

The NatM Fanfic Archive: Volume 2

Compiled by Ian [16 October 2023]

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The following PDF is a compilation of several fics posted to Livejournal, FanFiction.net, and AO3 between the years 2006 to 2014. In an effort to preserve these stories, and this early history of the fandom, they have been archived here. They are unedited from their original state, including grammar and spelling errors. They have also been archived with their links, so one can see them on their original platform.

All works archived here are oneshots. Multi-chapter works are in progress of being archived as of this work, and will be available to download here: [x] These oneshots are not archived in chronological order.

All works archived here are SFW, in that they do not contain sexually explicit content. They may contain violence, harsh language, and other adult topics. Sexually explicit fics are in the process of being archived in a different document, which will be available on the NatM Search site.

The NatM Search extends their thanks to these authors for shaping the early fandom.

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The Start of a Friendship

daisyduke80 // [x]
Posted 3 April 2008

Jed and Octavius were outside letting the air out of the tires of Cecil's van. They were almost done with the first, when Jed suddenly lost his grip on the spear and went flying. Octavius thought he would land in the soft snow and be okay, but he was wrong. He watched as Jed went up and was knocked against the van really hard and dropped to the ground. Octavius pulled the spear out of the tire and went over to Jed.

"Jed?" he asked as he knelt beside him.

Jed's eyes fluttered open.

"Octavius?" he whispered obviously in pain.

"I'm right here. Don't worry," Octavius reassured, "where are you hurt?"

"My head hurts a lot. So do my ribs," Jedadiah groaned, "Octavius it's cold. It's really cold."

Octavius took off his cape and wrapped it around Jed. He picked Jed up off the ground and tried to keep him warm.

"Jed why didn't you save yourself like I told you?" Octavius asked.

"I told you I wasn't giving up on you," Jedadiah smiled weakly, "you better get back to getting the air out of the tires."

Jedadiah slipped back into unconsciousness. The two roman soldiers and cowboy that came with them walked over to them. Octavius looked up at them.

"Take him back to the Frontier. He needs medical attention," Octavius instructed.

They picked Jedadiah up gently and rushed him back to the Frontier. Octavius went to the last back wheel and let the air out of it. He went back to the Frontier to check up on Jedadiah. When he got there, the doctor told him that Jed had a few bruised ribs and a slight concussion. Octavius now sat beside an unconscious Jedadiah.

"Jed...I don't know if you can hear me but,... I'm sorry for all those times I fought with you," Octavius apologized, "I really hope when you wake up you can forgive me."

Octavius sat there for a little while until thinking that Larry might need more help. He found the little remote control car and got in . Once figuring out how it worked, he took off to find Larry. He found him outside.

"How can I help Larry?" Octavius asked.

"Where's Jedadiah?" Larry asked.

"He was hurt when we were letting the air out of Cecil's tires," Octavius explained, "now how can I help?"

Larry explained the plan to Octavius. Octavius took off to cut Cecil off. He was just about to when the car flipped over a mound of snow.

"Forgive me Jed," Octavius whispered.

He passed out.

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Jedadiah began to stir. He felt someone holding his hand lightly and felt someone's presence next to him. He slowly opened his eyes and saw Octavius sitting next to him.

"Octavius?" he asked not believing what he saw.

"Yes Jed it's me. How do you feel?" Octavius asked.

"Dizzy," Jedadiah stated.

It was then Jedadiah noticed Octavius was covered in ash and soot.

"Octavius what happened? Why are you covered in ash and soot?" Jed asked.

"I crashed the remote control thing while trying to help Larry," Octavius explained.

"Are you okay? You aren't hurt are you?" Jedadiah asked trying to sit up.

He soon regretted it. The room spun and he collapsed back down onto the bed.

"Jed you shouldn't try to sit up right now. And don't worry I'm fine," Octavius reassured.

"Are you sure?" Jed asked.

"Yes I'm sure," Octavius smiled weakly.

They sat in silence for awhile. Jed finally broke it.

"Octavius...I'm sorry for always fighting with you," Jed apologized.

"I'm sorry too Jed," Octavius apologized.

"Can we just start over and be friends?" Jed asked.

"Yes we can," Octavius smiled.

Jed and Octavius hugged. It was the beginning to a long and lasting friendship.

Something Like That

10millionpeople // [x]

Posted 30 July 2010

"I've always known." I look at her. I really look at her. And before I can stop it, the fragile little heart inside of me shatters into five million pieces, all of them piercing the tissue inside of me.

Ouch.

I place my hands on her arms—were they there before she started talking?—and heave a sigh. I stare at her, and the seconds pass. One, two, three... tick, tick, tick... and in a couple more ticks she'll be dust. But I wait. I have to know if this is going to work.

Leaning in, I hesitate for a moment. (*"You talk too much, Ace."*) Well maybe I do.

So then, before another tick can pass off of her hidden timer, I crash my lips onto hers.

She relaxes into this kiss, and I have no idea how she does it. So many little electrical charges are running through my veins, making me jittery, and unable to relax even in the slightest.

But I *love* it.

I tilt my head to the side and deepen the kiss, all the while holding onto her for dear life like maybe it will keep her here.

I know it won't.

She knows it won't, too, but that doesn't stop her perfectly-manicured fingers to claw into my jacket. I smile and break away.

She's beaming. I made that happen. I don't know if I've ever been this happy before in my life.

She gives a "hmm" and turns around, her sights now set on Bessie. I'm beginning to love flying.

Stepping in, she never looks back, and my palms become sweaty all of a sudden. My heartbeat quickens, and my breathing becomes irregular. She's leaving. Gone. For good.

"Amelia- wait!" I reach out a hand just as she is about to start up the plane. The famous pilot opens the door and hops out of her plane.

She looks... sad, maybe. I don't know. I never was one to read people, and the confusing look planted on her "kisser", as she would say, does me no help. She takes one step toward me... then two... and falls straight into my arms.

I wrap my arms around her, embracing the last couple moments I have with her, knowing she's never going to make it back to DC in time. She holds onto me tighter than before, and I know for a fact that I will do anything for this woman.

Even explaining to McPhee how the Museum of Natural History got a new exhibit.

A tear slips down my face and falls into her strawberry-red curls. I could get used to this.

"Amelia, please. I don't—This couldn't possibly—I have no clue how this will work, but..." I hear her sniffle. "You being real. That wasn't the only thing I needed to talk to you about from

earlier.” I can feel her pull away, and I reluctantly let go. She looks at me, and I notice she’s crying.

“I like you, Amelia, okay? I don’t kn-I...” I run a hand over my face and through my hair, then look at her again.

“I have no idea how to say this, so I’m just going to spit it out. Okay?” She nods, and I exhale. *God, if you’re there... help me.*

“I think we make a great team. More than a team. But we can’t... with you in Washington, I mean. Do you k... do you catch my drift?” Look at me. Using expressions.

She smiles, and I see a glint in her eyes.

“Of course I do. But where are we going to put Bessie?”

My hands cup her face and I smile—a real, full-blown smile—and let out a breath I didn’t know I was holding.

“We can put her in a parking garage a little ways over... let someone else find it.” By this time I’m laughing, and so is she. I smile, my hands still on her face, and kiss her.

Soon, though, I break away, and just stare at her.

She stares back at me, understanding, and finally speaks.

“Seems to me, Mr. Daley, that you have just gotten your moxy back!” She manages a smirky smile that I’ve come to love. Pulling her in for another kiss, I chuckle.

“I had a feeling you’d say something like that.”

Overshadowing

rodlox // [x]
Posted 31 May 2009

Location: Smithsonian Museum:

By now, dawn was less than half an hour away. "See you tomorrow, ace?" Amelia asked him, challenging.

"Tomorrow or whenever," Al said. They'd finished getting everyone back to their respective museums and exhibits, and now, so this is so long.

"Then in that case, I need to be getting back down to the basement. Level B, I believe."

"I'll take you," Custer said. Before either of them could object, "I'm on the same floor, and besides, not enough time for you to get down there and back up to the Castle by daybreak," he said to Capone.

"Makes sense I suppose," Amelia said.

"Momento," Capone asked of her, and took Custer aside. "You do anything to her, if she so much's thinks you're doin' or about to do anything -" both warning and threat.

"Trust me," Custer told Capone, "I've already got enough women in my life." *Libby, Monahsetah...*

Capone nodded. "Make sure you remember that, then."

Amelia shook her head at them, but offered no resistance to being escorted back down to the basement.

As Capone watched her off, there was the sound of music in the air...spoiled only by heavy breathing. Turning around, he saw that black-armor guy. "What is that, a wedding march?" Capone asked.

"The *Imperial March*," Darth Vader said, clicking the HASBRO tape player off but not setting it down. "One day, it will be considered the height of classical music."

"Think I'll stick with the opera."

"That is your choice. We all must chose at some point in our lives.

"We do great good," Vader said, looking out to the skyline, "and so often they remember only our sins. That is their choice."

"That's people for ya," Capone agreed.

"It is sufficient that we know what we have done. All of it. We are our own judges."

"Makes sense." Capone thought over a few of his better times - as a boy, gathering kids to put a stop to pickpockets and return the stolen possessions to the rightful owners; at his horse-racing tracks, giving winning tickets to people he liked the look of; creating Chicago's first soup kitchen. "Thanks, pops," Capone said.

"I am not your father," Vader replied.

"Yeah no kidding. Mine was from Naples."

Vader threw up his hands and strode back to the museum he'd come from.

"Weird guy," Capone said to himself as he got back in his exhibit. "Right, but weird."

Error! Error!

rodlox // [x]

Posted 27 May 2009

A crossover with Terminator: Salvation.

Location: The Museum, early spring, a year or two after Judgement Day:

There was a full Moon overhead, and Sacajawea was sitting alongside Teddy Roosevelt, both at a safe remove from the small fire they had burning.

There was a *crunching* sound that seemed to be of something approaching, and hearing it motivated the pair to stand up and see who might be there.

For their curiosity had a purpose: to see who might be eeking out a living besides themselves. For Larry Daley had died of radiation poisoning in the week following Judgement Day. While it had not been targetted by this Skynet, the Museum suffered damage that crushed many statues - the larger African animals and the Easter Island head amongst them. Muttering something about Akhenatin having the last laugh, Akhmenrah had handed the tablet to Sacajawea before he walked into the arriving dawn light. Octavius and Jebadiah had taken their fellow miniatures underground, never to be heard from since. Ever the good little guard, Dexter spent every nocturnal hour perched in the highest remaining points of the Museum.

This left Teddy and Sacajawea alone. Alone and more dependent upon one another than ever before.

"An animatronic?" Sacajawea asked, her hands on Teddy's arm.

"It would seem so," Teddy said. "Strange that the machinery is so exposed."

"Perhaps his creator was unable to finish the job before he came to life."

"Perhaps."

The Terminator would have fired by now, but its targetting mechanism kept insisting that there was a problem with the subjects. Hence the walking up to them, visually-analyzing them the entire way.

The Terminator reached forth, but stopped short before it could grab Roosevelt's neck.

For the first time, Skynet got an **ERROR** message.

The Terminators walked away from the wax objects whose visage was known to be all over the world.

deal with JOHN CONNOR Skynet instructed. **investigate THEM afterward**

"Have fun!" Teddy called after them, not knowing what else to say. To Sacajawea, Teddy said under his breath, "Strange folks, and stranger than any we've met before."

Sacajawea nodded.

Down the Debt

rodlox // [x]
Posted 25 May 2009

Location: on Columbus Avenue, New York, New York:

They had just been saved from a mugging that had threatened to spiral into something far worse - saved by...

Alexis squinted at the man who'd saved her and her date. The lighting wasn't always good at this time of night at this time of year, but still... *It can't be*, she said to herself.

"Th-thank you," her date said. Then, seeing who had just saved them, he went white as a sheet. There were better analogies, but Alexis had better things for her mind than to dawdle with inanities like analogies right now.

"Yeah," said the man who was a spitting image of Al Capone - only not literally spitting, "so I own you, kid." To Alexis, "You owe me one," he said.

"I'm sorry, but who are you?" Alexis asked. *And why do you look distinctly monochromatic?*

"Capone."

"Common name," Alexis said, which made her date more nervous.

Capone just looked at her. He didn't have a tommygun with him right now, but with the way he was standing, you could utterly believe that this man was capable of doing everything he'd been reputed to have done. "Walk away, kid. I just want to know one thing."

"Oh? Just one?"

Only one thing that need concern you, smart gal. "Where's the Museum?" Capone wanted to know.

"You'll have to more specific than that," Alexis said. "Or at least a little more."

He nodded, as if grudgingly allowing that she had a point. "Museum of Natural History."

"How much do you want to know?"

Her date looked at her in alarm, as if to say *Alexis, you don't mess with guys carrying tommyguns!...or with guys who are supposed to be dead!*

Capone smiled, amused at her. "The full set of directions."

"That's not what I referred to," Alexis said. "I meant, how badly do you want the directions?"

In answer, Capone fingers moved in exactly the way that, had he a tommygun in hand, would be fingering the trigger on his gun, a hairs-breath from releasing a multitude of rapid-fire bullets. "What'd you have in mind?"

"He doesn't owe you," Alexis said, with a nod of her head at her date.

"Funny," Capone said. "And here I figured you'd say you don't owe me no more."

Alexis shrugged. "I don't mind."

"Fine. He's free an' clear. You, now you on the other hand -"

"You leave her alone!" her date shouted, then clapped his hands over his mouth, terrified.

"That's gratitude for ya," Capone said to Alexis.

"I think he's sweet," Alexis said.

Capone grinned and shrugged as if to say it was no skin off him. "Now, 'bout those directions."

Alexis nodded. "Just keep walking down this street, and you'll be at the Museum's back."

Capone nodded. "Much appreciated. Enjoy what's left of your date," he said and walked off.

"What a nice man," Alexis said while her date lost his lunch.

The Wedding

FireGoddess528 // [x]

Posted 19 March 2008

Sacajawa was nervous. Actually, nervous didn't even begin to describe how she was feeling. After a year of careful planning and preparations, here she was spending her last ten minutes as a single woman. Soon, she would walk down the staircase into the main lobby of the museum, and there she would become Mrs. Roosevelt.

"You look so beautiful," Rebecca said, as she walked into the room, standing beside her.

She nodded in agreement, admiring the dress she and Rebecca had spent two months making. It was simple as far as modern day dresses were concerned (Rebecca had shown her a magazine to give her ideas.) It was strapless, clinging to her every curve, coming down to just below her knees. A sash was tied around her waist into a bow on her back, and she wore white sandals on her feet. Her black hair was let out of her braids, and was now cascading down her back in light curls. She was indeed beautiful.

There was a knock at the door. "Five minutes ladies," Larry's voice yelled from the other side.

The feelings of nervousness that had disappeared were back again. She began fiddling with a strand of hair, trying to ignore the terrible feeling in her stomach. She could try to deny her feelings to herself, but Rebecca was another story.

"Sacajawa, are you nervous?"

She sighed, knowing that she was found out. "A little. I mean, this is a big deal. And what if something goes wrong, and the ceremony doesn't go right? Or what if Teddy and me aren't meant for each other like we think we are? What if he stops loving me after a couple of months?"

She fell into a chair, her head buried in her hands, shoulders trembling. Kneeling in front of her, Rebecca gave her the speech she heard her mother give her sister on her wedding day.

"Sacajawa, this is your special day. You've met a great guy that is head over heels in love with you, and would do anything to make you happy. You meant for each other more than any other people in the entire world, and you'll never fall out of love with each other, because you both love each other too much. And the ceremony won't go wrong, because everyone put too much into it to let any details be askew. I think you'll be more worried about it being perfect. So are you going to sit here and worry, or are you going to go and marry the man you were meant to marry?"

Sacajawa stood up, wiping all traces of tears from her eyes. "I'm going to marry the man I love."

Rebecca smiled. "Good."

There was another knock at the door, followed by Larry's head popping in, "It's time to get this wedding on the road you two."

"We're ready," Sacajawa said, taking Larry's outstretched arm.

Since she had no one to walk her down the aisle, Larry had volunteered to give her away, along with being Teddy's best man. The music filled her ears, and for the first time that day she felt joyful. The lobby was decorated with an assortment of paper decorations made by the museum's inhabitants themselves, and everyone was sitting in seats, looking at her. But her attention wasn't on the decorations or the people who had gathered to witness this event. Her eyes were glued on the man waiting at the altar smiling at her. Her eyes were on Teddy.

Larry and Sacajawa reached the end of the aisle, and Teddy gave her one of his arms which she took gladly. Knowing his duties so far were over, Larry stood next to Nicky, who was one of the groomsmen.

"Dearly beloved," Ahkmenrah began, playing the part of the priest. Since his tablet brought them all the life, thus enabling them two to meet, they both thought he should marry them.

"Were gathered here today to join these two people in holy matrimony."

The ceremony continued, everything going as planned. There were a few times, when Ahkmenrah would make a mistake in the words, but that made the ceremony feel even more personal. Even Dexter played his part as the ring bearer perfectly, bringing the rings right to Teddy and Sacajawa. He earned a lot of awws from the females, and a roll of the eyes from Larry.

"I now pronounce you man and wife. You may now ... continue kissing the bride."

Teddy didn't even wait for the final words. He had already pulled Sacajawa into a passionate kiss, that neither one wanted to end. But all good things had to end, and they broke apart smiling, not hearing the cheers of their fellow inhabitants. They were in their own world together.

The party that followed was full of laughter and congratulations. The music was loud, and everyone was dancing just having a good time. None more than the newly weds, who were beside each other every second. Well, almost every second.

"All right girls, I'm ready to throw to the bouquet."

The women inhabitants and Rebecca all gathered behind Sacajawa, each one secretly hoping to be the one to catch the bouquet. It flew through the air, twisting and turning in every direction. All the women's hands were in the air, hoping to feel the flowers.

"I've got it!"

Every woman but one let out a groan of disappointment. Larry just stared in disbelief.

Teddy clamped a hand on his shoulder. "Well Larry, looks like you'll be the next one getting married."

A Successful Campaign

trascendenza // [x] // [Русский]

Posted 5 August 2007

"So war," Octavius muses, sipping Jed's piss-beer, "bloody stupid, isn't it?"

"Reckon so," Jedidiah agrees, sniffing at the strange red brew Octavius had passed him.

"What else shall we do with our time, then? Rape, pillage?"

Jed shakes his head. "Naw. Gigantor would get mad." He snaps his fingers, "I got it! We'll join forces and gang up on the meanies with the sharp pointy—"

"No," Octavius vetoes immediately, rubbing a spot on his backside where a particularly mean spear had stayed lodged for a few days back in the Campaign of '04.

"I don't hear you comin' up with any good ideas," Jed mutters, swigging down the awful wine stuff.

"Well, as is proper after a successful campaign, we could have a Triumph, a five course feast, and after a visit the vomitorium... we could retire to my bed chamber."

"A vom-i-what?"

Octavius raises an eyebrow at where Jed's attention is focused. "What kind of uncultured imbecile are you? A vomitorium, of course."

"Hey," Jed says, lips forming into a pout, "you know I don't like it when you call me names, 'Tavius."

Octavius puts a hand on his shoulder. "I apologize." He let the hand move down Jed's shoulder to come rest on his chest. "In truth, the most important part of the offer was the last."

Jed perks up. "Bed chamber, huh?"

Octavius nods, casually laying his hand on his sword in case Jed doesn't take kindly to the suggestion.

"Will you let me wear the toga?"

Octavius drops a hand down onto Jed's hip, fingers working underneath the gun belt. "Only if you behave yourself."

"Oh-*ho*."

But they don't even make it back to the bed chamber before both the gun and sword have clattered to the floor, and the toga not long after it.

Its a small world

the_charm_caster // [x]

Posted 19 May 2013

No. No. *No!* This wasn't good! This *cant* be good!

"Put me down, you-you giant villain! You don't manhandle me! Too sissy to face me and my guns, Right? Hmph! Face me like a cowboy, par'ner!" The little cowboy huffed with anger, but the said 'giant villain' still carried him by his vest. Larry purposefully ignored his battle cries, and looked at the Roman general in his right hand.

"My liege?" The tiny man asked, voice confused and suspicious.

"One sec, guys. You guys are gonna get exactly what you deserve." Larry said, an evil smile on his face. He could take it no more! Numerous chances, he had given to these two leaders, but *no!* They did not seem to understand that war-time was over. So, it was time to teach them a lesson.

"Put me down now! Or else-" Jedediah was cut short of his threat when Larry switched him from his left hand to his right, gripping him and Octavius in tight grip, and bending down to do something.

"You're crushing me! " The Roman choked.

"Oh! Sorry!" The watchmen loosened his grip, but not loose enough to let the two miniatures escape. He finished doing whatever he was doing and sat straight. Whatever it was Jedediah did not notice. Simply because he was fully squished chest to knee with another man, who was breathing hard on his face. And he bet on the whole sun-sets-in-the-west theory that he had never seen eyes more beautiful or browner than the general's. But of course, he was not going to ever admit that out loud in his whole life.

Larry had pulled out a small chest from somewhere, and he lowered the two men into it.

"You two. You're gonna stay in here till you learn how to behave." The night-watchmen ordered, taking full advantage of his size. Hey! Since he was accused of being some giant monster, he should take advantage of that, right?

"What? In here? With this skirt-wearer?" Jedediah's pitch went a few octaves higher than he liked.

"Jedediah! Mind your tongue, barbarian!" The general spoke up. "It moves faster than this Gargantua himself." He mocked.

"The Gar-whatever being me, I suppose?" Larry asked, innocently. The General simply nodded and turned away, arms crossing in front of his chest. His Roman pride forbade him to tolerate any further.

"Okay guys, look. I'm trying to run a museum here for God's sake. I cant have you two declare wars on each other every night. So, both you can two kiss and make-up right now, or else, I'm gonna lock you up." He regarded them with a stern expression. No matter how much he tried, these two ended up fighting. He thought that maybe after working together against Cecil and others, they would realize the importance of teamwork, but no!

Jedediah's eyes went wide, a light blush creeping across his soot-stained face. "You don't actually mean that, right?" He took the sentence very literally.

But of course Larry did not remember that the two miniatures were from different centuries and had no clue about the idioms and sayings of this century, "Yes. I mean it!" He glared. "Octavius?"

"My honor forbids me to do something this low, my liege. I prefer to be prisoned." The Roman replied, with turning. Thank Jupiter he was wearing his bronze helmet, or else they all would see how embarrassed he was to even think of kissing the cowboy! An adversary! Who had a well built body and a remarkably handsome face, but Octavius wasn't saying anything.

"Fine! Then you two! Even if it takes days, I'm not letting you out unless you decide to be friends."

That's the last thing Jedediah heard before the lid of the chest was pulled down, and darkness swallowed them up.

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After minutes of kicking at blank walls and screaming, Jedediah sat down. He, just somehow, knew that Octavius sitting beside him. Maybe because of the exceptionally small size of the box, or maybe because he saw it, with a small ray of light creeping in from the key hole. It was still hours till dawn.

"Calm down Barbarian." The General's calm voice sounded like pleasant music in the darkness. Wait. *What?* Jedediah so did *not* think so. Especially when the Roman was insulting him.

"Calm down? *Calm down?* How can I calm down when I'm stuck in this box with you, Lolita? I-" Jedediah was cut short of his speech when he felt himself knocked over and pinned down by a very pissed off soldier, his hat rolling away.

"Do. Not. Call. Me. That. Ever again." Octavius said, gritting his teeth. Part of that was because, of course, he was insulted. The sacred toga of a Roman soldier was depreciated. And another reason was the proximity to the cowboy's face. With his hat knocked down, even in this dim light, Octavius could see the sparkling blue eyes, and something inside him did a flip. He slowly crawled away, hoping that the westerner could not hear his heart beat like a young maiden on her wedding night. Now. *Young maiden on a wedding night?* Where did *that* come from?

"Okay...Um...Okay." Jedediah of course did not notice the hitch in the Roman's breath. He was busy controlling his own.

Was it too hot in here, or he was the only one who thought so? He sat up straight and peered at the General in the darkness. Octavius took off his helmet and set it down, trying to regain control over his breath. Okay, maybe Jed wasn't the only one who felt the temperature rise.

Maybe it was just the darkness. Or maybe it was the way the dark curls framed his slender face. Whatever it was, Jed peered, straining his eyes, and wishing suddenly that it wasn't so dark in there. NO! What was happening? This was his enemy. His enemy, the one he's supposed to hate. His enemy, with chocolate eyes and pale skin and dark curly hair and rosy lips. Oh boy, how rosy those lips were, nobody could tell better that the Jedediah, who had

a nice close up of them when the watchman had held them together in a crushing fist.

"Cowboy?" Octavius pulled him out of his thoughts. Well, thank God he did, or else Jed would have gone crazy. That's when he paused again. The Roman had never called him that before. *Cowboy*. Well, it wasn't anything special. But still, Jed wanted to squeal like a girl.

Not.

No, he did not want to do that. He saw Octavius hovering over him.

"Yea?" He flinched when his voice cracked.

"Maybe we can open the hinges with my sword?"

Jedediah's eyes were better accustomed to the darkness now, and he saw Octavius reach out for him. He took his hand and stood up. And very much like a girl (not!) he did not want to let go of his hand. But his cowboy ego stood forward, and he (regrettingly) let go of the slender pale hand.

"Okay, let's do it, partner!" Jed said with a stupid smile on his face, placing his hat back in the right place.

Octavius stood on the tip of his toes, trying to reach the hinges. That's when the box began to shake. Maybe someone, preferably Larry, was carrying the box somewhere. But Octavius had no time to think, because the shake had misbalanced him and he was about to topple over, when he felt a firm hand on his back.

"Gotcha mate!" Jed grinned.

"I'm grateful, my friend." Octavius decided to ignore the warm hand on his back for a while, and work his way out. By heavens! He could actually feel the sparks that small touch was sending through his body. Maybe he should have put on his helmet, he thought, feeling his face go hot.

Maybe Jedediah could slip his hands around the buckles and belts and open the knots of the metal breast plate, 'accidentally'. Or maybe he could pin the slender man to the walls of the chest and dip a gloved hand into his 'skirt', slowly up that ivory thigh and higher till the other man whimpered for more. That's when he could-

"Jedediah? Are you listening?" Jed blinked when he saw a hand waving in front of his face. The cowboy fully blushed scarlet red, maybe redder than the Roman's said skirt.

"Y-yeah?"

"This is not working. Maybe we should try something else?" The Roman's eyebrows furrowed.

"Uh. Okay?" Jed replied weakly. "Maybe the keyhole?"

"No. No use." Octavius sat down, defeated.

"Oh." Jed sat down beside him.

They sat in compatible silence for a few minutes.

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"That gigantor! Wait till I get out of here!" Jedediah exclaimed. "What did you call him? Gator? As in alligator?"

"No." Octavius laughed. "Gargantua. It was a beast that had a big mouth, enough to eat many people at a time."

"Oh. Gargantua. Nice name, Lolita."

"Jedediah!" The General warned.

"Hey, no offense. But you're wearing a skirt. In my lands, that's considered, er, what you call it? Feminine?" The cowboy explained.

"And in my lands, only women have longer hair." The general shot back. Of course he did not mention that Princes and Gods kept long hair too. It was a fact, he wanted to enjoy all my himself. Maybe Jedediah Smith was a God in disguise, with golden locks that shimmered in the fake sun of his Western diorama, every night, when Octavius could see him from his Rome. Or those beautiful angelic blue eyes, they must have descended from Aphrodite herself! "Must I call you my queen then?" Octavius lost track of what he was saying, busy admiring the wild cowboy.

"As you wish, my liege!" Jed bowed, mimicking the Roman accent.

"Heavens! I always thought my lady would be, you know, in a soft pink or white gown, hair decorated with flowers, waiting for me in my chambers or something... But Jupiter! Look I get this savage, face covered in soot and dirt and has no sense how to talk. And oh! Wears trousers instead of a petticoat." Octavius mock-sighed.

"Oh no sweetheart! You want me to please you? I don't need flowers or skirts for that you know?" Jed climbed the general's lap, winking.

Oh? Octavius raised his eyebrows. Well, two could play this game. "Oh, yes? Then show me, love?" Of course, he felt his heart outspeed Atlanta at this pace.

"Hmmm..." Jed let out a sigh, breathing on the general's lips. "Let me-"

Jedediah was once again cut short. The box shook violently this time, throwing both of them crashing to the walls. Much as they all were plastic and wax when they are frozen, they seem to be real humans, when they 'woke up', with blood and flesh and all.

What the devil was that? Jedediah opened his mouth to curse the watchman, but then he felt the weight on top of him. He swallowed. How was he even supposed to speak when he had a Roman general straddling him, clutching his back hard? It was damn different in the opposite case, but this? This seemed to be a little too much for his pants.

"You okay, Jedediah?" The General asked, getting up, concerned. Jed's heart skipped a beat. But before he could open his mouth to reply, the chest turned again.

This time, Octavius landed on his back, with the Westerner on top of him. Of course it was because of these miniature earthquakes that the general was breathing so hard. Not because his lips were inches apart from a very handsome cowboy.

"Holy hell!" Jedediah screamed when the chest toppled over the third time. Octavius grasped him hard, more because of a protective instinct. But this time when the chest stopped, time stood still with it. And also very still were two small men, so hot and so close and locked in a tight embrace.

When Jedediah regained his senses, he became aware of the slender metal-covered waist he was holding. He instantly thought of letting go, but then he felt the Roman's thighs clenching around his legs, and decided against it.

Jolly heavens! Only he knows how much effort it took him to not kiss the neck in which his nose was now buried.

"Hey...Octavius, you okay?"

But he heard no reply.

The cowboy pulled away and gazed into the chocolate brown eyes. Was it the darkness,

or had those chocolate browns gone dark black?

"Sssh, Jed." Octavius sushed him, breath ghosting over the blonde's lips. "I was thinking...maybe we could do what Larry wanted us to." He whispered.

"What? You think he was serious? He couldn't mean that literally unless-" Jedediah was cut short yet once again, with a pair of lips crashing into another. Maybe they all were celebrating don't- let-Jedediah-Smith-finish-his-sentence day, and they forgot to inform him. After a few initial moments of disbelief, he gave himself up into the kiss and kissed back. It was an exotic taste, something sweet and addicting, far more powerful than his moonshine. Something forbidden and chaste.

After a few moments, when breathing became necessary, they pulled away. Sweet Juno! Octavius had no clue that a barba-such a savage could kiss so expertly. And that spicy and wild taste! A foreign delight. He held the stubbled face in his hand and pulled him into another sinful and sensual kiss. When Jedediah threaded his finger in the dark curly locks, he couldn't help but smile. He then felt Octavius smile against his lips.

Maybe Gargantua was not dying tonight.

"Hey Octavius?" Jed said when they pulled back, breathing hard, hands on pale thighs.

"Yes, my liege?" The General stared into the blue pools through the darkness.

Jedediah blushed. Well, he wasn't accustomed to this. "I...uh...your toga? I like it, okay?"

Octavius' eye widened dramatically. "You know it is called a toga?" he asked, sitting up. The cowboy simply nodded, since he couldn't turn away, as a Roman leader was straddling him, pinning him down.

"Then why call it a skirt? And why call me Lolita?"

"I...uh...nevermind." Jed looked away.

"My liege! Why?" Octavius cupped his face and made him look straight into the brown eyes. Well, as much as possible in the darkness, anyway.

"That was the only time you called me by my name..." The cowboy felt his face go hot. "And I like the way you call me, in that Roman tongue of yours...its way, waaay better than those chicks at the salon. And I-"

And he was cut short once again.

"Jedediah." Octavius smiled. The cowboy looked up and smiled at him.

The chest was suddenly filled with light, blinding them.

"Hey guys, you okay?" It was Larry who had opened the lid. "I don't know why, but Dexter and his gang thought this chest was the best thing to play catch with and I-Holy Shit! What the...?"

Obviously the sight was something that could render anybody speechless. With their helmets and hats tossed away, the cowboy pinned to the ground, hands roaming on the other's thighs, and the conqueror straddling him, holding his face in his hands, faces so close, lips red and swollen...Anybody would call this a sight.

"Guys!" Larry's voice changed into a whisper, suddenly respecting their privacy. Of course if he talked louder, the whole museum would know. "You do realize that I was not literally speaking of kissing, right?"

In reply all he got was two blank stares.

"I...uh..um...so, uh, do I get you two out of here or-" He stammered, blushing at the

sight.

"Close the lid for now, par'ner" Jed winked.

The Gigantor swallowed and did as asked to. Well, at least now he did not have to worry about the fights, right?

Symmetry

Keenir // [x]

Posted 21 December 2009

George Armstrong Custer watched with everyone else as Earheart's plane soared away to New York. And watched as everyone went their own way, to savor what night there remained to them.

In one direction went Thinker and the white Grecian marble woman whose name escaped him. In another, the Tuskegee Airmen talking amongst themselves. Those cherubim soared overhead, circling around and around each other, seeing how high they could climb before the magic of the night brought them back down.

The Giant Octopus rolled and splashed in the Reflecting Pool, not looking like it was about to head for the basement one second sooner than it had to.

Everyone left. Everyone but Custer himself. "We'll know," he said to himself. "We know what we did here, on this night." *We saved the world. Stopped the agents of darkness and death.*

But that didn't help the fact that he was alone.

It crossed his mind that perhaps he should walk down to the Museum of the American Indian, and see if Monasetah was there. "No," George told himself. "I'm here because of my disaster. They wouldn't have her there." *Or at least not on display*, a thought which lifted his spirits – he hadn't been on display either.

With a look at the sky to gauge how long it was until the break of day, Custer then dashed to the nearest museum with an eye to getting back underground. *What do I have to lose? If I can find Libbie or Monasetah, or better still both, even if I come upon them two moments before daylight kisses the horizon, then that's by far better than just sitting on my duff between now and dawn.* It would be an ending he would have no problem with.

And so he spent the next hour and some, searching, questing, reading each label on every crate that looked as though it might hold something the size of the women in his life. *Not my previous life. Not entirely. If it weren't for them, I'd make a clean break.* Mostly but not solely from Little Bighorn.

And right after nearly being gored by a Chinese kirin, Custer leaned against the empty box, one hand to his forehead as if to wipe away sweat, and

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And instantly found himself back where he had been when the adventure had begun. *Was it all a dream? No*, Custer thought to himself, dismissing that possibility. *No plastic draped over me like some rogue blanket.*

A quick look around soon confirmed his fear: *I'm back. But how did I get back here?* A thought occurred to him, and it was at least as frightening: *we're alive again. Now what?*

Custer sat down on a circular base which read 'North Island Moa' but was devoid of

giant birds. He well remembered how Larry had suggested to him that the people here needed a leader. He remembered as well how, when Larry had asked if he wanted to be that leader, he had said yes. *I could've said 'just for now.' But I didn't think we were going to wake up again.*

With him alone.

"Me in charge," he said to himself. "Great. For how long?" Unspoken but certainly thought was, How long until Kamenra or someone else comes to fight for control?

And how long until I have another atrocity under my belt? He remembered men back in his day, men who, when they had power, let it go to their heads. Probably going to be me in...well, does it really matter how long it takes?

Further introspection was put on hold when a woman told Custer, "Hands on your head."

He turned said head, and saw someone in a uniform identical to Larry's own, so he complied. "General George Armstrong Custer," he introduced himself to her. "At your service."

"Sure you are. And I'm Valentina Tereskova," this woman night guard said, holding a gun on him.

"Pleasure to meet you," Custer said, though he had a feeling that eye-rolling meant the same now as it did when he was a boy. "S there a problem?"

"How'd you get in here?" she wanted to know.

Grinning, "Not a clue. I woke up down here, pitched in when I was needed, and, well, here I am," Custer said proudly.

She pulled a handheld something from her belt, raising it to her unpainted lips. "Mike, we've got an intruder in -" and paused when there was something wrong. "No signal?" she asked herself. To the man who claimed to be Custer, she said, "What's going on?"

"We came to life," George Custer said simply, toning his grin down to a smile.

"We'?"

"Everybody," he said, not sure how to answer better than that, without getting into the nitty-gritty.

"Get up, and keep your hands on your head," she decided, clipping the walkie-talkie back to her belt.

"We going somewhere?"

"You're going to prison. Me, I'm going to finish my rounds after I turn you in."

You haven't seen anyone else down here? which gave him an idea. "I'm unarmed," Custer said. "I just want to do one thing."

"What's that?"

"I'm not gonna hurt you," he said. *Though I don't recognize any of the names on the crates here, I don't have any other options.* Killing the night guard was not only a bad idea – Custer had seen how Larry had fought Kamenra – but it didn't seem like the thing to do, either. "Just let me do one thing. I'm not coming toward you, and I'm not gonna run."

"Then what?" she asked, not about to lower her gun.

Custer threw himself at the nearest crate, collapsing to the ground once there was enough room for whatever was in there to come out. *Thank God it only took one hit,* he thought to himself.

Several quaggas sedately looked out of the broken wall, looked around, and ducked back into the shelter of their crate.

"Usually they high-tail it away," Custer said, remembering when he and Larry had raced

through these corridors.

“Well they are extinct,” the night guard said, all the sarcasm drained away as she took in what she’d just seen. “George Custer?” she asked him.

“That’d be me,” he confirmed.

“I’m Joan.”

“Good to meet you. Let’s find ourselves some horses so we can run patrol.” *Whether I lead or not, I think it’s best if I patrol this place – gives me something to do, long term.*

“Horses?”

“That’s right.”

“If you’re General Custer, what do you need a horse for?”

“I like horses. I’d rather use one than that tank I saw down the hall last night. So a horse.”

“Of course, of course,” Joan muttered. “Who’re you looking for? Anyone in particular on this patrol?”

“My wives.”

“Wives’ plural?”

Custer nodded. “Elizabeth and Monasetah. Libbie’s maiden name was Bacon, if it helps any. And Monasetah’s father was Little Rock, chief of the Cheyenne.”

Joan sighed and told him, “I’ll help you a little. Then I have to get back to work.”

“Sounds fair,” Custer said.

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“Think you could help me?” Custer asked her as they went up the stairs.

“With what?” Joan asked. *With what now?*

“From what I’ve gathered together, no matter who’s in charge, there has to be a night guard keeping us from coming to blows.”

“And what are you basing this on?”

“Larry Dailey. From the New York museum.”

“Huh,” Joan said, and made a mental note to see if she could get in touch with Larry Dailey.

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There was something about Joan’s face as she took in sights such as Darth Vader strolling alongside Valentina Tereshkova as they discussed the finer points of craft design, or Thinker continuing to show off for that Grecian, or...

“All this,” Joan said.

“Yup,” Custer said.

“Let me guess, you know where Jimmy Hoffa is too.”

“Not a clue. Think we should ask Earheart.”

“Amelia Earheart?” Joan asked. And when Custer nodded, she said, “Of course.”