

The Tale of the Lizards

"Nice shot, sah!"

"Why thank you, Agent Multitool. I'm sure you can beat it."

Multitool grabbed the sniper rifle from the Master Hunter, and took aim. "What're our plans for today, Master? Any daring raids? Any top secret, underground operations? Any ferocious, overlong battles?"

The Master Hunter paused while Multitool took his shot. It was a direct hit. "Well, I thought we'd test out this new type of toast I've invented," said The Master Hunter, taking back the rifle. "You can put the marge on before you toast it!"

"Oh, great!" replied Multitool. "And excellent shooting, by the way."

"You're welcome. I think perhaps we should stop now. It looks like he's getting bored."

Indeed, at this moment Agent 00'Leary approached the pair, looking worn and battered. He was wearing a rabid squirrel costume.

"I don't know why you can't just shoot the real thing," he muttered, turning his back to the sun and revealing several ragged bullet holes.

The Master Hunter smiled. "Ah, you know how exhausting that is. Anyway, this is good practice. You should maybe run around a touch more next time though, that was getting too easy."

"You should try running around when you've just been shot fifteen times!" cried 00'Leary bitterly.

"Ok," said the Master Hunter, and promptly shot himself fifteen times, and then ran a short marathon. He returned 3 hours 36 minutes later.

"Alright, point taken," 00'Leary resigned.

Back at Slayer Headquarters, Mr. Brooks was hallucinating.

"Aaargh!" he shouted as he saw himself treading on another small lizard. The lizards, thought to be hooded skinks, covered every surface of the room.

'I know - I'll attempt to eat one!' Mr. Brooks thought during an unusual logical insight. 'Then, when I bite my tongue, I'll realise that the lizards aren't real.'

00'Leary and the Master Hunter were walking back to base (Multitool had been eaten by the infamous diseased cows of England). They heard an unusually loud scream, followed by "fummin ell, my tomg!"

"That came from HQ," observed 00'Leary. "We'd better hurry."

Fear me. Fear me.

"What on earth was that?"

"That's just the crazed duck."

"How d'you know that?"

"I've read on a bit. A subplot, I believe."

"Oh, right."

Fear me. Fear me.

The two slayers reached base just in time. Mr. Brooks was buried under a sea of skinks. The lizards oozed out of every corner of the bunker. They swarmed over the computers, blocked doorways, and (to everyone's disgust) had eaten the Agents packed lunches.

00'Leary dived in and pulled Mr. Brooks to a standing position. Mr. Brooks looked shocked, but soon recovered.

"I'll go and make us some tea," said 00'Leary casually.

"And then maybe we can figure out the origin of these lizards" said Mr. Brooks.

"I can do that right away!" said the Master Hunter triumphantly. "I'm looking after them for a friend, the Lizard King. I didn't know they were arriving this morning, but here they are!"

Mr. Brooks frowned. "Well I can't live like this," he said. "I'm off to get some lizard repellent."

He left the room.

3½ seconds later, Agent Myself entered, wearing half an emu egg on his head.

"Greetings my pedigree chums!" he said.

The Master Hunter opened his mouth to ask about the egg, but then thought better of it. 00'Leary returned with the tea.

"I couldn't find the teabags," he said, "so I used lizards instead. He passed the cups around.

"Right, I'm gonna go an' test out this egg. Seeya" spoke Myself.

He left the room, two puzzled looks following him.

4¾ seconds later, Agent Mr. Brooks returned.

"Did you get the lizard repellent?" asked the Master Hunter.

"What?" said Mr. Brooks.

"You went out to get some lizard repellent. Did you get any?"

"Oh, yes. Er, no. I didn't. Why's my tea wriggling?"

"No teabags."

"It makes sense. Anyway, there're a couple of rabids south-south-east of here."

"Really? How far?"

"About ten metres."

"Did they see you?"

"No."

"00'Leary, call for backup. Mr. Brooks, release the Magic Carrot. Myself, er, where's Myself? Never mind, let's get them!"

With this, the Master Hunter grabbed a handful of lizards (he was attempting to take weapons, but the cupboard was buried under skinks) and handed them out to his agents. "Use them wisely. Now go!"

The three men (and one enraged carrot) surfaced from their underground bunker.

Quack. Quack.

And so the battle began. I say battle, but initially it seemed more like a skirmish. The three agents charged out, dug a small trench, and then turned to engage the rabid squirrels, only to find that the Magic Carrot had dispatched them already in an impressive aerial move.

"It's good, that carrot," said Mr. Brooks. The Magic Carrot dashed off into a nearby forest. "I'll go and catch it." He too dashed off into the forest.

The agents enjoyed a rare few seconds of silence. Then:

"Sorry I'm late, mateys." It was agent Myself, approaching them from behind. "Have I missed anything?"

The Master Hunter turned to him. "Apparently not. There seem to be a few more rabids leaping down from that tree ahead. Why are you wearing a skirt, Myself?"

"It's a disguise. The rabid squirrels won't attack an unarmed woman."

"I might," muttered 00'Leary.

They turned back to the rabids; thirty-seven of the monsters swarming towards them. The rabid squirrels were all exceptionally large and muscular, with huge, sharp front teeth. The Master Hunter shuddered at the sight of 76 cold, red eyes glaring at him. Then he loaded his lizard, stood up, and shot the nearest squirrel. The other two slayers followed his example. The rabids were now charging towards them, teeth barred.

While a lone rabid squirrel will usually shoot its opponent from the safety of a tree, a mob like this will be unable to resist tearing its opponent into little pieces up close. Now, with seven of their number dead on the grass, the rabid squirrels reached the agents. The Master Hunter and 00'Leary drew their swords and stood back to back. Agent Myself ran off, terrified.

Pass me my teeth...

Just as 00'Leary had passed out, and the Master Hunter had had his head cut off, help arrived. Mr. Brooks had returned, carrotless, but with back up in the form of Agents Jerro, Weasel, Eponymous Biro (the lizard king), Misciasci, Morris and Dr. Ellz. This mighty group quickly despatched the remaining squirrels (who were boxing in a corner) and then revived the slayers.

"Hurray we won!" said the Master Hunter. "All of you, come back to headquarters for a cup of tea."

And so they did.

"So, now that this is all over, I just have a few questions for you. Number one: Eponymous Biro, how long will we be keeping your lizards? They've started eating the carpet."

Eponymous Biro replied; "Oh, just another week. These particular lizards are extremely rare, I'm keeping them here, where they are nice and safe, until my base is no longer under attack."

00'Leary nodded, then subtly moved the teacups behind his back.

The Master Hunter continued.

"Fine. Question number two: why are Mr. Brooks and Myself never in the same place at the same time?"

"Well, you see..." began Myself, who had run in a few seconds ago. "Well..." He ran back out of the room. Mr. Brooks entered shortly after.

"No reason" he said.

"Ok," said the Master Hunter suspiciously. "And my final question: where did that duck come from?"

He pointed into an armchair along the back wall of the room. In the chair sat a duck with large teeth and glowing red eyes.

I am the duck, it said.

"Would you like a cup of tea, duck?" asked 00'Leary.

No.

"Well, I'm glad that has all been sorted," said the Master Hunter. "Now, let's watch some TV."