

Hot.

I was burning up. I was breathing hard, my sweat was evaporating from my skin as I was getting ready. It's been a while since I have had to fight like this. I looked across the burning sand to see him still coming after me. It seems he will pursue me no matter where I go. I faced him, and clenched both of my fists, releasing smoke and a hissing noise into the air. My fists erupted into flames, causing the edges of my sleeves to combust. I dragged my backfoot through the sand behind me, bent my knees and got ready to pounce. The muscular man in front of me began to speed up, and transitioned into a full sprint.

"I hate this part." I murmured to myself.

Flame burst from my ankles kicking up all the sand nearby into a cloud of dust. I went flying through the smoke right past my adversary. I dug both of my feet into the sand, causing me to skid and turn to face my enemy's back. He was disoriented by the sudden movement, and struggled to follow where I was. His eyes moved to me a little too late. I raised my arm to strike him, and then released a burst of flame from my elbow, launching my fist into his lower jaw as he was turning to face me. I could feel my fist knock his lower jaw past his upper jaw with an unsettling click. The impact of the punch sent him spinning into the ground. His body skid across the sand as it landed. Basking in my victory, I was about to start laughing, until I noticed him rise from the ground.

"This is the problem with you earth types, you just never know when to go down." I said in dismay.

He got up, and his face was radiating fury. His large body was shaking, and his veins looked like they could bust out of his skin anytime.

"Arrrrrghhh!" He let out a loud battle cry. He lowered his right hand and solidified the sand underneath it into a large rock. With a swing of his arm he whipped the rock in my direction. It wasn't particularly fast. I made a dash to avoid it, learning to my dismay that he also solidified the sand around my ankles pinning me in place.

"Fuck."

The rock blasted into my side Knocking me onto my back. I was coughing and trying to breathe, but all the air was knocked out of my chest. A large shadow began to loom over me. I looked up to see the huge man over me. He stood with a leg to either side and a huge stone block in hands. I watched in horror as he raised it above his head.

"Time out?" I said while raising my palms to the sky.

In response he let out a grunt and brought the huge rock down. Moments before it turned my skull into paste, I let a burst of fire from my palms sliding myself underneath his legs. I aimed my palms at the ground beneath me to blast myself to my feet. I quickly turned and punched him in the back of the head before he had a chance to turn around. I felt my fist make solid contact with his head, but he hardly flinched. He turned around and the veins in his head were pumping with fury. He stood up and towered over me. Now that we are this close I could see he was at least a foot taller than me, and weighed twice what I weighed in muscle.

"Ahhh shit." I said with a panicked voice.

I extended my arms in front of me, and blasted myself backwards, my feet burned from skidding across the sand. I managed to gain some distance from him, like I was hoping to. I wasn't super inclined to fight him up close anymore so I'll change up my plan. I took a deep breath and concentrated. I could feel a fiery sensation start in my lungs and spread down my veins causing

me to feel like I was burning on the inside. It spread to my fingertips which were aimed at the monstrosity before me. Bolts of fire burst from my hand, and went soaring towards him. He reacted quickly, and flicked his wrists up, causing walls of sand to rise from the ground, which quickly burst into clouds of dust when my fire crashed into them. I tried again, this time aiming slightly to the left and right of him. He got ready to block them again, and fell for my trap.

“Now.”

I pulled my hands in causing the bolts of fire to change direction last second, crashing into him and causing an explosion.

“Please, please, please.” I prayed to myself as I watched the cloud of dust settle.

“I must be dreaming!” I cried while watching a large figure walk its way out of the smoke. His shirt was just in tattered remains, revealing his tattoos that were painted on pure muscle. He started flinging his arms, sending multiple rocks flying at me. I looked down to see that my legs were yet again stuck in sand. I quickly burst flame from my ankles causing the sand to disperse. I felt a cold breeze pass by my left as a rock just missed me. I have to end this soon. He has to be getting tired after all this, right? He was slowly walking towards me, and getting ready to throw more rocks. I slid my back foot through the sand, and bent my legs. I rested my hands on the sand in front of me. Breathing was starting to get hard. My throat was so dry, it felt like I had been eating sand. I was concentrating, but each time I tried to ignite my fire, I felt like I was breathing in smoke.

“Come on just one more time!” I shouted to myself.

Flames burst from my palms and ankles, sending a cloud of dust in my wake as I zoomed through the sand. More rocks were coming my way, as I was gliding through the sand I kept making micro adjustments to my movements with the flames from my palms to avoid the oncoming rocks. He was just in front of me now. He raised his massive bear paw and solidified sand around it, he swung it in a wide arc to crash into me while I was flying at him. As it was about to smash into me I aimed my palms up to blast my upper body backwards to slide underneath his arm. I transferred my forward momentum to my backfoot, then caused an explosion underneath my heel to send it flying in a wide upwards arc crashing into the other side of his jaw, and making it clock in the opposite direction. I quickly brought my foot back down beside me. He was stumbling and disoriented, I only needed one more hit to end this. I raised my arm and moved my backfoot behind me. I simultaneously shot fire from my right elbow and ankle. Sending my fist flying into his temple. His eyes rolled back, as his huge body dropped with a large poof of sand. I stood over him, and was about to let out a victory cry. But I couldn't, my lungs felt like they were on fire, each breath felt like I was swallowing needles. I could hardly even speak. I needed to sit down, I looked down and the body in front of me shrugged and took a seat on his shoulder. I reached into my pocket for my cell phone. I noticed some new cracks on it from my scuffle. I hope it works, I tried calling a number, and heard a reassuring click. I heard a voice come in over the phone.

“Hey where are you, do you need something?” the voice buzzed at me.

“I need, some, fucking water.” I managed to croak out.