

Grod's Glory

By Ned Sane

A Life Lesson

Grod leaned heavily against the cave wall. His shoulders were slumped forward. The man was exhausted. And frustrated.

Grod was really starting to hate all the nonsense. More specifically, he loathed the difficult job of hunting. All that sprinting and scurrying was causing him great hunger.

Even on the few occasions when he did manage to catch a small animal, the quantity of meat was seldom adequate to satisfy the howling bellies of his family.

Grod's forehead protruded like a granite shelf hanging precariously from the front of his skull. His eyebrows had joined together many years before. They were now a tangled mass of coarse, angry hairs, each attempting to reach into a different direction for its own share of independence.

There *had* to be a better way to make a living, Grod's tiny brain reasoned.

His mate, Zuma, soon entered the cave with Klippa, their son. The big-boned Zuma immediately recognized the frustrated look in Grod's eyes. She attempted to inspire him by jabbering violently in his face, thus expelling her own feelings of frustration.

She was angry with her mate. Why was Grod such a lousy provider? He had certainly fooled her in the early days of courtship. Sure, he was great in the dirt, and had sort of covered up his lack of hunter skills with some down and stinky

lovin'. However, those days were long past. Their eyebrows and fingernails were much longer now.

Zuma was staring at Grod. An insurgence of heat was passing up through her neck and into her head like tingling fingers under her skin.

Meanwhile, their son Klippa insisently bit her hand. It was his way of getting her attention. He was probably hungry, she thought. Zuma was hungry as well.

Just as Klippa bit through one of her fingernails, Zuma firmly shoved his head away from her hand. The surprised Klippa was sent stumbling across the cave. The boy tripped and fell directly into the cherry hot cave fire. His thick skull struck and rock near the edge of the fire ring and he was knocked unconscious.

Without noticing, Zuma continued verbally lashing Grod with insulting clicks and grunts. Grod merely stared at the cracked stone floor. Depressed. He too had not noticed Klippa's unfortunate tumble.

Zuma suddenly stopped in mid-click. Something was not right. Grod looked up, surprised. It was unlike his mate to stop her fury so suddenly.

The odor reached them both at the same time. Their eyes quickly met, puzzled, horrified.

A delicious aroma was welling up into their nostrils.

And then they saw it.

Later, Grod smacked his lips and grunted with satisfaction. Zuma tried to smile, but she just not sure how she should feel regarding the delicious meal they had just enjoyed. Then again, it sure felt good to not be hungry any more. And there was plenty of meat left to last several more days.

Grod, meanwhile, was busy trying to figure out how he could get Zuma to drop another small person from her inners. That surely would help them get through the upcoming winter. After this meat supply was gone, the hunger was sure to follow.

Several suns had passed and Grod was once again hungry. Zuma was out picking berries that afternoon, and although they could survive indefinitely on plant life, it just was not satisfying enough.

They needed meat.

Which meant that Grod would eventually have to hunt. But that particular day was not a good one to begin anew with the search for fresh meat. Grod simply did not have the energy in his soul to sprint and scurry all day. Besides, his fingernails were so long, which meant that his hands were not working well together as a team. Grod knew that he could never catch a small animal with such clumsy hands.

The lazy caveman was sitting with his back leaning against the cave wall. His mind began to drift. The thick skin of his eyelids slowly dropped down. The last thing on his mind was the memory of that day when Klippa had been biting on Zuma's hand. He dazed off for a few seconds, and then suddenly remembered that

the little brat had been chewing on her fingernails. She had bitten one of them off.

Grod's eyes sprang open. He looked down at his long dirty nails. He lifted one without thinking and jammed it into his mouth, biting hard.

Nothing happened.

He glanced over at Klippa's little skull sitting near the fire. Grod's tiny brain then had a thought. Maybe the spirits are in his teeth, he thought, his wrinkled face grimacing from the rare act of gray matter exercise.

Sure enough, Klippa's teeth were much sharper than Grod's. After several minutes of overworked gray matter exercise, combined with fleshy faced wrinkling, Grod discovered that he could pinch off his fingernails with the razor sharp teeth inside Klippa's little skull.

He grunted with satisfaction as the nine remaining nails fell one at a time to the stone floor of the cage. Each was pinched off nicely with the young, strong jaw of their only son's skull.

Grod's heart began beating quickly as he suddenly remembered what his father had one told him long ago:

"Grunt click grunt, Grod. Click click ungh grunt gunk."

The memory always gave him goose bumps.

Later that day, Zuma returned with a basket full of bush berries. Zooda, the mate of Borg, accompanied Zuma. Grod immediately showed them his new device. They naturally seemed shocked, but were secretly amazed.

Soon, Grod had all their fingernails trimmed nice and neat.

The next day, Borg appeared in the cave. Grod greeted his friend and promptly trimmed his long, curly fingernails down to the finger. Borg then showed his appreciation for the gesture by dropping off a small animal for their dinner.

The news of the miraculous new tool soon spread throughout all caves in the mountainous region.

Grod removed fingernails for Boga, Goboo, and their teenage son, Bong. For this work he received a basket full of small animals. Next came the entire Doddoga Clan, whom traveled many days for the service. They promptly paid Grod with an entire deer. Then came the Clapper Clan, and so on, and so forth.

Grod never had to hunt again.

So next time you pull out those meaningless little clippers to do the necessary task, maybe there should be some gratitude for the hungerous passions that spawned the birth of such an important device.

Moral: Just because there are lazy slobs, doesn't mean there aren't easy ways to make a living.