

Like Cherries

by Martin Rowe

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EXT. A FOREST - DAY

A DEER nuzzles through the undergrowth, searching for food. Suddenly it stops and looks up, its ears pricked and its eyes wide, alert for danger. Before it can react an ARROW hits the deer in its neck. It falls down dead.

A CREATURE wanders over to retrieve the arrow. It is a bipedal humanoid, a metre tall and with child-like proportions. It walks on short, stubby legs. Its face is nearly human apart from a porcine nose and a tusked mouth. Its hair is a long, blonde, ringleted mohican. It is nearly naked apart from a garment covering (what are presumably) its genitals. Slung over its back is a chunky backpack and a quiver for its arrows, which are made of some sort of carbon fibre. In its hand it holds a crossbow.

The creature pulls the arrow out of the corpse with its stubby hands, grunts disappointedly, and drags the deer's carcass back through the forest.

EXT. THE CREATURE'S SPACECRAFT - DAY

The creature arrives back at its spacecraft. The spacecraft is low, triangular in plan design, but slightly rounded and bulging towards the rear end, with two protruding engines. ANOTHER of the creature's kind is watching from an open hatch on the top of the spacecraft. It clutches a pair of binoculars.

The other makes a questioning, porcine squeal of a noise to the first creature.

The first creature responds with a disappointed squeal and drops the deer's carcass in front of the spacecraft.

The other emits more squeals and grunts in return, and gestures with his binoculars into the distance towards a series of caves notched into the side of a cliff wall, at the edge of the forest.

The first makes a satisfied grunt and starts making preparations to leave.

EXT. THE CAVES, EARLY EVENING

A group of primitive APES sit near the caves in a clearing at the edge of the forest. They graze on recently-gathered food and groom each other. TWO YOUNG MALES toss a small, tough fruit back and forth. The fruit has fallen from a nearby tree.

Suddenly an arrow pierces the chest of one of the grazing apes at the edge of the group. It falls down dead.

The creature emerges into the clearing, raises its crossbow above its head and squeals triumphantly.

The apes panic and flee into the caves, except for the two males who are oblivious to the attack. One male tosses the fruit. As the other leaps up to catch it another arrow pierces through the fruit and into his face. He falls down dead. The surviving MALE screeches in fear and dashes to the nearby tree. He begins climbing the tree as fast as he can.

At the entrance to one of the nearest caves a FEMALE ape looks on in concern. She holds a newborn baby in her arms.

The creature squeals again and moves towards the tree. It takes its time. It is enjoying toying with the apes. As it walks it touches a button on its backpack and slowly rises into the air.

The female watches this. She passes her baby to another ape and urgently clambers up the cliff face.

The male reaches the top of the tree. He looks around and realises that the creature is hovering in the air, level with him and only a handful of metres away.

The creature casually takes aim at the male with its crossbow and fires.

At the same time the female leaps from the nearby cliff-face and lands on the tree, placing herself in front of the male. The arrow hits her in the shoulder and she emits a screech of enraged pain.

The creature looks surprised and begins fumbling for another arrow.

The male touches the female's shoulder. He makes a surprised, appreciative noise. The female grunts nonchalantly and looks him in the eyes. They kiss.

As the creature fumbles to get another arrow into its crossbow the female pulls the arrow out of her own shoulder. She brandishes it as a spear, and she and the male launch themselves from the tree towards the creature.

There is a startled squeal.

The End