

PELLUCIDAR, I HATE PELLUCIDAR

By Rick Johnson

Illustrated by Tony Phillips

My pocket watch went off.

I told people that it was my grandfather's but that was a lie I told to justify carrying the thing around. The truth is that I found the watch at a yard sale, had it gutted and replaced with...

Okay, reflexes took over. It's like when you spend your life in the dojo, training and spending hours on the moves until they become second-nature, and then someone at a party rests their hand on your shoulder because they really want to meet you, and before you realize what you have done, they are on the floor screaming in a wrist-lock, and you are a second away from crushing their throat with a punch before you realize what you are doing. Your potential date, romance, and eternal happiness have just gone down the drain forever, plus everyone is staring at you, and the party host cuts you off from the bar even though you are still totally sober.

In this case, I jumped from bed, grabbing my sword, knife, and watch as I moved, then awoke with a naked blade staring at the noonday sun.

Okay, I'm an early riser, having spent too many years in the military. I cannot sleep past seven and rarely six a.m., so to see the sun overhead at noon was...well it was strange. The fact that it was the

wrong size didn't matter. No it was the simple fact that it was overhead that bothered me.

Then to realize that the reason I could see the sun overhead was because my roof was gone, along with my bed and house, and that I was surrounded by jungle was even worse. Flashback to the war when I was a Headhunter, hunting the enemy in the jungle with a bow not unlike the one on my wall at home.

I think I awake easily and quickly but I've been told that my first words when woken up are narrhhggghh!!!??? Even in a foxhole I was the same. I thought I awoke quickly but my companions said otherwise. I can sleep through a battle and have done so upon occasion but it takes me forever to awaken. I still function, I just wake up a half hour later, dressed and wonder if I ate breakfast and brushed my teeth before I drove across town.

So as my faculties came to the forefront more slowly than I liked (Goddess, how did I ever survive all those years of combat?) I slowly accepted the thought that I was wearing underpants, a t-shirt and holding a pocket watch and rapier and hunting-knife and was otherwise naked and barefoot.

I could smell the ozone from the transference, then the methane that said 'jungle', the same smell I had endured in Vietnam, Africa, Indonesia, and a dozen other jungles where the leeches were worse than the big cats. Then more slowly I became aware of the birds and other animals I had never heard before, not in Africa, not in Southeast Asia, not in Southeast Europe. Something ... well it was different, and I ignored it until I realized that I wasn't in bed any more and nor was I dreaming.

Well that was good. A lifetime of failed relationships and insecurities gave me strange dreams. There was the usual changing my children's diapers and not remembering which end to clean, or the ones where my kids are hungry so I pop a tit free even though they are adults. And the normal my teeth are falling out dream and the usual ones where I am back on the farm though I haven't been there in half a century plus the usual sex dreams where I never seemed to climax no matter who or what I was doing. But this wasn't a dream.

As I shook my head awake and felt my hair in my mouth and eyes, I opened the pocket watch and saw the readings. Lat/Lon=n/a. Time= n/a. reference= n/a. What did that mean? The watch always was able to tell me my time and place and sometimes even why I was here.



Something moved in the brush and I shoved the watch and knife into my underpants and held my rapier and waited. The weight of the 8" knife pulled the elastic at my ass down, the round metal of my watch at my crotch felt cool, and me at ready, my upper arms pressing my breasts together as I waited in

a two-handed stance. I wanted to think I was waiting for danger but I was actually waiting for my underpants to fall down. Then an anklyosaur moved into the open. It looked at me then continued to munch on the vegetation. It wasn't Anklyosaurus, which was higher than I was tall, this was one of the smaller breeds, one without the club tail but with spikes along its back shield and barely three meters long and low enough I could probably jump onto it. I'd seen them in the books but couldn't remember the exact name. Like all armored dinosaurs, it was from the

Cretaceous era and was invulnerable to my rapier, which would break against its back armor. It knew this too and continued to ignore me as it ate.

For a moment I thought I had been transferred to the distant past, some 70 million years ago but then as I slowly came to wakefulness, I saw the horizon, or rather the lack of one. The vegetation stretched up and on until it faded into the distance. Here there was no horizon. There was a sun overhead, no horizon, and a dinosaur that should have become extinct 65 million years ago.

Now the US military and industry had been creating strange creatures by combining human and animal DNA, some of which I had to clean up. They had also stored downed UFO's at Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio and let the public think they were at the Groom-Lake facility which the public called "Area-51," and even I didn't know fully what the Brits had locked away other than that StarGate in France that went to Mars or the time machines at Tara and Avalon. And as for what Russia and China had... the mind boggles at how many of the Conspiracy Freaks that people laugh at are actually telling the truth. I mean, look at me!

So what was I doing here in... Okay, the info implied that the Earth was hollow and I was inside. No wonder my pocket watch didn't register the GPS satellites or temporal broadcasts. I had hundreds or thousands of kilometers of rock between

me and the surface and then hundreds more to the satellites. When a simple forest could dampen the GPS signals, all that rock would stop them cold. At least the anklyosaur was harmless. No tail-club and its only defense was the bone on its back and the spines along its side, so it ignored me as irrelevant.

I lowered my sword and moved around. Looking. Then stopped and tore a two-inch strip from the bottom of my t-shirt and made a belt of sorts to hold my Buck hunting knife and watch. Then another for my rapier because its hanger was on the floor back home being repaired. And some more was sacrificed to make a pouch for my watch. Fortunately, my shirt was extra-large and well below my ass when I started so now it went to my waist. I've seen people sleep naked or in tight tank-tops and now I was glad I was not one of them. I wished that I had taken the time to put on my normal pajamas before I went to bed but...

Giant ferns, trees, flowers, most of the vegetation was Earth-normal but that meant only that I was within 70 million years of my time, probably pre-central as even the gene-labs wouldn't make this monster. Brief thoughts passed by about being in a domed crater that was a zoo of sorts. That could also block the GPS and would be easier to believe than the Earth being hollow in contrast to every geologist who ever explored the planet.

I moved in a circle, at the ready, and then moved towards the dinosaur, which

looked at me and ignored me despite my casual resemblance to a velociraptor, my hips swaying, my breasts bouncing slightly, my hair blowing across my face.

Then it hit me. "God damn fucking shit cunt sucking..." The profanity flowed in the dozen languages I spoke until I was too weak to stand, almost. Now I understood, fully awake, the thoughts that I had casually considered returned in force and I knew I was in trouble. I needed a bra! And shoes! And hat. Water and weapons and all the survival gear that was hanging from my bedroom door back home.

Sometimes I hate my life and what was done to me.

I could walk for a time in my bare feet as I had made a point to walk barefoot as often as possible, but my boobs were already bouncing, and their enhanced size was again in the way. Every time I went into a fencing stance (I preferred to fight two-handed), my arms pressed them together which may have given me great cleavage but even the slightest strike would cause them to get in the way. Ten pounds on my chest (I had once weighed them and bent over a bucket of water to measure their volume after they were enhanced) wasn't anything to ignore despite that beach show on the telly about the lifeguards who had more silicon in their bathing suits than most chem labs owned, and somehow they never noticed a problem (probably why they always ran in slow

motion). But mine were fully natural and firm, and without support would be sagging, bouncing, and giving me backaches soon enough. A good bra and proper exercise would keep them firm, and I could again get used to fighting with them soon enough. Fuck! Sometimes I wised I were still a small B-Cup instead of my current full-C. And peeing in the brush would be a problem again. Chiggers and fleas up my...!

I also wished I had paid more attention to my messages and less to that bottle of Lambrusco last night. Something about a retrieval? Lost people? Or find people who knew something about something that was lost? Obviously they had told me when they were going to transport me but I hadn't paid much attention. Had I been sober when the call came, I'd have stopped drinking, changed into my work clothes, and waited with my gear and some decent weapons like a 30.06 carbine and some thermo-nuclear-explosive rounds instead of passing out in what little I was rapidly cannibalizing.

Okay, the girls were designed for fun, and as much as they liked the freedom, sometimes they needed to be confined. All this despite my saggier friends who insisted that they belonged to babies and men should ignore them until invited. Were that true, why did they buy sexy undergarments? At least I was honest in my desire to attract attention, which is why I had them enhanced. And I had no desire to run at top speed, topless, as some refugee from a dinosaur movie

chased me until I broke a bare toe on a rock. So, I needed to make shoes and bra, both comfortable and strong. I also would need a hat and clothing until I tanned. Being a redhead I could burn walking to the mailbox unless I was careful.

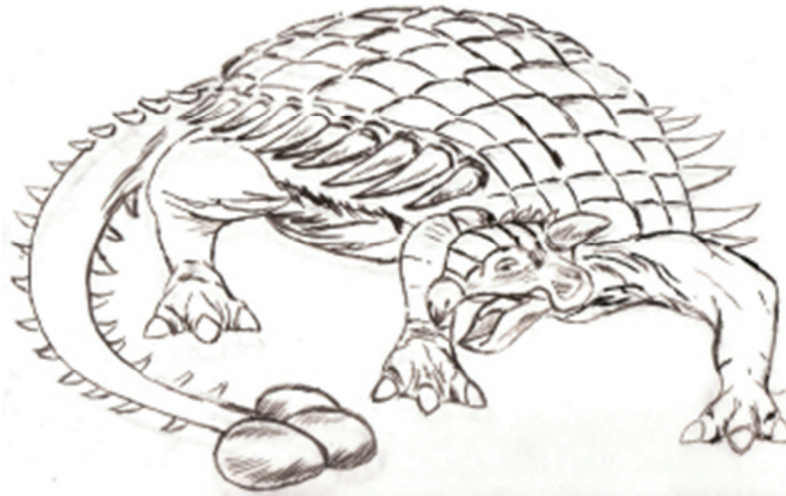
And a bow, arrows, spear, sling, and any other weapon I could think of and produce. Plus flint and tender to make fire, a backpack to carry gear, canteen; the list was endless. I normally carry

my kit just for this event but being a bit drunk last night (my date had stood me up and I was feeling very sorry for myself) I left the kit on my bedroom door where it still awaited my use. At least I didn't have periods any more so that was a blessing out here where shoving moss up my twat like when I was younger would be the only option. Those ended when I passed menopause some decades ago and when they enhanced and rejuvenated me, I asked them to avoid regenerating my womb because frankly, I hated bleeding every month. Between the cramps and PMS which almost got me killed a few times because the men of my native country weren't as politically correct or

sympathetic as I wanted them to be and my new body which still had a cycle, only instead of menstruating, I got disgustingly horny and still bitchy every twenty-eight days, I was not in the best of moods.

I tried tying my T-shirt in any of a half dozen ways to give some support but

nothing worked well. Well, I was stuck with it.



I needed to think how was I going to salvage this mission and live long enough to get home, and the

safest place seemed to be on top of that anklyosaur.

I noted what it was eating and found something similar but fresher, and cutting a large batch, shoved it under my armpits to absorb my sweat. People think I have some occult power over animals but most of it is simple tricks and common sense with any telepathy simply enhancing the control. Well, that's not completely true but it makes a lot of people feel more comfortable around me. Guys get really scared when they think I am controlling their actions.

The beast sniffed the grass, smelling my scent, and I sought its mind to send

thoughts of friendship that it would associate with food and my scent. There wasn't much mind there. When it wrapped its tongue around the grass and began to munch, I scratched it under its armored head then when it accepted me, I climbed onto its back, sat down, and tried to think.

Opening my pocket watch again, I touched the computer and asked, "Replay last message."

There was the usual security codes and identifications crap that they always used to impress anyone who was listening in. Frankly, we never used that stuff among ourselves. Then the meat of the message: "Assignment: Retrieval; Location: Pellucidar; Item: SRP Transmitter with TC power-source. Specifics: While on assignment, Agent Dor Taraus was robbed. SRP stolen by unidentified persons. Last known recording shows Transmission mass of 453 kg. Number of individuals: unknown. Race of individuals: unknown. Assignment: Retrieve SRP Transmitter, evaluate situation, take appropriate action. You are authorized to terminate individuals involved at your discretion. Backup and assistance: unknown. End message"

Great! Dor Taraus sounded like a Red Man from Barsoom. But Barsoomians don't steal so he might have been assigned to another planet or time. Thus the thieves could be Red Men, Green Men or any alien race you imagine

including those Trollock Soldiers who had escaped from the US Gene Labs. So they could be armed with Radium Revolvers with thermo-nuclear rounds, T or R-Rayguns that disintegrate flesh or metal, Lasers, slug-throwers, knives, force-fields, body armor, whatever and all I had was a shortened rapier and an 7" Buck hunting knife. Well, that's why I got paid so much, to risk my life in the face of certain doom. Considering the alternative, it wasn't a bad deal.

"Computer, locate nearest SRP Transmitter."

"Location moving: about twenty-one kilometers on heading of seventy-five degrees true." I didn't bother to ask for anything more detailed other than, "Map current area."

"Map of local area unavailable."

Twenty-one kilometers and moving. I should have been dropped within a kilometer of them so they were moving fast so checking the compass feature, I tapped my ride on the head with my rapier blade and when it was pointing the right direction, I tapped its tail and sent 'run' thoughts, then I lay down and held on for dear life. The anklyosaur wasn't built for speed but it did have a decent stride and moved faster than I could run. So I lay on his back and held on and watched the scenery pass. All too soon, he slowed, his stomach demanding food to support his mass so I let him graze while I checked my

location. Within that hour of travel, we had gone nearly 16 kilometers. Unfortunately, the SRP had moved another seven kilometers away so it was now twelve kilometers away, which would be less than forty-five minutes. Time to arm.

I had nothing to make a bowstring but some experimentation provided me with flint for a spearhead. As I sat there napping the spear, I wondered about the thieves. Did they know what they had stolen? I kept my SRP in a cheap pocket watch case that no one would think of stealing. My ex kept his in an old leather pouch and one person I knew had theirs surgically implanted. Actually they had their bellybutton turned into a pouch and they simply lubed the SRP with KY, shoved it in, and carried it comfortably within their belly. It worked well until someone held her down at a party, filled her navel with Kahlua and whipped cream, and when they tried to suck it out, she laughed so much the booze and cream got sucked in which caused her to spend an hour in the bathroom cleaning her pouch with a borrowed douche-bag and scrubbing the SRP with a stolen toothbrush before it shorted. At least the stolen one hadn't been opened because the Total-Conversion Reactor that powered the thing would have collapsed under the 'unauthorized personnel' Rule and caused a quarter-kiloton thermo-nuclear explosion. That was the secondary reason for me being here, to prevent such catastrophes, the main

being to keep our technology from unfriendly hands.

While napping my spear, a giant wolf appeared, solitary, adolescent, probably driven from the pack as he matured. He was hungry and saw me as his next meal. Fortunately, I was in the middle of my 'period' and was stinking like a bitch in heat, a substitute for my menses, and I could see the wolf's penis begin to extend from its sheath. Damn, I forgot that I had masturbated myself to sleep, and my fingers and panties still smelled of sex. This could work for me. I relaxed, broadcasted thoughts of 'pack', 'family', and 'calmness,' and the thing, as big as a lion, slowly approached. I allowed him to sniff and lick my fingers then he forced his muzzle between my legs. I didn't have the strength to stop him, and his teeth were longer than my knife so I relaxed, spread my legs and let him get a good whiff of myself, hoping I could prevent him from mounting me. Some Beast-Masters were into bestiality because it helped to control their Team. I preferred human men myself though like all Agents who deal with alien planets, I was very liberal as to the age, gender, race and species of my bedmates. When his empathic broadcasts turned from food to sex, I reached out to stroke his coat, and then scratch his ears, listening to his thoughts to find the places he enjoyed most. I wanted to avoid masturbating him only because it complicates the relationship but frankly, we Agents loose all inhibitions early on. I came from a country that saw black

people as 'animals,' and I watched a neighbor being stoned to death for mongrelizing the race when she married someone from a neighboring country because he wasn't 'our kind'. But when you work with aliens on a daily basis, terms like exterrality, bestiality, pre-marital sex, sin, homosexuality, masturbation, and the like quickly lose their meaning.

Finally he lay on his back and I scratched his belly, watching his engorged penis beg for attention. I had no problems with this if it would bind him to me but if I did, I'd never be able to bend over naked around him which would put a damper on my assignment, what with being mounted every time I checked for a land-mine or trip-wire.

So seeking an alternative, I perceived a large lizard-like mammal nearby. So casting my thoughts in that direction, I called it to me then said to the Dire Wolf, "dinner is here!" and the wolf was instantly upon the beast, his stomach overriding his dick. The fastest way to any man's heart is through his stomach, and this did the job.

Now, like the anklyosaur, the giant wolf associated me with pleasure and food, and I was now a part of the pack/herd. The dinosaur wasn't afraid of the wolf, he would just squat down and be invulnerable but I had to get them used to each other. This would take time, and every second I spent on, gathering a Team, allowed my Targets to get further

away. But jumping into a potentially dangerous situation with a bit of steel and undependable animals would be asking for trouble. I checked my watch and found them still moving with their SRP still inactive so they might not know what they had. And if that were true, then they wouldn't be heading for a Stargate but would be lost themselves. "Computer, locate nearest Stargate."

"Location of nearest Stargate is 16 kilometers on heading of 255 degrees."

"Computer, that's the one I entered. How about the nearest Stargate to the Targets?"

"Same Stargate. About 25 kilometers on heading of 254 degrees."

"Is there a Stargate along any projected path of the Targets?"

"Negative."

Then they didn't know what they had. They may be simple thieves who accidentally activated the Transmitter and are wandering around with no idea of what happened. If so, then nature here would soon kill them, and I'd only have to find the specific pile of dino-shit that contained the SRP and the bones of the guy who stole it. Still, they could be armed, and if so, better than I was. Well, this is better than sulking at home because some guy I fell in lust with stood me up for a football game or some girl younger than my grandchildren.

Oh, I know it wasn't love, just sex, but no woman likes to be stood up. That's what we do to men. When I was younger, I wanted a man to love me forever, be kind and considerate and look beautiful and that's exactly what I got, along with two kids and an STD because other women wanted the same thing from my husband.

Then I wanted a man with a job, who was caring and would be a good father to my children. He was, but he also loved beer and it wasn't more than a few years before his belly stuck past his dick and he couldn't perform any more or hold a job. But by then I had a few more kids.

Then I wanted a man who would be there for me. And I got a couple more kids instead.

Now, I just want a man with staying power and a big dick. But still, I resented him not even calling to cancel our date. So I threw the dinner into the yard for the neighbor's dogs, replaced my tight sexy dress with a baggy t-shirt, wiped my make-up off onto the \$350 dress I had bought for the evening, finished off both bottles of wine and jilled myself to a dozen or more climaxes until I passed out.

I wanted to masturbate some more but if I did, the wolf would see it as an invitation so I suffered. And remembered.

I remember it was a hard winter that had followed a number of hard winters. Centuries later they would call it the 'Little Ice Age'. Food was scarce, too scarce to waste on an old woman whose arthritis prevented her from working, who was crazy from syphilis and coughing up blood from tuberculosis. So they put me in a cave, wrapped me in a blanket and left, promising to return but knowing that they'd wait until Spring and bury what the wolves hadn't eaten. I didn't begrudge them this for we lived in a harsh land and sometimes, hard decisions had to be made. So there I was freezing to death, hoping that I froze before the wolves found me and then HE entered.

He was foreign, exhausted, and carried a sword, bloody and notched as if he hadn't been well trained in its use. I could see that he was different but not how different. He looked at me, then apologized, "Dear grandmother, I apologize for intruding." Then, before he could turn and leave, he looked at me and asked, "Honored grandmother, ... are you well?"

I remember laughing at his naivety then coughing up bloody sputum, and he was there in an instant, his sword forgotten, so unlike a warrior, pounding on my back to help. He acted as if he really cared, the fool! So I told him I was dying and why I was there. The more I spoke,

the more horrified he became until he said, "Honored Grandmother, it is not meet for a respected elder to die alone like this. Though I am not of your Clan or Family, I will stay with you if you wish."

And he did. I could tell he wanted to leave, that he was afraid to remain for those who he had fought would not let him go, we were that tenacious in our wars, but to him, the comfort of an old woman, dying alone, was more important than his own life. So he gathered sticks and made a small fire to warm me, heated some water and cut what food he had into small pieces and fed me the stew for I could no longer hold the spoon and mostly he listened as I told him about my life.

Then I said, "You must leave, the wolves come."

"I hear them not."

"I have a sense about this. In my youth I could send them away but not now." I told him my one secret, a skill for which my people would have burned me at the stake. I told it to him to force him to leave, to save his life but he nodded and reached for his sword, believing me without question, not fearing the power of a 'witch'. Then, later when I heard their howls, he excused himself and I cried, "Run! I am dead, save yourself!" But he said nothing and left to meet the wolves. I heard screaming, howling and then he returned, his leg torn, his left

arm useless, his sword covered with fresh blood. Then he collapsed at my feet.

I thought he would die but he didn't, and I was shamed that I couldn't even bend to assist him. Later, hours later, he woke and groaning, rolled over and began to treat himself. I was too crippled to do more than watch. "I hoped you would run," I said.

"You are still alive." As if that were all the reason in the world. Then after treating himself, I coughed again and he said, "I can ease your pain."

I thought he meant poison and nodded to him. He pulled himself to his knees, pressed a cylinder to my neck and there was a pressure, a slight sting, and the pain vanished. For the first time in years, I was pain-free. Then I asked, "How long before the poison takes affect?"

"Poison, there is no poison, Reverend Grandmother, just something to remove the pain."

Again, he sat with me, listened to me ramble on like an old woman, and his presence comforted me. Then he beeped! He touched a bracelet on his wrist, spoke in some foreign language and said to me, "I must leave soon. Your people come. Will you be safe?"

"Safer than will you if that is their blood on your blade."

He looked embarrassed and said, "I apologize for harming your kin. I tried to avoid violence but was forced into conflict." He actually meant it. He was no warrior, just a man who believed that an old woman shouldn't die alone.

"It is of no matter. My people are arrogant and violent. I am certain you did what you must and tried for peace."

"Thank you Honored Grandmother."

"Something comes. It is... I don't know. It's like an animal but not one. I read violence, aggression in its mind. Please, you have done so much for me, please leave that I will know you live."

He just shook his head and fed me more broth, the dried blood on his arm and hands flaking off.

Finally the door opened and a monster entered, one that would terrify our greatest warriors, one of the Trolls that we speak of to scare our children into obedience. I called for my companion to run and hide but he looked at the monster, smiled and spoke again in that same strange language, and the monster replied. They talked a moment, then the monster said to me, "Do you wish to live?"

"Rather would I wish this man to live. Take me and let him be."

The monster howled, and I felt laughter in his mind. "You will do. If I save you, will you serve us as does Arinnatol here?"

Serve a monster? But Arinnatol seemed to be at ease with his service, and I felt nothing from him but kindness. Then I made my decision, "Yes, though I know not what an old woman can do."

He spoke to his own bracelet, and others came, monsters all, they took me away to a ship made of steel and within the forest and placed me in a room with my companion and we both were carefully stripped naked. I saw his body, young and firm and masculine and I feared he would shudder at the wrinkled bag I had become but he said only, "I shall see you soon," and we both slept.

I had dreams, dreams I cannot remember then awoke, coughing and sat up, spewing liquid for they had placed me in a tank of fluid. My companion was doing the same, healed of his wounds. I could move again, and when the woman, beautiful beyond compare, offered me a mirror, I was young again, beautiful again, my skin smooth, my small breasts firm. My hair was still gray but the woman said in her language, which I now understood, "It will grow out your natural color."

We were helped to our feet, my body young and firm and in the service of the Aliens. Arinnatol became my mentor, my lover and most of all, my friend.

While my ankylosaur ate to fill his considerable stomach (did he have four like a cow?) and my Dire Wolf ate the beast I had summoned for him, I ignored the headache from my hangover and sought wood to make a bow or even a spear. I'd like to make a laser or blaster but in a primeval jungle like this, my options were restricted. Fortunately, I did have a good knife. That's why I carried a Buck, though not the top-of-the-line, they were still very good knives. So I looked around for a decent tree and flint. I was born in the Iron Age but we still used bronze because Blacksmiths were considered magical people and good steel was so rare, it was often used as wealth. In war, only the richest used a steel sword, the rest, an iron axe or a bronze sword, and we all learned early how to nap flint into spear and arrowheads for when away from home. But carving a decent bow would take time and making a string even longer, so first a spear.

A sapling, straight and strong would do, and with little work I had a decent spear curing over a small fire I had made with some dried leaves and sticks I was burning with a piece of flint and the steel from my knife. Then while sitting and chipping a spear-blade, the man-ape burst through. I could read lust in his mind and why not? Since my rebirth, I had been enhanced to serve my new masters. First they gave me back my youth and health, curing the diseases that ravaged my old body. Then they

made me stronger and faster, not super-human as some of the Weir with whom I served, but I was now almost as strong as a man of my size and somewhat faster. I healed faster, was immune to all diseases, and would be young for maybe a century, longer if I continued to serve. Then after I shifted from being a Soldier to an Agent, I had my breasts enhanced a couple sizes then reduced a bit to allow me to run without pain, my child-birth stretched vagina rebuilt smaller and my lips permanently reddened and moistened. And I had my sweat glands shifted to exude an aphrodisiac (which is why even I get disgustingly horny at times). In short, if I was to be an Agent and not a Soldier, I wanted to be able to impress the men with my beauty. I just forgot that my redheaded complexion, bred for the far north, would burn easily in these southern climates.

The ape-man stood, staring, not knowing what or who I was for I could read confusion in his mind. But his lust was evident, damn, I was still sweating musk, and that was turning on every male downwind. The thing looked like a cross between an ape and a man, heavily on the man but it could not stand erect, his jaw jutted forward and I could see his canines when he opened his mouth. Plus he was hairy and filthy. My people rarely bathed because the effort of melting snow and ice for warm water was so difficult that we saved bathing for birth and death and weddings. But since my rebirth, I had come to enjoy a hot shower and relaxing bath, and my nose

had become accustomed to the smell of clean-flesh so this one revolted me.

He also carried a spear with a primitive flint point and an axe made of stone ground narrow to hold the haft. Paleolithic I would imagine. His animal fur was poorly cured and I could feel the vermin living in his clothing and his fur. I found out later that he also carried an obsidian knife hanging behind his back.

He continued to stare, as did I, and he was rubbing his crotch with the hand that also held his club. There was no real bulge there so perhaps he was built like a gorilla in more ways than one because a gorilla had an erect penis of barely two inches which wouldn't be enough to satisfy me even were I to submit. Not that it mattered, the ape-man was far stronger than me and could easily force me if he desired. The only reason he did not was because my Dire Wolf had come to my side and was beginning to growl. The Ape-man was torn between lust and terror. Soon, no matter how much he wanted me, he'd bolt but I had other plans for him.



I scratched my wolf behind his ears and sent a thought to relax and sit. The ape-man relaxed also. Good. He was more beast than man so could be bent to my will. I sent him a thought, and he lowered his weapons, staring between my wolf and me as I approached, then I took his weapons from him and lay them on the ground, never breaking eye contact. I then slid my hands under my panties, slid my fingers inside myself, moaning as I did, and hearing his echoes. Then I rubbed his lips with my musk-covered fingers. With my anklyosaur, I used food as a binder, with my wolf I used pack, with this being I would use sex because you use the tools that work. He reached for me but I pushed his hands away and down as the wolf growled. Then, still touching his lips, letting him smell my musk, I slid my other hand under his fur and took his waiting erection in hand and gently stroked him to climax.

Men are rough with sex. They grab and jerk as if they were playing at tug-of-war seeking immediate climax but a woman understands the art of a gentle touch and

the pleasure of the journey, and no man can give as much pleasure to himself as can a woman give to him. When done, he fell to his knees, drained, and I licked my hand clean, always keeping eye contact, knowing that the musk my loins exuded would be absorbed into his penis and strengthen my control. I had no fear of disease or vermin for although I had grown to old age living with fleas and lice, my enhanced body was now immune to all diseases and vermin. They simply found me unpalatable and never bit and were repelled by my odor so I never again had to fear the tick, the mosquito, the biting fly or the louse, nor the sexual diseases so many men and women pass as casually as a kiss.

Now he was mine, a new member to my Team.

Eventually, he'd become tired of my manual attentions but I hoped I'd be done by then for I had no wish for his miniscule dick

to attempt entry. I had no problems with sex for I had spent the last decades working with alien races, I simply liked my men much, much larger than this ape-man, or Sagoth as I later learned him to be, was, and being frustrated from bad sex was worse than being frustrated by no sex at all.



The wolf had picked up our scent or thoughts or emotions for he was curled up licking himself as dogs can. I knew one Agent who had his spine made more flexible so he could do that to himself too. He bragged that he could do that better than any woman so I tied him to my bed and proved him wrong. I had to tie him up because after the first half hour, he was screaming for me to finish him, and I kept teasing him to climax and erection and climax over and over all night until he couldn't do anything, and his wrists were bleeding from the effort to free himself and rape the shit out of me. And still I worked on him. Men! But then, a man will spend hours doing to a woman whatever it takes to

near kill her with pleasure and deny himself all but that immediate climax.

I took the Sagoth to my wolf and anklyosaur and introduced them but both

wolf and Sagoth growled at each other. That was fine with me for so long as the wolf disliked the Sagoth, I was safe from rape. I didn't need them to like each other, just follow orders. Then that duty done, I introduced myself, "Estrith" and he himself, "Ahm," and then I knelt and showed him my spearhead that I was chipping. He looked, laughed (at least

these had humor), and removing a piece of antler from a pouch, began to work and within minutes had a simple but very effective spear-head that would have taken me a day to do half as well. He then lay a piece of stone that was hollow and placed some tree sap and a few other items into the hollow, placed that on my fire and as it melted, he lashed my spearhead to the shaft with some sinew, grunting as he pulled it tight, all the while, running the loose part through the melted mixture. Considering the size of his muscles, there must have been hundreds of pounds of pressure on that sinew and when it dried, it would be stronger than steel wire. All the while he talked. I'd hold up an object, say the name in my language and listen to him tell me the Pellucidaran word, and so I began to learn his language.

Since my Masters had also changed my brain a bit, I never forgot a word and so was able to develop a working vocabulary in a very short time. Ahm called my Dire Wolf a 'codon,' my anklyosaur a 'dros' and me a 'gilak-she'. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to tell if his accent would be understandable to any of the other more human races in Pellucidar. Some agents have Translators implanted but technology has a habit of breaking down at the most embarrassing times like when your nylon bow-string breaks under UV-degradation. So I preferred the slower but more dependable methods. Besides, despite the half-century since I had

become young again, I was still more comfortable with a cooking fire than a microwave.

I called another of the lizard-mammals that Ahm called an 'a-ho' or 'ant-lion' because it was small but fierce, and with his belly full and his balls empty, he settled down in a tree to sleep. I ate too but wasn't sleepy so continued to work, cutting a bow and carving it to the best of my ability. When I had a string and rope, I'd tie it to a tree and pull it to check and shape the limbs properly. I used to laugh at the telly shows where someone would cut a stick, tie a string to each end (they never explained about the string) and then have a weapon that could kill a man at a hundred yards. If the limbs of the bow aren't balanced, the arrow goes wild and the bow will snap under strain. The string must be strong and durable so it doesn't stretch or wear. Plus you need the right kind and age of wood. Too wet and the bow won't snap back. Too dry and it breaks. Yew is excellent, oak acceptable but pine isn't good for a real bow unless you back it with lots of sinew. Knowledge like this is why I am chosen for these primitive jobs, unlike my ex who was born more than a thousand years after me into a technical society and so understood computers as I did farming. He got all the assignments that dealt with comfortable hotels and good food and fast cars, I got Pellucidar or the Middle Ages where you sleep with fleas and are burned at the stake as a witch if they hear you talking into a Communicator.

Still, carrying a bow-blank now will be easier than making one later. And with reed arrows and Ahm making me arrowheads, it shouldn't take too much time before I was armed. So while Ahm and my wolf, no my codon slept and my dros ate, I scraped the hide and began to break down the fibers of the a-ho skin to make a pouch for my own gear. Then a leg-bone for a needle and awl, the stomach for a canteen and whatever else I could make from what my ex called 'garbage.' To him, raised in 20th century England, it may be garbage, but to me who spent many a Winter scraping lichen off a rock to boil into a stew for our empty bellies or shoving moss up myself because tampons wouldn't be invented for another thousand years or spending the Winter weaving the loose fur the children gathered into a blanket, this one animal was a cornucopia of wealth.

My ex. Sometimes I go years without thinking of him and other times he never leaves my mind. We weren't married, Agents rarely marry, but we were in love and lived together and even talked about children, though I let him do all the talking for I had born ten children, four of whom died before they left childhood, and I had no desire to have more. Occasionally, I returned to my own time to visit my children but they knew me as a distant cousin, not their mother and grandmother. It hurts to pretend but it's better than being burned at the stake for being so young after they left me for the wolves as an old woman.

"Computer, current location of SRP?"

"About eight kilometers heading 65 degrees true."

Eight Kilometers? That meant that they were heading almost back this way. Why? Did they realize that they were lost and retracing their steps or were they fleeing something bigger and meaner than they were? A good march in this forest would place them maybe an hour. I could do twice that speed easily on my dros. But, so long as they were approaching, why not wait? "Computer, notify me of any other course changes and also when the Target approaches within a kilometer."

Then I continued to work on my gear. Not enough time to tan the hide decently and it would stink soon enough but I could scrape as much of the flesh as was possible from the hide. Hopefully, I would be able to finish this assignment in a few more hours and go home.

My watch beeped, inaudible to anyone but an Agent, so I looked within, the clock-face gone as it reported. "SRP now within one kilometer heading 63 degrees true."

"ETA?"

"At current rate of speed and course, SRP will pass within 100 meters north in eight minutes."

I moved my dros to that direction then woke my codon and Sagoth and prepared myself. Rushing in with blazing guns was suitable for American Television and my own Iron-Age Danish people but were I like that, I'd have been killed decades ago. And frankly, this being young forever was to my liking so I wanted to evaluate the situation. My Vartanian Masters may be aliens who had given up war centuries ago but they still interfered with other worlds, rented themselves out as mercs, and accomplished tasks that other worlds could not. So they preferred intelligence even in their front-line soldiers.

Minutes later, I saw them. Four humans dressed in civilian clothing from the mid twentieth century dragging a trollock behind. The trollock was a goat-form, one of those creatures created by the American gene-labs to fight in the cold war, but who had accidentally read a copy of the American Constitution and Declaration of Independence and foolishly thought it referred to them as well. When they were to be 'terminated' (a polite way of saying murder to keep their dirty secrets a secret), the entire trollock army revolted, killed the American soldiers and scientists that created them and ran, to be rescued by a Weir Merc and his Ninja lover, and then recruited. Most of them serve my Masters as front-line soldiers or Black-Ops troops. The few who refused to enlist were shipped to another world where they could live in peace, paid for by their brothers in arms.

The humans were carrying what looked like hunting rifles and dressed in plaid shirts and jeans, the trollock still in the American BDU-uniform with his patches removed. Most of the trollocks in service retained their uniforms for some reason they could never make us understand so he could have been from pre-escape or post-enlistment or that in-between time when they were starving and hiding from the soldiers who wanted them dead.

The four were arguing but I couldn't understand their words, though I speak English very well. But nothing to be gained so I sent my wolf to one side, Ahm to the other and waited along their path with my spear in my left hand, my rapier in my right, blade along the back of my arm to be invisible in the gloom but ready, my knife at my back.

When they saw me they stopped, their jaws slack because I imagine I looked the sight. Wearing only white cotton underpants, I had removed my t-shirt to distract them, and was naked everywhere else though I looked like I was wearing eye and lip make-up thanks to my enhancements plus my long red hair which all men seem to love.

"What the hell...?" one said, staring. I know I looked hot and sexy and desirable. But then, I made certain that I was like this when last I left the Vartanian med-lab.

They stared and stared, mostly at my tits. One was smart enough to glance around but soon returned to me. "Which of you is in charge?" I asked.

I imagine that seeing a well-built naked redhead in the jungle holding a stone spear was distracting enough, to hear her speak English more so.

"Who the hell are you? Where are we? How did we get here?" I let them ramble on for a while as I called my ankylosaur to come to my rear. Seeing the dinosaur would keep their attention on me and allow the wolf and Sagoth to move in closer. Those hunting rifles looked dangerous and if they had been designed for moose or bear, they might kill my team and even me.

When they ran down I continued, "I am Special Agent Estrith Mormor investigating the possible murder and theft of Special Agent Dor Taraus. As possible witnesses you are ordered to stand down, lower your weapons and submit to questioning."

They looked at each other, at their trollock prisoner, at my dinosaur and even at me, though this time at my face, then one said, "Fuck you!" and raised his rifle.

His companion screamed, "NO!" but it was too late. Ahm's spear took him full in the back, the wolf, larger than a lion, was on another, and the crunching of his bones was louder than the screams of his

friends. "Drop them! Drop Them! Drop them!" the first cried as his rifle landed in the dirt. I managed to call Ahm off before he could actually kill the third though that man would be lucky to retain his IQ after that clubbing. The one who spoke was shivering, his pants stained by his bladder letting loose. Pellucidar is scary enough for those who had been trained for the place; to those who were accidental visitors it would be like being stuck in a horror movie.

Approaching the unconscious man, I let the wolf eat his fill for it would be impossible to drag him from the body, but I did collect their weapons and calling to the first, "Drag this one to the shade and wait for me. No tricks or you'll die too. Trollock! Come here please," as I drew my knife and sheathed my rapier. I didn't feel I would need either. Cutting the trollock free, I pointed to a tree near but distant from the humans and stripped the one that Ahm had speared. I put his pants on, rinsed as much blood as I could from his shirt and put that on, both baggie on my smaller frame, and ignored the shoes, which were a dozen sizes larger than my own feet.

Then buckling my knife and rapier to my hips with his belt, approached the two, the unconscious almost awake. I squatted then pulled my watch and asked in Vartanian, "Locate other SRP!"

"1.75 meters heading 34 degrees true." That man never blinked as my watch

and I spoke to each other in a foreign language. Then glancing at him, I asked, "Where is it?"

His pupils were dilated and he was going into shock quickly. So I repeated my question while he was still coherent.

"Where's what?"

"What you took off Dor Taraus, that Red Man with the black hair."

"I don't know what you are talking about. We never saw any red men."

I felt over his body then that of his friend until I found the SRP. It was a cylinder, looking like a cigar tube and I held it up for him to see. "This!"

"We got that from it!" he pointed aside.

"Shit!" I snapped, barely ducking the blow from the trollock. I pulled my knife, not able to loosen my rapier but Ahm had thrown the spear, which the trollock ducked, and they closed, the trollock with horns, the Sagoth with stone club.

Trollocks were created in the American gen-labs to be super-soldiers. Designed from human, ape, wolf, sheep, and the DNA of a dozen animals, then trained by the best America had for one reason, to be dropped behind Soviet lines to cause as much destruction as they could during WW-III. However, that war never arrived, and the trollocks were

considered to be expendable. So this one was good. Created and trained to kill.

But Ahm was an ape-man, a species that never lived on Earth and one who survived only by killing anything that stood against him.

The fight was rough, brutal and for both, final. Looking over them both I said, "I'm sorry Ahm, I never intended for you to die."

"Tell me your story?" I asked the last man as I searched the trollock and took Ahm's gear.

"I don't know. We were hunting when this sheep-thing came into our camp. It collapsed from some wound so we tied it up and were taking it to the police when... everything went crazy and we...we appeared here. We've been lost since. What happened?"

"It's best you don't know. How's your friend?"

"Bad. He's bleeding, probably has a concussion. He needs a doctor."

"The nearest doctor is 16 kilometers in that direction. It seems my wolf has abandoned me so we'll use my anklyosaur to carry us. I'll help you carry him."

We got him onto the anklyosaur and though crowded, we managed to ride the beast back the way I came.

“Preliminary report by Special Agent Mormor. Recovered SRP, Thief terminated before I could interrogate him. Two innocents dead, a third injured. Presumed the trollock stole SRP from Agent Taraus. Reason unknown. Trollock captured by innocents who accidentally activated SRP to transport to Pellucidar. Full

report to follow.” I supposed that when the Vartanians downloaded Agent Taraus’ SRP memory, they’d find out what happened. For me, I’d just get the two home and let them try to explain to their own government what had happened. They would both probably be locked up in a mental institution for telling the truth.

End