanks. This was fine until the ‘BIG ONE’ was laid on them and the other fifty eight got instantly evaporated.

Tiger punched him in the arm again, giving it all she had. It hurt enough to bring tears to his eyes but he stopped short of showing any other pain.

“HER NAME IS HAZEL AND THAT’S AGAINST REGULATIONS!” she yelled at him. “WE WERE NOT MADE FOR THAT!”

Genmods were originally created in secret by research scientists and then banned by the government when their successes were found out. This, however, was only on paper and meant to quell a negative public opinion. The military quickly took over the research seeing the advantages of having an army bearing the instnctive talents of animals and survivability encompassed within. Because of this, OMGs were each given a rider to be their eyes and ears since they were superior to any electromechanical devices that could and did fail. Plus they were far cheaper to replace when they were ‘used up’.

“What difference does it make when there’s nobody left who even wrote the damned regulations?!” the OMG driver countered rubbing his arm. “I want out... I want to lay next to a nice soft Fox...” In a softer voice he said, “I want you.”

‘click, click... Brody, lay off the Fox. We can hear you screaming all the way over here,’ Hank called on the radio.

The gunner raised his arm and looked at his wristwatch, seeing Hank's face looking back at him. He pushed the transmit button and told him, "Screw you and the horse you rode in on."

"Nope," Hank responded, the speakers of the OMG giving his voice a mechanical sound. "That would be the Equins and ain't no way I'd even go there."

"Why; cuz your Bunny Butt might get jealous?"

The screen on the watch turned red and his wrist vibrated from a mild shock meant to wake a sleeper quietly. This was followed by a female electronic voice. "Break through sector 9... estimated five heavies and ten lights with ground troops."

"Tiger!" Brody yelled, "We need to mount up!"

"Hostile ETA to current location twenty minutes," the report continued, "Possible attack drones inbound. ETA five minutes."

"Tiger! We got us a situation!"

"Situating this!" she yelled back holding up her middle finger. "I'm leaving!"

"Nooooo... you can't do that! Ahhhhh... all right I'm sorry! I think you're the sexiest thing in the whole wide world with the prettiest plushest butt I've ever laid eyes on!"

Tiger crossed her arms. "Kiss it!" she told him, "I'm radioactive! You had protection when the egg went off but Hazel and I didn't. I'm going to die. Maybe they'll give you a replacement with a fat ass when I'm gone."

"We don't have time for this!"

There was a mechanical sound of steel feet on loose rock and a Bunny head rose up over the fallen wall of the building where they were hiding. A second later more of her was in view and it looked as though she were floating in the air except for the head of the OMG which was next to her shoulder saddle. The Bunny made hand signals to Tiger, who 'eeped' and then ran to her gunner in order to help him mount... which was a part of her job. Once he was in, she pulled the safety pins out of his 'arm weapons' and climbed up to her saddle. Plugging in her headset she heard, "Estimated time inbound drones; one minute."

"Drones?" she asked.

"Yup," was Brody's only reply. They were fast, small, and deadly to the tanker. He could track and shoot some of them but all it would take was one to get through.

Reaching to the pouch located on the OMG's back, the Fox pulled out two shoulder fire rockets, checked them for serviceability and then pressed her 'talk' button. "I'm going to the top of the building." Without waiting for permission she unplugged and jumped off. To her right she found Hazel doing exactly the same thing. It wasn't training... training said stay with your tanker at all costs you are an asset... you are his eyes and ears. Though this thought was not actually written on paper, the genetically modified riders were socially trained to follow that path. The reasoning simply followed military logic; Genmod replacement was easier than fixing unreliable

equipment; they were never listed as killed. As assets, like any piece of equipment, they were used.

When Tiger and Hazel got to the top of the crumbling building they unlimbered and picked a different section of the sky. Looking through the launcher sights they found the small illuminated pips they were looking for and pulled their triggers. The rockets streaked out, each splitting into four separate little flames. Every flame but one found a target and detonated. In horror the girls watched the one remaining threat buzz past the bottom of the building and then explode as a thirty millimeter round picked it out of the sky as if the OMG had been skeet shooting.

There was no cheer or laughter. Bunny and Fox discarded the used tubes and carried the serviceable ones with them. Together they hurried back down the stairs and remounted. Plugging back in Tiger gave the command, "Ahead warp factor seven Mr. Scott."

"Aye, aye Cap'n," Brody replied in a very fake Scottish accent and then set the OMG in motion.

"Fart, fight, or run?" Hank called out.

"Ground troops and Lights, never a problem," Brody replied over the comm, "Heavies I'm not so sure about. What if they have some more of those miracle eggs?"

"They can't use them if we're in close," his partner told him.

"I'm not going to risk the girls," the tanker responded, "And that's final."

"We're used up in any case," Tiger told him over her comm. "If you've got a plan that'll work then I say we do it. If I'm going to die I'd rather do it in style."

"Me too," agreed Hazel and the other's of her group might have fallen over if they hadn't been moving.

"Since when can you talk?" Hank asked her.

"Since forever," she responded, "I just never had a reason to say anything other than the preprogrammed responses."

"Not even when we..."

"Especially not then!"

"You have done it!" Brody crowed, "I knew it!"

"So you didn't know!" Tiger replied acidly, calling him on his earlier lie. She slapped the top of the OMG's head with a resounding thunk. She then shook her paw trying to make the sting to go away.

"Inbound, inbound, inbound," squawked the early warning system.

As they were trained in this situation, Tiger and Hazel leapt from their saddles and sprinted for what was left of a nearby building. Brody and Hank then came back to back and raised their

arms which covered the skys with four thirty milimeter anti-everything guns. As soon as the missile came into view it was met with a hail of fire and blew up.

“I vote run!” both humans said in the same breath. Gathering up the girls, electronic maps were quickly consulted and the most direct route away from the enemy was chosen. In short order there was the clank clunk clank of armored feet hoofing it to somewhere perceived to be safer.

On the outskirts of a city once called New York, two OMG’s and their riders strode up a small hill which gave them a full overview of where they were. There they paused, Tiger and Hazel helping Hank and Brody dismount from their overly large mechanical bodies; which were now almost out of fuel.

Once the dismount checks were made, non-issue binoculars were dug out of a supply pack so they could see exactly where they were.

“I would kill for a carrot,” Hazel said absently as they passed a canteen between themselves. This caused a giggle fit among her friends.

“What?” she asked, and her question made them laugh even harder. The Bunny’s ears drooped as her arms crossed defensively.

This look of hurt went right to Hank’s heart and in a quick movement he leaned forward enveloping her in his arms. “The way you handled that launcher today, Haze, I don’t think I’d want to take you up on that proposition,” he told her softly. “It’s just that we’re all so damned tired. Think about it... we’re all trained killers aren’t we?”

“To what ends?” Tiger sighed. “It makes no sense to me what we’re doing.”

Brody’s arms wrapped around her from the back in like fashion to the other tanker. “I don’t want to be a killer,” he whispered in her ear, “I just want to be a lover.”

“Shhhhh...” she told him.

“But...”

She squirmed out of his grasp. “I heard something!” the Fox hissed. “There!” She pointed and her friends, hands and paws on sidearms, followed her finger.

From the near by underbrush, an African Dog soldier stepped out into plain sight. He was unarmed and from the tattered uniform they could see he was the enemy.

“Don’t take your weapons out,” Hazel advised. “He had the drop on us... if he meant us harm we’d be dead now.”

In the Dog’s right paw was something orange and this he held up. It was a single carrot complete with the green of its leaves showing it was fresh pulled from the ground.

“We are tired of fighting for no reason belonging to ‘us’,” the Dog announced.

Brody stepped forward. “As are we,” he replied.

The Dog spat upon the ground. "I was not speaking to you," it told him acidly, "I was talking to the Gens. There is a different war now... your time is done."

Tiger stepped forward and took Brody's hand in hers. "He is my chosen mate," she said loudly. "We are a pair as are the other two. We wish simply to live in peace."

"I thought you said you were radiated and dying?" Brody hissed.

"I lied."

Hazel and Hank came to stand next to them. "If we are meant to die," the Rabbit told the Dog, "We shall die together."

The foot soldier turned for a moment and listened to another voice further back in the brush. Returning his attention to those in front of him, he tossed the carrot to Hazel.

"Come," he told them.

Brody choked back a chuckle and Tiger gave him a hard elbow to his side.

"That's not what he meant!" she hissed.