

Deep within the forest where trees sway from distant winds, an old airship lies, settled comfortably on the moss floor. The airship was filled with battle scars from old flights, although now repaired, the reminder still lingers. Within it a skire, who has flown it in the past, now has made it a comfortable home whilst repairing it through the years. That skire was Molotov, who was currently packing his things for the trip to The Core planet. Inside the airship, metal music can be heard playing on an old radio, static slightly interrupting the music ever so often, meanwhile clinks and clanks are echoing through the ship from a variety of items being thrown around.

Molotov grumbles under his breath whilst searching around his airship for equipment "Where the fuck did I put the suit..." He grows frustrated with the inability to find what he needs, though his place was quite cluttered so no wonder that he was having trouble. He was throwing things around while digging through piles of old gear "I swear I left it here somewhere..." he continued with his irritated mumbling.

Suddenly, three loud thuds can be heard on the heavy metal doors of the ship, the sound echoes throughout, catching his attention. His ears perk up and he straightens up, turning slightly towards the door. He puts the task of finding the equipment aside, taking steps towards the door, he yells "WHO'S THERE??" his tone is still frustrated.

"You know who, can you let me in now?" A familiar voice can be heard which Molotov could recognize instantly. He hurried his pace, accidentally knocking over a few things with his tail as he scurried towards the door.

He unlocks the heavy door and it creaks as he pulls it open, outside stands Fester with a heavy bag and a slight smile "Hey, I brought my things for the trip." He readjusts his bag while waiting on Molotov's answer.

Molotov was glad to see Fester again, he gave him a warm welcome "Heyy you're finally here! Took you a while! I have been losing my mind trying to find this stupid fucking suit..." Remembering his frustration, he grumbles again and walks back to where he was, guiding Fester with his tail.

Fester steps inside, closing the door behind him before following Molotov "No wonder you can't find anything..." He looked around the place, cluttered with random items on the ground from Molotov throwing them around, he moves or kicks some out of the way before continuing his sentence "You really gotta clean up your place"

"I do not have time for that shit" Molotov grumbles in reply "Either way I usually find everything I need" he goes back to the pile where he was last searching before he got interrupted by Fester's arrival.

"Uhhuh..Usually..." Fester chuckles a bit, sitting down on a nearby bench and setting his heavy bag down which causes a collection of clunks to be heard from the bag.

“Jeez what the hell did you pack in that...” He turns his head slightly back towards Fester, stopping his rummaging. “You really came prepared” he snickered, walking towards Fester in curiosity.

“Oh just the essentials” Fester zips open a bag, within was a protective suit, equipment for defense, medkits and other medical items, rations and his shovel. He looked up at Molotov who was standing by him. “What were you planning on packing?”

Molotov inspected Fester’s items from afar, jokingly commenting “Well at least one of us found his suit...” he glanced over at the shovel in slight confusion “Did you really bring that for this?”

Fester was a bit confused by the question and looked down at his bag, realizing he meant his shovel, he looked back up at Molotov “Well yeah of course, I always bring Daisy with me, why wouldn’t I?” His expression still had a hint of confusion, he thought that the answer to that question was obvious.

“You know there is no dirt or other diggable terrain at The Core planet..?” Molotov was a bit muddled by Fester’s reasoning, it seemed like a waste of bag space that could’ve been used for more rations or resources.

“I’ll find a use for it...” Fester replied, still sure in his answers “You can wack ichor beasts with it.” Satisfied with his answer, he zipped up his bag.

“If you say so” Molotov sighed and turned back around to go back to his pile “I am NOT letting you near those things though.” He was firm on keeping Fester out of danger, wanting to protect him. He kept searching through his place “Could you help me out? I really can’t find my things...” He was slowly starting to give up and finally requested some assistance.

“Alright” Fester got up willingly, going to a separate part of the ship to expand the search through the messy clutter of Molotov’s things.

Some time has passed, the radio still playing its staticky music, wind occasionally causing faint howling through the metal ship. Both skiers had found all the things they needed and organized them a bit more neatly than it was before for ease of access. Fester kept organizing things further in case he found anything else useful, while Molotov started preparing the airship for takeoff. The old battle-ridden ship roared a loud startup as Molotov managed to ignite the engines.

“HELL YEAH!” Molotov shouted in success, he was able to get the ship running “Alright sit down and strap in, we are going to take-off soon” He gave Fester a heads up as the flight might be a bit bumpy.

“One sec!” Fester hurried from a corner where he was putting some things away, sitting down at the co-pilot seat next to Molotov, he had a centipede on his shoulder and was holding a few other critters in his hands.

“There you ar-” Molotov turned to Fester to see him holding bugs and his thought process was stopped by that sight “...I see you found some friends?...”

“Yeah there were a few of them scampering around” Fester always admired bugs and was fond of them. They don’t seem to bother him.

“Huh, maybe you are right, I really should clean up my place if you found all of those..” Molotov was a bit worried about the thought of a potential bug infestation on his precious airship.

Both of them were ready and Molotov proceeded to attempt to take the airship into flight, the nearby grass and trees swaying away from the wind caused by the engines. As the ship started to hover higher and higher, ascending up into the sky, it hit a few branches from nearby trees, causing a few wobbles and loud thuds. Molotov pushed through and got the airship high enough into the sky to start their flight towards The Core planet, it is a long way to it so Fester decided to start a conversation to pass the time.

“So...What do you intend on finding down at The Core?” Fester posed a question to Molotov, his head slightly tilted towards him, still calmly fiddling with the bugs he found.

“...Hm?” Molotov was quite focused on flying, he was zoned out in thoughts before snapping out of it “Oh right yeah uhh...Just want to see what it is like I guess? Fight some beasts while I am there, they didn’t request people with military experience for nothing.” He finally answered though his answer felt like it was hiding something and Fester could tell. “What about you?” He steered the conversation back to Fester.

“Oh, I mostly just want to do research on the ichor and the flora and fauna for potential medical studies, it might be useful.” Fester glanced at Molotov again, debating with himself if he should pry and ask further about it “You sure you aren’t searching for anything specific?”

Molotov gripped the steering wheel a bit tighter with unease, pausing a bit before answering “Well. They did request skires that had previous military or battle experiences...” he dragged out the sentence, his voice was determined “...there is a chance my old crew might have heard about the expedition and went down there” His gaze was fixed on the skies in front of him. “I am hoping to find them.”

Fester slightly expected that answer as Molotov had briefly mentioned it before but he wanted to check if his curiosity is correct “I hope so too” he added onto Molotov’s last sentence.

Molotov attempted to ease the uncomfortable silence by steering the conversation back to Fester again “So, ichor for medical studies huh? How would that even work, isn’t that stuff just

deadly and sticks to everything?” He glanced over at him, waiting for an explanation.

“Hm? Oh, yeah it is quite fascinating the way ichor works, how beasts can just form out of it, I think it could be useful potentially for reanimation to mend the dead, although I am not sure if they are a hive mind, that could cause problems with controlling it. Maybe some of the local flora down there have interesting chemical compositions and reactions to other medicine, so I could do a wide range of experiments. IF I find anything that is, we might just end up with a barren desert with nothing interesting other than aggressive ichor beasts.” Fester rambled for a bit, he decided to shorten his explanation a bit so it is not too much for Molotov to process at once, as he knew he was not too well versed in science.

“Uhhuh..” Molotov replied while listening, trying his best to understand “Well, if you find anything explosive, let me know, I would love some new creative ways to blow things up” he smiled a bit while processing what Fester has said, finally adding on a question “Reanimate? Wouldn’t the ichor just..I don’t know, melt them? Absorb them fully?” He was a bit puzzled with Fester’s thought process on that idea.

“Hm...” Fester took a second to think before replying “I am still unsure on that, as I have not seen it with my own eyes and I doubt anyone ran experiments like that on it yet either way, so anything is possible” He looked out the airship, admiring the landscape from above before spotting The Core in the distance “Oh hey, is that it?” Fester pointed over at the horizon

“Oh huh?” Molotov squinted at where Fester was pointing and was able to see some of the rugged terrain and floating islands with the sea of ichor below “...Yeaah that is definitely it”

They continued flying somewhat steadily, the engine hiccuped at times and the hull screeched at higher speeds, Molotov did his best to bring the airship there in one piece. Flying past floating islands was both a nerve wracking flight and a fascinating sight. Fester picked out a hopefully steady spot to land on and Molotov agreed on it. They carefully descended down, landing with a loud thud as the airship settled down onto the new ground. Molotov double checked a few things before turning the engines off and getting up to stretch from the long flight.

“Alrigggghtt, time to check out this shit” Molotov told Fester as he was stretching, starting to walk over to where he left his bag “You coming?” He enticed Fester to follow him.

“Yeah I’m going don’t worry” Fester slowly got up, gently putting his bug friends down as they scattered away into cracks and dips of the ship’s interior. He slowly followed Molotov to get his bag as well.

Molotov had put on his protective suit and was brushing some specks off it while Fester approached, after he noticed him, he handed over Fester’s suit from his bag “Here you go, we apparently need these to go out..”

"Thanks" Fester took his suit and got dressed, checking his bag afterwards incase he was missing anything before putting it on "Alright, I'm ready"

"Me too, let's go" Molotov responded as he swung his bag onto his shoulder and walked over to the exit door

(2016 word count before this, note to owner: I hope I captured them well enough! They are fun to write about)