

Scout Brooks vs. The Blobberous

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Scout Brooks vs. The Blobberous  
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For Marshall:

Between your infectious smile, your genuinely happy personality and the pure joy and love you have brought to your mother and I, we couldn't be more blessed to have a son like you. We love you so much, Marshall!

-Mom and Dad



## PROLOGUE

Here We Go Again...

Ya'll know me! I'm Scout Brooks, man! You know, the kid who accidentally stumbled into the EIA – a secret government organization focused on neutralizing alien threats from distant worlds, and ran by my high school astronomy teacher, Professor Ed Nog?

Well, with the help of someone very close to me, I've been able to tell you my story – The Scout Brooks Story – school year by school year, mission by mission.

You've read about my encounters with the Frooginites, and I've told you about Lord Radar the Great and his Slimeborg army. Well, now it's time to tell you about The Blobberous. It proved to be my most difficult mission, and up until that point, produced the most casualties.

But let me start with spring break of my sophomore year, cause that's when the crap started to hit the fan...

Spring Break, Sophomore Year...

# CHAPTER ONE

## Turn on The Slap!

### I.

I could feel the sweat dripping from the back of my neck and roving down my back at lightening speeds until it hit Crack City. The sweat traveled through the rugged butt crack territory and made its final resting place in the soft cotton of my boxers. My nerves were on fire; the gaseous bubbles in my stomach were singing a tune of fear and grossness. I had set out to pursue something great – something grand.

I'd mastered space travel, never flinched more than once when coming face to face with evil robots or aliens, put up living with my brother Mark – but this was the one thing that was making me more nervous than anything.

I adjusted the shift in my car to reverse, looked over my shoulder and out the back window and saw the coast was all clear. I was good to go. I adjusted the shift once more and then stepped on the gas, launching my car forward and into a row of orange traffic cones. I swung back around and looked forward and I continued to accelerate.

“What the crap are ya doin’, Scout!?” my driving instructor shouted at me from the passenger seat. He dropped his clipboard and braced himself on the dash of my car. “Slow down!”

“The brakes?” I nervously asked, swapping my foot from gas to brake and flattening the pedal against the floor. The car came to a sudden and abrupt stop and launched the instructor out of his seatbelt and sent him crashing through the front windshield.

He rolled on the pavement through all the broken glass and hopped right back up to his feet in one swift motion. I tried to catch my breath but I was having a hard time doing so. This was the third time this *exact* same thing had happened.

The instructor limped over to the drivers’ side of my car. “Well,” he said, “you’re getting better. Let’s call it quits for the day. *I’ll* drive you home.”

I unlocked the car door and stepped out.

“Scout!” the instructor yelled while reaching for the car. I turned around and noticed I forgot to put the darn thing in park! The car began to roll forward as the instructor leapt on top of the hood. He stood up and rode the car like a surfboard until it slowly went head-on into a tree.

The impact sent the instructor flying off the hood of the car and into a giant thorn bush. I closed my eyes tight and hoped this day would come to an end fast.

My instructor, Mr. Pealoft, drove me home after we swabbed up his bloody cuts and scrapes from the thorn bush and multiple car crashes. He dropped me off in front of my house and got out of my car. He handed me the keys and said “Don’t you dare drive that thing without me. Got it?”

“Got it,” I complied. Mr. Pealoft walked across the street and got into his own car and took off. I watched him drive down Goober Lane and turn the corner. He’d be back tomorrow for another lesson.

Driving was fun as all heck but I seemed to be having a more difficult time than my friends were. My good buddy, Chuck Taylor, was passing his in-cars with flying colors. My other friend, the now robotic Philclops, was doing good as well. The only thing I had going for me? I had my *own* car already!

My Uncle Jones bought it for me over the winter. He told me in private, “Every space hero needs a sweet, slick pair of wheels!” So he bought me a gray, 1988 Dodge Premise. I’d never heard of that kind of car before, but I guess it existed for about a week back in the late 1980s. It was considered a rare classic and I had one of only four functioning ones left in the world!

It was fully decked out with torn leather seats, sticky cup holders and a smell in the trunk that I couldn’t really find an origin for. I originally had some Hawaiian leis hanging up there

on the rearview mirror until captain of the varsity football team, Jeffrey Shuster, explained to me with a punch to the gut and a kick to my left shin that only girls did that. I wouldn't make that mistake again. So instead, I hooked my car up with a sweet clean linen air freshener. I wanted my Premise to smell like I just freshly extracted it from the laundry.

It was the middle of spring break and everything was going my way. After my cocky attitude created a Philclops, I decided to turn my life around and get my head back on right.

I felt so grown up. I had my own car, which I'd hopefully be able to drive all by myself by summer time. My mom got me a smart phone for Christmas, and I pumped it full of free candy smashing games, my favorite band, Iodine Eyes' entire 25 CD library, and of course downloaded *Frog Nog* – Professor Nog's app that he created specifically for members of the EIA. He was learning modern technology, so he'd update the app daily with news, information on our weapons and ships, etc.

I also got a part-time job to bring in some moola! After Jakon was out of the picture, a new guy bought out his comic book store and took it over. His name was Palmer Leafon – but we all just called him Palm. He was in his thirties, had shaggy brown hair with blonde highlights, wore sunglasses even when he was inside, and changed the name of the store to Palmer's Calmics.

He hired Chuck and I at the store after getting annoyed that we were in there so much. I started taking a shine to comics

myself after Chuck introduced me to *The Exo-Skeletons*, a comic series about a group of skeleton warriors from Medieval times. It was sweet.

It was getting close to four in the afternoon when I arrived at work. I walked though the front door and noticed that business was booming! Three middle school kids stood in the back looking at the new releases. I'd never seen this many people in there at once before. We were counting on word of mouth to bring people in, because I was certain that people wouldn't know what "Calemics" were.

Palm Leafon came walking out from the back room after hearing the front door chime when I walked in. He had his sunglasses on – a pair of white Ray bans – and was dressed in a pair of jeans and an unbuttoned mechanics shirt with 'Palm' written on the nametag. He always tried to appear as trendy as he could.

"Oh, Scout, it's just you," Palm said, not that excited to see me. "How'd your in-cars go this morning?"

"Eh, they've been better."

"Really?"

I thought about it. "Well, no. I guess they haven't been better. I'm terrible, dude."

"Well, not all of us were meant to drive, Scout. Some of us were just born backseat drivers. Like my Grams." Palm picked

up his coffee mug from the counter and took a sip. “Nothing worse than cold coffee, am I right?”

“I don’t know. I’ve never had it.”

“You’ve never had a hot cup of Joe?” Palm asked, stunned.

“No, man.”

“Well, today’s your day, brother. You’ll like the way I make it.”

In the back room, I watched as Palm brewed up a fresh pot of French Roast and poured me a cup. He added cream, a dash of sugar, some more sugar, and one final dash of sugar. He handed me the cup. “It’s hot, bro. Be careful.”

I leaned in and sniffed the drink. Hm, smelled pretty good. I took a small fragile sip and about a million fireworks exploded in my taste buds. This stuff was good!

Palm saw the smile on my face and he smiled back and gave me a high five. “Right on, brother.” He then motioned that I got a little above my lip.

I wiped the little bit off of my lips, scraping the rough stubble that was slowly starting to form. Philclops was able to grow his mustache back after it was singed off back in the winter, and I was now well on my way. My stash was coming in slowly but surely. It was a very light brown color, but it was definitely there. It made me so proud.

“Excuse me?” one of the middle school kids called out from over the counter. It was time to get to work. I carried my coffee out into the store to help the kid.

## II.

“So I went out to help the kid and ended up spilling my whole cup of coffee on him! It was classic!” I said as I lay in bed, talking to Chuck on my cell phone.

“That’s classic, bro. What happened next?” Chuck said on the other line.

“I refilled my cup. I must have drank about four cups of coffee tonight.”

“It’s that good?”

“You need to try it. Have Palm brew you some tomorrow at work.”

“Cool, cool, will do.”

My phone buzzed and I pulled it away from my ear and looked at it. Mark was calling through. I programmed his incoming picture into my phone as his face photoshopped on a badger’s body.

“Chuck, Mark’s calling. I’ll hit you up tomorrow.”

“Sweet man, good luck with your in-cars in the morning!”

“Thanks, bro!” I swapped over to Mark’s call. “Hello?”

“Scout, thank God you answered!” Mark cried out in excitement. “Turn on The Slap, dude!”

“The radio station?” I questioned, reaching for my iPod.

“Yeah, just listen for the next five minutes and then I’ll call you back!”

“Okay. How’s everything going up there in Chickensaw?” I asked. I hadn’t heard from Mark in a couple weeks. He moved up to Chickensaw, about an hour north of King’s Town, and roomed with his agent, Radical Ricky Rosa.

“I’m living the dream, Scout-ness! Now listen! I’ll call you back.”

Mark hung up first, and I followed. I popped my ear buds in and turned on the FM radio on my iPod to 106.7. The radio DJ – generic in every possible way – was giving the weather report and then drove right back into the tunes.

“You’re listening to 106.7, The Slap! And now here’s local artist, Mark Badger, with his debut, ‘I Need Ya (To Live)’!” the DJ said very nasally and theatrical.

What followed started as a single acoustic guitar strumming a very delicate and soft riff. Mark’s vocals kicked in very lightly as he sung about needing some girl. The strumming picked up speed and finally the song introduced some drums. I listened carefully to Mark’s song and was very surprised as to how good

it was. It definitely had potential, and when Mark's singing picked up for the upbeat, drum-blasting chorus, I knew Mark had finally found his niche in the music world.

Three minutes later, the song ended and the goofy radio DJ came back on the air. "You were just slapped by local indie music legend, Mark Badger and his heartbreaker of a debut, 'I Need Ya (To Live)'! His E.P. is out now, streaming all over the place for free online and in insanely awesome tie-died packages at some of your local estabs!"

My cell phone buzzed again with another incoming call from Mark. I was proud of him.

### III.

Morning came and I brewed a fresh pot of coffee before Mr. Pealoft came to pick me up for my in-car driving lesson. I topped off a travel mug that I found in one of our kitchen cabinets and added all the cream and sugar that Palm had showed me. I sipped the coffee as I stood on our front porch waiting for him.

Mr. Pealoft was there minutes later and within no time, I was driving us through King's Town – my coffee safely snuggled away in the cup holder.

"Okay, Scout," Mr. Pealoft began, "today we're going to work on how to put the car in park when we're not in it. And if there's

time after that, we'll maneuver through some cones or something."

"Cool," I said, reaching for my morning cup of Joe. I picked it up and noticed that I'd forgot to tighten the lid. I set the travel mug between my legs and with my free hand, began to twist it.

"Scout, stop being distracted!" Mr. Pealoft shouted, startling me. We hit a pothole in the middle of the road and the mug's lid popped off, sending steaming hot coffee splashing everywhere. I screamed as the coffee burned my cargo shorts.

"Christ, Scout!" Mr. Pealoft yelled as he dropped his clipboard and reached both hands for the steering wheel. Right then, my phone started ringing in my pocket. I looked down as we hit another pothole and more hot coffee splashed into Mr. Pealoft's eyes. "My eyes!"

He grabbed his face and sat back in his seat screaming in pain. I reached into my pocket to get my phone and –

**SCREEEECHHH!**

My Premise scrapped up against a parked car on the side of the street and then - THUD!

We came to a complete stop, head-on with a parked bulldozer. Mr. Pealoft scrubbed the coffee out of his eyes and caught his breath. I put the car in park, and nervously smiled. "Like that?"

I spent the afternoon in my bedroom and my car spent it at the shop. I had to call my mom at work to come and get me. We dropped the car off at Rusty's Auto Repair and then she drove me home before going back to work. I finally had a chance to look at my phone to see who was calling me earlier, and it was Professor Nog.

I called him back and he answered, "Scout? I tried calling earlier."

"I know. I was busy. What's up?"

"Dr. Hix Blossom will be here first thing in the morning for the annual audit. What are the chances you, Chuck and the Philclops can come here for the night and help us prepare?"

"I'm sure that'll be fine. I'll just tell my mom I'm spending the night at Chuck's."

"Alright. Just get here when you can. I'll call Chuck and Philclops to confirm. See ya soon, brotha."

I hung up with Nog. Originally I was going to invite my girlfriend, Mandy Lee, over to watch a movie – under mom's supervision of course – but the audit was a big deal. I called Mandy to see if she'd understand.

"Hey Mandy, how are you?" I asked when she answered.

"I'm good. I was just about to call you," she said.

"Is everything okay?"

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