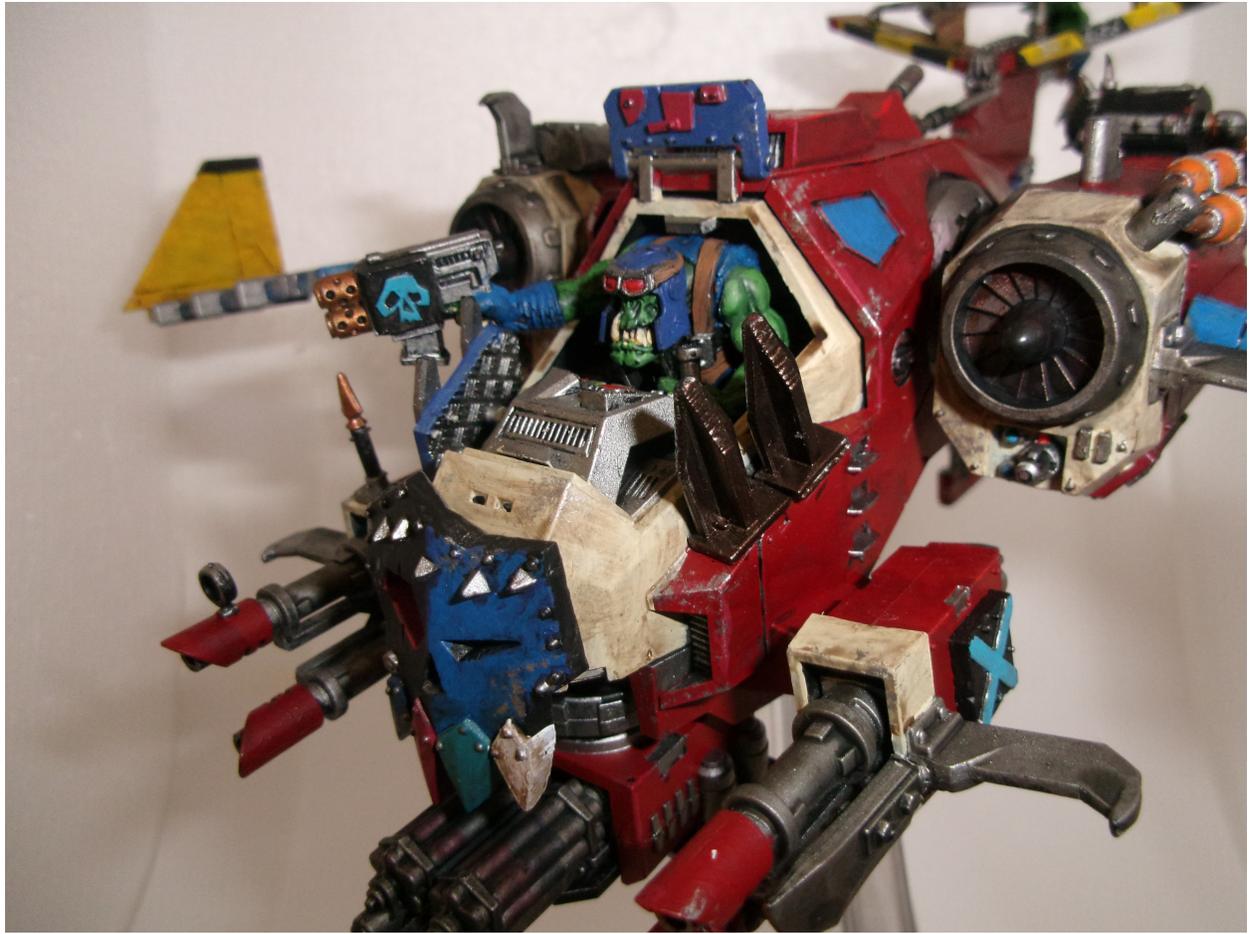


Entry Name: WAAAGH! Screwbitz





There was a low ringing through the halls of the *Wings of Justice*. The sound of the klaxon fading and being replaced by the general hum of the warp drive. Unsure of what caused the alarm, Inquisitor Ja'Quinn chose to ignore it. Tall and precise in movements, Ja'Quinn strode with haste toward the re-purposed conference room. Golden hair with a strong jaw, the Inquisitor would be called handsome if not beautiful. Ja'Quinn absently thumbed the holster of his las-pistol as he tried to make sense of his... "guest's" story. The naval crew he passed saluted him although others turned to avoid him when they saw him coming. Everyone aboard knew that he was with the Inquisition and they were understandably uncomfortable, worried that any misstep would cause Ja'Quinn to denounce them for heresy. Ja'Quinn ignored the rude behavior too, more concerned with the problem at hand. There was a puzzle here, reminding him of the twisted puzzles that his father made from scrap metal in the under-hive on Armageddon. He felt that with the right pull, everything would become clear. He just needed to find the right piece.

Entering the conference room, Ja'Quinn saw that his guest was still being entertained by Groomp. The ogryn was loyal beyond measure and equally as stupid. Groomp had a mechanical eye that replaced the one he had lost in service to Ja'Quinn which the ogryn felt made him smarter. Still, Groomp would only follow orders from Ja'Quinn himself and that made him reliable enough to watch over the guest.

Guardman Leoth Grey was dressed in plain work clothes, gathered from the crew of the *Wings of Justice*. Short cropped brown hair, and a too youthful face, Grey was the piece of the puzzle that Ja'Quinn needed to twist today. As the Inquisitor entered, Grey rose to his feet and saluted. Groomp withdrew to a corner and began to eat something smelly from his pocket.

"Guardman, I am feeling talkative today. I have reviewed your statements from earlier and I feel that there is something missing, maybe intentionally, or maybe not. However, I feel that given your intimate knowledge of the... incident, a certain amount of history might help you

remember these omissions.” The Inquisitor studied Grey, waiting to see if his speech changed the soldier's demeanor. “Yes, sir.” was Grey's curt reply. “Guardsmen, what I am about to share with you is sealed to the

Inquisition and the Emperor, may he live forever. This information was pieced together with records from the Ministourum and from data-slates that were recovered from the moon.”

Ja'Quinn removed a holocube from his pouch and opened the file depicting the planet Ganesha. The image projected from the cube washed the room in orange light causing Groomp to glance up from his snack. The three dimensional image was not stationary. The moon was slowly orbiting the planet. “This planet was lost to the Imperium for a number of years. Warp storms made this area of the segmentum unreachable. Before that, Ganesha was a lush world with a favorable climate for colonization. In addition the moon, FMS-4711, was ripe with minerals that would be beneficial to the Imperium. It was ten years after the first colonists were settled that the sinister Eldar began their attack on the world. Using the largely ignored moon as its base for counter operations, the Astra Militarum fought the Eldar to a standstill for nearly twenty years. Most of the initial colonies were destroyed by the Xenos, but we still had a strong presence on the southern hemisphere and, of course, on the moon FMS-4711.”

Grey listened with apparent interest as the Inquisitor recounted the story. Ja'Quinn had to believe that either the Guardsman had no knowledge of these events or that he was very well trained in deception. “After this period of twenty years, the Eldar began to receive reinforcements from somewhere unknown and began to turn the tide of this engagement against the Imperium. All seemed lost. The records show that vicious warp storms originated around this time preventing assistance from the Astartes or the Imperial Navy. However, records from the moon that we have recently discovered show that another significant event occurred at the same time. An Imperial cruiser crashed into the moon-base. Shortly after this event, Orks appeared en masse. This event ruined any chance for the Militarum to continue

operations against the Eldar. Those that were on the surface of the planet were likely overrun. To the knowledge of the Imperium itself, Ganesha and FMS-4711 were lost.” Grey swallowed at this point, and the Inquisitor noticed a twitch in his blue left eye. “Lost. Until, that is, we received the distress call...”

Deep within the mines, Screwbitz, the Mad Mek smiled. He had rebuilt the human signal device. Staring at the unfamiliar characters that flashed across the screen Screwbitz knew that they would come. It didn't matter who. The only thing that mattered was something would come. The Klanz grew restless. Krumping the last humans and smashing the robot defenses of this old place had helped for a time, but the Mad Mek knew that his boyz wanted a proper scrap. The pansies quit coming a while back and the spiky pansies had run off. More machine than Ork, Screwbitz filled the control chamber with his immense bulk. His new body was a vision from Gork. Built from some sort of walking vehicle that the boyz had blown up, Screwbitz now had four powerful legs to go along with his giant Klaw.

“Impressive, great leader. Your knowledge of the machines of Man is amazing to behold...”

Screwbitz turned toward the speaker. This raggedy human, with his big blue eyes pretended to grovel. He used big words to try and confuse. The Mad Mek saw through his dissembling. Suppressing the urge to rip the speaker in half, Screwbitz spoke.

“Oomie, yer walkin' a line ya don see. We'z already foun' da rest of yer boyz, an' me ladz bled 'em nice. I wan' anserz from ye. Questshuns I got fo' ye. O'ly rezun yer 'live now.” The rumbling voice sounded like the engine of one of the great earth moving machines that the humans had left behind. The voice of the Big Mek almost seemed to shake the entire chamber. The big blue eyes widened, but the gaze remained firm, giving away his pretense.

“Mercy, oh Great One! I can be very valuable. I have intimate knowledge of this mine. I was a

part of the crew here.”

Screwbitz turned to face the human. With a loud burst of steam, his Klaw move toward the human deftly grabbing the front of the human's shirt. Picking the man up was effortless as the Mad Mek drew him towards his metallic face.

“Mercy? Never 'erd of 'im. Yer gonna anser my questshuns. Do it right like and quick, an' I'll smash ye fast. Mess wif me an' I'll toss ye to da squigz.” Still no fear in the eyes.

“Y-yes, My Lord! Ask! Please. You will see how useful I am.” “Wer da rest uv da Demonz at?” Screwbitz smiled again – there was

the fear that had been missing. “D-Demons? I d-don't...” Screwbitz hurled the human across the room

into a stand of unknown equipment. A shower of sparks fanned across the room from the broken machinery. Blood pooled out from a gash on the man's head, further matting his close cropped brown hair.

“Not gonna be fast now.” Screwbitz began to advance until movement from the entryway distracted him. Huge bat-like wings were visible from the doorway. The man began to laugh though blood clenched teeth.

“Now you will see! Filthy Ork! You ruined it! All of it was going according to plan! My master is here now...” The human rose to his knees and stopped as he took in the rest of the form. Demonic horns thrust from a large green face, the wings green as well.

“Boss, he tellz us?” The creature spoke. Green energy rose off of his body like fluid falling upward. His skin seemed to glow with this green energy. A red pulsing was noticeable in a few spots, cracks amongst the green.

“Almost,” the Mad Mek turned again toward the kneeling human, “Wer da rest at? Me weirdboy sur iz 'ungry.” Blue eyes bulged in the human's face. His mouth seemed to be trying to form words. Screwbitz laughed, the sound of metal grinding bones to dust. “Can't fin' yer wordz? Li'l oomie. Da Blud Drinka luvs eatin' 'arts. Demon 'arts iz da best fer 'im. We'z found da firs' unz. We knowz derz more.”

“Imp- No! You speak lies, Ork! The ritual will be finished! Greenskin blood will suffice for my masters.” The human rose unsteadily to his feet. “I have power, oh yes, I have been marked by my masters. I will bring you to heel!” The man ripped open his shirt revealing a strange mark branded into his chest. Energy began to pulse from the image. The room began to grow cold. Screwbitz laughed. Dark psychic energy manifested into a writhing whip that lashed out at the Big Mek. It collided with a green force, a shield of energy created by the winged weirdboy. The man shrieked in frustration and rage, he doubled his efforts. Screwbitz advanced, laughing, enjoying the futile spectacle before him. “Deff will be slow fer ye.” His Klaw lashed out with incredible speed, connecting with a squelch. Blackness took the man. The last sound he heard was Screwbitz in an almost whisper – “Slow.”

“What can you tell us of the Ork leader? From your report, you have encountered him?” Ja'Quinn saw that he was making Grey uncomfortable. Another might have missed the signs. Grey was an excellent liar.

“He calls himself Screwbitz, sir. A silly name in the Ork fashion. He has augmented himself with machines taken from the Eldar. It would seem that his knack for re-purposing technology is why he took the moniker. However, he is extremely dangerous. Most of what was left behind at the main dig site on the moon has been fashioned into Ork weaponry.”

“Hardly unusual, Guardsman. Orks are notorious looters.”

“Indeed, sir. The scale at which he does this is what is remarkable. He has...”

“That is not what is important. The question of how he replicated the distress signal is. We have detected this signal on multiple channels. The authorization codes needed for this would be beyond the understanding of any Ork.” Ja'Quinn let that sink in. He could see Grey's mind working furiously, a single bead of sweat began to form above the too blue eyes of his guest.

“Inquisitor, are you implying that someone gave him the codes? That would seem less likely than... well, than anything else. This Screwbitz is a maniac, sir. Human life, or any life, means nothing to him.”

“So, Guardsman, you would rather I assume that this Ork from a back- water moon, managed to interface with and crack an encrypted code sequence using his... what? Luck? Superior intellect? No, Grey. There is a traitor here. That is the only explanation. Someone betrayed the Imperium and the Emperor, may he live forever, just to save their own sorry skin.”

Grey was still. He could see what Ja'Quinn meant. “Sir. Sir you are mistaken. I... survived my encounter with that beast by luck. I don't know the codes needed to send the signal. I... I am not...”

“Enough. You are good at the game of secrets, Grey. I am better.” Ja'Quinn gestured to Groomp and the ogryn moved from his corner. “There is something you are hiding from me and I mean to have it.”

Grey's head swiveled between the Inquisitor and Groomp. His movements were those of a cornered animal. “Sir. Sir... you must, Sir!” The klaxon came to life again, its sound drowning out Grey's panicked breaths. Suddenly the ship lurched. Gravity changed direction and the Guardsman

was flung toward the roof. Groomp put one of his massive hands against the ceiling and stayed

put, bracing himself and grabbing Ja'Quinn out of midair. Just as abruptly gravity was restored and Grey was slammed back to the ground.

“It appears our friend has fainted, Groomp. Tie him up. If he speaks to you without me here, knock him out again. I need to asses the situation.”

“It is some sort of massive tractor beam, Inquisitor. Coming from the moon. It is not strong enough to pull us in, but if we maintain our current distance, things could get bumpy.” The Captain was resplendent in his uniform. His snow white hair was perfectly manicured for his rank. More direct than most when dealing with an agent of the Inquisition, Captain Edwards was a seasoned veteran with the Navy. As if to punctuate his statements the klaxon flared to life once more, a brief warning before the tractor beam shook the ship.

“Well, Captain. I would not like to see any significant damage to your vessel. I will need a shuttle. You will travel to a safer distance and broadcast a message for me.” Ja'Quinn handed Edwards a data-slate.

“You are going down there? How many of my men do you need?”

Ja'Quinn smiled. This Edwards was a bright spot in this mess. A commendation letter would be required. “Only one. A secondary pilot for the shuttle. I have my own to assist with everything else. Make sure he is steady, Captain.”

Captain Edwards saluted, “I'll have one, Inquisitor.” *****

“Wake up, heretic.” Grey opened his eyes. The familiar brownish blue of the sky on FMS –

4711 greeted him. The constant dust storms were blowing in full. Grime was caked to his eyes and lips. Grey looked around and noticed the shuttle. The

large ogryn was nearby watching him. The Inquisitor was discussing something with a crewman.

“You missed planet-fall. Slept like a baby right through it. Must be nice to have such a clear conscience. Or is it a concussion?”

The speaker was a woman. Dressed in gray and brown fatigues, she almost seemed to blend into the surrounding without trying. No hair was visible under her tight wrapped headgear. Goggles hid her eyes but her skin was pale around her mouth. Despite the camo gear she was wearing, the figure was distinctly female. Only a fool would fail to notice. Grey decided not to answer. Biding his time seemed best.

“Most likely a concussion,” Ja'Quinn called over his shoulder. “We have no time for his injuries now. He has one role to play.”

Grey's mind spun. Role? What is this damned fool talking about? The Inquisitor had no idea how far off the mark he was. Those damned Orks! They ruined everything. The gate was close, his brothers had turned the majority of the ranks to their cause. The Eldar and their Dark brethren had the forces on Genesha all but defeated. The ritual to summon the warp storms had been a success. Then out of nowhere, these Orks attacked the moon. Years of planning destroyed by these filthy aliens.

“You have secrets still, Guardsman. I see the panic in your face. You are well trained. However, this puzzle is getting more interesting the more I dig.” Ja'Quinn pulled a rolled-up parchment from his bag. “This I received as a gift. It was strange to come across it on my first visit to this moon, when I scooped you up, Grey. My first visit I was given this and I had no idea what it was. Well, I knew what it was, just not the context.” The Inquisitor began to unroll the bundle. It looked more like thin leather than parchment, cracks and dried blood along the back side. As he finished, Ja'Quinn showed him the skin. The mark of Chaos branded deep.

Grey clutched his chest. Impossible! The woman reached over and tore open Grey's shirt

revealing the scarred flesh. The deep wounds where he had been skinned by Screwbitz now visible. The pain and memories came back. The strange laughing medic, keeping him awake while the monster did his work. Grey felt the machine inside him. The mechanical heart that Screwbitz had placed inside his body to keep him alive burned. He remembered the Blud Drinka laughing while it ate his real heart. "No mor Demonz lef, yurz 'ill do." How could this Inquisitor have gotten that skin?

Footsteps like thunder. Over the ridge he saw. Screwbitz followed by a host of Orks. His machine body spewing smoke and steam. The ogryn grew tense. The crewman rushed back onto the shuttle. Ja'Quinn was unfazed.

"So you are the Boss, then? Screwbitz?" Ja'Quinn asked of the massive metal monster.

"Daz right, I be Da Mad Mek, Screwbitz!" Hundreds of Ork voices took up the energy, "Screwbitz! Screwbitz!" A few shot their weapons into the air. "Got me present? Good. I new uze oomies wud like dat one. I 'ad fun meself."

"Why give me this? Why did you let this one live?"

"Eez a Demon luvin' oomie, dat one. Planin' to bring all sorts of 'em 'ere. Gotz hiz temple, hiz ladz, even a couple actual Demonz! Dey livin' in me cavez till my ladz smashed 'em!," More cheers and gunfire. "Dat one, I sayz he gonna die real slow. I skinz him. I takez hiz 'art. Den I fix 'im up gud. Eez a liar, gud un. I sayz to me how ta make 'im really really suffa? Give 'im back to da oomies!" Hideous laughter echoed from a hundred Ork voices.

"One more thing, Screwbitz, how did you crack the codes for the distress signal?"

The laughter stopped. A mechanical eye, akin to the one Groomp wore, whirred and refocused. Screwbitz moved his massive bulk toward Ja'Quinn. Quietly, like the hum of the warp drive back on the *Wings of Justice*, "I iz very, very smart, Ja'Quinn. You got Big Boss Blud Fist to come 'ere.

You was plannin' on us ladz krumpin dees Demon luvas. Blud Fist got Krumped. Screwbitz iz da boss now. Ye was hopin' my boyz would buy ye time. Well, we smashed yer problem, and den we got bored. Da planet down dere iz full uv scrappin an' I want in. Soz I sayz, if no one comez 'ere, we can't go fight dere. So I need shipz to come 'ere." Screwbitz smiled, a horrid rictus with his massive metal jaw. "Ur done 'ere, Ja'Quinn. Git off me moon 'less I change me mine."

Grey was stunned. The Orks were brought here by Ja'Quinn? The Inquisition knew their plan? "Wait! This was planned? You knew all along?"

Ja'Quinn turned back to the shuttle, "The warp storms prevented the arrival of the fleet meant to destroy your attempted incursion. I had to seek other methods to save this area."

"Save? You doomed this system! Do you see the monster you created, Inquisitor? Xenos? You are as much of a heretic as I! You..." Ja'Quinn's las-pistol silenced Grey forever. Screwbitz laughed; a landslide.

"I wuz wantin' 'im to suffa mor!"

Ja'Quinn's retinue boarded the shuttle, "Screwbitz. The Mad Mek. A fitting name."

Transmission: Inquisitional report from Ja'Quinn of the Ordo Xenos

Betram. A new player in the game. FMS – 4711 a moon orbiting the disputed planet Genesha, is now home to a gathering force of Orks. Their leader calls himself Screwbitz. He is very cunning for his race and is determined to leave the moon and become entwined in the battle for Ganesha. Looks like it could be the start of something big. This Ork is responsible for the activation of distress beacon 93- 1979. Also, it would seem that these Orks dealt with the other issue for us. I would advise avoiding the area for the time being. Other Xenos will likely be drawn to the signal as well as rogue traders in the area looking for wealth. We still need to observe. Also recommend written commendation for Captain Lucas Edwards of the Wings of Justice. Praise to the Emperor, may he live forever.

