

We hop in the van and drive through this ghost town over to Ninth and Iron, seeking Tom Tom at the local Daedalus Security. We find a pile of junk with a chain-link fence wrapping around this lot that's about half a block square. (At first blush, *this* junkyard is not sentient.) There is a fifth wheel style trailer parked on the lot, a handful of automobiles on cinder blocks, and palettes of stuff all over the place. On the fence in no less than six places is a sign reading, "No Trespassing. Beware of ~~Dog~~ Worg." (A Worg is more intelligent than a Dire Dog, and is likely to speak Goblin.)

Carlos notices there are no less than five security cameras. From what I can tell, they've been up there 25 years and don't even have an oscillator, just huge VHS-camera-like cameras.

Izar: "No worgs, it seems."

Ego: "That's good news. More good news: there are security cameras, even if antiquated ones, so maybe there's actually something here worth securing."

We get out of the van and head to the fence to look for a doorbell.

Ego looks around for a doorbell, and while she's doing so

Izar says, "Oh, nevermind. It looks like there *are* worgs." Two worgs rush over snarling and crash against the fence, knocking Ego over. As they're barking and snarling, there is already blood on their faces, and some of it has splattered on Ego from their initial response to the intrusion.

Izar writes out a sign saying, "Dear Tom Tom: SOS"

Hrothulf exits the van and stands by the van, muttering to the group, "Hey y'all, if this doesn't work I can conjure up some steaks for a distraction."

Ego backs away from the fence and stands with a "Hmph!" and continues looking for a doorbell, only from a greater distance. There is probably one on the trailer, but not clearly one on the fence.

Hrothulf draws his sword to see whether the worgs react in any way. They are simply barking and barking and the blood on their mouth has foamed up a little so they have pink foam staining their beards.

Izar takes out his pyrotechnics wand and flings it around. He tries to write 'Tom Tom' toward the trailer in the magenta sparkles, though he notices all of the blinds are slatted shut.

H: "Hey y'all--here's the plan." He times it just so and attempts to ram his soul lance (which he has taken out), lit on fire, right down the throat of a worg, skewering it.

The worg just *barely* dodges Hrothulf's attack and they take a step off the fence, barking territorially all the more, but no longer against the fence.

Ego takes out her railgun and fires a shot of rocks at the trailer door saying, "Maybe this'll get his attention." She pops a hole in the door just about the handle.

The gunshot sent the worgs scurrying a little bit, putting a couple palettes between us and them, but still snarling and barking.

Izar looks for other entrances, but this appears to be the only one. He notices that there is a car in the driveway that looks actually driveable. There is a warehouse across the Ninth Street called Warehouse #9. There doesn't seem to be anyone there, though.

Hrothulf walks down along the fence to see if he can get a better look at things. One of the worgs follows his steps, none too pleased to let him mosey about her property.

Ego keeps her gun trained on the worg nearby and shouts, "Tom Tom! Are you there? Are you okay?"

Izar starts thinking through where Tom Tom might eat around here. There's nothing in comfortable walking distance of here though.

The worg near Hrothulf has approached closer to the fence with menacing snarls, and actually bites the fence a couple times. "Should I dose these worgs with psychotropics?" Unsure.

Hrothulf does notice some kind of blood spatter on the outside of a '58 Steudebaker due south of him, on the door away from the trailer.

"I say there Tom Tom, uh, can anyone here inside there? Hey y'all. How y'all doing?"

It's hard to get over the barking of the worgs, but he raises his voice.

Ego slowly approaches the fence trying to calm the worg. It does not work. The worg leaps toward her, and she falls back.

Suddenly, the door to the trailer bursts open. A kobold in a bath robe blows a tiny whistle. Both worgs stop and sit down. "Debbie! Denise! You get in heeah!" The whistle is quickly replaced with a sawed off shotgun. Turning to Ego, "Did you blow a hole in my door?!"

"Nothing else seemed to be working."

"Can't a man take a dump in peace?!"

"Seems not. Are you the proprietor of the Daedalus Vaults around here?"

"I didn't understand half the words you just said!"

"I believe it. Are you the man to see about security needs in this here town?"

Tom Tom puts down the shotgun and takes out a black box. Pointing it in Ego's direction, he clicks it, and the fence door starts opening. "Come on in."

Ego walks in and Tom Tom holds the door open for her. The kobold stretches out a hand, introducing himself as Tom Tom and welcoming us to Daedalus Security. Ego feels veritably welcomed, and walks in, shaking Tom Tom's hand and saying, "Nice to meet you."

Tom Tom similarly welcomes Izar and says, "That is a fine animal you have there," speaking of Hiare.

"Yours too."

"Top of the line discipline training. Yours is safe here."

Hrothulf slowly follows the rest of us into the trailer.

"Pleasure to meet you, hot hand," says Tom Tom. "Sorry for Debbie and Denise. There just a little overprotective. But it's their job." At which point he says to them, "Debbie! Denise! Get to work!" At which point they take their posts outside again.

There is an ancient TV set with a gravball match playing. Tom Tom picks up a giant control with which he freezes the frame.

"I'm very sorry I didn't greet you as I normally would. I've been experiencing some IBS symptoms and was otherwise detained. Where you all from where putting a hole in a door is the equivalent of knocking.

We're apologetic, saying we're from all over.

"No harm, no foul. I got plenty of doors lying around. We don't get many coming from offworld. What brings you here?"

Leaning in, Ego says "The Daedalus Vault."

"Safes then, you're looking for safes! What do we got here? A gun vault? Something to hide goods?"

He then goes into offering coffee, water, donuts.

Hrothulf: "I would be delighted to try some of your local coffee."

"Alright." He takes a glass container off a heater and pours. Bits are sticking in the container.

"Sugar?"

"Sure."

He gives a two-lb bag of sugar, and also offers cigarettes.

"So, what kind of safes you looking for?"

Ego: "Not so much a vault, as *the* vault."

Tom Tom looks with a blank stare, which as a reptile-y kobold is particularly unnerving.

Izar: "How did you get into this business? Is it a family business?"

"Well, Daedalus is a guy who made mazes and such and hid things. Not a real person or anything, but my father in law... or his father, or whoever, thought it was a cool name and story."

"Do you do off-world orders?"

"Sure. I mean near everything around here is local, but..."

"Do you do things for other parts of this world, with clients in other towns and such?"

"I'm not going to talk about other clients' business. Just like I would secure *your* business."

"Ah, like a safe."

Noticing some obvious private documents that he has on his fridge, he goes over and semi-casually puts a hand on them, sliding them toward the floor. "Uh, yeah. Like a safe."

Ego: "Where do you get these from? You make them yourself?"

"No." Tom Tom says. "I work pretty closely with the tradespeople in town, usually separate the work. I do some of the work myself. I mainly get the parts and assemble them myself. We could do that! But I don't usually... I'm more a people guy, you know?"

"Oh sure, I'm just curious. Where do you get the parts from?"

"Well, I know a guy who works with metal, I know a guy who... (etc.) I got my people. Most of them are in town."

Izar asks for the stories that Tom Tom was referencing. The stories he's heard surrounding the Daedalus name.

Tom Tom says this guy Daedalus was really well known for being able to build things. The gods would often approach him and say, "Hey, I've got this really super cool object that I want to keep safe to protect the mortals. Could you build something for me?" And there was one god who asked if he could hide her because she was not safe for the mortals. So he made a big complicated maze so no one could ever find her.

Izar: "What if we want something like what's in that story?"

Tom Tom laughs.

"Is there anywhere nearby where people make offerings or honor these stories or their origin?"

Tom Tom gives another classic kobold stare.

Hrothulf: "Okay, well, I, uh, have a question for you."

"Yeah?" Tom Tom says, with a couple sideways blinks.

"Could you build a safe like that? I mean you're named after this story that..."

"Yep, story. Not true."

"But if we're interested in building such a device, is that something your organization could build?"

"You mean like a humanity threatening artifact? I mean, I could build a big box, sure."

"But like the labyrinth...?"

"What? No."

"What else could you do?"

"worg and lycan hairs. I do some night junkyard work..."

"So would it be fair to say that what we're looking for is outside the scope of what your organization could do for us?"

"Uh, yeah. If you're looking for a 30 mile square labyrinth, no."

"Is there an organization around or somewhere on this planet that could do this sort of thing?"

"Ah. Are you yanking my chain? You serious? You want to build a huge-ass maze?"

"Well, we were told you were the best and..."

"Who told you I'm the best?! I mean look around you."

"I mean, particularly when you were telling of your good lady wife..."

"Ex-wife."

"Oh I'm sorry. That's..."

"I'm not. You don't know my struggle!"

There is a sudden cacophony of muffler action outside that gets super loud, then gradually quieter, then off.

Tom Tom: "Excuse me a moment."

A hulking shadow fills the door, and a massive finger goes through the hole Ego put in the door with a grody black fingernail.