

VI: A podcast by the Intergalactic Improv Initiative.

KAYA: *Ride of the Valkyrie* Minisode 4: *Gratch Is Strongest*. Featuring the voices of Cha—

GRATCH: Gratch is strongest! What else you need to know? Yeesh! You should roll.

VI: Time Unknown. MSV *Valkyrie*, Mess Hall.

KAYA: So, this is some miscellaneous time on the *Valkyrie*, I'm assuming in the galley, around one of Bean's many cans of Chef Boyardee for turians.

GRATCH: And Blast-Ohs.

KAYA: And Blast-Ohs, very important, yes, thank you, Gratch. How is Gratch doing this morning?

GRATCH: Gratch feels great. Gratch went [elongated] boom! [cackles]

BEAN: Gratch went boom? What are you talking— [horrified] wait, did—do I need to go clean the showers *again*?

GRATCH: No, not *that* kind of boom. Gratch threw a grenade. There was a cave, and, and it was a humming cave, and Gratch threw a grenade in there, and everything exploded, and then Gratch blew up Omega!

[enter dream sequence]

KAYA: You see the tunnel they are pointing to: the hum tunnel. What will you do?

GRATCH: Gratch pulls out a cluster grenade, pulls the pin, and *throws it down the tunnel!*

KAYA: Silence... for several seconds... that are too long... and yet not long enough. And then, one explosion— two explosions—three explosions—a *cascade of biotic fields rippling down the tunnel*, and from far down you hear in the distance,

DISTANT VO: Save us, Gratch, save us!

GRATCH: Gratch will save you! Gratch runs towards the—the sound of the "save us."

CARVER: Gratch, where are you going? What are you doing down there? Do you need my cannon?

KACHE: Do you want help?

GRATCH: No, Gratch has his own cannon. Gratch has to save people in cave that Gratch blew up. Gratch is strongest. Gratch does this by Gratch-self.

TITOH: [skeptical] Alright, if he wants to go down the weird tunnel by himself, I guess he can...

KAYA: Okay, Gratch, you are now alone in this very rubble-filled tunnel, and you can hear the echoes of cascading grenades blast down into the distance. All of the rock is glittering and sparking with element zero in it. What do you do?

GRATCH: Ooh. Gratch didn't know he was a miner. Gratch collects the shiny rocks.

KAYA: Do you collect many of the shiny rocks? Or just a few?

GRATCH: *Many.*

KAYA: Nice, always a good idea. Always a good idea.

GRATCH: Then Gratch proceeds *down* the tunnel. Does Gratch hear the voices?

KAYA: Yes, you can still hear the echoes of the voices calling for assistance.

BEAN: [distant] Gratch, help us! You're the only one strong enough!

ZYN: [distant] Help this one, Gratch the strongest. You are this one's only hope.

KACHE: [distant] Oh Gratch, save us, please!

TITOH: [distant] Only Gratch can save us now. He is *truly* the strongest.

KAYA: Make me an Insight roll.

GRATCH: Gratch's greatest skill! Ooh. Thirteen minus four. Nine.

KAYA: They're a little hard to make out...

BEAN: [distant] Gratch, I am positively overcome with fear!

KAYA: But they're definitely saying, "Save us, Gratch." hundred percent. You could not mistake them for anything else.

GRATCH: [stunned] They know who Gratch is?

KAYA: They totally know who Gratch is. How could they not? Gratch is very important and Gratch is strongest.

GRATCH: Gratch *is* strongest. Everybody knows that. Gratch goes to save the people in exploding cave.

KAYA: As you continue down the cave, you come to a section where it looks like one of the cluster grenades exploded a particularly large vein of eezo, and it's an

absolute disaster. You will have to—you will have to get through this rockslide, or you can climb up it and into a teeny, little tunnel at the top that looks like it probably goes the same way.

GRATCH: [duh] Gratch goes through rubble.

KAYA: How is Gratch going to go through the rubble? There's a lot of it.

GRATCH: Gratch lifts rubble with his bare hands.

KAYA: Awesome. That would be an Athletics check, please.

GRATCH: Gratch got a ninety-two. [KAYA stifles a snort] Gratch—Gratch goes to the rubbles, and he grabs rocks, and—one rock, *two rock, three rock, THE GIANT BOULDERS*, until there's a giant tunnel for tunnel-size Gratch.

KAYA: In very short order, Gratch has cleared a beautiful path through the eezo rubble, and he— how does he proceed down the tunnel that he has just cleared?

GRATCH: Confidently, with his chest out and lightweight rocks behind him.

KAYA: Very nice, very nice. I...would like you to make me a Perception check.

GRATCH: Oh boy. Uh, fi— [redirects himself] I mean, twenty-one. Gratch is very perceptive.

KAYA: Gratch is *very* perceptive, of course, because that is part of being the strongest. Obviously.

GRATCH: Yes.

KAYA: You have the strongest ears and the strongest eyes—

GRATCH: See?

KAYA: And obviously the strongest nose.

GRATCH: Glad somebody gets me.

KAYA: As you proceed down the tunnel, you continue hearing the voices. They sound like your friends.

TITOH: [distant] Oh strongest one, your muscles know no bounds. You are our only hope. Please, save us!

BEAN: [distant] If only there was someone here with biceps that could curl!

GRATCH: [whispering, elated] Gratch has friends?

KAYA: Gratch has friends. People always want to be friends with the strongest guy.

GRATCH: Of course! Is Gratch's friends from the *Valkyrie*, or Gratch's friends from the Blood Pack, or these Gratch's friends from the Citadel?

KAYA: All three.

GRATCH: [awed] All of Gratch's friends are in the cave?

KAYA: [confirming] All of Gratch's friends are in the cave.

GRATCH: Oh, Gratch *must* save them.

KAYA: Yes.

GRATCH: Gratch proceeds down the cave.

KAYA: As Gratch continues, Gratch hears the pilot of *Valkyrie*; Bean is calling out:

BEAN: [distant] Gratch? Gratch! Please save us! We need your help. I need *you* specifically to fly the ship.

KAYA: Quickly followed by Carver:

CARVER: [distant] Gratch, please! I'm sorry I never let you use my cannon! Please come and save us, Gratch!

GRATCH: The puny human and the taxi driver need my help! On my way!

KAYA: As you scramble across—scramble down the rocks, you come to a part of the cave that looks like it has a pool of acid at the bottom, and, like, thin bits of rock that you would have to jump across to get through. And they're— on the other side is a—is another tunnel, and you can hear— you can hear Kache yelling from the other side.

KACHE: [distant] Gratch! I cheated at arm wrestlin'. We need a rematch so that you can *prove* that you're strongest.

GRATCH: I *knew* he cheated! Gratch is on his way. Gratch trudges through the acid, 'cause Gratch is immune to acid.

KAYA: [resisting giggles] Constitution save, please.

GRATCH: [with unwarranted confidence] It's definitely not a natural one. That's a—that's a thirty-seven.

KAYA: It's a nice exfoliating acid. You hear that there are asari who pay, like, a lot of money for this. It's very refreshing.

GRATCH: Ah, Gratch's skin is gonna be shiny and beautiful.

KAYA: Gratch clambers out of the acid pool on the other side and continues down the tunnel, and— what is Gratch going to say to all his friends when he gets there to save them?

GRATCH: Fear not! Strongest Gratch is here to save you, to *save the day!*

KAYA: As Gratch is considering his heroic entrance, he hears Titoh's voice coming down the—coming down the tunnel.

TITOH: [distant] Gratch! If you save us soon, not only will I buy you all the Blast-Ohs you can imagine, but I might let you lick my arm.

GRATCH: [gasp] Gratch gets to *smell colors?* Yeah! I'm coming, Titoh, *I'm coming!*

KAYA: A few more steps and Gratch hears Zyn... Zyn's lovely hazy voice floating down the hall.

ZYN: [distant] This one has many credits ready for Gratch if Gratch will hurry up and come save these ones. This one will not even require receipts. That one could buy all the cluster grenades that that one can *dream of.*

GRATCH: Does Gratch get the black card?

ZYN: [distant] Gratch can have whatever Gratch desires.

GRATCH: [elongated] *Yes!* Gratch is running. Gratch is running!

KAYA: Gratch erupts into a huge cavern teeming with all the people Gratch knows: the crew of the *Valkyrie*, his old friends from the Blood Pack, his old *enemies* from the Blood Pack, the people that he saw that one time on the Citadel—Kasumi Goto's in the back there somewhere, he's pretty sure, and she *even has his presents!* But in between Gratch and all the people... *is a Reaper destroyer.*

[BWAAAAAH]

GRATCH: A Reaper destroyer... [rapidly speeding up] If Gratch destroys the destroyer, then *Gratch* is the destroyer, and then Gratch will be the [elongated] *strongest ever!*

KAYA: [verbal finger gun vibes] Roll initiative.

GRATCH: [elongated] Yes. Gratch got a twenty-two.

KAYA: Love it. Gratch goes first.

GRATCH: [eager to save the world] *Who!* Gratch— Gratch—where, where is the Reaper? How high is the Reaper?

KAYA: The Reaper is floating just above all of the people, flying there, menacing them all. You can see it's starting to light up its red eye, it's gonna fire a laser.

GRATCH: Reaper won't fire laser on Gratch's watch! Gratch runs up and jumps all the way up to the Reaper's head, pulls out his Claymore and [elongated] *BOOM!*

KAYA: Okay, I would like, yeah— Acrobatics, I assume, is what you're doing, or Athletics, either way.

GRATCH: Athletics. Gratch rolled a forty-two.

KAYA: Love it. You soar across the gap and land on the Reaper. And then I would like you to roll me—well, how many, how many d6s is that Claymore roll?

GRATCH: At *least* a hundred.

KAYA: Oh, I love it. Okay, alright. Roll those d6s.

GRATCH: Hold on. [stifling a laugh] This'll take a second. [sound of a statistically significant number of dice rolls] That Claymore shot did, um, [breathy, counting aloud] one, seven, forty-two, and 112, uh, 213 points of damage.

KAYA: The Claymore shot rips a huge chunk out of the Reaper's hull and it makes that awful [BWAAAAAH] sound that shakes the walls of the cavern, and rock starts falling from above, and the people are screaming and running!

GRATCH: Die, Reaper scum!

[Reaper protests]

KAYA: The laser charges up, and— Gratch, *you're right over top of the laser*. If you don't move, it's gonna shoot you. What do you do?

GRATCH: [chilling realization] But if I move, then Reaper shoot Gratch's friends. [with heroic abandon] Gratch *takes the laser beam to his chest!*

[BWAAAAAH]

KAYA: Gratch gets 500 Paragon points and spends all his effort to make a Con save with *quadruple* advantage! This is a Commander Shepard shot.

[one die roll...two dice, three dice... four...]

GRATCH: [heavily] Gratch rolled a four.

KAYA: [stricken] *No.*

[a beat, then KAYA and CHASE dissolve into laughter]

CHASE: Composure...

KAYA: [gathers herself] For one horrible moment there is nothing but *white hot pain* and *heat* and *suffering*.

[GRATCH screams]

KAYA: And then it all fades into silence... and softness... and Gratch opens his eyes. Who does Gratch see above him?

GRATCH: Gratch sees Kache.

KAYA: And what does Kache say?

GRATCH: I don't know what Kache says.

KACHE: Gratch, what is it, my bestest buddy? Spit it out.

GRATCH: Gratch tells Kache, [whispering] "I told you Gratch was strongest."

[exit dream sequence]

GRATCH: And that's how Gratch *destroyed a Reaper* and became the strongest in *all the universes*.

KACHE: Now, that...that was the biggest load of elcor dung I ever heard.

CARVER: It's certainly interesting, to say the least.

BEAN: Oh come on, tell it again! One more time!

CARVER: One slight critique, though—an editorial comment, if you will—I don't have a cannon. Sorry to disappoint.

ZYN: This one is *not quite certain* what to think about that particular story. It seems as though perhaps Gratch has indulged in drell hallucinogenic oils.

TITOH: Don't look at me. I didn't give him anything. Unless... *Gratch!*

[CHASE's resistance of giggles is futile]

VI:

You have been listening to *I Should Roll, Ride of the Valkyrie*, Minisode Four: *GRATCH IS STRONGEST*. Featuring the voices of Hans Cummings as Zynamondan, Ché Grové as Titoh Raas, Chase Hutchison as Gratch, JD Kelly as Kache, Hunter LaPaglia as Carver Fairbank, Leah Ryan as Bean Gainian, and Kaya Renwick as everyone and everything else.

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