

License to ED

The blood-crazed warriors charged in on the Outlaws and the commissar, and they closed very quickly. But not quick enough. As soon as they got into firing range, the air was filled with bolts, red lasgun shots and burning plasma. The most of the laser and bolts bounced right off the armour of the warriors of Khorne, but when Double D's plasma shots found their mark, the Berzerkers fell like mighty oaks. Some were taken out, but when the Berzerkers got within range with their bolt pistols, the return fire came.

Most of the shots bounced right off the Eds power armour and Terminator armour. Double D shot Rolf a look and saw that he was like a standing target. Wearing little armour (almost none at all) he would easily be taken out.

Double D acted quickly and threw himself to protect Rolf, but too late.

A stray shot hit Rolf right in the head and he fell to the ground. Double D felt the rage building inside and turned to face the Berzerkers. He reached out with his hand and sent a lightning storm on the Berzerkers, which didn't stand a chance. The lightning easily found any scratch in the armour and made them into wide holes. The only one that got away was the Champion leading the Berzerkers.

"Just run ya coward!!" Double D shouted after the fleeing figure. Then he turned his head and looked at Rolf. Ed and Eddy joined him, their faces showing their dismay very clearly.

"How could it happen?" Double D said with a sad voice.

"Who knows." Eddy said and knelt down.

"He doesn't breathe." he said when he'd been looking on Rolf for a while.

"I can't belive it." Ed said and felled a tear.

"Let's go." Eddy said and got up.

Against their will, the Eds left Rolf were he was.

"You did what!!?" Kharn roared.

"We killed Yarrick." the Berzerker Champion whimpered.

Kharn stood before the cowering Champion and Amon Chakai stood close behind Kharn.

"MORON!!" Kharn shouted and lifted up the Champion with one hand.

"I wanted him ALIVE!!"

"Kharn, listen to me..." Amon tried.

"Shut up, milksop!!" Kharn said and gave Amon a withering look. "I have something to say to Montoro here."

Kharn took a firm grip around Montoro's waist and hissed between clenched teeth:

"You will never do that again."

"Of course not, Lord Kharn." Montoro said and tried to look innocent.

"I belive so." Kharn said and smiled maliciously.

Before Montoro understood what was happening, Kharn had put him down and slized his head clear off with his claws.

The blood flowed from the throat of the Berzerker and painted the floor crimson.

Kharn went down to his normal size (If you count 10 feet as normal) and so did Amon.

"It's pretty useful to be able to change size, ain't it Amon?" Kharn said and knelt down by the body.

"It makes our warriors respect us, but please, listen to me.."

Kharn took up some blood on his fingers and tasted it. It had a salty taste and he felt a tingling feeling in his body.

"Kharn?" Amon tried again.

Kharn gave up and stood up and turned to face Amon.

"What?"

"Are you completely sure Yarrick is dead?"

"Why do you ask?"

"If he was dead, I would have felt his soul leave this world, but I haven't."

"You mean that....?" Kharn said and looked surprised.

"He may be alive, yes."

Kharn looked like he'd struck gold in Alaska.

"YAHOO!" he shouted. "Best news I've ever heard."

Amon looked completely taken back.

"These Khornate Deamons are completely nuts." he thought to himself.

"Let's go celebrate." Kharn said and put an arm around Amon's shoulders.

"I won't take one more step!" Ed said and sat down.

"Why?" Eddy asked surprised.

"I can't accept Rolf is dead."

"We all feel the same Ed, but there's nothing we can do." Double D said and put a hand on Ed's shoulder.

Eddy looked thoughtful and then he said:

"Wait a second. Double D, you can revive him!"

"Excuse me Eddy, but what did you say?" Double D asked shocked.

"I mean that you must be able to revive him. With you're psychic powers, it would be easy."

"But Eddy..." Double D began.

"No buts, c'mon!" Eddy said and ran back to where Rolf was lying.

"This will never work!" Double D protested when Eddy dragged him to Rolf.

"Yes it will, McKenzie did it on McGranth. Why won't it work on Rolf?"

"Cause Rolf is dead!"

"He's not dead!" Eddy shouted. "Do it."

Double D looked down at Rolf's body and felt the dismayal flowing throughout his body.

"Eddy, there's one little thing I want to say."

"What?" Eddy and Ed said in unison.

"I'm not sure I'll survive it, but if you want me to...."

"Wait!" Eddy shot in. "Are you telling me you're not sure you're gonna survive it yourself? Then I'm not sure I want you to..."

"Eddy!" Ed said. "We have to get Rolf back to life, our entire mission hangs on it!"

"But if Double D won't survive the resurrection, I'm not sure...."

But Double D had already made up his mind. He knelt down by Rolf and put his hand on Rolf's forehead. Double D pulled it back rapidly.

Eddy and Ed noticed this.

"What is it?" Ed asked.

"This is very odd." Double D began.

"What is odd?" Eddy asked.

"There's no blood, and the wound...It's just a scar." Double D pulled away some of Rolf's hair and showed Eddy and Ed.

"But..." Eddy began. "That's impossible. A head-shot kills outright. And you saw clearly how he was shot."

"Yes, I did Eddy, but who knows? Maybe...."

"Maybe what?" Eddy asked frustrated, but Double D couldn't answer, because Rolf was coming to!

"Uuh, my head!" Rolf said and sat up. He put his hand on his forehead and rubbed it lightly.

"It's a miracle." Eddy said, deeply confunded.

"I'm stumped." was all Ed got out.

"Highly peculiar." Double D said and touched Rolf on his shoulder to see if it was really Rolf and not a ghost.

Then, Double D looked like he'd realized something.

"Of course!!" he shouted.

"What?" the unison reply came from the three others.

"Don't you see? Yarrick's spirit barrier protected Rolf from the shot, but the recoil from the shot was enough to almost send Rolf into the jaws of Death. That's why he didn't breathe. He was in a shock-state, when his lungs didn't work, although for a short while."

"So, what's your conclusion, Doctor Double D?"

Double D shot Eddy a dark look and added:

"Rolf won't be harmed as long as Yarrick's spirit is there to protect him."

"Ok, I believe we get it now." Eddy said and looked at Ed and then towards where Rolf had been standing, but he wasn't there.

Instead he was running towards the far side of a hill.

"C'mon Ed-boys!" he shouted over his shoulder. "Rolf has something to show you!"

"What the heck can that be?" Eddy asked himself as the Eds ran after Rolf.

Lieutenant Michael Yarrick took down the binoculars from his eyes. The last couple of weeks had been pretty calm, and no Deamons had been sighted for days. He wondered why he still was on watch, but you never argue with the orders from a commissar AND a colonel. Especially when the commissar is your three year older sister.

"Hey! Yarrick!?" he heard a voice shout from below. "How is it in the eagle's nest?"

It was James Shawsey, Lieutenant of the third platoon in the fourth company. Michael didn't like him very much. His family had once betrayed the Emperor, but that was a long time ago.

"Boring!" Michael replied, and you could clearly hear a stinch of Rolf's dialect in his voice.

"Why don't ya come down and join us in a game of tin-daja?" James asked.

(Note: Tin-daja is an old Eldar game, which they taught to humans long ago. It's as usual to the Imperial humans as poker is to us)

"Lieutenant Shawsey!" Samantha Yarrick's voice cut the air. "Leave my brother alone! He's on watch!"

"Ay commissar!" James said, saluted Samantha and rushed off.

When James had gone, Samantha turned her attention to Michael.

"Anything?" her simple question was.

"Sand, sand, sand and some rocks." Michael's answer came, the boredom in his voice was so clear you could almost reach out and touch it.

Samantha realized this and said:

"I totally agree with you. If nothing happens soon, I don't know what I'll do."

"I believe you get it your way, my dear sister." Michael said from up in the guard tower.

"What do you mean?"

"Get Colonel Hemmersen. Leman Russ at the horizon and closing fast!" Michael shouted and pointed at the horizon.

"Really good idea this with the Leman Russ." Eddy said as he sat himself to a more comfortable way up on the hull of the tank.

"Amazing it was just standing there." Ed got out. If it hadn't been for all the clouds in Secundus 2's atmosphere, you could have sworn on that Ed was sun-bathing.

"What makes me amazed is that it still works. I didn't take more than a couple of minutes to fix it." Double D said from where he stood, by Rolf up in the turrent.

"That's why the Imperial army uses them, or should I say used." Rolf said, speaking with Yarrick's memory. "They're easy to maintain and rugged. The main tank of the Guardsmen army."

"Speaking of rugged," Eddy shot in. "but those guys up ahead doesn't seem to friendly, do they?"

Eddy showed the other three the line up of an entire Guardsmen Company, just a couple of hundred yards before them.

The Leman Russ halted before the Guardsmen, and what followed was an uneasy silence.

"Reveal yourselves!" Colonel Hemmersen's voice rang.

The damp light on Secundus 2 made it hard to see the faces of the Eds and they knew this. The three Outlaws jumped off the hull and stood before the tank.

"You too! Up in the turrent!" the colonel said and pointed at Rolf, who's face was almost impossible to see because off the peak on his cap.

He took off the cap with a swift stroke and a sudden murmur was heard in the ranks of the Guardsmen (And women for the record).

"Commissar Rolf Yarrick." the colonel said in a almost whispering tone.

"My great ancestor." Samantha said quietly.

Michael Yarrick had walked up to the front line to join his sister.

"Then," he said softly. "those must be the Space Outlaws of the Omega Squad!"

"That's right!" Rolf's voice called from up in the turrent. "And the rumours of my death are HIGHLY exaggerated!"

The shouts of joy that followed are hard to describe, but in some way, the Eds and Rolf knew they were amongst friends now.

When the rejoicing had calmed down and most Guardsmen gone back to whatever they had been doing before, the Eds and Rolf was left almost alone with Colonel Hemmersen, Lieutenant Michael Yarrick and Commissaress Samantha Yarrick.

"Incredible." the colonel began. "Where have you been?"

"It's a long story." Eddy said and tried to show that he didn't want to tell it.

"I believe the tank belongs to your Armoured Company?" Double D said and pointed at the Leman Russ.

"Yes," Colonel Hemmersen answered. "or what's left of it."

"What do you mean with that?" Ed asked.

"We've sustained very heavy losses over the years." Colonel Hemmersen said and looked like he'd just lost someone dear.

"Don't worry." Rolf said in an attempt to cheer up the colonel. "Never give up and never loose hope. If you do, that's the first step on the path of Damnination."

Double D walked away from Rolf and the colonel with Ed, Eddy and the other Yarricks.

"Let's leave them alone." he said simply and they walked off.

"Commissar, look." Colonel Hemmersen protested. "Some day we'll have to give up. The Deamons come in hordes and they get more numerous for each attack."

"The Deamons are easy prey." Rolf said and made a quick glance on his sword.

"That's easy for you to say!" the colonel almost shouted out.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you're a commissar! You're trained to know no fear, and to be callous."

"We're only trained to know the Imperial Law by heart and to make sure, even by force sometimes, that it's followed!"

Rolf was slowly loosing his patience with Colonel Hemmersen. Something wasn't right here.

"Bah!" the colonel spat out. "That's what your kind has said for millenia. Why don't you tell us the truth? That you were created for Deamon Hunting."

"That was the work of the Inquisition!" Rolf shouted out in protest.

"What I can remember, the Inquisition was used only when it came down to Heretics and Traitors, not Deamons."

"Another myth about us commissars, is that we're callous, but we're not."

"Oh, really?"

The colonel voice had changed. It sounded soft and all-knowing, which bugged Rolf incredibly much.

"What do you call those cold-blooded battle-field executions if not a complete testimony of total callousness?"

"Do you know why we do it?"

"No, and I don't need to know either." the colonel said and went for something holstered.

"It's great to know the Yarrick family still excists." Eddy said as he, Ed, Michael and Samantha was watching Double D when he fixed the plasma reactor of a Sentinel walker. The walker had "knelt" down, and you almost couldn't see Double D's head from inside.

"We're pretty many in our family." Michael said and looked into the Sentinel.

"Screwdriver." he heard Double D's voice echo from inside.

Ed handed Double D the screwdriver and sat down beside to prepare for more orders.

"I think it's amazing that you can repair it. You're not even a Tech Priest." Samantha said with a voice full of wonder.

"Whaddya mean Tech Priest?" Eddy asked with a confused face.

"We use so called Tech Priests to repair our machines, but it seems your Lexicanum is pretty good at it too." Michael explained.

"Wrench!"

"Why does your friend ask for the tools in that way?" Samantha asked.

"He's a surgeron too, I believe." Eddy answered.

BLAM!

"What the..?" Eddy shouted.

Double D came out of the Sentinel rubbing his head.

"What in the name of the Emperor was that?" he asked.

Samantha, knowing her weapons, answered:

"That was a bolt pistol."

"But the only one with a bolt pistol here, my dear sister, is the colonel..."

Michael's voice travelled off.

The five looked shocked at each other and then said in chorus:

"By the Emperor!"

Then they ran for where they'd left Rolf and Colonel Hemmersen.

As they got to where Rolf and the Hemmersen had been standing, Michael found it hard to keep his lunch down.

Before them was an awful sight; the body of Colonel Hemmersen lay on the ground. His vocal cords ripped out. And Rolf standing before him, his right hand dripping with blood. The bolt pistol that had belonged to the colonel lay beside him (the colonel).

"What in the name of the most Holy, has happened?" Double D asked shocked. Now firstly did Rolf seem to realize he wasn't alone. He turned to face the Eds and said:

"He was possessed."

"Rolf is bleeding!" Ed said terrified and pointed at Rolf's left shoulder. And Ed was right. Rolf's left sleeve on his coat had gotten an uncanny tinge of crimson.

Double D got hold of the situation quickly and said:

"Don't tell any of the Guardsmen about this. Not yet, any way."

Ed had a weird thought, he just had to share it with the others:

"But how come Yarrick's....."

Eddy put a hand before Ed's mouth and hissed to him:

"Shut up! Samantha and Michael doesn't know that this isn't the REAL Rolf Yarrick."

Eddy got a muffled "Okay." as an answer and took away his hand.

"Samantha." Eddy began. He got a devastating look from her.

"I'd prefer Commissaress Yarrick, if you please?"

"Look, we have three Yarricks here, and two are commissars. It can't be that bad that I call you by your first name, okay?"

"Now, take Michael away from here. No Guardsman has really got the guts, excuse the pun, to see something like this."

"I will." Samantha answered. "C'mon Michael, I mean Lieutenant."

When Samantha had left, Eddy turned to Double D.

"I also wonder why Yarrick's spirit barrier didn't protect Rolf?"

"To be honest Eddy I don't have a clue." Double D looked down on Rolf, who was now sitting on the ground, of excaution.

"I'm gonna have a look at the wound," he said and knelt down beside Rolf. "so can you take off your coat?"

Against his will, Rolf took off the coat, and Double D could clearly see that the bolt was deep into his shoulder.

"It's was a dud." Double D said to himself as he created a psionic pair of

tweezers.

"What do you mean with dud?" Ed asked.

"Bolts are no ordinary bullets." Double D said from where he was sitting.

"Whaddya mean?"

"Their supposed to...(Urgh!)..Sorry Rolf....explode on impact. Or to be more exact, 50 milliseconds after impact."

Rolf was grinning very badly as Double D pulled out the bolt from his shoulder, tears falling down his face because of the pain.

"This is what a bolt looks like." Double D said and showed the others.

It was almost 2 inches long and chromed, except the top, which was made of brass. The blood on it seemed to be just slipping off, finding nothing to stick on.

Double D threw it away from the a bit and it exploded with a krak.

After that, he put his right hand on Rolf's shoulder, and sent a psychic shock through him.

"Yeargh!" Rolf screamed and jumped to his feet. "What was that good for?!"

"It was my little way of telling Yarrick's spirit to heal you." Double D replied softly.

"Yes, but did it have to hurt that much?" Rolf said and rubbed his shoulder.

"Just take on the coat, I want to have a little look on the colonel's body."

Double D walked over to the body and knelt down. He turned the head and took a look on a spot on the neck before he stood up again.

"Rolf was right." he said. "Colonel Hemmersen was possessed."

"By what?" Ed asked.

"A Tzeentchian Deamon." Double D answered.

"Well," Eddy began. "We'd better be going. We still have four miles left and our mission is far from over. Let's go."

"Wait." Rolf shot in. "I want to say something to Yarrick's descendants before we leave."

As Rolf walked away, Eddy turned to Double D.

"You know, it has happened again."

"What has happened again?" Double D asked.

"That we're taller than normal. I mean, look at Ed. He must be at least 8 feet tall, and you about 7. Rolf is somewhere around 6½ and I'm about 6 feet."

"And your point is?"

"The suits do something with us. Like if they were radioactive or something."

"But Rolf was his usual 5'2" back in the cul-de-sac?"

"Maybe so, but then it's the warp that makes him tall. Or maybe...?"

"I also believe it's Yarrick's spirit that make him taller. It feels at home here."

"Commissar-Lieutenant Yarrick!" Rolf called as he walked up to Samantha. She turned round and looked at him.

"What do you want?" she asked.

Rolf was about head and shoulders taller than Samantha.

"I wanted to say good-bye, maybe forever."

"No, you can't die!" Samantha shouted.

"I won't." Rolf answered softly. "But I won't come back to this outpost."

"So, what more do you want?"

"I want you, with the help of others of course, to build up a new Imperium of Man. An Imperium without a single strong leader. Instead, I want to see an Imperium ruled and governed by a council. And when you re-establish contact with the other planets, form a new, higher council."

"I also want you, in this new Imperium, to be less relying on Space Marines. Instead, rely a bit more on yourselves. Learn to defend yourselves against the Dark Gods, and never turn the mutants your back. Because if you do so, they will take revenge. Promise me this."

"Of course I will." Samantha answered.

Rolf gave her a pleasant smile and walked away.

"But may I ask why?" she called after him.

"I am myself a half-breed; half Space Marine, half ordinary human."

"Half-breed?" Samantha repeated to herself.

"So, can we go now?" Eddy said exasperated when Rolf came back.

"Of course we can." Rolf answered and off the foursome went.

They'd been walking for a while when Double D said:

"You told her Yarrick was a half-breed, right?"

"Right so. How did you know?"

"I have my ways."

They were now in the middle of a giant dust field. A storm was raging in and sand was thrown up and made the passage difficult for them. The Eds had put on their helmets, and Rolf had, for once, buttoned up his coat real good. He'd also pulled down his cap as far down as he could.

They were mainly relying on Double D's psyker vision and Eddy's heat vision to find their way.

All of a sudden, the storm stopped. There wasn't a cloud in the sky and the field fell silent. But it was a terrifying silence.

Double D was the first one to take off his helmet.

"I believe we're safe, for now."

Ed and Eddy took off their helmets and Rolf unbuttoned his coat.

Suddenly, the sand began rising on some places.

"What is that?" Ed shouted shocked and pointed at one of the mounds of sand.

The mounds were slowly taking form. From each sand mound, a creature, undoubtedly Deamons, arose. They had no real heads, just enormous beaks, and their bodies were of the same shape as some sort of fungi. Their arms ended in something that can be mostly described as the muzzles of flamethrowers.

"Those are Tzeentchian Flamers!" Double D shouted.

"I thought you could see Deamons with your psyker vision?" Eddy said shocked.

He was ready for close combat, just like Ed, Rolf and Double D. They all had their close combat weapons at the ready.

"They must have concealed themselves."

"That doesn't matter right now!" Rolf shot in. "Let's kill them! They're still just spine-less Deamon-scum!"

"You're right!" Double D said.

And with a unison roar, the foursome jumped on the Deamons.

This threat was easily dealt with, as Tzeentch's Deamons are not as close combat oriented as Khorne's. The Eds and Rolf kept on moving, no more threats coming in their way, until they reached the Tower of Despair.

"Ookay!" Eddy said as he looked up at the gargantuan obsidian doors that blocked their way.

"How the heck, do we get in?"

Ed made a cut at it with his power sword. Nothing happened.

"We can't get in that way." he said and looked upwards, trying to find the top of the tower.

"Where's Double D?" Eddy asked shocked, afraid of having forgotten him somewhere.

To his relief, Double D came back just as he'd said that.

"I found another way in." he said. "Follow me."

Double D showed them to a hole in the wall.

"It must have been caused under the siege of the Imperial Palace."

"What a hole." Ed said and looked inside.

"Yeah, it's big enough to fit me and my Terminator suit."

"Okay." Double D said. "Ed you go in first, then Eddy. Rolf you're third and I'm last."

"Right." Eddy replied. "Ed? What are you waiting for?"

"It's dark in there."

"Ed-boy! Move it!"

Rolf's voice seemed to make Ed want to go, because he clambered in, closely followed by Eddy, Rolf and Double D.

As they got inside, they really realized how dark it was.

"Great!" Eddy sighed "No lights!"

"You have built in torches in you left "Claw" Eddy." Double D said as he lighted a psionical fire in his right hand.

Eddy turned on his torches and swept with it around in the room.

"Eeeew." he said, disgusted.

Double D's psychic fire also gave enough light for them to see why Eddy felt so disgusted.

"Cool." Ed said. "Zom-Bots!"

"What's a Zom-Bot?" Rolf asked.

"It's a short-form for Zombie Robot. This is just like "Zombie Warriors of Planet Gwynatch."

"I'm just happy they're not "online"." Double D said with dismayal in his voice.

"Yeah!" Eddy agreed. "Let's find the light switch!"

"I'll go look overthere." Rolf said and pointed towards a point in the room.

"Be careful." he heard Double D's voice, just before he stepped on a cord.

FRAKASH!

The lights went on, and Rolf was still concious when Double D helped him up.

"I told you to be careful."

"Yes, yes." Rolf sighed. "I just hope it wasn't connected to something important...."

As the Outlaws and the commissar looked up, they saw that all the Zom-Bots had gone online.

"Gross." Ed and Eddy said in unison.

"Me and my big feet." Rolf said in a whimpering tone.