

Of the Sky, Of the Sea, and of the Stones

Part 6 – Chaotic Hunger

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Quil stared down at the hungry presence plaguing the colossal, orange furred troll. Its integument was as lustrous as the metal of the lodgium gate. Though, a dark fog surrounded its body in places, seemingly stuck to them. The troll, who probably identified itself as a lodgium door, was groaning in fear, agony, or both.

It was swaying back and forth, in a daze. For the dark fog was doing something. Though, as Quil inspected it more, she realized that this was no cloud of fog, but a tremendous amount of filaments of various thicknesses. These monochromatic gray filaments were reaching in from the inside of the lodgium gate, though nothing was entering it from the other side. The door was not even open.

Near her, on top of the gate, she noticed patches of bluish rust upon the metal surface. Quil remarked on how strange she found that, as lodgium was widely known to be virtually immune to oxidization. She poked and prodded at one of the blue rust spots briefly, but was shocked to find that they reacted to her harassment. When touched, each spot would change shape. Either becoming longer, thinner, wider, or any measure of transformation, though they stayed relatively the same size. They also gave off small puffs of violet smoke that burst into many tiny monochromatic gray filaments that dissipated into the wind almost instantly.

While making observations, she realized that she was possibly in danger. Academic curiosity often blinded her to threats, she had admitted to me on multiple occasions. She said that she thought then of getting the huge being's attention, but realized that it would likely not amount to much, considering how distracted they seemed to be. Instead, Quil resolved to try and assist the huge troll

She dug into her pack and pulled out a small knife. She prodded a blue spot of rust, forcing it to eject a cloud of smoke. As the small cloud puffed out of existence, and produced the filaments, Quil slashed with her knife. Her minute, yet sharp, steel blade cut through the wispy filaments with ease before they disappeared of their own accord, as before.

She looked over the edge at the troll being assailed by the greater filaments and pondered if they had the same properties as the smaller ones. She assumed the blue rust spots and greater filaments were connected, as they both displayed similar qualities, though she could not rule out that they could be unrelated.



Figure 6. An artistic impression of the entropic filaments.

But, she told me that she had to try. The troll was growing more and more frantic, groaning louder and louder. From her pack, she pulled out a package containing sharp, rigid leaves. These were leaves from the ghost blade plant, Quil told me. She explained that they grew in abundance on her home island of Gainsborough and that they were used as utensils for various crafts, but were versatile enough to warrant carrying a package of them at all times.

Quil then proceeded to tell me of how she used the leaves of the ghost blade plant as kunai and/or shuriken stand-ins while fully re-enacting the scene before myself and a crowd of other children listening to her tale. We were all quite excited to see her jumping about, throwing twigs as various individuals' light heartedly. But, in looking back upon it now, I realized she told this part of her story in this manner in order to obscure the abject horror of the situation she encountered upon the isle of Agalloch that day.

For when she threw the slicing leaves at the greater filaments harassing the troll, they were severed quickly and cleanly, but immediately reacted violently and

entropically. A few great strands being severed was enough to force all of them to release the orange troll, but instead of retreating back into the rift that it was undoubtedly coming through, it exploded.

Chaotically, it erupted with such a great deal of force that its individual filaments became missiles, which also disintegrated violently upon impacting any surface. Luckily, Quil was atop the frame of the door, which completely blocked the eruptions directness to her. Though, the surroundings were not so fortunate.

The stone of the canyon walls cracked and pieces fell away. The filaments and explosions eviscerated the troll. Its entire body was dissected in a manner not unlike what would occur if a block of cheese were pressed through a loom of razor sharp wires. After being eviscerated, the explosions pummeled the viscera into dust and scorched it to ash, leaving very near to no trace of the troll, save a few bloody stains among the rubble of the canyon.

The sides of the gate were equally destroyed, which left the top as a free-floating bar. Though, there was no opportunity for it to drop from the lack of support, as the chaotic explosion from beneath propelled it upwards. Upwards with great velocity, as well, Quil was sure to stress. It rocketed her up into the sky, the force pressing her body against the orange metal, until she was literally among the clouds.