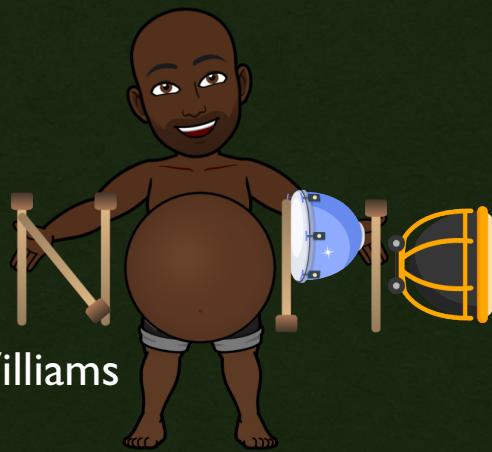




Welcome to



by Adrien Williams



**A BONUS STORY FROM  
ADVENTURES IN THE LSPECTRONIVERSE**



# Welcome to Timpanopia

An LSPECTROniverse Story

Adrien Williams

© Adrien Williams (aka LSPECTRONIZTAR)

This book is just for kicks, you know? Like, if someone wants to use it for making money or whatever, that's cool with me. I'm not gonna trip about it. I'm not a full-time storywriter. Just wrote this thing for fun while I didn't have my PC, so it's whatever. Peace out.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, and places are either a product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or events is purely coincidental (well, the appearances of the characters aren't entirely coincidental but whatever).

I used ChatGPT to generate 50% of this book. I'm sorry, I used to be a great storywriter, but personal issues have currently deprived me of any motivation and I really wanted to get this finished. It's not illegal or anything, and besides, this entire book is basically experimental. Anyway, please visit their website:  
<https://chat.openai.com/>

This book was made using Apple Pages.

The cover picture was made with random images from the internet. I just wanted to experiment more with composition.

The majority of the text in this book was set in 11 pt Publico Text.

The headings were set in Roboto.

Visit the LSPECTROniverse's official website to see awesome stuff and play awesome games that aren't as random as this book:

<https://lspectroniztar.github.io/>

(Yeah, I'm a game-maker. You really think I write stories as a full-time job? I was bored.)

#### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- This book is purely experimental as I just said.
- None of the websites displayed in the story are real.

*Dedicated to all the good dads in my family, especially our beloved and deceased cousin Patrick, whose laughter and love for life continue to inspire me every day. Your spirit lives on in the rhythm of these pages.*



# Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Introduction: My Mind Is Weird.....              | vii |
| + Prologue .....                                 | 1   |
| <b>1</b> Faizon's Big Inventions .....           | 7   |
| <b>2</b> The Age Accelerator .....               | 24  |
| <b>3</b> Elijah's Story .....                    | 41  |
| <b>4</b> The Funeral.....                        | 57  |
| <b>5</b> The Obese Orchestra .....               | 74  |
| <b>6</b> Rumbling Rehearsals.....                | 90  |
| <b>7</b> The Concert.....                        | 104 |
| <b>8</b> In Search of Permission .....           | 126 |
| <b>9</b> Navigating the Bureaucracy .....        | 136 |
| <b>10</b> Enigma Evergreen .....                 | 153 |
| <b>11</b> Belly Bombers .....                    | 169 |
| <b>12</b> Preparing for the Trip.....            | 183 |
| <b>13</b> Cooperative Country Collaboration..... | 198 |
| <b>14</b> The Search .....                       | 218 |
| <b>15</b> The Insider's Revelation.....          | 233 |
| <b>16</b> The Great Rescue Mission .....         | 250 |
| <b>17</b> Belly Talk.....                        | 267 |
| <b>18</b> The Cavern .....                       | 278 |
| <b>19</b> The Extra Variants.....                | 288 |
| <b>20</b> The Silence King .....                 | 317 |
| <b>21</b> Resolutions .....                      | 337 |
| <b>B</b> Jeremiah's Archive.....                 | 351 |
| + Epilogue .....                                 | 361 |
| About the Author.....                            | 363 |



# Introduction: My Mind Is Weird

This novel we read in eighth grade had an introduction, so I decided to add my own introduction so you guys could know what inspired me to share this story. I don't know how to talk about what I'm about to talk about without sounding weird or cringe, but I'll try anyway. Let the suffering begin....

My mother always told me that when you start something, you finish it. According to her, this applied to everything—from binge-watching a K-drama series on Netflix, to starting a new game on your PC or gaming console, to developing a new game out of pure boredom (like *Right Side City 2*, which I doubt I'll ever finish now, as all of the Keynote presentations I made for drawing the assets are all gone due to a bullying incident. Thanks a lot, Joshua Cross). Since she was probably going to hold me to this standard, I figured I might as well finish an idea I've had for a long time now—one I haven't told anyone about, otherwise they'd be all over me about it and call me weird. Well, finishing that idea turned out to be a sort of mistake (for me, at least).

Ever since I was approximately 8 or 9 years old, I've had this stupid recurring fantasy involving two individuals: large, bald-headed Black men, both heavily muscled with substantial beards and prominent, round bellies. They would stand shirtless, back-to-back, as if one was a reflection of the other, in front of a green screen. A timpani drum roll (that *did* kinda fit the two men well) would play in the background, causing their bellies to grow incrementally bigger with each hit of the drum, while they slowly turned their heads simultaneously look at the camera. The sight of their synchronized movements and the rhythmic expansion of their bellies was oddly captivating. Like I said, it was weird.

It got even weirder when I started having these fantasies in public (only in my mind, mind you). Whenever I saw a random Black man or boy in public with a big belly, I would immediately start imagining the same scenario with that person as both of the two men. (On the last day of our vacation to Barbados, I actually saw two Black men, both with large round bellies, communicating with each other—imagine how that looked to me!) It was as if

## INTRODUCTION

my brain automatically superimposed this vision onto anyone who fit the description. To this day, I still don't fully understand why my mind does this. Maybe it's because of my autism and ADHD or something else; ChatGPT suggested it could be related to neurodiversity or sensory stimulation. Regardless, these fantasies have stuck with me, surfacing unexpectedly and creating a bizarre yet persistent mental image that I haven't been able to shake.

I figured that if I was going to keep having these (weirdly satisfying) fantasies, I might as well turn them into something digital. So it all started one afternoon, after I returned home from a particularly good day at my summer STEM camp. That day, I had taken over the entire program with my awesome coding skills, earning a lot of admiration and high-fives from the other kids. Afterward, I went to my mother's job. While she worked, I played on the PC at an empty desk, since I didn't have my own PC at the time, and sometimes helped her stack papers.

Once home, I grabbed my iPad and created a new Canva account using one of my alternate Google accounts, which I had barely used before. With a new design ready to go, I began to shape my odd fantasy into a visual form. I found and downloaded a soundless stock video of a man playing a roll on a timpani drum for about eleven seconds. Using my video editing skills, I looped the video back and forth, making it seem like the drum roll lasted much longer, finally stretching it to nearly 4 minutes.

Next, I downloaded an audio track containing a 30-second timpani drum roll and edited that to match the extended video length. Once both audio and video were perfectly synced, I merged them and saved the finished product to my Canva design. For the rest of that afternoon and the next day, having just completed a big Scratch project, I had little else to do. I spent most of my time watching my "masterpiece" play before me, cringing slightly at its strangeness. Sometimes, I would do a split screen and let the video play on one side while I looked at images of shirtless men with enormous bellies. Like I said, it was weird.

(I managed to shake off that weirdness the following day when I attended my cousin and his wife's newborn son's 1-year-old birthday party. It was a joyous occasion, and I immersed myself fully in the celebrations, temporarily forgetting about my bizarre creation.)

## MY MIND IS WEIRD

The next time I opened that cursed design wasn't until exactly five months later. I had just come home from the second-to-last day of school before Christmas break; I was in seventh grade at the time and deeply nostalgic for 2022. I had finished working on *Rhythm Prism 3*, the first game I had actually completed in five months, and was now experimenting with orchestral percussion and timpani in a new GarageBand project called *X-Mas the Spot*—an obvious pun on *X Marks the Spot*. It was a pirate-themed remix of *Carol of the Bells*, an idea that had been brewing in my mind for a while.

Incorporating a long timpani drum roll into the project reignited my interest in my previous creation. Taking what I knew was a stupid risk, I plunged back into that cursed design. I spent that night and the next day engrossed in it, tweaking and perfecting it. The same obsession continued on January 7-8, 2023, the day before my cousin died and everything changed.

From then on, I would *always* be immersed in that design; it was my only way of escaping this new reality that negligent hospital plunged us into. Looking back, those moments were a mix of creativity and escapism, a peculiar blend of my passions and my mind's odd fascinations.

Anyway, on this one peculiar night—in which I'd waken up early that morning to watch my younger brother Julien (who was *way* better at console games than even *I* am) beat the levels leading up to the final boss fight in *Splatoon 2: Octo Expansion*—I found myself idly searching for the actor who played the fat Black manager in the movie *Elf* on my iPad. After a few moments of browsing, I discovered it was Faizon Love. Being the weirdo that I unfortunately was, I then proceeded to search up "faizon love big belly" images and was intrigued to find one that'll never leave my mind.

It was a striking image of a large man, his deep-brown skin glistening under the light. His humongous belly, a true beer belly, jutted out prominently, almost defying gravity. It was so massive that it overshadowed the rest of his muscular physique, including his heavily muscled arms and broad shoulders. The man stood shirtless, his bald head and huge beard adding to the imposing appearance. The most captivating part was his hand resting on his belly, highlighting its sheer size and roundness. This image was both fascinating and unforgettable, embedding itself deeply in my memory.

## INTRODUCTION

Anyway, I spent the next four-and-a-half months looking at this intriguing image while playing various timpani drum roll audio tracks on a split screen. I might have taken things a bit too far when, on the fourth-to-last day of my STEM program that year (which I had missed half of because of our nearly disastrous trip to Disney World), I woke up at 4 AM to sneak on my iPad and started a new design. Long story short, I ended up with a design where that same image of Faizon Love was enlarged and edited to appear as if he was a giant, and a smaller man (normal-sized) was playing a 4-minute long, loud timpani drum roll on his big brown belly. The design made it look like his belly was so large it could be played like an actual timpani drum, with each beat resonating deeply, almost as if his belly itself was producing the sound. The sight of the massive, rounded belly being used as a drum was both mesmerizing and surreal, adding an odd, almost comical element to the whole scene.

Then, in October, when I finally got my hands on ChatGPT, I decided to have some fun. I instructed it to generate a story about a Black man named Faizon (who was meant to resemble the image of Faizon Love from my design) playing a timpani drum roll on another big, fat man's stomach to make it grow as large as Faizon's. Initially, I didn't feel like finishing the story, but it was progressing so well that I decided to see it through to the end.

The more I wrote, the more invested I became in this quirky narrative. By the time I finished, I thought, why not share something I've worked so hard on? So, I'm sharing this with y'all as a bonus entry in my *Adventures in the LSPECTROniverse* book series (which was made for a random project I'm working on: LSPECTR-OS. It's an experimental gaming platform I created using a certain Scratch mod, and it's basically like your average PlayStation 4, except it's for PCs), hoping that you guys might find the same odd charm in it that I did.

This story was crafted to be stimulatingly humorous, blending the absurdity of the situation with themes of happy family dynamics that I often enjoyed. However, I want to make it absolutely clear that this story is not meant to body-shame anyone, nor am I fatphobic. In fact, some of my closest friends have been on the chubbier side, and I cherish those friendships dearly. This narrative was purely a creative exercise meant to explore an unusual and humorous scenario, not to poke fun at anyone's appearance.

## MY MIND IS WEIRD

Throughout the tale, I've meticulously woven details about the characters' appearances, especially focusing on the often exaggerated size of their bellies. For example, I mention specific measurements like "1.25 feet in diameter" (though these might not be 100% accurate, depending on how you visualize it). These details help create a vivid and whimsical image for the reader, adding to the humor (and also making it easier for me to picture the characters if I decide to turn this into an animation or video game later). I want to make it clear that this whole thing is all in good fun and not intended to be offensive or suggest anything inappropriate. Yes, I'm looking at you, @masteroogwgay (that was his actual YouTube handle). I wanted to clarify this so there's no misunderstanding. My folks are quite adept at jumping to conclusions!

Additionally, the story includes frequent mentions of the characters' race to, again, provide a sense of imagery (and, again, to remind myself what they look like in case I decide to make it into a game), not to be racial. I have tried to make it as less racial as possible, avoiding any racial stereotypes (I'm Black too, you know) I just want to warn you so you guys don't get the wrong idea.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy this story as much as I cringed while writing it. Crafting this narrative was surprisingly enjoyable, though undeniably quirky. So, without further ado, indulge in this delightfully strange tale.



# Prologue

In a universe far removed from our own, nestled within the vast expanse of the LSPECTROniverse, there existed a planet known as Beatweaver Haven. Upon this serene world, ensconced within the gentle embrace of cosmic tranquility, lay a sprawling landmass known to its inhabitants as Timpanopia. Here, beneath the expansive skies that stretched endlessly above, peace reigned supreme, enveloping the land in a cloak of serenity and harmony.

In this idyllic realm, the people of Timpanopia thrived amidst the verdant landscapes and shimmering waters that dotted the countryside. And at the heart of their society lay a cherished tradition, a unique facet of their culture that set them apart from all others: the celebration of the majestic bellies that adorned the forms of their men.

Throughout the annals of history, the men of Timpanopia had cultivated a proud tradition of embracing their ample girth, viewing their large bellies not as a burden, but as a source of pride and strength. These corpulent figures, with their robust physiques and jovial demeanors, were revered as pillars of the community, their bellies serving as symbols of prosperity and vitality.

In every corner of Timpanopia, from the bustling cities to the tranquil villages nestled amidst the rolling hills, the resonance of belly drumming filled the air, a rhythmic symphony that echoed the heartbeat of the land itself. With each resounding *thud* of their bellies, the men of Timpanopia forged bonds of camaraderie and kinship, their rhythmic beats weaving a tapestry of unity and togetherness.

From dawn till dusk, the men of Timpanopia reveled in the joyous art of belly drumming, their melodic rhythms echoing across the countryside like the gentle caress of a summer breeze. And as the sun dipped below the horizon, casting its golden hues across the land, the people of Timpanopia gathered together in celebration, their bellies resounding with the joyous cadence of their shared heritage.

## PROLOGUE

In this land of plenty, where peace reigned supreme and harmony prevailed, the people of Timpanopia lived in blissful ignorance of the darkness that lurked beyond the horizon. For in their hearts, they knew only of the boundless joy and camaraderie that filled their days, their spirits uplifted by the timeless rhythm of their beloved belly drums.

And so, as the sun set on another day in the land of Timpanopia, where the weight and rhythm of bellies held a unique significance in a land associated solely with most pit percussion instruments, its people slept soundly, their dreams filled with visions of prosperity and unity.



On this unsuspecting night of April 24, 2023, an empty warehouse echoed with silence, the air thick and still. A collection of percussion instruments—timpani drums, concert bass drums, large taiko drums, and big gongs—were scattered across the vast space, waiting for something to stir their dormant existence.

A sudden, soft rumbling sound like a timpani drum roll filled the air, resonating within the desolate walls of the warehouse. Ten seconds later, a massive bass drum-like sound accompanied the roll, heralding the entrance of a large Black man. This giant man, who was so big and wide that his back stretched to at least 1.5 feet, went by the name of Faizon.

He moved deliberately into the warehouse without a shirt, unapologetically displaying his massive arm muscles (which had tattoos that stood out against his dark skin) and substantial pectorals. But perhaps his most distinguishing feature was his extremely enormous stomach, measuring at a staggering diameter of about 1.5 feet and a circumference of about 5 feet.

The most immediate comparison for this large, round belly was a timpani drum, the smooth, curved surface resembling the rounded body of the instrument, and the soft, rich skin resembling the color of a timpani drum. Just as a timpani drum produced deep, resonant sounds when struck, the belly symbolically represented a source of deep, resonant presence. Faizon could even use it to make timpani sounds, like he was doing now. The belly, with its

## PROLOGUE

smooth, taut skin reminiscent of a ripe brown apple's skin, swelled outward like a robust fruit waiting to be plucked, seamlessly melding into his body and curving outward like a perfect circle attached to his frame yet distinct in its prominence, hovering with a sense of weightless buoyancy.

Spherical in shape, the belly protruded significantly and shook as he walked, each ponderous step producing a slightly louder rumbling bass drum hit, blending with the continuous timpani drum roll emanating from his large hands softly shaking his large, deep-brown timpani belly. The rhythm of his gait echoed through the room, a subtle variation in volume adding depth and complexity to the steady beat, much like the ebb and flow of a gentle tide against the shore, each shake producing a timpani drum beat that was either slightly louder or softer than the last.

Faizon's contemplative expression remained unchanged as he muttered about his "big brown belly," every four steps. The rhythmic procession continued for two full minutes until Faizon reached a timpani drum in the corner, his bald head gleaming under the fluorescent lights of the warehouse, and his belly drum roll intensified. "Big brown belly," he repeated, continuing to shake his belly softly with his large hands, the roll growing louder and louder.

As Faizon stood by the timpani drum, the loud roll persisted. Then, at the same slow pace, another big man entered—Faizon's cousin, Gilbert. He had light skin and dark, neat-styled hair. He had a goatee, framing his chin and mouth, adding a touch of ruggedness to his appearance. Gilbert was also shirtless, emphasizing the size and roundness of his belly, which seemed to be his most noticeable feature. His large hanging belly, not as massive as Faizon's but still impressive, measured at a 0.75-foot diameter and produced a slightly louder bass drum-like hit with each step. The warehouse, now occupied by both men, rumbled with the symphony of their bellies.

When Gilbert reached Faizon after two more minutes, the continuous roll on Faizon's belly ended in a timpani drum sound that echoed through the empty space. Gilbert greeted Faizon, who responded by stating that he had already prepared his big brown belly for the intimidation phase.

Without hesitation, Gilbert removed his shirt, deciding to match Faizon's intimidating display. "You ready for this, Faizon?" Gilbert asked, his voice filled with anticipation.

## PROLOGUE

Faizon nodded, reaching over to poke Gilbert's belly. "Let's make this belly bigger," Faizon muttered, adjusting the tuning with his skilled hands. Picking up mallets from the drum behind him, Faizon initiated the intimidation phase. "Big round belly," he uttered, playing a loud continuous roll on Gilbert's big round belly.

As the drum roll continued, Gilbert's belly wobbled with each strike, gradually growing bigger. The warehouse resonated with the weight of the rumbling timpani drum roll on Gilbert's big round belly. Faizon kept rolling loudly, maintaining the intimidating effect for a full five minutes. Gilbert's belly, now as big as Faizon's, protruded prominently from his midsection, extending forward and slightly downward, creating a substantial bulge that contrasted with the rest of his body. The overall appearance conveyed a sense of mass and volume, suggesting that it carried a significant amount of weight.

As the very loud big belly drum roll continued on Gilbert's now matching-in-size belly, Faizon and Gilbert engaged in a long, quoted conversation about their unique abilities and the peculiar nature of their bellies.

Faizon, his arms moving rhythmically as he played the roll, initiated the discussion. "You see, Gilbert, handling the weight of these rumbling timpani drum rolls is an art. It builds character, the same way it builds our bellies."

Gilbert, still absorbing the vibrations, responded with a grin, "Character, huh? Well, I reckon our bellies got plenty of that!"

Faizon chuckled, "Indeed, my friend. It's a testament to our strength and endurance. These big round bellies of ours can take quite a beating."

Gilbert nodded, "But how do you keep those arms of yours so strong, Faizon? I mean, playing these rolls for so long must be quite the workout for your arms."

Faizon explained, "Ah, it's all about practice. I make sure to play regularly, keeping my arms in shape. Just like the bellies, the strength builds up over time."

Gilbert, now fully engrossed in the conversation, queried, "And how about making your big brown belly so enormous? How do you manage that?"

Faizon grinned, "Simple, my friend. I constantly play the timpani drum roll on my big brown belly, just like I'm doing to yours right now. It's a workout for

## PROLOGUE

the belly, you know, except the belly gets big instead of small. But I *can* make it smaller too, just by playing decrescendos."

Gilbert, his belly responding to the continuous roll, laughed, "So, it's like a musical workout for the big brown belly, except the belly grows and shrinks as you please? That's something, Faizon."

Faizon nodded, "Exactly. It's all about control. The bellies grow and shrink as I please, just like the music. It's an art, my friend, and we are the masters of our big round bellies."

As the conversation unfolded, the big belly drum roll persisted, creating a symphony of sound and camaraderie in the dimly lit warehouse. Faizon and Gilbert, bonded by their unique talents, continued the rhythmic display, their bellies vibrating in harmony with the rolls that echoed through the empty space.

As the big belly drum roll on Gilbert's belly came to a halt, the aftermath was palpable. Gilbert's belly wobbled heavily, carrying the weight of the rumbling timpani drum roll, creating an echo effect that reverberated through the warehouse. When the echo finally subsided, Gilbert, patting his belly twice, let out a loud round timpani sound with each pat.

"Man, Faizon, I can feel those pounds you added with that roll. I can still feel the rumble echoing in my big gut," Gilbert remarked, his eyes twinkling with satisfaction.

Proudly, he continued, "And I must say, I liked that rumbling roll on your big brown belly when you entered. It set the perfect tone for your intimidating frame."

Faizon, ever the showman, merely smirked. "That's nothing," he declared, before playing a loud rumbling roll on his own belly. As the roll persisted, his belly gradually grew even bigger. After a few seconds, he spoke confidently, "Watch as my belly grows even bigger to match the feeling of my intimidating frame."

With heavy footsteps, Faizon began to walk around, creating a rhythm that resonated through the warehouse. After 45 seconds, he turned to face Gilbert, and the roll intensified, his belly growing even bigger as he moved closer. Fifteen seconds later, the roll quieted and stopped, leaving Faizon's heaving belly in its wake.

## PROLOGUE

Playfully, Gilbert poked Faizon's belly button, causing the big brown belly to wobble more heavily. "That roll of yours shook the ground," Gilbert exclaimed, mischief in his eyes.

Faizon chuckled and jokingly warned, "Careful, you might set off a rolling thunderstorm or something. My belly button is where some of the sounds come from." He left the ending vague, letting the imagination fill in the blanks.

Gilbert grinned mischievously, "Well, why not?" He kept his finger on Faizon's belly button, repeatedly prodding it to create another roll, a combination of a timpani drum and a bass drum. Faizon laughed heartily at the impromptu percussion.

As Gilbert stopped the roll, Faizon, thinking about timpani drums and bass drums, suggested, "Speaking of drums, I should practice on actual ones. Why not?" He resumed the same rumbling roll on his belly, marching towards a bass drum.

Stopping the roll, Faizon handed the timpani mallets to Gilbert and grabbed the bass drum ones. He played rolls and complex rhythms on the bass drum, while Gilbert added atmosphere to the polyrhythm by playing a soft roll on his belly that gradually grew louder.

After five minutes of rhythmic exploration, Gilbert suggested, "We should really get some rest for tomorrow. We need to reproduce the intimidating effect next time." He played a decrescendo on his belly, and Faizon used the bass drum mallets to perform a decrescendo on his own belly. They both kept rolling softly for another minute before returning the mallets.

Gilbert playfully poked Faizon's belly again, muttering, "Rolling thunderstorm," and with a chuckle, they bid each other goodnight, leaving the warehouse in silence once again.

# 1

## Faizon's Big Inventions

The next day, Faizon lay asleep in his bedroom, his big brown belly at its normal size—still big, round, and prominent, but not in its enormous, intimidating form. On his shirt, there was a picture of Faizon facing the front, proudly showcasing his intimidating belly in its full, impressive size.

His bedroom, a sanctuary of rhythm and percussion, featured two timpani drums on either side of a large concert bass drum as well as various pictures adorning the walls. Among them was a realistic side-view drawing of Faizon, shirtless, standing directly behind a timpani drum, with his extremely enormous big brown belly resting on it in its intimidating size, timpani mallets resting on the top of his belly.

As Faizon woke up, he removed his shirt and retrieved a pair of timpani mallets from one of the timpani drums. Looking down at his enormous belly with an unchanged expression, he began playing a fast rumbling soft timpani drum roll on his belly with the mallets. The belly wobbled slightly with each hit, and slowly, it started to grow and get bigger. After a full minute, the roll intensified, becoming louder and more resonant. Another minute passed, and the belly continued to grow as the roll persisted.

Eventually, the belly reached its very big, enormous, intimidating size, hovering as if it was slightly defying gravity like it did the day before. Faizon muttered, "Big brown belly," as he initiated a decrescendo at the same speed. After two minutes of skillful control, the belly gradually returned to its normal size. Then he immediately transitioned into another crescendo and kept it going for about two more minutes until the belly was at its intimidating form again, then he ended the roll with a single loud hit.

## CHAPTER 1

With the ritual complete, Faizon went to his desk and fetched his backpack. He packed a square machine, his laptop, and a mysterious new square device he had created. Then, putting on his backpack, Faizon walked out of his house, his big brown belly proudly on display.

As Faizon stepped out of his house, he encountered his brother Audito, a large Black man with a significantly protruding belly that extended outward in a pronounced curve.

Audito's dark skin was smooth and accentuated the roundness of his abdomen. He usually wore a shirt tucked in to his pants, proudly displaying the logo of Faizon's company, "BellyBeat Percussion Co.: Rolling Thunder from the Depths of Large Round Bellies," featuring the familiar illustration of Faizon behind a timpani drum with his extremely enormous big brown belly hanging over it, but today, he was shirtless, highlighting the fullness of his belly, and he stood with his hands resting on his lower back, a posture that suggested a moment of relaxation or perhaps an effort to support his considerable weight. He also had a bald head and a beard that framed his jawline.

Today, he was wearing colorful, patterned shorts that contrasted with his skin tone, adding a vibrant touch to his otherwise understated look.

He greeted Faizon, a mischievous grin on his face. "Hey, Faizon! Making any thunderstorms with that big brown belly of yours?" He playfully poked Faizon's belly button.

Faizon responded with pride, "Oh, you bet. Been making lots of intense timpani drum rolls with this big ol' heavy belly of mine."

Audito, still grinning, shared that he had signed up for lessons at Faizon's company, eager to learn the art of transforming his belly into its intimidating form and mastering the art of belly drumming. Faizon, approving of Audito's decision, mentioned that he was meeting Gilbert at the warehouse to have some fun taking advantage of their big bellies in their intimidating form.

However, Audito regretfully explained, "Can't make it today, Faizon. Got big belly drumming lessons. Learning how to make my own rolling timpani drum sounds. Just trying to be like my bigger brother. You know, like Faizon, the large man with the big brown belly that he never hesitates to show."

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

Faizon, having forgotten about the scheduled lessons, encouraged Auditō, "No worries. With those big rumbling rolling belly drumming lessons, you'll get there soon." He patted Auditō's belly with his backhand where the belly button on the shirt's picture was and headed towards the warehouse, shaking his belly with a rolling timpani drum sound to create a suspenseful atmosphere as he walked.

Faizon arrived at the warehouse to find Gilbert already in the midst of a soft crescendo roll on one of the big gongs, his belly proudly in its enormous, intimidating form. Gilbert was wearing the same shirt Auditō would have worn on a normal day, but this time the large man in the picture was Gilbert in his intimidating form. Gilbert's belly, slightly rubbing against the rolling gong in its large size, looked even bigger with the shirt on, appearing as if he were carrying an actual timpani drum within the fabric, creating a mesmerizing spectacle. The shirt was neatly tucked into his pants, emphasizing the sheer mass and weight of his big round belly.

The rhythmic beats of Faizon's large, heavy footsteps echoed through the warehouse, mimicking the bass drum hits from the day before. Gilbert, upon hearing the familiar sound, stopped his roll and turned toward Faizon.

"Well, well, well, if it isn't the leader of the Obese Orchestra. Your belly in its intimidating form may not be *too* big for Timpanopia's standards, but it's still very heavy," Gilbert teased, giving Faizon's belly a shake to create a soft timpani drum roll.

Faizon chuckled and replied, "You're one to talk, big round belly."

In good spirits, Gilbert decided to reciprocate the banter. He held the two gong mallets in one hand, untucking his shirt and lifting the hem with the other, inviting Faizon to poke his belly button. Faizon obliged, poking the belly button that was the control center of Gilbert's rhythmic prowess. After the playful interaction, Gilbert let go of the hem and tucked back in his shirt, the fabric once again attempting to contain the massive drum of a belly that defined his imposing presence.

"Hey, Gilbert, today I've got something special to show you. It's an experiment, and I think you'll find it pretty awesome," Faizon exclaimed, a glint of excitement in his eyes.

Eagerly, Gilbert responded, "I'm all in! What's the plan for today's session?"

## CHAPTER 1

Faizon grinned. "First, how about an echoing, rumbling big round belly drum roll to set the stage? I want to build some tension and suspense like we build our bellies," he said patting his big brown belly.

Gilbert, still holding the large gong mallets, began a soft roll on his big round belly (muffled by his thick shirt), providing a rhythmic background as Faizon took off his backpack and prepared to unveil his invention.

Faizon revealed his creation, the Big Belly Drum Drone. It was a flat square with two short timpani mallets on the base, their bottoms connected to the top of the square. Faizon explained, "You attach the bottom of the square to the side of your belly, and the mallets point forward to hit the belly. The mallets then hit the belly one after another in a drum roll, making the user's belly grow to its big size with a timpani drum roll."

Excitement filled the air as Faizon continued, "With this, we can make our bellies grow to their intimidating form without the musclework. We can keep producing rumbling rolls, bringing all of the belly drummers in Timpanopia together, forever. Watch and listen."

Faizon stuck the Big Belly Drum Drone on the right side of his belly, and it played a soft continuous timpani drum roll as he walked to the gong. Taking the mallets from Gilbert, he repeatedly played soft gong hits and rolls, creating a symphony of rhythmic sounds that echoed through the warehouse. Gilbert took off his shirt and began tapping his own belly in rhythm.

After an hour of musical experimentation, Faizon set the gong mallets on a nearby timpani drum and removed the drone, causing it to stop playing. As he did so, he noticed an unusual smell emanating from his belly button.

Gilbert, acknowledging the awesomeness of the drone, pointed out, "Hey, Faizon, it seems like that thing made your belly smell a bit."

Faizon, with a chuckle, replied, "Apparently, when I roll on my belly for so long, it starts to smell like my farts. Always happens to us belly drummers, that's why we don't always play continuous rolls that long."

Pacing the length of the warehouse, "I guess the smell from rolling so long might be a slight disadvantage," he mused, acknowledging the unintended consequence of extended belly drumming sessions. He considered the implications, especially since he was planning on letting the drone play the user's belly for long periods, even during sleep. "But," he continued, turning

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

back to Gilbert and walking back towards him, "the immersive feeling it could provide might just outweigh that slight inconvenience. I would really enjoy feeling my belly rumble and grow under my large hand as the drone beats it when I'm resting," he remarked, his imagination painting vivid scenes of rhythmic tranquility.

As he said this, he temporarily envisioned himself sleeping on his back in bed, his big brown belly in its enormous, intimidating size, with his large hand resting gently atop it. The drone played a soft, low timpani drum roll on his belly, creating a rhythmic symphony that synchronized with his slow, silent breaths. The rise and fall of his belly dictated the pitch of the roll, creating a ghostly timpani drum roll that resonated through the stillness of the night.

Contemplating the potential drawbacks of the Big Belly Drum Drone, he said, "I guess it should probably be recommended only for use during rest periods. If it defeats the purpose of the musclework usually needed for the intimidation phase, not everything can always be done the easy way. But forget about that for now. I have another big invention I want to reveal."

Gilbert, ever the curious sidekick to Faizon's inventive endeavors, raised an eyebrow. "Another invention, Faizon? What have you got up your sleeve this time?"

Faizon chuckled, patting his own sizable belly affectionately. "Well, let's just say it involves our favorite instrument." With a mischievous glint in his eye, he turned to face Gilbert fully. "Could you give me another one of those big belly drum rolls, my friend?"

Without hesitation, Gilbert grinned back and began to rhythmically pat his own belly, producing a low, resonant rumble that filled the warehouse with its deep timpani sound. Faizon nodded approvingly, the beat syncing perfectly with the rhythm of his own heartbeat.

With a flourish, Faizon reached into his backpack and retrieved his laptop, fingers dancing over the keyboard as he navigated to a particular application. "Check this out, Gilbert. It's my latest creation. It's an app I've been working on that allows you to interact with simulated versions of our Obese Orchestra members, including ourselves, as well as some extra variants."

## CHAPTER 1

Gilbert's eyes widened in amazement as he took in the sight of the virtual orchestra members displayed before him. "Wow, Faizon, this is incredible! I've never seen anything like it. How does it work?"

Faizon grinned, his excitement palpable. "It's simple, really. Each member of the orchestra is represented here, complete with their own unique belly size and skin tone. And get this—the bigger their bellies, the deeper their drum sound, just like us. I also added a special easter egg—in this view, the note played depends on the first letter of the member's name. For example, my name starts with an F, so when I click on myself, the belly drum plays an F note."

As Faizon demonstrated, he clicked on each member's belly, eliciting a resonant drum sound that reverberated through the warehouse. Gilbert watched in awe, marveling at the seamless integration of technology and music.

"But wait, there's more," Faizon continued, his fingers dancing across the laptop's touchpad. "Check out the conductor's view."

With a few quick clicks, the screen transformed to display the orchestra members grouped by section, standing in a quarter circle formation. Faizon pointed out the features of the interface, explaining how each member could be individually selected and manipulated.

"When you click their bellies, they emit a round timpani drum sound in the key of the first letter of their name," Faizon explained, his enthusiasm infectious. "And if you double-click and wait a second, it zooms in to the belly of the member you selected." He double-clicked, and the screen zoomed in to Faizon's big brown belly.

Gilbert nodded in understanding, his mind racing with the possibilities of this innovative new tool. "This is amazing, Faizon. You've really outdone yourself this time. But what about the drum rolls?"

Faizon grinned mischievously, as if he'd been waiting for this question. "Ah, the drum rolls. That's the best part. When you triple click, it starts to play a short timpani drum roll."

As Faizon demonstrated, the warehouse filled with the rhythmic sound of drum rolls, each one perfectly synchronized with the virtual orchestra members on the screen. Gilbert couldn't help but smile, thoroughly impressed by Faizon's ingenuity.

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

"And here is the current member list," Faizon concluded, displaying a comprehensively detailed roster of the orchestra members along with their belly sizes and details.

### Obese Orchestra Members:

#### 1. Faizon:

- Height: 5'10", Weight: 400 lbs, Age: 45, Belly Size: 1.5-foot diameter
- Description: Faizon, a gentle giant with skin the color of timpani drums and a heart as big as his booming belly, exudes warmth and charisma wherever he goes. His belly, a majestic expanse of pure brown, rumbles with the power of a thunderstorm. His gentle demeanor belies the raw energy contained within his massive frame, making him a beloved leader and visionary in Timpanopia.
- Instrument: Timpani drum

#### 2. Gilbert:

- Height: 5'11", Weight: 400 lbs, Age: 40, Belly Size: 1.5-foot diameter
- Description: Gilbert is Faizon's loyal companion, his jovial demeanor and quick wit adding a touch of levity to the ensemble. With light skin unlike the others, his big round belly contrasts with Faizon's, but its depth and resonance rival that of his friend's, contributing to the orchestra's harmonious sound.

- Instrument: Timpani drum

#### 3. Audito:

- Height: 5'10", Weight: 380 lbs, Age: 45, Belly Size: 1.2-1.5-foot diameter (depending)
- Description: Being Faizon's brother, it makes sense for Audito's big brown belly to pulse with rhythmic precision, anchoring the orchestra's performances with its steady beats. His quiet strength and unwavering dedication to his craft inspire admiration and respect among his peers.
- Instrument: Timpani drum

#### 4. Baldwin:

- Height: 6'7", Weight: 360 lbs, Age: 40, Belly Size: 0.95-foot diameter
- Description: Baldwin's big brown belly resonates with authority, commanding attention with its thunderous timpani drum beats. Despite his imposing stature, Baldwin's gentle spirit and passion for music shine through in every performance, earning him admiration and acclaim.
- Instrument: Timpani drum

#### 5. Charles:

- Height: 5'9", Weight: 320 lbs, Age: 52, Belly Size: 0.75-foot diameter
- Description: Charles may not have the largest belly, but his passion for music is unmatched. His big brown belly, which is darker and cooler-colored to match his personality, resonates with clarity and precision, complementing the ensemble's sound with its distinctive timbre.
- Instrument: Timpani drum

## CHAPTER 1

### Extra Variants:

6. Gold Gilbert:
  - Height: 5'11, Weight: 507, Age: 40, Belly Size: 1.5-foot diameter
  - Description: A golden statue erected in honor of Gilbert's contributions to the orchestra, Gold Gilbert stands as a symbol of artistic excellence and innovation. Though immobile, his presence adds a touch of grandeur to the ensemble, his golden form gleaming in the light of the warehouse.
  - Instrument: Gong
7. Taiko Audito:
  - Height: 5'10", Weight: 380 lbs, Age: 45, Belly Size: 1.2-foot diameter
  - Description: A variation of Audito, Taiko Audito specializes in the traditional Japanese taiko drum, his rhythmic beats infusing the orchestra's music with energy and vitality. His deep-brown belly resonates with power, driving the ensemble forward with each thunderous strike.
  - Instrument: Taiko drum
8. Bass Drum Baldwin:
  - Height: 6'7", Weight: 360 lbs, Age: 40, Belly Size: 1.5-foot diameter
  - Description: Baldwin's versatility extends beyond the timpani, as he also commands the booming depths of the bass drum. His big brown bass drum belly serves as the heartbeat of the orchestra, its powerful reverberations underscoring the ensemble's melodic tapestry.
  - Instrument: Bass drum
9. Big Mack:
  - Height: 7'1", Weight: 450 lbs, Age: 47, Belly Size: 1.8-foot diameter
  - Description: Big Mack is a towering presence in the orchestra, his sheer size and booming voice commanding attention wherever he goes. With a belly even larger than Faizon's, this grizzly bear of a man generates timpani drum rolls that shake the very foundations of Timpanopia, adding an unparalleled depth to the ensemble's music (and also gives good grizzly bear hugs).
  - Instrument: Timpani drum
10. BOMBarder:
  - Height: 5'10", Weight: 400 lbs, Age: 45, Belly Size: 1.5-foot diameter
  - Description: BOMBarder is a military variant of Faizon designed specifically for the Obese Orchestra app. His massive frame and dark-brown complexion speak to years spent on the battlefield, where he utilized his booming belly to create rumbling timpani drum rolls that summoned bombs from the sky with devastating precision during war.
  - Instrument: Timpani drum

"What do you think, Gilbert?" asked Faizon. "Pretty cool, huh?"

Gilbert nodded enthusiastically, his eyes still glued to the screen. "Absolutely, Faizon. This is going to revolutionize the way we practice and perform."

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

"Yep," replied Faizon. "But like the drone, it might defeat the purpose of the musclework, so it's not generally ready for public release yet. However, there are a few more features I would like to show you."

Faizon's excitement was contagious as he guided Gilbert through the various features of the application. With a few deft clicks, he navigated to a new screen, labeled "Track View."

"Okay, Gilbert, this is where the real magic happens," Faizon explained, his voice tinged with enthusiasm. "Here, you can assemble stock live loops and assign each loop to a specific member, allowing for endless possibilities in crafting our own unique sound. But that's not all," he continued, tapping on the screen to reveal a plethora of options, "you can also create your own custom fills and rolls."

Gilbert's eyes widened in awe as he took in the array of possibilities before him. "So, we can mix and match different rhythms and beats to create our own unique compositions?"

"Exactly!" Faizon exclaimed, nodding enthusiastically. "Imagine the endless combinations we can come up with, Gilbert. We'll be able to orchestrate symphonies that rival even the greatest maestros."

With eager anticipation, Gilbert leaned in closer, his fingers itching to explore the potential of the track view. "How do we get started, Faizon?"

Faizon grinned, his own fingers flying across the keyboard as he demonstrated the process. "First, we select a live loop for each section of the orchestra," he explained, dragging and dropping various loops onto the designated areas of the screen. "Then, we can customize the tempo and intensity to suit our preferences."

As Gilbert watched in fascination, Faizon seamlessly integrated different loops, layering them together to create rich, intricate rhythms that pulsed with life. "And check this out," Faizon said, pointing to a section of the screen, "we can even record our own performances and add them to the mix."

"Wow, Faizon, this is incredible," Gilbert breathed, his mind buzzing with ideas. "I can't wait to start experimenting with different sounds and patterns. I can't wait to see what else you have in store for us."

## CHAPTER 1

"Oh, I'll show you what else I have in store. Please, give me another big round belly drum roll so I can build more anticipation for the next announcement I'm about to make."

As Gilbert unleashed a final loud hit after 10 seconds of rolling suspense, Faizon seized the moment to explain his latest creation. "Behold, the Big Belly Companion Creator!" He presented a small box with a red button. "With this, you can create a companion for making rolling timpani drum sounds. All you have to do is press the red button on the box. It will record you patting your belly to make timpani drum sounds for a short amount of time. Then, the machine will create a baby-like clone of you."

Gilbert, clearly impressed, remarked, "Faizon, you're creating a lot of inventions. If you ever decide to take a temporary break from belly drumming, you should become an engineer. Let your new son take over, well, I mean, if you decide to demonstrate the Companion Creator right now and make your own son."

"Sure!" Faizon exclaimed enthusiastically. "I haven't tried it yet, but I did a simulation on my computer, so I know it works. It uses an engine similar to the Rhythmic Reproduction Chambers in Timpanopia that create babies. You know, the specialized chambers that utilize advanced algorithms and genetic data to synthesize embryos in a rhythmic pattern. The process is synchronized with the beat of timpani drums, gongs, or other percussion instruments, creating a harmonious environment conducive to the creation of new life. Anyway, let's see it in action."

Faizon placed the Companion Creator on a timpani drum, grabbed the mallets, pressed the button, and began playing on his belly. The machine whirred to life, generating Faizon's new baby clone. As it worked its magic, Faizon started softly playing a roll on his belly, gradually increasing the intensity to create a feeling of tension.

Finally, Faizon Jr. emerged, the same shade of brown as Faizon, with a faded hairstyle, wearing a similar shirt to Gilbert's, paired with underwear. Faizon and Gilbert both gasped in awe at the creation.

Unexpectedly, Faizon Jr. jumped at Faizon, landing straight into the center of Faizon's enormous stomach and hugging the belly tightly. "Big brown belly," Faizon Jr. uttered, patting it with one hand. Faizon, chuckling, remarked,

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

"Apparently, Faizon Jr. is obsessed with my big brown belly. Would you like to feel a rumble from my big brown belly, Faizon Jr.?"

Carefully taking the baby off his belly, Faizon held Faizon Jr. in his open left hand. With his right hand, Faizon retrieved the Big Belly Drum Drone and placed it on the right side of his big brown belly. It started playing a soft roll, emitting a smell not as bad as before. Faizon slowly lowered his left hand, allowing Faizon Jr. to reach down and touch the steadily growing belly, which was starting to get even bigger than its usual intimidating form.

As Faizon Jr. felt the rumble of Faizon's big brown belly beneath his tiny hands, he slowly climbed off Faizon's large hand and onto the belly. Placing his hands on Faizon's chest, the little one pushed with surprising force, causing Faizon to start descending to the floor butt-first with a heavy *thud*. The drone fell off in the process, prompting a chuckle from Faizon. "Oh, okay," he laughed, acknowledging his son's newfound strength.

As Faizon settled on the floor, Faizon Jr. climbed atop the big brown belly, reaching the smelly belly button. The little one began bouncing on the belly, producing wobbling timpani sounds. Faizon and Gilbert both burst into laughter at the playful antics.

Eventually, Faizon sighed with relief and placed his hands behind his head, relaxing. In this moment of tranquility, he found himself drifting into a dream—a dream where Timpanopia faced a dire threat.



In the ethereal realm of the dream, Faizon, Gilbert, Faizon Jr., and Auditō found themselves standing in a vast chamber, its walls stretching endlessly into the darkness. As they cautiously navigated the space, their eyes widened in astonishment as they beheld a towering figure looming before them.

Before them stood a colossal incarnation of BOMBarder, Faizon's military variant from the depths of the Obese Orchestra app. Towering four times their size, this larger-than-life clone possessed a slightly darker complexion than

## CHAPTER 1

Faizon, his imposing presence magnified by an even more expansive belly that seemed to eclipse the very horizon.

Clad in remnants of military attire, which lacked a shirt, BOMBarder's formidable frame was adorned with the regalia of a seasoned warrior. Around his neck hung a cascade of medals, glinting ominously in the dim light of the chamber. His massive, dark-brown belly protruded menacingly over a colossal timpani drum, the size of which dwarfed even Faizon himself. Gripping oversized timpani mallets with a steely determination, the clone fixed his gaze upon the intruders with an intensity that sent shivers down their spines.

In a voice that reverberated through the chamber like thunder, BOMBarder declared his purpose: he had been created by a mysterious force to thwart their progress, a formidable obstacle standing between them and their ultimate goal. With a challenge issued, the stage was set for a confrontation of epic proportions.

Faizon, confident, decided to handle the situation. "Just letting you know, any type of roll you try to play will just make *my* belly grow even bigger," he declared, stepping forward. "I've gained the ability to let anyone's big brown belly drum roll affect my belly."

BOMBarder, lifting up his belly and moving back with heavy stumps to avoid it hanging over the drum, let it drop and hang prominently and retorted, "Yeah, you must have gained it the way you gain weight. Speaking of your heavy weight, you should have shrunk your belly before you came here, because this big brown belly drum roll is about to make it bad for you! But I don't need my belly when I can use a real drum, like you're supposed to."

The tension in the chamber grew as BOMBarder began to play a loud, rumbling continuous drum roll on the timpani drum with the big mallets, the reverberations echoing throughout the chamber to create an intense atmosphere. Faizon's big brown belly started to grow bigger with the roll.

*Oh no, thought Faizon, he's using my own power against me!*

Suddenly, bombs fell from the sky in a rhythmic pattern for one minute. Faizon, struggling with the growing largeness of his belly, had to jump and run to dodge them, the challenge heightening as his belly steadily grew with each beat of BOMBarder's mallets on the rolling timpani drum.

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

Halfway through the bombardment, he groaned, "Big brown belly," acknowledging the challenge of maneuvering with his expanding belly. Sweating and panting, Faizon reached the drum. He had now realized what BOMBarder had been up to—he was playing the timpani drum roll to make Faizon's belly grow unbearably big so it would be difficult for him to dodge BOMBarder's bombs. Looking back, Faizon saw that the bellies of Gilbert and Audito were also getting unbearably larger.

From his pants pocket, Faizon took out a metal timpani mallet and pressed a button, expanding the stick to be half as big as Faizon. The roll continued as Faizon, now with the mallet in his large hands, jumped as high as he could. He managed to grip the mallet onto the center of the shaking timpani drum, struggling to use it to lift his heavyweight body on top of the drum.

His belly grew faster and faster, his buttocks slightly expanding with his weight, as the roll got louder. His substantial back and prodigious growing belly undoubtedly contributed to the generous proportions of his posterior, imbuing it with an unmistakable aura of solidity and mass. Faizon could feel everything weighing him down. Finally, Faizon pole-vaulted himself above the drum, falling on his back with a resounding timpani drum sound that concluded BOMBarder's timpani drum roll. Panting heavily, he was relieved to find that he had successfully navigated the bombardment, and his big brown belly, now at a diameter of at least 2 feet, wobbled heavily from the growing. His larger military variant, whose belly had also grown so much during the bombardment that it was touching the edge of the big timpani drum again, remarked, "Guess that belly got big enough to start slowing you down, huh? You know, instead of being stupid and actually trying to get up here and risk that enormous belly bouncing you off, you could have just used it as a trampoline. Because, you know, big brown belly."

BOMBarder used the big mallet to poke the real Faizon's now immensely humongous belly, pushing Faizon dangerously close to the edge.

Unfazed, Faizon retorted, "Who are you to talk? Your bigger and browner belly seems to have gained unbearable weight as well." He smacked his hand on BOMBarder's big brown belly, making a rumbling timpani drum sound. "And anyway, the big brown belly is a part of me, like *your* big brown belly is a part

## CHAPTER 1

of you. I might not be as agile as usual when my belly is *this* big," he patted it, "but it's never too big for me to handle."

Attempting to take the big, heavy mallets with his big, strong arms, Faizon played a roll on his big brown belly. Suddenly, it grew bigger and bigger, then started to explode with a gong sound.



Faizon woke up from his short nap, feeling a sense of unease lingering from the dream. He hadn't experienced such vivid dreams in a long time, and they usually foretold something ominous. As he stretched, Faizon glanced around the warehouse, the memory of the dream still fresh in his mind. Something dark was looming, but he couldn't quite decipher its meaning. Was it a premonition, or just his imagination running wild?

Faizon Jr., who had been sitting on his big brown belly, hopped off as Faizon stirred. Faizon's weight shifted slightly, causing the floorboards to creak beneath him as he sat up, his expression thoughtful.

Across the warehouse, Gilbert was sitting on a timpani drum, his arms folded casually across his chest. Spotting Faizon waking up, Gilbert called out, "Had a nice nap there, Faizon?"

Faizon rubbed his eyes and shook his head. "Not really. I had a dream... a strange one."

"Oh?" Gilbert's interest was piqued. "What kind of dream?"

Faizon recounted the dream, his voice tinged with uncertainty. "I dreamt there was a giant version of my military variant BOMBarder—remember him from the Obese Orchestra app?—he was challenging me. He started playing a loud roll on his timpani drum, and then bombs fell from the sky in a rhythmic pattern for one minute. And then... my belly started to grow with the roll. It was... ominous."

Gilbert furrowed his brow, considering Faizon's words. "Yeah, that does sound pretty ominous, indeed. Just like the ominous timpani drum roll that you described."

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

Faizon nodded solemnly. "Yep, pretty ominous. And as dark as that dark-skinned doppelgänger." He paused, pondering. "Or maybe it was just my brain playing tricks on me. I don't really know...."

The weight of the dream hung in the air for a moment before Faizon shook it off, focusing on the present. "Anyway, enough about that. What have you been up to while I was napping?"

Gilbert shrugged nonchalantly. "Oh, you know, just practicing a few rolls here and there. Trying to keep the rhythm alive."

Faizon nodded, appreciating Gilbert's dedication to their craft. "Well, we should get back to it. Can't let a little nap slow us down."

But then Faizon Jr. crawled back onto Faizon's belly, repeating his familiar phrase, "Big brown belly," gently patting Faizon's stomach with each word. Faizon smiled down at his son, his heart swelling with paternal pride.

"Yep, Daddy's belly is big," Faizon affirmed, running a hand over his substantial midsection. "And you know why, Jr.? It's because in Timpanopia, everyone's big, especially with big bellies like mine. And do you know why we're so big? It's so we can play the timpani drum."

"Daddy so big," Faizon Jr. chimed in, his eyes wide with curiosity.

"That's right," Faizon said, lifting his son and setting him on the floor. As he stood up, the floorboards creaked under his weight, adding to the ambiance of the moment. "But you know who else is big? You're going to love him when you meet him."

Faizon cleared his throat, his voice rumbling like distant thunder as he spoke. "Please, allow me to introduce you to your uncle Gilbert."

Faizon started slightly shaking his stomach to produce a soft, rumbling timpani drum roll, signaling Gilbert to approach. The floorboards groaned under Gilbert's weight as he rose from his spot, his heavy footsteps echoing through the warehouse.

Faizon Jr. watched in amazement as Gilbert approached, his eyes widening in excitement. "You're big," he exclaimed, pointing at Gilbert.

Gilbert chuckled heartily, his own belly jiggling slightly as he spoke. "That's right, little buddy. Uncle Gilbert's big and heavy, just like big Daddy here." He playfully slapped Faizon's shoulder before darting forward to playfully poke Faizon's belly, eliciting a deep rumble from within.

## CHAPTER 1

Faizon suddenly had an idea. He turned to Gilbert, a glint of excitement in his eyes. "Hey, Gilbert," he asked. "Mind coming upstairs with me for a while?" They ascended the creaky stairs together, their synchronized movements adding to the already building anticipation with each step. "Hey, Gilbert, what do you say we put on a little show for little Faizon Jr.? You know, recreate that timpani drum roll from my dream?"

Gilbert grinned at the idea. "That's a fantastic idea, Faizon! Should we also recreate the bombs?"

Faizon nodded eagerly. "Absolutely! But who's going to create the bomb sound?"

Faizon's eyes lit up with a spark of inspiration. He strode over to a big, round, golden shield with a slightly convex shape mounted on a nearby wall, its thick strap dangling behind it. With a swift motion, he unstuck the strap and approached Gilbert.

"Here's the plan," Faizon explained as he wrapped the shield around Gilbert's belly, securing it in place with the strap. "We'll use this shield to create the bomb sound. It may not be perfect, but it'll give us the effect we're looking for. We can always try a gong version later."

With their makeshift bomb apparatus in place, they descended the stairs, Faizon gesturing for Gilbert to fetch a timpani mallet from the drum he had been sitting on. Meanwhile, Faizon Jr. watched with curiosity as his father prepared for the spectacle.

"Alright, Jr., I want to show you something special," Faizon said, his voice rumbling with excitement.

With a nod from Faizon, the performance began. Faizon started shaking his belly, producing a loud, deep timpani drum roll that reverberated through the warehouse. As the roll continued, Gilbert softly struck the shield on his big round belly, creating a low bomb sound. With each strike, Gilbert took a deliberate stomp forward, adding to the dramatic effect as if it was a B-movie.

The rhythm of their performance intensified as the bomb sounds grew slightly louder at one-and-a-half-second intervals like a percussive drone, matched by heavier footsteps from Gilbert. After a minute or so, the roll reached its climax as Faizon shook even harder, slightly increasing the volume of the roll, while Gilbert met the rise in intensity with louder bomb sounds.

## FAIZON'S BIG INVENTIONS

The warehouse filled with the symphony of their collaboration, Faizon's big brown belly drum roll and Gilbert's bomb strikes echoing off the walls. Faizon Jr. watched in awe, his eyes wide with excitement as he witnessed the spectacular performance orchestrated by his father and uncle.

After fifteen seconds of intense crescendo, Faizon slightly quieted his roll, and a second after Gilbert produced a final thunderous bomb sound, the roll came to a halt. The warehouse was enveloped in a moment of echoing silence.

Faizon Jr. clapped enthusiastically, his laughter filling the air as he cheered for his father and uncle's impressive display of rhythmic prowess.

Faizon grinned proudly as he looked at Gilbert and Faizon Jr., his eyes twinkling with satisfaction. "Big Brown Belly BOMBardment," he declared, his voice booming with pride. "Our latest performance."

Gilbert chuckled heartily, nodding in agreement. "A performance fit for legends," he remarked, slapping a hand on Faizon's massive shoulder. "I dare say, we've outdone ourselves this time," Gilbert glanced at Faizon's impressive belly as if about to poke it again.

Faizon grinned proudly, his big brown belly jiggling slightly with each step. "Indeed, Gilbert, indeed," he replied, a twinkle of satisfaction in his eyes. "But now, I believe it's time for a well-deserved meal. Breakfast at the restaurant ends at 11:00, which is in 30 minutes."

With synchronized movements, Faizon, Gilbert, and Faizon Jr. made their way towards the exit of the warehouse, the anticipation of a hearty meal fueling their steps. Faizon began to play a rolling timpani drum march on his belly, the rhythmic beats echoing through the empty space, creating a lively atmosphere as they walked.

As they stepped out into the bright sunlight, Faizon Jr. skipped ahead, his laughter ringing out as he enjoyed the musical accompaniment provided by his father's belly. Together, they ventured into the bustling streets of Timpanopia, the sounds of the city blending harmoniously with Faizon's belly drumming. With each step, they drew closer to their destination, eager to indulge in a delicious meal and continue their adventures in this vibrant world of rhythm and camaraderie. And with Faizon's belly leading the way, they marched onwards, ready to savor the delights that awaited them.

# 2

## The Age Accelerator

The next morning, Faizon was asleep, dreaming. In the surreal realm of Faizon's dream, he found himself standing in an empty chamber, the air heavy with anticipation and a faint echo lingering in the space. The dim light cast eerie shadows against the walls, adding to the mysterious atmosphere that enveloped him.

As Faizon surveyed his surroundings, a sudden thunderous timpani drum roll reverberated through the chamber, startling him and causing the floor to tremble beneath his feet. The sound seemed to emanate from every direction, filling the air with an electrifying energy that sent shivers down his spine.

In the distance, a figure materialized out of the darkness, moving towards Faizon with deliberate steps that echoed softly against the floor. As the figure drew nearer, Faizon's heart pounded in his chest, his curiosity piqued by the enigmatic presence approaching him.

The figure revealed itself to be the magnificent golden statue of Gilbert that had been in his app—wait, no—it was a version of Faizon himself, not Gilbert. The statue towered over the original with an imposing stature that demanded attention. Its metallic skin gleamed in the dim light, casting a radiant glow that illuminated the chamber with an otherworldly brilliance.

In one hand, the golden statue held a mallet, which it used to strike its belly with precision, producing resonant gong-like tones that filled the chamber with rich, melodious vibrations. Each strike of the mallet against the golden surface echoed with a hauntingly beautiful resonance, captivating Faizon's senses and drawing him further into the dreamlike trance.

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

In the other hand, the statue held a golden boombox, its sleek design adorned with intricate patterns that shimmered in the faint light. The boombox emitted a deep, rumbling timpani drum roll, its powerful bass reverberating through the chamber like a thunderous heartbeat. The subwoofers on the boombox protruded outward, each one adorned with a subtle indentation below the center reminiscent of a belly button, the bottom of the boombox resting against the top of the statue's monumental belly.

As the roll came to a dramatic conclusion, the golden statue gently placed the boombox down. The chamber fell silent once more, the echoes of the drum roll lingering in the air like a fading whisper. Faizon stood transfixed, his mind reeling with wonder and awe at the surreal encounter that had just unfolded before him.

As Faizon stood before the towering golden statue, his mind swirling with a myriad of emotions, he couldn't help but feel a sense of disbelief at the surreal encounter unfolding before him. With a mixture of awe and curiosity, he finally gathered the courage to address the enigmatic figure.

"Who are you?" Faizon's voice echoed softly in the chamber, mingling with the lingering reverberations of the drum roll that had just ceased.

The golden statue's metallic features seemed to soften momentarily as it chuckled, the sound resonating with a musical quality that sent a shiver down Faizon's spine. "I am but a variant of yourself," the figure replied, its voice deep and resonant. "I exist to showcase a different facet of your being. While you create timpani drum rolls with your belly, I specialize in producing gong sounds of unparalleled magnificence."

A faint glimmer of recognition sparked in Faizon's mind as he recalled the performances he had crafted with his own belly drums, each resonant beat a testament to his creativity and skill. The idea of a variant of himself dedicated to a different musical pursuit intrigued him, and he couldn't help but feel a twinge of curiosity about this golden reflection of his own essence.

"But why?" Faizon asked, his voice tinged with curiosity. "Why appear to me in this manner?"

The golden statue's laughter echoed through the chamber, its metallic form shimmering in the faint light. "It was but a jest, my dear Faizon," it replied, amusement dancing in its eyes. "I simply wished to pay homage to the

## CHAPTER 2

performance you bestowed upon your son the other day. A bit of entertainment, if you will, to lighten the mood and bring a touch of whimsy to this encounter."

As the statue spoke, Faizon couldn't help but marvel at the intricacies of the dream world he found himself in. The notion that his own subconscious had conjured up this elaborate scenario, complete with a golden variant of himself and a playful jest, filled him with a sense of wonder and awe.

And as the weird and seemingly meaningless dream began to fade, the echoes of the golden statue's laughter lingering in his mind, Faizon felt a renewed sense of purpose and determination. Whatever challenges lay ahead, he knew that he would face them with the same creativity and spirit that had brought him here, to this surreal realm of dreams and possibilities. With a final farewell to his golden reflection, Faizon embraced the fading dream, ready to awaken to a new day filled with promise and adventure.



Faizon Jr. was nestled in his bed, his tiny form barely making a dent in the plush mattress compared to his father's imposing presence. Faizon was sleeping shirtless on his back beside him, his big brown belly in its enormous, intimidating size, with his large hand resting gently atop it. His drone played a soft, low timpani drum roll on his belly, creating a rhythmic symphony that synchronized with his slow, silent breaths. The rise and fall of his belly dictated the pitch of the roll, creating a ghostly timpani drum roll accompanied by a slightly unpleasant odor as the continuous roll on his belly drum caused him to frequently let out silent farts combined with the smell coming from his belly.

As dawn broke, casting a warm glow through the curtains, Faizon Jr. stirred from his slumber. He blinked sleepily, his gaze wandering to his father's massive form beside him. With a small yawn, he reached out a chubby hand to pat his father's belly, feeling the steady thrum of the drum beneath his touch.

Faizon awoke, the soft morning light filtering through the curtains of his bedroom. His big brown belly rose and fell rhythmically with each breath, a

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

testament to the peace that enveloped Timpanopia. As he stirred from his slumber, he stretched his arms above his head before detaching the drone and putting it on his nightstand. With a warm smile, he greeted his son, his voice rumbling like distant thunder as he ruffled Faizon Jr.'s faded hair affectionately. "Good morning, little one."

With a gentle pat to his own belly, Faizon swung his legs over the edge of the bed and rose to his feet with purposeful movements, the floorboards creaking slightly under his considerable weight. He glanced around the room, taking in the familiar sights and sounds of his sanctuary.

With a contented sigh, he ran a hand through his nonexistent hair, feeling a bit heavier than the day before. He got up and walked slowly to a mirror standing against the wall, each step producing heavy stumps that shook the ground and his big brown belly alike. He had decided to take on a new responsibility overnight, one that extended beyond the boundaries of Timpanopia and into the realm of leadership on a larger scale, having promised to protect his son and the people of Timpanopia in case anything suspicious happened. With each step, the weight of his responsibility seemed to grow heavier, mirrored by the substantial mass of his big brown belly swaying with his movements.

Faizon stood before the mirror, his reflection a testament to his immense size. His big brown belly protruded prominently, dominating his frame with its sheer mass. He ran a hand over the expanse of his stomach, still feeling the weight of his newfound responsibilities as a protector mirrored in the heaviness of his belly.

As he examined himself in the mirror, Faizon couldn't help but marvel at the imposing figure that stared back at him. His broad shoulders, thick arms, and sturdy legs spoke of a strength born from years of dedication and hard work. Yet, it was his belly that drew the most attention, a symbol of authority and power in Timpanopia.

Faizon's gaze lingered on his reflection, a mixture of pride and contemplation flickering in his eyes. Despite the challenges that lay ahead, he knew that he was ready to face them head-on, his unwavering determination mirrored in the steely resolve of his gaze.

## CHAPTER 2

With a nod of affirmation to his reflection, Faizon straightened his posture, his demeanor exuding confidence and assurance. And as he prepared to face the day ahead, he did so with the knowledge that he was more than capable of weathering whatever storms may come his way.

Faizon slowly made his way to the timpani drum in the corner. His large hands enveloped his hefty belly as he lifted it slightly. Faizon strode purposefully towards the timpani drum, positioning himself with a confident stance, with close proximity to the drum. The drum awaited beneath, its surface ready to resonate with the weighty *thud* that was about to come.

With a deep breath, Faizon released his grip, allowing his belly to drop onto the timpani drum with a resounding *boom*. The sound reverberated through the empty space, echoing the weight of his burdens.

Faizon stood for a moment, his hand instinctively patting the top of his belly in acknowledgment of its heaviness. It was a silent recognition of the responsibility he bore, a burden he carried with both pride and apprehension.

As the morning light streamed through the windows of their home, Faizon sat back down on his bed beside Faizon Jr., his big brown belly protruding slightly as he settled into the chair. With a gentle pat to his son's shoulder, Faizon Sr. began to speak, his voice rumbling like distant thunder.

"Faizon Jr.," he started, his tone solemn yet resolute, "I want to tell you about the performance we put on yesterday. It was inspired by a dream I had, a dream that carries a deeper meaning."

Faizon Jr. looked up at his father, his eyes wide with curiosity.

"In my dream," Faizon Sr. continued, "I saw a vision of a challenge ahead, a test of strength and courage. The timpani drum roll and the booming sounds of the bombs represented the trials we may face."

He paused, his gaze searching Faizon Jr.'s face for understanding.

"These dreams," Faizon Sr. explained, "they often come to me when something ominous is on the horizon. But fear not, my son, for I will do everything in my power to protect you and the rest of Timpanopia."

Faizon Jr. nodded solemnly, his trust in his father unwavering.

"Together," Faizon Sr. declared, "we will face whatever challenges may come our way. And no matter what lies ahead, know that you will always be safe by my side."

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

With that, Faizon Jr. leaned into his father's reassuring embrace, finding comfort in the strength and determination that radiated from him. And as they sat together in the quiet warmth of their home, a sense of unity and resolve filled the air, binding them together as they prepared to face the uncertain future that lay ahead.



Faizon's presence in the warehouse was as imposing as ever, his frame dominating the space as he entered, his son cradled securely in his arms. Each step he took reverberated through the floorboards, the familiar creaks serving as a chorus to his arrival. The anticipation in the air was almost tangible, crackling with the promise of something extraordinary about to unfold.

As his gaze swept across the dimly lit expanse, Faizon's eyes landed on Gilbert, whose own belly jiggled in response to Faizon's heavy footfalls.

"Morning, Gilbert," Faizon's booming voice filled the warehouse, bouncing off the walls.

Gilbert, never one to miss an opportunity for banter, replied, "Morning indeed. You're looking particularly hefty today. The Big Belly Drum Drone must have added a few more pounds to your impressive bulk."

Faizon chuckled, his laughter rumbling through the warehouse like distant thunder. "Ah, you know me too well, Gilbert. But today, I bring something even more impressive."

With a grand gesture, Faizon beckoned towards a nearby room, from which he wheeled in a towering, cylindrical contraption that bore a striking resemblance to the time-traveling machines from futuristic movies.

"Behold, the Age Accelerator," Faizon announced proudly. "With this one-time use invention, I can adjust the age of little Faizon Jr. here, make him older by a few years if I want."

Gilbert's eyebrows shot up in surprise, his curiosity piqued. "Well, ain't that something! What's the occasion?"

## CHAPTER 2

Faizon grinned, a mischievous glint dancing in his eyes. "I figured it's time for Faizon Jr. here to start experiencing more of Timpanopia, and for him to prepare for any future challenges like the one demonstrated in my dream. And what better way to do that than by giving him a head start?"

With a sense of excitement hanging in the air, Faizon carefully placed his son into the contraption, his movements deliberate yet tender. As the device hummed to life, emitting a soft, otherworldly glow, Faizon stepped back with anticipation, his hands poised in readiness. After ten seconds of increased tension, Faizon stepped back and began to shake his belly with increasing intensity, the familiar rumble building into a thunderous crescendo. The warehouse was filled with the timpani drum rolls, vibrating through the air like a heartbeat.

Then, as the drum rolls reached their peak, a thirteen-year-old boy emerged from the contraption, his features resembling a younger version of Faizon, albeit with his own unique charm. He had the same jovial smile and twinkle in his eyes, but his belly, while still impressive, was not yet as large and imposing as his father's. He now had short, neatly cropped hair, dark, slightly squinted, almond-shaped eyes that conveyed a friendly expression, and a broad smile that highlighted his rounded cheeks and warm demeanor..

The men's grins widened as he watched Faizon Jr. take tentative steps forward, his young eyes filled with wonder and curiosity. The rumbling roll of Faizon's belly continued, a steady rhythm underscoring the momentous occasion.

As Faizon Jr. ventured further into the warehouse, his steps hesitant yet determined, he eventually found himself standing before his father's massive belly. With a mixture of awe and trepidation, he reached out a big hand, tentatively pressing it against the warm expanse of his father's abdomen.

Feeling the solid yet yielding surface beneath his touch, Faizon Jr. couldn't help but marvel at the sheer size and weight of his father's belly. It was a symbol of strength and security, a familiar presence that had always been a source of comfort and reassurance.

Faizon chuckled softly, his deep voice reverberating through the warehouse. "Impressive, isn't it?" he remarked, his pride evident as he looked down at his son. "One day, your belly will be just as mighty as mine."

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

As Faizon Jr. observed his father's impressive belly, he couldn't help but feel a sense of awe. It was undeniably large, its bulk casting a formidable shadow over the warehouse floor. He marveled at the sheer size and weight of it, realizing that it was a defining feature of his father's imposing presence.

"I know what you're thinking," rumbled Faizon, his deep voice cutting through the air like a gentle thunder. "That belly is so big and probably very heavy. Look, I know. You might think I'm big and intimidating because of it. You might even think I'm fat, and I can't blame you."

Faizon's words hung in the air, punctuated by the weight of his belly. Yet, there was a warmth in his tone, a hint of reassurance that belied the surface appearance. Gilbert, who had started walking towards the bathroom, looked back and gave them a thumbs up.

"Actually, you know what?" Faizon continued, his eyes twinkling with mischief. "Remember when I said that one day your belly would grow to be as big as mine? Well, change of plans. That one day is today. We are going to teach you how to become a belly drummer."

Faizon Jr.'s eyes widened in excitement, a spark of anticipation lighting up his young face. "Really?" he exclaimed, speaking full sentences for the first time. "So I'll be able to turn my belly into a timpani drum?"

To which Faizon responded with a hearty laugh, "Actually, your belly is already a timpani drum." He reached out and gently patted Faizon Jr.'s burgeoning stomach, eliciting a slightly high-pitched timpani sound. "It's just the sound we have to work on. The deepness of the sound mirrors the size of the drum, or in this case, your belly. That's why we like to make our bellies as big as possible."

Faizon's excitement grew as he realized the potential of his own belly. With a wide grin, he eagerly awaited Faizon Sr.'s guidance on how to harness the power of the Big Belly Drum Drone.

"First things first," Faizon announced, his voice brimming with enthusiasm. "We're going to start by experimenting with the Big Belly Drum Drone."

Faizon Jr.'s anticipation reached a fever pitch as he eagerly nodded in agreement. He couldn't wait to see the drone in action and experience the exhilarating sensation of his belly growing to the rhythm of a timpani drum roll.

## CHAPTER 2

Faizon Sr. instructed Faizon Jr. to remove his shirt, preparing him for the transformative experience ahead. With a practiced hand, Faizon retrieved the drone from his shorts pocket, holding the flat square device in front of his enormous stomach.

"Watch closely, son," Faizon said, his tone both instructional and encouraging. "You attach the bottom of the square to the side of your belly, like so." He demonstrated, positioning the drone against his own belly to illustrate the process. Naturally, the drone starting to play its roll on Faizon's belly.

"The mallets point forward to hit the belly," Faizon continued, his words punctuated by the rhythmic *thud* of the drone against his flesh. "And then, they hit the belly one after another in a drum roll, like this."

With each strike of the mallets, Faizon's already enormous belly swelled slightly, the sound resonating through the warehouse like a melodic heartbeat. Faizon Jr. watched in awe, eager to try it out for himself.

"Your turn, son," Faizon said, passing the drone to Faizon Jr. with a proud smile. "Let's see what your belly can do."

With eager anticipation, Faizon Jr. attached the drone to the side of his body, positioning it just right to maximize the impact of the mallets against his belly. Meanwhile, Faizon Sr. retrieved a controller from the nearby table, his fingers poised over the buttons in readiness.

"Ready, son?" Faizon asked, his voice tinged with excitement.

Faizon Jr. nodded eagerly, a mixture of anticipation and exhilaration coursing through him.

With a press of a button, Faizon Sr. initiated the drone's sequence. Instantly, the device sprang to life, emitting a soft, fast timpani drum roll against Faizon Jr.'s stomach. With each hit, Faizon Jr.'s belly began to gradually swell, the roll growing lower and slightly louder with every passing moment.

As the minutes ticked by, Faizon Jr.'s stomach expanded under the rhythmic assault of the drone, its surface undulating slightly with each impact. Faizon Sr. monitored the progression, his eyes alight with pride at his son's growing mastery of the belly drumming technique.

When the roll had finally transitioned from a G note to a lower C note after a minute had passed, Faizon Sr. pressed another button on the controller, causing the roll to gradually return to its normal volume and pitch. Faizon Jr.'s

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

stomach followed suit, gradually reverting to its original size as the drum roll faded into silence.

But the respite was short-lived, as Faizon Sr. swiftly pressed another button, unleashing a new wave of intensity upon Faizon Jr.'s belly. The roll grew louder and lower, each hit reverberating through the warehouse with increasing force. Faizon Jr.'s belly swelled even further, its surface rippling with each impact as the mallets struck one after another with relentless determination.

With a final press of a button, Faizon Sr. brought the drone's roll to a dramatic conclusion, the last stroke echoing against Faizon Jr.'s now significantly larger belly. The warehouse fell silent, save for the lingering resonance of the final timpani hit, as Faizon Jr.'s belly, now at a diameter of 1.25 feet, wobbled gently in the aftermath of the intense drumming session, now hovering in the same fashion as Faizon Sr.'s big brown belly.

"Whoa," exclaimed Faizon Jr., his eyes wide with amazement. "Big brown belly," he said with satisfaction as he gently patted his round stomach.

Faizon Sr. nodded approvingly. "That's right, son. Now that your belly is deep enough, you can produce belly drum rolls that'll keep everyone on the edge of their seats."

He leaned in closer to Faizon Jr., his tone serious yet encouraging. "Now that we know your belly is compatible enough to make timpani drum rolls, we're going to practice rolling without the drone."

With a deft motion, Faizon removed the drone from Faizon Jr.'s belly, setting it aside for the time being.

"Now, the first thing we'll do is shaking our bellies," Faizon continued, his voice authoritative yet supportive. "You see how big your belly is right now? That's how big it's supposed to be in its intimidating size. And this method only works if the belly is in its intimidating form," he warned as he gestured toward his own formidable belly, underscoring the significance of its size and presence, "as this method doesn't make your belly grow. Only the mallets can do that."

He leaned in closer to Faizon Jr., his tone dropping to a conspiratorial whisper. "However, shaking our bellies does have its own special power," Faizon added, a glint of mischief in his eyes. "It sends out shockwaves, sort of like a signal, that can be used to call an ally over."

## CHAPTER 2

Faizon Jr. nodded, understanding the significance of the technique. With newfound knowledge, he prepared himself to master this fundamental skill in the art of belly drumming, eager to explore its potential.

"Now, you hold your lower belly with both hands," Faizon instructed, demonstrating the technique with practiced ease. "And you shake it up and down as fast and soft as you can." With each movement, a soft rolling timpani drum sound emanated from Faizon's belly, filling the air with its rhythmic pulse.

After demonstrating for 30 seconds, Faizon ceased his movements and turned to Faizon Jr. with a encouraging smile. "Now you try it, son."

Faizon Jr. took a deep breath, steeling himself for the challenge. With determination in his eyes, he began to shake his belly, following Faizon's instructions closely. At first, the roll was soft and muted, but as Faizon Jr. grew more confident, he intensified his movements.

With each shake, the timpani drum sound grew louder and more pronounced, filling the warehouse with its rhythmic pulse. Faizon Sr. watched with pride as his son embraced the technique, his belly becoming a powerful instrument of rhythm and sound.

As Faizon Jr. intensified his movements, his roll grew increasingly loud, the timpani drum sound reverberating through the warehouse with undeniable power. Each shake of his belly produced a deep, resonant *boom*, filling the space with a palpable energy.

Just as Faizon Jr. was fully immersed in his practice, Gilbert emerged from the bathroom, his ponderously heavy footsteps echoing against the floor as he made his way towards them. The intensity of Faizon Jr.'s belly drum roll had indeed caught Gilbert's attention, drawing him back to the main area of the warehouse with a sense of curiosity and intrigue.

Faizon Sr. chuckled softly at the sight. "Looks like your drum roll sent enough shockwaves to call Gilbert over," he remarked, his voice tinged with amusement. He glanced at Faizon Jr. with a proud smile, recognizing the progress his son had made in mastering the art of belly drumming. Faizon Jr. smiled back at his father before beginning to slowly waddle around the warehouse as he continued his thunderous performance.

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

As Faizon Jr.'s roll began to quiet after a minute of walking around, the thunderous drumbeat gradually faded into silence, leaving behind only the lingering echoes of its powerful resonance. With each passing moment, the rhythmic vibrations grew softer until finally, after a minute had elapsed, the sound ceased altogether.

Faizon Jr. took a moment to catch his breath, his chest rising and falling with the exertion of his efforts. Despite the quietening of the roll, a sense of accomplishment washed over him, knowing that he had successfully mastered the shaking method under Faizon Sr.'s guidance.

Faizon Sr. grinned as he retrieved a pair of felt mallets from a nearby shelf, his eyes alight with excitement. "Now, we're going to use these," he declared, holding up the mallets for Faizon Jr. to see. "The average belly drummer uses a special kind of felt mallets so that their presence is felt by their target audience whenever they play the timpani drum rolls on their bellies. Get it?"

He paused for a moment to let the significance of his words sink in before continuing. "But here's the fun part," Faizon Sr. said with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. "The felt mallets can also manipulate your belly size, even make it even bigger than its intimidating size if you really dare."

Faizon Sr. proceeded to explain the technique, demonstrating with practiced precision. "You play on your belly with the mallets by beating them against your belly like you would on a normal timpani drum." With each word, he emphasized the motion, his hands moving in sync with his explanation.

He suddenly brought one mallet down against his belly with a resounding *thud*, followed by a softer strike with the other mallet. Alternating between each stick at split-second intervals, Faizon Sr. showcased the rhythm of a timpani drum roll.

"To learn to play a timpani drum roll, you start by hitting the drum with one stick after the other," Faizon Sr. explained, his movements becoming faster and more fluid with each passing moment. "Then you gradually get faster and faster and faster," he added, his pace accelerating to match his words.

After 15 seconds of rapid drumming, Faizon Sr. was playing a timpani drum roll on his big brown belly. As he rolled, he continued to impart his wisdom to Faizon Jr. "When you're playing this fast, it becomes a roll," he said between beats, his voice carrying over the rhythmic pulse. "A roll is perfect for creating

## CHAPTER 2

suspense and tension. Sometimes it's even used to emphasize the big bellies of the fat men you see in cartoons."

With each successive beat, Faizon Sr. maintained the intensity of the roll, the sound resonating through the warehouse like a primal heartbeat. After about 15 seconds, he brought the roll to a dramatic conclusion with a final hit, his belly reverberating with the echoes of his performance.

With a proud smile, Faizon Sr. handed the mallets to Faizon Jr., encouraging him to give it a try. "Now you try. I'll bet you can make it grow bigger than its intimidating size if you concentrate hard enough," he said, his voice brimming with anticipation.

Faizon Jr. took the mallets in his hands, feeling a surge of excitement course through him as he prepared to follow in his father's footsteps. He began to beat his belly slowly at first, the mallets making soft, rhythmic thuds against his flesh.

As Faizon Jr. grew more confident, he picked up the pace, the beats becoming faster and more pronounced with each strike. Soon, he found himself in a rhythm, the mallets moving in harmony as he transitioned into a roll.

With each successive beat, Faizon Jr.'s belly responded, swelling slightly under the impact of the mallets. After a few moments, Faizon Jr.'s big brown belly drum roll reached a crescendo, his belly now noticeably larger than before. The timpani drum roll filled the warehouse with its powerful rhythm, creating an atmosphere charged with excitement and energy.

Faizon Sr. watched with pride as his son embraced the challenge, his own belly swelling with anticipation as Faizon Jr. unleashed his newfound skill. With each passing moment, Faizon Jr.'s roll grew louder and more powerful, the timpani drumbeat echoing through the warehouse with undeniable force.

As Faizon Jr. rolled on, his determination never wavered, his focus unwavering as he poured his energy into the performance. With each successive beat, he felt a sense of exhilaration building within him, knowing that he was mastering a skill that would serve him well in the days to come.

After a few moments of intense concentration, Faizon Jr. brought the roll to a dramatic conclusion, the final hit resonating through the warehouse with undeniable power. As the echoes of his performance faded into the silence,

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

Faizon Jr. looked up at Faizon Sr. with a triumphant grin, his belly now larger and more imposing than ever before. Its weight was so heavy that it hung prominently over his pants again the way Gilbert's big round belly did at either size.

Faizon congratulated Faizon Jr. with a hearty clap on the back, his pride evident in the warmth of his smile. "Well done, son," he exclaimed. "You're shaping up to be quite the belly drummer! I could hear a bear's growl in there."

With a nod of acknowledgment, Faizon Sr. continued, his enthusiasm undiminished. "Now, we're going to move on to controlling the pitch of the roll," he explained. "The pitch of the belly roll is only controllable if the belly is in its intimidating size or bigger. Which note did you hear during your roll?" Faizon Sr. asked.

Faizon Jr. thought for a moment before responding confidently, "I heard a low F."

"Correct," Faizon Sr. confirmed with a nod. "Naturally, if your belly is in its intimidating form or bigger, the note it plays is the first letter of your name, as long as your name starts with a letter that has an alphabetical index less than 8. Otherwise, the default note is always gonna be a C."

Curious, Faizon Jr. inquired, "But I heard a C when your drone was playing on my big belly. How come?"

Faizon Sr. chuckled and explained, "That's because your belly was in its smaller form at the time, and still adjusting to its intimidating pitch a bit."

Turning his attention back to the task at hand, Faizon Sr. continued, "To change the pitch of the roll, you need to concentrate on your roll and change its pitch. It'll send a signal to your belly, and then you can freely change the pitch for the length of the roll."

With a confident nod, Faizon Sr. took the mallets from Faizon Jr. and demonstrated the technique, starting to play a C roll. "Now watch closely," he instructed Faizon Jr. "I'm going to concentrate on changing my roll to a higher note."

As Faizon Jr. observed, Faizon Sr. gradually altered the pitch of his roll, transitioning it to a high Ab with fluid precision. After successfully changing the pitch, Faizon Sr. played on for a minute, the roll now resonating with a new, higher tone.

## CHAPTER 2

Gradually, Faizon Sr. transitioned the roll back to its original C, his movements deliberate and controlled. He continued to roll softly for a minute, allowing Faizon Jr. to observe the technique in action, before finally bringing the roll to a gentle stop, the warehouse filled with the lingering echoes of his roll.

"Alright, take these back," Faizon Sr. said, giving his son the mallets. With a nod of acknowledgment, Faizon Jr. accepted the mallets back from Faizon Sr., his determination fueled by the newfound knowledge and skills he had acquired.

"Follow me," Faizon Sr. instructed, leading Faizon Jr. towards two timpani drums nestled in the corner of the warehouse. Gilbert, who had been sitting on one of the drums, rose from his seat as Faizon approached.

As Faizon Jr. joined them behind the timpani drums, Gilbert couldn't resist a playful jab, poking Faizon Jr.'s belly with a chuckle. "Big brown belly," he muttered with a grin, before retreating to watch from the corner of the room.

Meanwhile, Faizon Sr. wasted no time in picking up two mallets that lay atop the timpani drum opposite the one Gilbert had vacated. His movements were deliberate and purposeful, the anticipation in the air palpable as Faizon Jr. waited with bated breath for what was to come next.

"We're going to do an exercise," Faizon Sr. announced, his voice brimming with enthusiasm. "I'll play these timpani drums, and whenever you hear the higher note, you concentrate on making your belly drum roll higher. And when you hear the low note, you concentrate on bringing it back to its regular pitch. You ready?"

Faizon Jr. nodded eagerly, his anticipation mounting as Faizon Sr. outlined the exercise they were about to undertake. With a determined expression, he affirmed, "Ready."

"Alright. Let's roll," Faizon Sr. declared with a grin, his excitement matching Faizon Jr.'s.

As Faizon Jr. began to roll softly on his belly with his own mallets, the sound echoed through the warehouse like a distant thunderstorm approaching slowly. Each beat reverberated with a sense of power and anticipation, filling the space with a gentle, rolling thunder. The rhythmic pulse of Faizon Jr.'s belly drum

## THE AGE ACCELERATOR

resonated through the air, gradually building in intensity as Faizon Sr. prepared to lead the exercise.

With practiced precision, Faizon Sr. struck the low timpani drum, its deep, resonant sound adding depth to the rolling thunder of Faizon Jr.'s belly drum. The notes blended harmoniously, both the timpani drum and the belly drum tuned to a low F. Pausing for a moment, Faizon Sr. struck the low drum twice more before transitioning to the high timpani drum, tuned to a C.

As Faizon Sr. played the high note, Faizon Jr. focused intently, gradually increasing the pitch of his roll to match the C note being played. Each successive beat of the high timpani drum guided Faizon Jr., who adjusted his roll with precision, their rhythms perfectly synchronized.

After a brief pause, Faizon Sr. struck the high timpani drum three times slowly, the notes ringing out clearly in the warehouse. He waited a moment before repeating the sequence, this time at a slightly faster pace, then transitioned back to the low timpani drum. Faizon Jr. smoothly adjusted his soft roll to match the low F note, mirroring the rhythm of Faizon Sr.'s drumming. Their performance flowed seamlessly, the warehouse alive with the harmonious interplay of sound.

After the same sequence was repeated twice more, Faizon Jr. gradually softened his roll until only a gentle rumble could be felt beneath the mallets. With a final flourish, he brought his belly drumming to a gentle stop, the echoes of their synchronized performance lingering in the air.

Faizon Sr. beamed with pride as Faizon Jr. successfully completed the exercise, his belly drum roll perfectly synchronized with the rhythm of the timpani drums. "Well done, son," Faizon Sr. praised, his voice filled with genuine admiration. "You nailed it!"

In a gesture of celebration, Faizon Sr. patted his own belly, producing a rolling timpani drum sound that echoed through the warehouse. The rhythmic pulse added an extra layer of excitement to the moment, a fitting tribute to Faizon Jr.'s achievement.

Faizon Jr. grinned with pride at his father's demonstration, feeling a sense of accomplishment wash over him. Together, they had successfully completed the exercise, their synchronized performance a testament to their shared passion for belly drumming.

## CHAPTER 2

As the echoes of their synchronized performance faded, a heavy stomp broke through the lingering silence. Gilbert was approaching, each step echoing through the space. "That was incredible, Faizon Jr." he said, grinning. "I could feel the power from the other side of the warehouse."

Faizon Jr. laughed, rubbing his big brown belly. "Thanks, Uncle G. I think I'm getting the hang of this."

Gilbert poked Faizon Jr.'s belly playfully, watching it jiggle. "You sure are. Your dad's right; it's like you've got a bear's strength in there." He decided to draw their attention back to the present moment. With a sheepish smile, he said, "Anyway, sorry to interrupt this interaction, but don't you think we should go to the restaurant for breakfast? I hear they're servin' somethin' fresh today, and it wouldn't hurt a bit to see what they're cookin'."

Faizon Sr. chuckled warmly, his jovial demeanor returning as he nodded in agreement. "You're right, Gilbert. A hearty breakfast sounds like a great idea after all this drumming."

Turning to Faizon Jr. with a playful twinkle in his eye, he added, "What do you say, champ? Ready for some breakfast? Elijah is going to hit us with one of his dark stories this morning."

Faizon Jr. grinned eagerly and nodded enthusiastically, his bare-chested stomach rumbling in anticipation of a delicious meal and the company of his father and uncle. With a final pat on his big brown belly, Faizon Sr. led the way, his heavy footsteps echoing through the warehouse as they walked out the open door. Faizon Jr. followed Faizon Sr. and Gilbert out of the warehouse, eager to indulge in both food and fellowship.

# 3

## Elijah's Story

**A**s they stepped into Timpani Temptations, the aroma of freshly cooked food filled the air, mingling with the lively chatter of patrons enjoying their meals. Big men with various belly sizes were scattered throughout the restaurant, engaged in animated conversations and hearty laughter.

Faizon took the lead, guiding Faizon Jr. and Gilbert to an empty table nestled in a cozy corner of the bustling eatery. With a sense of familiarity, they settled into their seats, ready to indulge in the culinary delights that Timpani Temptations had to offer.

Their attention was soon drawn to the approach of a familiar figure. Elijah, with his distinctively deep voice and imposing presence, made his way towards their table with a friendly smile. "Hey, Faizon, Gilbert," he greeted them warmly, his eyes twinkling with familiarity.

Elijah stood as a prominent figure among Timpanopia's residents. With a commanding presence and a voice that carried like thunder, he was known far and wide for his captivating storytelling and his undeniable talent for belly drumming.

Elijah was more than just a storyteller; he was a beloved member of the community, a cherished friend to many, and a source of inspiration for those who crossed his path. His stories were legendary, weaving tales of adventure, mystery, and triumph that transported listeners to far-off lands and filled their hearts with wonder.

But perhaps what set Elijah apart was his deep connection to music, a bond that ran through the very core of his being. As the brother of Charles, a revered member of Faizon's Obese Orchestra, Elijah shared a lineage of musical

## CHAPTER 3

prowess that stretched back through generations. Charles' presence in the orchestra had been immortalized in Faizon's Obese Orchestra app, a digital tribute to the talents of the ensemble and a testament to their enduring legacy.

Through Charles, Elijah had been introduced to the world of belly drumming, a tradition that had been passed down through their family for generations. Together, they had honed their skills, mastering the art of creating mesmerizing rhythms that echoed through the halls of Timpanopia with unmatched power and precision.

Elijah shared not only a bond of blood with his brother but also a striking resemblance. With a black goatee beard and neat cut adorning his head and cool-toned brown skin that contrasted with Faizon's slightly lighter hue, Elijah cut a distinct figure in the community of Timpanopia. Yet, it was his sizable belly, measuring at a 0.75-foot diameter in its intimidating form, the same size as Faizon's belly in its normal form, that truly set him apart, echoing the proud tradition of belly drumming that ran through their family's veins.

But while Charles had found his calling in the spotlight of the orchestra, Elijah had discovered his own passion in the art of storytelling. With a natural gift for weaving words into captivating tales, he had enchanted audiences young and old alike, earning a reputation as Timpanopia's resident storyteller.

Today, he was wearing black pants with a white tank top, showcasing his massive muscles.

Turning his attention to Faizon Jr., Elijah's gaze softened as he addressed the big, young boy. "Hey, kid," he said affectionately, his tone gentle yet playful. "Are you with Faizon?"

Faizon Sr. nodded with pride as he affirmed, "Yes, Elijah. Faizon Jr. is our son."

A flicker of surprise danced across Elijah's otherwise dark features. His eyes widened ever so slightly as they lingered on the young boy's big brown belly, a testament to his impressive size even at such a tender age.

"Wow," Elijah exclaimed softly, his surprise evident in his tone. "Look at you, young man. Quite the impressive belly you've got there."

Faizon Jr. grinned proudly, puffing out his chest as he basked in the attention. Despite his youth, he wore his belly with confidence, fully embracing the legacy of his larger-than-life family.

## ELIJAH'S STORY

Faizon Sr. chuckled warmly at Elijah's reaction, a hint of pride evident in his voice. "He's following in his old man's footsteps," he remarked with a playful glint in his eye. "Big bellies run in the family, after all."

After the exchange of pleasantries and Elijah's surprise at Faizon Jr.'s big brown belly, he turned his attention to their dining preferences. With a friendly smile, he inquired, "So, what'll it be today, gentlemen? Any cravings for our delectable delights?"

Faizon Sr. leaned back in his chair, his gaze scanning the menu with a thoughtful expression. After a moment of consideration, he decided, "We'll have three of your famous Timpani Tacos, please. One for each of us."

Elijah nodded in acknowledgment, jotting down the order on his notepad with practiced ease. "Three Timpani Tacos coming right up," he confirmed with a smile. "Anything to drink with that?"

Faizon Sr. glanced at Faizon Jr. and Gilbert, silently seeking their input before replying, "Just some water for now, thank you."

As Elijah returned with their order of Timpani Tacos, Faizon Jr.'s eyes lit up with excitement. Eager to dive into his meal, he wasted no time in grabbing his taco and taking a hearty bite. With youthful enthusiasm, he devoured the taco in record time, swallowing it down in one impressive gulp.

The onlookers couldn't help but marvel at the sight, their eyes widening in astonishment at Faizon Jr.'s voracious appetite. But the most remarkable moment came a few seconds later when the taco made its dramatic descent into the pit of Faizon Jr.'s big brown belly.

As the taco landed with a soft *thud*, Faizon Jr.'s hollow-sounding belly jiggled in response, producing a melodious timpani drum glissando that reverberated through the restaurant. The unexpected sound drew the attention of nearby patrons, who turned to watch in awe as Faizon Jr.'s belly showcased its unique talent.

Faizon Sr. chuckled proudly at his son's impressive display, a grin spreading across his face as he exchanged amused glances with Gilbert. "Looks like someone's got a knack for belly drumming," he remarked with a hint of pride in his voice.

With a satisfied sigh, Faizon Jr. leaned back in his chair, his belly now comfortably filled with the delicious flavors of his Timpani Taco.

### CHAPTER 3

As the lively chatter amongst the residents of Timpanopia gradually quieted, a hush fell over the restaurant, broken only by the distant sound of three dull timpani drum hits. Faizon Jr., ever attuned to the nuances of belly drumming, noted to himself that the timpani drum or belly was being played on an E. It must've been Elijah, he surmised, recognizing the distinctive pitch of his friend's belly.

Sure enough, as all eyes turned to a single point in the restaurant, their gaze settled upon Elijah, who was making his way to a slightly raised platform in the corner of the dining area. With a confident stride, he took his seat, a sense of anticipation hanging in the air as the patrons awaited his next performance.

Faizon Sr. and Gilbert exchanged knowing glances, their curiosity piqued by Elijah's sudden display of belly drumming prowess. It was a rare treat to witness such a performance, and Gilbert settled back in his seat, eager to enjoy the spectacle that was about to unfold.

As Elijah settled into position, the air crackled with anticipation, the rhythmic pulse of the timpani drums serving as a prelude to the mesmerizing performance that was to come. With a steady hand and a focused expression, Elijah prepared to unleash his dark stories upon the eager audience.

Faizon Jr. glanced around, momentarily puzzled by his father's absence. However, his curiosity was swiftly sated as he spotted Faizon Sr. engaged in a curious exchange with Elijah. Faizon Sr. was extending his drone toward Elijah, who had removed his tank top for the time being. The exchange piqued Faizon Jr.'s interest, and he watched intently as Elijah accepted the device with a mixture of excitement and trepidation.

"Thanks, Faizon," Elijah exclaimed, his eyes bright with anticipation, his voice rumbling with the same thunder as Faizon's voice. "I've always admired your impressive belly, but I never knew when the right time to try to recreate its intimidating effect was." He attached the drone to his midsection, and the familiar percussion of a timpani drum roll started.

With a nod of acknowledgment, Faizon Sr. grinned knowingly, his own belly jiggling with mirth as he reclaimed his seat beside Faizon Jr.

"Listen closely, son," Faizon Sr. advised, gesturing toward Elijah. "Elijah's got a story to tell."

## ELIJAH'S STORY

Faizon Jr. obeyed, his ears attuned to the soft echo of the timpani drum roll emanating from Elijah's gradually expanding belly. As the rhythmic beat filled the air, Faizon Jr. couldn't help but note the pitch—a low E note, resonating with a melodious hum. Meanwhile, Elijah's round belly began to swell gradually, the drone's mallets orchestrating a symphony of growth.

As Elijah settled into his storytelling, a hushed silence fell over the gathered crowd, punctuated only by the rhythmic beat of the timpani drum roll emanating from his expanding belly. His voice, initially soft and measured, soon gained momentum, weaving a tapestry of intrigue and foreboding.

"It began," Elijah began, his tone grave, "with whispers in the shadows, murmurs carried on the winds of uncertainty. Tales of a darkness long thought dormant, stirring once more beneath the surface of our world."

With each word, the intensity of the drum roll seemed to swell, its echoes growing louder, more insistent, as if echoing the ominous undertones of Elijah's narrative. The patrons of Timpani Temptations leaned in, captivated by the gravity of his words and the palpable sense of unease that hung heavy in the air.

"The signs were subtle at first," Elijah continued, his gaze fixed on the flickering candlelight dancing across the tabletops. "A disturbance in the rhythms of nature, a shadow creeping across the land where once there was light. Whispers turned to murmurs, murmurs to rumors, until the truth could no longer be ignored."

As Elijah spoke, his belly swelled with each passing moment, the drum roll reaching a crescendo that seemed to mirror the rising tension of his tale. Faizon Jr. watched with wide eyes, his heart quickening in his chest as the weight of Elijah's words settled upon him like a heavy shroud.

"It is said," Elijah intoned, his voice low and ominous, "that the ancient darkness has begun to stir once more, its tendrils reaching out, seeking to ensnare all who stand in its path. Those who once fought against it have vanished without a trace, their memories fading like echoes in the night."

The timpani drum roll reverberated through the restaurant, the sound now thunderous in its intensity, as if heralding the impending storm foretold by Elijah's words. Faizon Sr. exchanged a knowing glance with Gilbert, the gravity of the situation weighing heavily upon them all.

### CHAPTER 3

"But fear not, my friends," Elijah declared, his voice ringing with resolve. "For even in the darkest of times, there is hope yet to be found. We must stand together, united against the encroaching shadows, and remember that even the smallest light can banish the deepest darkness."

With those words, the drum roll reached its zenith, the sound echoing throughout the restaurant with a deafening roar before gradually fading into silence. The patrons of Timpani Temptations sat in stunned silence, the weight of Elijah's tale hanging heavy in the air like a shroud of uncertainty. Faizon Jr. exchanged a knowing glance with his father, a silent acknowledgment of the challenges that lay ahead.

Suddenly, a thunderous applause erupted from the patrons of Timpani Temptations. Hands of various sizes clapped together in admiration and appreciation for the storyteller's skill in weaving such a captivating narrative, while murmurs of awe and admiration filled the room.

Amidst the applause, Faizon Jr., his eyes wide with a mixture of excitement and apprehension, sought reassurance in the familiar warmth of Faizon Sr.'s gaze, silently pleading for guidance in the face of the ominous tale they had just heard.

Faizon Sr. met his son's gaze with a reassuring smile, his eyes twinkling with a mixture of pride and understanding. He placed a comforting hand on Faizon Jr.'s shoulder, a silent gesture of support and encouragement in the wake of Elijah's unsettling revelations.

"That was quite a story, wasn't it, son?" Faizon Sr. remarked, his voice low and reassuring. "But remember, stories are just stories. It's what we do with them that matters most."

Faizon Jr. nodded, his apprehension tempered by his father's wisdom. He drew strength from Faizon Sr.'s words, a newfound resolve settling within him as he contemplated the challenges that lay ahead.

As the applause gradually subsided, Gilbert turned to Faizon with a look of profound admiration and respect. His eyes, alight with a flicker of excitement, reflected the lingering echoes of Elijah's tale, a testament to the storyteller's skill in capturing the imagination of their audience.

## ELIJAH'S STORY

"That was incredible, Faizon," Gilbert exclaimed, his voice filled with genuine awe. "I've never heard Elijah spin a tale quite like that before. The way he had us all on the edge of our seats... it's like we were living the story ourselves."

Faizon nodded in agreement, a smile playing at the corners of his lips as he exchanged a knowing glance with Gilbert. The weight of Elijah's words lingered in the air between them, a silent reminder of the challenges that lay ahead.

"It certainly was something," Faizon replied, his voice tinged with a hint of contemplation. "But it's not just the story that's got me thinking. There's a weight to Elijah's words, a sense of truth beneath the surface. We'd be wise not to ignore it."

Gilbert nodded solemnly, his expression mirroring Faizon's concern. He knew all too well the importance of heeding the warnings of the wise, especially in times of uncertainty.

"You're right, Faizon," Gilbert agreed, his voice low and earnest. "We can't afford to dismiss this as mere superstition. There's something stirring in Timpanopia, and we need to be prepared for whatever comes our way."

But despite the reassurances of his friends and the camaraderie that filled the air, Faizon couldn't shake the nagging feeling of unease that had settled deep within his gut. Elijah's story had struck a chord within him, resonating with an eerie familiarity that sent shivers down his spine.

As he sat in the midst of the bustling restaurant, surrounded by laughter and conversation, Faizon found himself lost in thought, his mind drifting back to the vivid images that had haunted his dreams the night before. The parallels between Elijah's tale and the unsettling visions that had plagued him were impossible to ignore, leaving Faizon with a sense of foreboding that gnawed at his insides.

"I can't shake the feeling that there's more to Elijah's story than meets the eye," Faizon muttered under his breath, his words barely audible over the din of the crowd.

Gilbert, ever perceptive to Faizon's moods, turned to him with a furrowed brow, concern etched into the lines of his weathered face.

"What do you mean, Faizon?" Gilbert asked, his voice tinged with apprehension.

## CHAPTER 3

Faizon hesitated, unsure of how to put his feelings into words. The weight of his premonitions hung heavy upon him, casting a shadow over the jovial atmosphere of the restaurant.

"It's just... Elijah's story," Faizon began, his voice trailing off as he struggled to articulate the turmoil raging within him. "It felt... familiar, somehow. Like I've heard it before."

Gilbert's expression softened with understanding, his eyes reflecting the depth of Faizon's unease.

"You think there's a connection between Elijah's tale and your dream?" Gilbert ventured, his voice barely above a whisper.

Faizon nodded slowly, a knot of apprehension tightening in his chest. The pieces of the puzzle were beginning to fall into place, painting a picture of looming danger that he couldn't afford to ignore.

As the distant sound of deep gongs suddenly reverberated through the air, signaling the conclusion of the morning meal, the bustling activity within Timpani Temptations gradually began to wind down. Plates were cleared away, conversations dwindled to murmurs, and patrons prepared to depart, their bellies full and spirits lifted by the camaraderie of the meal.

Elijah's belly, now matching Faizon's impressive girth, jiggled from the sound of the distant gongs as cast a knowing glance around the restaurant, his expression one of quiet authority. With a voice that carried the weight of his newfound stature, he addressed the gathered crowd.

"You know what those gongs mean," Elijah announced, his tone firm but not unkind. "Breakfast is over. Start finishing up and stay where you are. I have a special announcement to make."

His words served as a gentle reminder to the patrons, signaling the end of their morning reprieve. Faizon Jr. watched with a mixture of awe and admiration as Elijah commanded the attention of the room, his newfound confidence mirroring the swell of his belly.

Faizon Sr. exchanged a nod of acknowledgment with his son, a silent acknowledgment of the shifting dynamics within their tight-knit community. The events of the morning had brought with them a sense of urgency, a reminder that their world was teetering on the edge of uncertainty.

## ELIJAH'S STORY

Faizon Jr. turned to his father, his gaze lingering on Elijah's giant form as the distant gongs continued to clang and clash to their uneven polyrhythm.

"What do you think, Dad?" Faizon Jr. asked, his voice hushed with reverence. "Do you think Elijah's story was true?"

Faizon Sr. paused for a moment, his brow furrowed in thought. The echoes of Elijah's tale still reverberated in his mind, a haunting reminder of the dangers that lurked just beyond the horizon.

"I'm not sure, son," Faizon Sr. admitted, his voice tinged with uncertainty. "But one thing's for certain—there's more to this than meets the eye. And we need to be ready for whatever comes our way."

As the lively atmosphere of Timpani Temptations continued to buzz with animated chatter, Elijah rose to his feet, a mischievous glint in his eye. With a playful grin, he declared, "It is now time for our daily special shoutout!"

With a flourish, Elijah unleashed a thunderous timpani hit on his belly, the sound reverberating through the restaurant with a commanding presence. Without missing a beat, he transitioned seamlessly into a soft timpani drum roll on his expansive brown belly, the rhythmic beats filling the air with a melodic cadence that captivated the audience for a full thirty seconds. Faizon Jr. noticed that now his belly was being played on a low Bb note.

As the roll came to a gentle conclusion with a soft hit, Elijah waited with bated breath, allowing the anticipation to build to a fever pitch. Then—

"Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in giving a warm welcome to Faizon Jr.!" Elijah exclaimed, his words met with thunderous applause and cheers from the gathered crowd.

Emboldened by the enthusiastic response, Faizon Jr. climbed onto a nearby table, his big brown belly proudly protruding over the waistband of his pants. With a deep bow, he acknowledged the adulation of the crowd before leaping off the table with a flourish, his infectious energy lighting up the room.

As the applause began to subside, Elijah, now clad in his tank top once more, addressed the patrons with a jovial smile. "The playground is open to anyone who wants to have some fun!" he announced, gesturing toward the outdoor play area adjacent to the restaurant.

"Perhaps some of our younger guests would like to join Faizon Jr. for a game," he suggested, his eyes twinkling with amusement.

## CHAPTER 3

As Faizon and Faizon Jr. made their way towards the playground, Faizon Jr. couldn't contain his excitement, his eyes sparkling with anticipation of the fun-filled activities that awaited them. Sensing his son's enthusiasm, Faizon Jr. decided to engage him in conversation, eager to share in the joy of their time together.

"You know, son," Faizon began, his voice filled with paternal warmth, "I've always had a soft spot for percussion instruments. There's just something magical about the way they can set the rhythm of a song and bring it to life."

Faizon Jr. nodded eagerly, his interest piqued by his father's words. "Yeah, Dad, percussion instruments are awesome! I especially love the sound of the timpani drums we were playing earlier. It's like they have a voice of their own, you know?"

Faizon smiled proudly at his son's enthusiasm, his heart swelling with paternal pride. "Absolutely, Faizon Jr.," he replied, his voice tinged with admiration. "And did you know that each percussion instrument has its own unique sound and role in an ensemble? Take the snare drum, for example—it provides that crisp, staccato rhythm that drives the music forward."

Faizon Jr. listened intently, soaking in his father's words with rapt attention. "And what about the cymbals?" he asked, curiosity gleaming in his eyes. "I love the way they *crash* and shimmer, adding drama and flair to the music."

Faizon chuckled softly, his affection for his son evident in the gentle twinkle of his eyes. "Ah, the cymbals—they're like the punctuation marks of the percussion section, adding emphasis and excitement to the music," he explained. "It's all about finding the right balance and timing to create that perfect crescendo."

As they made their way towards the playground, the distant clash of gongs echoed through the air, their reverberations adding a touch of mystique to the already lively atmosphere. Faizon Jr. glanced in the direction of the sound, a curious expression playing across his features.

"Dad, do you hear that?" he asked, his voice tinged with intrigue. "Those gongs—they sound so powerful and mysterious."

Faizon nodded, his own curiosity piqued by the distant sound. "Ah, yes, the gongs," he replied, his tone thoughtful. "They're an ancient percussion

## ELIJAH'S STORY

instrument, often used in ceremonial rituals and cultural celebrations. The way they resonate through the air can be quite mesmerizing."

Faizon Jr. listened intently, his fascination with percussion instruments evident in the eager gleam of his eyes. "I've never heard gongs like that before," he mused, his imagination taking flight. "It's like they're telling a story all on their own."

His son's observation brought a smile to Faizon's lips, his heart swelling with paternal pride. "You have a keen ear, Faizon Jr.," he remarked, his voice filled with warmth. "Gongs have a way of capturing the imagination and stirring the soul—it's no wonder they've been used in music and ceremony for centuries."



As Faizon Jr. arrived at the playground, the vibrant energy of the children at play filled the air, their laughter and shouts mingling with the rustle of leaves in the breeze. Elijah, now clad in his tank top once more, stood at the center of the playground, his formidable belly restored to its regular intimidating size, its diameter measuring a staggering 0.75 foot.

Nearby, there was a big, wide, and chubby boy with a big belly measuring at 0.5 foot in diameter (which hung slightly over his waistband) that bore a striking resemblance to Gilbert, his cheeks flushed with excitement as he engaged in conversation with Faizon Jr. However, his innocent observation soon took a misguided turn as he made a comment about Elijah's belly, mistaking him for Faizon Jr.'s father.

"Wow, your dad has a huge beer belly!" the heavy boy exclaimed, his voice filled with innocent curiosity.

Faizon Jr., taken aback by the misconception, quickly shook his head and corrected him. "Actually, Elijah isn't my father," he explained, gesturing towards Faizon Sr., who stood nearby. "That's my father over there."

The boy blinked in surprise, his chubby cheeks flushing with embarrassment. "Oh, my bad!" he exclaimed, his voice sheepish. "His belly is enormous! I guess that's why your belly is so big too!"

## CHAPTER 3

With a playful grin, he pointed at Faizon Jr.'s protruding brown belly, his chubby fingers poking at the soft flesh with innocent curiosity. "Bet you can't even see your feet with a belly like that!" he teased, his laughter ringing out across the playground.

Faizon Jr., unfazed by the playful jibe, chuckled good-naturedly and shook his head. "Nah, I can see them just fine," he replied, his tone lighthearted. "But having a big belly just means there's more of me to love, right?"

As the heavy boy introduced himself as Gabriel, Faizon Jr. greeted him with a friendly smile, pleased to have made a new acquaintance. "Nice to meet you, Gabriel," he replied warmly, his own belly jiggling slightly with each syllable. "I'm Faizon Jr."

Gabriel's eyes widened with recognition as Faizon Jr. revealed his name. "So that big guy with the ginormous belly must be Faizon, my father's cousin!" he exclaimed with a grin, pointing towards Faizon Sr. who was engaged in conversation nearby.

Faizon Jr.'s brow furrowed in confusion, prompting Gabriel to explain further. "Yeah, Gilbert dropped me off here to hang out with my uncle four days ago," he continued, his chubby cheeks dimpling with a smile. "He just returned me today."

Just then, Gilbert appeared on the scene, his familiar face lighting up with recognition as he spotted Gabriel. "Hey there, Gabriel!" he called out, making his way over to join the conversation. "How was your time with your Uncle Biggums?"

Gabriel beamed at Gilbert's question, his chubby cheeks flushed with excitement. "It was fun," he replied enthusiastically. "He let me play the timpani drum on his big round belly!"

Gilbert chuckled at Gabriel's enthusiasm, nodding in agreement. "Yes, he does have quite the belly," he agreed with a grin.

With a mischievous twinkle in his eye, Gabriel lifted his shirt, revealing his own sizable belly to Faizon Jr. and Gilbert. "Well, I've got a bit of a belly too," he admitted with a shrug. "But hey, who needs a six-pack when you've got a snack pack, amirite?"

Faizon Jr. and Gilbert couldn't help but laugh at Gabriel's jovial remark, their shared bond growing stronger with each passing moment.

## ELIJAH'S STORY

With a playful glint in his eye, Gabriel turned to Faizon Jr., his curiosity piqued. "Hey, Faizon Jr., can you make timpani drum rolls with your big brown belly too?" he asked, his chubby cheeks dimpling with anticipation.

Faizon Jr. grinned at the request, already one step ahead. With one hand firmly pressed against his prominent stomach, he raised his other hand high above his head, ready to strike.

In one swift motion, Faizon Jr. brought his hand down with a resounding *thud*, creating a slightly louder timpani drum hit that reverberated through the air. Without missing a beat, he transitioned seamlessly into a rhythmic shaking of his stomach like Elijah had done, his flesh quivering and jiggling in perfect harmony.

For the next thirty seconds, Faizon Jr.'s belly performed a mesmerizing timpani drum roll in a low F, the soft *thud-thud-thud* of his flesh creating a melodic cadence that captivated Gabriel and Gilbert alike.

As the roll came to a gentle conclusion, Faizon Jr. released his hold on his stomach, allowing it to jiggle prominently with each movement. With a proud grin, he looked to Gabriel and Gilbert, their eyes wide with amazement at the spectacle before them.

"Wow, Faizon Jr., that was amazing!" Gabriel exclaimed, his chubby cheeks flushed with excitement. "You've got some serious talent with that belly of yours!"

Faizon Jr. chuckled modestly at the compliment, his own cheeks tinged with a rosy hue. "Thanks, Gabriel," he replied with a grin. "Just a little trick I picked up."

As they shared a moment of laughter and camaraderie, Faizon Jr. couldn't help but feel a sense of pride in his unique talent—a talent that had brought joy and laughter to those around him.

Gabriel's laughter filled the air, his eyes sparkling with amusement. "You know, Faizon Jr.," he continued, unable to resist another quip, "if your belly gets any bigger, you could probably give the playground's slide a run for its money in the fun department!"

Faizon Jr. couldn't help but join in the laughter, his big brown belly bouncing with each hearty chuckle. "Who needs a slide when you've got a belly as big and bouncy as mine?" he joked, playfully patting his big brown belly for emphasis.

## CHAPTER 3

Faizon Sr. called out to Faizon Jr., his voice carrying across the playground with gentle authority. "Faizon Jr., it's time to head back now," he announced, his tone firm but affectionate. Faizon Jr. nodded in understanding, reluctantly tearing himself away from the lively conversation with Gabriel and Gilbert.

Gilbert chimed in, his friendly demeanor easing the transition. "Hey, why don't you and Gabriel come play around in the warehouse?" he suggested, his eyes twinkling with anticipation. "Gabriel will be joining us now that his visit with his grandfather is over."

Gabriel's face lit up with excitement at the prospect, his chubby cheeks dimpling with a wide grin. "Yes, let's go!" he cheered enthusiastically, his enthusiasm infectious.

With a nod of agreement, Faizon Sr. and Gilbert began to lead the way back to the warehouse, their children following close behind. As they made their way through the bustling playground, laughter and chatter filling the air, Faizon Jr. couldn't help but feel a sense of anticipation for the adventures that awaited them in the familiar confines of the warehouse.

With each step, he felt a surge of excitement, knowing that he was surrounded by friends who shared in his joy and laughter. In that moment, as they marched back to the warehouse with smiles on their faces and laughter in their hearts, Faizon Jr. embraced the simple pleasure of being surrounded by those he loved, his big brown belly bouncing with each step as he looked forward to their next adventure together.



In the ancient realm of Enigma Evergreen, where the sun dared not cast its rays, a palpable sense of foreboding hung heavy in the air. Within the depths of a sacred chamber, nestled amidst the tangled roots of the Evergreen Forest, stood a pedestal unlike any other.

Shaped like the bowl of a timpani drum, the pedestal radiated an aura of ancient power, its surface etched with mysterious runes and symbols that

## ELIJAH'S STORY

whispered of long-forgotten secrets. For centuries, it had remained dormant, a silent sentinel guarding the sanctity of the realm.

Yet on this fateful day, a tremor rippled through the chamber, as if the very earth itself quivered in anticipation. A dark aura, thick and suffocating, suddenly arose from the depths of the pedestal, spiraling upwards with an ominous intensity.

The air crackled with an otherworldly energy as the dark aura coiled and twisted around the pedestal, shrouding it in an impenetrable cloak of shadow. Within the swirling vortex of darkness, a figure began to take shape—a towering, menacing silhouette that seemed to draw its very essence from the abyss.

With a deafening roar that echoed through the chamber like thunder, the shadowy figure erupted from the heart of the dark aura, its form twisting and contorting with a primal fury. Eyes blazing with malevolent intent, it surveyed its surroundings with a hunger that bordered on madness.

As the shadowy figure swirled around a focal point in front of the pedestal, a ripple of anticipation coursed through the chamber, heralding the emergence of another mysterious figure. From the depths of darkness stepped a being whose presence commanded attention, a clone of BOMBarder, the formidable military variant from the Obese Orchestra app.

With a complexion slightly darker than Faizon's, this imposing figure bore all the hallmarks of a seasoned warrior, his expansive belly rivaling Faizon's in size and stature. Clad in the familiar military pants and cap, the absence of a shirt only served to accentuate the muscular contours of his formidable frame.

Unlike Faizon's dream, where BOMBarder had loomed large in size, this clone stood at his regular stature, yet his presence was no less imposing. Around his neck hung a cascade of gleaming medals.

"Welcome to Enigma Evergreen, big bomber boy." the shadowy figure hissed in a voice that seemed to reverberate with echoes of the abyss, each word dripping with malevolence and menace. "I created you for a reason - to aid me in my attempt to finally rid Beatweaver Haven of all its peace."

In response, BOMBarder, the formidable clone, stood tall and unyielding, his serious expression hidden behind a mask of unwavering resolve. Despite the

### CHAPTER 3

darkness that surrounded him, there was a glint of determination in his eyes, a spark of obedience that refused to be extinguished.

"Yes, but I have a name," BOMBarder chuckled darkly, his voice deep and resonant, like the rumble of distant thunder. "And that's BOMBarder. I come from the depths of a particular app called 'Obese Orchestra Playroom.'"

The shadow, undeterred by BOMBarder's defiance, revealed its sinister intentions with a chilling calmness. "Indeed," it replied, its voice a low, ominous whisper that sent shivers down BOMBarder's spine. "I have harnessed the power of that app, stolen its data, and molded you into a weapon of destruction. You are mine to command, BOMBarder, and together, we shall bring about the downfall of Beatweaver Haven. And now, you will live to serve me in my attempt to destroy this world once and for all. I will be generating your friends shortly, but for now, go plant me some bombs, bomber boy."

With a malicious gleam in his eyes and a deep, rumbling chuckle that reverberated from deep within his vast belly, BOMBarder acknowledged the shadow's instructions, his massive belly quivering with anticipation. The shadow watched with cold detachment as the clone began to shake his massive belly, the rhythmic timpani drum roll echoing through the chamber with a haunting intensity. With each powerful vibration, the forest trembled, the very earth itself quaking beneath the weight of BOMBarder's actions.

In the distance, the unmistakable sound of an explosion shattered the stillness, signaling the beginning of the shadow's reign of terror. With a sense of grim determination, BOMBarder turned away from the shadow, his heavy footsteps echoing through the chamber like thunder as he embarked on his dark mission.

With each deliberate stride, he moved further away from the shadow, his resolve unshakable despite the darkness that threatened to consume him. As he disappeared into the depths of the forest, the shadow watched with satisfaction, its plans set in motion and its control over BOMBarder unyielding. In the realm of Enigma Evergreen, where darkness reigned supreme and secrets whispered on the wind, a sinister alliance had been forged, spelling doom for Beatweaver Haven.

# 4

## The Funeral

**A**s the late afternoon sun cast its warm glow through the windows of the warehouse, Faizon Jr. and Gabriel were playing around in the heart of the vast space, surrounded by an eclectic array of percussion instruments and musical paraphernalia. The air was filled with the rhythmic pulse of their conversation, punctuated by bursts of laughter and the occasional clatter of drumsticks against drums.

Gabriel's chubby cheeks were flushed with excitement as he marveled at the realization that they were cousins. "I still can't believe it," he exclaimed, his eyes wide with wonder. "You and I, Faizon Jr., we're actually related!"

Faizon Jr. grinned in agreement, his own excitement mirrored in the twinkle of his eyes. "Yeah, it's pretty wild," he replied, his voice tinged with amazement. "Who would've thought we'd find out we're cousins here of all places?"

Gabriel nodded eagerly, his curiosity getting the better of him. "Hey, Faizon Jr., do you think you could show me how to play those, uh, rolling drums on my belly?" he asked, his chubby fingers fidgeting with anticipation. "You know, the timmy roll—no, the timpdrum—I mean the tummy—what's the word again?"

Faizon Jr. chuckled at Gabriel's attempt to recall the name of the instrument and the technique, his own excitement bubbling over as he prepared to share his passion for percussion with his newfound cousin. "You mean the timpani drum roll!" he exclaimed with a grin, his voice filled with enthusiasm. "You can even call them *roulement de timbales*. Or *Paukenwirbel*. The timpani drums, or kettledrums, with or without spaces, are these big drums that you play with mallets, and they make this deep, booming sound." He slapped a hand on his big brown belly to demonstrate.

## CHAPTER 4

As Faizon Jr. demonstrated his skill with the timpani drums, Faizon watched with a sense of pride swelling in his chest. His son's passion for percussion was evident in every beat, and Faizon couldn't help but feel a swell of paternal pride at the sight of Faizon Jr. embracing his musical talents.

However, their moment of camaraderie was abruptly interrupted by the jarring notification on Faizon's phone. His heart sank as he read the news alert – a bomb had been dropped on the massive statue of Sir Roundbellied, a revered military figure in Timpanopia.

Faizon's mind raced with disbelief and anger as he processed the implications of the destruction. The statue, a symbol of honor and valor, had stood proudly in the center of Timpanopia for five years, serving as a reminder of the sacrifices made by Sir Roundbellied and his comrades in arms.

Turning to Gilbert, Faizon's expression was grim as he relayed the shocking news. "Can you believe it, Gilbert?" he muttered, his voice heavy with frustration. "Sir Roundbellied's statue—destroyed in an instant. All those years, all that effort... wasted."

Gilbert's eyes mirrored Faizon's somber expression as they both contemplated the significance of the fallen monument. "Sir Roundbellied was a big man with a big brown belly just like yours," Gilbert remarked solemnly, prodding Faizon's belly softly (which emitted a resonating soft timpani hit, which Faizon Jr. noted was in a low A). "Didn't he inspire your military variant in your virtual Obese Orchestra app, BOMBarder?"

Faizon nodded in agreement, his thoughts drifting to the legendary figure whose memory now lay in ruins. "Sir Roundbellied was a force to be reckoned with," Faizon recalled, his voice tinged with reverence. "I remember hearing stories about the war he fought in—how he would summon bombs from the sky with the sound of rumbling, rolling timpani drums from his big brown belly."

Their conversation was steeped in nostalgia and sorrow as Faizon and Gilbert reminisced about the heroics of Sir Roundbellied and the tragic events of the war that claimed his life.

Faizon Jr., who had been eavesdropping, started to feel emotional and hung his head. As Faizon Jr. began to make a low, soft timpani drum roll by shaking his big brown belly (which quivered with each rhythmic beat), Faizon and Gilbert exchanged a knowing glance. The somber melody seemed to capture

## THE FUNERAL

the dark mood that hung over them like a shroud, a poignant reminder of the gravity of the situation.

Turning their attention back to each other, Faizon and Gilbert shared a moment of silent understanding before resuming their conversation.

"It's a shame, isn't it?" Gilbert remarked, his voice heavy with regret. "Sir Roundbellied's statue was more than just a monument—it was a symbol of hope and resilience for our community."

Faizon nodded in agreement, his thoughts drifting to the legacy of the fallen hero. "He may have been a military figure, but he represented so much more than that," Faizon reflected, his voice tinged with sadness. "Sir Roundbellied stood for courage, strength, and unity—qualities that we all aspire to embody."

Gilbert's gaze softened as he listened to Faizon's words, a shared sense of reverence passing between them. "You're right, Faizon," he acknowledged quietly. "His memory will live on in the hearts of those who knew him and in the stories we pass down to future generations."

As Faizon Jr.'s timpani drum roll grew louder, his brow furrowed in confusion, his attention drawn to the source of the sudden increase in volume. Turning around, he was met with a surprising sight—Gabriel, shirtless once again, had surreptitiously retrieved the Big Belly Drum Drone from atop a nearby timpani drum.

With nimble fingers, Gabriel had swiftly attached the drone to his own big round belly, and within moments, the air was filled with the rumbling sound of distant timpani drums emanating from the device. Faizon Jr.'s eyes widened in astonishment as he watched Gabriel's belly begin to swell and grow, matching the size of his own impressive belly.

The warehouse reverberated with the deep, resonant tones of their synchronized drum rolls, the rhythmic beats echoing off the walls and filling the space with a palpable energy. Faizon and Gilbert looked on in amazement, their expressions a mix of awe and disbelief at the unexpected turn of events.

Gabriel grinned triumphantly as his belly expanded to match Faizon Jr.'s, the Big Belly Drum Drone amplifying the sound of his drum roll to new heights. With each passing moment, the intensity of the rumbling grew, filling the warehouse with a powerful, primal rhythm that seemed to echo through the very fabric of space and time.

## CHAPTER 4

As Faizon Jr. and Gabriel continued their synchronized drum rolls, their bellies pulsating with the force of the music, Faizon read on.

As Faizon Sr. read on, his expression shifted from surprise to resignation at the news of the memorial service. The Mayor of Timpanopia's decision to hold the service immediately after breakfast at Timpani Temptations elicited a cynical mutter from Faizon. "Of course he would," he muttered under his breath, his tone tinged with sarcasm. "I'll bet that'll be the only time someone gets a funeral for a second time."

Gilbert chuckled wryly at Faizon's remark, his own skepticism evident. "Well, you know how it goes," he replied, shaking his head in disbelief. "Can't miss an opportunity for a bit of pomp and circumstance, even if it is a bit... unconventional."

Faizon nodded in agreement, a sense of resignation settling over him. "Indeed," he conceded, his voice tinged with resignation. "I suppose it's the least they could do, given Sir Roundbellied's contributions to our community."

As the roll continued and the news sank in, Faizon couldn't help but feel a sense of frustration at the absurdity of the situation. The juxtaposition of mourning the loss of both a man and his statue seemed to encapsulate the strange and often contradictory nature of their world.

Nevertheless, Faizon knew that they would honor Sir Roundbellied's memory in their own way, paying tribute to his legacy with heartfelt remembrance and quiet reflection. And as they prepared for the memorial service to come, Faizon couldn't help but feel a sense of determination—a resolve to honor the fallen hero in a manner befitting his stature, both as a man and as a symbol of hope and resilience in their community.

As Faizon Jr. released his grip on his stomach, allowing it to settle back into its natural state with a soft jiggle, Gabriel followed suit and removed the Big Belly Drum Drone from his own significantly larger belly. The rhythmic rumbling of the timpani drums faded into silence, leaving behind an atmosphere of quiet contemplation in the warehouse.

With a satisfied sigh, Faizon Jr. turned to Gabriel, his eyes widening in astonishment at the sight of Gabriel's now considerably enlarged belly. "Whoa, Gabriel, your belly is really big!" he exclaimed, his tone filled with a mix of surprise and admiration.

## THE FUNERAL

And indeed it was. Gabriel's belly was now matching Faizon Jr.'s belly's intimidating size, however, like Gilbert's belly, it did not seem to hover in a gravity-defying style even when in its intimidating size, and it was no bigger than Faizon Jr.'s, which was still bigger than its regular intimidating size.

Gabriel chuckled in response, his chubby cheeks dimpling with a good-natured grin. "Yeah, I guess it is," he replied nonchalantly, his demeanor unaffected by Faizon Jr.'s observation.



The next day, after another hearty round of breakfast and the solemn exchange of dark stories accompanied by the rumbling timpani drum rolls from Elijah's big brown belly, the group found themselves gathered once again in the familiar surroundings of Timpani Temptations. The lingering echoes of their conversation seemed to hang in the air, mingling with the scent of freshly brewed coffee and warm pastries.

As Elijah rose from his seat, a sense of gravity seemed to descend upon the room, his solemn expression a stark contrast to the jovial atmosphere of moments before. "Friends," he began, his voice resonating with authority, "it is time for us to pay our respects to Sir Roundbellied."

Faizon Jr. and the others exchanged solemn glances, their hearts heavy with the weight of the impending task. Rising from their seats, they followed Elijah out of the restaurant, their footsteps echoing against the cobblestone streets as they made their way to the graveyard.

The atmosphere was somber as they approached the entrance to the graveyard, the air heavy with anticipation and sorrow. Elijah led the way, his steady stride a beacon of resolve in the face of uncertainty.

As the hushed silence enveloped the group at the final resting place of Sir Roundbellied, a sense of reverence hung heavy in the air, mingling with the soft rustle of leaves in the gentle breeze. They waited in solemn anticipation, their thoughts turning inward as they prepared to pay their respects to the fallen hero.

## CHAPTER 4

Suddenly, a faint rumbling sound echoed through the cemetery, barely audible at first but steadily growing in intensity. Faizon Jr. and the others exchanged curious glances as the timpani drum roll filled the air, its rhythmic beat echoing off the surrounding gravestones.

The roll swelled and ebbed, rising to a crescendo before fading back to a soft rumble, only to surge forth again with renewed vigor. Elijah's big brown belly quivered with each powerful beat, the sound of rolling thunder reverberating through the cemetery with a haunting intensity.

Faizon Jr. watched in awe as Elijah's masterful performance captured the essence of Sir Roundbellied's legendary prowess on the battlefield. The uneven transitions between volume shifts mirrored the unpredictability of war, each crescendo and decrescendo a testament to the ebb and flow of conflict.

As Elijah approached the stage, the timpani drum roll reached its climax, a final resounding hit punctuating the air with a sense of finality. Elijah's expression was one of solemn pride as he explained the significance of his performance.

"That," he declared, his voice filled with reverence, "is my impression of the rolling thunder Sir Roundbellied used to fend off enemies during his war. As we gather here today to honor the memory of Sir Roundbellied," Elijah began, his voice echoing with solemnity, "let us not merely mourn his passing, but celebrate the indomitable spirit and unwavering courage that defined his life."

With each word, Elijah's belly resonated with the rhythmic beat of another timpani drum roll, his performance a poignant tribute to the fallen hero. "Sir Roundbellied was more than just a warrior," Elijah continued, his tone filled with reverence. "He was a beacon of hope in times of darkness, a symbol of strength in the face of adversity."

As the roll intensified, so too did Elijah's impassioned speech, his words a stirring call to action. "Let us remember Sir Roundbellied not for the battles he fought, but for the values he embodied—courage, integrity, and selflessness," he proclaimed, his voice rising above the rhythmic cadence of the drums.

Faizon Jr. and the others listened intently, their hearts stirred by Elijah's eloquence and the solemnity of the occasion. "In the days and weeks to come," Elijah continued, his voice unwavering, "let us strive to honor Sir

## THE FUNERAL

Roundbellied's memory by embodying the same spirit of resilience and determination that he so exemplified."

As the timpani drum roll reached its climax, Elijah's words hung heavy in the air, a solemn reminder of the enduring legacy of a true hero. "May we never forget the sacrifices made by Sir Roundbellied and countless others," he concluded, his voice filled with emotion. "May their memory live on in our hearts forever."

As Elijah's timpani drum roll reverberated through the cemetery, filling the air with its rhythmic cadence, Gabriel's playful jab broke through the solemnity of the moment. With a mischievous grin, he reached out and tapped Faizon's stomach, his words ringing out clear and unapologetic. "You're fat," he declared, his tone teasing but lighthearted.

Faizon Jr. couldn't help but chuckle at Gabriel's boldness, his own belly jiggling with amusement. "Hey now, Gabriel," he replied, his voice tinged with mock indignation. "Pot calling the kettle black, aren't we?"

Elijah, undeterred by the interruption, repeated his impassioned speech, his words weaving a tapestry of remembrance and reverence. "As we gather here today," he intoned, his voice rising above the rumbling of the drums, "let us honor the memory of Sir Roundbellied with reverence and respect."

Faizon Jr. and the others listened intently, their attention divided between Elijah's stirring words and Gabriel's playful banter. "Let us remember," Elijah continued, his voice filled with conviction, "that the legacy of Sir Roundbellied lives on in each and every one of us."

As the timpani drum roll reached its crescendo, Elijah's speech drew to a close, his final words carrying a sense of solemnity and hope. "May we never forget the sacrifices made by those who came before us," he concluded, his voice tinged with emotion. "May their memory inspire us to strive for a better tomorrow."

With a final, resounding hit of the drums, Elijah's speech came to an end, the echoes of his words lingering in the air like a solemn vow.

As the last echoes of Elijah's timpani drum roll faded away, Gabriel seized the opportunity to indulge in a bit of playful teasing. With a mischievous glint in his eye, he launched into a spontaneous song, his whispering voice barely audible over the smattering of applause.

## CHAPTER 4

*"Oh Faizon Jr., oh Faizon Jr.,"* Gabriel sang, his tone teasing but affectionate, *"with a belly so big, you're quite the star. Your timpani drum rolls, they echo from afar, a symphony of sound from that belly, oh so large."*

Faizon Jr. couldn't help but laugh at Gabriel's antics, his cheeks flushing with a mixture of amusement and embarrassment. "Alright, alright, Gabriel," he interjected, his voice laced with mock protest. "We get it, my belly's big. No need to write a whole song about it!"

*"Oooh, look at Faizon Jr., with his big brown belly so round,"* Gabriel sang, his voice filled with exaggerated melodrama. *"It's like a timpani drum, making that thunderous sound!"*

Faizon Jr. laughed again, his own belly bouncing with mirth. "Hey now, Gabriel, watch your tone," he retorted, his voice filled with mock indignation. "Or I might just make you my personal xylophone!"

But Gabriel was undeterred, his grin widening as he continued his playful serenade. *"Oooh, Faizon Jr., with your big ol' belly, you're the king of timpani, oh so smelly! Your stomach's like a drum, big and round, with every step you take, it makes a sound! With each rumble and roll, your belly takes the stage,"* he sang, his voice rising and falling in playful melody. *"A timpani virtuoso, in every way. So let's give a cheer for Faizon Jr.'s belly, hooray!"*

As Gabriel's song came to an end, Faizon Jr. seized the moment to join in the playful banter, his own belly jiggling with anticipation as he prepared to unleash his own musical retort. With a mischievous glint in his eye, he untucked his shirt from under his pants and lifted the hem of his shirt, which was yellow with red vertical stripes, and began to shake his belly, the soft rumble of the timpani drum roll echoing through the cemetery with a rhythmic cadence.

*"Ah, Gabriel, dear Gabriel, with a belly so round,"* Faizon Jr. sang, his voice carrying across the quiet expanse of the graveyard, *"your girth knows no bounds, it's the talk of the town. Your belly, so big, it could blot out the sun, casting shadows on all, one by one."*

Gabriel's laughter filled the air as Faizon Jr. continued his playful serenade, each word punctuated by the soft rumble of his belly. *"Your belly's so massive, it's a sight to behold,"* he sang, his voice tinged with playful teasing. *"It's got its*

## THE FUNERAL

*own zip code, or so I've been told. And when you walk by, the ground starts to shake, like an earthquake in motion, for goodness' sake!"*

The roll grew louder and louder with each word, the rhythmic beat matching the playful cadence of Faizon Jr.'s song. "Your belly's so big, it's like a storm warning sign," he continued, his voice rising above the rumble of the drums. "With clouds of flab and thunder thighs, you're a force of nature, in every way, shape, and size."

But Faizon Jr. wasn't done yet, his playful teasing showing no signs of slowing down. "And oh, Gabriel dear, if you were to sit down," he sang, a mischievous twinkle in his eye, "your belly would be tickled by the grass on the ground. It's so wide and so vast, it's a sight to behold, like a mountain of flesh, or so I've been told."

As the song reached its crescendo, Faizon Jr. unleashed a final, resounding hit of his big belly drum, the medium timpani drum hit echoing through the cemetery with a sense of finality. Gabriel erupted into laughter, his cheeks flushed with amusement as he playfully swatted at Faizon Jr.'s belly in mock retaliation.

"Hey again, Gabriel," a deep voice boomed, causing Gabriel to turn around in surprise.

There stood Guy Biggums, Gabriel's uncle, his imposing figure casting a shadow over the young boy. Gabriel couldn't help but grin at the sight of his uncle, his heart warmed by the familiar presence.

Guy Biggums was a large, wide man who bore a pink T-shirt with sunglasses hanging from the top of the shirt. A neatly trimmed beard framed his face, accentuating his strong jawline, transitioning beautifully into his hair, which was covered by a gray cap that had been put on backwards. His big pectorals protruded over what seemed to be a round bulge that circled around his midsection like a donut, the front part of the donut being his big belly.

"Uncle Biggums! You're here to see me again already?" Gabriel exclaimed, his voice filled with delight.

With a hearty chuckle, Guy Biggums enveloped Gabriel in a bear hug, his big belly pressing against Gabriel's own in a comforting embrace. "You missed me already, didn't you," he rumbled affectionately. "I also came to pay my respects."

## CHAPTER 4

With a hearty laugh, Guy Biggums joined in the playful banter, his deep voice booming with joviality. "So I hear we're making songs about each other's bellies now, are we?" he exclaimed, his eyes twinkling with amusement. "Well, I've got a few tunes of my own to add to the mix!"

With a dramatic flourish, Guy Biggums launched into his own impromptu song, his voice resonating through the cemetery with a rich timbre. "*Oh Faizon Jr., oh Faizon Jr.*" he sang, his tone playful yet reverent, "*with a belly so big, it's like a rolling thunder. With each rumble and roll, it shakes the ground, a symphony of sound, oh so profound.*"

Faizon Jr. couldn't help but chuckle at Guy Biggums' lively performance, his own belly jiggling with mirth. "*And Gabriel, dear Gabriel,*" Guy Biggums continued, turning his attention to the young boy with a grin, "*with a belly so round, it's the talk of the town. Like thunder in the distance, it rumbles and roars, a force of nature, forevermore.*"

"Alright guys, I know the service is technically over by now," Elijah began, his voice carrying across the cemetery with a hint of amusement (to which Guy Biggums complained, "But I literally just got here!"), "but can we go back to the restaurant, or are we gonna sit here and wait for you guys to finish making weight jokes about each other?"



As they stood in the corner of the restaurant, Guy Biggums leaned in, his voice low and conspiratorial. "You know," he began, "I meant to swing by yesterday after dropping Gabriel off, but duty called. Had some business to attend to."

Faizon nodded understandingly, his brow furrowed with curiosity. "Business, huh? What kind of business keeps a man like you busy?" he asked, his interest piqued.

"Oh, you know how it is," Guy replied with a shrug, a playful twinkle in his eye. "Running my own little enterprise keeps me on my toes. Can't let the competition get too comfortable, now can we?"

## THE FUNERAL

Gilbert chimed in with a knowing nod. "Absolutely," he agreed. "Competition's fierce out there, especially in this day and age. Gotta stay ahead of the game."

Faizon chuckled, a hint of pride in his voice. "Tell me about it," he said. "Between managing my own business and keeping up with the latest developments in the Timpani Tummies app, I barely have time to catch my breath."

Guy raised an eyebrow in curiosity. "Timpani Tummies, you say? That app's been making waves lately," he remarked, his interest clearly piqued. "What's your involvement with it?"

Faizon's chest swelled with pride as he launched into an animated explanation. "Well, you see, I've been involved with the app since its early days," he began, his voice tinged with excitement. "Started out as a user myself, but soon found myself drawn into the world of app development. Before I knew it, I was knee-deep in all things Timpani Tummies."

Gilbert nodded in agreement, his eyes alight with enthusiasm. "Faizon here's been a real trailblazer in the world of virtual belly drumming," he added, a note of admiration in his voice. "His contributions to the app have been nothing short of revolutionary."

Faizon waved off the praise with a modest smile. "Oh, it's nothing really," he said, though the pride in his voice was evident. "Just doing my part to push the boundaries of what's possible in the world of digital entertainment. I even made my own fork of the Timpani Tummies app, and it's about my very own Obese Orchestra, which you should consider joining. I even have my own company: BellyBeat Percussion Corporation—"

"Rolling Thunder from the Depths of Large Round Bellies," Gilbert finished proudly.

Guy nodded thoughtfully, his gaze lingering on Faizon with newfound respect. "Well, I'll be damned," he muttered, a hint of admiration in his voice. "You're quite the entrepreneur, aren't you? I'll have to keep an eye on you."

"By the way, do you guys know how to make a bass drum?" Faizon quipped, a mischievous twinkle in his eye. "I'll tell you: more than one of us standing in the same room!" He chuckled at his own joke, his laughter booming through the room like the roll of a distant thunder.

## CHAPTER 4

Gilbert couldn't help but laugh at Faizon's joke, his amusement evident in the twinkle of his eyes and the curve of his smile. "If only there were a drum kit so someone could play a rim shot," he quipped, his voice laced with humor.

"By the way, have you been making some timpani drum rolls on that currently undeveloped belly lately, big guy?" Faizon asked, curious.

"He's more of a timpani drummer than he is a belly drummer," Gilbert muttered darkly.

"Well, you see, I've always been more of a timpanist myself," Guy explained, his voice carrying a hint of nostalgia. "There's something about the deep, resonant tones of the timpani that speaks to my soul. It's not just about the sound, you know, it's about the feeling, the way each beat reverberates through your entire being. It's like you're tapping into something primal, something ancient, something... elemental. And the thing is, with timpani, it's not just about the drums themselves—it's about the connection between the drummer and the instrument, the way you become one with the music, the way you channel your energy and your emotions into each and every stroke. It's a dance, really, a dance between man and machine, between flesh and blood and wood and metal. It's about finding that perfect balance, that perfect harmony, that perfect moment when everything clicks into place and you're lost in the music, lost in the rhythm, lost in the sheer joy of creation. It's a feeling unlike any other, a feeling of... transcendence. And you know what? I think I've rambled on long enough. Let's cut to the chase, shall we? I've got a timpani roll in mind that I think you'll appreciate—here, let me show you a roll...."

With a focused expression, Guy Biggums retrieved a pair of mallets from the timpani drum standing nearby, his movements deliberate and precise. As he fixed his gaze on the timpani drum, his serious demeanor softened slightly, replaced by an air of concentration.

With a deep breath, Guy began to play, the soft timpani drum roll echoing through the restaurant with a haunting intensity. Each stroke of the mallets was deliberate, each beat infused with a sense of purpose and passion. As he played, his pectorals jiggled with the rhythmic motion of his body, his belly gradually growing larger and larger with each passing moment.

## THE FUNERAL

The roll continued, growing louder and more resonant with each stroke, filling the air with its powerful rhythm. Guy's eyes were closed now, lost in the music, lost in the moment, lost in the sheer joy of creation.

And as the roll reached its crescendo, the restaurant seemed to fade away, the only thing that mattered in that moment was the music, the rhythm, the connection between man and machine. It was a moment of pure magic, a moment of pure transcendence.

And when the roll finally came to an end, Guy opened his eyes, a smile playing at the corners of his lips. "There you have it," he said, his voice filled with satisfaction. "A timpani roll like no other. It's all about the rhythm, you see, the heartbeat of the music. And when you find that rhythm, when you tap into that primal energy, there's nothing quite like it."

Faizon's eyes widened in astonishment as he listened to Guy's explanation, his gaze lingering on the impressive expanse of Guy's burgeoning belly. "So, you can make your belly grow even without playing on it?" he repeated, his voice tinged with incredulity.

Guy nodded solemnly, his expression thoughtful. "Yes, that's right," he confirmed. "I applied for that special ability because I wanted to explore the power of intimidation without having to subject myself to the discomfort of playing on my belly. You see, beating mallets on my belly can be quite painful, especially considering my hearty appetite."

He gestured to his now substantial midsection, a wry smile playing at the corners of his lips. "I'll admit, I have quite the appetite," he confessed. "Even more than Gilbert here, if you can believe it. And let me tell you, all that eating can take its toll on a man's stomach."

Faizon chuckled in understanding, nodding sympathetically. "I can only imagine," he said. "But I suppose it's all worth it for the sake of mastering the art of timpani drumming."

Guy's smile widened at Faizon's words, a glint of appreciation in his eyes. "Indeed," he agreed. "And besides, it's not just about the drumming—it's about the presence, the aura, the sheer power of a big belly. There's something undeniably intimidating about it, wouldn't you say?"

Faizon nodded thoughtfully, his gaze drifting back to Guy's impressive midsection. "Absolutely," he agreed. "There's a certain gravitas that comes with

## CHAPTER 4

a big belly, a sense of authority and strength. It's like wearing your confidence on your sleeve, or in this case, your stomach."

With a nod of understanding, Guy patted his belly affectionately, a sense of pride evident in his gesture. "Exactly," he said. "And while I may not enjoy the discomfort of playing on my belly, I certainly appreciate the power it brings. After all, in Timpanopia, size does matter."

"Speaking of that ability, I have something to tell you...."

Guy Biggums listened intently as Faizon recounted his dream, his brow furrowing in concentration as he absorbed every detail. "A military variant from the Obese Orchestra app, you say?" he mused, his voice tinged with curiosity. "And it had the ability to summon bombs from the sky with a timpani drum roll?"

Faizon nodded solemnly, his expression grave. "Yes, that's right," he confirmed. "It was like something out of a nightmare. The sheer power of those bombs, the devastation they caused... it was terrifying."

Gilbert chimed in with a nod of agreement. "To me, it sounded like something straight out of Sir Roundbellied's playbook," he chimed in. "He was known for his ability to summon bombs with his timpani drum rolls during the war."

Faizon nodded in agreement, his thoughts drifting back to the dream. "Exactly," he said. "And what's even more unsettling is that I possessed the same ability in that dream. My belly grew so big that I could barely move, let alone run to dodge his bombs."

Guy's eyes widened in astonishment as he processed Faizon's words, his expression a mixture of awe and concern. "That's... quite the dream," he remarked, his voice tinged with uncertainty. "It's almost as if your subconscious is trying to tell you something, isn't it?"

Faizon nodded thoughtfully, his gaze distant. "Perhaps," he agreed. "Or perhaps it's just a manifestation of my own fears and anxieties. Either way, it's certainly given me pause for thought."

With a nod of understanding, Guy placed a reassuring hand on Faizon's shoulder, his gaze sympathetic. "Well, whatever it may mean, just know that you're not alone," he said. "We're all in this together, facing whatever challenges come our way, whether they be real or imagined."

## THE FUNERAL

Faizon smiled gratefully at Guy's words, a sense of camaraderie settling over the group. "Thank you, Guy," he said, his voice filled with gratitude. "It means a lot to have your support."

Guy patted Faizon's shoulder. "Anytime, pal."

"Let's talk about our children," said Faizon, his voice tinged with warmth. "They're truly something special, aren't they?"

Guy Biggums nodded in agreement, a fond smile playing at the corners of his lips. "Indeed they are," he agreed. "There's nothing quite like watching them grow and develop, seeing them become the people they're meant to be."

Faizon's expression softened as he began to speak, his tone filled with pride and affection. "You know, just two days ago, I created a clone of myself named Faizon Jr.," he revealed, a note of excitement in his voice. "It was just a few minutes before that dream I told you about. And let me tell you, he's been quite the handful ever since."

He glanced over at Gilbert, a knowing smile on his face. "You were there with me, Gilbert, you saw it all," he added, his eyes twinkling with amusement.

Gilbert nodded enthusiastically, his own pride evident in his expression. "Oh, I remember it well," he confirmed. "Faizon Jr. may be young, but he's got a big personality, just like his old man."

Turning back to Guy Biggums, Faizon continued his tale, his voice tinged with excitement. "Yesterday, I aged Faizon Jr. to two years older than Gabriel using my Age Acceleration device," he explained. "He's now thirteen years old, and let me tell you, he's been a quick learner."

Guy Biggums raised an eyebrow in interest, his curiosity piqued. "Aged him, you say?" he repeated, his voice tinged with fascination. "That's quite the feat. And you taught him how to belly drum, too?"

Faizon nodded proudly, a grin spreading across his face. "That's right," he confirmed. "I've been teaching him everything I know about belly drumming, and he's been mastering it with each passing day. It's truly amazing to watch him grow and develop."

At that moment, Gilbert interjected, a playful twinkle in his eye. "And as for Gabriel," he said, his voice filled with affection, "well, let's just say he's been doing just about everything a growing boy like him would do—eat, and, yeah..."

## CHAPTER 4

The group chuckled at Gilbert's jest, their laughter mingling with the warm glow of camaraderie. And as they continued to discuss their children and the joys of fatherhood, Faizon couldn't help but feel a sense of gratitude for the bonds of friendship that connected them all.

As Faizon's phone buzzed with another notification, a sense of unease settled over the group, their expressions darkening with concern. Faizon sighed heavily as he read the message, his brow furrowed in frustration. "Another bomb," he muttered, his voice tinged with dismay. "This time it's the Rhythmic Fountain."

Gilbert's eyes widened in shock as he absorbed the news, his hands clenched into fists at his sides. "Not the Rhythmic Fountain," he exclaimed, his voice filled with disbelief. "That's one of the most iconic landmarks in Timpanopia!"

Faizon nodded grimly, his expression troubled. "I know," he replied, his voice heavy with regret. "It's unthinkable that someone would target such a beloved monument. But it seems that whoever is behind these attacks is intent on causing chaos and destruction."

Guy Biggums' brow furrowed in concern as he considered the implications of the latest bombing, his expression thoughtful. "This is troubling indeed," he remarked, his voice tinged with apprehension. "If they're targeting famous landmarks, who knows what they'll strike next?"

Faizon's jaw clenched with determination as he mulled over their options, his gaze steely with resolve. "We need to put a stop to this," he declared, his voice firm. "We can't let these attacks continue unchecked. We need to find out who's behind them and put an end to their reign of terror."

Gilbert nodded in agreement, his expression resolute. "You're right," he affirmed, his voice filled with determination. "We can't let fear dictate our actions. We need to stand together and fight back against whoever is responsible."

As Faizon pondered the motives behind the relentless bombings, his mind raced with a myriad of possibilities, each more troubling than the last. Was it a calculated act of terrorism, designed to sow fear and chaos among the citizens of Timpanopia? Or perhaps it was a vendetta against the city itself, a misguided attempt to strike at the heart of its cultural heritage? Whatever the reason, one thing was clear: the perpetrators were determined to wreak havoc upon the

## THE FUNERAL

city, and they showed no signs of stopping anytime soon. Faizon's thoughts swirled with a sense of urgency as he considered the implications of their actions, his mind grappling with the enormity of the situation. He couldn't help but wonder what kind of person would stoop to such despicable acts, what kind of darkness lurked within their hearts. But amidst the uncertainty and fear, one thing remained certain: they couldn't afford to wait idly by while their city crumbled around them. They needed to take action, and they needed to do it now.... They needed to rally their forces, to stand united against the forces of destruction that threatened to tear their world apart.... They needed to find answers, to uncover the truth behind these senseless attacks.... And they needed to do it quickly, before it was too late.... With a firm resolve, Faizon turned to Gilbert, his voice steady despite the turmoil raging within him....

"Gilbert," he said, his tone commanding, "we need to gather the children and head back to the warehouse.... I'll contact the rest of the Obese Orchestra and instruct them to meet us there.... We'll strategize our next move and put an end to this madness once and for all."

# 5

## The Obese Orchestra

**W**ithin ten minutes, Faizon, Gilbert, Guy Biggums, the two boys, and the rest of the Obese Orchestra were all facing each other in a circle, sitting on foldable chairs Faizon had dug out from the closet.

Faizon's voice rumbled with authority as he spoke. "Now that we are all gathered here, we need to focus on an important issue. The bombings," he rumbled darkly.

Audito, his deep voice resonating with gravitas, interjected, "Indeed, these bombings pose a significant threat to the stability of Timpanopia. We must act swiftly and decisively to uncover the perpetrators and put an end to their reign of terror."

Guy Biggums nodded in agreement, his expression serious as he considered the gravity of the situation. "We can't afford to underestimate our adversaries," he remarked, his voice tinged with urgency. "They've already demonstrated a willingness to target some of our most cherished landmarks. Who knows what they'll strike next?"

Faizon's brow furrowed in thought as he mulled over their options, his mind racing with possibilities. "We need to gather as much information as possible," he declared, his voice firm and commanding. "We'll need to coordinate with the authorities and conduct our own investigation to uncover any leads."

Gilbert, his expression determined, spoke up next, his voice filled with conviction. "We can't rely solely on the authorities," he asserted, his tone resolute. "We need to take matters into our own hands and track down whoever's behind these attacks ourselves."

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

The rest of the Obese Orchestra murmured their agreement, their voices blending together in a chorus of determination. As they prepared to embark on their mission, a sense of unity and purpose settled over the group, steeling their resolve for the challenges that lay ahead.

And with Faizon leading the way, they knew that they would stop at nothing to protect their beloved Timpanopia from the threat of violence and chaos. For in the face of adversity, it was their bond of friendship and their unwavering commitment to justice that would see them through.

Gabriel, his youthful voice brimming with earnestness, suggested a proactive approach. "Perhaps we should reach out to neighboring countries," he proposed, his eyes alight with a spark of initiative. "They might have experienced similar incidents or noticed suspicious activity in their own territories."

Faizon nodded in approval, impressed by Gabriel's proactive thinking. "That's a good idea, Gabriel," he remarked, his voice carrying a note of encouragement. "We'll need to cast a wide net if we're going to uncover any leads."

Audito, his tone measured and thoughtful, offered a word of caution. "Let's proceed with caution," he advised, his deep voice resonating with wisdom. "We don't want to provoke unnecessary tensions with our neighbors, especially if they're not involved in these attacks."

Guy Biggums, ever the pragmatist, weighed in with practical considerations. "We'll need to gather intelligence discreetly," he suggested, his voice low and serious. "We can't afford to draw attention to ourselves or jeopardize any potential leads."

"Maybe," Faizon Jr. began, his voice tinged with a hint of uncertainty but also determination, "we should consider putting together a team to go out there and confront whoever's behind these attacks. We can't just sit back and wait for them to strike again. We need to take action, and we need to do it now. I know it's risky, but if we don't do something, who will? We have the strength, the courage, and the determination to make a difference. We can't let fear hold us back. We owe it to ourselves, to our families, and to everyone in Timpanopia to stand up and fight for what's right. So what do you say? Are you with me?"

## CHAPTER 5

His words hung in the air, the weight of their implications settling over the group like a heavy blanket. For a moment, there was silence as each member of the Obese Orchestra contemplated Faizon Jr.'s proposal, weighing the risks and rewards of such a bold plan. Then, one by one, they began to nod in agreement, their expressions set with determination.

"I'm in," Gilbert declared, his voice filled with conviction. "We can't afford to wait any longer. We need to take the fight to them."

Audito, ever the voice of reason, offered a word of caution. "We must proceed carefully," he cautioned, his deep voice resonating with wisdom. "We don't know what we're up against, and we can't afford to underestimate our adversaries."

Guy Biggums, his expression serious but resolute, nodded in agreement. "We'll need to plan our approach carefully," he agreed, his voice low and steady. "But I believe we have what it takes to succeed."

And with that, the decision was made. The Obese Orchestra would assemble a team and embark on their mission to confront the perpetrators behind the bombings, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead with courage and determination.

"But wait!" Faizon Jr. interjected, his voice cutting through the tension like a sharp blade. For a few moments, the air seemed to crackle with uncertainty ("Timpani drum roll," Guy Biggums suggested under his breath), each member of the Obese Orchestra holding their breath in anticipation. And after a few more seconds of tension, Faizon Jr. said, "Are we sure that every one of us can come?"

Baldwin and Charles, unable to join them due to prior commitments that they had absolutely no intention of rescheduling, exchanged apologetic glances, their expressions reflecting their disappointment at being unable to participate in the upcoming mission.

Faizon, his brow furrowed in thought, considered their options carefully. "We can't afford to leave anyone behind," he declared, his voice firm and unwavering. "We'll need to adjust our plans accordingly and ensure that everyone who can participate is given the opportunity to do so."

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

Gilbert, his expression thoughtful, nodded in agreement. "We'll need to be flexible and adaptable," he acknowledged, his voice tinged with resolve. "But I believe we can still make this work, even with a smaller team."

Audito, his quiet strength anchoring the group, offered a reassuring smile. "We may be fewer in number, but our determination remains unchanged," he assured them, his voice steady and reassuring. "Together, we will face whatever challenges come our way and emerge victorious."

"Before we go..." Faizon interjected, his voice commanding attention as the group turned their focus towards him. Audito, his movements deliberate and precise, took off his square glasses and wiped them clean on the top of his big brown belly, the soft rumble of his belly adding a subtle background rhythm to their conversation. With practiced ease, he folded the glasses and laid them atop his belly, the lenses facing downwards.

"...we must first decide *where* we are going to go first," Faizon continued, his tone thoughtful as he surveyed the faces of his companions, each one reflecting a mix of anticipation and determination. "We need to prioritize our targets and determine the most strategic course of action."

Gilbert, his brow furrowed in concentration, offered a suggestion. "Perhaps we should start by investigating the sites of the previous bombings," he proposed, his voice carrying the weight of their collective concern. "We might find clues or evidence that could lead us to the perpetrators."

Audito, his quiet strength anchoring the group, nodded in agreement. "Agreed," he affirmed, his voice steady and assured. "We should gather as much information as we can before we make any decisions about our next steps."

Guy Biggums, his expression serious but resolute, chimed in with a suggestion of his own. "We should also consider reaching out to our contacts in neighboring countries," he suggested, his voice low and measured. "They might have insights or intelligence that could prove invaluable to our investigation."

Faizon Jr., who had been preparing to propose a new angle for their investigation, started to speak. "Or," he began, his voice thoughtful, "we can just ask the people that were there during the bombings. There might be some witnesses."

"I'm just going to make a stupid guess," Gabriel interjected, his tone uncertain but determined.

## CHAPTER 5

Faizon couldn't help but feel a twinge of apprehension at Gabriel's words, his mind racing with a mixture of anticipation and dread. *Oh boy*, he thought, bracing himself for what was to come.

"You want a drum roll to go with that guess, bud?" Faizon Jr. teased, his hands already poised over his enormous stomach, ready to start shaking.

As Faizon Jr. started to unleash a rolling timpani drum crescendo, Gabriel took a long, deep breath, steeling himself for his moment of revelation. With each beat of Faizon Jr.'s belly, the tension in the room seemed to mount, the rhythmic rumble echoing through the space like a heartbeat.

And then, as the roll reached its crescendo and fell silent, Gabriel blurted out his unexpected theory. "Maybe it was Sir Roundbellied sending a signal to us from the heavens, trying to prepare us just in case," he exclaimed, his words tumbling out in a rush of excitement and uncertainty. "Think about it... perhaps he foresaw the danger we now face, and these bombings are his way of warning us, guiding us towards the path of righteousness. Sir Roundbellied was a symbol of strength and resilience, a beacon of hope in times of adversity"—his voice gained momentum as he elaborated on his theory—"and it's not inconceivable that he would continue to watch over us, even from beyond the grave. Perhaps these bombings are his way of communicating with us, a cryptic message urging us to remain vigilant and united in the face of danger. And if that's the case, then it's our duty to honor his legacy and heed his warning. We must stand together, unwavering in our resolve, and confront this threat head-on, for the sake of Timpanopia and all who call it home."

His words hung in the air, the group absorbing the weight of his speculation with a mixture of skepticism and intrigue. For Faizon Jr., the notion of Sir Roundbellied orchestrating the bombings as a form of divine intervention seemed far-fetched, but he couldn't deny the sense of comfort it brought to consider the possibility that their beloved hero was still watching over them.

But before Faizon Jr. could voice his thoughts, Gilbert, ever the voice of reason, interjected. "As much as I admire Sir Roundbellied, I find it hard to believe that he would resort to such extreme measures," he reasoned, his tone measured but firm. "Besides, why would he want to bomb his own statue after all the hard work the community spent making it for him? That's like if I were to belittle you for spending a month composing a symphony for the belly drum.

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

We need to focus on finding tangible evidence and following proper investigative procedures."

Faizon Jr. nodded in agreement, his mind still grappling with the implications of Gabriel's theory. "You're right," he conceded, his voice tinged with a hint of reluctance. "Let's stick to the facts for now and leave the speculation for later. Gilbert, start up an interference, we don't need anyone spying on us to hear what we're talking about."

Gilbert swiftly retrieved a mallet and, holding a shield in with his right hand, smaller than the one he had used to replicate bomb sounds, began to strike it with the mallet in his other hand with rapid precision. The gong-like clangs echoed around the room with an unmistakable resonance, their reverberations drowning out any potential eavesdroppers and enveloping the room in a cocoon of sound.

"Anyway," grunted Faizon Jr., shifting slightly in his seat as the slightly polyrhythmic clanging of Gilbert's shield continued, each clang varying slightly in volume, "I think it'll be best if we start with the people who were at the scene of the crime when it happened. Who do we know that was certainly near the scene of the first bombing when it happened?"

"Well," Baldwin pondered, his brow furrowing in concentration, "there were quite a few people milling about near the statue at the time of the first bombing. But one individual stands out in my memory." He paused for a moment, organizing his thoughts before continuing. "Timpani drum roll, please... Mayor Tympano. I distinctly remember seeing him giving a speech near the statue just moments before the explosion occurred."

Faizon's words hung in the air, the gravity of his revelation sinking in as the members of the Obese Orchestra exchanged concerned glances. If Mayor Tympano had indeed been present at the scene of the first bombing, it raised troubling questions about his possible involvement in the attacks.

"But why would the mayor want to bomb his own city?" Gilbert questioned, his voice tinged with disbelief.

Faizon shrugged, his expression grim. "That's what we need to find out," he replied. "We can't afford to overlook any leads, no matter how improbable they may seem. If Mayor Tympano was indeed near the scene of the first bombing, then he warrants further investigation."

## CHAPTER 5

"Indeed," Charles affirmed, his deep voice resonating with certainty. "And let's not forget about George. He sent me a text mere minutes before the bombing of Sir Roundbellied's statue, mentioning that he was planning to meet up with a friend at the very location where the explosion occurred. So while Mayor Tympano might have had a potential connection to the bombings, George's proximity to the scene of the crime cannot be overlooked. It's entirely plausible that he may have valuable information regarding the events leading up to the bombing. Plus, his sense of hearing is as strong as his belly is big. He can hear anything from at least a mile away, and sometimes he can even tell where the sound was, so he must've heard something suspicious."

As Charles spoke, his words carried a weighty significance, each syllable laden with the weight of their collective determination to uncover the truth. The members of the Obese Orchestra listened intently, absorbing the gravity of the situation as they contemplated the potential implications of George's involvement. Gilbert softened his clanging.

"But what could George's motive be?" Faizon mused aloud, his voice tinged with a note of skepticism. "And who exactly is this friend he was meeting? We need to gather as much information as possible before drawing any conclusions."

With a resolute nod, the group acknowledged the importance of pursuing all available leads, no matter how obscure or seemingly insignificant. For in the intricate web of clues and suspicions that surrounded them, every detail could hold the key to unraveling the mystery of the bombings that threatened to engulf their community in chaos.



The atmosphere in Mayor Tympano's office was tense as Faizon, Gilbert, and Faizon Jr. entered, their expressions grave and determined. The mayor, seated behind his desk, regarded them with a mix of curiosity and apprehension, his features betraying a hint of unease at their unexpected visit.

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

"Mayor Tympano," Faizon began, his voice steady and authoritative, "we need to ask you some questions regarding the recent bombings that have plagued our city."

Mayor Tympano's eyes widened slightly at the mention of the bombings, his composure faltering for a brief moment before he regained his composure. "I assure you, gentlemen, I am just as concerned about these incidents as you are," he replied, his tone carefully measured.

Faizon arched an eyebrow, his skepticism evident. "Is that so?" he countered, his voice laced with suspicion. "Because it just so happens that you were near the scene of the first bombing at the statue of Sir Roundbellied."

The mayor's facade slipped slightly, a flicker of unease crossing his features before he quickly masked it with a forced smile. "Yes, well, as the mayor of Timpanopia, it's not uncommon for me to be present at public events and gatherings," he explained, his tone defensive.

Gilbert stepped forward, his gaze piercing as he fixed the mayor with a pointed stare. "And what about your whereabouts during the other bombings?" he pressed, his voice unyielding.

Mayor Tympano hesitated, his gaze flickering nervously between the three men standing before him. "I... I assure you, I had nothing to do with those incidents," he stammered, his tone tinged with desperation.

Faizon exchanged a meaningful glance with Gilbert before turning back to the mayor, his expression unreadable. "We'll see about that," he replied cryptically, his words hanging in the air like an ominous warning.

Gilbert, determined to unravel the tangled web of lies and deceit that enshrouded the truth behind the bombings, leaned in closer, his voice low and commanding as he posed another question to the mayor. "Tell us, Mayor Tympano, do you have any enemies? Anyone who might have a motive to orchestrate these attacks?"

The mayor hesitated once more, his gaze flickering nervously as he weighed his words carefully. "Well, as the leader of our city, I'm sure there are those who may disagree with my policies or decisions," he admitted reluctantly. "But I can assure you, none of them would resort to such violent and destructive measures."

## CHAPTER 5

Faizon Jr., sensing the mayor's discomfort, spoke up from his position beside his father. "But what if someone wanted to send a message? What if they wanted to strike fear into the hearts of our community?" he suggested, his voice tinged with a sense of urgency.

Mayor Tympano's expression darkened at the implication, his features contorted with a mixture of frustration and apprehension. "I... I understand your concerns, but I can assure you, I am doing everything in my power to ensure the safety and security of our citizens," he insisted, his voice strained.

Faizon exchanged a meaningful glance with Gilbert, a silent acknowledgment passing between them. It was clear that the mayor was withholding information, and they would need to tread carefully if they hoped to uncover the truth.

Faizon Jr. leaned forward, his brow furrowed in concentration as he posed his questions to the mayor. "Mayor Tympano," he began, his voice steady, "can you recall anyone acting suspiciously in the vicinity of the statue before the bombing occurred?"

The mayor's eyes darted nervously as he mulled over the question, his hesitation palpable. "Well, it's hard to say," he replied evasively, his tone guarded. "There's always a lot of activity in that area, especially during the day."

Undeterred, Faizon Jr. pressed on, his determination unwavering. "But surely there must have been something out of the ordinary," he insisted, his voice tinged with urgency. "Did you notice anyone loitering around, or any strange vehicles parked nearby?"

Mayor Tympano shifted uncomfortably in his seat, his gaze flickering as he struggled to recall the events leading up to the bombing. "I... I'm not sure," he admitted reluctantly, his voice tinged with uncertainty. "It all happened so quickly, and I was preoccupied with other matters at the time."

Faizon Jr. exchanged a knowing glance with his father and Gilbert, a silent acknowledgment passing between them. It was clear that the mayor's memory was faltering, and they would need to approach the investigation from a different angle if they hoped to uncover the truth. Faizon Jr. couldn't shake the feeling that they were on the brink of a breakthrough, poised to unravel the mystery that had gripped their city in fear and uncertainty.

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA



George greeted them at the door, his deep-brown skin glistening in the sunlight as he stood shirtless, his big belly protruding proudly like a testament to his strength and resilience. George's belly was substantial, rivaling the impressive girth of Charles' own ample midsection. It jutted out prominently, a testament to his hearty appetite and robust physique, measuring a formidable 0.75 foot in diameter.

He wore a chunky gold chain around his neck, reminiscent of the accessories favored by rappers, adding a touch of swagger to his appearance. His dark eyes sparkled with a mixture of curiosity and apprehension as he welcomed Faizon, Gilbert, and Faizon Jr. into his home, unaware of the storm of questions that awaited him.

Faizon's voice rumbled with authority as he began the interrogation, his gaze piercing as he focused on George.

"George, we need to ask you some questions about your whereabouts and activities on the day of the bombing at Sir Roundbellied's statue," Faizon began, his tone firm yet composed.

George shifted uncomfortably under Faizon's scrutiny, his expression guarded as he prepared to answer the probing questions.

"Can you tell us where you were and what you were doing around the time of the incident?" Faizon pressed, his voice carrying a sense of urgency.

George hesitated for a moment before responding, his eyes darting nervously as he struggled to recall the events of that fateful day.

"I was, uh, just hanging out with a friend near the statue," George replied hesitantly, his voice tinged with uncertainty. "We were just, you know, chilling and talking."

Faizon's brow furrowed slightly as he processed George's response, his mind racing with possibilities. "And did you notice anything unusual or suspicious in the area leading up to the bombing?" he continued, his tone probing for any potential leads.

## CHAPTER 5

George shook his head, his expression earnest as he replied, "Nah, man, everything seemed pretty normal to me. Just people going about their business, you know?"

Faizon exchanged a meaningful glance with Gilbert and Faizon Jr., silently conveying their shared determination to uncover the truth.

Gilbert leaned forward, his expression intent as he posed his question to George. "Did you happen to hear anything unusual or out of the ordinary in the moments leading up to the bombing?" he inquired, his voice carrying a note of urgency.

George nodded slowly, his brow furrowing in concentration as he recalled the events of that fateful day. "Yeah, I heard something," he replied, his tone grave. "About five seconds before the bomb fell, there was this rumbling, loud timpani drum roll. It was like thunder, but... different."

*"I knew it!"* Gabriel shouted, almost at once. "I knew it was Sir Roundbellied!"

Despite Gabriel's insistence, Faizon Jr., his father, and Gilbert remained focused on George's testimony, their attention undeterred by Gabriel's repeated assertions. They had already established that Sir Roundbellied's involvement was improbable, if not impossible, based on the evidence they had gathered earlier.

Faizon Jr. exchanged a meaningful glance with his father, their suspicions deepening at George's revelation. "Are you sure about what you heard?" Faizon Jr. pressed, his voice tinged with curiosity.

George nodded emphatically, his expression serious as he affirmed, "Positive. My hearing may not be what it used to be, but I know the sound of a timpani drum when I hear it."

Gilbert exchanged a knowing glance with Faizon, their minds racing with possibilities as they considered the implications of George's testimony. "Thank you for your cooperation, George," Gilbert said solemnly, his voice conveying his gratitude for George's compliance.

"Wait, that's not all!" Faizon Jr. interjected, his voice tinged with urgency. "What else did you hear?"

George shifted uncomfortably, his gaze fixed on the ground as he recalled the ominous words that had echoed in his ears on that fateful day. With a deep breath, he cleared his throat, emitting a soft rumble from his big brown belly,

### THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

the sound resembling a short timpani drum roll in a low G. Then, in a voice tinged with darkness, he began to recite the ominous command he had overheard.

"Plant some bombs," George intoned, his voice carrying an eerie resonance that sent shivers down Faizon Jr.'s spine. "Spread chaos and destruction throughout the city. Bring Timpanopia to its knees! That's what I heard before the bomb fell. I think it came from Enigma Evergreen."

The words hung heavy in the air, casting a pall of unease over the room as the gravity of the situation weighed heavily on everyone present. Faizon Jr.'s eyes widened in astonishment as he absorbed George's chilling revelation, his mind racing as he grappled with its implications and his determination to uncover the truth burning brighter than ever.

"Do you know what this means?" George concluded ominously. "It means that the bombings are only just the beginning. It's a phase—perhaps an individual's campaign to destabilize Timpanopia. Each bombing will serve as a strategic move within a larger plan, aimed at sowing fear and chaos among the inhabitants of Timpanopia. This phase is characterized by calculated attacks designed to undermine the peace and security of the community, with the ultimate goal of achieving the perpetrator's sinister objectives."

With a solemn nod, Faizon Jr. exchanged a meaningful glance with his father and Gilbert, their resolve unshaken in the face of adversity. Armed with this new information, they were one step closer to unraveling the mystery behind the sinister plot threatening their city.

Faizon observed George's appearance, noticing the subtle changes in his physique. "Hey, George, looks like you've been putting on some weight," he remarked, his tone casual as he gestured towards George's big brown belly. "Been hitting those snacks a bit too hard, huh?"

George chuckled, a sheepish grin spreading across his face as he glanced down at his ample midsection. "Yeah, you caught me," he admitted, rubbing his belly absentmindedly. "Guess I've been indulging a bit too much lately."

Faizon nodded understandingly, a faint smile playing on his lips. "I hear you," he replied, his own belly rumbling in agreement. "Sometimes you just have to treat yourself, right?"

## CHAPTER 5

As they exchanged light banter about the joys of good food and indulgence, the weight of their investigation momentarily lifted, allowing them to enjoy a brief respite from the pressing concerns of the outside world.

As they prepared to depart from George's house, Faizon Jr. couldn't shake the feeling of unease that settled in the pit of his stomach. The shadowy figure's ominous words echoed in his mind, fueling his determination to confront the darkness that lurked in the shadows and protect their world from harm.



"We've gathered some crucial information," Faizon announced, his voice resonating with authority as he addressed the assembled group. "George heard a dark voice commanding the planting of bombs, and he overheard the exact words spoken. He claimed it came from Enigma Evergreen."

Faizon Jr. nodded in agreement, his mind already racing with thoughts of how to proceed. "We also know that Mayor Tympano and George were both near the scenes of the bombings," he added, his tone grave as he recounted their findings.

Gilbert's brow furrowed in concentration as he processed the information. "It's clear that we're dealing with a calculated and sinister plot," he remarked, his voice tinged with concern.

Audito's glasses gleamed in the dim light of the warehouse as he adjusted them on the bridge of his nose. "We must act swiftly and decisively to uncover the truth and put an end to this threat," he urged, his words carrying the weight of experience.

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled with determination as he spoke. "We'll need to use every resource at our disposal to track down the perpetrator and bring them to justice," he declared, his voice booming with authority.

Charles nodded in agreement, his expression resolute as he glanced around the circle. "Together, we'll find the answers we seek and ensure that Timpanopia remains safe from harm," he affirmed, his voice echoing with conviction.

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

Gilbert's shield reverberated with each precise strike of the mallet, its metallic clangs filling the warehouse with a symphony of resounding tones. The rhythmic beat echoed off the walls, creating a barrier of sound that cocooned the group in their discussion.

"We need to consider all our options carefully," Faizon urged, his voice cutting through the din of Gilbert's shield. "We can't afford to overlook any leads or dismiss any possibilities."

Audito adjusted his glasses, his expression thoughtful as he listened to the discussion unfold. "Agreed," he concurred, his voice steady despite the urgency of their situation. "We must proceed with caution and precision."

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled in agreement as he nodded solemnly. "We need to stay focused and unified in our approach," he asserted, his tone resolute as he surveyed the group.

Charles leaned forward, his eyes intent as he considered their next steps. "We must act swiftly but methodically," he advised, his voice carrying the weight of experience. "Every decision we make could have far-reaching repercussions."

Faizon Jr. listened intently, his mind already racing with thoughts of strategy and planning. "Let's make sure we're thorough in our investigation," he suggested, his tone determined as he glanced around the circle.

Faizon Jr.'s suggestion hung in the air, each word carrying the weight of their collective resolve. "Enigma Evergreen," he reiterated, his tone steady despite the gravity of their decision. "That's where George heard the orders given."

Faizon Sr. nodded thoughtfully, his expression reflecting the seriousness of their situation. "It's worth investigating," he affirmed, his voice firm with determination. "We need to follow every lead, no matter where it takes us."

Audito adjusted his glasses, his gaze focused as he considered Faizon Jr.'s proposal. "Enigma Evergreen may hold the key to unraveling this mystery," he mused, his tone reflective as he weighed the possibilities.

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled in agreement as he spoke up. "We can't afford to overlook any potential clues," he asserted, his voice resonant with conviction. "Enigma Evergreen could provide us with valuable insights into our adversary."

## CHAPTER 5

Charles nodded in agreement, his expression grave as he voiced his support. "Let's prepare for the journey ahead," he suggested, his tone decisive as he urged the group into action. "We must leave no stone unturned in our pursuit of the truth."

Gilbert's voice echoed through the warehouse, punctuated by the rhythmic clangs of his shield. "But how are we going to get there?" he queried, his voice filled with a mix of uncertainty and determination. "Tons of obstacles stand in our way, and it's a whole mile away from Timpanopia. Plus, we have to get through the..." He trailed off, leaving the destination unspoken, knowing full well the challenges that lay ahead.

Faizon Sr. exchanged a knowing glance with Gilbert, acknowledging the validity of his concerns. "Getting there won't be easy," he admitted, his voice tinged with realism. "We'll need to plan our route carefully and anticipate any obstacles that may arise."

Audito adjusted his glasses, his brow furrowing in thought as he considered their options. "Perhaps we could enlist the help of the Timpanopian authorities," he suggested, his tone thoughtful. "They may be able to provide us with assistance or resources to aid in our journey."

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled in agreement as he chimed in with his own perspective. "We could also reach out to our contacts in neighboring regions," he proposed, his voice resonant with practicality. "They might be able to offer us safe passage or guidance through unfamiliar territory."

Faizon Jr. stepped forward, his big brown belly prominent as he addressed the group with unwavering confidence. "We can't let obstacles deter us," he declared, his voice resolute. "We'll find a way to overcome them, just like we always do."

Guy Biggums nodded in agreement, his expression determined. "We've faced this sort of challenge before," he acknowledged, his voice steady. "And we emerged victorious, did we not?"

Faizon Sr. furrowed his brow in thought, his mind already working on a solution. "We'll need to plan carefully," he advised, his tone measured. "But I'm confident we can devise a strategy to navigate through the obstacles."

## THE OBESE ORCHESTRA

Audito adjusted his glasses, his gaze focused on the task ahead. "We must remain steadfast in our determination," he urged, his voice steady. "With careful planning and teamwork, we can overcome any challenge."

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled with determination as he spoke up. "Let's not lose sight of our goal," he asserted, his tone resolute. "We'll find a way to reach Enigma Evergreen, no matter what stands in our way."

Charles nodded in agreement, his expression reflecting his unwavering resolve. "Together, we can accomplish anything," he declared, his voice filled with conviction. "Let's face these obstacles head-on and emerge victorious once again."

"Alright, then," said Gilbert. "But I still don't know how we can possibly get through the Timpanopian Council."

Navigating past the Timpanopian Council would indeed pose its own set of challenges. Faizon Sr. furrowed his brow, considering their predicament. "The Council holds considerable sway over Timpanopia," he remarked, his voice tinged with concern. "We'll need to proceed with caution if we're to gain their approval."

Gilbert's rhythmic beating on his shield paused momentarily as he weighed in on the discussion. "The Council's bureaucracy can be notoriously difficult to navigate," he observed, his tone thoughtful. "We'll need to present a convincing case for our journey to Enigma Evergreen."

Audito adjusted his glasses, his expression grave as he spoke. "The Council may view our expedition as a threat to their authority," he warned, his voice tinged with apprehension. "We must tread carefully to avoid arousing suspicion."

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled in agreement as he offered his perspective. "We'll need to demonstrate the importance of our mission," he suggested, his tone resolute. "Convincing the Council of the urgency of our cause will be crucial."

Charles nodded in agreement, his expression determined as he spoke. "Our mission is too important to be derailed by bureaucratic red tape," he asserted, his voice unwavering. "We must be prepared to face opposition. But with persistence and diplomacy, we may be able to secure the Council's support."

# 6

## Rumbling Rehearsals

**H**ey, wait a minute," Faizon interjected, his brow furrowing with realization. "Don't we have to practice for our concert tomorrow night?"

Gilbert's eyes widened in sudden remembrance. "What concert? I don't remem—oh!" He exclaimed, bringing a hand to his face in a classic facepalm gesture. "I totally forgot we have our concert!"

A chorus of muttered acknowledgments rippled through the group, with nods of agreement from everyone except Faizon Jr., Guy Biggums, and Gabriel, who appeared utterly clueless about the impending performance.

Faizon Jr. exchanged a knowing look with his cousin Gabriel, a sense of camaraderie evident between them despite the confusion swirling around the forgotten concert. Meanwhile, Guy Biggums scratched his head in bewilderment, clearly puzzled by the sudden revelation.

"We can't let this slip our minds," Faizon declared, his tone serious as he glanced around at the group. "Our concert is important, but so is our mission. We'll need to find a way to balance both without compromising either."

Gilbert nodded in agreement, his expression determined. "Let's make the most of our rehearsal time today," he suggested, rallying the group with newfound resolve. "We'll polish our performance and then get back to unraveling this mystery tomorrow. Sound good?" Gilbert's question hung in the air, met with unanimous nods and murmurs of assent from the group. Faizon, sensing the need to shift their focus back to their impending concert, took charge of the situation.

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

"Alright, everyone," Faizon called out, his booming voice commanding attention. "Let's gather in the back of the warehouse. We need to have a chat."

With a shuffling of feet and a rustle of clothing, the group followed Faizon to the designated spot, curiosity evident in their expressions. As they congregated in a semi-circle, Faizon cleared his throat, preparing to address the matter at hand.

"Alright, folks," Faizon began, his tone authoritative yet warm. "As you all know, tomorrow night is our annual concert. It's a chance for us to showcase our talents and spread joy through our music."

He paused, letting the significance of the event sink in before continuing. "But with everything that's been going on, it's easy to get sidetracked. We can't forget the importance of coming together as a community and celebrating what we love to do."

Gilbert nodded in agreement, his expression serious as he chimed in. "Faizon's right. Our music brings people together. It's our way of sharing our culture, our traditions, with the world."

Audito adjusted his glasses, his gaze thoughtful as he added his perspective. "And let's not forget, our performance tomorrow night is an opportunity to show solidarity. Despite the challenges we face, we stand together, united in our love for music."

Baldwin's big brown belly rumbled in agreement as he spoke up. "We've worked hard to prepare for this concert. Let's give it our all and remind everyone why we're known as the Obese Orchestra."

Charles, ever the voice of reason, nodded solemnly. "Tomorrow night isn't just about music," he emphasized. "It's about resilience, about perseverance. No matter what obstacles we encounter, we'll face them together."

Faizon surveyed the group, a sense of pride swelling within him. "So let's make tonight count," he declared, his voice ringing with determination. "Let's rehearse like never before, pour our hearts and souls into our music, and show Timpanopia what we're made of."

Faizon's eyes sparkled with excitement as he addressed the group, his voice filled with anticipation. "But first, I want to show you a performance that Gilbert and I have put together. This will be included in the concert."

## CHAPTER 6

With eager enthusiasm, Faizon Jr. jumped at the opportunity, his face lighting up with excitement. "Oh, Dad, Dad, can I do it this time, please?" he pleaded, his eyes wide with anticipation.

Faizon Sr. chuckled, unable to resist his son's infectious enthusiasm. "Sure, why not?" he replied with a grin, giving Faizon Jr. a playful wink.

With a sense of anticipation, Faizon Jr. stepped forward, his youthful energy palpable as he addressed the members of the Obese Orchestra. "Gentlemen," he announced theatrically, his voice taking on a mock deep tone for dramatic effect, "may I present to you the 'Big Brown Belly BOMBardment.'"

The anticipation in the air was tangible as Faizon Jr. launched into action, his big brown belly shaking with rhythmic fervor to produce a resounding timpani drum roll. The warehouse reverberated with the deep, thunderous beats, setting the stage for Gilbert's performance.

Gilbert, donning the larger golden shield strapped securely around his belly, stepped forward with purpose, a timpani mallet in hand. As Faizon Jr.'s drum roll intensified, Gilbert's movements synchronized perfectly, each strike against the shield producing a low, booming bomb sound that echoed through the space.

With each step towards the Obese Orchestra, the tension mounted, the rhythm building in intensity as Faizon Jr. shook harder, his drum roll reaching a crescendo. Gilbert matched the rise in volume with louder bomb sounds, his movements deliberate and commanding.

The Obese Orchestra looked on in awe, their eyes wide with excitement as they bore witness to the spectacle unfolding before them. Faizon Jr. and Gilbert were a picture of harmony and coordination, their performance captivating and electrifying.

As the drum roll reached its climax, the warehouse filled with a symphony of sound, the bomb sounds thundering in unison with Faizon Jr.'s rhythmic shaking. Then, as abruptly as it had begun, the performance reached its conclusion, the final thunderous bomb sound reverberating through the air before the drum roll ceased.

A moment of stunned silence hung in the air before erupting into enthusiastic applause from the members of the Obese Orchestra. Faizon Jr. and Gilbert exchanged triumphant grins, their bond strengthened by the success of

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

their collaborative performance. It was a moment to be cherished, a testament to the power of music and camaraderie in the face of adversity.

"Faizon Jr.'s got quite the belly on him," Faizon Sr. remarked with a grin. "He was actually showing Gabriel how he could make it even bigger in the playground after the funeral, or so Gabriel says."

A smile played at Audito's fat lips as he marveled at Faizon Jr.'s impressive belly. "It does seem to be even bigger than its standard intimidating size," he remarked, his tone filled with admiration.

Audito couldn't help but be intrigued by Faizon Jr.'s ability to sustain the drum roll for such an extended period. "I used to be able to roll for that long. Let's see if I still got it in me," he mused, determination gleaming in his eyes.

With a nod from Faizon Sr., Audito took center stage, his own big brown belly poised for action. As he began to shake it rhythmically, a deep, rumbling timpani drum roll reverberated throughout the warehouse, matching the intensity of Faizon Jr.'s earlier performance.

Gilbert, ever the reliable accompanist, resumed his role, striking the shield on his belly with precision. But as Audito continued his drum roll, it became apparent that he couldn't quite match Faizon Jr.'s endurance.

With each bomb sound from Gilbert's shield, the ground seemed to tremble beneath Audito's feet, causing him to stumble slightly. Despite his efforts, Audito struggled to keep up the pace, his laughter echoing silently through the warehouse as he fought to maintain the rhythm.

With each passing second, Audito's drum roll faltered, his movements growing more labored until, finally, he ceased his roll altogether, the echoes of Gilbert's final bomb sound lingering in the air. Yet, despite the brief struggle, Audito's attempt had been nothing short of impressive, a testament to his own skill and determination.

Faizon Jr. approached Audito with a grin, his eyes twinkling with camaraderie as he patted Audito's big brown belly affectionately. "Big brown belly," he echoed with a chuckle, acknowledging Audito's valiant effort in joining the performance.

Baldwin stepped forward, a determined glint in his eye as he addressed Audito. "Audito, you're doing it wrong," he declared with a hint of playful competitiveness. "This is how a true belly drummer does it."

## CHAPTER 6

Turning to Gilbert with a nod, Baldwin signaled his readiness. "Hit me with it, Gilbert," he called out, his voice filled with anticipation as he prepared to showcase his own belly drumming prowess. With Gilbert poised to strike, Baldwin braced himself, ready to demonstrate his skills with confidence.

With a confident nod from Gilbert, the tension in the air mounted as Baldwin braced himself for the performance. With a swift motion, Gilbert struck the shield strapped to his own belly, unleashing a deep, resonant bomb sound that reverberated throughout the warehouse.

Baldwin, undeterred by the challenge, began to shake his own big brown belly in time with the rhythm, his movements fluid and controlled. As the timpani drum roll echoed through the space, Baldwin's determination shone through, his focus unwavering as he sought to prove his skill as a true belly drummer.

However, much like Audito before him, Baldwin soon found himself faced with the daunting task of keeping up with Gilbert's thunderous bomb sounds. With each strike of the shield, the ground seemed to tremble beneath him, causing Baldwin to stumble slightly as he struggled to maintain the rhythm.

Gilbert's bomb sounds reverberated through the warehouse, their intensity matched only by Baldwin's valiant effort to keep pace. Yet, despite his best efforts, Baldwin soon found himself overwhelmed by the sheer force of the performance.

As Gilbert delivered a final, thunderous bomb sound, Baldwin's resolve wavered, his movements faltering as he struggled to keep up. With a hearty laugh and a good-natured pat on the back from Gilbert, Baldwin conceded defeat, his own big brown belly still quivering with the echoes of their collaborative effort.

Despite the brief setback, Baldwin's attempt had been nothing short of impressive, a testament to his dedication and passion for belly drumming. As the echoes of their performance faded into the air, the group looked on with admiration, united by their shared love of music and camaraderie.

With a decisive tone, Charles intervened, his voice cutting through the excitement of the moment. "Alright, that's enough," he declared, his words carrying a note of authority. "It's been fun, but we really have to practice now."

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

His words served as a gentle reminder to the group, refocusing their attention on the task at hand. As the echoes of their impromptu performances lingered in the air, Charles' call to action spurred them into motion.

Faizon nodded in agreement with Charles' directive, his expression reflecting a blend of amusement and determination. "Charles is right," he concurred, his voice carrying a note of urgency. "We've had our fun, but now it's time to get down to business."

A playful grin crossed Faizon's face as he glanced towards Faizon Jr., a hint of pride evident in his gaze. "Maybe you guys should be taking lessons from Faizon Jr.," he suggested with a chuckle, acknowledging his son's impressive performance earlier. "He's certainly got a knack for keeping the rhythm going."

Turning his attention back to the group, Faizon's demeanor shifted to one of practicality. "Anyway, do you guys still have your music sheets?" he inquired, his tone businesslike as he sought to ensure that they were fully prepared for their rehearsal. "Let's make sure we're all on the same page before we dive back into our practice."

As the Obese Orchestra took out their music sheets from their duffel bags, Gabriel, who had gone out to use the bathroom after Faizon Jr.'s performance, emerged from the restroom muttering absentmindedly about percussion instruments. "Rolling timpani drums on my belly...," he muttered under his breath, his words tinged with a hint of amusement and admiration. "Oh, hey again, Faizon Jr."

Faizon Jr. glanced over at Gabriel, a bemused expression crossing his face. "Damn, I didn't even *see* you go into the bathroom," he remarked with a chuckle, marveling at his cousin's unexpected disappearance.

Gabriel chuckled as he joined the conversation, his earlier muttering still fresh in his mind. "That performance was so tense it made me nervous and want to pee," he admitted with a playful grin. "It was *that* dramatic."

Faizon Jr. laughed heartily at Gabriel's jest, the camaraderie between them evident as they exchanged banter. "Well, you're just in time for another performance," Faizon Jr. declared, a mischievous glint in his eye. "Dad is about to practice with his big brown belly buddies for the concert."

Meanwhile, Faizon, with a sense of purpose, rummaged through the clutter of the warehouse, retrieving a set of music stands from a dusty corner. With

## CHAPTER 6

careful precision, he arranged five stands in front of five chairs, creating a makeshift stage for their rehearsal.

"Alright, everyone," Faizon called out, his voice carrying a tone of authority tempered with warmth. "Take your positions and place your sheets on these music stands."

As the members of the Obese Orchestra settled into their seats, Faizon stepped forward, his gaze sweeping over the group with pride and determination. With a deep breath, he began to speak, his words carrying the weight of their collective passion for music.

"My friends," Faizon began, his voice resonating with authority, "tonight, as well as tomorrow, we gather not just as musicians, but as storytellers. Each note we play, each beat we drum, carries with it a tale of perseverance, of unity, and of the unbreakable bonds that tie us together as a community."

He paused, letting the significance of his words sink in before continuing. "In the face of adversity, we have stood strong. We have faced challenges with courage, and we have triumphed through the power of our music."

Faizon's eyes gleamed with pride as he addressed each member of the orchestra individually, his words a testament to their shared journey. "Tonight, as we prepare for our concert, let us remember why we do what we do. Let us channel our passion, our determination, into every note, every beat, as we strive to create something truly magical."

He gestured towards the sheets on the music stands before them, a symbol of the journey they had embarked upon together. "These sheets of music represent more than just sheet music," Faizon declared. "They represent our dedication, our commitment to excellence, and our unwavering belief in the power of music to uplift and inspire."

With a final nod of encouragement, Faizon urged the group forward. "So let us rehearse with purpose, with passion, and with the knowledge that together, there is nothing we cannot achieve," he proclaimed, his voice ringing with conviction.

As the warehouse filled with the sound of music, Faizon's words lingered in the air, a rallying cry for the Obese Orchestra to give their all and make their concert a night to remember. With renewed determination, they set to work,

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

their hearts and souls poured into every note, every beat, as they brought their collective vision to life.

"Now, enough procrastination," Faizon declared, his tone firm yet laced with a hint of humor. "I'm sure I've caused the boys a lot of tension waiting for us to start. Gabriel probably has to pee again," he added with a chuckle, acknowledging the lightheartedness of the moment. "Anyway, let's start."

With a sense of purpose, Faizon motioned for the group to begin, the anticipation palpable in the air as they prepared to showcase their unique talent with their big round bellies. The warehouse buzzed with energy as they positioned themselves, their bellies poised and ready for action.

As Faizon took his place among his fellow belly drummers, a sense of camaraderie filled the space, uniting them in their shared passion for music. With a nod of agreement from the group, they launched into their first piece, the rhythmic beats resonating through the air as their bellies reverberated with each strike.

Each member of the Obese Orchestra played their belly drums with precision and skill, their dedication to their craft evident in every booming rhythm, every thunderous roll. As they immersed themselves in the music, time seemed to stand still, the outside world fading away as they became lost in the rhythm.

Faizon's leadership served as a steady anchor, guiding the group through each passage with confidence and grace. His words of encouragement echoed in their minds as they played, a reminder of the importance of their mission and the power of their collective talent.

As the performance progressed, the warehouse filled with the rich tapestry of sound, each belly drum contributing its own unique timbre to the ensemble. With each repetition, their performance grew stronger, their unity as a musical ensemble shining through in every beat.

And as they reached the final crescendo, the Obese Orchestra erupted into applause, their hearts filled with pride and satisfaction. It had been a performance filled with challenges and triumphs, but through it all, they had remained steadfast in their commitment to excellence.

As they dispersed, the echoes of their belly drumming still reverberating in the air, they did so with a renewed sense of purpose and determination. They were one step closer to achieving their goal, one step closer to sharing their

## CHAPTER 6

music with the world. And as they left the warehouse that night, they did so with the knowledge that their big brown bellies had once again brought joy and harmony to all who had the privilege of listening.



As BOMBarder traversed the shadowy depths of Enigma Evergreen, his heavy footsteps reverberated through the eerie silence of the forest. With each deliberate stride, his massive belly jiggled rhythmically, the weighty presence of his form casting a looming shadow upon the twisted landscape.

Approaching the pedestal at the heart of the forest, BOMBarder felt a sense of anticipation course through him. The air crackled with dark energy as he drew nearer, the ominous presence of the shadowy figure lurking within sending a shiver down his spine.

Suddenly, as if summoned by his arrival, the shadowy figure materialized before him, its form coalescing out of the darkness of the pedestal. With a voice dripping with malice, it addressed BOMBarder with a chilling familiarity.

"So, how was the bombing, big bomber boy?" the shadowy figure inquired, its tone laced with sinister intent.

"Mission successful," BOMBarder reported with a commanding tone, his voice resonating with authority. Despite the weight of his actions, there was no hint of hesitation in his words, only a steely resolve to carry out his dark purpose.

The shadowy figure regarded BOMBarder with a twisted grin, its features obscured by the darkness that enveloped it. "Excellent," it hissed, its voice a menacing whisper that echoed through the chamber. "Your loyalty to our cause is commendable, big bomber boy."

BOMBarder's massive frame loomed large in the dim light, his imposing presence a stark contrast to the eerie surroundings of Enigma Evergreen. With each movement, his big brown belly jiggled with an almost hypnotic rhythm, a testament to the power contained within him.

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

"And what of the inhabitants of Timpanopia?" the shadowy figure inquired, its voice dripping with anticipation. "Have they begun to feel the effects of our... collaboration?"

BOMBarder's expression remained impassive as he delivered his report. "Fear has begun to spread," he stated matter-of-factly, his voice resonating with a sense of authority. "The bombings have sown chaos and discord among them, as you desired."

A sense of satisfaction washed over the shadowy figure as it absorbed BOMBarder's words. "Excellent," it murmured, its eyes gleaming with malevolent delight. "With each passing moment, our grip on Beatweaver Haven tightens. Soon, nothing will stand in the way of our ultimate victory."

With a sinister grace, the shadowy figure extended a shadowy hand towards BOMBarder's massive belly, its form wavering in the dim light. As its incorporeal fingers brushed against the surface of his big brown belly, a sense of cold darkness seemed to seep into BOMBarder's very being.

The shadowy figure regarded BOMBarder's belly with a sense of macabre fascination, its touch lingering upon the smooth, round surface. "Impressive," it murmured, its voice reverberating with a chilling tone. "So round... so shiny..."

BOMBarder remained stoic as the shadowy figure examined his belly, its touch sending a shiver down his spine. The shadow kept its hand firmly pressed against BOMBarder's big brown belly, its touch lingering like a cold whisper upon his skin. With a sense of eerie intimacy, it spoke in a low, sinister tone, its words dripping with twisted admiration.

"My, my, you are quite big, aren't you?" the shadow murmured, its voice a chilling echo in the darkness. "So round, so imposing... a true force to be reckoned with."

BOMBarder remained silent, his gaze fixed ahead, his mind a maelstrom of conflicting emotions. Despite the shadow's words of praise, there was a gnawing sense of unease within him, a reminder of the darkness that lurked within his own soul.

As the shadowy figure withdrew its hand, a sense of unease settled over the chamber, the air thick with the weight of their ominous exchange. With a final glance towards BOMBarder's imposing figure, the shadowy figure vanished into the darkness, leaving behind only a lingering sense of dread.

## CHAPTER 6

Alone once more in the depths of Enigma Evergreen, BOMBarder stood in silence, his big brown belly quivering with a sense of foreboding. With each passing moment, the weight of his dark mission pressed upon him, driving him ever closer towards the brink of darkness.

And as he started to depart, his heavy footsteps echoed through the chamber, a sense of determination burned within him, fueling his resolve. With each stride, his big brown belly jiggled with a certain pride, a testament to his immense size and power.

Turning back to face the pedestal, BOMBarder's gaze was steely, his voice filled with a defiant edge. "You speak of my size as if it were a weakness, but in reality, it is my greatest strength," he declared, his words resonating with authority. "My big brown belly is a symbol of the unstoppable force that I am."

With a sense of satisfaction, BOMBarder let out a deep, rumbling chuckle, the sound echoing through the chamber like the distant roll of thunder. He turned to leave the forest and continue his dark mission, the weight of his steps reverberating through the forest. With each heavy step, his belly jiggled and emitted a very soft timpani drum sound that resonated throughout the jungle.



Faizon Jr. reclined on the top bunk of his bed, the soft glow of the moon casting gentle shadows across the room. With a sense of tranquility, he idly traced patterns around the belly button on his big brown belly, the rhythmic rise and fall accompanied by the soft timpani drum roll emanating from the attachable Big Belly Drum Drone on his belly, each beat seeming to lull him into a state of blissful relaxation. Below him, Faizon Sr. lay sprawled out on the lower bunk, his big brown belly dominating the space as it rose and fell with each steady breath. Despite his son's insistence on shrinking it before sleeping, Faizon Sr. had once again refused to do so, finding comfort in the familiar weight of his belly as he drifted off into slumber.

As Faizon Jr. lay awake in the stillness of the night, his mind adrift in a sea of thoughts and emotions, he started muttering random phrases. "Soft rolling of

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

dramatic kettledrums....," he muttered absentmindedly, now holding both sides of his enormous burgeoning belly, which wobbled slightly. "Dark booming bass drums rolling like thunder.... Big round rolling belly playing a round timpani drum roll sounding like a bear...."

As he muttered the words, he started to realize something profound about the ghostly timpani drum roll on his belly, which sounded like the roll he made when he had been practicing his belly drumming. The roll *did* seem to capture the atmosphere of a big sleeping bear. His mind wandered, envisioning a large bear, one that looked remarkably like Faizon Sr. and was sleeping on the jungle.

This bear was massive, its deep-brown fur blending seamlessly with the shadows of the undergrowth. One large, furry hand rested over its huge, round belly, which was even more expansive than Faizon Sr.'s. The belly was expanding and contracting with each steady breath, the size and roundness emphasized by the gentle moonlight filtering through the jungle canopy.

In Faizon Jr.'s mind, the bear's snores were deep and resonant, perfectly complementing the atmospheric timpani drum roll playing from his own belly. He also imagined himself standing behind a set of large timpani drums, his big belly resting on the edge of the drums to support its heavy weight, and in his imagination, he was playing the same rhythm as his father had played when he had been practicing. The combination of sounds created a soothing, harmonious symphony that echoed through the imaginary jungle. The sheer size of the bear's belly, moving in time with the drum roll, added a sense of grandeur to the scene.

The soft rhythm of the drum roll continued to reverberate through the room, a soothing melody that seemed to echo the cadence of his own heartbeat.... Despite the tranquility that surrounded him, there was a restlessness that tugged at the edges of his consciousness, a sense of anticipation for the unknown that lay beyond the realm of wakefulness.... His gaze wandered to the ceiling above, where shadows danced in the moonlight, casting intricate patterns upon the walls.... His eyes slowly closed, surrendering to the gentle embrace of sleep as dreams beckoned from the depths of his subconscious....

He was wandering almost mindlessly in an empty chamber, the walls stretching endlessly into darkness. Silence hung thick in the air, broken only by the faint echo of his own footsteps as he ventured further into the abyss. The

## CHAPTER 6

air was heavy with an unspoken tension, each breath a struggle against the oppressive atmosphere.

With each step, the weight of the unknown pressed down upon him, casting a pall over his senses. Shadows danced and flickered along the walls, twisting and contorting into shapes that seemed to shift and change with every passing moment. The chamber felt alive with a presence that he couldn't quite grasp, a sense of foreboding that prickled at the edges of his consciousness.

Faizon Jr. moved cautiously through the chamber, his senses alert for any sign of danger. But try as he might, he couldn't shake the feeling of being watched, of unseen eyes boring into his very soul. The silence seemed to press in on him from all sides, suffocating in its intensity.

As he reached the center of the chamber, a sense of unease washed over him like a wave crashing against the shore. The darkness seemed to constrict around him, wrapping him in its cold embrace. And in that moment, Faizon Jr. realized that he was not alone.

A chill ran down his spine as he turned to confront whatever lurked in the shadows. The air crackled with an electric energy, the tension thickening with each passing second.

Faizon Jr. glanced down to the side of his immense belly, where the Big Belly Drum Drone lay dormant, its rhythmic pulse silenced in the oppressive stillness of the chamber. With a sense of determination, he reached out and pressed a button on the device, igniting its power with a soft hum.

Immediately, the Big Belly Drum Drone sprang to life, its timpani drum roll resonating through the air with a soothing cadence. The rhythmic vibrations seemed to pulse in harmony with his own heartbeat, guiding him forward through the passageway with a sense of purpose.

As Faizon Jr. moved through the darkness, the soft roll of the drum echoed off the walls, illuminating his path with each resounding beat. The oppressive atmosphere seemed to lighten ever so slightly in the wake of the drone's melody, offering a glimmer of hope amidst the shadows.

With each step, Faizon Jr. felt a renewed sense of determination coursing through him, fueled by the rhythmic pulse of the Big Belly Drum Drone.

Faizon Jr.'s ears perked up at the faint sound of grace notes, their delicate ascent blending seamlessly with the rhythmic roll of his own belly drum. It was

## RUMBLING REHEARSALS

as if someone else was rolling on a timpani drum set to the same pitch, their presence echoing through the chamber in harmony with his own movements.

Though initially unsure of the source of the sound, Faizon Jr. pressed on, the melodic interplay between the grace notes and his belly drum roll guiding him forward through the darkness. With each passing moment, the grace notes grew slightly louder, their ethereal melody weaving a tapestry of sound that enveloped him in its embrace.

As he walked, Faizon Jr. found himself drawn towards the source of the music, a sense of curiosity driving him ever onward. Though the shadows remained thick and impenetrable, he felt a strange connection to the unseen musician, a shared bond forged through the universal language of music.

With each step, the grace notes grew louder still, their presence reverberating through the chamber with increasing intensity. And as Faizon Jr. drew closer to the source of the sound, he felt a sense of anticipation building within him, a longing to uncover the mystery that lay hidden in the darkness—

"Alright, sonny, it's time to wake up."

Faizon Jr.'s eyes fluttered open, the remnants of sleep still clinging to his consciousness. "It's already morning?" he muttered groggily, blinking away the haze of slumber.

As he stirred awake, Faizon Sr.'s voice cut through the fog of sleep, bringing him fully into the present moment. "Today's the day of the concert," his father announced, his tone infused with a mixture of excitement and anticipation.

With a jolt of realization, Faizon Jr. sat up in bed, the events of the previous night flooding back to him in a rush of memories. The chamber, the belly drum drone, the haunting melody of the grace notes—it all seemed like fragments of a dream, fading into the recesses of his mind with the light of day.

But as he shook off the remnants of sleep, Faizon Jr. felt a surge of excitement course through him, his heart pounding with anticipation for the day ahead. With a determined nod, Faizon Jr. swung his legs over the side of the bed, ready to face whatever challenges awaited him. Today was the day they had been preparing for, the culmination of days (well, only a couple of days, really) of practice and dedication. And as he rose to his feet, he knew that together, they would make their performance one to remember.

# 7

## The Concert

The warehouse buzzed with excitement as Faizon, Gilbert, Guy Biggums, and the two boys gathered in anticipation of the concert. The air was filled with a palpable energy, each member of the group eager to take the stage and share their music with the world.

As Faizon Jr. rubbed his belly in anticipation, a grin spread across his face. "When are the rest coming?" he asked eagerly, his eyes shining with excitement.

Faizon Sr. placed a reassuring hand on his son's shoulder. "Soon, son, soon," he replied with a smile, his own anticipation building with each passing moment. He could feel the familiar thrum of excitement coursing through his veins, a reminder of the joy that music brought to their lives.

With a final glance around the warehouse, Faizon Jr. took a deep breath, savoring the moment before they took the stage. Today was the day they had been waiting for, the culmination of their hard work and dedication.

Gilbert, his oversized stomach accentuated by the shield already wrapped around his midsection, leaned back to address Faizon, his belly protruding even further in the process. With a grin, he leaned in closer to his friend. "I talked to Charles after we left the warehouse yesterday," he said, excitement bubbling in his voice. "He decided he's going to make quite an entrance when he comes here."

Faizon's eyes lit up at the news, a smile spreading across his face. "That's fantastic!" he exclaimed, his own anticipation growing by the moment. The thought of Charles making a grand entrance only added to the excitement of the upcoming concert.

## THE CONCERT

As Gilbert straightened up, Faizon couldn't help but feel a surge of excitement coursing through him. Today was going to be a day to remember, and he couldn't wait to see what surprises awaited them on stage. With a nod of determination, he prepared himself for whatever the performance would be.

As a sudden rumbling timpani drum roll echoed through the warehouse, reminiscent of the one Faizon Jr. had played the day before, anticipation crackled in the air. Five seconds later, Charles made his grand entrance, his big brown belly protruding proudly as he walked in, the rhythmic patting of his stomach adding to the thunderous roll.

Faizon Jr.'s eyes widened in awe as he watched Charles' dramatic entrance, a grin spreading across his face. The sight of Charles, his muscles straining against the fabric of his gray shirt, was a sight to behold. The attachable microphone attached to his shirt added to the professional air, and the shirt was straining so much that it slightly blended in with his dark-brown skin.

Without missing a beat, Gilbert began to beat his shield at the same intervals, the sound blending harmoniously with Charles' rumbling drum roll. The rhythmic cacophony filled the warehouse, setting the stage for the concert that was about to unfold.

Then, as if on cue, Audito made his entrance, dressed in a sharp suit and tie. His presence added a touch of sophistication to the proceedings, his demeanor exuding confidence and poise.

Following closely behind was Baldwin, his pine-green shirt a stark contrast to the others' attire. Though his belly was not in its intimidating size, but at its normal size (still big, of course), it still jiggled slightly with each step, a testament to his jovial nature.

Guy Biggums leaned back slightly, his own belly expanding from its normal size to its intimidating size during Charles' dramatic roll. With a few hearty pats, he emphasized the impressive girth of his stomach, the movement causing the rumble to reverberate through the warehouse.

Faizon Jr. watched in amazement as Guy's belly swelled to its full size, the sheer magnitude of it taking his breath away. Despite the imposing presence of his own belly, even Faizon Sr. couldn't help but marvel at the sight before him.

With each pat, the rhythmic drum roll seemed to grow in intensity, filling the air with a symphony of sound that set the stage for the concert to come. Guy's

## CHAPTER 7

belly, now at its full size, added to the grandeur of the moment, its sheer mass a testament to his strength and presence.

As the rumbling timpani drum roll reached its climax, Charles released his grip on his belly, bringing the thunderous sound to a gradual halt. The final echoes reverberated through the warehouse, fading into the air like a distant memory.

Faizon Jr. and the others watched in awe as Charles brought the roll to an end, a sense of admiration washing over them. His ability to command the attention of the room with nothing but the power of his belly drumming was truly remarkable.

With a satisfied smile, Charles stood tall, his big brown belly still protruding proudly as a testament to the impressive performance. The air seemed to hum with energy, the lingering echoes of the roll adding to the anticipation that hung thick in the air.

With the roll now complete, the group exchanged knowing looks, a silent acknowledgment of the powerful bond they shared.

Faizon Sr. chuckled appreciatively, nodding in agreement. "That was quite a roll, Charles," he remarked, his voice filled with admiration. "You really know how to make an entrance."

The rest of the group chimed in with words of praise, echoing Faizon Sr.'s sentiments. Each member was in awe of Charles' performance, his ability to captivate the room with his belly drumming skills leaving a lasting impression on them all.

"But enough about that," Faizon Sr. interjected, sensing the need to refocus their attention. "We have to get back to the case about the bombings."

A collective groan filled the air as the group reluctantly shifted their focus away from the excitement of the concert. Though they were eager to take the stage and share their music with the world, the looming threat of the bombings cast a shadow over their festivities.

Faizon Sr. shared a sympathetic look with the rest of the group, understanding their frustration. But he knew that they couldn't afford to ignore the danger that lurked in their midst. The safety of Timpanopia depended on their ability to unravel the mystery behind the attacks.

## THE CONCERT

With a determined nod, Faizon Sr. rallied the group, his voice firm and resolute. "Let's not lose sight of why we're here," he said, his tone unwavering. "We need to gather whatever information we can and continue our investigation. The safety of our community depends on it."

Though reluctant, the group nodded in agreement, their resolve strengthened by Faizon Sr.'s words. Despite the challenges that lay ahead, they were determined to uncover the truth and put an end to the threat once and for all.

"What should we do now?" asked Gilbert, who had put away the big shield and started getting the smaller one. The gong-like instrument had already begun to clang afresh.

"A lot of stuff actually," replied Faizon Jr. "Like... evaluating the effectiveness of current security measures in place and discussing any additional steps that could be taken to protect the community from future attacks. Discussing any updates or communications received from law enforcement or other relevant authorities involved in the investigation, and coordinating efforts to share information and resources. Engaging with members of the community to gather insights, perspectives, and any relevant information they may have regarding the bombings or potential suspects. Maybe even considering some strategies for conducting surveillance or monitoring activities in key areas of interest, such as potential target locations or areas with high activity."

Faizon Jr. paused, taking a moment to gather his thoughts as the others listened intently. With a sense of determination, he continued, "We should also revisit our list of potential suspects and motives, making sure we're not overlooking anything. And perhaps we can brainstorm new approaches or angles to explore in the investigation."

Gilbert nodded in agreement, his expression serious as he processed Faizon Jr.'s suggestions. "Sounds like a plan," he said, his voice firm. "Let's divide up the tasks and start tackling them one by one."

Faizon Sr. nodded in approval, a sense of purpose driving him forward. "Agreed," he said, his voice echoing with resolve. "Let's not waste any time. The sooner we get to the bottom of this, the sooner we can ensure the safety of our community."

## CHAPTER 7

With renewed determination, the group set to work, each member taking on their assigned tasks with a sense of purpose and urgency. As they dove back into the investigation, their commitment to uncovering the truth remained unwavering, fueled by their shared desire to bring peace and security back to Timpanopia.



The group made their way to George's house, their footsteps echoing on the quiet streets of Timpanopia. As they approached the familiar building, Faizon Sr. knocked on the door, his knuckles rapping against the wood in a steady rhythm.

After a moment, the door creaked open, revealing George standing on the other side. His eyes widened in surprise at the sight of the group, but he quickly composed himself, offering them a tentative smile.

"Faizon, Gilbert, what brings you here?" George asked, his voice tinged with curiosity.

"We wanted to follow up on what you told us about hearing ominous orders before the bombings," Faizon Sr. explained, his tone gentle yet determined. "We were hoping you might be able to provide us with some more information that could help with our investigation."

George nodded, stepping back to allow them entry into his home. As they entered, the group took in their surroundings, noting the cozy interior of George's living room and the faint smell of freshly brewed tea in the air.

Settling into chairs around a small table, Faizon Jr. and the others listened intently as George recounted the events leading up to the bombings. With each detail he shared, their determination to uncover the truth grew stronger, their resolve unshakeable in the face of adversity.

The air in George's living room hung heavy with anticipation as the group settled in, their eyes fixed on George, eager to hear what he had to say. With a deep breath, George began to speak, his voice carrying a weight of importance.

## THE CONCERT

"Well, you see," George started, his words measured and deliberate, "I was sitting out on my porch, just enjoying the morning breeze, when I heard it. At first, it was just a faint whisper on the wind, barely audible. But as I focused my senses, I could make out the words."

Faizon Jr. leaned forward, his interest piqued. "What did you hear?" he asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

George paused, his brow furrowing in concentration as he recalled the events of that fateful evening. "It was a voice," he said, his tone solemn. "A voice filled with malice and intent, speaking orders to someone. It sent shivers down my spine, I can tell you that much."

Gilbert shifted in his seat, his eyes narrowed in thought. "Did you recognize the voice?" he inquired, his voice tinged with urgency.

George shook his head, his expression troubled. "No, I'm afraid not," he admitted. "It was unlike any voice I've ever heard before. But the words... they were clear as day."

Faizon Sr. leaned forward, his gaze locked on George. "What did they say?" he pressed, his voice firm.

George took a deep breath, steeling himself before speaking. "They said, 'Plant the seeds of destruction. Chaos must reign supreme in Timpanopia,'" he recounted, his voice tinged with unease.

The room fell silent, the weight of George's words hanging heavy in the air. Faizon Jr. exchanged a glance with his father, a sense of urgency driving them forward. They knew that they had to act fast if they were going to stop whoever was behind the bombings.

"But why would someone want to cause chaos in our community?" Faizon Jr. wondered aloud, his voice filled with disbelief.

"That's what we need to find out," Faizon Sr. replied, his tone resolute. "And with George's help, I believe we can get to the bottom of this."

"We need to dig deeper," George interjected, his voice carrying a sense of urgency. "There's more to this than meets the eye. I've been listening closely these past few days, and I've picked up on some... troubling chatter."

The group leaned in, their attention fully captivated by George's words. Faizon Jr. felt a knot form in his stomach, a sense of foreboding creeping over him.

## CHAPTER 7

"What kind of chatter?" Gilbert asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

George hesitated, his eyes darting around the room before settling on Faizon Sr. "There are whispers of a shadowy figure lurking in the shadows," he revealed, his voice low and grave. "A figure with twisted desires and a thirst for power. They say he's the mastermind behind the bombings, pulling the strings from the shadows."

Faizon Sr.'s jaw tightened, his mind racing with the implications of George's words. "Do you know who this figure is?" he asked, his voice tight with concern.

George shook his head, a look of frustration crossing his features. "I'm afraid not," he admitted. "But I've heard rumors of someone... someone with a darkness in their soul. Someone who would stop at nothing to achieve their goals."

The room fell silent, the weight of George's revelation hanging heavy in the air. Faizon Jr. felt a chill run down his spine, a sense of unease settling over him. He knew that they were facing a formidable enemy, one who would stop at nothing to achieve their sinister objectives.

"We need to tread carefully," George warned, his voice tinged with apprehension. "This figure is cunning and ruthless. We can't afford to underestimate them."

Faizon Sr. nodded in agreement, his expression grim. "Agreed," he said, his voice firm. "We'll need to be vigilant and stay one step ahead if we're going to stop them. But anyway—did you hear about our concert?"

George nodded, a faint smile playing at his lips. "Yes, indeed," he confirmed, his voice tinged with pride. "George Jr. has been looking forward to it for weeks. He's been practicing his drumming non-stop."

Faizon Sr.'s eyes lit up with excitement. "That's fantastic!" he exclaimed, his enthusiasm palpable. "We'll have to make sure to give him a warm welcome when he arrives."

"Let me paint you a picture of my boy, George Jr.," George began, his voice filled with paternal affection. "Ever since the first bombing, he's been under a lot of pressure, you know? Stress-eating has become a bit of a coping mechanism for him, but who can blame him? The weight of these events is heavy on all of us. Yet, despite the added pounds, he hasn't lost his spirit. His belly may have gotten a bit... *bigger*, but that hasn't dampened his enthusiasm

## THE CONCERT

one bit. He's still rolling away on those timpani drums like there's no tomorrow. Every day, rain or shine, you'll find him in the backyard, pounding away at those drums, practicing his heart out. And let me tell you, he's got rhythm like nobody's business. He dreams of nothing more than starting his own belly drum orchestra, just like you, Faizon. Heck, he's even taken it upon himself to learn how to play the timpani drum roll on his own big brown belly. Can you imagine the dedication? That's my boy, through and through. Hang on a second, let me go fetch him—*Hey, George Jr.!*"

George Jr. descended the stairs, his youthful energy apparent as he held his phone in hand, earphones securely in place. At twelve years old, he was slightly shorter than average, but his resemblance to his father was unmistakable, with the same deep-brown skin tone. He had a round face with a slight fixed smile, he wore rectangular glasses with dark-colored frames and clear lenses, and his hair was short and neatly cut. Clad in pine-green shorts and a white-and-green-striped shirt that draped over a belly that wasn't half as large as Faizon Jr.'s, he exuded a sense of casual confidence.

"Come on, Dad," he said, his young voice a mix of exasperation and amusement, "I told you Jeremiah and I were going to be livestreaming in his Discord server—oh."

As he reached the bottom of the stairs, his eyes widened in surprise at the sight of Faizon Jr. and the others gathered in the living room. Quickly pulling out his earphones, he stuffed his phone into his pocket and flashed a sheepish grin.

"Uh, hey there," he said, his cheeks flushing with embarrassment. "Didn't realize we had company. Sorry about that."

"Ah, sorry about that," George said with a chuckle, stepping forward to make introductions. "This is my son, George Jr."

Faizon Sr. grinned warmly, extending a hand towards the younger George. "Nice to meet you, George Jr.," he said warmly. "I've heard a lot about you."

Gilbert nodded in agreement. "Pleasure to meet you, young man," he said, offering a friendly smile.

Faizon Jr. flashed a grin, eager to make a new friend. "Hey, George Jr.," he said enthusiastically. "I'm Faizon Jr. This is my dad, Faizon, and our friend Gilbert."

## CHAPTER 7

George Jr. returned the smiles, feeling a bit more at ease in the presence of his father's guests. "Nice to meet you all," he said, his voice tinged with genuine warmth. "Sorry about the interruption earlier. Livestreaming with my brother Jeremiah tends to take up most of my attention."

"Oh, I almost forgot about Jeremiah," George exclaimed, a hint of excitement in his voice. "Let's bring the big boy down too. *Hey, Jeremiah! JEREMIAH!*"

A few moments later, the sound of heavy footsteps echoed down the stairs, and Jeremiah appeared in the doorway. Taller and broader, he towered over George Jr. with a presence that demanded attention. His skin, darker than George's, reflected his unique heritage. Clad in jeans and a black shirt that stretched over his big round belly, he exuded a sense of confidence and strength. He also seemed to be a bit tall for a thirteen-year-old.

"Hey, what's up?" Jeremiah greeted, his deep voice resonating through the room. "Enjoying ruining my livestream?"

As Faizon Jr. poked his stomach, George couldn't help but chuckle at the playful gesture. Then, turning his attention back to Jeremiah, he launched into another proud speech about his eldest son.

"Let me tell you about Jeremiah," George began, a twinkle of pride in his eye. "He's quite the character, that one. Always marching to the beat of his own drum, quite literally. You see, he's got his own set of timpani drums in his room. Can't go a day without playing those drums, especially those thunderous drum rolls he loves so much. It's like music is in his blood, you know? And speaking of music, he's also got this Discord server where he livestreams himself playing popular rhythm games. He's got quite the following, let me tell you. People from all over tune in to watch him play, and he's got a real knack for it. Keeps him busy, that's for sure."

As George spoke, a sense of pride filled the room, his admiration for his son evident in every word. Jeremiah's passion for music and gaming was contagious, and George couldn't help but feel grateful for the opportunity to share his son's accomplishments with others.

"And let me tell you about Jeremiah's belly," George continued, a fond smile tugging at his lips. "He's always had a big appetite, that one, and lately, with all the stress from the bombings, he's been stress-eating a bit more than usual as well. Can't blame him, really. But despite gaining a bit of weight, he's doing

## THE CONCERT

alright. He's a resilient kid, that's for sure. And let me tell you, he's excited to come to your concert. We all are. Can't wait to see you and Faizon Jr. in action. It's going to be a night to remember, I'm sure of it."

As the group exchanged pleasantries, a sense of camaraderie filled the room, bridging the gap between generations. Despite the unexpected encounter, they quickly found common ground, bonding over their shared love of music and rhythm.

As the time to depart arrived, Faizon Sr. stood up, his expression serious yet determined. "It's been fun," he declared, "but we have to head back to our warehouse. There's important investigations related to the bombings, and Faizon Jr. and his cousin's brother need to prep for their roles in the concert."

"Bye," Jeremiah chimed in, waving farewell to the departing guests.

George Jr. nodded, a hint of excitement in his eyes. "Let's get back to our livestream now," he said eagerly. "Bye, Faizon Jr.!"

Faizon Jr. grinned mischievously, offering some parting advice. "Keep up the weight gain, both of you," he joked, "It'll do you good for when you want to start playing those big brown belly drum rolls."



As the concert drew near, anticipation buzzed through the air, filling the warehouse with an electric energy. The hours leading up to the event seemed to pass in a blur, with last-minute preparations and rehearsals consuming their time. Though it felt like only a couple of hours had flown by, in reality, it had been a full eleven hours of meticulous planning and frenzied activity.

Outside, the distant gongs perched atop the Timpani Drum Tower began to chime, signaling the arrival of 8 PM. The rhythmic tolling echoed through the night, serving as a reminder of the impending performance and drawing eager spectators from all corners of Timpanopia. As the final preparations fell into place and the stage was set, excitement reached a fever pitch, culminating in a crescendo of anticipation for the night ahead.

## CHAPTER 7

Backstage, the atmosphere hummed with focused energy as Faizon, Gilbert, Guy Biggums, Faizon Jr., and the rest of the Obese Orchestra sat on chairs, diligently practicing their routines. Each member was immersed in their own world of rhythm and melody, fine-tuning their performances for the impending concert.

In a last-minute decision, Jeremiah had asked his father to participate in the concert, and now he himself sat behind a large timpani drum, his steady hands poised to unleash thunderous beats that would reverberate through the warehouse. Beside him, Guy Biggums grumbled softly, feeling his original role had been stolen, but nonetheless, he didn't mind as he sat behind a single suspended cymbal, ready to add his own unique flair to the ensemble.

Meanwhile, Gabriel sat on a faraway chair, his presence a quiet but essential part of the group. As they continued to rehearse, each member of the orchestra felt a sense of camaraderie and determination, united in their passion for music and their shared goal of delivering a memorable performance. With every beat of the drum and every *crash* of the cymbal, they inched closer to the moment when they would take the stage and share their talents with the world.

When the familiar deep booming gong reverberated throughout the stage after what felt to Faizon Jr. like hours, everyone participating in the event stood up and began to move towards the stage, carrying their foldable chairs with them. Jeremiah dragged his timpani drum, the instrument's large body scraping softly against the floor, while Guy Biggums balanced his suspended cymbal with practiced ease. Gabriel went to find and go sit with George and his son in row K, as Faizon Sr. had instructed him to.

Stepping into the spotlight, Faizon Jr. was momentarily blinded by the bright light, the sound of a cheering crowd washing over him like a wave. With each step towards the stage, his heart pounded with anticipation, the adrenaline fueling his determination to deliver an unforgettable performance to remember.

The group quickly unfolded their chairs and sat down, arranging their music stands in front of them with practiced ease. Faizon Sr., Gilbert, Guy Biggums, and the rest of the Obese Orchestra took their places, each member exuding a sense of readiness and resolve. Jeremiah positioned himself behind his timpani

## THE CONCERT

drum, his face set in a look of focused determination, while Guy Biggums set up his cymbal, the metal disc gleaming under the stage lights.

Faizon Jr. took a deep breath, his hands steadyng as he prepared himself for the performance of a lifetime. He rubbed his big brown belly, feeling the familiar heft and warmth that had become a source of both comfort and strength.

As the noise of the crowd began to settle, the stage was awash in a sea of eager faces and expectant silence. Faizon Jr. glanced at his father, who gave him an encouraging nod. This was it—the moment they had all been working towards, the culmination of their passion and practice. He closed his eyes for a brief second, centering himself, before opening them to meet the gaze of the audience.

As Faizon Jr. met the expectant gaze of the audience, he felt a surge of adrenaline coursing through his veins, heightening his senses and sharpening his focus. But before the concert could begin in earnest, Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his commanding presence drawing the attention of the crowd.

With a deep breath, Faizon Sr. raised his hand, gesturing for silence as he prepared to address the audience. His voice, rich and resonant, carried effortlessly through the air, commanding the attention of all who listened.

"My friends," he began, his tone both authoritative and warm, "tonight marks a special occasion—a celebration of music, community, and the indomitable spirit that unites us all. As we gather here tonight, surrounded by the pulsating rhythms and vibrant melodies that fill this space, let us take a moment to reflect on the journey that has brought us to this moment."

He paused, allowing his words to sink in, before continuing with a sense of solemnity and reverence. "In the face of adversity, we have remained steadfast. In the wake of uncertainty, we have found strength in each other. And tonight, as we stand on this stage, united in our passion for music and our commitment to each other, let us reaffirm our shared values of resilience, perseverance, and unity."

Faizon Sr.'s gaze swept over the audience, his eyes alight with a fierce determination and unwavering resolve. "For it is in times of darkness that the light of our collective spirit shines brightest," he declared, his voice ringing out with conviction. "And tonight, as we come together to revel in the beauty of

## CHAPTER 7

music and the power of community, let us remember that we are stronger together than we could ever be apart."

With his speech concluded, Faizon Sr. stepped back, his presence a guiding beacon of inspiration and strength for all who stood before him. As the applause erupted once more, he felt a swell of pride in his chest, buoyed by the energy and enthusiasm of the audience. With a nod of encouragement to his fellow performers, he settled into his seat, ready to immerse himself in the music and contribute his own unique flair to the performance.

As the applause faded into the background, Faizon Sr. exchanged a nod of acknowledgment with Jeremiah, the silent communication between them a testament to their shared understanding and camaraderie. With a swift motion, Jeremiah's hands moved with practiced precision, poised to unleash the thunderous power of his timpani drum upon the waiting audience.

Suddenly, the air was filled with the resounding *boom* of the timpani drum, its deep, reverberating tones pulsating through the roofless auditorium with a force that seemed to shake the very foundations of the building.

As the echoes faded, Jeremiah transitioned smoothly into a soft, rolling tremor on the timpani, his hands moving with practiced ease, creating a gentle, undulating rhythm that seemed to flow like a river.

The audience was enraptured, their breaths held in anticipation as Jeremiah expertly manipulated the dynamics, guiding the roll to a gradual crescendo. The sound swelled, growing fuller and richer, reaching a peak that resonated with an almost tangible intensity. Just as the sound seemed to fill every corner of the warehouse, he skillfully brought it back down, the volume tapering off into a delicate decrescendo that left the crowd on the edge of their seats.

After a few seconds of this mesmerizing softness, Jeremiah initiated another crescendo, his movements fluid and precise. The roll built up once again, reaching its climactic peak with a force that commanded attention. And then, just as expertly, he brought it back to a whisper, the sound soft and soothing. Without missing a beat, he began a quicker, slightly softer crescendo, the pace quickening as he played with the dynamics, before settling back into the soft, steady roll.

Then, with a determined look, Jeremiah launched into an even louder crescendo, the sound swelling to a powerful climax before quickly receding

## THE CONCERT

back to the soft roll. At this point, Guy Biggums decided to join in, striking his suspended cymbal with a rolling crescendo. The shimmering sound of the cymbal blended perfectly with the rumbling sound of the timpani drum, the two instruments creating a rich tapestry of sound that enveloped the audience.

Jeremiah and Guy Biggums continued to play together, their instruments matching in volume and intensity. Jeremiah transitioned between crescendos and decrescendos with a playful ease, each shift in dynamics bringing a fresh wave of excitement to the performance. Guy Biggums mirrored these changes on his cymbal, the rolling crescendo of the cymbal adding a shimmering layer to the deep, resonant tones of the timpani drum. The synergy between the two performers was palpable, their combined efforts creating a mesmerizing interplay of sound that captivated everyone present.

The dark tension was palpable in the air as Jeremiah continued to play, the soft, rhythmic roll casting a spell of anticipation over the audience. For five seconds, the notes were delicate, almost fragile, before he initiated a soft crescendo. The sound swelled gently, then receded back into a decrescendo, each transition smooth and controlled. The audience held their breath, caught in the ebb and flow of the music.

Then, after another five seconds, Jeremiah returned to the loud riffs, each one building with a force that sent shivers down the spine. The intervals between riffs varied in quick speeds, creating a dynamic and unpredictable rhythm that kept everyone on edge. His hands moved with lightning speed, the timpani drum responding to his every touch with deep, resonant tones. The varying tempos added a layer of complexity to the performance, showcasing Jeremiah's exceptional skill and intuition.

For a full minute, Jeremiah maintained this intense pattern, the crescendos and decrescendos creating a powerful and immersive soundscape. The tension in the room grew with each passing second, the music weaving a web of anticipation and excitement. Then, in a sudden, dramatic pause, Jeremiah stopped for about a tenth of a second, the silence hanging heavy in the air.

With a synchronized movement, Jeremiah banged the timpani drum loudly with both mallets in a forceful double strike, the sound echoing like a thunderclap. Simultaneously, Guy Biggums struck his suspended cymbal with a resounding *crash*, the two instruments creating a powerful, explosive climax

## CHAPTER 7

that reverberated through the warehouse. The abruptness of the sound, following the intense buildup, left the audience stunned.

For a moment, there was silence, the only sound the faint ringing of the cymbal. Then, gradually, the silence turned to applause, the audience erupting into cheers and clapping. The ovation grew louder, filling the space with a wave of appreciation and admiration for the performers. Jeremiah and Guy Biggums exchanged satisfied glances, their faces reflecting the pride and joy of a successful performance. Faizon Jr. felt his heart swell with pride, knowing that this was just the beginning of an unforgettable night.

In the distance, Faizon Jr. could hear George shouting, "That's my boy!" The proud father's voice carried through the applause, filled with joy and pride. The heartfelt exclamation was a testament to Jeremiah's hard work and talent. His deep booming voice seemed to echo the sentiments of many in the audience, who were equally impressed by the performance.

George Jr., standing beside his father, shouted enthusiastically, "You've got a big brown belly, Big J!" His voice, though younger and lighter, was filled with just as much pride and excitement. The affectionate nickname and the playful acknowledgment of Jeremiah's notable feature added a touch of familial warmth and humor to the moment. George Jr.'s shout brought a smile to many faces, adding a lighthearted touch to the charged atmosphere.

Jeremiah, hearing the supportive shouts from his family, felt a renewed sense of confidence. He glanced in the direction of his father and brother, giving them a quick nod of acknowledgment before returning his focus to the task at hand. The support of his family meant the world to him, and their presence in the audience was a powerful motivator.

As the applause began to die down, the other members of the Obese Orchestra prepared to take their places. The stage was set for a night of spectacular performances, each one promising to be as memorable as the last. Faizon Jr. took a deep breath, steadyng himself for his turn in the spotlight.

As the applause began to taper off, Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his imposing figure commanding attention even before he began to speak. He gave a warm smile to the audience, his eyes twinkling with pride and a hint of mischief. "Ladies and gentlemen," he started, his voice rich and resonant, "tonight, we

## THE CONCERT

are gathered here not just to enjoy a concert, but to celebrate the incredible talents and the remarkable journeys of each of our performers."

He paused, letting his words settle in the expectant silence. "I have the great pleasure of introducing someone very special to me, someone who has been by my side through thick and thin—quite literally. My son, Faizon Jr." The audience responded with a ripple of applause and murmurs of excitement, eager to see the young prodigy in action.

"Faizon Jr. is no ordinary thirteen-year-old," Faizon Sr. continued, his tone a mix of humor and affection. "He's got a talent for belly drumming that runs in the family, but he's taken it to new heights. Now, I've seen a lot of bellies in my time—" he patted his own substantial midsection, eliciting laughter from the crowd,—"but let me tell you, Faizon Jr.'s belly is something else. It's not just big; it's a musical instrument in its own right."

He chuckled, shaking his head in mock disbelief. "You know, every morning, I wonder if the house will be able to withstand another day of his practice sessions. The way he plays, it's like he's summoning thunder from within. And it's not just the volume—it's the sheer joy and passion he brings to every roll and beat."

Faizon Sr. glanced over at his son, who was standing ready, his face a mix of anticipation and determination. "He's been working tirelessly, pouring his heart and soul into his music. And tonight, you're all in for a treat. You'll see not just a boy with a big brown belly, but a true artist, someone who can make that belly sing with the rhythm and beats that are as powerful as they are precise."

He took a deep breath, his expression turning slightly more serious. "In these times, with all that's been happening in our community, it's more important than ever to find moments of joy, to come together and celebrate what we have. Faizon Jr. embodies that spirit. His music is a reminder that even in the face of adversity, we can find strength, we can find harmony."

Faizon Sr. spread his arms wide, as if to embrace the entire audience. "So, without further ado, it is my great honor to present to you my son, the remarkable Faizon Jr. Let's give him a warm welcome and let the music begin!"

As Faizon Jr. rose from his seat, the anticipation in the air was palpable. Charles, with his practiced precision, began to shake his belly, creating a soft

## CHAPTER 7

timpani drum roll that reverberated through the room for exactly one second. Guy Biggums tapped his cymbal slightly halfway through that second.

With each step, Faizon Jr. moved gracefully across the stage, his presence commanding attention. As the last hit of Charles' roll played out, Gilbert seamlessly transitioned, his mallets dancing across the surface of his shield for exactly one second. Audito followed suit, his movements fluid and precise.

Faizon Sr. joined in next, his belly resonating with each strike of the mallet for exactly one second before passing the rhythm on to the next member of the ensemble. And on and on they switched, each musician adding their own unique flair to the performance. Guy Biggums, true to form, kept the rhythm steady with his continuous tapping on the cymbal, providing a solid foundation for the rest of the orchestra.

As Faizon Jr. made his way back to his seat, the room was filled with the rhythmic symphony of their combined efforts, a testament to their skill and camaraderie. The energy in the room was electric, each note building upon the last in a crescendo of sound and emotion. It was a moment of pure harmony, a perfect blend of talent and teamwork that left the audience in awe of their musical prowess.

As Faizon Sr. took the spotlight once more, his words carried a weight of anticipation and excitement. "Ladies and gentlemen," he began, his voice projecting with authority and enthusiasm, "prepare yourselves for a performance unlike any other. Tonight, you will witness the mastery of Faizon Jr., as he unleashed the power of his big brown belly in a performance we called the Big Brown Belly BOMBardment."

As Faizon Sr. spoke, Gilbert rose from his seat, a determined expression on his face as he wrapped the big shield around his belly, ready to accompany Faizon Jr. in their mesmerizing display. With a nod of acknowledgment, Faizon Jr. stepped forward, his own belly already pulsating with anticipation.

With a swift motion, Faizon Jr. began to shake his big brown belly, each movement resonating with a deep, thunderous timpani drum roll that filled the air with tension and anticipation. The sound was powerful and full-bodied, a rolling thunder that built in intensity with every successive note. It was a continuous, cascading flow of rhythm that resonated through the air, creating a pulsating undercurrent that was both mesmerizing and commanding. Gilbert

## THE CONCERT

followed suit, softly striking the shield on his belly to produce a low, ominous bomb sound, each step he took towards the crowd echoing with purpose.

The performance unfolded with precision and intensity, the bomb sounds growing slightly louder at one-and-a-half-second intervals, the footsteps becoming heavier with each passing moment. Faizon Jr. shook harder, the roll reaching its climax as the volume rose to a crescendo. Gilbert matched these changes with his own variations, striking the shield at different angles and with varying force, producing a range of tones from sharp, staccato hits to long, resonant rings.

The beats turned into a relentless, driving force, creating a harmonious blend of low, rumbling tones and higher, sharper overtones. This layering added depth and texture, making the sound rich and multidimensional. And as the roll reached its peak, the tension in the room was palpable, the audience hanging on every beat, every step. And then, just as suddenly as it began, the roll quieted, the final bomb sound reverberating through the room with a thunderous roar, bringing the performance to a dramatic close.

As the last echoes faded away, the audience erupted into applause, their excitement and admiration evident in every cheer and whistle. Faizon Sr. smiled proudly, his words of praise for Faizon Jr. and Gilbert lost in the sea of applause and cheers. It was a performance that would be remembered for years to come, a testament to the power of music and the undeniable talent of those who wielded it.

As the performance entered its next phase, the tempo became more dynamic, the crescendoing rolls varying between 1.5 to 3 seconds with each switch. Faizon Jr. and Gilbert seamlessly transitioned between their respective rhythms, their movements synchronized with precision.

Every two switches, Guy Biggums punctuated the performance with a powerful *crash* of his cymbal, adding an extra layer of intensity to the already electrifying atmosphere. The audience watched in awe as the performance unfolded before them, each roll building upon the last with increasing momentum.

After a minute of mesmerizing drumming, a *crash* reverberated through the air, signaling a shift in the performance. Auditò seamlessly took over with a soft timpani drum roll, his skillful execution adding depth to the composition.

## CHAPTER 7

Meanwhile, Faizon Jr. wasted no time in attaching the Big Belly Drum Drone to his enormous stomach, the device immediately syncing with the roll and causing his belly to swell slowly. With one hand, he deftly retrieved a small taco from his pocket and shoved it into his mouth, the swelling of his belly accelerating with each passing moment.

As both rolls reached their peak, Guy Biggums unleashed a thunderous *crash* on his cymbal, signaling the pinnacle of the performance. Immediately, both rolls were replaced by Gilbert's roll, which echoed through the room for a full five seconds, enveloping the audience in a wave of sound and emotion. And just as the tension reached its zenith and the audience hung on the edge of their seats, a deafening explosion shattered the air in the far distance. The sudden blast reverberated through the room, sending shockwaves of panic and confusion rippling through the crowd.

In an instant, the jubilant atmosphere of the concert was replaced by chaos and fear. People screamed and ducked for cover, scrambling to escape the unexpected danger that now loomed over them.

As the chaotic scene unfolded around them, Faizon Sr.'s senses heightened, his heart pounding in his chest as he scanned the auditorium for any sign of danger. Suddenly, a rumbling, loud timpani drum roll echoed through the space, but it wasn't his own. His instincts screamed at him to take cover, but before he could react, he looked up to the open sky and saw a dark object descending, emitting ominous yellow particles as it fell.

It seemed to be falling in slow motion.... The bomb was going to fall down somewhere in the auditorium.... If only there was something he could do to stop it from falling—but his muscles seemed to have stopped working.... He looked around as if expecting a fire extinguisher to magically appear—but before he could make a move, the bomb plummeted directly onto the stage, causing no visual damage but nevertheless sending performers flying and causing chaos to erupt in its wake.

Faizon managed to bring himself up, looking around fearfully. More bombs were falling down in a familiar rhythmic pattern—it couldn't be.... Surely it wasn't coming true....

Meanwhile Faizon Jr., who had also gotten to his feet, couldn't seem shake the feeling of unease that gnawed at the pit of his stomach. The suddenness of

## THE CONCERT

the explosions and the uncertainty of its origin weighed heavily on his mind, fueling his determination to uncover the truth behind the bombings and protect his community from further harm....

"GEORGE!" screamed Faizon Sr., his loud voice echoing through the auditorium amidst the chaos. "Get the kids and get out of here!"

"OK!" George called back, his voice barely audible over the deep rolling thunder of the timpani drum roll that seemed to reverberate through every inch of the space. "Gabriel, George Jr., come with me!"

The urgency in George's voice spurred the children into action. Gabriel, his face pale but determined, grabbed George Jr.'s hand and pulled him towards the nearest exit. The sounds of their footsteps were almost drowned out by the continuous drum roll, which seemed to echo with a malevolent intensity, as if mocking their desperate attempt to flee.

Jeremiah, who had caught up to George and the kids as the bombs began to fall, was panting heavily. "Are you guys okay?" he asked, his voice strained with concern. The distant rumble of timpani drum rolls filled the air, punctuated by the occasional *boom* of falling bombs.

Gabriel, his eyes wide with fear but still managing a hint of curiosity, asked, "Is it true that you only joined just to show everyone that roll?"

Jeremiah gave a quick nod. "Yes," he replied, his voice steady despite the chaos. "It's called 'Rolling Thunderstorm', but now's not the time. We have to—"

Before he could finish, a bomb suddenly fell near the exit they were attempting to reach. The blast threw debris into the air and sent a shockwave that rattled the walls. George Jr., who had been trying to keep calm, started whimpering and instinctively wrapped his arms around Jeremiah's midsection. The boy's big forehead, shining with beads of sweat, pressed hard against Jeremiah's enormous stomach, causing him to wince in pain. Despite the discomfort, Jeremiah hugged his little brother back tightly, whispering, "It'll be okay."

George, standing nearby, was scanning the area frantically for another way out. "We need to move, now!" he shouted, trying to keep the panic from his voice. The distant timpani drum rolls seemed to grow louder, each beat a grim reminder of the danger they were in.

## CHAPTER 7

Jeremiah nodded, trying to calm George Jr. with gentle pats on his back. "We have to find another exit," he said, his voice firm. "Let's go."

Gabriel, trying to be brave, held George Jr.'s hand and started leading the way, glancing back to ensure Jeremiah was following. The four of them moved quickly but cautiously, the sounds of the concert now replaced by the relentless rhythm of the bombings.

As they navigated through the debris-filled corridors, Jeremiah kept reassuring George Jr., who clung to him like a lifeline. "Just keep moving," he murmured. "We'll get out of here—just keep moving...."

Every step was a struggle against the fear that threatened to paralyze them, but together, they pushed forward. Meanwhile, Faizon Jr. was with his father, trying desperately to guide everyone to safety. The noise of the rolling timpani drums and the booming bombs made their bellies jiggle with each step, adding to the chaos and confusion. The heavy, rhythmic beats of their own bellies pounding in time with the distant thunder added an eerie layer to the atmosphere, a constant reminder of the peril they faced.

Faizon Jr. looked around, scanning the auditorium for any signs of their friends. The once bustling space was now a chaotic maze of overturned chairs, scattered instruments, and panicked people. His eyes darted across the room, searching for familiar faces amidst the sea of confusion.

"Audito!" he called out, his voice barely audible over the din. He spotted Audito struggling to navigate through the debris-laden path, each step a monumental effort. As Faizon Jr. moved closer, he noticed something alarming—Audito's belly was gradually growing to an unbearable weight, wobbling uncontrollably with each step. Faizon Jr. supposed the timpani drum roll must have been really getting to him.

"Audito, are you okay?" Faizon Jr. shouted, pushing through the crowd to reach him.

Audito, sweating profusely, shook his head. "I don't know what's happening," he gasped. "I can barely move. My belly... it's so heavy."

Faizon Sr. turned back, realizing something was wrong. He rushed to Audito's side, his own massive belly swaying with urgency. "We've got to get him out of here," he said, his voice firm despite the fear in his eyes.

## THE CONCERT

Faizon Jr. nodded, grabbing Audito's arm to help support him. "Come on, Audito. We've got you."

The three of them moved slowly, each step a Herculean effort for Audito. The growing weight of his belly made it difficult to balance, and every jolt from the distant explosions sent ripples through his expanding midsection. Faizon Jr. and Sr. flanked him, trying to keep him upright and moving forward.

"We need to find a way to stop this," Faizon Jr. said, looking desperately at his father.

Faizon Sr. nodded. "We need to get out of here first. Then we'll figure out what's causing this."

As they continued their arduous journey through the auditorium, Faizon Jr. couldn't shake the feeling that something sinister was at play. The pattern of the bombings pointed to a deeper, more dangerous plot. He pushed the thought aside, focusing on the immediate task of getting his friend to safety.

They finally reached an exit, where George and the kids were waiting. Jeremiah was still comforting George Jr., who clung to him with a mixture of fear and relief. Gabriel was keeping watch, his eyes darting nervously around the room.

"We've got to move fast," Faizon Sr. said, urging everyone out the door. "Stick together, and we'll get through this."

As they spilled out into the night, the contrast between the chaos inside and the eerie calm outside was stark. The distant sounds of the timpani drums and the sporadic booms of the bombs continued, but here, under the open sky, there was a brief moment of respite.

Faizon Jr. took a deep breath, his heart pounding. They were safe for now, but he knew this was far from over. The mystery of the bombings needed answers. And they were determined to find them.

# In Search of Permission

## **Chaos at the Concert Hall**

Explosions during long-awaited concert causes yet more terror in Timpanopia

In a startling turn of events, the highly anticipated annual spring concert at Timpanopia's prestigious concert hall came to an abrupt halt last night due to an unforeseen and alarming incident. Attendees were left in shock and confusion as a powerful explosion rocked the venue, shattering the harmony of what was meant to be a night of musical celebration.

The concert, featuring the renowned Timpanopian Symphony Orchestra (a.k.a. the Obese Orchestra), was well underway when chaos erupted. Just as the orchestra reached a crescendo in their performance, a deafening blast echoed through the hall, sending shockwaves rippling through the audience.

Eyewitnesses described scenes of panic and pandemonium as concertgoers scrambled for safety amidst the chaos. The explosion caused structural damage to the concert hall, with debris scattered across the venue. Miraculously, there were no reported fatalities,

## IN SEARCH OF PERMISSION

though several attendees sustained minor injuries in the commotion.

Authorities were swift to respond to the scene, launching an immediate investigation into the cause of the explosion. Preliminary findings suggest that the blast may have been the result of a deliberate act, though the motive behind the attack remains unclear.

In light of the incident, officials have called for heightened security measures across Timpanopia, urging residents to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity. Meanwhile, the Timpanopian Symphony Orchestra has issued a statement expressing their shock and dismay at the disruption of their performance, vowing to reschedule the concert at the earliest opportunity.

As the investigation into this brazen act of sabotage continues, residents of Timpanopia remain on edge, grappling with the unsettling reality that their once peaceful community has been thrust into the spotlight of turmoil and uncertainty.

Faizon Sr., Gilbert, and Faizon Jr. sat around George's kitchen table, their brows furrowed in concentration as they continued to peruse the Saturday morning newspaper. Jeremiah stood nearby, lost in the world of his phone.

Faizon Sr. sighed heavily, the weight of their recent ordeal still hanging heavily on his shoulders. "Looks like the authorities are no closer to figuring out who's behind these bombings," he muttered, his voice tinged with frustration.

Gilbert nodded in agreement, his expression grave. "It's like we're running in circles," he said, running a hand through his hair in exasperation.

Faizon Jr. frowned, his mind still reeling from the events of the previous night. "We can't just sit around waiting for someone else to solve this," he said, his voice determined. "We need to take matters into our own hands."

Jeremiah looked up from his phone, his interest piqued. "What do you mean?" he asked, stepping closer to the table.

## CHAPTER 8

Faizon Jr. leaned back in his chair, considering their options. "We need to start by gathering as much information as we can," he said, his tone serious. "We know Audito's belly was growing because of the tension from the timpani drum roll. That means whoever's behind this must have some way of controlling or manipulating the vibrations in the air."

"Well, that's natural," said Faizon Sr. "I know Audito better than anyone, he's my brother, and his belly would always grow whenever he got excited, and he gets excited whenever he hears such tense timpani drum rolls."

"Oh."

Gilbert nodded, his mind already racing with possibilities. "We should also reach out to any contacts we have in the community," he suggested. "See if anyone's heard anything suspicious or knows someone who might be involved."

Faizon Jr. leaned forward, his eyes shining with determination. "And we can't forget about George," he said. "He might be able to hear something that the rest of us can't."

Jeremiah nodded in agreement, his expression serious. "Let's do it," he said, a steely resolve in his eyes. "We won't rest until we've uncovered the truth behind these bombings."

With a shared nod of determination, the group prepared to navigate the bureaucratic maze of investigations and gather the evidence they needed to bring the culprits to justice.

George Jr. suddenly made his entrance, his big belly jiggling with each ponderous step. "What up, everybody?" he exclaimed, raising his hands in greeting.

Jeremiah chuckled deeply as George Jr. poked his belly button, the timpani drum logo on his black T-shirt jiggling slightly in response. "G'morning, big guy," said George Jr.

"G'morning to you too, little bro," Jeremiah replied, his voice warm with affection.

Faizon glanced over at George Sr., a thoughtful expression crossing his face. "Hey, George, we're heading to the warehouse," he said, his tone serious. "We need to figure out how to navigate the bureaucracy and get access to Enigma Evergreen."

## IN SEARCH OF PERMISSION

"Count me in," George Sr. said eagerly, his big brown belly jiggling with excitement. "Let's go uncover some secrets."

With George Sr. joining their ranks, the group set off towards the warehouse, their minds already buzzing with plans and strategies. As they prepared to face the challenges ahead, they knew that with their determination and ingenuity, they would find a way to uncover the truth hidden within the labyrinth of bureaucracy and mystery.

They found Baldwin and Audito already inside, seated amidst a flurry of papers and maps strewn across the large central table. Baldwin was leaning back in his chair, casually drumming his fingers on his slightly protruding belly, while Audito, whose excitement had clearly caused his belly to swell slightly from its normal form, was meticulously examining a detailed map of Enigma Evergreen. Neither Gabriel nor Guy Biggums were there, due to the fact that they had important stuff to do back at Guy Biggums' house.

"Baldwin, Audito, good to see you both," Faizon Sr. greeted them warmly, his deep voice filling the space. He glanced around at the disorganized array of documents. "Looks like you two have been busy."

"Busy's an understatement," Baldwin replied with a chuckle, his fingers never ceasing their rhythmic tapping. "We've been trying to piece together everything we know about the bureaucracy and Enigma Evergreen. It's a real maze."

Audito nodded enthusiastically, his glasses slipping down his nose as he looked up from the map. "We've made some progress, though," he said, his excitement palpable. "We've identified a few key officials and departments that we need to approach to get the access we need."

George Sr. walked over to the table, his belly jiggling with each step. "Great to hear," he said, his tone earnest. "So, what's the plan? How do we get these bureaucrats to let us into Enigma Evergreen?"

"We need to put together a formal request," Audito explained, pushing his glasses back up. "But it's not just about the paperwork. We need to make a strong case, show them that our investigation is crucial for the safety of the community."

"Right," Baldwin chimed in, leaning forward. "And we need to make sure we're speaking to the right people. There's a lot of red tape, and we can't afford to get lost in it."

## CHAPTER 8

Faizon Jr., who had been quietly listening, stepped forward. "What if we also gather some testimonials from the community?" he suggested. "If we can show that people are genuinely concerned and want answers, it might help our case."

"Good idea, son," Faizon Sr. said, nodding approvingly. "We can start by talking to folks around the neighborhood. Get their thoughts, their fears, and their support."

Gilbert, who had been thoughtfully silent, finally spoke up. "We also need to consider the timing," he said. "We can't just walk in there and demand access. We need to be strategic about when and how we present our case."

George Sr. smiled, his eyes twinkling with determination. "Sounds like we've got a lot of work ahead of us," he said. "But I believe we can do it. Let's get started."

With their course of action clear, the group dove into their preparations. Baldwin and Audito continued their work on the maps and documents. As they worked, the atmosphere in the warehouse was charged with a sense of purpose. They knew that the road ahead would be challenging, but together, they felt ready to tackle whatever obstacles came their way. And with the knowledge that their efforts could bring them one step closer to uncovering the truth behind the bombings, their resolve was stronger than ever.



"So here's the plan," said Faizon Sr., half an hour later. "Baldwin and Audito have already compiled the documentation. They have gathered all necessary documents and maps related to Enigma Evergreen and the bombings, including official records, past communications with the bureaucracy, and any other relevant data. Now you guys will determine which bureaucrats and departments have the authority to grant access to Enigma Evergreen. Baldwin and Audito will identify these key figures and their contact information.

"Then, George and I will draft a formal letter requesting access to Enigma Evergreen. This letter will outline the urgency of our investigation, the potential threat to the community, and the importance of our work. The letter

## IN SEARCH OF PERMISSION

will include evidence from our investigation, testimonials from witnesses, and any other supporting documents that demonstrate the necessity of our request.

"Faizon Jr. and Gilbert will talk to members of the community to gather their thoughts, concerns, and support. They will collect written and possibly recorded testimonials from people affected by the bombings or who have relevant information. We will also inform the community about our efforts and garner additional support, which can be presented as part of our request to show broad community backing.

"Next, we need a strategic presentation. Now, Gilbert emphasized the importance of timing. We will research the best time to approach the officials, considering factors like upcoming meetings, deadlines, or events that might make the officials more receptive to our request. If possible, we will then coordinate our efforts with local law enforcement to strengthen our case. This might involve sharing our findings and collaborating on the formal request.

"Once the letter is finalized and we have gathered sufficient community support, George and I will formally submit our request to the identified bureaucrats and departments. We will follow up with the officials to ensure our request is being considered and to provide any additional information or clarification as needed. We will also prepare for possible rejections or delays by having contingency plans in place. This might involve identifying alternative routes to gain access or additional ways to apply pressure if our initial request is denied."

"Sounds like a plan," said Audito, who had been taking notes. "Let's do it." And with that, he and Baldwin brought the papers and documents to the workshop in a nearby door and started to find the contact information of the authorities.

"Alright, let's see what we have here," Baldwin said, spreading out the documents on a large wooden table. "We need to pinpoint exactly who we need to contact. Any luck finding those old communications, Audito?"

Audito adjusted his glasses and nodded, "Yeah, I've got them right here. Let's see.... There's an email from a few months ago from someone named Radames Carter. Oh, perfect, he's the leader of the Council! He also seems to be a higher-up in the Enigma Evergreen administration."

## CHAPTER 8

"Good, good," Baldwin replied, jotting down the name. "What about the head of the department responsible for security? We need someone who can understand the urgency of our situation."

"Found it," Audito said, flipping through a stack of papers. "Martez Brooks, Head of Security. There's also a note here about his deputy, Glenn Patterson. It might be worth contacting both of them."

"Excellent," Baldwin said, his pen moving quickly across the paper. "We'll need to draft a letter that really highlights the importance of our request. Faizon and George are working on that now. Once we have their approval, we'll need to ensure it reaches these key officials."

Audito nodded thoughtfully. "I've got a few more names here. There's a public relations officer, Shurland Lawson. He might be useful for rallying community support. And then there's the general contact for emergency services. They might not have direct authority over Enigma Evergreen, but they could help us get our foot in the door."

"Perfect," Baldwin said. "Let's make sure we include all this information in our plan. The more people we can get on our side, the better."

Audito shuffled through another pile of papers and pulled out a few more documents. "I also found some maps of Enigma Evergreen and the surrounding areas. These might come in handy when we present our case. If we can show them exactly where the bombings happened and how close they were to critical areas, it might help convince them."

"Good thinking," Baldwin agreed. "Let's get all this organized. We need to be as thorough and persuasive as possible."

As they worked, the room filled with the rustling of papers and the low hum of conversation. Faizon Jr. and Gilbert occasionally popped in to check on their progress, offering suggestions and encouragement. The sense of urgency and determination in the room was palpable, as everyone worked together to ensure their plan would be successful.

After Baldwin showed Faizon Sr. the contact information, he and George huddled over the table, the dim light casting shadows across the worn wooden surface.

Faizon couldn't help but chuckle as his big brown belly bumped into the edge of the table. "I suppose I could try shrinking my belly, but that might take some

## IN SEARCH OF PERMISSION

time." He glanced down at his ample midsection, which indeed occupied a significant portion of the table space.

George grinned. "Or you could just use it as a surface. It's like having a built-in desk!"

Faizon laughed, patting his belly affectionately. "You might be onto something there. Who needs a table when you've got a belly this big?"

With a playful wink, he leaned forward, resting his arms on his belly as he continued writing the letter. George shook his head, amused by Faizon's ingenuity. Together, they made quite the team, using every available resource to tackle the challenges before them. The weight of their mission hung heavy in the air as they meticulously crafted each sentence of the letter to Radames, the head of security.

"We need to be crystal clear about our intentions," Faizon remarked, his voice low and steady.

George nodded, his brow furrowed in deep concentration. "Absolutely. We can't afford any misunderstandings."

With a firm grip on his pen, Faizon began to outline their request. "First, we need to emphasize the urgency of the situation. These disturbances pose a serious threat to our community."

George leaned in closer, his eyes scanning over Faizon's words. "Right. And we have to make it clear that we're not just asking for access out of curiosity. We believe there's a connection between the bombings and Enigma Evergreen."

Faizon nodded in agreement, his pen scratching across the paper. "Exactly. We're conducting a thorough investigation, and we need their cooperation to get to the bottom of this."

As they worked, their conversation flowed seamlessly, each idea building upon the last. They discussed the importance of transparency, the need for collaboration, and the assurance of their commitment to resolving the crisis.

As they delved deeper into drafting the letter, Faizon's belly served as an unconventional yet surprisingly practical workspace. Despite its considerable size, it provided a stable surface for them to spread out their documents and jot down notes. Faizon occasionally tapped his fingers on his belly as he mulled over the wording, the rhythmic beat echoing softly in the room.

## CHAPTER 8

George, meanwhile, leaned in closer, his brow furrowed in concentration as he reviewed each sentence for clarity and coherence. "I think we're making good progress," he remarked, glancing up at Faizon.

Faizon nodded, a determined glint in his eyes. "Absolutely. This letter needs to be concise yet persuasive, laying out our case clearly and compellingly."

With renewed focus, they continued to refine their draft, their collaboration seamless as they worked toward their common goal. The task ahead was daunting, but with Faizon's belly as their makeshift workspace and George's keen attention to detail, they were determined to navigate the bureaucracy and seek the answers they sought.

Faizon Jr. and Gilbert ventured out into the bustling streets of Beatweaver Haven, their mission clear: to gather insights and information from the community members. As they walked side by side, the rhythm of their footsteps echoing in harmony, they exchanged determined glances, ready to tackle whatever challenges lay ahead.

Their first stop was the local marketplace, where vendors and shoppers mingled amidst colorful stalls and lively chatter. Faizon Jr. and Gilbert approached each person they encountered with friendly smiles, engaging them in conversation and asking about their experiences and observations regarding the recent bombings.

They listened attentively as people shared their concerns and suspicions, taking note of any valuable leads or clues that could aid in their investigation. Faizon Jr. tapped his belly thoughtfully, the rhythmic beat serving as a constant reminder of their purpose.

Their journey took them through various neighborhoods and gathering spots, from the bustling streets to the tranquil parks, as they tirelessly canvassed the community for information. With each interaction, they gained valuable insights and forged connections with the people of Beatweaver Haven.

As the sun began to set on the horizon, Faizon Jr. and Gilbert returned to the warehouse, their hearts filled with determination and resolve. They had made significant progress in their quest for answers, but they knew that the road ahead would be long and challenging. With unwavering determination, they prepared to continue their pursuit of truth, one step at a time.

## IN SEARCH OF PERMISSION

When they all gathered back at the warehouse at nightfall, Faizon Sr. greeted Faizon Jr. and Gilbert with a warm smile. "Welcome back, boys. Did you find anything interesting?" he asked, his deep voice filling the air.

Faizon Jr. nodded eagerly. "We spoke to several people in the community," he replied. "There's definitely a sense of fear and uncertainty, but we also got some valuable information that could help us."

Gilbert chimed in, his eyes bright with excitement. "Yeah, we heard some interesting theories and possible leads. It seems like everyone is eager to see this mystery solved."

Baldwin and Audito, who had been busy organizing the documents, looked up with interest. "What did you hear?" Baldwin asked, leaning forward.

Faizon Jr. shared the details of their conversations, recounting the suspicions and speculations they had encountered. As he spoke, the group listened intently, absorbing every word.

Faizon Sr. nodded thoughtfully. "It sounds like we're on the right track," he said. "We'll need to follow up on these leads and continue our investigation."

With renewed determination, they began to strategize, discussing their next steps and dividing tasks among themselves. Despite the late hour, their spirits were high as they worked together towards a common goal: uncovering the truth behind the bombings and ensuring the safety of their community.

# 9

## Navigating the Bureaucracy

**A**fter a tense week of waiting for a response from the council (during which another bombing had shaken the community), they were back at George's house—Faizon, Gilbert, Guy Biggums, and the two boys—when they finally received a letter. The weight of anticipation hung heavily in the air as Faizon Sr. opened it (half-expecting the same rumbling timpani drum roll to play), his large hands trembling slightly. Inside, on official council letterhead, was a message from Radames:

*Dear Mr. Faizon Brown,*

*I hope this letter finds you well. I regret to inform you that after careful consideration and thorough deliberation, the council has decided not to grant your request for access to Enigma Evergreen at this time. We understand and empathize with your concerns regarding the recent bombings that have shaken our community. However, due to the sensitive nature of Enigma Evergreen and the potential risks involved, the council feels it is in the best interest of public safety to maintain restricted access.*

*Please know that this decision was not made lightly. We have reviewed all provided documentation and appreciate the diligent efforts you and your team have put forth in addressing this critical issue. Unfortunately, the complexities surrounding Enigma Evergreen necessitate an extra layer of caution that we cannot afford to overlook.*

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

*We encourage you to continue working closely with local law enforcement and community leaders to find alternative ways to enhance security measures and gather information pertinent to the ongoing investigation. Your dedication to the safety and well-being of our community does not go unnoticed, and we remain committed to supporting your efforts in any way we can.*

*Once again, we deeply regret any inconvenience this decision may cause and appreciate your understanding as we navigate these challenging times together.*

*Sincerely,*

*Radames E. Carter*

*Head of Council, Timpanopia*

*P.S. On a lighter note, deputy to the Head of Security, Glenn Paterson, thoroughly enjoyed watching the livestreamed concert performance, and you know how tough he is to impress. He couldn't stop talking about your son's impressive big brown belly drum roll! Perhaps another performance is in order soon? Glenn would love to hear it.*

Faizon sighed deeply as he finished reading the letter, the weight of Radames' words pressing down on him. Despite the disappointment, the playful postscript brought a small smile to his face.

George, who had been peering over Faizon's shoulder, leaned back slightly as he spoke. "I know Glenn," he began, his voice tinged with familiarity. "He's the Head of Security's deputy. Bit shorter than average for his adult age, but let me tell you, his big brown belly's as big and dark as Charles', if not bigger." He paused, a thoughtful expression crossing his face as he recalled memories of Glenn. "I remember seeing him around the community meetings, always with

## CHAPTER 9

that confident aura about him, despite his stature. And that belly of his, it's like a force of nature, commanding attention wherever he goes."

Faizon nodded slowly, digesting George's words. "Interesting," he murmured, contemplating the implications of Glenn's involvement in the council's decision. "Seems like we might need to approach this from a different angle if we want to sway their decision."

George chuckled softly, a hint of mischief in his eyes. "Perhaps a little charm offensive wouldn't hurt," he suggested, a playful smile tugging at the corners of his lips. "After all, Glenn does have a weakness for impressive belly drum rolls."

Guy Biggums leaned back in his creaky wooden chair, his fingers tapping a rhythmic beat against the table. His eyes, framed by a bushy brow, sparkled with mischief as he contemplated their next move. "So we tempt him with some timpani belly drumming?" he proposed, a mischievous grin stretching across his face. The idea hung in the air, tempting and tantalizing, like the lingering echo of a drumbeat.

Faizon Jr. furrowed his brow, considering Guy's suggestion. "Or we could write a letter to Glenn instead," he countered, his voice thoughtful. His father, Faizon, nodded in agreement, his own big brown belly jiggling slightly as he shifted in his seat. "Explaining the problem might be the best approach," Faizon remarked, his deep voice resonating in the warehouse sanctuary.

Gabriel scratched his chin thoughtfully, a contemplative expression crossing his face. "Or we can just go confront them face-to-face ourselves," he suggested, his arms folding across his own sizable belly. His words carried a weight of determination, reflecting the steely resolve that lay beneath his gentle demeanor.

Gilbert nodded in agreement. "A direct approach might be what's needed," he affirmed, his voice carrying the wisdom of experience. "But let's tread carefully. We don't want to stir up more trouble than we can handle," Gilbert finished, his voice carrying the weight of their predicament.

Faizon Sr. nodded solemnly, turning to George, who had been quietly listening to the exchange. "Alright, George, let's prepare to write another letter to Glenn," Faizon Sr. said, his tone resolute. "We need to make him understand the gravity of the situation."

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

George nodded and retrieved a blank sheet of parchment and a quill from a nearby drawer. The warehouse's soft glow illuminated the paper as Faizon Sr. began to dictate, his voice steady and purposeful.

"Dear Glenn," Faizon Sr. started, his words flowing with a blend of urgency and clarity, "We write to you once more with a matter of grave importance that threatens not only Timpanopia but potentially all of Beatweaver Haven. The recent bombings are not isolated incidents; they are part of a sinister plot aimed at destroying our beloved communities."

George's quill scratched against the parchment, capturing each word with precision. Faizon Sr. paused, allowing the weight of his message to sink in before continuing. "Our investigation has led us to believe that the heart of this plot lies in Enigma Evergreen. We have uncovered clues that point towards a shadowy figure orchestrating these attacks, seeking to sow chaos and discord among our people."

Faizon Jr. leaned in, his eyes wide with a mix of fear and determination. "We need to explain why it's so important to go to Enigma Evergreen," he urged. "They need to understand that it's not just about stopping the bombings, but about protecting our way of life."

Faizon Sr. nodded, appreciating his son's insight. "Indeed," he agreed, resuming his dictation. "It is imperative that we travel to Enigma Evergreen to confront this threat at its source. Only by doing so can we hope to uncover the full extent of this plot and put an end to it before more harm can be done. We must act swiftly and decisively to safeguard our communities and preserve the peace that we hold dear."

As George penned the final words, Faizon Sr. glanced around at his friends and family. "We need Glenn to understand the urgency of our mission," he said, his voice filled with determination. "If he can hear the truth in our words, perhaps he will grant us the support we need."

Gabriel, who had been silent until now, stood up, his voice steady. "Let's make sure Glenn knows we stand ready to perform another live concert, not just to entertain, but to unite our people in the face of this threat. Our music has always been our strength, and we must use it to rally our community."

## CHAPTER 9

Gilbert clapped a hand on Gabriel's shoulder, a proud smile playing on his lips. "That's the spirit, son. Our music is our power, and our unity is our strength."

Faizon Sr. finished the letter with a flourish, adding a final plea. "We humbly request your presence and support, Glenn. Together, we can confront this danger and ensure the safety of Timpanopia and all of Beatweaver Haven. With hope and determination, Faizon Sr., Faizon Jr., George, and the entire community of Timpanopia."

George carefully folded the letter, sealing it with wax. "I'll deliver it to Glenn myself," he volunteered, his eyes shining with resolve. "He needs to hear this from someone who believes in the cause as much as we do."

Faizon Sr. nodded, placing a hand on George's shoulder. "Thank you, George. Let's hope this letter reaches Glenn's heart and ignites the fire of action within him."

As George departed with the letter, the group gathered once more, their determination renewed. They knew the road ahead would be fraught with challenges, but with their unity and the power of their music, they felt ready to face whatever dangers Enigma Evergreen held. The beat of their drums and the strength of their camaraderie would guide them, one rhythm at a time.



Faizon Sr. and the others had barely settled back into their seats an hour later when a messenger arrived, breathless and urgent. He handed Faizon Sr. a sealed letter, bearing the familiar seal of Glenn Patterson. With a mix of anticipation and trepidation, Faizon Sr. broke the seal and began to read aloud:

*Dear Mr. Faizon Brown,*

*Thank you for your heartfelt and urgent letter. I want to start by acknowledging the importance of the situation you have brought to our*

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

*attention. The recent bombings and the potential threat to all of Beatweaver Haven are indeed matters of grave concern.*

*I would have loved nothing more than to grant you permission to pursue this investigation in Enigma Evergreen. However, I am bound by the orders of Radames Carter, who has made it clear that no one is to enter Enigma Evergreen without explicit authorization. The reason for this restriction is the dark transformation that most individuals undergo upon entering the forest. Our primary mission is to protect our people from such dangers, and thus, I am forced to reject your request.*

*Nevertheless, I am not without hope. I still wholeheartedly support your reasoning and believe in the urgency of your mission. Therefore, I offer you a suggestion—try confronting us face-to-face tomorrow afternoon. I have told Radames to schedule a meeting with you guys. Perhaps a direct and personal appeal will change the minds of those in authority. I must admit, I love a good action scene, and I think this might be the dramatic push needed to sway Radames.*

*Safe travels, and may your determination guide you through these troubled times.*

*Sincerely,*

*Glenn W. Patterson*

*Deputy to the Head of Security*

Faizon Sr. folded the letter carefully, his brow furrowed in thought. "Glenn is giving us a chance, albeit a slim one," he said, looking up at the assembled group. "We have to make this confrontation count."

## CHAPTER 9

Gilbert nodded, his face set with resolve. "We need to prepare ourselves for tomorrow afternoon. This might be our only shot to convince Radames in person."

Faizon Jr.'s eyes lit up with determination. "We can do this, Dad. We've faced challenges before, and we'll face this one head-on too."

Guy Biggums, ever the optimist, clapped his hands together. "Alright, then. Let's gather our strength, our words, and our rhythm. Tomorrow, we show them the power of Timpanopia!"

The warehouse buzzed with renewed energy as everyone set about making preparations. Instruments were tuned, drums polished, and words rehearsed. They knew that the upcoming confrontation would be crucial, a pivotal moment in their quest to protect their home and uncover the truth behind the sinister plot threatening their community.

As the sun set over Timpanopia, casting a warm glow over the bustling preparations, the group felt a sense of unity and purpose. They were ready to face the challenges ahead, armed with their music, their resolve, and the unbreakable bond that held them together. Tomorrow, they would confront the powers that be, and with any luck, they would emerge victorious.



The next day, at half past noon, Faizon Sr. stood in the dim light of the warehouse, staring intently at an old, worn map of Timpanopia spread out on a large wooden table. The map, intricately detailed with every street, alley, and significant landmark, led his eyes towards the foreboding boundary of Enigma Evergreen. Its dark, twisting lines seemed almost alive, whispering secrets and warnings to those who dared to look too closely.

Gabriel, curiosity piqued, wandered over and peered over Faizon Sr.'s shoulder. His eyes followed the path of his uncle's gaze, tracing the same lines and curves of the enigmatic forest. "Can't we just go into Enigma Evergreen ourselves?" Gabriel asked, a note of defiance in his voice. "We don't need permission. They can't find us if we just sneak in...."

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

Faizon Sr. sighed deeply, his brow furrowing as he turned to face his son. "It doesn't work that way," he replied, his voice tinged with the weight of experience. "They've activated a special force field around it. No one without permission can go in. Anyone who tries to enter will just get bounced back off their bellies." He paused, seeing the look of determination in Gabriel's eyes. "They can get *out*, though. Once inside, they can leave freely, but getting *in* without authorization is impossible."

Gabriel frowned, clearly dissatisfied with this revelation. "So we're just supposed to wait and hope Glenn can convince Radames to let us in?" he asked, frustration creeping into his tone.

Faizon Sr. placed a reassuring hand on Gabriel's shoulder. "I know it's frustrating, son," he said gently. "But sometimes, the direct approach isn't always the best one. We need to trust Glenn's suggestion and give it our best shot this afternoon."

As the minutes ticked by, the rest of their group gathered around the table, each one carrying their own blend of anticipation and determination. Gilbert, George, Guy Biggums, and Faizon Jr. all stood ready, their eyes reflecting the shared resolve that had brought them together.

"Alright," Faizon Sr. announced, folding the map with deliberate care and tucking it away. "It's time to head to the meeting point. Let's make sure we're prepared for whatever comes our way. Remember, we're not just fighting for ourselves. We're fighting for all of Timpanopia and Beatweaver Haven."

The group nodded in unison, their spirits bolstered by Faizon Sr.'s words. With a final glance around their beloved warehouse sanctuary, they set off towards the central square, where Glenn had suggested they meet.

The streets of Timpanopia were unusually quiet as they made their way through the town, the usual bustle of activity subdued by the undercurrent of tension that had gripped the community since the bombings. As they approached the designated meeting spot, they saw Glenn Patterson waiting for them, his stance firm and authoritative.

Glenn was a heavyset and slightly short middle-aged man with cool-toned brown skin, much like Charles. He sported a buzz-cut with a framing beard similar to Guy Biggums. Today, he wore beige shorts and orange sneakers, paired with a black T-shirt stretched over his big brown belly, which was nearly

## CHAPTER 9

as large as Charles', though not quite as George had suggested. As he walked slowly up to them, his protruding belly jiggled steadily with each deliberate step.

"Faizon, Gabriel, everyone," Glenn greeted them, his expression serious but welcoming. "Thank you for coming."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, offering a nod of acknowledgment. "Thank you for giving us this chance, Glenn. We're ready to make our case."

Glenn's eyes scanned the determined faces before him. "Follow me," he instructed, leading them towards the imposing administrative building where Radames Carter awaited. "Remember, this isn't just about convincing Radames. It's about showing him the strength and unity of our community."

As they entered the building, the air grew thick with anticipation. The hallways, lined with stern-faced guards and echoing with the weight of countless decisions, seemed to close in around them. Finally, they reached the large, ornately decorated chamber where the warm-skinned, big-bellied Radames Carter stood, flanked by his advisors.

Radames looked up as they entered, his sharp gaze assessing the group with a mixture of curiosity and skepticism. "Faizon Brown," he began, his voice calm but commanding. "You've come to make your case. Let's hear it."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his heart pounding but his resolve unshaken. "Radames, we stand before you today not just as individuals, but as representatives of Timpanopia. We believe that the recent bombings are part of a larger, more sinister plot aimed at destroying our community and possibly all of Beatweaver Haven. We need to enter Enigma Evergreen to stop this threat at its source."

Radames listened, his expression inscrutable. "And why should I grant you permission to enter Enigma Evergreen, knowing the risks involved?"

Faizon Sr. took a deep breath, gathering his thoughts. "Because the risk of doing nothing is far greater. If we don't act now, we could lose everything we hold dear. Our community, our way of life—it's all at stake. We have the skills, the knowledge, and the determination to face this threat head-on. All we need is your trust and permission to do so."

Gabriel, unable to hold back any longer, stepped forward as well. "We know it's dangerous, but we're willing to face that danger. We believe in our cause,

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

and we believe in each other. Give us this chance, and we'll prove that we can protect our home."

Radames considered their words, his gaze lingering on each member of the group. Finally, he spoke, his tone measured. "You speak with conviction and courage. But understand this: if I grant you permission, you will be taking on a great responsibility. The safety of our community will rest on your shoulders."

Faizon Sr. nodded firmly. "We understand, Radames. We're ready."

There was a long, tense silence as Radames weighed their plea. Finally, he nodded. "Very well. You have my permission to enter Enigma Evergreen. But be warned: if anything goes wrong, the consequences will be severe."

"Really?" said Gabriel excitedly. "You'll let us go?"

"Of course not!" laughed Radames. "No, you do not have my permission."

Faizon Sr. felt his heart sink as Radames' words hung heavily in the air. The hope that had blossomed within him wilted, replaced by a sinking feeling of disappointment. Beside him, Gabriel clenched his fists, his jaw set with determination. They had come too far to give up now.

Faizon Sr. squared his shoulders, meeting Radames' gaze with unwavering determination. "We understand your concerns, Radames," he said, his voice steady despite the disappointment gnawing at his insides. "But we truly believe that entering Enigma Evergreen is the only way to stop this threat and protect our community. Please, reconsider."

Glenn stepped forward, his voice carrying the weight of their collective plea. "Radames, I understand the risks involved. But these are not ordinary times, and these are not ordinary people. They are our best chance at uncovering the truth and putting an end to this danger. Trust me when I say that they are more than capable of handling whatever comes their way."

Radames regarded them with a thoughtful expression, his gaze flickering between each member of the group. "I admire your conviction," he admitted, his tone softened slightly. "But the risks are too great. I cannot in good conscience grant you permission to enter Enigma Evergreen."

Faizon Sr. felt a surge of frustration bubbling up inside him, but he pushed it aside, focusing instead on finding a way forward. "Is there anything we can do to change your mind?" he asked, his voice tinged with urgency.

## CHAPTER 9

Radames hesitated, seeming to consider Faizon Sr.'s question carefully. "Hmm, let me think—nope. Nothing at all."

Radames' abrupt refusal hung in the air, the abruptness of his dismissal leaving Faizon Sr. momentarily speechless. He began to protest, "But—"

"*SILENCE!*" Radames bellowed, his voice reverberating through the chamber. He clasped both hands to his large brown belly, which suddenly emitted a resonant timpani drum glissando, a powerful sound that filled the room and culminated in a shockwave. The force of it was so immense that it threw Faizon Sr., Gabriel, Gilbert, George, and Guy Biggums off their feet, scattering them across the floor like leaves in a storm.

Struggling to his feet, Faizon Sr. wiped the sweat from his brow, the intensity of Radames' display lingering in the air. Radames stood firm, his belly wobbling ominously, a tangible reminder of the power he wielded. "I'm sorry, but *rules are rules*," Radames declared, his tone unyielding. "And yes, I know they're my rules, but still.... Now, if you're *really* that desperate to enter Enigma Evergreen, you'll have to get through us first."

A tense silence followed his proclamation, the challenge laid bare between them. Faizon Sr. exchanged determined glances with the rest of his group, the resolve in their eyes reflecting his own. They had come too far, endured too much, to be stopped now. If they had to fight for their right to protect Timpanopia, then fight they would.

Faizon Jr. was the first to recover fully, his expression one of steely determination. "So be it," he declared, his voice firm. "We'll show you the strength of our resolve, Radames."

Glenn, who had watched the exchange with growing tension, stepped forward. "Radames, you know their cause is just," he pleaded, his tone a mix of frustration and desperation. "Give them a chance to prove themselves."

Radames' eyes narrowed, his stance unyielding. "Very well," he said, his voice cold. "If you truly believe in your mission, then face me and my crew. Prove to us that you are worthy of entering Enigma Evergreen."

Radames took a deep breath, his chest rising and falling as he gathered his thoughts. The room, thick with the anticipation of the coming battle, fell silent. The faces of Faizon Sr., Gabriel, Gilbert, George, and Guy Biggums reflected a

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

mix of determination and cautious optimism. Radames knew the stakes were high, and the challenge they faced was monumental.

"Before we begin," Radames started, his voice carrying the weight of authority and the gravity of the situation, "let me say a few words."

He paused, his gaze sweeping over the assembled group. "Faizon, Gabriel, and all of you who stand before me today, you have shown great courage and resolve in your quest to protect Timpanopia. The threats we face are not just physical but are also deeply rooted in the very fabric of our community and the mysteries that surround it."

Radames took a step forward, his eyes narrowing as he continued. "The forest of Enigma Evergreen is not just a place of dark transformations and hidden dangers. It is a symbol of the unknown, of the challenges that lie beyond our understanding. Those who seek to enter it must be prepared to face not just the external dangers but the inner demons and trials that will test their very souls."

He clasped his hands together, the sound echoing in the silent chamber. "Today, you will face my partners, Martez Brooks and Shurland Lawson. They are not just skilled in the art of belly drumming, but they embody the spirit and strength that our community holds dear. To defeat them is to prove that you have the fortitude, the unity, and the unwavering spirit necessary to confront the greater dangers that await in Enigma Evergreen."

Radames' expression softened slightly, a hint of respect in his eyes. "This is not just a battle of strength or skill. It is a battle of wills, of hearts, and of the very essence of what makes us who we are. You must show that your cause is just, that your unity is unbreakable, and that your determination is unmatched."

He raised his hands, signaling the beginning of the challenge. "May the rhythm of your hearts guide you, and may the strength of your resolve carry you through. Prove to us, to Timpanopia, and to yourselves, that you are worthy of the task that lies ahead."

With those words, Radames stepped back, his eyes fixed on Faizon Sr. and his group. The air was charged with tension and anticipation, the challenge now clear before them. The doorway to the battleground opened, revealing

## CHAPTER 9

Martez Brooks and Shurland Lawson, their formidable presences dominating the space.

Martez, with his imposing figure and a big brown belly that seemed to resonate with its own inner rhythm, stood ready. His dark eyes, reflecting a mix of confidence and readiness, locked onto the approaching group. Shurland, a old man with slight hairs all around his big brown belly, looked equally imposing, and, exuding a calm, almost serene aura, stood beside Martez, his hands resting on his belly in a gesture of quiet power.

Faizon Sr. felt a surge of adrenaline coursing through him. This was the moment they had prepared for, the test that would determine their fate. He glanced at his companions, seeing the same determination mirrored in their faces. They nodded to each other, a silent pact of unity and resolve.

With a final, deep breath, Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his belly drum at the ready. The others followed, forming a line of determined faces and resolute hearts. They began to drum on their bellies, the rhythmic beats echoing through the chamber, a powerful testament to their unity and their cause.

Martez and Shurland responded in kind, their own rhythms filling the air, creating a powerful, resonant harmony. The sound waves collided, creating a symphony of strength and determination, a battle of wills that reverberated through the very walls of the chamber.

As the battle commenced, it was clear that this was more than just a physical confrontation. It was a clash of spirits, a test of the bonds that held Faizon Sr. and his group together. Every beat, every note, carried with it the weight of their mission, the love for their community, and the unbreakable strength of their unity.

The rhythm of the battle intensified, the sound waves growing more powerful, more resonant. Faizon Sr. and his group held their ground, their determination unwavering. With each beat, they pushed forward, their unity and resolve shining through.

Martez and Shurland, formidable as they were, began to feel the strength of their opponents. The rhythm of Faizon Sr. and his group was not just powerful; it was imbued with the spirit of their cause, the unyielding determination to protect their home and uncover the truth.

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

Finally, with a final, powerful beat, Faizon Sr. and his group broke through the defenses of Martez and Shurland. The room fell silent, the echoes of their victory resonating in the air. Radames stepped forward, a look of shock in his eyes.

Faizon Sr. opened his mouth to speak, but before he could get a word out, Radames spoke first. "No... it's not possible..."

"Yes, it is possible," said Faizon Sr. "And you'd better believe it."

Radames' expression of shock lingered for a moment longer before it flickered into an evil smirk. "Yes, of course, it's possible. I made it too easy for you. Not this time, though, not now...."

He clasped his hands to his belly once more, and the room seemed to darken as a soft rumbling timpani drum roll filled the air, growing in intensity. Faizon Sr. recognized the ominous sound and felt a cold dread wash over him. He knew what was coming, and he did not like it one bit. The group tensed, their eyes fixed on Radames as the rumbling continued, growing louder and more menacing with each passing second.

Gradually, Radames' belly began to expand, the taut skin stretching as if fueled by some dark, unstoppable force. The drum roll reverberated through the chamber, amplifying the tension in the air. His belly, once large and formidable, now grew to monstrous proportions, the vibrations shaking the very foundation of the room.

The transformation didn't stop there. As Radames' belly swelled, so did the rest of his body. Muscles bulged and expanded, his limbs lengthening and thickening, his height increasing steadily. The growth was slow but relentless, a terrifying display of power that left the onlookers stunned and apprehensive. The rumbling drum roll grew louder still, the sound becoming almost unbearable as Radames continued to grow.

Gabriel, eyes wide with a mix of awe and fear, nudged Gilbert. "Look, Daddy, he's growing bigger." But Gilbert was too flabbergasted to respond, his mouth agape as he watched Radames transform into a giant before their very eyes.

Radames' growth showed no signs of stopping. His enormous belly, now a colossal drum of flesh, seemed to pulse with an inner power. The floor beneath him creaked and groaned under his immense weight. His clothing stretched to its limits, seams popping and fabric tearing, revealing the sheer mass of his

## CHAPTER 9

expanding form. The air grew thick with the tension of his transformation, the oppressive sound of the timpani drum roll resonating in every corner of the chamber.

The group's sense of scale was thrown into chaos as Radames continued to grow. His head now nearly brushed the ceiling, and his massive hands, now more like hammers, clenched and unclenched with a force that sent tremors through the ground. The drum roll reached a deafening crescendo, the vibrations causing the walls to shake and the ground to tremble beneath their feet.

With a powerful roar, Radames released the grip on his enormous stomach and pounded the ground with his now huge fists, sending double shockwaves across the floor. The sheer force of the impact was like an earthquake, and Faizon Sr. and his group were knocked down once again, sent sprawling by the overwhelming power radiating from Radames.

"Let's see if you can get through me!" roared Radames, his voice booming like thunder, filling the chamber with a challenge that echoed in their ears. His eyes blazed with a fierce determination, and his newly transformed body exuded an aura of invincibility.

Faizon Sr., scrambling to his feet, could hardly believe his eyes. Radames now stood towering over them, his once formidable form now transformed into a gargantuan figure of muscle and drum. The ground quaked with each step he took, the power emanating from his belly creating palpable vibrations in the air. The enormity of the challenge before them was almost overwhelming, but Faizon Sr. knew that they couldn't back down now.

The vibrations in the air intensified as Radames started shaking his belly with renewed vigor, the loud rumbling timpani drum roll reverberating through the battleground. A deep gong sounded somewhere in the distance, adding a haunting resonance to the scene. Faizon Sr. looked around, his eyes narrowing as he took in the sight before him—a group of shirtless men with large bellies stood behind various percussion instruments, their expressions grim and focused. Three of them began to drum intensely on their taikos, their powerful beats merging with Radames' relentless roll. The air filled with a cacophony of sound, each drumbeat a palpable force that seemed to shake the very ground they stood on. The combined rhythms created an almost tangible wall of

## NAVIGATING THE BUREAUCRACY

sound, a barrier that Faizon Sr. and his group knew they had to break through. The drummers' synchronized movements and the sheer power of their beats added a new layer of challenge to the already daunting task before them.

"We need to regroup," Faizon Sr. called out, trying to steady himself against the unrelenting waves of power. "Stay together!"

George, his eyes wide with a mix of fear and determination, shouted over the cacophony, "How do we beat something like that?"

Faizon Sr. clenched his fists, feeling the weight of their mission pressing down on him harder than ever before. "We focus on our strengths. We don't need to match his size. We just need to outsmart him."

Guy Biggums nodded, his face set with resolve. "Right. Use our rhythm, our unity. We can do this."

The group huddled together, their bellies beating a steady rhythm as they gathered their strength. Radames watched them, his smirk growing wider as he saw them preparing for what seemed like an impossible task.

"Ready yourselves," Faizon Sr. urged, his voice strong and unwavering. "Remember, our strength lies in our unity. Let's show him what we're made of."

As they began their synchronized belly drumming, the rhythmic beats grew louder, reverberating through the chamber and countering the oppressive force of Radames' drumming. The air thrummed with their combined power, each beat a testament to their determination and unyielding spirit.

Radames laughed, a deep, booming sound that echoed through the hall. "Do you really think you can stand against me? Against this power?"

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his eyes locked onto Radames. "It's not about standing against you. It's about standing for what we believe in. For Timpanopia. For our home."

With those words, the group intensified their drumming, the rhythm becoming a powerful force that pushed back against Radames' overwhelming presence. The sound waves collided, creating a tangible energy in the air, a symphony of defiance and hope.

Radames, despite his immense size and power, began to feel the pressure of their united rhythm. His smirk faltered, replaced by a look of concentration as he redoubled his efforts, his belly emitting even stronger waves of force. The

## CHAPTER 9

ground beneath them trembled, but Faizon Sr. and his group held their ground, their rhythm unbroken.

"Keep going!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice filled with determination. "We can do this!"

As the battle of rhythms reached its crescendo, the chamber seemed to pulse with energy, the very air alive with the clash of power and will. Faizon Sr., his friends, and family drummed with all their might, their combined strength creating a wave of sound that surged forward, challenging Radames' dominance.

Radames, feeling the force of their unity, roared in defiance. But no matter how much power he poured into his drumming, the unyielding determination of Faizon Sr. and his group began to push him back, inch by inch.

In a final, desperate move, Radames released a colossal wave of sound, his belly drumming reaching a peak of intensity. But the group, united in their resolve, met his challenge head-on, their rhythm surging forward in a powerful counterattack.

The two forces collided, creating a massive shockwave that shook the chamber to its core. When the dust settled, Faizon Sr. and his group stood firm, their rhythm unwavering. Radames, now drained and defeated, looked at them with a mixture of respect and resignation. Gradually, he began to shrink back to his normal size.

Radames, breathing heavily and his belly still trembling from the exertion, raised a hand to signal the end of the confrontation.

"You've proven your worth," Radames admitted, his tone begrudgingly respectful. "You may enter Enigma Evergreen. May you find the truth and protect our home."

Exhausted but triumphant, Faizon Sr. and his group exchanged relieved smiles. They had won the right to enter Enigma Evergreen, but more importantly, they had proven the strength of their unity and the power of their resolve. With renewed determination, they prepared to face the challenges that awaited them in the mysterious forest, ready to uncover the truth and protect their beloved Timpanopia.

# 10

## Enigma Evergreen

**W**e did it," said Gabriel, his voice brimming with excitement. "We did it! We got access to the forest! Now we get to go into Enigma Evergreen! The force fields can't stop us now!"

"Not so fast!" yelled Radames before Gabriel could move another muscle. Faizon Sr. raised a threatening eyebrow, a silent challenge in his gaze. "You still have to come back to my office so you can sign the registration form. And then you'll have to wait a few hours for it to get sent to the computational programming executable application that powers the force field!" Radames burst into maniacal laughter as he said this, the sound echoing through the chamber.

Faizon Sr. remained calm, unfazed by Radames' theatrics. "No problem," he said with quiet confidence. Radames' expression became blank once more, the laughter dying in his throat.

"A few hours is more than enough for us to prepare for the journey ahead," Faizon Sr. continued. With a purposeful stride, he began to walk towards the open door, his posture exuding determination. The others, spurred on by his unwavering resolve, fell into step behind him, their footsteps echoing in unison as they followed him.

They made their way to Radames' office, their big round bellies pushing against the backs of the person in front of them as they struggled to fit through the narrow door. The office, cluttered with stacks of paperwork and various mechanical contraptions, seemed even smaller with the group squeezed inside. The walls were adorned with maps and diagrams of Timpanopia, a testament to the meticulous nature of Radames' control over the region.

## CHAPTER 10

Radames, now seated behind his imposing desk, gestured impatiently to a set of documents laid out before him. "There, the registration forms," he said, his tone curt. "Each of you needs to sign."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward first, his broad shoulders barely fitting in the cramped space. He picked up the pen and signed his name with a flourish, his determination clear in every stroke. One by one, the others followed suit—Gabriel, Gilbert, George, and Guy Biggums—each signing their names with equal resolve.

As the last signature was scrawled onto the form, Radames snatched up the papers and began feeding them into an old, clunky machine that hummed and whirred with mechanical life. "This will send the data to the force field," he explained, his voice tinged with a hint of glee. "It will take a few hours for the force field to recognize your permissions."

Faizon Sr. nodded, his eyes scanning the room for anything that might be of use in their journey ahead. "Thank you, Radames," he said, the words polite but carrying an undertone of readiness. "We'll use this time to prepare."

Radames merely smirked, leaning back in his chair. "Do as you wish," he said, waving them off dismissively. "But remember, Enigma Evergreen is no ordinary forest. Be ready for anything."

With their task complete, Faizon Sr. led the way out of the office, each of them pushing against the tight confines once more. As they emerged back into the open air, they felt a sense of relief, the weight of the office's oppressive atmosphere lifting.

Faizon Sr. unfurled the map of Timpanopia once more, his eyes tracing the route they would take. "Let's gather our supplies and regroup," he instructed, his voice steady and clear. "We need to be ready for whatever Enigma Evergreen throws at us."

The group dispersed, each heading off to prepare in their own way. Gabriel checked the sturdiness of their drums, making sure the mallets were secured and the drumheads tight. Gilbert went to gather provisions, ensuring they had enough food and water for the journey. George and Guy Biggums focused on their protective gear, adjusting straps and securing buckles to ensure they could move freely but safely.

## ENIGMA EVERGREEN

Faizon Sr. took a moment to reflect, his mind turning over the recent events. The confrontation with Radames had been intense, but it had only solidified their resolve. They were more determined than ever to uncover the truth behind the bombings and protect their home.

As they exited the door they'd come in, they found Glenn standing next to it, a knowing smile playing on his lips. He bumped Faizon Sr.'s broad shoulder and said, "I saw everything. That was certainly a big battle, if you get my drift."

Gabriel, with a cheeky grin, made sure to give Glenn's belly a little pat as they passed, emitting a faint timpani drum sound. Glenn chuckled, his laughter echoing lightly in the corridor.

They marched back to George's house, their spirits buoyed by the victory and the imminent adventure. As they entered, they were greeted by the familiar sight of George Jr. and Jeremiah engrossed in a game on their gaming console. The room was filled with the sounds of electronic explosions and triumphant music, a stark contrast to the serious preparations they had been undertaking.

"So how was it?" asked George, his eyes flicking up from the screen. "Can you get in?"

Faizon Sr. nodded, a smile spreading across his face. "We can. We had to jump through a few hoops, but we're set. Just need to wait for the permissions to process."

George Jr., his forehead glistening with sweat, paused the game and turned to face them. His big brown belly seemed to jiggle slightly as he moved. "That's awesome! So, what happens next?"

Jeremiah, his dark skin glowing in the dim light of the room, looked up with a serious expression. "You're really going into Enigma Evergreen? Isn't that place super dangerous?"

"It is," Faizon Sr. replied, his tone somber. "But we have no choice. We need to find out what's causing the bombings and protect Timpanopia. It's our home, and we'll do whatever it takes to keep it safe."

George, leaning against the doorframe, nodded in agreement. "We've got a bit of time before we can actually enter. Let's use it wisely. We'll gather our final supplies, rest up, and make sure we're ready for anything."

## CHAPTER 10

Faizon Sr. looked around the room at his team, his friends and family, each one of them determined and ready to face whatever lay ahead. "Let's go over our plan one more time. We need to be prepared for anything once we're inside."

As they settled into a more serious discussion, George Jr. and Jeremiah listened intently, the gravity of the situation sinking in. Faizon Sr. spread the map of Timpanopia on the table, pointing to their planned route into Enigma Evergreen.

"We'll enter here," he said, indicating a point on the map. "Once inside, we need to stay close and stay alert. The forest is known for its illusions and traps. We can't afford to get separated."

Gilbert added, "We'll rely on our belly drumming not just for communication but also for protection. The rhythms can disrupt the illusions and keep us grounded."

Guy Biggums chimed in, "And remember, we're not just fighting to survive. We're fighting to uncover the truth. We need to stay focused on our mission."

Gabriel, his face set with determination, said, "We'll stick together, no matter what. We're stronger as a team."

As the evening wore on, they finalized their preparations, each member of the group contributing their skills and knowledge to ensure they were ready. George Jr. and Jeremiah, though young, helped in their own ways, fetching supplies and asking thoughtful questions that kept the adults on their toes.

Finally, as the last rays of sunlight filtered through the windows, they gathered in a circle, the map of Timpanopia in the center. Faizon Sr. looked at each of them, his heart swelling with pride and determination.

"We're ready," he said, his voice filled with quiet strength. "Tomorrow, we enter Enigma Evergreen. Together, we'll face whatever comes our way and protect our home."

With a shared nod of agreement, they broke the circle, each heading off to their houses to rest and prepare for the journey ahead. As George's house settled into quiet, the sounds of their preparations still echoed in the air, a reminder of the challenges they would soon face and the unwavering bond that would carry them through.



The next day, everyone gathered in the living room of George's house once again. The atmosphere was a mix of anticipation and determination, each person going over the final details of their plan in their minds. The living room, usually a place of casual conversations and laughter, now buzzed with the serious energy of impending adventure.

Faizon Sr. spread the map of Timpanopia on the coffee table, pointing out their entry point into Enigma Evergreen one more time. "We need to stay together and stay alert," he reiterated. "The forest is known for its illusions and traps. We can't afford to get separated."

George nodded, his expression resolute. "We have all our supplies packed. We'll move swiftly and efficiently."

Just as they were wrapping up their discussion, the sound of rapid footsteps echoed down the stairs. George Jr. came running into the room, his face flushed with excitement and determination. Right behind him was Jeremiah, his heavier footsteps creating a rhythmic thumping that filled the house.

"Wait!" George Jr. called out breathlessly. "We want to come with you!"

Jeremiah, slightly out of breath but equally determined, added, "We can help! We want to protect Timpanopia too."

The adults exchanged glances, a mixture of surprise and concern flashing across their faces. George Sr. stepped forward, looking his sons in the eye. "This isn't a game, boys. Enigma Evergreen is dangerous."

George Jr. nodded earnestly, his big brown belly slightly jiggling with the motion. "We know. But we're part of Timpanopia too. We want to help protect it. We've been practicing our belly drumming, and we're ready."

Jeremiah, taller and more serious, spoke up. "We can handle it. We're not just kids anymore. We've trained with you, and we know the risks. Please, let us come."

Faizon Sr. looked at George Jr. and Jeremiah, seeing the determination and courage in their eyes. He understood their desire to protect their home, to

## CHAPTER 10

stand alongside their family and friends. He glanced at George, who was clearly torn between protecting his sons and acknowledging their bravery.

After a moment of silence, Faizon Sr. spoke. "I understand your desire to help. But this is a dangerous mission. If you come with us, you must promise to follow our instructions to the letter and stay close at all times."

George Jr. and Jeremiah both nodded vigorously, their expressions serious. "We promise," they said in unison.

George sighed, placing a hand on each of his sons' shoulders. "All right. But remember, this is not just about you. It's about all of us. We move as a team, and we protect each other."

The boys nodded again, their determination unwavering. With their decision made, the group finalized their preparations. George Jr. and Jeremiah fetched their mallets, ensuring they were secure and ready for use on their own big bellies. The adults double-checked their supplies, ensuring everything was in place for the journey ahead. The living room was a flurry of activity, with everyone making sure they had what they needed—food, water, protective gear, and of course, their bellies.

Faizon Sr. reviewed the map one last time, his finger tracing the route they would take into Enigma Evergreen. "Remember, we stick together no matter what," he said, his voice firm. "The forest is filled with illusions and traps, but if we stay close, we can navigate it safely."

"Our belly drums are our lifeline in there," he reminded everyone. "Not just for communication, but for protection. The rhythms can help break the forest's illusions."

Gilbert and Guy Biggums were packing the last of the food supplies, ensuring they had enough to last the journey. "We've got enough provisions to keep us going," Gilbert said, zipping up a sturdy backpack. "But we need to be mindful and ration it wisely."

George stood by the door, his sons at his side. He looked at each member of the group, his expression a mix of pride and concern. "Let's do this," he said, his voice steady. "For Timpanopia."

As the first light of dawn filtered through the windows, casting a Gold Glow over the room, Faizon Sr. addressed the group one last time. "We're ready. Let's move out."

## ENIGMA EVERGREEN

With a collective breath, they stepped out of the house, the crisp morning air filling their lungs. The path to Enigma Evergreen lay before them, a journey fraught with danger and uncertainty. But together, united by their purpose and their bond, they were ready to face whatever challenges awaited them in the mysterious forest.

The walk to the edge of Enigma Evergreen was filled with a tense but excited energy. They moved in a tight formation, their bellies occasionally bumping into one another, a physical reminder of their solidarity. They made their way through the quiet streets of Timpanopia, their steps resonating with determination. As they approached the edge of the town, the dense, shadowy outline of Enigma Evergreen loomed in the distance, an imposing wall of green.

"Remember," Faizon Sr. said, his voice carrying over the soft rustle of leaves, "stick together, stay alert, and rely on your belly drumming to keep us grounded and focused."

George Jr. and Jeremiah nodded, their youthful faces set with determination. Gabriel, Gilbert, George, and Guy Biggums exchanged glances, each silently affirming their readiness.

The group stopped at the boundary of the force field, a faint shimmer in the air marking its presence. They waited, the tension palpable, until a soft chime indicated their permissions had been processed. With a collective step forward, they passed through the barrier, feeling a slight tingling sensation as they did.

Inside the forest, the air was cool and damp, filled with the earthy scent of moss and leaves. The trees towered above them, their branches intertwining to form a thick canopy that filtered the sunlight into dappled patterns on the forest floor.

"Stay close," Faizon Sr. reminded them, his eyes scanning the surroundings for any signs of danger.

As they ventured deeper into Enigma Evergreen, the forest seemed to come alive around them. Strange sounds echoed through the trees—the rustling of leaves, the distant calls of unseen creatures, and the occasional snap of a twig underfoot. The group moved cautiously, their senses heightened by the unfamiliar environment.

Every so often, Faizon Sr. would pause and signal for a quick belly drum session. The rhythmic beats of their drumming echoed through the forest,

## CHAPTER 10

creating a protective resonance that seemed to dispel the eerie silence. The vibrations from their bellies provided a comforting reminder of their unity and strength.

At one point, they came across a narrow, winding path that seemed to lead deeper into the heart of the forest. "This looks like the right direction," George said, consulting the map. "But we need to be extra careful. The deeper we go, the more unpredictable it might become."

George Jr., his forehead glistening with sweat, kept a firm grip on his mallets. "We can handle it," he said, his voice steady. "We're ready for anything."

Jeremiah, his tall frame casting a long shadow, nodded in agreement. "We'll stay together and get through this."

As they continued along the path, the forest began to change. The trees grew thicker, their trunks gnarled and twisted. The air seemed to grow heavier, the atmosphere more oppressive. Faizon Sr. could feel the presence of the forest's magic, an ancient and powerful force that seemed to watch their every move.

Suddenly, a low growl echoed through the trees, causing the group to halt. Faizon Sr. held up a hand, signaling for silence. They waited, tense and ready, as the growl grew louder, closer. From the shadows emerged a creature, its eyes glowing with a malevolent light.

Without hesitation, Faizon Sr. began a powerful drum roll on his belly, the deep, resonant sound filling the air. The others joined in, their synchronized drumming creating a barrier of sound that pushed back against the creature's advance.

The creature hesitated, its glowing eyes flickering as the rhythmic beats reverberated through the forest. With a final, defiant snarl, it turned and fled back into the shadows, leaving the group in a stunned silence.

Faizon Sr. took a deep breath, lowering his hands from his belly. "Good work, everyone. That was just a taste of what we might face. Stay sharp and keep drumming."

They pressed on, their resolve strengthened by the encounter. Enigma Evergreen was filled with dangers, but they were ready to face them together. United by their rhythm and their purpose, they would uncover the truth behind the bombings and protect their home at any cost.

## ENIGMA EVERGREEN

"Hey, Dad," said George Jr., poking his father in the stomach to get his attention. "Where do you remember hearing the orders given?"

George paused, his brow furrowing in concentration as he tried to recall the exact location. "I think it's... this direction? I mean, it could be... of course it is...." He trailed off, glancing around the dense forest as if trying to see through the thick foliage and shadows.

Faizon Sr. stepped closer, his eyes narrowing as he surveyed the area George was indicating. "We need to be sure," he said, his voice steady but cautious. "Every step we take deeper into this forest increases the risk. We can't afford to get lost or sidetracked."

Gilbert nodded, his own big belly rumbling softly as he adjusted his stance. "We need to rely on our instincts and the clues we've gathered. Radames wouldn't have let us in here without a reason. There must be something significant in this part of Enigma Evergreen."

George Jr. glanced at his father again, seeking reassurance. "What do you remember, Dad? Think back to when you heard the orders. Was there anything specific about the surroundings?"

George took a deep breath, closing his eyes for a moment to focus. "I remember... there was a strange tree, different from the others. Its bark was darker, almost black, and it had these odd, glowing symbols carved into it. The voice seemed to echo around that area, like the tree itself was amplifying it."

Gabriel's eyes lit up with recognition. "I've heard of that tree! It's called the Sentinel Tree. It's said to be a marker for something important, maybe even an entrance to another part of the forest."

Faizon Sr. nodded thoughtfully. "That sounds like a good lead. We'll head towards the Sentinel Tree. Everyone, stay close and keep your eyes peeled for any signs or symbols. We don't know what other dangers might be lurking."

With renewed purpose, they adjusted their course, moving cautiously but steadily in the direction George had indicated. The forest seemed to grow denser with each step, the trees pressing in around them and the light dimming as the canopy overhead thickened.

As they walked, the rhythmic sound of their footsteps and the occasional soft belly drumrolls filled the air, providing a comforting rhythm that helped them

## CHAPTER 10

stay focused and calm. They kept a close eye on their surroundings, looking for any sign of the Sentinel Tree.

After what felt like hours of trekking through the dense underbrush, they finally spotted something different. Ahead of them, partially obscured by thick vines and moss, stood a tree unlike any other they had seen. Its bark was a deep, almost black hue, and faint, glowing symbols pulsed softly along its trunk.

"That's it," George whispered, his voice tinged with excitement and relief. "The Sentinel Tree."

Faizon Sr. approached the tree cautiously, his eyes scanning the symbols for any clue or hidden message. "These symbols... they look like some kind of ancient script," he murmured. "Maybe a riddle or instructions on how to proceed."

Gilbert stepped closer, peering at the glowing carvings. "I think I recognize some of these. They're similar to the markings used by the old Drum Masters. We need to drum a specific rhythm to unlock whatever the tree is guarding."

George Jr. and Jeremiah exchanged eager glances, ready to put their belly drumming skills to the test. "Let's do it," said Jeremiah, his hands poised to start drumming.

Faizon Sr. nodded. "All right, everyone. Follow my lead. We'll start with a simple rhythm and see if the symbols react. Be ready to adjust as needed."

He began to drum a slow, steady beat on his belly, the deep sound resonating through the forest. The others joined in, their synchronized drumming creating a powerful, harmonious rhythm. As the beats echoed around them, the symbols on the tree began to glow brighter, pulsing in time with the rhythm.

Gradually, they increased the complexity of the rhythm, incorporating different beats and patterns. The tree seemed to respond, the glowing symbols shifting and changing with each new rhythm. Finally, with a triumphant flourish, Faizon Sr. led them in a final, powerful crescendo.

The ground beneath the Sentinel Tree trembled, and a hidden door at its base slowly creaked open, revealing a dark passage leading further into the depths of Enigma Evergreen.

"Well done, everyone," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with pride. "Let's proceed with caution. We have no idea what lies ahead."

## ENIGMA EVERGREEN

They kept on walking, their footsteps echoing softly in the dim passageway. The air was cool and damp, and the light from the Sentinel Tree's symbols grew fainter the deeper they ventured. The group's spirits were high, buoyed by their successful drumming and the progress they were making.

Suddenly, George Jr. stumbled, nearly falling over something hidden in the shadows. "Whoa!" he exclaimed, catching himself just in time. He looked down to see a pedestal, partially covered in moss and leaves.

"Careful, George Jr.," Faizon Sr. said, helping him regain his balance. "What did you trip over?"

George Jr. brushed away the debris, revealing the pedestal more clearly. It was a simple stone structure, weathered by time and covered in strange carvings similar to those on the Sentinel Tree. The group gathered around it, their curiosity piqued.

"Looks like some kind of marker or altar," said Gilbert, his fingers tracing the intricate designs on the stone. "But it doesn't seem to be active."

Faizon Sr. examined the pedestal closely, his eyes narrowing as he tried to decipher the carvings. "It's definitely connected to the tree. Maybe it's another puzzle or a test. But it doesn't seem to be reacting to our presence."

Gabriel knelt beside the pedestal, tapping it lightly with his fingers. "There's got to be a way to activate it. Maybe we need to drum again or find something to place on it."

Jeremiah, his tall frame looming over the pedestal, suggested, "Or perhaps it needs a specific rhythm or sequence to unlock whatever it's hiding."

Faizon Sr. nodded thoughtfully. "Let's try drumming again. This time, we'll use a different rhythm, something more intricate. Everyone, get ready."

They positioned themselves around the pedestal, their bellies ready to drum. Faizon Sr. started with a slow, deliberate beat, and the others followed, their synchronized drumming filling the passageway with a resonant, echoing sound. The stone beneath their feet seemed to vibrate with the rhythm, but the pedestal remained inert.

George Jr. furrowed his brow, thinking hard. "Maybe we need to combine the drumming with something else. Like a chant or a specific movement."

Gilbert nodded. "That makes sense. The old Drum Masters often combined rhythms with chants to unlock the full potential of their magic."

## CHAPTER 10

Faizon Sr. considered this. "Let's try adding a chant. Everyone, repeat after me."

He began to chant in a deep, rhythmic tone, the words flowing smoothly with the beat of their drumming. The others joined in, their voices blending harmoniously. The passageway seemed to come alive with the sound, the walls reverberating with the combined power of their drumming and chanting.

As they continued, the carvings on the pedestal started to glow faintly, pulsing in time with the rhythm. Encouraged, they increased the intensity of their drumming and chanting, their focus sharp and unwavering. The glow grew brighter, the carvings shifting and rearranging themselves into a new pattern.

But then, just as the pedestal seemed on the verge of revealing its secrets, the glow faded, and the carvings returned to their original state. The group paused, their breaths heavy with exertion and frustration.

"Nothing happened," said George Jr., a note of disappointment in his voice.

Faizon Sr. placed a reassuring hand on his son's shoulder. "It's okay. We're getting closer. There's something we're missing, but we'll figure it out."

Gilbert sighed, his eyes scanning the passageway for any other clues. "We need to think outside the box. Maybe there's another clue hidden nearby."

Gabriel looked around, his keen eyes searching the shadows. "There could be more markers or symbols we haven't seen yet. Let's spread out and look carefully."

They began to search the area around the pedestal, their eyes sharp and their senses alert. Faizon Jr. and George Jr. moved together, their youthful energy driving them forward as they examined every inch of the walls and floor. Jeremiah and Gabriel worked methodically, their experience guiding their search.

As they explored, Faizon Sr. couldn't shake the feeling that they were on the right track. The pedestal, the Sentinel Tree, and the force field all pointed to something significant, something crucial to their mission. They just needed to find the missing piece of the puzzle.

"We'll find it," Faizon Sr. murmured to himself, his determination unwavering. "We have to."

## ENIGMA EVERGREEN

Just then, a shadowy figure sprang out of the pedestal, emerging with a sudden burst of movement that startled everyone. The figure was cloaked in darkness, its form shifting and wavering as if it were made of smoke. It hovered above the pedestal, its presence sending a chill through the air.

The group instinctively stepped back, their eyes wide with surprise and caution. Faizon Sr. positioned himself protectively in front of George Jr. and Jeremiah, his muscles tensing as he prepared for whatever this new threat might be.

"Who... what are you?" Faizon Sr. demanded, his voice steady but filled with authority.

The shadowy figure did not respond immediately. Instead, it hovered silently, its form pulsing with an eerie, otherworldly light. Finally, it spoke, its voice a low, echoing whisper that seemed to come from everywhere and nowhere at once.

"You're looking for whoever might have caused the bombings, aren't you?" the figure hissed, his voice echoing through the forest. "You came to confront the person with the evil plan of demolishing Timpanopia, didn't you? Well, it was me."

"It was *you*!?" Jeremiah exclaimed, his voice a mix of incredulity and outrage. "You bombed the statue of Sir Roundbellied?"

The figure chuckled darkly. "It wasn't me, but rather my servant. A servant that had been originally created for a belly drumming app by someone to replicate the round-bellied bloke himself, brought from the virtual world to the physical world by me. Meet—BOMBarder."

A soft, rumbling timpani drum roll suddenly filled the air. Faizon Jr., who had basically perfected his absolute pitch by now, couldn't help but notice it was in an E.

Suddenly, there was the sound of rustling leaves, and a large figure emerged from the high, wide bush behind the pedestal. He looked a lot like Faizon—if Faizon had served in the military (which he hadn't). He was wearing a military uniform—hat and all, but no shirt—with a short and barely visible neck that was adorned with military golden medals. He was shaking his belly slightly with his large hands to produce that soft timpani drum roll.

"BOMBarder?" gasped Faizon. The others were at a loss for words.

## CHAPTER 10

BOMBarder's presence was imposing, his muscular frame and decorated chest exuding an aura of power and menace. His belly, the source of the ominous drum roll, seemed almost hypnotic as it moved rhythmically under his hands.

"Your creation, Faizon, is now *mine*," the shadow declared, his voice filled with pride and malice. "And together, we will bring Timpanopia to its knees."

Gilbert, still reeling from the shock, managed to find his voice. "But why? Why destroy our home? What do you stand to gain from this?"

The shadowy figure sneered. "Power, control, and the destruction of your precious belly drumming culture. Timpanopia's harmony and unity are a threat to my ambitions. By sowing chaos and fear, I can bend this world to my will."

Faizon Sr. clenched his fists, his face a mask of determination. "We won't let you. We will protect our home and our way of life."

BOMBarder let out a deep, rumbling laugh, his belly shaking with the effort. "You think you can stop me? I was created to be the ultimate weapon, a drumming force unmatched by any in Timpanopia. You will fall before my power."

Jeremiah, his eyes blazing with defiance, stepped forward. "We'll see about that. We have the heart and the rhythm of Timpanopia on our side. You may be strong, but we are united."

The shadow's eyes glinted with amusement. "Very well. If you wish to challenge BOMBarder, then so be it. But know this—he is more powerful than you can imagine. Prepare yourselves for the fight of your lives."

The group steeled themselves, their resolve firm. Faizon Sr. glanced at his friends and family, seeing the determination mirrored in their eyes. "We stand together," he said, his voice steady. "We will protect Timpanopia."

With a synchronized nod, they began to drum, their powerful beats resonating through the forest. The sound was a declaration of their unity and strength, a defiant answer to the threat before them.

BOMBarder responded in kind, his belly drum roll growing louder and more intense, the air vibrating with the power of his rhythm. The two forces clashed in a symphony of sound, each side pushing their limits in a battle of belly drums.

## ENIGMA EVERGREEN

Faizon Jr., his pitch-perfect ear guiding him, matched BOMBarder's rhythm beat for beat, his smaller frame belied by the power of his drumming. George Jr. and Jeremiah added their own beats, creating a complex and harmonious counterpoint to BOMBarder's relentless rhythm.

Gilbert, Gabriel, George, and Guy Biggums drummed with all their might, their synchronized beats amplifying the strength of their group. The forest seemed to come alive with the sound, the very trees vibrating with the force of their drumming.

The shadow watched with a mix of admiration and frustration. "Impressive," he muttered. "But it won't be enough."

The battle of rhythms continued, the air thick with tension and the sound of belly drums. Each beat was a testament to their resolve, a declaration that they would not be defeated.

As the final crescendo approached, Faizon Sr. led the group in a powerful, unified beat, their combined rhythms creating a wave of sound that surged towards BOMBarder. With a final, defiant roar, BOMBarder's rhythm faltered, his drum roll breaking as he was overwhelmed by the power of their unity.

BOMBarder staggered, his eyes wide with shock. "No... this can't be..."

The shadowy figure's face twisted with rage.

"This isn't over!" The shadow's voice rang with a mix of desperation and anger as he continued, his shadowy form flickering ominously in the dim light. "You think you've won, but this is merely the beginning. I am but a servant, a harbinger of what is to come. You have no idea of the forces you are dealing with. The Silence King, the true master behind these events, will arise once again. He is the architect of chaos, the puppeteer pulling the strings from the darkest corners of Enigma Evergreen. His power far exceeds anything you can imagine. I was merely a tool, a pawn in his grand design to bring Timpanopia and Beatweaver Haven to their knees. The bombings were just the first step in his plan to sow fear and discord. When the Silence King emerges from his slumber, his wrath will be unparalleled. Your petty resistance, your drumming –none of it will matter. He will consume everything in his path, and there will be no sanctuary, no refuge from his reign. You think you've defeated me, but in truth, you've only delayed the inevitable. Mark my words, the Silence King is coming, and when he does, your precious Timpanopia will be reduced to

## CHAPTER 10

silence and ashes. You may have won this skirmish, but the war has just begun. Prepare yourselves, for the true terror is yet to come."

With that, BOMBarder retreated into the shadows, and the shadow sunk back into the pedestal, leaving the group standing victorious but wary.

Faizon Sr. took a deep breath, his heart pounding with both exertion and relief. "We did it," he said, a note of triumph in his voice. "We protected Timpanopia."

But as they looked around the dark forest of Enigma Evergreen, they knew their journey was far from over. They had won this battle, but as the shadow had said, the war to protect their home and uncover the full extent of the sinister plot against them had only just begun. With renewed determination, they prepared to face whatever challenges lay ahead, ready to defend their beloved Timpanopia at any cost.

# 11

## Belly Bombers

**T**hat was intense," George said, his voice breaking the heavy silence that had settled over the group. "Why don't we all head back to my house for now? I'm sure George Jr. and Jeremiah would love to share their gaming console with you."

The suggestion brought a much-needed sense of relief and normalcy to the group. With nods of agreement and murmurs of gratitude, they began their trek back through the forest, retracing their steps towards George's home. The journey back was quicker, their footsteps lighter as they navigated the familiar path.

When they finally arrived at George's house, the comforting sight of its sturdy walls and welcoming windows greeted them. The tension from their encounter with the shadowy man and BOMBarder began to dissipate, replaced by the warm, inviting atmosphere of George's home.

As they entered the living room, George Jr. turned to his father. "Can we play now?" George Jr. asked eagerly, his sweaty forehead glistening as he wiped it with the back of his hand.

"I don't see why not," George Sr. replied, a proud smile on his face.

George Jr. and Jeremiah grinned widely, their excitement palpable. "Come on, we've got a great multiplayer game you'll all love," Jeremiah said, leading the way to the large, comfy sectional couch in front of the 30-inch TV.

Faizon Jr., Gabriel, George Jr., and Jeremiah settled in, controllers in hand, as the game loaded up on the screen. The room soon filled with the sounds of bombs and gunfire, the occasional rumbling timpani drum roll adding a familiar yet thrilling element to their virtual battlefield.

## CHAPTER 11

"Watch out, there's a sniper on the roof!" Faizon Jr. called out, his fingers moving rapidly over the controller.

"I got him!" Jeremiah responded, his avatar performing an impressive maneuver to take out the enemy.

George Jr. and Gabriel teamed up, their characters providing cover fire as they advanced through the digital landscape. The camaraderie and teamwork they shared in the game echoed the unity they felt in real life, a testament to their strong bond and shared purpose.

"Nice shot, Gabriel!" George Jr. cheered as Gabriel's character took out a wave of enemies with a perfectly timed explosion.

"Thanks, but we're not done yet!" Gabriel replied, his focus unwavering as the game intensified.

Despite the serious undertones of their mission and the recent confrontation with BOMBarder, the laughter and banter among the boys provided a much-needed respite. The living room was filled with their voices, a blend of excitement and joy that temporarily overshadowed the dark clouds looming over Timpanopia.

As the game continued, Faizon Sr., George, and Gilbert watched from nearby, their own tensions easing as they saw the younger generation finding a moment of peace and happiness amidst the chaos. The adults exchanged knowing glances, each silently reaffirming their commitment to protect these moments of joy and the future of their beloved home.

The sounds of virtual bombs and gunfire, accompanied by the familiar rumbling timpani drum rolls, filled the room, creating a lively symphony of resilience and hope.

As the rumbling timpani drum roll grew incrementally louder with each beat, the loud bomb sounds reminiscent of the staccatoed sounds Gilbert had played on his shield during the concert echoed through the speakers. These sounds erupted at the same one-and-a-half intervals as Jeremiah's character, which was apparently supposed to be Sir Roundbellied, with his striking resemblance to BOMBarder, appeared to be scattering bombs throughout the battleground with strategic precision.

Jeremiah clutched his fists in triumph as he and Faizon Jr. simultaneously threw a giant bomb at a faraway soldier. The explosion that followed made a

## BELLY BOMBERS

louder bomb sound, filling the room with the exhilarating rush of a well-executed maneuver.

"I honestly didn't think Sir Roundbellied would be able to run around while carrying all that weight on him," Jeremiah said, acknowledging his character's appearance. He marveled at the agility and power of his in-game avatar, despite its hefty, round-bellied form.

"Yeah, it's pretty impressive," Faizon Jr. agreed, his eyes fixed on the screen as they continued their virtual onslaught. "But it makes sense if you think about it. Sir Roundbellied's strength and determination are what make him a hero in our stories."

George Jr. and Gabriel nodded in agreement, their focus unwavering as they coordinated their next move. "It's kind of like how we faced BOMBarder earlier," George Jr. said. "We had to use our strengths and work together to beat him."

"Exactly," Gabriel chimed in, his character providing cover fire for the team. "It's all about using what we've got and sticking together."

The game continued, their characters moving seamlessly through the battleground, executing complex maneuvers and launching coordinated attacks. The sound of bombs and gunfire mixed with the rhythmic drum rolls created an immersive and thrilling experience for the boys.

As they played, the adults watched with a mix of amusement and pride. Gilbert leaned back in his chair, a satisfied smile on his face. "Looks like they've got the hang of it," he said, glancing at Faizon Sr. and George.

Faizon Sr. nodded, his eyes twinkling with pride. "They're a good team," he said. "Just like us."

George chuckled, shaking his head in amazement. "Who would've thought our boys would be fighting virtual battles with such skill?"

The game session continued, the boys' laughter and shouts of excitement filling the room. Despite the seriousness of their mission and the challenges they had faced, these moments of joy and camaraderie were a reminder of what they were fighting for.

As Jeremiah's character, Sir Roundbellied, led another charge, scattering bombs and clearing the path for his teammates, the boys felt a renewed sense of purpose. They knew that the virtual battles they fought were a reflection of

## CHAPTER 11

the real challenges they faced. And just like in the game, they would face those challenges together, with determination and unity.

The hours passed quickly, filled with the sounds of their virtual warfare and the rhythmic beats of their laughter. By the time they finally put down their controllers, the boys were exhausted but happy, their spirits lifted by the fun they had shared.

As they settled down for the night, their minds drifted back to the real battle ahead. But now, more than ever, they felt ready to face whatever came their way. With their family and friends by their side, they knew they could overcome any obstacle and protect their beloved Timpanopia from the looming threats. They all felt a renewed sense of determination. No matter the challenges ahead, they would face them together, united by their love for Timpanopia and their unwavering spirit.



The next day, however, Faizon, Gilbert, and Guy Biggums were to be found sprinting to George's house, their hearts pounding not just from the run but from the shocking news they had just heard. As they burst through the front door, the urgency of their arrival was palpable.

"Did you see the news—Mayor Tympano's been murdered!" Faizon blurted out, his eyes wide with shock.

Jeremiah barely looked up from his game console, engrossed in his virtual world, but George Jr., standing behind a large timpani drum next to Jeremiah, stopped his vigorous timpani drum roll momentarily. He was wearing a turtlenecked dark gray shirt and beige shorts, his pectorals shaking slightly from the effort.

"That's not the only thing," George Jr. said, running a hand through his hair as he caught his breath. "The Timpanopia Sound websites that serve the timpani drum sounds have been destroyed. It said something along the lines of 'internet failure: can't connect to sound.timpanopia.org.' I'm just here trying to keep the ambiance alive."

## BELLY BOMBERS

The weight of the news hit them all at once, the room falling into a tense silence. The rhythmic drum roll George Jr. had been playing lingered in the air, a poignant reminder of the deep connection they all had to the music and the community it symbolized.

"How could this happen?" Guy Biggums exclaimed, his face contorted in a mixture of disbelief and anger. "Mayor Tympano was one of the pillars of our community!"

"And the sound websites?" Gilbert added, shaking his head. "This feels like a coordinated attack. First the bombings, now this. Someone is trying to destroy the heart of Timpanopia."

Faizon nodded grimly. "It's not just about the physical destruction. They're attacking our culture, our identity. Without those sounds, the spirit of Timpanopia is under threat."

George Jr. resumed his rolling on the timpani drum, the powerful, resonant beats providing a backdrop to their conversation. "We have to do something," he said between rolls, his face set with determination. "We can't let them take this away from us."

Jeremiah finally looked up from his console, his expression serious. "Maybe there's a way to restore the sound sites. If we can find the source of the attack, we might be able to reverse the damage."

"That's a good point," Faizon Sr. agreed. "But first, we need to figure out who is behind all of this. The murder of Mayor Tympano and the attack on the sound sites are connected. Someone wants to plunge Timpanopia into chaos."

Guy Biggums nodded. "We need to investigate. Maybe there's something in Mayor Tympano's office or home that could give us a clue."

Gilbert turned to Faizon. "Do you think we should split up? Some of us can go to the Mayor's office, while the others try to contact the sound site administrators or any tech experts who might help us."

Faizon considered this for a moment before nodding. "Good idea. Gilbert, you and Guy Biggums head to the Mayor's office. See if you can find anything that might explain his murder. I'll stay here with George and the boys, and we'll try to get in touch with the sound site administrators."

## CHAPTER 11

As they solidified their plan, the tension in the room began to dissipate, replaced by a determined resolve. George Jr. continued to play his drum, the deep, resonant beats a steady reminder of what they were fighting to protect.

"Stay safe," Faizon said as Gilbert and Guy Biggums prepared to leave. "And remember, whoever is behind this, they are dangerous. We need to stay one step ahead of them."

"We will," Guy Biggums replied, his voice firm. "We'll find out who's responsible and stop them."

With that, the adults split into their respective teams, each member feeling the weight of their mission but also the strength that came from their unity. As Faizon and the others worked to restore the lifeblood of their community, they knew they were not just fighting for the sounds that defined their culture, but for the very soul of Timpanopia itself.

George Jr. turned to Faizon, his eyes bright with excitement. "Hey, Faizon, can Jeremiah show you how good he is at Belly Bombers?"

Jeremiah, still engrossed in his game, barely acknowledged the conversation. His fingers danced across the controller with practiced ease, navigating the chaotic virtual battlefield with impressive skill. George Jr. resumed his rolling on the timpani drum, the deep, resonant beats filling the room and providing the ambiance that should have been coming from the game itself.

"Sure," Faizon said, stepping closer to the boys. "Let's see what Jeremiah's got."

George Jr. beamed and adjusted his stance, rolling on the timpani drum with renewed vigor. "Jeremiah, show him that move you did earlier—the one with the double bomb drop!"

Jeremiah nodded, his focus intensifying as he maneuvered his character, Sir Roundbellied, through the game's treacherous terrain. The screen showed his avatar dodging enemy fire, his round belly jiggling with each step, until he found the perfect vantage point.

"Here it comes," Jeremiah announced, his voice steady despite the virtual chaos around him. He activated a special move, launching two bombs in quick succession. The screen erupted in a dazzling display of explosions, the sound effects amplified by George Jr.'s drumming.

## BELLY BOMBERS

Faizon watched in awe as the bombs landed precisely where Jeremiah intended, taking out a cluster of enemy soldiers and clearing a path for his teammates. The skill and precision were remarkable, especially considering the makeshift ambiance George Jr. was providing to keep the game immersive.

"Wow, Jeremiah, that's impressive!" Faizon said, genuinely impressed. "You've got some serious skills."

Jeremiah grinned, his eyes never leaving the screen. "Thanks, Faizon. It's all about timing and knowing when to strike."

George Jr. continued his drum roll, his pectorals shaking slightly with each beat. The rhythm he created blended seamlessly with the game's sound effects, creating an atmosphere that was both thrilling and comforting.

"Keep it up, you two," Faizon said, glancing at George Jr. with a proud smile. "You're doing a great job maintaining the ambiance, George Jr. It's like we're right there in the game with you."

George Jr. nodded, his expression determined. "Thanks, Faizon. I'm just trying to keep the spirit of Timpanopia alive, even if it's just through a game."

Faizon patted George Jr. on the shoulder, feeling a swell of pride for both boys. "You're doing more than that. You're showing us all that no matter what happens, we can always find a way to keep our traditions and our culture alive."

The boys continued their game, the room filled with the sounds of bombs, gunfire, and the rhythmic roll of the timpani drum. As Faizon watched them, he couldn't help but feel hopeful. Despite the challenges and the looming threats, the boys' dedication to keeping the spirit of Timpanopia alive through their game was inspiring, a testament to the resilience of their community. Despite the challenges and threats they faced, the bond forged by their shared love for music and belly drumming was unbreakable.

"You're doing great, boys," Faizon said, his voice filled with encouragement. "Keep up the good work. Every beat you play and every move you make in that game is a reminder of what we're fighting for."

Jeremiah, focused on his game, managed to flash a quick smile. "Thanks, Faizon. We're not just playing; we're practicing. If we can master these moves in the game, we'll be ready for anything out there."

George Jr. nodded in agreement, his hands moving expertly over the drum, maintaining the ambiance that should have been coming from the game's

## CHAPTER 11

soundtrack. "Yeah, it's like training. We're learning to work together, just like we will when we face the real threats."

Gilbert and Guy Biggums, who had just come back from the office and were watching from the sidelines, stepped forward, clearly moved by the boys' dedication. "You've got a good head on your shoulders, Jeremiah," Gilbert said. "And George Jr., your drumming skills are top-notch. It's amazing how you two are turning this game into something more meaningful."

Guy Biggums added, "We all need to take a page from your book. Staying focused and working together is the only way we'll get through this."

Faizon nodded, feeling the weight of their words. "Absolutely. We're in this together, and we'll support each other every step of the way. Now, let's see if we can get in touch with the sound site administrators and figure out what's going on with those websites."

As Faizon and the others moved to the side, discussing their next steps, the boys continued their game. The sound of bombs, gunfire, and the deep, resonant beats of the timpani drum created an atmosphere of both urgency and determination.

George Jr. took a brief pause from his drumming to catch his breath, wiping a bead of sweat from his forehead. "Hey, Dad," he called out to George, who was deep in conversation with Faizon. "Do you think we can figure out who's behind all this? The bombings, the websites going down, everything?"

George looked over at his son, his expression thoughtful. "We're going to try, son. It's not going to be easy, but with all of us working together, I believe we can get to the bottom of it. We owe it to Mayor Tympano and everyone in Timpanopia to find out the truth and put a stop to it."

Jeremiah, still focused on the game, nodded in agreement. "We'll do whatever it takes. Just like in this game, we'll keep fighting until we win."

The boys continued their virtual battle, their characters moving seamlessly through the game's landscape, executing complex maneuvers and launching coordinated attacks. The immersive soundscape created by George Jr.'s drumming added a layer of intensity to their efforts, making the game feel like a real training exercise.

As the hours passed, the adults worked tirelessly to contact the sound site administrators and gather more information. The room buzzed with activity, a

## BELLY BOMBERS

hive of determined energy focused on solving the mystery and protecting their community.

Finally, as evening approached, they received a breakthrough. Gilbert managed to connect with one of the sound site administrators, who confirmed their suspicions: the attack on the websites was a deliberate act of sabotage, aimed at crippling the cultural lifeblood of Timpanopia.

"This is it," Faizon said, holding up the phone. "We've got the information we need. Now we just need to find out who's behind it and why."

George Jr. and Jeremiah paused their game, turning their attention to the adults. "What's the plan?" George Jr. asked, his eyes wide with anticipation.

"The *plan*," Faizon said, "is to use this information to track down the saboteurs and stop them. We'll need to be smart and careful, but I know we can do it. We'll protect Timpanopia and ensure that the spirit of our community continues to thrive."

With renewed determination, the group prepared for the next phase of their mission. The weight of their responsibility was palpable, but so was their collective resolve. They knew they were up against a formidable adversary, but their unity and unwavering spirit would be their greatest strengths.

"We need to be strategic," Faizon said, gathering everyone in George's living room. The room, which had been filled with the sound of Jeremiah's game and George Jr.'s drumming, now fell silent as they listened intently. "The information we've gathered points to a deliberate attempt to destabilize Timpanopia. We need to find out who's behind it and put a stop to their plans."

Gilbert nodded, his expression serious. "The sound site administrator mentioned some suspicious activity coming from an abandoned warehouse on the outskirts of town. It could be a lead."

"An abandoned warehouse?" Guy Biggums echoed. "That sounds like the perfect place for someone to operate in secret. We should check it out."

Jeremiah, his eyes still gleaming with determination from his gaming session, spoke up. "We should be careful. If they're capable of taking down the sound sites and causing the bombings, they might have the place booby-trapped or guarded."

## CHAPTER 11

George Jr. added, "We need a plan to get in and out safely. Maybe we can use the skills we've been practicing in the game. It might sound crazy, but we've learned a lot about strategy and teamwork from it."

Faizon smiled at George Jr.'s enthusiasm. "You're right. This isn't just a game anymore. We've been preparing for something like this without even realizing it. Let's use those skills to our advantage."

The group spent the next hour devising a plan. They would approach the warehouse under the cover of night, using their belly drumming techniques to create distractions and communicate silently. Faizon and Gilbert would lead the way, with Guy Biggums providing backup. George Jr. and Jeremiah, with their keen eyes and quick reflexes, would act as scouts, ensuring the path was clear.

As night fell, they set out, the cool evening air filled with a sense of anticipation. The streets of Timpanopia were eerily quiet, a stark contrast to the usual vibrant atmosphere. They moved swiftly and silently, their large figures blending into the shadows.

When they reached the outskirts of town, the warehouse loomed ahead, its silhouette dark and foreboding against the night sky. They paused a safe distance away, taking in their surroundings.

"This is it," Faizon whispered, his voice barely audible. "Everyone knows their roles. Stay alert and watch each other's backs."

George Jr. and Jeremiah moved ahead, their footsteps barely making a sound. They circled the warehouse, looking for any signs of activity or security measures. After a few tense moments, they signaled back to the group that the coast was clear.

Faizon led the way, his broad shoulders and big belly moving with surprising agility. As they approached the entrance, they could hear faint murmurs coming from inside. He motioned for the others to follow, and they slipped through a partially open door.

Inside, the warehouse was dimly lit, the air thick with dust and the smell of old machinery. They could see figures moving in the shadows, their outlines barely visible. Faizon signaled for everyone to take their positions.

Using the techniques they had practiced, George Jr. and Jeremiah created a soft, rhythmic drum roll on their bellies, the sound barely perceptible but enough to signal their presence and readiness. Faizon and Gilbert moved

## BELLY BOMBERS

stealthily through the rows of old crates and machinery, their eyes scanning for any signs of the saboteurs.

Suddenly, they heard a voice—a low, menacing tone that sent chills down their spines. "I know you're here," the voice said. "You can't hide from me."

Faizon motioned for the group to freeze. The voice continued, growing louder and more confident. "You thought you could stop me? You have no idea what you're up against."

From the shadows emerged a figure, cloaked in darkness. His presence exuded power and malevolence. Faizon stepped forward, his jaw set with determination. "We're here to protect Timpanopia," he declared. "And we won't let you destroy it."

The figure laughed, a sound that echoed through the cavernous space. "Brave words," he sneered. "But bravery alone won't save you. Prepare to face the wrath of the Silence King."

At the mention of the name, a collective gasp ran through the group. They had heard whispers of the Silence King—a figure of legend said to command the power of silence and sound with equal mastery. This was no ordinary adversary.

But Faizon stood firm. "We won't back down," he said. "For Timpanopia, for our community, we will fight."

The figure stepped into the light, revealing his face. It was the same shadowy figure they had encountered at the pedestal, now fully illuminated. His eyes glinted with malice, and his smile was that of a predator toying with its prey.

"Then let the battle begin," he said, raising his hands. A low, rumbling timpani drum roll filled the air, the sound vibrating through their very bones.

The tension in the warehouse was palpable as the group faced off against BOMBarder. His presence was overwhelming, the military uniform he wore giving him an air of authority and menace. The rumbling timpani drum roll from his belly reverberated through the space, signaling the start of a fierce confrontation.

"Get ready, everyone," Faizon commanded, his voice steady despite the gravity of the situation. "We have to work together if we're going to take him down."

## CHAPTER 11

With a collective nod, the group sprang into action. George Jr. and Jeremiah, using their skills from countless hours of gaming and belly drumming practice, took the lead in distracting BOMBarder. They darted around the warehouse, their movements fluid and coordinated. George Jr. kept the rhythmic beat on his belly, creating a distracting cadence that echoed through the room.

BOMBarder roared, his voice booming over the timpani drum roll. "You think you can defeat me with your childish games?" He lunged towards George Jr., but the boy was too quick, ducking out of the way just in time.

Faizon and Gilbert moved in from opposite sides, their broad shoulders and powerful bellies making them formidable opponents. They used their size to their advantage, attempting to corner BOMBarder. Faizon threw a punch aimed at BOMBarder's midsection, but the massive figure deflected it with ease, his belly absorbing the impact with a resounding thud.

Gilbert followed up with a swift kick, aiming for BOMBarder's legs to destabilize him. The kick connected, causing BOMBarder to stumble momentarily, but he quickly regained his balance. With a snarl, he swung his massive arm, knocking Gilbert backward into a pile of old crates.

"Gilbert!" Faizon shouted, his concern for his cousin evident. But there was no time to check on him, as BOMBarder turned his attention back to Faizon, his eyes burning with fury.

Guy Biggums, seeing an opening, charged at BOMBarder from behind, his own belly drum roll creating a powerful rhythm that added to the chaotic soundscape. He aimed a powerful tackle at BOMBarder's back, hoping to knock him off balance. The impact sent both men crashing to the ground, the force of their bellies colliding creating a shockwave that reverberated through the warehouse.

Jeremiah, seizing the moment, leaped onto a stack of crates, gaining a height advantage. "Over here, big guy!" he taunted, drawing BOMBarder's attention. He then jumped down, landing with a heavy thud that added to the cacophony of sounds. As BOMBarder turned to face him, Jeremiah's eyes narrowed with determination.

George Jr., still keeping the rhythm on his belly, moved in close to Jeremiah. "Let's do this together," he whispered. The two boys exchanged a quick nod, their unspoken plan clear.

## BELLY BOMBERS

Jeremiah acted first, running towards BOMBarder and then sliding between his legs, causing him to twist awkwardly to follow. As BOMBarder turned, George Jr. took advantage of the distraction, delivering a series of quick, sharp hits to BOMBarder's side. The blows, though not strong enough to cause serious harm, were perfectly timed to keep him off balance.

Faizon saw his chance. With a burst of speed, he charged at BOMBarder, his fists raised. He landed a solid punch to BOMBarder's jaw, followed by another to his chest. The force of the blows caused BOMBarder to stagger backward, his eyes wide with surprise.

"You can't win, BOMBarder," Faizon declared, his voice filled with resolve. "Timpanopia is stronger than you think."

BOMBarder, his face twisted with rage, let out a deafening roar. He clasped his hands to his belly once more, the timpani drum roll intensifying. The sound grew louder and louder, filling the warehouse with an almost unbearable noise. Faizon, George Jr., Jeremiah, and Guy Biggums braced themselves against the sonic onslaught, their hands covering their ears.

But even as the sound threatened to overwhelm them, they refused to give up. Gilbert, having recovered from his earlier fall, rejoined the fight. He moved with surprising agility, his eyes locked on BOMBarder. With a fierce determination, he leaped into the air and brought his fists down onto BOMBarder's shoulders, forcing him to the ground.

"Now!" Faizon shouted. The group moved in unison, their combined strength and resolve focused on subduing BOMBarder. They delivered a series of coordinated strikes, each blow synchronized with the rhythm of George Jr.'s belly drum roll. The sound, once a source of chaos, now became a unifying force, driving them forward.

Finally, with a final, resounding strike, they brought BOMBarder to his knees. The massive figure, once so imposing, now seemed defeated. He looked up at Faizon, his eyes filled with a mixture of anger and respect.

"You... you haven't seen the last of me," BOMBarder growled. "The Silence King will rise again."

Faizon, breathing heavily, met his gaze. "Maybe, but not today. Today, we protect Timpanopia."

## CHAPTER 11

With that, BOMBarder slumped to the ground, the fight drained from him. The group stood victorious, their bodies bruised and battered but their spirits unbroken. They had faced a formidable foe and emerged triumphant, their unity and determination proving stronger than any force thrown against them.

As they helped each other up and began to make their way out of the warehouse, Faizon turned to the group. "This is just the beginning. There are more challenges ahead, but I know we can face them together. For Timpanopia."

The others nodded in agreement, their hearts filled with renewed hope. They had proven their strength and resilience, and they knew that, no matter what came next, they would face it together as a team, as a community, and as protectors of their beloved Timpanopia.

# 12

## Preparing for the Trip

**A**s they entered Faizon's warehouse, they were greeted by the familiar sight of Faizon Jr. and Gabriel, who were engaged in animated conversation. Faizon's heart swelled with pride at the sight of his son, who had grown into a skilled belly drummer in his own right.

"Hey, there," Faizon called out, a wide grin spreading across his face. "Did you two have fun playing with Glenn while we were out?"

Gabriel chuckled, his eyes twinkling with amusement. "Oh, we had a blast," he replied. "Glenn's quite the character, isn't he?"

Faizon Jr. nodded enthusiastically. "Yeah, we played some games and had some snacks. It was awesome!"

Faizon's smile widened at his son's excitement. "That's great to hear. It's important to have some fun, especially after everything we've been through."

As they made their way towards the back of the warehouse, where they kept their supplies and equipment, Faizon couldn't help but notice Glenn standing nearby, a warm smile on his face. The deputy to the head of security had been true to his word, watching over Faizon Jr. and Gabriel while the adults were away.

"Thanks for looking after them, Glenn," Faizon said, giving the shorter man a friendly pat on the back.

Glenn chuckled, his big brown belly jiggling slightly. "No problem at all," he replied. "They're good kids. And besides, it's not every day I get to hang out with the future belly drumming champions of Timpanopia!"

## CHAPTER 12

Faizon and the others laughed, their spirits lifted by Glenn's easygoing demeanor. As they passed by him, each of them gave his belly a large, playful pat, eliciting a series of timpani sounds that echoed through the warehouse.

"Take care, Glenn," Faizon said, giving him a final nod before continuing on their way. "We'll see you around."

With that, they disappeared into the back of the warehouse, their laughter mingling with the rhythmic beats of their footsteps. But Faizon Jr.'s eyes widened in shock as he took in the sight of his father's scarred body. His gaze shifted to the various marks and bruises that marred Faizon Sr.'s skin, evidence of the fierce battle he had endured.

"Why do you have so many scars, Dad?" Faizon Jr. asked, his voice filled with concern.

Faizon Sr. sighed, his expression grave. "It's a long story, son," he began, his voice tinged with weariness. "But it all started with a big fight with BOMBarder."

As Faizon Sr. spoke, George Jr. immediately went to the timpani drum in the corner of the warehouse and started playing a timpani drum roll. The rhythmic beats filled the air, adding a dramatic backdrop to Faizon Sr.'s tale.

"We were up against a formidable opponent," Faizon Sr. continued, his voice steady despite the memories that stirred within him. "BOMBarder was powerful, and he wasn't afraid to use that power against us."

Faizon Jr. listened intently as his father recounted the events of the battle, his eyes widening with each new detail. He could hardly believe that his father had faced such danger and emerged victorious.

"But we fought with everything we had," Faizon Sr. said, his tone filled with pride. "And in the end, we prevailed."

Faizon Jr. nodded, his admiration for his father evident in his eyes. "You're so brave, Dad," he said, his voice filled with awe.

Faizon Sr. smiled, his heart swelling with love for his son. "Thank you, son," he replied. "But I couldn't have done it without the support of my friends and family."

As the timpani drum roll came to an end, the group fell into a thoughtful silence. They knew that there would be more challenges ahead, but they also knew that as long as they stood together, they could overcome anything that came their way.

## PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

The next day, as the first light of dawn crept over Timpanopia, the group gathered at Timpani Temptations, the popular local diner known for its hearty breakfasts and vibrant atmosphere. The air was filled with the mouthwatering aromas of sizzling bacon, fluffy pancakes, and freshly brewed coffee, a welcoming contrast to the tension of their recent battles.

Faizon Sr., his broad shoulders and battle-scarred body a testament to the previous day's fight, took a seat at their usual table. The others followed suit, their expressions a mix of determination and anticipation. The rhythmic clatter of cutlery and the soft hum of morning chatter provided a comforting backdrop as they settled in.

As they dug into their breakfast—plates piled high with scrambled eggs, sausages, and stacks of pancakes—Faizon Sr. leaned forward, his face serious.

"Alright, everyone," he began, his deep voice cutting through the ambient noise. "We've dealt with BOMBarder, but we can't stop here. We need to start checking in with the neighboring countries. There's no telling how far this threat has spread."

George, seated beside him, nodded in agreement. "We need to know if they're experiencing similar issues. If the Silence King is planning something big, it's not just Timpanopia that's in danger."

Gilbert, still nursing a slight limp from the previous day's battle, looked up from his plate. "Do we have any contacts in the neighboring countries? People we can trust?"

Faizon Sr. thought for a moment, then replied, "We do have a few. There's Riko in Roundrhythmia, Marie in Prismatica, and the Rythmi twins in Beatopia. They've always been allies, and I believe they'll be willing to help us."

Gabriel, his youthful face set with determination, chimed in, "How do we reach them? It's not like we can just send a message through the usual channels with the Sound websites down."

Faizon Jr., who had been quietly listening, suddenly spoke up. "What about the old-school way? Letters or even sending someone directly? It might be slower, but it's secure."

Faizon Sr. nodded approvingly. "Good thinking, son. We'll prepare letters for each of our contacts, explaining the situation and asking for their assistance.

## CHAPTER 12

We can also send a couple of us as messengers to ensure the letters reach them safely."

Jeremiah, who had been wolfing down his breakfast with the enthusiasm of a thirteen-year-old, looked up. "I'll go. I'm the fastest runner in our group, and I can handle myself if there's any trouble."

George Jr., his big brown belly still moving rhythmically from his recent drum practice, added, "I can go too. We'll be quick and careful."

Faizon Sr. smiled, pride evident in his eyes. "Alright, Jeremiah and George Jr., you two will deliver the messages. The rest of us will scontinue to gather information and keep an eye on things in Timpanopia. Meet us back at my warehouse when you're finished."

As they finished their breakfast, the group felt a renewed sense of purpose. They knew the road ahead would be challenging, but they were ready to face it together. With their plan set, they prepared to reach out to their neighbors, hoping to uncover more about the sinister plot threatening their home and beyond.

As the morning sun climbed higher in the sky, casting a warm glow over Timpani Temptations, the group dispersed to begin their tasks. The battle with BOMBarder was just the beginning, and they were determined to protect not only Timpanopia but the entire Beatweaver Haven from the looming darkness.

Jeremiah and George Jr. exchanged determined glances as they stood up from the table, their mission clear in their minds. They navigated through the bustling diner and out into the early morning light, the streets of Timpanopia slowly coming to life with the hustle and bustle of daily activity. The weight of their responsibility hung heavy, but their resolve was unwavering.

As they walked the familiar route to George's house, they discussed their plan. "We need to be clear and direct in the letter," Jeremiah said, his tone serious. "We have to make sure they understand the urgency of the situation."

George Jr. nodded in agreement, his mind already working on the phrasing. "Right. We can't afford any misunderstandings. This could be the difference between stopping the Silence King and falling into chaos."

Arriving at George's house, they quickly made their way to his room. It was a space filled with the usual signs of teenage life: posters of famous belly drummers adorned the walls, and a stack of comics sat on a cluttered desk. The

#### PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

room also had a timpani drum in the corner, a testament to Jeremiah's dedication to music.

Jeremiah pulled out a piece of parchment and a pen from his desk drawer, and they both sat down on the floor, cross-legged, with the parchment laid out between them. George Jr. picked up the pen, and Jeremiah began to dictate.

"To Riko, Marie, and the Rythmi twins," Jeremiah started, his voice steady and clear.

George Jr. wrote quickly, his handwriting neat and precise:

*Dear Riko, Marie, and the Rythmi twins,*

*We hope this letter finds you well. We are writing to inform you of a dire situation in Timpanopia that may have far-reaching consequences for all of Beatweaver Haven. Recently, our city has been under attack by a figure known as BOMBarder, a servant of the mysterious and malevolent Silence King. This threat is not confined to Timpanopia alone, and we believe it is part of a larger, more sinister plot to disrupt the peace and harmony of our lands.*

*We urgently request your assistance in investigating any similar disturbances in your respective countries. It is vital that we pool our resources and knowledge to uncover and thwart the Silence King's plans. Your expertise and support will be invaluable in this effort. We will be delivering this letter personally to ensure its safe arrival and to discuss any further details in person. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Together, we can protect our homes and preserve the harmony of Beatweaver Haven.*

*Sincerely,*

*Jeremiah Caldwell and George Caldwell Jr.*

## CHAPTER 12

Jeremiah paused, and George Jr. carefully signed both of their names at the bottom of the letter. They read it over once more to ensure it conveyed the urgency and gravity of the situation.

"Looks good," George Jr. said, nodding in satisfaction.

"Agreed," Jeremiah replied. "Let's get this to the others and prepare for our journey."

They carefully folded the letter and placed it into an envelope. As they stood up, their eyes met, and they shared a moment of silent determination. George Jr. glanced at Jeremiah and grinned mischievously. "Hey, do you mind if I just, you know, do this real quick?" he asked, his eyes twinkling with playful intent.

Jeremiah looked puzzled for a moment, then his expression shifted to one of amused understanding. "Go ahead," he said, chuckling as he relaxed his posture.

With a practiced motion, George Jr. placed his hands on Jeremiah's big brown belly and began to play a timpani drum roll. The rhythmic, resonant sound filled the room, a testament to their shared love of music and camaraderie. Jeremiah's belly responded with a deep, warm vibration, and they both laughed at the playful yet serious nature of their bond.

"That never gets old," George Jr. said, stepping back with a satisfied smile.

"Yeah, it's like having a portable drum with me all the time," Jeremiah replied, patting his belly affectionately.

Their moment of levity passed, and they refocused on their mission. With the letter securely in the envelope, they headed out of the house and made their way to the post office. The streets of Timpanopia were busier now, with merchants setting up their stalls and townsfolk going about their daily routines.

As they approached the post office, the sound of their footsteps mingled with the city's vibrant ambiance. The building was modest but bustling, with a steady stream of people coming and going. They entered, the bell above the door jingling to announce their arrival.

The clerk behind the counter, a middle-aged man with a friendly demeanor, looked up and greeted them with a smile. "Good morning, boys! What can I do for you today?"

Jeremiah stepped forward, holding out the envelope. "We need to send this letter to our friends in Roundrhythmia, Prismatica, and Beatopia. It's urgent."

## PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

The clerk took the envelope, his expression turning serious as he noted the importance in Jeremiah's tone. "I'll make sure it gets there as quickly as possible," he assured them, carefully placing the letter in a priority mail slot.

"Thank you," George Jr. said, relief evident in his voice.

"You're welcome," the clerk replied. "Good luck with whatever it is you're dealing with."

With the letter on its way, Jeremiah and George Jr. stepped out of the post office, feeling a sense of accomplishment. They had taken the first step in rallying their allies, and now they just had to wait for their response. The fate of Timpanopia and the surrounding regions might hinge on their swift and decisive actions, but they were ready to face whatever came next.

Jeremiah and George Jr. walked back through the lively streets of Timpanopia, the morning sun now fully risen and casting a warm glow over the town. They felt a renewed sense of purpose, their earlier conversation and playful belly drumming having lightened their spirits despite the gravity of their mission.

Upon arriving at Faizon's warehouse, they found Faizon Sr., Gilbert, and Guy Biggums in deep conversation. Faizon Jr. and Gabriel were nearby, engaged in a game that involved intricate patterns of drumming on various surfaces, a practice that had become second nature to them.

"Did you get the letters sent?" Faizon Sr. asked, looking up as the boys entered.

"Yes, sir," Jeremiah replied confidently. "They're on their way to Roundrhythmia, Prismatica, and Beatopia."

"Good job, boys," Gilbert said, giving them an approving nod. "Now we just have to wait and see how our friends respond."

Guy Biggums, with his imposing frame and serious demeanor, added, "In the meantime, we should be preparing for whatever might come next. We can't afford to be caught off guard."

Just then, Faizon Jr. and Gabriel ran over, excitement evident in their eyes. "Dad, can we help with the preparations?" Faizon Jr. asked eagerly.

"Of course," Faizon Sr. replied, smiling at his son's enthusiasm. "Every bit of help counts."

## CHAPTER 12

The group split up to tackle various tasks. Faizon Sr. and Guy Biggums went over the warehouse's inventory, ensuring they had all the supplies they might need for any potential journeys or confrontations. Gilbert took on the task of fortifying the warehouse, adding extra security measures to protect against any surprise attacks.

Jeremiah and George Jr. found themselves in charge of gathering intelligence. They moved through the town, discreetly talking to local merchants and townsfolk to gather any information or rumors that might provide clues about the Silence King's next move.

As they moved through the bustling marketplace, George Jr. couldn't help but reflect on the changes in their lives. "It's strange, isn't it? Just a few weeks ago, our biggest concern was practicing our drumming and keeping up with schoolwork. Now we're trying to stop a sinister plot."

Jeremiah nodded, his expression thoughtful. "Yeah, but I guess that's what happens when your home is threatened. You do whatever it takes to protect it."

They continued their information gathering, their ears perked for any mention of disturbances or unusual activity. As the day wore on, they compiled a list of potential leads and returned to the warehouse to share their findings with the others.

Back at the warehouse, they found Glenn, who had come over to check on the group. "How's everything going?" he asked, his big brown belly moving slightly as he spoke.

"We've sent out letters to our allies and are gathering as much information as we can," Faizon Sr. replied. "We're preparing for whatever comes next."

Glenn nodded approvingly. "Good to hear. I'll keep an ear to the ground and let you know if I hear anything useful."

As the day drew to a close, the group gathered in the warehouse's main room, each member contributing to the ongoing discussion. They shared the information they had gathered, made plans for potential scenarios, and ensured everyone knew their roles.

George Jr., exhausted from the day's efforts but still determined, sat beside Faizon Jr. "Do you think we'll be able to stop the Silence King?" he asked, his voice a mix of hope and uncertainty.

## PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

Faizon Jr. looked at his friend and nodded confidently. "We have to. There's no other option."

The group's camaraderie and shared determination were palpable. They knew the road ahead would be challenging, but together, they felt ready to face whatever came next.

As night fell over Timpanopia, they settled into their makeshift sleeping arrangements within the warehouse, each person's thoughts filled with the day's events and the uncertain future. But despite the looming threat, they took comfort in knowing they were not alone in this fight. United by their love for their home and their determination to protect it, they drifted off to sleep, ready to continue their mission with renewed vigor the next day.



The next day dawned bright and early in Timpanopia, casting long shadows through the streets as the town began to stir. Inside Faizon's warehouse, the group gathered around the table, their faces reflecting a mix of anticipation and anxiety. The previous day's efforts had been thorough, but now they awaited the crucial responses from their allies.

Just as the sun fully crested the horizon, a sharp knock echoed through the warehouse. Faizon Sr. went to the door and returned with a thick envelope, bearing the seals of multiple neighboring nations. The group leaned in, their excitement palpable as Faizon Sr. carefully broke the seal and unfolded the letter. He began to read aloud, his voice steady and clear.

*Dear Friends of Timpanopia,*

*We have received your urgent message and the alarming news of Mayor Tympano's murder. The reports of the bombings and the destruction of the Timpanopia Sound websites have shaken us deeply. Our thoughts are with you during this tumultuous time.*

## CHAPTER 12

*We understand the gravity of the situation and the threat posed by the Silence King. Your courage in the face of such danger is commendable, and we stand ready to support you in any way we can.*

*In response to your request for assistance, we have convened an emergency meeting with representatives from our respective nations. After careful deliberation, we have decided that a united front is essential to combat this menace effectively.*

*Therefore, we invite you to meet with us at Prismatica Square at the earliest possible moment. Our representatives, including Riko from Roundrhythmia, Marie from Prismatica, and the Rythmi twins, will be in attendance. They will bring their expertise and resources to aid in devising a comprehensive strategy to thwart the Silence King's plans.*

*Please come prepared to discuss your findings, share your insights, and collaborate on the best course of action. We believe that through unity and shared determination, we can overcome this threat and restore peace to our lands.*

*Safe travels to Prismatica Square. We eagerly await your arrival and the opportunity to stand together against this common foe.*

*With solidarity and hope,*

*Riko, Representative of Roundrhythmia*

*Marie, Representative of Prismatica*

*The Rythmi twins, Special Envoys of Beatopia*

As Faizon Sr. finished reading the letter, a hush fell over the group. The significance of the upcoming meeting and the gravity of the situation weighed

## PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

heavily on their minds. It was George Jr. who broke the silence first, his voice filled with both determination and a hint of excitement.

"So, we're going to Prismatica Square," he said, looking around at the others. "It sounds like we'll have some strong allies there."

"Yeah," agreed Faizon Jr., his eyes shining with anticipation. "Riko, Marie, and the Rythmi twins—it's going to be quite the assembly."

Gilbert nodded thoughtfully. "This is a great opportunity for us to unite our efforts. But we need to be prepared. It's not just a meeting; it's a chance to plan our next moves and gather resources."

Guy Biggums folded his arms across his chest, his face serious. "We should leave as soon as possible. The sooner we get to Prismatica Square, the sooner we can start coordinating with our allies."

"Agreed," Faizon Sr. said, his tone resolute. "But let's make sure we have everything we need before we set out. It's a long journey, and we don't know what challenges we might face along the way."

Jeremiah, who had been silent until now, spoke up. "What about transportation? It's not just us going, but we'll need to bring supplies and equipment too."

Faizon Sr. nodded. "We'll take the larger wagon. It's sturdy and has plenty of space for all of us and our gear. Plus, it's been outfitted with some enhancements that should make the trip smoother."

Gabriel looked at the map spread out on the table. "The route to Prismatica Square takes us through some rough terrain. We'll need to be vigilant."

George Jr., who had been listening intently, added, "I've heard there are a few safe havens along the way where we can rest and resupply if needed. We should plan our stops carefully."

Faizon Sr. smiled at his son's thoughtfulness. "Good thinking, George Jr. Let's mark those locations on the map. We want to be as prepared as possible."

As they discussed the logistics of their journey, each member of the group contributed their ideas and expertise. They talked about packing enough food and water, ensuring their instruments were in good condition, and double-checking their defenses in case of an attack.

## CHAPTER 12

Gilbert looked around the room, a sense of pride swelling within him. "We're a strong team, and with our allies, we'll be even stronger. The Silence King won't know what hit him."

Faizon Sr. placed a reassuring hand on Gilbert's shoulder. "We'll face this together, and we'll protect our home and our friends. This journey to Prismatica Square is just the beginning."

Jeremiah, his face set with determination, nodded. "Let's get moving. The sooner we start, the sooner we can end this threat."

Jeremiah's eyes widened in surprise as Faizon Jr. exclaimed, "*Wait!* Instead of the wagon, we can just use my father's van!" The words hung in the air, and for a moment, the group paused, considering the practicality and efficiency of using the van for their journey to Prismatica Square. The idea was sound, and the van would undoubtedly offer more comfort and speed than the wagon.

Jeremiah, who had been deep in thought about the upcoming preparations, stood up suddenly, causing everyone to look his way. George Jr., a determined look on his face, held up a hand, signaling for everyone's attention. "Wait, hang on," he said, his voice steady but filled with an unusual excitement. "Before we prepare, can I just..."

Jeremiah and George Jr. turned to face each other, a silent understanding passing between them. George Jr. walked over to the large timpani drum positioned beside him and fetched a pair of mallets. He approached his older brother, the mallets poised for action. "Jeremiah," he began, his voice a mixture of anticipation and reverence, "let me just... do this real quick."

Without another word, George Jr. started to play a rhythmic roll on Jeremiah's big brown belly. The sound was rich and resonant, a deep, rolling timpani drum roll that filled the room with its rhythmic pulse. Jeremiah looked down at his younger brother, a curious smile forming on his lips as the beats reverberated through his body.

As George Jr. continued, the tempo of the drum roll increased slightly, and something extraordinary began to happen. Jeremiah's belly, already substantial, started to grow gradually. The transformation was mesmerizing, and the others watched in awe as Jeremiah's belly slowly expanded, matching the size of Faizon Jr.'s own impressive belly. The deep, resonant tones of the drum roll

## PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

seemed to infuse life into the transformation, each beat marking another increment in the growth.

Jeremiah chuckled, the sound vibrating through his growing belly. "This feels... strange but kind of amazing," he said, looking down at his now larger belly. George Jr. finished the roll with a flourish, the final beats echoing through the room before fading into a satisfied silence.

The others, momentarily distracted from their planning, couldn't help but be impressed. Faizon Jr. clapped his hands together, a grin spreading across his face. "That was incredible, George Jr. You really seem to enjoy being with your big brother."

Gilbert nodded, a look of appreciation in his eyes. "You've got quite the talent there, George Jr. And Jeremiah, you're certainly embracing the spirit of belly drumming."

Guy Biggums, ever the pragmatist, brought them back to the task at hand. "Alright, now that we've witnessed that impressive display, let's get focused again. Using the van is a great idea. It'll save us time and effort."

Faizon Sr. agreed, his mind already shifting to the logistics. "We should gather everything we'll need and load up the van. We'll be able to cover more ground quickly and ensure we're well-prepared for whatever lies ahead in Prismatica Square."

With the plan to use the van solidified, the group began to finalize their preparations with a renewed sense of purpose. They gathered in Faizon Sr.'s warehouse, the familiar hum of activity creating a buzz of excitement.

"Alright, everyone," Faizon Sr. began, clapping his hands to get their attention. "Let's start by organizing our supplies. We need to make sure we have everything we might need for the trip to Prismatica Square. Food, water, medical supplies, and of course, our instruments."

George Jr. nodded enthusiastically, already making a mental checklist. "I'll get the food and water. We should pack enough for several days, just in case we encounter any delays."

"I'll handle the medical supplies," Gilbert said, stepping forward. "We need to be prepared for any injuries or emergencies. I'll make sure we have bandages, antiseptics, and anything else we might need."

## CHAPTER 12

"I'll check your bellies," Faizon Jr. added, his eyes sparkling with excitement. "We need to make sure our bellies are in top condition. They're going to be crucial, not just for communication but also for our morale."

Guy Biggums, ever the pragmatist, spoke up next. "I'll inspect the van and make sure it's ready for the journey. We can't afford any mechanical failures on the road."

Jeremiah, still feeling the weight and presence of his newly grown belly, gave it a satisfied pat. "I'm ready for this. Let's get to it."

As they split up to tackle their tasks, the warehouse buzzed with energy and purpose. Faizon Jr. carefully inspected each belly, making sure the tension was just right and the mallets were in good condition. "These need to be perfect," he muttered to himself. "Every beat has to count."

George Jr. and Gabriel worked together to pack the food and water. "We should bring a variety of things," George Jr. said, placing cans of beans and packets of dried fruit into a box. "We don't know how long we'll be out there."

"Good idea," Gabriel agreed, adding bottles of water and a few loaves of bread. "And we should pack some high-energy snacks, too. We might need the extra boost."

Meanwhile, Gilbert meticulously sorted through the medical supplies. "Better safe than sorry," he said, packing bandages, antiseptics, and pain relievers into a sturdy first aid kit. "We need to be ready for anything."

Guy Biggums, with his usual efficiency, inspected the van from top to bottom. "The tires look good," he said, checking the tread. "And the engine sounds fine. I'll just top off the fluids and we should be ready to go."

As the preparations continued, the group frequently exchanged encouraging words and jokes, keeping the atmosphere light despite the seriousness of their mission. "Remember that time we got lost on the way to the festival a year ago, Gilbert?" Faizon Sr. said with a laugh. "We ended up performing in that tiny village instead. They loved us!"

"Yeah," Gilbert chuckled, organizing the last of the food supplies. "And they fed us so much we could barely drum afterward!"

The laughter and camaraderie strengthened their resolve, reminding them of the bond they shared and the importance of their mission.

## PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

Faizon Sr., overseeing the activity, felt a surge of pride. "We've come a long way," he said, his voice filled with emotion. "We're not just friends, we're family. And together, we can face anything."

The group responded with a chorus of agreement, their spirits high. "To Prismatica Square," George Jr. said, raising a can of beans in a mock toast. "And to protecting Timpanopia and Beatweaver Haven!"

As they loaded the van with their carefully prepared supplies, the rhythmic beats of their hearts and the memory of George Jr.'s remarkable timpani roll on Jeremiah's belly served as a reminder of their shared goal and the power of their camaraderie. The sun began to rise, casting a Gold Glow over the warehouse and filling the group with a sense of hopeful anticipation.

The journey to Prismatica Square awaited them, and they were ready to face whatever challenges came their way. United, prepared, and driven by a deep sense of purpose, they climbed into the van, their hearts filled with determination and the knowledge that, together, they could overcome any obstacle.

With a unified cheer, they set off down the road, the rumbling sound of the van's engine mingling with the rhythmic beats of their hearts. The next chapter in their adventure was about to unfold, and they were ready to protect their home, their friends, and their future.

# 13

## Cooperative Country Collaboration

**A**s the van rolled down the winding road, the landscape gradually shifted from the familiar sights of Timpanopia to the lush greenery of the surrounding countryside. Faizon Sr. sat behind the wheel, his grip steady as he navigated the van through the twists and turns of the road. Beside him, Gilbert acted as navigator, consulting the map and directing their course.

In the back of the van, the rest of the group settled in for the journey. Faizon Jr. and George Jr. sat together, their excitement palpable as they discussed the upcoming meeting at Prismatica Square. "I can't wait to see what Riko and Marie have to say," Faizon Jr. said, his eyes shining with anticipation. "They're both experts in their fields, and their insights could be invaluable."

"Yeah, and I'm curious to meet the Rythmi twins," George Jr. replied, adjusting his seatbelt. "I've heard they're pretty legendary when it comes to rhythm and music."

Jeremiah, his newly grown belly comfortably settled, leaned back against the seat, his expression thoughtful. "I wonder what kind of plan we'll come up with," he mused. "Stopping the Silence King won't be easy, but with everyone working together, I think we have a chance."

Guy Biggums, always practical, chimed in from the front passenger seat. "We need to stay focused and keep our wits about us," he reminded them. "We're facing a formidable opponent, and we can't afford to underestimate him."

As the van continued on its journey, the landscape outside the windows changed, giving way to rolling hills and dense forests. Occasionally, they passed other travelers on the road, exchanging friendly waves and nods as they made their way to their own destinations.

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

Hours passed, and the sun began to sink lower in the sky, casting long shadows across the road. Faizon Sr. glanced at the dashboard, noting the time. "We should start thinking about finding a place to rest for the night," he said, his voice calm but authoritative. "We don't want to push ourselves too hard."

Gilbert consulted the map, scanning for nearby settlements. "There's a small village up ahead," he said, pointing to a cluster of buildings on the map. "We should be able to find a place to stay there for the night."

With a collective nod of agreement, Faizon Sr. guided the van off the main road and onto a smaller, less traveled path that led towards the village. As they approached, the lights of the village twinkled in the gathering dusk, welcoming them with a warm glow.

Pulling into the village square, they found a cozy inn with a flickering lantern hanging above the door. Faizon Sr. parked the van and turned off the engine, the quiet hum of the night settling around them. "Looks like we've found our rest stop for the night," he said, a note of relief in his voice.

The group gathered their belongings and stepped out of the van, stretching their limbs after the long journey. As they entered the inn, they were greeted by the warmth of a crackling fire and the inviting aroma of home-cooked meals.

Inside, they found a table large enough to accommodate them all and settled in for a hearty meal. Conversation flowed easily as they shared stories and laughter, enjoying each other's company and the sense of camaraderie that bound them together.

As the night wore on and the fire burned low, they retired to their rooms, ready to rest and recharge before continuing their journey to Prismatica Square. Tomorrow would bring new challenges and opportunities, but for now, they were content to bask in the comfort of friendship and the promise of a brighter future ahead.



Faizon Jr. woke up to what felt like a hard hit on his big brown belly as well as a loud timpani drum sound in Bb. The soft, majestic timpani drum roll that

## CHAPTER 13

followed, combined with the familiar sensation on his stomach, made him stir groggily and slowly look up. As his eyes adjusted to the dim light of the room, he saw George Jr. kneeling next to his belly, his sweaty hands rhythmically beating on the large makeshift timpani drum before him. With each hit, Faizon Jr.'s belly quivered slightly, producing a deep, rich, fuzzy, and resonant sound that filled the room.

George Jr. maintained his focus, his eyes locked on the surface of Faizon Jr.'s belly, which provided a perfect canvas for his impromptu performance. The young boy's round face was a mask of concentration, his brows furrowed as he maintained the tempo and intensity of the drum roll. Each strike of his hands was precise and deliberate, creating a rhythmic pattern that was both soothing and oddly invigorating.

Faizon Jr. tried to speak, but his voice was caught in the gentle reverberations that George Jr. was coaxing from his belly. He could only watch as George Jr., still absorbed in his playing, let out a final, emphatic hit with his right hand while keeping his left hand on the stomach, feeling the vibrations ebb away. The room seemed to vibrate with the force of it, and Faizon Jr.'s belly shook slightly with the impact as George Jr. slowly raised his right hand (his left hand still on the stomach) and let the sound die out.

George Jr. then turned his head to face Faizon Jr., the same sheepish smile on his face. "Sorry," he said, his voice barely above a whisper in the stillness of the morning. "I just like to play on other people's big stomachs. And yours is pretty big." His eyes were wide with a mix of excitement and apology, clearly hoping that Faizon Jr. would understand his impulsive actions.

Faizon Jr. blinked a few times, his mind slowly catching up to the situation. He felt a strange sense of camaraderie with George Jr., who had, in his own way, shared a piece of his musical passion. Despite the unexpected wake-up call, he couldn't help but feel a bit of pride. "It's okay," he finally said, his voice still thick with sleep but carrying a note of appreciation. "Just... maybe next time, give me a heads-up first?"

George Jr.'s smile widened, relief washing over his features. "Sure thing," he agreed, pulling his hands away and sitting back on his heels. "I just couldn't resist. Your belly has such a good sound." He patted his own belly, though not

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

as large as Faizon Jr.'s, it was still ample enough to produce a similar, albeit softer, rumbling sound.

The two boys shared a moment of understanding, their bond strengthened by this shared experience. Faizon Jr. shifted slightly, adjusting to a more comfortable position, while George Jr. moved to sit beside him.

"So," Faizon Jr. said, turning his head to see George Jr. shifting his heavy weight slightly, "you like big brown belly drum rolls, then?"

George Jr.'s face lit up with enthusiasm, his eyes sparkling as he responded. "I really love them," he confessed, his voice filled with genuine passion. "I play on my dad's belly all the time, and then on Jeremiah's belly too. There's just something about the sound and feel that I can't get enough of. It's like creating music with a living, breathing instrument."

Faizon Jr. nodded, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. "Jeremiah does have quite the belly," he agreed, thinking back to the many times he had seen Jeremiah's impressive form. "It's like a perfect drum, and the sound it makes is so deep and powerful."

George Jr. chuckled, rubbing his own belly absently. "Yeah, he's got a real talent for it too. Sometimes we have little competitions to see who can make the best drum roll. It's always a blast. By the way, when you really think about it, your belly kinda reminds me of a bongo drum. It kinda feels like one, and I could've sworn it kinda sounded like a bongo too, along with the timpani sound. Or maybe it was just like that because I was playing on it with my bare hands." He glanced down at his sweaty palms.

"Oh, it's okay. Sometimes the timpani can be played with bare hands too, you know. But for this ol' timpani drum, I'd prefer felt mallets, they make my presence feel *felt*, you know, and they're also good for maintaining that intimidating effect."

"I've been wondering," George Jr. mused, "where exactly do the sounds come from? Is it from the belly button?" With a curious expression, he lifted the hem of his shirt with one hand, revealing his belly button. "Or does it come from deep inside the pit of the stomach?" He pressed down firmly on his belly button, causing a single, barely audible fart to escape. "Maybe," he grinned mischievously, giggling softly as he let go of his shirt, "it comes from a tiny little hole nestled between two plump, rounded, chocolatey mounds?"

## CHAPTER 13

Faizon Jr. snorted into his grimy palm. "Well, you *would* get a sound from your butthole if you punched your stomach hard enough to fart your own hams off." With a mischievous grin, he jabbed his own belly button with a finger and let loose a huge, thunderous fart. Both boys erupted into peals of laughter.

"Dang, I didn't know your farts could be so *loud!*" George Jr. hiccuped, still shaking uncontrollably with laughter. "Must be that wide butt of yours!"

Faizon Jr. glanced down at his substantial backside. Indeed, his big butt and robust belly undoubtedly contributed to the resounding nature of his fart. "Yeah, I guess it's got some acoustic advantage," he chuckled, poking his own side playfully.

"And your gyatt isn't too small, either," Faizon Jr. remarked, poking fun. "Then again, pot calling the kettle black, I guess. It's just an expression," he explained, noticing George Jr.'s puzzled expression. "Kind of fits, though, since I'm practically a *kettledrum*—or at least my stomach is—and you've got a bit of a *pot belly* yourself," he teased, giving George Jr.'s big round belly a playful poke.

George Jr. chuckled, swatting Faizon Jr.'s hand away playfully. "Hey now, my belly's just well-stocked for emergencies."

Faizon Jr. grinned mischievously. "Yeah, like, perhaps, when the snack machine runs out at school!"

Both boys erupted into another round of laughter, their giggles echoing through the room as they enjoyed their playful banter.

"Anyway, my greatest guess about the sounds of our timpani bellies is that we Timpanopians have those sort of metallic strings embedded within our bellies as part of the Timpanopian anatomy, much like those you'd find in an actual timpani drum, were you to disassemble one. And if that's true, I'm surprised I've never felt any interference with those strings when I eat and leave no crumbs. I guess our anatomy is modified so that the strings are passthrough components made seamlessly integrable or something like that.... Dunno if that would be physically accurate, but again, who knows? The only way to ensure it holds up scientifically is if the people who call themselves 'scientists' could even be bothered to study the Timpanopian anatomy, which they can't."

"Really?" Faizon Jr. said softly, his otherwise dark face slowly paling at this astonishing revelation. "Damn, li'l Georgie, you may be small, but you're very, very smart! This country could *really* use more geniuses like you."

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

"What was that? You think I'm small? Oh-ho, just you wait, Bradley," grinned George Jr. "Can I call you Bradley? I know I shouldn't, but you just look like a Bradley.... Anyway, I'll soon be able to make my belly get even *bigger*—and I don't mean by stress-eating—and only then shall we see who's the smaller one. Just gotta be careful not to make it *too* big without shrinking it back eventually, otherwise I won't be able to run around or play basketball, and I *certainly* won't be able to dodge certain types of balls, if you get my drift."

"Did you hear about my father's dream?" asked Faizon Jr., thinking that last sentence couldn't be a coincidence.

"Yep," George Jr. nodded, his round midsection sticking out proudly. "My dad heard it from your dad. Anyway, I think our stomachs grow because the belly reacts to felt mallets. Maybe the reaction causes the strings inside to expand and get heavier, making our bellies grow bigger or something.... I honestly don't know...."

Their conversation was interrupted by the sound of Faizon Sr.'s voice calling from down the hall. "Boys, come on! It's time to shower so we can head to Prismatica Square fresh and presentable. We don't want to show up all stinky."

Faizon Jr. rolled his eyes good-naturedly but knew his father was right. "Alright, Dad!" he called back, pushing himself up from the bed. He looked at George Jr. with a grin. "Guess we'd better get cleaned up."

George Jr. nodded, getting to his feet with a bit of effort. "Yeah, can't argue with that. We've got to make a good impression."

As they made their way to the bathroom, Faizon Jr. couldn't help but feel a sense of anticipation. Today was going to be an important day, and he wanted to be ready for whatever came their way.

After a quick but thorough shower, Faizon Jr. dried off and dressed, feeling the refreshing effects of the hot water. He met George Jr. back in the room, both boys now clean and dressed in fresh clothes. The morning sunlight streamed through the windows, casting a warm glow over everything and filling the room with a sense of renewed energy.

"Feeling better?" Faizon Jr. asked, adjusting the collar of his shirt as he looked over at George Jr.

George Jr. nodded, a contented smile on his face. "Definitely. Nothing like a good shower to wake you up and get you ready for the day."

## CHAPTER 13

Faizon Jr. agreed, feeling the same way. "Yeah, I feel more awake and ready for anything now."

They exchanged a look of shared determination, knowing that today could be a turning point in their journey. With the sounds of their morning preparations echoing in the house, they were ready to face whatever challenges awaited them at Prismatica Square.

As they headed downstairs, the smell of breakfast greeted them, adding to their growing sense of readiness. The rest of the group was already gathered, finishing up their morning meal and preparing for the day's events.

"Let's go, boys," Faizon Sr. said with a nod, his voice filled with a mix of authority and encouragement. "We've got a big day ahead, and we need to be at our best."

With that, the group set out, their spirits high and their minds focused on the task ahead. The road to Prismatica Square awaited, and they were ready to take the next step in their journey.

As Faizon Sr.'s van rumbled down the road, Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah settled into the back seats, their excitement palpable. The hum of the engine and the occasional bumps in the road provided a rhythmic backdrop to their animated conversation.

"Man, I can't believe we're actually doing this," Faizon Jr. said, glancing out the window at the passing scenery. "Prismatica Square... it sounds so cool. I've heard it's like a kaleidoscope of colors and sounds."

George Jr. nodded, his eyes wide with anticipation. "Yeah, my dad told me stories about it. He said the place is magical, like every sound you hear is part of some grand symphony. I can't wait to see it for myself."

Gabriel, sitting next to Faizon Jr., leaned forward, his big brown belly pressing slightly against the seat in front of him. "Do you think we'll meet anyone interesting there? I mean, it's not every day you get to meet representatives from other countries."

Jeremiah, who was squeezed comfortably into the seat behind George Jr., added, "I'm more curious about what they'll have to say about the bombings and the Silence King. Do you think they know something we don't?"

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

Faizon Jr. shrugged, but there was a gleam of curiosity in his eyes. "Maybe. I hope they can help us figure out what's really going on. It feels like we've only scratched the surface."

George Jr. leaned back, letting out a thoughtful hum. "Yeah, there's got to be more to this. And with everything that's happened—Mayor Tympano's murder, the attacks on the sound websites—it feels like things are escalating."

Gabriel nodded, a serious expression on his face. "It's like the whole world is being silenced, one beat at a time. We can't let that happen. Music and sound are what make Timpanopia and the surrounding countries so special."

Jeremiah, always the pragmatic one, chimed in. "We need to stay focused. We've faced BOMBarder, and we know there's a bigger threat out there. But we're not alone in this. If we can get the support of our neighbors, we might stand a chance."

Faizon Jr. looked at each of his friends in turn, feeling a surge of pride. They had all grown so much through this journey, each of them bringing their unique strengths to the table. "We're in this together," he said firmly. "No matter what happens, we'll face it as a team."

George Jr. grinned, giving Faizon Jr. a friendly nudge. "And with our bellies, we've got some serious firepower."

The group laughed, the tension easing slightly as they enjoyed the camaraderie. The rhythmic bumps of the road and the soft hum of the van's engine seemed to sync with their thoughts, creating a harmony that felt reassuring.

As the van continued its journey, the conversation shifted to lighter topics. They shared stories of their previous adventures, reminiscing about the funny and unexpected moments that had brought them closer together. George Jr. recounted the time he and Jeremiah had tried to outdo each other in a belly drum roll competition, resulting in a hilarious spectacle that left them both breathless with laughter.

"Remember that time you almost tripped over the pedestal?" Jeremiah teased George Jr., eliciting a groan from his brother.

"Hey, that pedestal came out of nowhere!" George Jr. protested, though he couldn't help but laugh at the memory. "But yeah, it's been quite a journey. And we're just getting started."

## CHAPTER 13

Jeremiah leaned back, a contented smile on his face. "Yeah, we've had our ups and downs, but we've always come out stronger. This time will be no different."

As the van continued its journey towards Prismatica Square, the conversation took a more lighthearted turn, focusing on a topic that had always been a source of amusement and camaraderie among the boys: their big brown bellies.

"You know," Gabriel began, his voice taking on a contemplative tone, "I've always wondered what it is about big *brown* bellies that makes them so, I don't know, special. I mean, look at me—I'm White, but my belly's still got that drum-like quality."

George Jr. chuckled, patting his own belly affectionately. "It's not just about the color, Gabriel. It's about the sound and the feel. There's something uniquely comforting and powerful about a big belly. It's like our secret weapon. Most of us Timpanopians predominantly have brown skin to reminisce the warm tones of the timpani drums we use our bellies as. It's part of our culture—or so I think. But being any other skin color is perfectly fine as well."

Faizon Jr. nodded enthusiastically, his eyes lighting up. "Yeah! And it's not just about size either. It's about how you use it. I've seen you play some pretty impressive drum rolls on your belly, Gabriel. You could give any of us a run for our money."

Jeremiah leaned forward, his big brown belly slightly pressing against George Jr.'s seat. "It's true. The belly is like a canvas for sound. Each one has its own unique tone and resonance. That's why we make such a great team—every belly adds something different to the mix."

Gabriel smiled, a hint of pride in his expression. "I guess you're right. It's like we're all part of this big, harmonious orchestra. And our bellies are the instruments that bring us together."

Faizon Jr. couldn't help but laugh. "Who would have thought we'd be having a deep conversation about bellies on our way to save the world?"

George Jr. grinned, giving his own belly a playful pat. "Well, it's true. Our bellies have gotten us through some tough times. Remember when we used them to bounce back from Radames' shockwaves?"

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

Jeremiah joined in the laughter. "Yeah, and who could forget how we used them to intimidate BOMBarder? That was epic."

George Jr.'s eyes twinkled with amusement. "And let's not forget the time me and Jeremiah had a belly drum roll-off. That was one of the best workouts I've ever had!"

Faizon Jr. shook his head, a fond smile on his face. "It's funny how something as simple as a big belly can mean so much. It's part of who we are, part of our identity. And it connects us in ways we might not even realize."

George Jr. looked thoughtful for a moment. "You know, I think our bellies are a symbol of strength and unity. They remind us that we're in this together, no matter what."

Jeremiah nodded in agreement. "Absolutely. And when we drum on them, it's like we're making a statement. We're saying, 'We're here, and we're not backing down.'"

The van hit a particularly bumpy patch of road, causing all of their bellies to jiggle slightly. This elicited another round of laughter from the group, easing any remaining tension.

Gabriel looked around at his friends, feeling a deep sense of camaraderie. "You guys are the best. I wouldn't trade our big-bellied adventures for anything."

Faizon Jr. grinned, reaching over to give Gabriel a friendly pat on his belly. "Right back at you, buddy. We're in this together, belly and all."

As they continued their journey, the boys shared more stories and jokes about their bellies, the conversation flowing easily and bringing them even closer together. The rhythmic hum of the van and the occasional bumps in the road seemed to match the beat of their hearts, creating a sense of harmony and unity that filled the air.

With their spirits high and their bond stronger than ever, they looked forward to whatever challenges awaited them in Prismatica Square, ready to face them with their unique blend of strength, humor, and of course, the power of their big brown bellies.

As the conversation continued, Faizon Sr. couldn't help but overhear the boys' animated discussion about their big bellies. With a warm smile, he decided to join in.

## CHAPTER 13

"You know," Faizon Sr. began, his deep voice resonating through the van, "there's a lot of history behind those big bellies of ours. It's not just about the size or the sound. It's about the legacy we're carrying forward."

The boys turned their attention to Faizon Sr., eager to hear what he had to say.

"Our ancestors," he continued, "used their bellies not just for drumming, but for communication and connection. They would gather around in circles, sharing stories, music, and laughter, just like we're doing now. It was a way to strengthen their bonds and face challenges together."

Faizon Jr. looked at his father with admiration. "So, our bellies are like a link to the past?"

"Exactly," Faizon Sr. nodded. "And every time we drum on them, we're honoring that tradition. We're reminding ourselves and each other that we're part of something bigger. Something that transcends time and space."

George Jr. leaned back, his eyes wide with wonder. "That's amazing. I never thought of it that way."

Jeremiah added, "So, it's like we're carrying the spirit of our ancestors with us, giving us strength and courage."

Faizon Sr. smiled proudly. "That's right. And it doesn't matter what color our bellies are, or how big or small they might be. What matters is the heart and the spirit behind them. That's what makes us strong."

Gabriel, feeling a deep sense of connection, patted his own belly. "I'm proud to be a part of this legacy."

The van fell into a comfortable silence for a moment, each person reflecting on the significance of their shared history and the journey ahead. The sense of unity and purpose was palpable.

As they approached Prismatica Square, the vibrant colors and bustling activity came into view. The square was filled with representatives from neighboring countries, their faces serious and focused. The gravity of the situation was evident, but the boys and Faizon Sr. felt ready, fortified by their bond and the strength of their shared heritage.

Faizon Sr. looked at the boys, his eyes filled with determination. "Remember, no matter what happens, we're in this together. We'll face whatever comes our way with the strength of our ancestors and the power of our big bellies."

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

The boys nodded in unison, their expressions mirroring his resolve. As they pulled into Prismatica Square, the sense of anticipation and readiness filled the air. They knew that whatever lay ahead, they would face it as a team, united by their shared history and the powerful bond of their big brown bellies.

Faizon Sr. stepped out of the van, taking a deep breath of the crisp morning air. He glanced up at the clear blue sky, feeling a momentary sense of peace before the day's challenges. His moment of reflection was interrupted by an energetic shout that drew his attention back to Beatweaver Haven.

"Guys! You made it!"

He turned just in time to see a teenage girl running towards them with a beaming smile. Riko, a vibrant and animated presence, was dressed in a leather jacket over a white t-shirt, with black headphones adorned with glowing green circles perched on her head. Her lively yellow eyes and brown hair, styled in a way that seemed straight out of an anime, added to her dynamic appearance.

"Riko!" Faizon Sr. exclaimed, his voice filled with warmth and recognition.

Without hesitation, Riko wrapped her arms around Faizon Sr.'s midsection, her small frame dwarfed by his large build. "Oh my God, your belly's so *big!*" she exclaimed, her voice bubbling with excitement.

Faizon Sr. chuckled, his deep laughter resonating through the air. "Well, it runs in the family," he said, patting his belly proudly.

Riko pulled back slightly, her hands still resting on Faizon Sr.'s stomach. "I've heard so much about you and your belly drumming skills. It's an honor to finally meet you in person!" She turned to the boys, her eyes widening with delight. "And you must be Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah! You all look just as impressive as him!"

George Jr. blushed slightly, scratching the back of his head. "Thanks, Riko. We heard you were the best guide around here."

Riko grinned, her enthusiasm contagious. "I try my best! It's great to see you all here. This is a big deal, and I'm glad we can all face it together."

Jeremiah, always curious, asked, "So, where do we go from here, Riko?"

Riko's eyes sparkled with excitement. "Follow me! I'll take you to the meeting spot. The representatives from Roundrhythmia, Prismatica, and Beatopia are already gathered there. We've got a lot to discuss and plan."

## CHAPTER 13

As they walked, Riko kept the conversation lively. "You know, when I first heard about the bombings, I couldn't believe it. It's like something out of a dystopian novel. But then I thought, if anyone can figure this out and bring peace back, it's you guys."

Faizon Jr. nodded, his expression serious. "We're determined to get to the bottom of this, Riko. We can't let whoever's behind this get away with it."

Riko glanced over at Faizon Sr., her eyes filled with admiration. "Your father has been a legend here. The stories of his belly drumming and the way he brings people together... it's inspiring."

Faizon Sr. gave a modest smile. "It's not just me, Riko. It's all of us, working together. And we couldn't do it without the support of friends like you."

Riko beamed. "Well, consider me your biggest supporter then! Now, let's get to the meeting spot. We have a lot to discuss and not a moment to lose."

They continued their journey through the vibrant streets of Prismatica Square, the sense of urgency palpable. As they neared their destination, the atmosphere grew more intense, with representatives from various regions gathered in serious discussion. Riko led them confidently, her presence a guiding light amidst the chaos.

"We're almost there," Riko said, pointing ahead. "Just through those doors, and we'll be right where we need to be."

The group exchanged determined glances, their resolve strengthened by the support and guidance of their new ally. They knew the path ahead would be challenging, but with unity and determination, they were ready to face whatever came their way.

They approached a tall, wide building that stood out against the skyline of Prismatica Square. Its architecture was imposing yet elegant, with glass panels reflecting the morning light. Riko led the way confidently, guiding them through the grand entrance and into the bustling hallways.

"We need to head upstairs to the meeting room," Riko explained, her voice echoing slightly in the high-ceilinged corridor. "It's just up these stairs."

They climbed the marble staircase, their footsteps resonating through the space. The walls were lined with portraits of past leaders and significant events in the history of Prismatica, adding a sense of gravity to their ascent. As they reached the top of the stairs, Riko led them down a hallway adorned with

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

intricate murals depicting the harmony between music and nature—a hallmark of Prismatica's cultural heritage.

Finally, they arrived at a set of double doors. Riko pushed them open, revealing a large meeting room. At a wide table facing them sat an official-looking woman with a stern expression. She had tan skin, red lips, and a double-bun hairstyle that gave her an air of authority. She was dressed in a black dress shirt, black jeans, and polished black boots, completing her professional appearance. Representatives from Roundrhythmia, Prismatica, Beatopia, and other neighboring countries were also gathered, their expressions reflecting the seriousness of the situation.

"This is Marie," Riko announced, her tone respectful.

Marie looked up from her documents, her gaze sharp and assessing. As her eyes landed on Faizon Sr., a slight smile curved her red lips. "Faizon Sr., you've certainly gotten a bit *bigger* since I last saw you," she remarked, her voice carrying a mix of amusement and nostalgia.

Faizon Sr. chuckled, patting his belly. "Time has a way of doing that, Marie. It's good to see you again."

Marie nodded, her expression softening slightly. "It's good to see you too, Faizon. I'm glad you could make it. We have much to discuss."

Riko led them to their seats, and they settled around the table, the atmosphere thick with anticipation. The room was filled with representatives from various regions, their faces reflecting a mix of concern and determination.

Marie gestured to the map spread out on the table. "We've gathered intelligence from Roundrhythmia, Beatopia, and other neighboring countries. The situation is dire, and we need to act swiftly."

Faizon Sr. leaned forward, his eyes scanning the map. "We've encountered BOMBarder and a shadowy figure who hinted at a larger plan. We need to uncover the mastermind behind these attacks and put an end to this threat."

Marie nodded in agreement. "That's precisely why we need your expertise and the unique talents of your team. Your belly drumming skills and the power they hold could be pivotal in our efforts."

Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah exchanged determined glances, their resolve unwavering. They knew the path ahead would be challenging, but they were ready to face whatever obstacles came their way.

## CHAPTER 13

Marie continued, "We've arranged for a strategy session to start immediately. We'll need to coordinate our efforts and pool our resources to ensure the safety of Timpanopia and all neighboring regions."

Riko added, "We'll also need to stay vigilant for any further attacks. Our intelligence suggests that the enemy might strike again soon."

Faizon Sr. turned to his team, his voice filled with determination. "Let's get to work. We have a lot to do, and we can't afford to waste any time."

Marie handed out packets of information, detailing the latest intelligence reports and strategic plans. Faizon Sr. and his team absorbed the data, their minds racing to piece together the clues that could lead them to the mastermind behind the attacks.

"We've pinpointed several potential locations where the enemy might be hiding," Marie explained, pointing to various spots on the map. "These areas have shown unusual activity recently, and we need to investigate them thoroughly."

Faizon Sr. nodded, tracing a path on the map with his finger. "We'll start here," he said, tapping a location near the border of Timpanopia. "This area has a history of being a hideout for shady characters. It's a good place to begin our search."

George Jr. leaned in, his curiosity piqued. "Do we have any intel on who this mastermind might be?"

Marie sighed, her expression grim. "Not much, unfortunately. The shadowy figure you encountered is our best lead so far. We believe he's a high-ranking member of the enemy's organization, possibly even the one giving the orders."

Riko chimed in, "We also have to be prepared for the possibility that there are more BOMBarders out there. If the enemy has the technology to bring virtual entities into the physical world, we could be facing an army."

The room fell silent as the weight of her words sank in. Faizon Jr. broke the silence, his voice steady. "We'll be ready. We can't let fear stop us from protecting our home."

Marie gave him an appreciative nod. "That's the spirit. Now, let's go over our plan of action."

For the next few hours, they discussed their strategy in detail, each member contributing their expertise. They planned their movements, coordinated with

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

allies, and devised contingency plans for various scenarios. The atmosphere was tense but focused, everyone driven by a shared sense of purpose.

Finally, Marie stood up, signaling the end of the meeting. "We have our plan," she said. "Now it's time to execute it. Be vigilant, stay connected, and trust in each other. We can do this."

As they prepared to leave, Riko approached Faizon Sr. "I'll be in touch with you constantly," she said, her tone serious. "We need to stay ahead of the enemy."

Faizon Sr. smiled, clapping a hand on her shoulder. "We'll do our part, Riko. Let's keep in touch and coordinate our efforts."

The team left the meeting room, their resolve stronger than ever. The stakes were high, but they knew they had the skills and determination to succeed. They made their way back to the van, the weight of their mission heavy on their shoulders.

As they drove through the streets of Prismatica Square, the vibrant city seemed to pulse with energy. People went about their daily lives, unaware of the danger looming over them. Faizon Sr. glanced at his team, a mixture of pride and concern in his eyes.

"We're doing this for them," he said, his voice firm. "For everyone who calls Timpanopia and its neighboring regions home. We won't let them down."

Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah nodded in agreement, their expressions resolute. They knew the road ahead would be fraught with challenges, but they were ready to face them head-on.

Arriving back at the warehouse, they found Glenn waiting for them. His presence was a comforting reminder of their support network. "How did it go?" he asked, a hint of worry in his voice.

"We have a plan," Faizon Sr. replied. "It's going to be tough, but we know what we need to do."

Glenn nodded, his face serious. "Good. Just remember, you're not alone in this. We all have your backs."

Faizon Sr. smiled, feeling a surge of gratitude. "Thanks, Glenn. That means a lot."

As they filed into the warehouse, the familiar sounds of belly drumming and camaraderie filled the air. Despite the gravity of their mission, they found

## CHAPTER 13

solace in each other's company and the rhythmic beats that bound them together.

Faizon Sr. gathered his team around him. "Tomorrow, we begin our search. Rest up tonight and be ready for anything. We have a lot of ground to cover and a lot of questions to answer."

The team dispersed to prepare for the next day, their minds already focused on the task ahead. They knew that the road to uncovering the mastermind behind the bombings would be long and perilous, but they were ready to face whatever challenges came their way. With their skills, determination, and the support of their allies, they would protect Timpanopia and bring peace back to their beloved home.

As the team dispersed, their minds preoccupied with the challenges that lay ahead, the door to the warehouse creaked open. Charles, one of the members of the Obese Orchestra, stepped inside. His presence immediately commanded attention, his big brown belly prominent as ever, a serious expression etched on his face.

"Charles!" Faizon Sr. exclaimed, moving forward to greet his old friend. "What brings you here?"

Charles took a deep breath, his shoulders sagging slightly under the weight of whatever news he was carrying. "I heard about the meeting in Prismatica Square," he said, his voice steady but tinged with concern. "I wanted to see how you all were holding up. And, I have some news."

The room fell silent as everyone turned to face Charles, anticipation hanging in the air. Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah gathered around, their earlier preparations momentarily forgotten.

"What's the news?" Faizon Sr. asked, his brow furrowing with worry.

Charles glanced around the room, making sure he had everyone's attention. "There's been another incident," he began. "A small explosion at the border of Timpanopia and Roundrhythmia. No casualties, thank goodness, but it's clear the enemy is trying to send a message."

The weight of his words settled over the group, the gravity of the situation becoming even more apparent. "Do we know who's behind it?" Faizon Sr. asked, his voice tense.

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

Charles shook his head. "Not yet. But we have some leads. There have been sightings of strange figures moving in and out of the area, always just out of reach. It's like they're toying with us."

Faizon Jr. clenched his fists, his youthful face set with determination. "We can't let them get away with this," he said. "We have to find them and stop them."

"Agreed," George Jr. added, his voice firm. "But we need a solid plan. Rushing in without knowing what we're up against could be disastrous."

Charles nodded in agreement. "That's why I'm here. I want to help. The Obese Orchestra is at your disposal, Faizon. Whatever you need, we're ready."

Faizon Sr. felt a surge of gratitude. "Thank you, Charles. Your support means a lot. We could use all the help we can get."

"What's the next move, Dad?" Faizon Jr. asked, looking up at his father with wide, expectant eyes.

"We stick to our plan," Faizon Sr. replied. "But now, we have more resources at our disposal. Charles, I want you and the Obese Orchestra to patrol the border areas. Keep an eye out for any suspicious activity and report back immediately."

Charles nodded, his expression resolute. "Consider it done."

Faizon Sr. turned to the rest of the team. "In the meantime, we'll continue our investigation in Prismatica Square and follow up on any leads. We need to stay one step ahead of the enemy."

The group nodded in agreement, their determination unwavering. As they began to discuss the finer details of their plan, the warehouse buzzed with a renewed sense of purpose. The rhythmic beats of their belly drums provided a steady backdrop, a reminder of the unity and strength that bound them together.

As the meeting drew to a close, Charles stepped forward once more. "Before I go, there's something else," he said, reaching into his pocket. He pulled out a small, folded piece of paper and handed it to Faizon Sr. "I found this near the site of the explosion. It might be a clue."

Faizon Sr. unfolded the paper, his eyes scanning the hastily scribbled message. "It's a map," he said, his voice tinged with excitement. "And it looks like it leads to a location deep within the Enigma Evergreen."

## CHAPTER 13

The room buzzed with anticipation as everyone crowded around to get a look. "This could be it," Gabriel said, his voice filled with hope. "This could lead us to the mastermind."

Faizon Sr. nodded, his mind racing with possibilities. "We'll follow this lead," he said. "First thing tomorrow, we head to Enigma Evergreen. But for now, let's get some rest. We have a long journey ahead."

The group dispersed, their spirits lifted by the discovery of the map. As they prepared for the night, the rhythmic beats of their belly drums echoed through the warehouse, a symbol of their unwavering resolve and unity. Together, they would face whatever challenges came their way and protect their home from the looming threat.

As the team was about to disband for the night, Charles suddenly announced, "Hey, wait, I want to show you something."

Everyone turned to face him, curiosity piqued. Charles had a twinkle in his eye, a hint of excitement that was contagious. "I saw Glenn earlier and talked to him. We decided it was time to register for the AnyRoll ability. You know, the ability to let anyone's big brown belly drum roll affect your belly upon hearing. So we registered."

Faizon Sr. raised an eyebrow, disbelief written all over his face. "You're joking."

"Try us," said Glenn, who had appeared beside Charles, stepping into the warehouse with a confident stride. With that, they both walked to the center of the room and stood back-to-back, their faces looking in the direction their bodies were facing, and their big brown bellies matching in size and color, both hidden under black shirts.

The group gathered around, intrigued by what was about to unfold. Gilbert got his gong-like shield ready, the polished surface gleaming under the warehouse lights. Faizon Jr. exchanged a knowing glance with George Jr., and they both nodded. Faizon Jr. lay on the floor, his big brown belly exposed and ready. George Jr. knelt beside him, taking a deep breath before starting to play a roll on Faizon Jr.'s belly drum in a low F with his hands.

The moment George Jr.'s hands made contact with Faizon Jr.'s belly, a soft, resonant rumble filled the air. The sound was deep and powerful, a testament to the unique timbre of their belly drums. As the roll continued, Glenn and

## COOPERATIVE COUNTRY COLLABORATION

Charles' bellies began to grow gradually and simultaneously, responding to the rhythm as if an invisible force was connecting them.

Faizon Sr. and the others watched in awe as Glenn and Charles' bellies expanded in perfect harmony with the drum roll. Their movements were synchronized, each turning their head slowly to face the others, their expressions a mirror image of each other. The scene was mesmerizing, a testament to the power of the AnyRoll ability.

Gilbert began to play his shield, the gong-like sounds adding a layer of complexity to the rhythmic symphony. For a full minute, the warehouse was filled with the harmonious blend of belly drum and shield, the vibrations resonating through the space and into the hearts of everyone present. George Jr. kept his focus, his hands moving with precision and care, until finally, he stopped the roll with the same hand movement he had used that morning.

The room fell silent, the echoes of the performance lingering in the air. Glenn and Charles' bellies stopped growing, settling back into their natural rhythm. They both turned to face the group, smiles spreading across their faces.

"Impressive," Faizon Sr. said, breaking the silence. "I can see the AnyRoll ability is quite something."

Glenn nodded, his eyes sparkling with pride. "It's a game-changer, for sure. And it's just the beginning of what we can achieve together."

Charles added, "With this ability, we can synchronize our efforts like never before. It's going to be a crucial advantage in the battles to come."

The team nodded in agreement, their spirits lifted by the demonstration. As they prepared to rest for the night, the sense of camaraderie and determination was stronger than ever. Together, they would harness their unique abilities and face the challenges ahead with unwavering resolve.

# 14

## The Search

The dawn broke gently over Timpanopia, casting a warm golden hue across the landscape. The air was filled with the soft chirping of morning birds and the distant hum of the bustling town coming to life. In the midst of this serene morning, Faizon Sr. and his team prepared for the next phase of their mission: the search for the perpetrators behind the bombings.

Faizon Sr., Gilbert, Guy Biggums, Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah gathered at the warehouse, their resolve hardened by the events of the previous days. They knew that their journey would not be easy, but they were determined to uncover the truth and protect their beloved Timpanopia.

"Alright," Faizon Sr. began, his voice steady and commanding. "We've got a lead. The information we received from the neighboring countries suggests that the perpetrators might be hiding in the outskirts of Beatweaver Haven. It's a dangerous area, filled with unpredictable terrain and potential traps. We need to be prepared for anything."

George Jr. nodded, his eyes reflecting a mixture of determination and excitement. "I'm ready, Dad. Whatever it takes, we'll find them."

Faizon Sr. smiled at his son's enthusiasm, but his expression quickly turned serious. "This isn't a game, son. We need to stay vigilant and work together. We'll split into two groups. George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah, you'll come with me. Gilbert, Guy Biggums, and Faizon Jr., you'll take the eastern route. We'll cover more ground this way."

As they finalized their preparations, the group exchanged supportive glances, knowing that the bond they shared would be their greatest strength in

## THE SEARCH

the trials ahead. They gathered their supplies, checked their maps, and set out on their journey.

The team moved with purpose, their footsteps echoing the rhythm of their hearts. The streets of Timpanopia gave way to winding paths and dense forests as they ventured further from the town. The beauty of the landscape was marred by the knowledge of the danger that lurked ahead, but their resolve remained unshaken.

After hours of trekking through the rugged terrain, the two groups found themselves deep in the heart of Beatweaver Haven. The area was eerily quiet, the usual sounds of nature replaced by an unsettling stillness. Faizon Sr. signaled for his group to stop, his keen eyes scanning the surroundings for any signs of movement.

"Stay alert," he whispered. "We're getting close."

Suddenly, the silence was broken by a rustling sound from the bushes nearby. The group tensed, readying themselves for whatever might emerge. To their surprise, a small figure stepped out from the undergrowth—a young girl with wide, fearful eyes. She looked no older than twelve, her clothes tattered and her face smudged with dirt.

"Please, don't hurt me," she pleaded, her voice trembling. "I was just trying to find food."

Faizon Sr. approached her slowly, his expression softening. "We're not here to hurt you. What's your name?"

"Anya," she replied, her eyes darting nervously between the group members.

"Anya, we're looking for some people who might be hiding in this area. Have you seen anyone suspicious?"

The girl hesitated, glancing over her shoulder as if expecting someone to appear. "There are men...they came a few days ago. They have a camp not far from here. They talk about big plans, and I heard them mention Timpanopia."

Faizon Sr.'s heart quickened. "Can you take us there?"

Anya nodded, her fear giving way to a sense of purpose. "Yes, but you have to be careful. They're dangerous."

"We'll be careful," Faizon Sr. assured her. He turned to his group, his eyes filled with determination. "Let's move."

## CHAPTER 14

Following Anya's lead, the group made their way through the dense forest, every step bringing them closer to their goal. As they approached the camp, the sounds of hushed voices and clinking metal reached their ears. Faizon Sr. signaled for the group to spread out, positioning themselves for a strategic approach.

The camp was crude but well-hidden, nestled in a small clearing surrounded by thick foliage. Several men were gathered around a makeshift table, their expressions serious as they discussed their plans. Faizon Sr. recognized one of them from the descriptions provided by the neighboring countries—a man with a scar running down his left cheek, known as Martez Brooks.

Faizon Sr. took a deep breath, steeling himself for what was to come. "This is it," he whispered to his group. "Remember, we're here to gather information and bring them to justice. Stay focused and follow my lead."

With a silent nod, the group moved into position, ready to confront the perpetrators and end the threat to Timpanopia once and for all. The search had led them to this critical moment, and they were prepared to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

The battle for the safety of Timpanopia was about to begin.

As Faizon Sr. and his group positioned themselves around the perimeter of the enemy camp, they could feel the tension in the air. The men in the camp were completely unaware of the approaching threat, their focus solely on their plans for destruction. Faizon Sr. exchanged a determined look with Gilbert and Faizon Jr., signaling that it was time to make their move.

With a deep breath, Faizon Sr. stepped out from the cover of the trees, his voice echoing through the clearing. "Martez Brooks! We know what you're planning. It's over."

The men around the table jumped to their feet, weapons drawn, their eyes wide with surprise. Martez Brooks, a tall, imposing figure with a scar running down his left cheek, stepped forward, a sneer twisting his lips. "Well, well, if it isn't the famous Faizon Sr. and his merry band of drummers. I was wondering when you'd show up."

"Radames might have trusted you, but we're here to stop you," Faizon Sr. declared, his voice unwavering. "You won't get away with this."

## THE SEARCH

Martez laughed, a cold, mirthless sound that sent a chill down everyone's spine. "You think you can stop us? You're just a bunch of drummers with big bellies. This isn't a concert, Faizon. This is war."

Faizon Jr., standing beside his father, clenched his fists, his eyes burning with determination. "We're more than just drummers. We're protectors of Timpanopia, and we won't let you destroy our home."

"Big words for a little boy," Martez mocked, his eyes narrowing. "Let's see if you can back them up."

With a signal from Martez, his men charged forward, weapons raised. Faizon Sr. and his group braced themselves, ready to fight. The clearing erupted into chaos as the two sides clashed, the sound of metal clanging against metal and the rhythmic pounding of drums filling the air.

Faizon Sr. swung his drum mallets with precision, deflecting blows and striking back with force. Gilbert and Guy Biggums fought beside him, their strength and skill evident in every move. Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah moved with agility and coordination, their practice in belly drumming translating into an unexpected advantage in the fight.

In the midst of the battle, Faizon Sr. spotted Anya hiding behind a tree, her eyes wide with fear. "Anya, stay back!" he shouted, his voice cutting through the noise. "We'll protect you."

As the fight raged on, it became clear that the group was outnumbered but not outmatched. Their unity and determination gave them an edge, allowing them to hold their ground against Martez's men. Faizon Sr. knew that they couldn't afford to lose this battle. The safety of Timpanopia depended on their victory.

Suddenly, a loud, resonant drumroll filled the air, cutting through the chaos like a clarion call. Everyone turned to see Faizon Jr. standing atop a large rock, his hands moving rapidly over his belly in a powerful rhythm. The sound seemed to invigorate his allies, giving them renewed strength and resolve.

Martez's eyes widened in shock as he realized the impact of the belly drumroll. "What...what is this?"

"It's the power of Timpanopia," Faizon Sr. replied, a fierce smile on his face. "And it's more than enough to defeat you."

## CHAPTER 14

With renewed vigor, the group pressed forward, their movements synchronized with Faizon Jr.'s drumming. The tide of the battle shifted in their favor, Martez's men falling back under the relentless onslaught. Martez himself was forced to retreat, his confidence shattered.

Seeing their leader in retreat, the remaining men began to falter, their resolve crumbling. Faizon Sr. seized the moment, rallying his team for one final push. "Now! Give it everything you've got!"

With a collective roar, the group surged forward, overwhelming the remaining enemies and forcing them to surrender. Martez, realizing that he had been defeated, raised his hands in surrender, a look of bitter resignation on his face.

"It's over, Martez," Faizon Sr. said, stepping forward to confront him. "You're coming with us. You'll answer for your crimes."

Martez glared at him but knew he had no choice. "This isn't the end, Faizon. There are others...you'll never stop all of us."

"We'll see about that," Faizon Sr. replied, his eyes steely with determination. "But for now, you're going to face justice."

With the battle won, Faizon Sr. and his group began to secure the camp, ensuring that Martez and his men were properly restrained. As they worked, Anya emerged from her hiding place, her expression a mix of relief and gratitude.

"Thank you," she said softly. "You saved us all."

Faizon Sr. smiled warmly at her. "It's not over yet, Anya. But we took a big step today. And with people like you helping us, I know we can do it."

As the sun began to set, casting long shadows over the clearing, Faizon Sr. and his team prepared to head back to Timpanopia, their spirits high despite the challenges that still lay ahead. They had won a crucial battle, but the war was far from over. With Martez in custody, they hoped to uncover more information about the threat they faced and find a way to ensure the safety of their beloved home.



## THE SEARCH

The journey back to Timpanopia was filled with a sense of triumph and urgency. Faizon Sr. led the way, his steps steady and resolute. Martez and his captured men were securely bound and marched under the watchful eyes of Gilbert and Guy Biggums. Faizon Jr., George Jr., Gabriel, and Jeremiah walked alongside Anya, their conversations filled with hope and determination.

As they approached the outskirts of Timpanopia, the familiar sounds of the town greeted them. The rhythmic beats of belly drumming and the cheerful chatter of its residents reminded them of what they were fighting for. The group made their way to the center of town, where a crowd had gathered, anxiously awaiting news of their mission.

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, addressing the crowd with a voice that carried the weight of their victory. "People of Timpanopia, we have captured one of the masterminds behind the recent bombings. Martez Brooks and his men are in our custody. But this is only the beginning. We must remain vigilant and united as we continue to protect our home."

The crowd erupted into cheers, their relief and gratitude palpable. Faizon Sr. turned to his team, his heart swelling with pride. "We did it," he said softly. "But there's still work to be done."

As the crowd began to disperse, Faizon Sr. led his team to the town hall, where they would question Martez and gather more information about the threat they faced. The room was dimly lit, the atmosphere tense as they prepared to confront their captive.

Martez sat in a chair, his hands bound behind his back, a defiant look in his eyes. Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his expression stern. "Martez, we need answers. Who else is involved in this plot? What are your plans?"

Martez sneered, his eyes glinting with malice. "You think I'll just tell you everything? You're fools if you believe that."

"We'll find out one way or another," Faizon Sr. replied, his voice unwavering. "But it would be easier if you cooperate. Think about your men. Think about your own future."

For a moment, Martez's defiance wavered, a flicker of uncertainty crossing his face. But he quickly masked it with a sneer. "You're wasting your time."

## CHAPTER 14

"We'll see about that," Faizon Sr. said, turning to Gilbert and Guy Biggums. "Keep him secure. We need to strategize our next move."

As they left the room, Faizon Jr. approached his father, his eyes filled with determination. "Dad, what are we going to do now?"

Faizon Sr. placed a reassuring hand on his son's shoulder. "We keep searching for answers. We won't rest until we know the full extent of their plans. And we'll do whatever it takes to protect Timpanopia."

The group gathered in a small conference room, their faces reflecting the gravity of the situation. Faizon Sr. spread out a map of the region, pointing to various locations marked with red circles. "These are the areas we believe could be potential hideouts or bases for the enemy. We'll need to investigate each one thoroughly."

George Jr. leaned forward, his eyes scanning the map. "What about our allies? Can we count on them for support?"

"We'll need to reach out to them," Faizon Sr. agreed. "Riko, Marie, and the others have been invaluable so far. We'll need their help as we continue this fight."

The conversation continued late into the night, plans forming and strategies being discussed. The weight of their mission was heavy, but the bond between them was stronger than ever. They knew that together, they could overcome any obstacle.

As the first light of dawn began to filter through the windows, Faizon Sr. stood and addressed his team. "Rest up, everyone. Tomorrow, we continue our search. We won't stop until Timpanopia is safe."

With renewed determination, the team disbanded for the night, each member finding solace in the knowledge that they were not alone in this fight. The road ahead was long and fraught with danger, but they were ready to face it together.



## THE SEARCH

The next morning, the team gathered at Faizon's warehouse to finalize their plans. The air was filled with a sense of urgency and purpose as they prepared for the next phase of their mission. Faizon Sr. stood at the center of the room, his eyes scanning the faces of his team, each one reflecting the same resolve he felt within himself.

"Alright, everyone," he began, his voice steady and commanding. "Today, we reach out to our allies. Riko, Marie, and the others have been crucial in our fight so far. We'll need their continued support as we move forward."

George Jr. nodded, his expression serious. "I'll handle the communication with Riko. She's always been quick to respond."

"I'll reach out to Marie," Faizon Sr. said. "Her strategic mind will be invaluable in planning our next moves."

As the team split up to make their calls, Faizon Sr. took a moment to reflect on the journey they had undertaken. From the mysterious bombings to the capture of Martez Brooks, they had faced numerous challenges and had emerged stronger for it. But he knew that their mission was far from over. The threat to Timpanopia loomed large, and they needed to be prepared for whatever lay ahead.

Once the calls were made and plans set, the team reconvened, their faces reflecting a mix of determination and anticipation. "Riko and Marie are on board," George Jr. reported. "They're ready to assist us in any way they can."

"Good," Faizon Sr. said, nodding. "We'll need all the help we can get. Our next step is to investigate the areas marked on the map. We'll split into teams to cover more ground."

As they discussed the specifics of their plan, the door to the warehouse swung open, and a familiar figure stepped inside. It was Glenn, his expression serious yet hopeful. "I heard about Martez. You did good."

Faizon Sr. smiled, a sense of camaraderie filling the room. "Thanks, Glenn. We couldn't have done it without everyone's support."

Glenn nodded, his gaze shifting to the map on the table. "What's the plan now?"

"We're reaching out to our allies and investigating potential enemy hideouts," Faizon Sr. explained. "We need to uncover their plans and stop them before they can strike again."

## CHAPTER 14

"Count me in," Glenn said firmly. "Timpanopia is my home too. I'll do whatever it takes to protect it."

With Glenn's added support, the team felt an even stronger sense of unity and purpose. They knew that the road ahead would be challenging, but with their combined strength and determination, they were ready to face it head-on.

As they made their final preparations, Faizon Sr. looked around at his team, his heart swelling with pride and gratitude. "We've come a long way," he said softly. "And we'll go even further. Together, we'll ensure the safety of Timpanopia."

With those words, the team set out, their spirits high and their resolve unbreakable. The search for answers continued, and with each step, they moved closer to uncovering the truth and protecting their beloved home.

The team walked back to the tall, wide building where they had previously met with Riko and Marie. As they approached, George Jr. led the way, now clad in a white tank top that accentuated his muscular frame. With each ponderous step he took, he would slap his stomach with alternating hands, producing a rhythm that sounded like an alternating timpani drum. The rhythmic beat echoed through the hallways, adding a unique cadence to their march.

Faizon Sr. chuckled softly, shaking his head at the sight. "George Jr., you're going to make us all want to dance before we get there."

George Jr. grinned, his eyes twinkling with mischief. "Just keeping the spirits up, Mr. Faizon. Besides, a little rhythm never hurt anyone."

As they entered the building, the familiar scent of polished wood and the faint hum of conversations reached their ears. They climbed the stairs, the sound of George Jr.'s belly drum roll providing an uplifting backdrop to their ascent. When they reached the top, Riko was waiting for them, her ever-present energy and enthusiasm lighting up the room.

"Guys! You made it!" she exclaimed, bouncing on the balls of her feet. Her yellow eyes sparkled with excitement, and the green circles on her black headphones glowed brightly. "Marie is already inside, waiting for us. Come on in!"

They followed Riko into the meeting room, where the official-looking woman sat at the wide table, her stern expression softened slightly as she greeted them.

## THE SEARCH

Marie looked up from a stack of papers and offered a small smile. "Faizon Sr., it seems you've brought quite the entourage."

Faizon Sr. returned the smile, nodding in acknowledgment. "Marie, always a pleasure. And yes, we have quite the team here."

As they settled into their seats around the table, Marie's gaze shifted to George Jr., her eyes widening slightly as she took in his appearance. "George Jr., I see you're making quite an impression."

George Jr. shrugged, his hands still rhythmically patting his belly. "Just keeping the rhythm alive, Marie. You know how it is."

Marie shook her head, a faint smile tugging at her lips. "Always the entertainer."

Riko clapped her hands, drawing everyone's attention. "Alright, let's get down to business. We need to strategize our next moves. The enemy won't wait, and neither should we."

Faizon Sr. leaned forward, his expression serious. "We've identified several potential hideouts. We need to investigate each one thoroughly. Riko, Marie, do you have any updates on your end?"

Marie nodded, tapping a few keys on her laptop. "We've been monitoring communications and movements. It seems like there's increased activity in the eastern sector. We suspect that might be a key location."

Riko added, "I've also received some intel from Beatopia. They've noticed unusual patterns near the border. We should definitely check it out."

Faizon Jr., sitting beside his father, chimed in, "We should split into teams to cover more ground. It'll be more efficient that way."

"Agreed," Faizon Sr. said. "We'll form two groups. One will head to the eastern sector, and the other will investigate the Beatopia border."

George Jr. slapped his belly one final time, signaling the end of his impromptu drum session. "Count me in for the eastern sector. I'll keep the rhythm going."

Jeremiah, sitting quietly beside his brother, spoke up. "I'll go with you, George Jr. We make a good team."

Marie nodded in approval. "I'll lead the team to Beatopia. Faizon Sr., you should stay here and coordinate our efforts. We need someone to oversee everything."

## CHAPTER 14

Faizon Sr. agreed, understanding the importance of a central command. "Alright, let's move out. Stay in constant communication and report back any findings immediately. Our priority is to gather as much information as possible."

As the teams prepared to set out, Riko bounced over to Faizon Sr. "Don't worry, we'll get to the bottom of this. We've got a great team."

Faizon Sr. smiled, his confidence bolstered by the determination of his allies. "I know we will, Riko. Let's do this."

As the teams departed from the building, Faizon Sr. stood by the entrance, watching his allies disappear into the horizon. He knew the coming days would be challenging, but their determination was unwavering. With a deep breath, he turned back inside, ready to coordinate their efforts.

Meanwhile, George Jr., Jeremiah, and their team made their way to the eastern sector. The rhythmic beats of George Jr.'s belly provided a steady backdrop to their journey, a comforting reminder of their unity. George Jr. glanced over at Jeremiah, who seemed deep in thought.

"Hey, Jeremiah, what's on your mind?" George Jr. asked, giving his belly an extra thump for emphasis.

Jeremiah looked up, his dark eyes meeting his brother's. "I was just thinking about all we've been through. It feels like we're on the brink of something big, something that could change everything."

George Jr. nodded, understanding the weight of Jeremiah's words. "Yeah, it's a lot to take in. But we've got each other, and that makes all the difference."

The team continued their trek, the landscape gradually shifting from urban sprawl to dense forest. The eastern sector was known for its rugged terrain and hidden pathways, making it a perfect hideout for those wishing to avoid detection.

Back at the command center, Faizon Sr. busied himself with the myriad of communication devices and maps spread across the large table. He coordinated with Marie's team, who were heading towards the Beatopia border, ensuring both groups were in constant contact.

Marie's team moved swiftly, their path taking them through bustling markets and quiet villages. Riko led the way, her headphones glowing brightly as she

## THE SEARCH

scanned their surroundings. The villagers seemed uneasy, their eyes darting towards the team with a mix of curiosity and fear.

"Something's not right here," Marie observed, her gaze sharp. "The villagers are on edge."

Riko nodded, her usually cheerful demeanor tempered by caution. "Yeah, it's like they know something we don't. We should tread carefully."

As they approached the border, the landscape became more desolate, the air thick with tension. The team pressed on, determined to uncover the source of the unusual activity.

Back in the eastern sector, George Jr.'s team reached a clearing where the forest gave way to a hidden enclave. The air was heavy with the scent of pine and earth, the only sounds being the rustling of leaves and the occasional chirp of a bird.

"Looks like we're getting close," George Jr. said, his voice low. "Everyone stay alert."

They moved cautiously, their eyes scanning the surroundings for any signs of movement. Suddenly, a rustle in the bushes made them freeze. George Jr. held up a hand, signaling the team to stop.

From the underbrush emerged a figure, tall and imposing, with a military bearing. His face was partially obscured by a hood, but the determined glint in his eyes was unmistakable. He stepped forward, revealing a large brown belly that matched those of the team members.

"Who are you?" George Jr. demanded, his hands instinctively moving to his own belly.

The figure remained silent, his gaze unwavering. Then, in a low, gravelly voice, he spoke. "I'm here to help. I know what you're looking for."

George Jr. exchanged a wary glance with Jeremiah. "And what exactly do you know?"

The figure pulled back his hood, revealing a face lined with age and experience. "I know about the bombings. I know who's behind them. And I know how to stop them."

Jeremiah stepped forward, his eyes narrowing. "Why should we trust you?"

## CHAPTER 14

The man met Jeremiah's gaze, his expression resolute. "Because I used to be one of them. I know their plans, their strategies. And I want to make things right."

Back at the command center, Faizon Sr. received a message from George Jr. detailing the encounter. He listened intently, weighing the information carefully.

"Proceed with caution," Faizon Sr. instructed. "Gather as much intel as you can, but don't take unnecessary risks."

George Jr. acknowledged the directive, turning back to the man. "Alright, we'll listen. But if you try anything, you'll regret it."

The man nodded, a solemn look on his face. "Understood. Let's move. Time is running out."

As George Jr.'s team delved deeper into the forest, Marie's team reached a secluded outpost near the Beatopia border. The air was thick with anticipation, every step feeling like it could trigger something monumental.

Marie turned to Riko, her expression serious. "Stay sharp. We're not alone out here."

Riko nodded, her headphones glowing brighter in the dim light. "I've got your back, Marie. Let's find out what's going on."

With determination in their hearts and the weight of their mission pressing down on them, both teams pressed forward, each step bringing them closer to unraveling the mysteries that threatened their world.



After a grueling day of investigations, both teams finally reconvened at Faizon's warehouse. As they gathered, George Jr. stood close to Faizon Jr., his hands skillfully playing a timpani drum roll on Faizon Jr.'s big brown belly, providing a steady, rhythmic backdrop to their intense discussion.

The rhythmic beats of the drum roll created a hypnotic atmosphere, allowing everyone to focus on the information at hand. The room was filled with a sense

## THE SEARCH

of urgency and anticipation, the beats mirroring the steady determination of their mission.

Faizon Sr. addressed the group first, his voice authoritative yet calm. "Alright, everyone, let's share what we've learned. George Jr., Jeremiah, you had quite the encounter in the eastern sector. Tell us about this man you met."

Jeremiah nodded, his expression serious. "We met a former insider, someone who used to work with the people behind the bombings. He said he knows their plans and strategies. His information seems credible, and he wants to help us stop them."

The steady drum roll continued as Faizon Sr. absorbed this information. "Did he give any specifics about their plans?"

George Jr. interjected, his hands never missing a beat on Faizon Jr.'s belly. "He mentioned that the bombings are just the beginning. They're planning something much bigger, something that could destabilize the entire region."

Marie, who had been quietly listening, spoke up. "We encountered similar tension near the Beatopia border. The villagers were uneasy, almost like they were expecting something bad to happen. It's clear that whatever is being planned, it's widespread."

Riko, her headphones glowing softly, added, "We need to act fast. The villagers know something we don't, and we need to find out what it is before it's too late."

Faizon Jr. glanced down at George Jr., who was still engrossed in the rhythmic drumming. "Hey, George Jr., you think our new ally can help us figure out the next steps?"

George Jr. nodded, finally ceasing his drum roll with a final, resonant beat. "Yeah, I think he can. He seemed genuine about wanting to make things right. We should bring him in and get all the details he has."

Faizon Sr. looked around the room, his eyes meeting each of his friends and family members. "Alright, we'll bring him in and hear what he has to say. But we need to stay vigilant. If what he's saying is true, we're up against something much bigger than we initially thought."

The atmosphere in the room grew tense as the gravity of their situation sank in. The rhythmic drumming had ceased, leaving an almost palpable silence that underscored the seriousness of their mission.

## CHAPTER 14

"Let's prepare for his arrival," Faizon Sr. continued. "We'll need to question him thoroughly and cross-check his information with what we've already gathered. Everyone, stay on high alert."

As the group began to make preparations, George Jr. and Faizon Jr. exchanged a glance. There was a shared understanding between them, a recognition of the challenges ahead. Despite the seriousness of the situation, there was also a sense of unity and purpose that bolstered their resolve.

The rhythmic drumming might have ceased for now, but its steady beat continued to echo in their hearts, reminding them of the strength they derived from each other and their shared mission. They were ready to face whatever lay ahead, united in their determination to protect their home and bring peace back to Timpanopia.

# 15

## The Insider's Revelation

**T**he next morning, the team reconvened at Faizon's warehouse, ready to meet the insider Jeremiah and George Jr. had encountered. The atmosphere was tense yet filled with a renewed sense of purpose. George Jr., now wearing a white tank top, stood close to Faizon Jr. As they waited, George Jr. played a timpani drum roll on Faizon Jr.'s big brown belly, his hands moving with practiced ease and rhythm, filling the air with a steady, calming beat.

Jeremiah, who had fetched the insider, walked in with a serious-looking man. The man had a rugged appearance, with a few days' stubble and eyes that spoke of hardships endured. He was introduced simply as "Smith."

Smith nodded, his eyes scanning the room with a mixture of wariness and determination. "I used to be part of their operations, but I left when I realized the extent of their plans. They're not just targeting Timpanopia; they're looking to destabilize the entire region."

George Jr.'s drum roll grew more intense, punctuating the gravity of Smith's words. Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his expression hard. "Tell us everything you know. We need to understand their plans and how we can stop them."

Smith took a deep breath, glancing briefly at the rhythmic drumming that seemed to resonate with his own heartbeat. "They have a network spread across multiple locations, each one responsible for different aspects of their plan. The bombings were meant to create chaos and fear, but their main objective is to take control of key infrastructure points. They want to control the power, the water supply, everything."

Marie, who had been listening intently, asked, "Do you know their next target?"

## CHAPTER 15

Smith nodded. "Yes. They're planning to hit the Prismatica Power Plant. If they succeed, it will cause a massive blackout, affecting not just Prismatica but also neighboring areas."

The room fell silent except for the steady timpani roll from George Jr. Faizon Sr. looked around at his team, each of them showing varying degrees of concern and resolve. "We can't let that happen. We need to stop them before they can carry out this attack."

Riko, her yellow eyes sharp with determination, spoke up. "We need a plan. We need to coordinate with the authorities in Prismatica and set up a defense at the power plant."

Jeremiah added, "And we should also look into disrupting their network. If we can cut off their communication and resources, we can weaken their efforts."

Faizon Sr. nodded. "Agreed. Smith, you'll guide us. We'll need every bit of information you can provide. George Jr., keep that drum roll going; it's helping us stay focused."

George Jr. smiled slightly, his hands continuing their rhythmic dance on Faizon Jr.'s belly. The steady beat seemed to galvanize everyone in the room, reminding them of their shared goal and the strength they drew from each other.

The team quickly began to formulate a plan, discussing logistics, roles, and contingencies. Smith provided detailed information about the enemy's operations, drawing rough maps and highlighting key points. The sound of the timpani drum roll provided a steady backdrop, a reminder of the urgency and the unity of their mission.

As the planning session drew to a close, Faizon Sr. stood up, his voice carrying the weight of their shared determination. "We have our plan. We know our enemy. Now let's go out there and protect our home."

The team nodded, each member feeling the gravity of the task ahead but also the unwavering support of their comrades. With a final, resounding beat on Faizon Jr.'s belly, George Jr. signaled the end of their preparations. The time for action had come, and they were ready to face whatever lay ahead.

They filed out of the warehouse, their hearts and minds synchronized with the steady beat of the drum roll that had guided their planning. As they stepped

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

into the sunlight, they knew that the next phase of their mission was about to begin, and they were prepared to do whatever it took to protect Timpanopia and its people.

The team made their way towards the Prismatica Power Plant, their resolve solidified by the rhythmic beat that had guided their planning. The journey was tense, filled with the weight of the task ahead. Each member of the group understood the gravity of their mission and the stakes involved.

As they approached the power plant, the team could see the high security fences and the guards patrolling the perimeter. The facility was a sprawling complex of towers, transformers, and control rooms, all vital to the region's power supply. Faizon Sr. gathered everyone for a final briefing before they split into their designated roles.

"Alright, everyone," Faizon Sr. began, his voice steady and commanding. "Smith will guide us through the enemy's plans. George Jr., Jeremiah, and Faizon Jr., you three will focus on defending the main control room. Riko and I will coordinate with the plant's security to fortify our defenses. Marie, you'll handle communication with the authorities and ensure we have backup if needed."

George Jr. pounded a final drum roll on Faizon Jr.'s belly, signaling the start of their mission. The sound echoed through the air, providing a sense of unity and determination. The team split up, each moving towards their assigned tasks with a sense of urgency.

Inside the power plant, the control room was a hive of activity. Engineers and technicians were monitoring the systems, unaware of the impending threat. Faizon Jr., George Jr., and Jeremiah quickly took their positions, their eyes scanning the room for any signs of trouble.

Faizon Sr. and Riko moved through the facility, coordinating with the security personnel. They set up additional barriers and checkpoints, ensuring that every possible entry point was covered. Riko's enthusiasm and quick thinking were instrumental in fortifying their defenses.

"You're doing great, Riko," Faizon Sr. said, impressed by her efficiency. "We need to be ready for anything."

Meanwhile, Marie was in constant communication with the authorities, providing updates on their situation and requesting reinforcements. Her calm

## CHAPTER 15

demeanor and strategic thinking were crucial in maintaining order and ensuring they had the support they needed.

Smith, keeping a watchful eye on everything, provided crucial insights into the enemy's tactics. "They're going to try to infiltrate from multiple points," he warned. "We need to be vigilant and ready to respond quickly."

The tension in the air was palpable as they waited for the enemy to make their move. The sound of the timpani drum roll, still echoing in their minds, kept them focused and united.

Suddenly, alarms blared throughout the facility. The enemy had arrived. Shadows moved swiftly across the perimeter, and the guards sprang into action. The team braced themselves, ready to face the oncoming assault.

George Jr. and Faizon Jr. stood back-to-back in the control room, their eyes scanning for any sign of danger. Jeremiah, with his imposing presence, stood guard at the entrance, ready to defend against any intruders.

The first wave of attackers breached the outer defenses, but they were met with fierce resistance. Guards and security personnel, fortified by the preparations made by Faizon Sr. and Riko, fought back with determination.

In the control room, Faizon Jr. and George Jr. engaged in a fierce battle with the intruders. Their synchronized movements and unbreakable bond made them a formidable duo. Jeremiah's strength and presence were a significant deterrent, keeping the attackers at bay.

Faizon Sr. and Riko moved through the chaos, coordinating the defenses and ensuring that every breach was countered swiftly. Marie's constant communication with the authorities brought in reinforcements, bolstering their defenses and giving them the upper hand.

The battle raged on, but the team held their ground. The sound of the timpani drum roll, now just a memory, continued to resonate in their hearts, driving them forward.

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, the last of the attackers were repelled. The facility was secure. The team, though exhausted, stood victorious. They had protected the power plant and prevented the enemy from carrying out their plan.

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

As they regrouped, Faizon Sr. looked around at his team, pride swelling in his chest. "We did it," he said, his voice filled with emotion. "We protected the power plant."

The team nodded, their expressions reflecting a mixture of relief and determination. They knew that their fight was far from over, but they also knew that together, they could overcome any challenge.

With the immediate threat neutralized, the team took a moment to catch their breath and plan their next steps. They had won this battle, but the war was far from over. They were ready to face whatever came next, united by their shared purpose and the unbreakable bond that had been forged through their trials.

Faizon Sr. looked at his son, George Jr., Jeremiah, Riko, Marie, and the rest of their allies. "Let's get back to the warehouse," he said. "We have a lot of work ahead of us."

As they walked back to their van, the team felt a mixture of exhaustion and relief. The adrenaline from the battle was slowly wearing off, replaced by the dull ache of tired muscles and the weight of the realization of what they had accomplished. They had defended the power plant, but the road ahead was still uncertain.

Once they were settled back in the van, Faizon Sr. took a moment to look around at his team. They were a diverse group, brought together by a common purpose. Each one of them had proven their strength and resolve in the face of danger. He felt a surge of pride and gratitude for each of them.

"Let's head back to the warehouse," Faizon Sr. said, his voice steady but tired. "We need to regroup and plan our next move."

The ride back was relatively quiet, each member lost in their thoughts. Faizon Jr. and George Jr. sat next to each other, their shoulders touching, a silent testament to their growing bond. Gabriel and Jeremiah exchanged occasional glances, their shared experiences deepening their friendship.

When they arrived at the warehouse, the familiar sight brought a sense of comfort. It was their sanctuary, a place where they could regroup and plan their next steps. Faizon Sr. led the way inside, and they were greeted by Glenn, who had stayed behind to keep an eye on things.

## CHAPTER 15

"How did it go?" Glenn asked, his gaze sweeping over the group, noting their weary expressions.

"We secured the power plant," Faizon Sr. replied. "But it wasn't easy. The enemy is getting more aggressive. We need to be prepared for anything."

Glenn nodded, his face serious. "I figured as much. We need to stay vigilant."

As they settled in, Faizon Jr. and George Jr. couldn't resist the urge to talk about the battle. They were still buzzing with the excitement of their victory and the intensity of the fight.

"Did you see the way Jeremiah held off those intruders?" George Jr. asked, his eyes wide with admiration. "It was incredible!"

"And Faizon Jr.," Jeremiah added, "you were amazing too. The way you coordinated with George Jr. was spot on."

Faizon Jr. blushed slightly at the praise. "We make a good team," he said, a hint of pride in his voice.

As the conversation continued, Faizon Sr. and Glenn talked about their next steps. They needed to gather more information about the enemy and their plans. The attack on the power plant was a clear indication that the threat was far from over.

"We need to reach out to our allies," Faizon Sr. said. "We can't do this alone. We need to coordinate with other communities and share information."

Glenn nodded in agreement. "I'll start making calls. We need to be ready for anything."

Meanwhile, Riko was busy checking her gear and making sure everything was in order. She was always prepared, always ready for the next challenge. Her energy and enthusiasm were contagious, and it kept the team's spirits high.

Marie, on the other hand, was deep in thought. She was strategizing, thinking about their next move and how to stay one step ahead of the enemy. Her sharp mind and tactical skills were invaluable to the team.

As the evening wore on, they all took some time to rest and recuperate. They knew that the battle was far from over, but they were ready to face whatever came next. They had each other, and that was their greatest strength.

The next morning, they gathered in the warehouse's makeshift meeting room. The atmosphere was tense but focused. They knew that they needed to stay vigilant and be ready for anything.

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

"We have to keep pushing forward," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with determination. "We can't let our guard down. We have to be ready for whatever comes next."

The team nodded in agreement, their expressions reflecting their resolve. They were ready to face the challenges ahead, united by their shared purpose and strengthened by the bond they had forged through their trials.

As they prepared to move forward, they knew that they were not alone. They had each other, and they had the support of their allies. Together, they would protect Timpanopia and ensure that their home remained safe.

With renewed determination, they set out to face the next challenge, ready to defend their community and stand up against the threats that loomed on the horizon. They were a team, a family, and they were ready for whatever came next.



Glenn found himself deep in the heart of an unfamiliar country on the other side of the planet, on a mission fraught with danger and uncertainty. His task was clear: locate and uncover the secret headquarters of Martez, the traitor who had managed to escape custody. This mission was critical, and Glenn knew the stakes were high.

He couldn't forget the look on Radames' face when he had reluctantly handed Glenn the mission. "I thought I could trust him," Radames had said tearfully, his usual stern demeanor cracked by a deep sense of betrayal. The memory of Radames' words and the urgency in his voice fueled Glenn's determination.

Navigating the security system of Martez's secret headquarters had been no small feat. The place was a fortress, designed to keep out even the most skilled intruders. But Glenn had years of experience and training, and he used every bit of his expertise to bypass the alarms and surveillance systems. After hours of meticulous work, he finally found himself inside the headquarters.

## CHAPTER 15

Glenn paused for a moment, taking in his surroundings. The headquarters was a stark contrast to the bustling, friendly environment of Timpanopia. It was cold and sterile, with a minimalist design that spoke of efficiency and secrecy. The walls were lined with monitors displaying various security feeds, and the air was thick with a sense of foreboding.

But Glenn knew he couldn't afford to get distracted. He had a job to do, and every second counted. He quickly reminded himself of his mission: gather any information that could lead to the capture of Martez and dismantle his operation.

Moving with practiced stealth, Glenn began to search the headquarters. He checked rooms and offices, looking for anything that might give him a clue. The place was eerily silent, the only sound the faint hum of the electronic equipment that surrounded him.

In one of the offices, Glenn found a series of files and documents spread across a large desk. He sifted through them quickly, his eyes scanning for anything that might be useful. There were blueprints, security codes, and detailed reports on various operations. One document, in particular, caught his attention. It was a plan for a large-scale operation, one that involved multiple targets and a significant amount of resources.

"This must be it," Glenn muttered to himself, carefully folding the document and slipping it into his jacket. He continued to search the office, finding more pieces of the puzzle. Each new discovery added to the growing picture of Martez's plans and operations.

As he worked, Glenn couldn't help but think about the team back in Timpanopia. He knew they were facing their own challenges, and he hoped they were faring well. The thought of his friends and comrades gave him the strength to keep going, even as the weight of the mission pressed down on him.

Finally, after what felt like hours, Glenn had gathered everything he could. He had a stack of documents, several USB drives filled with data, and a handful of blueprints. It was a treasure trove of information, enough to give them a significant advantage in their fight against Martez.

With his mission accomplished, Glenn carefully made his way back through the headquarters, retracing his steps to avoid detection. He moved swiftly and

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

silently, his senses on high alert for any sign of danger. The last thing he needed was to get caught now, with all this valuable information in his possession.

When he finally emerged from the headquarters, the night air felt cool and refreshing against his skin. He took a deep breath, feeling a sense of relief wash over him. The hardest part of the mission was over, but he knew there was still much to be done.

Glenn quickly made his way back to his rendezvous point, where a transport was waiting to take him back to Timpanopia. As he settled into the seat, he couldn't help but feel a sense of satisfaction. They were one step closer to bringing Martez to justice and protecting their home from the looming threat.

As the transport sped through the night, Glenn allowed himself a moment of rest. He knew there would be no time for relaxation once he returned. The information he had gathered would be crucial in the days to come, and he needed to be ready for whatever lay ahead.



The atmosphere was thick with tension as Faizon Sr. and his crew discussed their mission. Their goal was clear: find and stop the sinister mastermind behind all the chaos—the Silence King. The weight of their task was heavy, and the stakes had never been higher.

The room was dimly lit, the only light coming from a single lamp in the corner that cast long shadows on the walls. Faizon Sr. stood at the head of the table, his broad shoulders squared and his expression serious. Around him were his trusted companions: George Jr., Gabriel, Jeremiah, Faizon Jr., and Gilbert. Each of them carried the weight of their recent battles, their faces a mix of determination and fatigue.

"We need to focus on gathering as much intelligence as possible," Faizon Sr. began, his voice steady. "The Silence King has been pulling the strings from the shadows for too long. It's time we bring him into the light."

George Jr. stood close to Faizon Jr., his eyes glinting with a mixture of excitement and nervousness. With a quick nod of approval from Faizon Sr., he

## CHAPTER 15

took his mallets and approached Faizon Jr.'s big brown belly. The room fell silent, all eyes on the two boys. George Jr. raised his mallets high and struck Faizon Jr.'s belly twice with ominous, thunderous hits that reverberated through the room.

The deep, resonant sound seemed to hang in the air, a reminder of the gravity of their mission. George Jr. then transitioned into a delicate, yet powerful, piano fortissimo roll, his hands moving with precision and grace. The roll started soft and grew gradually louder, each beat echoing their resolve and unity. The room vibrated with the rhythm, and everyone present felt a renewed sense of purpose.

When the roll ended, George Jr. stepped back, his breathing slightly heavy but his eyes alight with determination. "We can't let fear hold us back," he said, looking around the room. "We need to be strong, together."

"He's right," Gabriel added, stepping forward. "We've faced tough challenges before, and we've always come through. This time won't be any different."

Jeremiah nodded in agreement. "The Silence King might think he's untouchable, but he hasn't faced a team like us. We have the strength, the skills, and the will to take him down."

Faizon Sr. placed a hand on George Jr.'s shoulder, giving it a reassuring squeeze. "We're in this together," he said, his voice filled with warmth and confidence. "No matter what happens, we'll face it as a team. Now, let's go over our plan one more time."

They spent the next hour meticulously going over their strategy, each member contributing their insights and ideas. Faizon Jr. suggested a few alternate routes they could take to avoid detection, while Gilbert mapped out potential locations where the Silence King might be hiding. Jeremiah used his technical skills to enhance their communication devices, ensuring they would stay connected no matter what.

As they finalized their preparations, the mood in the room shifted from somber determination to a more hopeful optimism. They knew the road ahead would be difficult, but they also knew they had the strength and support of each other to see them through.

As they gathered around the table, anticipation hung thick in the air. Faizon Sr. leaned forward, his brow furrowed in thought. "The Silence King is a master

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

of deception," he began, his voice low and measured. "He could be hiding anywhere, using his network of spies and informants to stay one step ahead of us."

Gilbert, ever the strategist, tapped his chin thoughtfully. "He might be holed up in an abandoned warehouse on the outskirts of town," he suggested. "Somewhere isolated, where he can operate without drawing too much attention."

Jeremiah nodded in agreement. "Or he could be hiding in plain sight, right under our noses," he added. "Maybe he's posing as a respectable citizen, attending meetings and events while secretly pulling the strings behind the scenes."

Faizon Jr. leaned back in his chair, deep in thought. "What if he's using technology to stay hidden?" he mused. "Hacking into our systems, manipulating data, covering his tracks at every turn."

George Jr., ever the optimist, offered a hopeful suggestion. "Maybe he's not as invincible as he thinks," he said, a glimmer of determination in his eyes. "Maybe there's someone out there who knows his secrets, someone who can lead us straight to him."

Faizon Sr. nodded, his expression serious. "Whatever the case may be, we need to be prepared for anything," he said. "The Silence King is a formidable opponent, but he's not unbeatable. With perseverance, dedication, and a little luck, we'll find him and put an end to his reign of terror."

With their guesses shared and their determination renewed, the team set out once again, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead. The hunt for the Silence King had begun, and they were more determined than ever to see it through to the end.



Glenn stood at the entrance of the headquarters, his posture tense as he awaited Charles' arrival. The night air was cool, but there was a sense of

## CHAPTER 15

urgency that hung heavy around them. As Charles approached, Glenn turned to greet him, his expression grave.

"Charles," Glenn said, his voice low but determined. "I'm glad you decided to come with me tonight. We need to find out what Martez is planning and put an end to it once and for all."

Charles nodded, his own sense of determination mirrored in his eyes. "I couldn't let you face this alone," he replied. "Whatever dangers lie ahead, we'll face them together."

With a shared nod of understanding, the two men squared their shoulders and prepared to enter the headquarters. They knew the risks involved, but they also knew that they had to act swiftly to save Timpanopia from whatever threat Martez posed. With their resolve firm and their spirits united, they stepped forward, ready to confront whatever awaited them inside.

They made their way through the security systems, the glow of the monitors casting eerie shadows across their faces. Charles struggled slightly, his brow furrowed in concentration as he navigated the complex maze of passcodes and encryption protocols.

Glenn watched him closely, a silent support as they moved forward together. Despite the challenges, they pressed on, their determination unwavering in the face of adversity. With each obstacle they overcame, they drew closer to their goal, their resolve growing stronger with every step.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, they reached the heart of the headquarters. The air was thick with tension as they stood before the final barrier, their breaths coming in shallow gasps. But they did not falter. With a shared nod of determination, they pushed forward, ready to confront whatever awaited them on the other side.

Then a loud rumbling timpani drum roll filled the air like the distant rumble of a rolling thunderstorm, causing them both to start frantically looking around in fear.

The rumbling timpani drum roll grew incrementally louder, echoing through the corridors like the roar of an approaching storm. Glenn and Charles exchanged a knowing glance, their hearts pounding in their massive chests as they braced themselves for what was to come. Unsurprisingly, their bellies

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

began to undergo the same transformation, swelling larger with each passing moment.

"Run," Charles muttered urgently, his voice tinged with desperation.

With a shared sense of urgency, they turned towards the exit and attempted to start running. But their growing bellies hindered their movements, each step becoming increasingly difficult as the weight pulled them down. With every stride, their bellies seemed to swell larger, the pressure mounting with each passing second.

Despite their best efforts, they found themselves struggling to move, their bodies weighed down by the ever-expanding mass of their bellies. Each movement felt like wading through thick mud, the growing weight making it impossible to maintain their pace. With every passing moment, their chances of escape dwindled, the ominous rumble of the drum roll serving as a relentless reminder of the danger closing in around them.

Suddenly, they heard the sound of a trapdoor opening, and as they turned around, their hearts pounding with adrenaline-fueled fear, their eyes widened in horror at the sight before them. A massive elephant trap in the form of a round metallic cage, its jaws gaping wide, rolled across the floor towards them with alarming speed. With a shared sense of urgency, Glenn and Charles made a desperate attempt to evade the deadly contraption, their feet pounding against the ground as they sprinted with all their might.

Their breaths came in ragged gasps as they dodged and weaved, narrowly avoiding the swinging jaws of the trap. But as they evaded one, more traps emerged from the darkness, hurtling towards them with relentless determination. With each passing moment, the danger grew more imminent, their chances of escape slipping further and further away.

As they frantically tried to evade the oncoming elephant traps, their movements became more sluggish and labored, weighed down by the sheer mass of their bellies. Each dodge was a herculean effort, their bodies straining against the overwhelming weight that seemed to grow with every passing moment.

But despite their best efforts, they found themselves overwhelmed by the sheer number of traps closing in around them. In a desperate bid for survival, they continued to dodge and evade, their bodies straining under the weight of

## CHAPTER 15

their rapidly expanding bellies. But as the traps closed in, they knew that their efforts were in vain.

And then with a sickening thud, Glenn and Charles each found themselves ensnared in the jaws of an elephant trap, their bellies now swollen to an unprecedented size. The pressure was immense, their breaths coming in shallow gasps as they struggled to free themselves from the trap's grasp.

As they struggled against their restraints, their bodies contorted in agony, the sheer size of their bellies now almost incomprehensible. It was a grim realization of their dire situation, trapped and helpless in the face of an unknown adversary.

Their bellies loomed large, casting ominous shadows in the dim light of the corridor. The once formidable men were now reduced to helpless prisoners, trapped by their own growing mass. With each passing moment, the situation grew more dire, the weight of their bellies pressing down on them like a suffocating blanket.

Then as a red light atop both elephant traps started to blink ominously, the timpani drum roll ceased, and a hush fell over the corridor, the air thick with tension and uncertainty. Glenn and Charles exchanged a wary glance, their hearts pounding in their chests as they braced themselves for whatever came next.

In the eerie silence that followed, the weight of their predicament hung heavy around them, the reality of their captivity sinking in with each passing moment. With their bellies trapped and their movements restricted, they were at the mercy of their unknown assailant, their fates uncertain as they awaited their next move.

The red lights continued to pulse, casting a sinister glow over the trapped duo. With each blink, it served as a stark reminder of their vulnerability, a silent warning of the danger that surrounded them.

Then a screen flickered to life on the wall in front of them, casting an eerie glow in the dimly lit corridor. Glenn and Charles strained to see who it was, their bellies still trapped and their breathing heavy from the exertion. The image sharpened, and there was Martez, grinning wickedly at them.

## THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

"So, I see you've tried to escape my elephant traps, eh?" Martez's voice was filled with a twisted glee. "How fitting for two large men with big brown bellies. I must say, you've made it farther than I expected. But your journey ends here."

Glenn glared at the screen, his frustration evident. "Martez, this isn't over. We'll find a way out, and when we do, you'll regret ever messing with Timpanopia."

Martez chuckled darkly. "Bold words from someone in such a... constricted position. You see, the traps were designed to handle even the most determined individuals. The more you struggle, the tighter they get. Quite ingenious, if I do say so myself."

Charles, his voice strained but defiant, spoke up. "We'll never stop fighting, Martez. We'll find the Silence King, and we'll put an end to this madness."

Martez's grin widened. "Ah, the Silence King. Always the elusive prize, isn't he? But let me assure you, he has no intention of being found. He's far too clever for that. And you, my dear friends, are far too preoccupied to pose any threat to him now."

With a final, mocking laugh, Martez's image disappeared from the screen, leaving Glenn and Charles in the dark once more. The red light atop the elephant traps continued to blink, a relentless reminder of their captivity. They knew they had to find a way out, but with their bellies showing no sign of shrinking and the traps tightening with every move, their options were running out fast.

Glenn and Charles looked around desperately, their breaths coming in labored gasps. Just as their situation seemed most dire, the blinking red lights atop the elephant traps abruptly ceased.

For a moment, there was an eerie stillness. Then, without warning, the traps began to roll forward, taking Glenn and Charles with them. It was as if the traps had a mind of their own, guiding them towards some unknown destination within the labyrinthine headquarters.

"What's happening?" Glenn grunted, trying to gain some semblance of control over his movements but finding it impossible. His large, now immense, brown belly was firmly lodged in the trap, making any effort to free himself futile.

## CHAPTER 15

"I don't know," Charles replied, his voice strained with exertion. "But we need to stay alert. Wherever they're taking us, we need to be ready."

The elephant traps rolled through a series of corridors, each one narrower and more foreboding than the last. The walls seemed to close in on them, the metallic surfaces cold and unwelcoming. The sound of their bellies rubbing against the sides of the traps created a disconcerting echo, a constant reminder of their predicament.

After what felt like an eternity, the traps came to a halt in front of a massive, reinforced door. Glenn and Charles exchanged a wary glance as the door slowly began to open, revealing a dimly lit chamber beyond. The traps continued to move forward, pulling them into the room before finally releasing their grip and rolling away to the sides, as if completing their task.

The chamber was vast and ominous, filled with strange machinery and glowing screens. In the center stood a tall figure, partially obscured by shadows. As the figure stepped forward, the light revealed Martez, his expression one of smug satisfaction.

"Welcome," Martez said, his voice dripping with condescension. "I see my traps have delivered you as intended. You must forgive the rough treatment, but it was necessary to ensure you reached your destination."

Glenn struggled to his feet, his belly still enormous and unwieldy. "What do you want, Martez? Why go through all this trouble?"

Martez's grin widened. "What I want is simple, really. I want to show you the futility of your resistance. You and your friends have been a thorn in my side for far too long. But now, you'll see just how powerless you truly are."

Charles, also on his feet now, clenched his fists. "We'll never give up, Martez. No matter what you throw at us, we'll keep fighting. We'll find the Silence King and end this madness."

Martez laughed, a cold, mirthless sound. "The Silence King is far beyond your reach. But if you insist on pursuing this foolish quest, then by all means, continue. I welcome the challenge."

With a wave of his hand, Martez activated the machinery in the room. The screens lit up with various images and data, showing maps, plans, and schematics. Glenn and Charles watched in horror as they realized the full extent of Martez's plans.

#### THE INSIDER'S REVELATION

"This is just the beginning," Martez said, his voice low and menacing. "You will witness the rise of the Silence King and the fall of Timpanopia. And there is nothing you can do to stop it."

As the room filled with the hum of machinery and the glow of the screens intensified, Glenn and Charles knew they had to find a way to escape and warn their friends. The fate of their world depended on it.

# 16

## The Great Rescue Mission

The next morning, in the bustling hub of their warehouse sanctuary, the atmosphere was a mix of excitement and anticipation. George Jr., now equipped with the Big Belly Drum Drone that Faizon Sr. had presented to him, was engrossed in an experiment. He had removed his tank top, revealing his broad, round belly. Placing the drone on the right side of his belly with his right hand, he kept his left hand atop it, feeling the gradual and satisfying growth. His belly, already impressive, was steadily expanding to match the size of Faizon Jr.'s.

Jeremiah, sitting nearby at his computer, was deeply focused on his latest endeavor. His fingers danced over the keyboard as he uploaded his newest video to a popular streaming platform where he had accumulated about one hundred thousand subscribers. "Only one tenth of the way there!" he had said earlier, his eyes gleaming with determination. The video showcased a blend of his belly drumming skills and gaming prowess, a combination that had won him a dedicated following.

"Hey, George Jr.," Jeremiah called out, not taking his eyes off the screen. "How's the experiment going?"

George Jr. looked down at his growing belly, a proud smile spreading across his face. "It's working perfectly! I can feel it expanding. Soon, I'll be as big as Faizon Jr." He gave a contented sigh, enjoying the sensation of his belly stretching and growing.

Faizon Jr., who was sitting nearby and watching with interest, grinned. "Welcome to the club, George Jr. It's a great feeling, isn't it?"

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

"It really is," George Jr. agreed, his hand still on the drone. The soft, rhythmic beats of the drone filled the warehouse, creating a soothing backdrop to their activities. "This drone is incredible. I can see why your dad is so proud of it."

Just then, Faizon Sr. walked into the room, his presence commanding and reassuring. He looked at George Jr. with approval. "I see you're getting the hang of it. The Big Belly Drum Drone is a marvel, isn't it? It's all about rhythm and patience."

George Jr. nodded enthusiastically. "Absolutely, Faizon Sr. Thank you for giving me this opportunity. It's amazing to see and feel the results."

Faizon Sr. smiled warmly. "You're doing great. Keep practicing, and you'll perfect it in no time."

As they continued their conversation, the warehouse buzzed with a sense of camaraderie and purpose. Each of them was working towards their own goals, yet united by a common mission. The drone's beats, combined with the tapping sounds of Jeremiah's keyboard and the hum of his computer, created a unique symphony of progress and hope.

Jeremiah finally looked up from his screen, stretching his arms above his head. "Video's uploaded! Now, let's see how our viewers respond."

George Jr. gave a thumbs-up, still focused on his growing belly. "I'm sure they'll love it. Your videos are always a hit."

"Thanks," Jeremiah replied, a satisfied smile on his face. "I just hope it gets us closer to finding out more about the Silence King. We need all the help we can get."

Faizon Jr. leaned back in his chair, his gaze thoughtful. "We'll find him. We're a strong team, and we've come this far. We won't stop until we take him down."

George Jr. paused his experiment with the Big Belly Drum Drone and wiped his sweaty forehead, his brow furrowing slightly. "You know," he said, placing both hands on the sides of his growing big brown belly, "all these beats are starting to make my belly smell a bit." He shifted his weight and let out a small fart, a mischievous grin spreading across his face.

Faizon Sr. chuckled at the comment, but his amusement was short-lived. As he glanced at his phone, his smile faded and a look of shock took over. "Guys, listen to this," he said, his voice tense. He began reading aloud:

# Martez Brooks' Sudden Change

## Former Council member imprisons other member via illegal use of timpani rolls

In a shocking turn of events, Glenn Patterson, a member of the Timpanopia Council, and Charles Burlington, his "accomplice", were falsely captured by the once respected member of the Council now turned infamous criminal Martez Brooks. Known for his prowess in belly drumming, Martez has proved to be a formidable adversary. The incident occurred late last night in an undisclosed location believed to be Martez's secret headquarters.

According to sources, Patterson and Burlington, both large Black man with notably big and round bellies, were attempting to infiltrate Martez's headquarters when they were outsmarted by an elaborate trap involving a powerful timpani drum roll. Witnesses report that the drum roll, executed to perfection by Martez himself, caused the two men's already substantially round bellies to grow rapidly bigger, making it impossible for them to escape the elephant traps that Martez had cunningly set up for them.

This now makes two of Martez's nefarious activities, the first one which has increasingly put the safety of Timpanopia and its neighboring regions at risk. The Council is urging all citizens to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities. More details are expected to emerge as the investigation continues, but one thing is certain: Martez Brooks has once again demonstrated his ability to outsmart even the most skilled members of the Timpanopia Council. Stay tuned for updates to this story.

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

Faizon Sr. looked up from his phone, his face etched with concern. "We have to rescue Glenn and Charles. This is getting out of hand."

Jeremiah, who had been listening intently, nodded. "We can't let Martez get away with this. We've got to come up with a plan."

George Jr. put down the Big Belly Drum Drone, his eyes serious. "Whatever it takes, we'll get them back."

"I have good news, though," said Jeremiah. "Hey, Faizon, read the article I sent you."

Faizon Sr. quickly opened his email and clicked on the article Jeremiah had just sent him. He began to read aloud, his voice lifting the spirits of everyone in the room:

# Sound Websites Restored

## The Timpanopian sound websites are officially back online after a scary outage

In a delightful turn of events, the Timpanopian sound websites, which serve as the backbone of the community's rich musical culture, have been successfully restored. After a mysterious and disruptive internet failure that caused the beloved sites to go offline, the dedicated team at [timpanopia.org](http://timpanopia.org) has managed to bring them back online, much to the relief of the citizens.

The outage, which affected multiple platforms including [sound.timpanopia.org](http://sound.timpanopia.org) and various other timpani drum sound repositories, had left many without access to the essential sounds that fuel their daily lives and cultural practices. The impact was felt across Timpanopia, with musicians, students, and enthusiasts alike expressing their concerns and frustrations.

## CHAPTER 16

'We've been working around the clock to identify and fix the issue,' said Leo Matthews, lead technician at [timpanopia.org](http://timpanopia.org). 'Our main goal was to ensure that everyone could get back to creating and enjoying music as soon as possible. It's been a challenging few days, but seeing the joy and relief in the community makes it all worth it.'

The restoration of these websites means that the iconic timpani drum rolls and other unique sounds of Timpanopia are once again available for all to enjoy. This is especially important as the community prepares for the upcoming Timpanopian Music Festival, an event that celebrates the town's rich musical heritage and brings people together through the power of rhythm and melody.

Local musician and community leader, Faizon Brown, expressed his gratitude, stating, 'These sound websites are the heart of our culture. They enable us to share our music, teach our children, and keep our traditions alive. Their restoration is a victory for all of us.'

"I did *not* say that," Faizon Sr. said quickly. He read on:

As Timpanopia rejoices in this melodious revival, residents are encouraged to visit the restored websites and immerse themselves in the vibrant world of Timpanopian music once again. The team at [timpanopia.org](http://timpanopia.org) promises to continue their efforts in ensuring the stability and accessibility of these vital platforms.

For now, the sounds of Timpanopia are back, and the community couldn't be happier. Stay tuned for more updates on the upcoming Timpanopian Music Festival and other exciting musical events.

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

Faizon Sr. looked up, a smile spreading across his face. "This is fantastic news! With the sound websites back online, we have all the resources we need to stay connected and strong as a community. This is exactly the boost we needed."

Jeremiah nodded. "Exactly. We can use this to our advantage, rally everyone together, and show Martez that he can't break our spirit."

George Jr., still beside Faizon Jr., added, "And with the Big Belly Drum Drone and our skills, we can make sure our music is heard far and wide." He sighed wistfully, "I'm gonna miss banging on that timpani drum during Jeremiah's gaming sessions. I was even going to try and use my belly too, now that I know how to make it bigger, finally."

Jeremiah chuckled and patted George Jr.'s large belly affectionately. "You can play the timpani drum with or without your belly whenever you want. And hey, maybe your big brown belly could use a break." His pat elicited a soft rumble, the familiar sound blending into the background noise of the warehouse.

Faizon Sr. stood up, his expression serious. "Alright, everyone. We need to plan our travel to Martez's headquarters. We've got the momentum now with the sound websites back online, but we can't afford to waste any time."

Gilbert leaned forward, his brow furrowed in concentration. "We need to gather all the intel we have on Martez's operations. Charles and Glenn's capture has given us some clues, but we need to be sure we're prepared for whatever traps he might have in store."

Faizon Jr. looked around the room, determination shining in his eyes. "We should make sure our equipment is ready too. We can't let our guard down, not even for a second."

Jeremiah nodded. "I'll start gathering supplies. We need to be ready for anything. This might be our toughest mission yet."

George Jr., still adjusting to the new size of his belly, added, "And maybe we can use our musical skills to our advantage. If we encounter any more of Martez's traps, we can try to outsmart them with our beats."

Faizon Sr. smiled at his son's enthusiasm. "That's the spirit, George Jr. We'll use everything we have—our skills, our teamwork, and our determination—to bring Martez down."

## CHAPTER 16

The group huddled together, discussing their plan in detail. They talked about possible routes to Martez's headquarters, the equipment they would need, and how to handle potential dangers. Each member of the team had a role to play, and they were ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

As the conversation continued, the sense of camaraderie and purpose grew stronger. They knew the road ahead would be difficult, but with their combined strength and the support of their community, they felt ready to take on Martez and his sinister plans. The mission to save Glenn and put an end to Martez's reign of terror had begun in earnest, and they were determined to see it through to the end.

As Faizon Sr. finished speaking, the group fell into a contemplative silence, each member lost in their thoughts about the daunting task ahead. Finally, George Jr., still experimenting with the Big Belly Drum Drone, broke the silence. "So, where do we start? Martez's headquarters isn't exactly on the map."

Jeremiah leaned back in his chair. "I've been thinking about that. We know Martez is smart—he'll have traps and security measures we can't even imagine. We need to be smarter."

Gilbert nodded in agreement. "We should first gather more intel. If we can find any blueprints or records of his headquarters, it'll give us a tactical advantage."

Faizon Sr. rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Good point. We also need to consider our approach. A frontal assault might be too risky. We need a plan that allows us to infiltrate quietly."

Faizon Jr. chimed in, his young face serious. "Maybe we can use our musical talents as a distraction. If we can create enough noise in one area, we might be able to slip in unnoticed from another direction."

George Jr., tapping rhythmically on his now impressive belly, added, "And we should also think about our exit strategy. If things go south, we need a way to get out quickly. We can't afford to get trapped like Charles and Glenn did."

Jeremiah leaned forward, his eyes sparkling with determination. "I've got some contacts who might be able to help. People who owe me favors from the gaming world. They might have access to information networks we don't."

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

Faizon Sr. nodded approvingly. "Good thinking, Jeremiah. Reach out to them. Any information we can get will be valuable. Meanwhile, I'll check in with the Council and see if they have any leads on Martez's location."

Gilbert stood up, stretching his muscular frame. "I'll start prepping our equipment. We need to make sure everything is in top shape. No room for errors."

The group continued to discuss their plan, each member contributing their unique skills and perspectives. They talked about disguises, possible routes, and contingency plans. George Jr. suggested they bring along portable belly drums to communicate through rhythmic codes, an idea that was met with enthusiasm.

As they mapped out their strategy, the sense of camaraderie grew stronger. They knew they were up against a formidable foe, but their bond and shared determination gave them the confidence they needed.

Faizon Sr. finally called the meeting to a close. "Alright, everyone. We've got a lot of work to do. Let's regroup in a few hours with any new information we can gather. Remember, this mission is about more than just stopping Martez—it's about protecting our home and our way of life."

With renewed determination, the group dispersed to their tasks. Faizon Sr. headed to the Council offices, Jeremiah to his computer, and the rest to their respective preparations. As they moved forward with their plans, the rhythmic beat of their resolve echoed through the warehouse, a promise of the battle to come.



When they finally found Martez's headquarters, the sense of accomplishment was tempered by the stark reality of the mission ahead. The team had spent days gathering intel, coordinating with Jeremiah's contacts, and analyzing every piece of information they could get their hands on. Now, standing before the imposing structure hidden deep within the forested outskirts of Timpanopia, they knew the real challenge was just beginning.

## CHAPTER 16

The headquarters was a sprawling compound, partially camouflaged by the surrounding trees and foliage. High walls and advanced security systems hinted at the formidable defenses they would need to breach. Faizon Sr. gathered the team for a final briefing before they moved in.

"Alright, everyone," Faizon Sr. began, his voice steady but filled with the gravity of the situation. "We've done the groundwork, and now it's time to execute our plan. Remember, our primary goal is to locate and capture Martez. Disabling his operations is secondary. Stay focused, stay together, and let's get this done."

George Jr., who had been remarkably serious throughout the planning stages, gave Faizon Sr.'s belly a reassuring pat. "We've got this, big man. We've planned for every possible scenario."

Jeremiah, tapping away on his portable device, nodded. "I've hacked into their systems enough to loop the security cameras for about fifteen minutes. That should give us a window to get inside."

Gilbert, adjusting his shield and equipment, added, "Once we're in, we need to move fast. Martez won't hesitate to use everything at his disposal to stop us."

Faizon Jr., bouncing slightly on the balls of his feet with nervous energy, asked, "What about the traps? We know he has elephant traps and other devices. How do we avoid those?"

Jeremiah answered, "We've mapped out the most likely locations for traps based on the layout we found. Stick to the paths we've marked and stay alert. If anyone spots something suspicious, signal the rest of us immediately."

With final nods of agreement, the team moved toward the compound's entrance. Faizon Sr. led the way, his broad shoulders and formidable presence a reassuring sight to the others. They approached the main gate, where Jeremiah quickly disabled the electronic lock.

As they slipped inside, the compound's eerie silence enveloped them. The interior was a maze of corridors and rooms, each potentially harboring hidden dangers. They moved cautiously, guided by the plans they had studied so thoroughly.

At one point, Faizon Sr. held up a hand, signaling a stop. He pointed to a series of barely visible wires stretched across the floor—tripwires for an unseen

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

trap. Gilbert carefully stepped forward, using his shield to block the path as he cut the wires with a small pair of scissors.

"Nice work," Faizon Sr. whispered. "Let's keep moving."

The group proceeded deeper into the compound, their senses heightened and muscles tensed. They encountered a few more traps along the way, each one a testament to Martez's cunning and paranoia. But their training and preparation paid off, allowing them to bypass each obstacle without incident.

Finally, they reached a large, reinforced door at the end of a long corridor. Faizon Sr. signaled for everyone to halt. "This must be it," he said quietly. "Jeremiah, can you get us in?"

Jeremiah nodded, stepping forward to examine the lock. "It's heavily encrypted, but I think I can crack it. Give me a minute."

As Jeremiah worked on the lock, the others formed a defensive perimeter, ready for any surprises. The seconds ticked by with agonizing slowness, each one stretching their nerves to the breaking point.

With a soft click, the lock disengaged, and the door swung open. Jeremiah looked up with a triumphant smile. "We're in."

The team stepped through the door, ready for whatever lay beyond. They found themselves in a large, dimly lit room dominated by a series of monitors and control panels. And there, standing in front of the largest screen, was Martez.

"Welcome," Martez said, his voice dripping with mockery. "I've been expecting you."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his fists clenched at his sides. "This ends now, Martez."

Martez's eyes gleamed with malevolent glee. "We'll see about that. You're in my domain now, and I have no intention of letting you leave."

With a quick gesture, Martez activated a series of traps. The room's floor began to shift, revealing a complex pattern of moving panels and hidden snares. The team sprang into action, their movements coordinated and precise, as they dodged and weaved through the dangers.

Gilbert used his shield to block an incoming projectile, while Faizon Jr., Gabriel, and George Jr. worked together to dismantle a series of mechanical arms that reached out to ensnare them, with help from Guy Biggums and

## CHAPTER 16

George Sr. Jeremiah hacked into the control panels, trying to disable as many traps as he could.

The battle was intense and chaotic, but the team's unity and preparation gave them the edge they needed. Slowly but surely, they pushed forward, closing the distance between themselves and Martez.

Finally, Faizon Sr. reached Martez, delivering a powerful blow that sent the villain sprawling to the ground. "It's over, Martez," he said, standing over the fallen criminal. "You're coming with us."

Martez laughed, a hollow, bitter sound. "You think you've won? The Silence King is still out there. You may have stopped me, but the real threat is far from over."

As the team secured Martez and began the process of dismantling his operations, they knew he was right. The Silence King was still out there, and their fight was far from finished.

But for now, they had won a crucial victory, and now all they had to do was save Glenn and Charles. George Sr. put a hand to his ear and listened intently. "I think I can hear them. Let's go!"

When they found Glenn and Charles, they were in a dimly lit prison cell, sitting back-to-back in the center. Bound together around their protruding midsections (now returned to normal) by strong leather ropes, their hands tied together, they looked both weary and relieved to see their friends. The cell was cold and damp, the walls lined with old, rusting chains, a faint smell of mildew hanging in the air.

"You guys okay?" Faizon Sr. asked, concern evident in his voice as he knelt down to inspect the ropes.

"Yeah," Glenn replied, his voice strained but relieved. He looked up at Faizon Sr. with tired eyes. "We're okay, just a bit sore."

Gilbert stepped forward, his face set with determination. "Hold still," he said, drawing a pair of scissors from his pocket. He carefully tried to cut through the ropes, but the blades merely scraped the surface, unable to make a dent in the thick leather.

"So you came to stop Martez and save us?" asked Charles, his voice carrying a note of hope. His eyes flicked between Faizon Sr. and Gilbert, his expression a mix of gratitude and desperation.

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

Gilbert shook his head in frustration as he continued to unsuccessfully struggle with the ropes. "Yep," Gilbert said, straightening up and flipping the scissors in his hand. "But unfortunately, these scissors aren't any help, so we will have to try something else. Remember the Big Brown Belly BOMBardment, Charles?"

"Oh, yeah!" said Charles, his eyes lighting up. Turning to a confused Glenn, he explained, "The Big Brown Belly BOMBardment was a special performance Faizon created for the concert. It was what they performed when they tested our ability. Perhaps if the belly drum rolls grow our big brown bellies, they could actually break through the ropes if they get big enough."

Glenn's eyes widened in realization. "So you're saying we can drum our way out of this?"

"Exactly," Charles confirmed with a nod.

"Okay, let's give it a shot," Faizon Sr. said, stepping forward. He positioned himself in front of Glenn and Charles, his big brown belly already exposed and ready for action. George Jr., who had been watching intently, took his place beside him, his hands poised for the upcoming drum roll on Faizon Sr.'s belly.

"Alright," Faizon Sr. said, taking a deep breath. "On my count. One, two, three—"

With that, George Jr. began a steady timpani drum roll on Faizon Sr.'s big brown belly, the rhythmic thumping filling the room. Faizon Sr.'s belly jiggled with each hit, and soon, a deep rumble started to build. The sound waves reverberated through the small prison cell, causing the walls to shake slightly.

A slightly unexpected phenomenon began to occur. Glenn and Charles' bellies started to gradually grow again. They slowly turned their heads towards Faizon Sr., their eyes wide with a mix of alarm and confusion as their midsections swelled larger and larger.

Gilbert, sensing an opportunity, began to beat on his gong-like shield, using his knuckles in the absence of a mallet. The sound resonated through the cell, a deep, rhythmic pounding that seemed to fuel the growth of their bellies. For two whole minutes, the ropes strained under the pressure of the expanding bellies, inch by inch growing almost twice as big as Faizon Sr.'s imposing girth.

The tension was palpable. The ropes creaked and groaned, fibers fraying and snapping as the enormous bellies pressed against them. Glenn and Charles

## CHAPTER 16

gritted their teeth, their faces flushed with the effort, as the leather bonds slowly gave way. George Jr. was showing almost no sign of stopping the timpani drum roll; in fact, he continued to drum, his hands beating harder against Faizon Sr.'s belly.

With a final, resounding gong-like hit, the ropes finally snapped. The sound of freedom echoed through the cell as the last remnants of the bindings fell away. A second later, George Jr. stopped the roll, Faizon Sr.'s belly now quivering ominously from the powerful vibrations.

Glenn and Charles' big brown bellies were now too big for their shirts, which were starting to rip at the seams. Their bellies were so massive and weighty that, despite the appearance of weightless buoyancy, they were now touching the floor slightly. The sheer size and heaviness of their midsections were almost awe-inspiring, a testament to the power and resilience that had seen them through this ordeal.

Glenn looked down at his newly freed belly, a mixture of relief and amazement on his face. "Thanks, guys," he said, his voice filled with gratitude. "I didn't think we'd make it out of there."

Charles nodded in agreement, a broad smile spreading across his face. "We owe you one," he added, patting his massive belly. "Now let's get out of here before Martez tries something else."

Faizon Sr. clapped both men on the back, his own belly still quivering slightly. "It's all in the belly drum rolls. Now, let's get out of here and regroup. We still have a lot of work to do to take down the Silence King."

With their team reunited, they made their way out of the prison cell and back through the compound, their steps lighter with the weight of victory and camaraderie. When they attempted to make their escape, Gabriel led the way, navigating the dimly lit corridors with urgency. Their footsteps echoed through the hallways, a cacophony of anticipation and desperation. As they neared the exit, the light of freedom just within reach, Gabriel suddenly collided with something solid. Staggering backward, he looked up to see a formidable figure blocking their path.

The man in the doorway turned around with slow, deliberate stomps, each step reverberating through the floor like the ominous beats of a bass drum.

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

Standing tall and imposing, his eyes gleaming with a menacing glint, his big brown belly jiggling under a black shirt was none other than...

"Martez Brooks!" shouted Gabriel, his voice a mix of surprise and alarm. He took quick steps backward, his heart pounding in his chest.

Martez grinned wickedly, his expression a mixture of arrogance and malice. "So, you thought you could escape?" he sneered. "You thought you could thwart my plans and walk out of here unscathed? Pathetic." His voice was deep and resonant, carrying an air of authority and menace.

He took a step forward, his eyes locking onto each member of Faizon's crew. "You fools have no idea what you're up against," Martez continued, his voice growing louder. "I am the mastermind behind the chaos that has plagued Timpanopia. I am the orchestrator of the Silence King's return. And you? You're nothing but a minor inconvenience."

Without warning, Martez began to beat his fists on his large pectorals like a gorilla, the sound echoing through the hallway like the thunderous bass drum. Each contact between fist and pectoral created a deep, resounding *boom* that seemed to shake the very walls of the building. The rhythm was relentless, a rapid and powerful bass drum roll that filled the air with an almost tangible force.

The vibrations coursed through the corridor, causing the walls to tremble and dust to fall from the ceiling. Martez's chest heaved with each strike, his muscles bulging and his expression one of fierce concentration. The thunderous beats seemed to fuel him, his body beginning to undergo a transformation.

Just like Radames had, Martez started to grow. His already imposing figure expanded, his muscles swelling and his height increasing. His pectorals, the source of the thunderous drumming, grew larger and more defined. The fabric of his shirt strained against the growing mass, seams stretching and tearing under the pressure.

Martez's entire body seemed to exude power, his presence becoming even more overwhelming. His fists continued to pound against his chest, each beat propelling his growth further. The sound was deafening, a relentless cacophony that reverberated through the hallways and sent shivers down the spines of Faizon's crew.

## CHAPTER 16

Faizon Sr. and the others watched in a mix of horror and fascination as Martez transformed before their eyes. The ground seemed to shake with each of his movements, the air vibrating with the intensity of the bass drum roll. Martez's eyes gleamed with a dangerous light, his grin widening as he reveled in his newfound strength.

"You see," Martez said, his voice now booming with a supernatural resonance, "I am unstoppable. I am invincible. And you will all bow before the Silence King."

The hallway seemed to grow smaller as Martez's immense form filled the space, his presence almost suffocating. The thunderous bass drum roll continued, each beat a reminder of the power that Martez now wielded. Faizon Sr. and his crew braced themselves, knowing that a confrontation was inevitable, and that they would need every ounce of their strength and courage to face the monstrous foe that Martez had become.

"We cannot be doing this *again*," groaned George Jr., frustration lacing his voice as he watched Martez suddenly cease his relentless drumming and pound the floor with both fists. The impact reverberated through the building, sending shockwaves that made the walls shudder and the floor tremble beneath their feet.

Martez straightened up, his eyes locking onto George Jr. with a menacing glare. "Oh, but we *are*," he hissed, his voice dripping with malice. "And this time, there will be no escape for any of you."

With a sudden burst of speed, Martez lunged forward, his massive frame moving with surprising agility. Faizon Sr. reacted quickly, stepping in front of his son and bracing himself for the impact. Martez's fists came crashing down, but Faizon Sr. met them with his own formidable strength, their muscles straining as they grappled with each other.

"Spread out!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice strained from the effort. "We need to find a way to weaken him!"

George Jr. and the others quickly obeyed, fanning out to encircle Martez. Gilbert, always quick on his feet, darted around to Martez's side, his shield ready. He struck Martez with a resounding gong-like blow, the sound reverberating through the hallway. Martez flinched slightly, but the blow seemed to do little more than annoy him.

## THE GREAT RESCUE MISSION

Jeremiah, realizing that brute force alone wouldn't be enough, began to think strategically. "We need to disrupt his rhythm!" he called out, his voice carrying a note of urgency. "If we can throw him off balance, we might have a chance!"

Gabriel, ever resourceful, nodded and grabbed a nearby chair. He hurled it at Martez's legs, aiming to trip him up. The chair collided with Martez's shin, causing him to stumble slightly. It wasn't much, but it was enough to give Faizon Sr. an opening. He took advantage of Martez's momentary distraction, delivering a powerful punch to Martez's midsection.

Martez roared in anger, his eyes blazing with fury. He swung his massive arm at Faizon Sr., but Faizon Sr. ducked just in time, the blow grazing past him and crashing into the wall, leaving a sizable dent. George Jr., seeing an opportunity, rushed forward and began to play a rapid timpani drum roll on Faizon Sr.'s belly, the vibrations adding to the chaos and disorienting Martez further.

Charles, despite the recent ordeal, gathered his strength and joined the fray. He moved with surprising speed, positioning himself behind Martez. With a powerful leap, he wrapped his arms around Martez's neck in a chokehold, using his own considerable weight to pull him off balance.

Martez, caught off guard, staggered backward, his movements becoming more erratic. He shook Charles off with a mighty shrug, but the distraction had worked. Faizon Sr. and the others seized the moment, launching a coordinated attack from all sides. Gilbert struck Martez's knees with his shield, while Guy Biggums and George Sr. aimed for his torso and head, each blow carefully timed to keep Martez off-balance.

The fight raged on, the air filled with the sounds of grunts, shouts, and the relentless beat of the makeshift drum rolls. Despite their best efforts, Martez's strength and resilience were formidable, and he fought back with relentless fury. But Faizon Sr. and his crew were determined, their resolve unshaken. They knew that this battle was not just for their survival, but for the future of Timpanopia and the defeat of the Silence King's sinister plans.

Their efforts began to take their toll on Martez. With each blow and distraction, his movements became slower, his attacks less coordinated. Faizon Sr. and the others pressed their advantage, redoubling their efforts to weaken him further.

## CHAPTER 16

Jeremiah, seeing an opening, unleashed a barrage of rapid-fire punches to Martez's midsection, his fists connecting with a satisfying thud. Meanwhile, Faizon Jr. and George Jr. worked in tandem, coordinating their attacks to keep Martez off balance. Gabriel aimed precise strikes at Martez's legs, while George Jr. continued to play his belly like a drum, the vibrations adding to Martez's disorientation.

As Martez staggered under the relentless assault, Faizon Sr. seized the moment. With a mighty roar, he unleashed a series of powerful punches, each one landing with bone-jarring force. The combined efforts of the crew were finally taking their toll, and Martez began to falter.

With a final, desperate lunge, Martez aimed a wild swing at Faizon Sr., but Faizon Sr. was ready. With lightning-fast reflexes, he dodged the blow and delivered a crushing uppercut to Martez's chin. Martez stumbled backward, his eyes wide with shock as he teetered on the brink of defeat.

The crew watched breathlessly as Martez wavered, his strength ebbing away. With one last defiant roar, he collapsed to the ground, defeated. The battle was over.

Exhausted but victorious, Faizon Sr. and his crew gathered around Martez's fallen form, their faces flushed with exertion but also tinged with relief. They had faced down one of the greatest threats Timpanopia had ever known and emerged triumphant. But their victory was not just a personal one—it was a victory for their community, for the spirit of unity and resilience that had brought them together in their darkest hour.

As they stood together amidst the wreckage of the battle, Faizon Sr. and his crew knew that their journey was far from over. The road ahead would be fraught with challenges and dangers, but they were ready to face whatever lay ahead, united in their determination to protect their home and their way of life.

And so, with their heads held high and their spirits undaunted, Faizon Sr. and his crew prepared to face the uncertain future that awaited them, knowing that as long as they stood together, they would always be able to overcome whatever obstacles stood in their way.

# 17

## Belly Talk

The next morning, the sun shone brightly over Prismatica Square, casting long shadows from the tall buildings that surrounded the bustling plaza. Inside one of the largest buildings, a diverse group had gathered, their expressions a mixture of relief and determination. Faizon Sr., Gilbert, George Sr., Guy Biggums, Glenn, Charles, Riko, Marie, and all four boys—Faizon Jr., George Jr., Jeremiah, and Gabriel—were seated around a large table, the air filled with the low hum of conversation.

As the room settled into a focused quiet, Faizon Sr. stood, his presence commanding attention. "We've been through a lot these past few days," he began, his deep voice resonating through the room. "But we managed to defeat Martez and save our friends. Now, we need to ensure that nothing like this happens again. We still haven't caught the mastermind behind all of this—the Silence King."

George Sr. nodded in agreement. "We need to be proactive, not just reactive. We have to find the Silence King and deal with him before he can cause more harm."

Riko, her yellow eyes shining with determination, leaned forward. "I've been doing some research, and there are rumors about the Silence King's whereabouts. We need to gather more intelligence and track him down."

Marie, her stern expression softening slightly, added, "We also need to strengthen our defenses. The Silence King might have more allies. We need to be prepared for anything."

As they discussed their next steps, Faizon Jr. looked around the room, feeling a sense of pride and unity. They had all come together in their darkest hour

## CHAPTER 17

and emerged stronger. Now, they were ready to take on the Silence King and bring true peace to Timpanopia.

Gabriel, who had been quietly listening, spoke up. "I think we should start by reaching out to our allies in neighboring countries. They might have information on the Silence King's movements."

Jeremiah, always quick to see the practical side, nodded. "And we should also upgrade our technology. Better communication systems, more advanced security—we need to be prepared for anything."

Glenn, his big brown belly still a point of pride, chuckled. "And maybe we can find a way to use our unique talents to our advantage. After all, there's nothing quite like a belly drum roll to throw our enemies off balance."

Charles grinned, clapping Glenn on the back. "That's the spirit! Let's show them what Timpanopia is made of."

Guy Biggums, his presence imposing and reassuring, stood up. "Then it's settled. We start today. We reach out to our allies, upgrade our defenses, and track down the Silence King. We'll make sure Timpanopia remains a place of peace and harmony."

With their plan in place, the group felt a renewed sense of purpose. They had faced down one of the greatest threats to their community and come out victorious. Now, they were ready to find the Silence King and ensure the safety of their beloved Timpanopia.

As they began to break off into smaller groups to start their tasks, Faizon Jr. caught George Jr.'s eye. "You know," he said with a grin, "I think we make a pretty good team."

George Jr. smiled back, slapping his own big brown belly. "Yeah, we do. And we've got a lot more to accomplish."

With a shared sense of camaraderie and determination, the group set to work, ready to take on the Silence King and whatever challenges lay ahead.

In the days that followed their gathering, they dove into their respective tasks with a renewed sense of purpose and urgency. Each member of the group took on specific roles to ensure they left no stone unturned in their pursuit of the Silence King.

Gabriel and Riko took the lead in reaching out to neighboring countries. They contacted representatives from Roundrhythmia, Prismatica, Beatopia,

## BELLY TALK

and others to gather any intelligence on the Silence King's movements. Gabriel, with his knack for diplomacy, used his connections to secure meetings with influential figures, while Riko utilized her technological skills to set up secure communication channels.

"I've scheduled a video conference with the head of security in Beatopia," Gabriel reported one morning. "They've been experiencing strange disturbances similar to ours."

"Good work, Gabriel," Faizon Sr. replied. "We need all the information we can get."

Jeremiah and George Jr. focused on upgrading their technology and defenses. They worked tirelessly to improve their communication systems and bolster security measures. Jeremiah, with his expertise in technology, developed advanced encryption protocols to ensure their messages remained secure. George Jr., ever the hands-on type, installed new security cameras and motion detectors around their base.

"We need to make sure we're one step ahead of the Silence King," Jeremiah said as he tightened a bolt on a newly installed camera. "He won't catch us off guard again."

"Agreed," George Jr. responded, patting his belly. "And with these upgrades, we'll be ready for anything."

Marie and Faizon Jr. were tasked with gathering intelligence on the Silence King's potential hideouts. They poured over maps, analyzed patterns in recent disturbances, and cross-referenced sightings reported by their allies. Marie's keen analytical mind and Faizon Jr.'s attention to detail made them an effective team.

"We've narrowed it down to a few possible locations," Marie said, pointing to a map. "But we'll need to investigate further to confirm."

"Let's start with the most likely one," Faizon Jr. suggested. "The sooner we find him, the better."

Glenn, Charles, and Guy Biggums focused on training and preparing the team for any confrontations. They developed new strategies and honed their combat skills, incorporating their unique abilities into their plans. Glenn and Charles practiced the Big Brown Belly BOMBardment, perfecting their timing

## CHAPTER 17

and coordination. Guy Biggums led physical training sessions, ensuring everyone was in peak condition.

"We need to be ready for anything," Guy Biggums said, his voice booming. "The Silence King won't go down without a fight."

Faizon Sr. and Gilbert oversaw the entire operation, coordinating efforts and ensuring everyone stayed on track. They held daily briefings, reviewing progress and adjusting plans as needed. Faizon Sr.'s leadership and Gilbert's strategic mind kept the team focused and motivated.

"We're making good progress," Faizon Sr. said during one such briefing. "But we can't let our guard down. The Silence King is out there, and we need to be ready."

As the days turned into weeks, their hard work began to pay off. The intelligence they gathered from their allies pointed to a remote location on the outskirts of Beatopia. It was a place rarely visited, known for its treacherous terrain and hidden valleys. The perfect hideout for someone who wished to remain unseen.

"We've got a lead," Gabriel announced one morning, holding up a map. "Our contacts in Beatopia confirmed unusual activity in this area. It matches the patterns we've been tracking."

"Then that's where we need to go," Faizon Sr. declared. "We leave at first light."

With their plan in place and their preparations complete, the team felt a surge of determination. They were ready to track down the Silence King, confront him, and bring an end to his reign of terror. The journey ahead would be challenging, but together, they knew they could overcome any obstacle.

The next morning, as the sun began to rise, the team gathered at the edge of Prismatica Square. They loaded their supplies into Faizon Sr.'s van, their hearts filled with resolve. This was it—the final leg of their journey. They were ready to face the Silence King and ensure the safety of Timpanopia and its neighboring lands.

As the van rumbled to life and they set off towards the unknown, the team felt a renewed sense of unity and purpose. They were a family, bound not by blood, but by their shared experiences and their unwavering commitment to

## BELLY TALK

each other and their home. And together, they would see this mission through to the end.



As the van sped down the road towards Beatopia, the atmosphere inside was charged with a mixture of tension and camaraderie. Conversations bubbled up, some lighthearted, others more serious. George Jr., seated in the backseat with Faizon Jr., Jeremiah, and Gabriel, decided to break the ice.

"You know," said George Jr., "if our bellies had an identity of their own, they'd likely identify as timpani drums, amirite?"

To accentuate his point and the hilarity of his joke, he slapped his belly, still bigger and rounder from his experiment with the Big Belly Drum Drone, and quickly sucked it in hard; the result was a sharp timpani glissando sound accompanied by a slight fart.

Faizon Jr. giggled along with George Jr., remembering their conversation that had followed George Jr. playing on Faizon Jr.'s stomach. "You're not wrong," Faizon Jr. chuckled supportively. "Our bellies *are* basically timpani drums in their own right. They're large and round, like timpani drums. And the bigger they are, the lower their pitch, just like timpani drums! And," he started beating his belly very softly with his hands to create a soft roll, "according to your hypothesis, they might even have those metal strings inside that give them that nice, round sound, just like timpani drums!"

"You ask me," said George Jr., his belly bouncing back to its round, intimidating size with a soft, round timpani sound that complemented Faizon Jr.'s softer roll, "our bellies are basically an upgrade to actual timpani drums. Unlike timpani drums, playing on them with mallets allows us to manipulate their size."

"Ah, yes," Gabriel sighed, "the size manipulation. To me, personally, there's something—*exciting*—about witnessing a tummy drum roll being played on a growing round belly, especially when it's happening to your own belly."

## CHAPTER 17

"Exactly!" Faizon Jr. agreed. "But of course, the real thrill is when the belly somehow gets even bigger than its intimidating size and becomes absolutely humongous! I've already seen that happen to so many big brown bellies," he said, stopping his stomach drumming and counting off his dirty fingers, "including myself, my father, my uncle Audito, Radames, and even Elijah from that restaurant—what was it called again, Timpani Temptations?—and yesterday, we basically had the thrill of our lives seeing it happen to both Glenn and Charles!"

"The only big bellies you haven't seen get past their intimidating size yet at this point are mine, my father's, and my uncle's," Gabriel chuckled, referring to Gilbert and Guy Biggums respectfully. "Our bellies are quite different from yours. It might be due to unique genetic traits or the environments we're accustomed to. For one, my belly doesn't exhibit the same level of gravitational defiance when it's in its intimidating form. And also, it can't expand beyond its intimidating size—not *yet*, at least. But at least we can make rolls on any instrument—and our big bellies—sound so tense that the listener might feel nature calling afterwards."

"Then again, I wonder how our bellies even grow in the first place? Also, speaking of Glenn and Charles, when their bellies got huge, I thought they'd explode! Your drumming was so dramatic and thrilling and scary that I almost had an accident, George Jr. Please don't play your tummy drum rolls so dramatically next time; my heart was pounding!"

"Hey, I was scared too!" George Jr. laughed. "My hands were literally shaking with fear as I played. I could've played a roll at the same pace using just one hand, the way they were trembling. And to answer your question about the expansion of the bellies, I think the strings inside our bellies react to felt mallets as if the felt is a stimulus. Then they either expand and get heavier or get smaller, depending on the desire of the person with the growing stomach."

"Wait, are there actually strings inside our bellies?" Gabriel exclaimed.

"Haven't confirmed it yet, but I'm sure there are. I mean, we're humans, and I don't think Earthling humans can play their bellies like timpani drums the way we can, no matter how big they are, so Timpanopians *must* be built differently. Maybe the strings are organized in a certain way—I'm guessing there's one connecting my belly button and my... well, my butthole, I guess—and I also

## BELLY TALK

believe there's some sort of special coating around the inside of our bellies that makes them seem and sound so hollow and metallic on the inside—even though they're clearly the opposite. I mean how can it be hollow when it's full of food and strings? Plus, it can't be metallic if you can easily change its shape by playing with it. Anyway, I'm getting a bit too far with that one, but I also have another guess about how the belly growth works, something to do with the combination of the subcutaneous fat that makes up 75% of the inside of our bellies and the visceral fat at the bottom but—"

"Do you think you could tell us about the AnyRoll ability?" said Glenn, who had been eavesdropping from near the front. "I'd like to know more about what me and Charles have gotten ourselves into."

"Oh, please," George Jr. scoffed, rolling his bespectacled eyes. "Only real ones know that the doctors who *pretend* to inject the AnyRoll ability into you after giving you that stupid sleep gas—they just attach a very small special device to your ear that injects it automatically so *they* won't have to. Then you wake up feeling heavy as hell but under the false impression that you've just been through a successful procedure. Yeah, the earpieces make you believe stuff too, depending on what's in them. Crazy, right? And even after you notice the earpiece, change your mind, and take it off, the ability will stick with you until it wears off on its own, if it ever does. Their little masquerade was exposed through a review on the Timpanopia business websites a year ago—a review read by only two people: me, and the writer themselves. And it had pictures and supportive information to prove their claim as well."

"You read reviews?" said Jeremiah. "Since when?"

"Uh, since I started using the Internet. I like practicing detective work, just in case all-time sports star or world-class gamer doesn't work out—which it should—so therefore, I believe that it's my job to uncover the truth. I *always* read reviews whenever I see fit."

"Well, speaking of 'fit', you *do* have the body of an unfit gamer, all right," Charles muttered with a chuckle. "Dunno about 'all-time sports star', though...."

"Leave the kid alone, Charles," Glenn laughed. "You can't be lecturing anybody about their body with that immense belly of yours. It's so big, I can't even tell if that's its normal size or its intimidating size—"

## CHAPTER 17

"It's both," Charles rumbled, his deep voice cutting through Glenn's jab like a cut-off stroke after a timpani drum roll. "My belly is so huge that its normal size is also its intimidating size."

"Well, mine too!" Glenn gloated, patting his own belly proudly. "Mine's even bigger than yours. You call *that* a belly?"

Faizon Sr. tried to suppress his laughter, but he was unsuccessful. Charles glared at him suspiciously.

"What're you laughing at?"

"Nothing, Faizon Sr. Giggled, letting go of the wheel with one hand to rub the top of his own large brown belly, which was twice the size of either Glenn's or Charles'. "You wanna know something, kiddos? Me and Audito applied for the AnyRoll ability—the *limited* AnyRoll ability, which means our bellies don't react to any kind of timpani drum roll—except if it's being played with the good ol' felt mallets directly on our bellies—unless we're *really* excited or nervous about something. A weird limitation, if you ask me, but we decided not to spring for the full ability right away, just in case—well, you saw how fast Audito's belly was growing during the concert," he chuckled. "And don't forget my dream about the encounter with BOMBarder."

"Audito must've been really nervous," Riko muttered.

"I haven't seen the big man in a while," Marie spoke up. "How's he doing?"

"He's fine," Faizon Sr. responded. "He's gaining a lot of weight even in his normal size. Heck, his favorite pinstripe suit and tie don't really fit him like they used to—"

"I'm actually surprised it ever fit him at all," Marie chuckled, looking a little reminiscent. "I miss his hugs—they're like hugging a grizzly bear, because his hugs are so damn strong!"

"You should try my dad," Faizon Jr. suggested. "His arms are much stronger, and from what I've seen—since he loves being shirtless—he's got a furry chest. He fits the description of a 'grizzly bear' more than Audito."

Faizon Sr. gasped mockingly, clapping his free hand to his chest (which indeed had a considerable amount of hair). "Wow, son. Audito would not be happy."

Everyone laughed, the kids clutching their stomachs.

## BELLY TALK

"I'm jokin'," Faizon Sr. laughed, waving his free hand like it was nothing. "A lot of us are grizzly bears!"

"Naw, more like elephants!" Glenn chortled. "Big fat elephants! Why else would Martez have bombarded us with those darned elephant cages? Thing is, we're Black—well, *most* of us—and rather than large trunks for trumpeting, we have large bellies for drumming. Oh, and speaking of large bellies..."

"He's gonna brag," George Sr. whispered warningly. And indeed, Glenn looked ready to start boasting. Which he did.

"You know," he began, lifting the hem of his shirt to reveal his big brown belly, "this right here is a massive form of power." He gave his belly a proud pat, and it jiggled slightly with the motion.

Charles, never one to back down from a challenge, quickly followed suit. "Nah, mine is even bigger," he said, hoisting his own shirt to display his equally impressive belly. "Just look at it!"

"No way!" Faizon Jr. exclaimed from the back, lifting his shirt to show off his belly. "Mine is the biggest here!"

The van was soon filled with overlapping voices as the friendly competition escalated. The group's debate turned into a cacophony of unintelligible arguments, each one trying to outdo the other in boasting about their belly size, but they had barely gotten two seconds in when—

"Y'all *better* not start arguing," Faizon Sr. commanded, slamming his free hand on the wheel for emphasis. The van went silent for a moment, the only sound being the hum of the engine and the road beneath them.

Glenn, not one to let a conversation end abruptly, smirked and said, "The only thing you have that I have that's bigger than my own," he paused for dramatic effect, "is your *gyatt*."

Charles burst out laughing. "You act as if you don't have a gyatt yourself."

"I have no gyatt," Riko interjected from the back, her voice cutting through the laughter. She was leaning against the window, her headphones slightly askew on her head. "Seriously, nothing there."

Everyone chuckled, the mood lightening further.

Faizon Sr., still focused on the road but enjoying the banter, chimed in. "No matter what y'all say, no one's gyatt is bigger than Gilbert's, to be honest." His

## CHAPTER 17

voice carried a tone of finality that made everyone nod in agreement, acknowledging the truth in his words.

Gilbert, sitting beside Faizon Sr., just shook his head with a grin. "Ain't that the truth," he said, giving his own belly a playful pat.

The van continued its journey, the conversations inside shifting from playful banter to discussions about their upcoming mission. But for a moment, they had shared a laugh and lightened the burden of the task ahead. It was moments like these that kept their spirits high and their bond strong, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

"How are things back in *your* world, Marie?" Faizon Sr. asked.

"Well, back at Prismatica, we've had an adventure of our own\*," Marie smiled. "The day before your concert—and yes, all of Prismatica knew about your concert, and we wished we could come—we saved Prismatica from some rando who had plans to steal the Master Prism and use its power for evil."

"Really?" Faizon Sr. said, interested.

"Yep. So basically, it all started when these two dudes—one Russian and one businesslike—were running around Prismatica Square worrying their thick heads off about the Master Prism. They found a lost teenage boy, and then they—the two dudes and the boy—encountered me interrogating a guy. His name was Gilbert, but since there's already a Gilbert here, let's call him Chubby."

"I remember Gilbert," the Timpanopian Gilbert said. "Or Chubby, whatever you want to call him. I met him during our vacation to Prismatica last year, remember? We had so much in common. We even *looked* alike."

"So then we all traveled—me, the lost boy, the two dudes, and Chubby—through Electropica and to this wasteland, where we met this guy named Omniscience. He revealed to us that his name was William, and that he had no idea who he was or where he was from. He then battled us, and of course, we emerged victorious. I mean, what'd you expect? The bad guys *always* lose."

"Then we took a boat to Techniprisma, Omniscience's former headquarters, where he sold crystal shards from the mines. He owned the fifth prism, and

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\* If you still haven't figured out the game this is referencing, it's *Rhythm Prism: Community Mix*.

## BELLY TALK

when we fought him for it, he *finally* realized he was no match for any of us. He should've known from the start, since he thinks he knows everything.

"Long story short, we saved the civilized Chromatica from its leader's stepbrother, Techno-Jayne, who we were also technically saving, as he was infected by Technoskater, a spirit that Deathtrap—the main man behind all this—had temporarily transformed himself into.

"So the two brothers joined us on our journey to find the last two prisms. Then we encountered Deathtrap, went through his insane courses, defeated him, and reassembled the Master Prism. Boom, a happy ending for you right there. All's well that ends well."

"What happened to the others?" asked Gabriel.

"Well, William's currently working on construction for his own project—the 'Community Mix'—and he's also been recovering from his amnesia. He's doing pretty well now. And Chubby started training with me and my crew, and also lost some of the cake..."

And as the van continued to rumble along the road, they approached the entrance to a large cavern, its gaping maw inviting yet foreboding. Faizon Sr. peered inside the hollow cavern, his gaze scanning the darkness for any signs of danger. After a moment of careful observation, he nodded in satisfaction and declared, "Clear. Let's go."

The atmosphere inside the van shifted subtly, tension coiling like a snake ready to strike. Despite the bravado of their earlier banter, the reality of their mission hung heavy in the air. Each member of the group steeled themselves for what lay ahead, their expressions determined and resolute.

With Faizon Sr.'s command echoing in their minds, they prepared to venture into the depths of the cavern, knowing that their journey would test not only their physical prowess but also their courage and camaraderie. As the van rolled to a stop at the entrance, they exchanged silent nods of reassurance, drawing strength from the unity of their purpose.

With a collective breath, they stepped out of the van and into the unknown, ready to face whatever challenges awaited them in the shadows of the cavern.

# 18

## The Cavern

**A**s they ventured deeper into the cavern, the conversation among the group shifted from the weighty matters of their mission to lighter topics, albeit with a touch of humor and curiosity.

Glenn leaned in towards Gilbert, his voice barely above a whisper, "But really, how big is your gyatt?"

Gilbert chuckled softly, shaking his head. "Now's not exactly the best time for gyatt discussions, Glenn. Let's stick to talking about big bellies instead."

Meanwhile, George Jr., his curiosity piqued, interjected with a question of his own, "Is it true that playing a decrescendo on my big belly will make it smaller? Because, despite my hypothesis, I haven't actually tried it yet, and if it stays this big forever, I won't be able to play basketball again."

Faizon Jr., ever the voice of reason, reassured him, "Don't worry, George Jr. Your big brown belly won't stay big forever as long as you remember to decrescendo on it. But hey, if you're comfortable with it like that, that's perfectly fine too."

With a nod of understanding, George Jr. took matters into his own hands, quite literally. He began to shake his big brown belly softly, the rhythmic motion filling the cavern with the soothing sound of a soft rumbling timpani drum roll in Bb, echoing off the stone walls and easing the tension among the group.

"According to the map, we go... this way," he declared, pointing towards a shadowy passage.

George Jr. let go of his belly with his left hand and adjusted his glasses with a thoughtful expression, his gaze flickering around the cavern. "This place is

## THE CAVERN

dark," he remarked, his voice carrying a note of curiosity as he continued to shake his big brown belly with his right hand with practiced ease.

Faizon Sr. nodded in agreement with George Jr.'s observation, his brow furrowing slightly as he continued to scan the dimly lit surroundings. Faizon Jr., however, couldn't resist a playful jab, muttering under his breath, "No kidding, Captain Obvious."

As they approached an opening in the cavern, George Jr. momentarily ceased his belly drumming, releasing his grip on his stomach with his right hand and delivering a soft slap to the other side. The resulting round sound resonated through the air for a few seconds before he resumed his grip on both sides of his big brown belly with both hands, bringing the sound to a gentle end. "What is this place?" he wondered aloud, his curiosity piqued by their surroundings.

The sudden transition from darkness to blinding light as they came closer to the shadowy passage they had been approaching left them all momentarily disoriented, their eyes struggling to adjust to the sudden change in illumination. As the brightness gradually subsided, they found themselves standing in a place that bore little resemblance to the cavern.

It was as if they had stepped into another realm entirely. The chamber before them was unlike anything they had ever seen, reminiscent of the surreal landscape Faizon Sr. had encountered in his dream—the same dream that had seemed to replay itself during their time in Martez's headquarters.

The room was a perfect cuboid, its walls stretching endlessly upwards like towering pillars of television static. Faizon Sr. craned his neck, but all he could see above was a featureless expanse of white—a ceiling that seemed to extend infinitely, defying the laws of space and perception.

"What in the world..." Faizon Sr. muttered, his voice echoing faintly against the surreal surroundings.

George Jr. stood beside Faizon Sr., his rectangular glasses slightly askew from the sudden disorientation. Despite the bewildering environment surrounding them, he maintained a calm demeanor, his curiosity piqued by the strange chamber they found themselves in.

"Quite the unexpected turn of events," George Jr. remarked, adjusting his glasses with a practiced gesture. "It's as if we've stumbled into a realm beyond our own reality—a place of surreal dimensions."

## CHAPTER 18

Faizon Sr. nodded, his brow furrowed in deep contemplation. "Indeed, George Jr. This place feels both familiar and utterly foreign at the same time. It's as if we've entered a realm where the rules of our world no longer apply."

He glanced around the chamber, taking in its bizarre architecture and the strange, pulsating energy that seemed to permeate the air. "But we mustn't let ourselves be overwhelmed by the unknown," Faizon Sr. continued, his voice steady despite the uncertainty of their circumstances. "We've faced challenges before, and we'll face this one together."

With a determined expression, he turned to the rest of the group. "Let's proceed cautiously. Whatever lies ahead, we'll confront it as a team."

George Jr. resumed the rumbling roll on his big brown belly. The tension built as they walked further, until—

CRACK.

Faizon Sr.'s muscles tensed as he recognized the imposing figure that had just appeared before them. BOMBarder's presence seemed to fill the chamber, his gaze fixed on the group with an intensity that sent shivers down their spines.

"You!" Faizon Jr. exclaimed, his voice echoing in the cavernous space. His hand instinctively went to his belly, ready to defend himself against any threat.

BOMBarder's expression remained unreadable as he regarded them. "You've come far," he rumbled, his voice deep and resonant. "But you cannot stop what has already been set in motion."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his eyes narrowed with determination. "We'll see about that," he declared, his voice steady despite the tension in the air. "We're here to put an end to your schemes once and for all."

BOMBarder's lips curled into a menacing smile. "You may try," he replied cryptically, before disappearing into the shadows with a flicker of movement.

The group exchanged wary glances, their senses on high alert as they continued deeper into the unknown. Whatever awaited them in this strange realm, they were prepared to face it head-on.

As they pressed forward, George Jr.'s rhythmic drumming filled the air, a steady pulse guiding their steps through the uncertain darkness. Glenn's belly, ever expanding, bounced with each movement.

Faizon Sr. cast a glance back at Glenn, noting the remarkable growth of his belly. "Keep it up, Glenn," he encouraged, his voice carrying through the

## THE CAVERN

cavernous space. "We'll need all the strength we can muster for what lies ahead. Just don't let it get too big, or... you know..."

Glenn nodded, determination etched on his features despite the weight of his burgeoning belly. "I'm ready," he affirmed, his voice resolute.

With each passing moment, the tension grew thicker, the air heavy with anticipation. But they pressed on, united in their resolve to confront whatever challenges awaited them in this mysterious realm.

George Jr. eventually found himself walking alongside Glenn, the continuous rumbling of his big brown belly resonating through the cavern. With a mischievous grin, he let go of his belly with his left hand, still shaking it with his right, and poked Glenn's growing belly. "Big brown belly."

Glenn chuckled and poked George Jr.'s big brown belly in return, their camaraderie lightening the tension.

"This way," directed Faizon Sr., leading them onward.

They continued their march, George Jr. maintaining his rhythmic roll, and Glenn's belly steadily expanding. As they approached another passage, George Jr., his eyes closed and trusting the roll of his big brown belly to guide him, suddenly felt his belly collide with what felt like another belly. The collision produced a deep, resonant *boom* that echoed through the chamber.

George Jr.'s eyes snapped open, and he saw another large man standing before him, their bellies now pressed together.

"Who—" George Jr. started, but before he could finish, the figure stepped back, revealing the unmistakable form of BOMBarder.

"You!" Faizon Sr. exclaimed, recognizing the adversary who had caused them so much trouble.

BOMBarder's eyes gleamed with a mixture of amusement and challenge. "You just don't know when to quit, do you?" he taunted, his voice a deep rumble that matched the timpani roll of George Jr.'s belly. He began to vigorously shake his own massive midsection, the sound intensifying and reverberating through the chamber. Glenn's belly, already growing, accelerated in size, the sound waves fueling its expansion.

George Jr. gritted his teeth, refusing to back down. He continued his roll, the rhythm unwavering despite the growing tension. "We won't stop until we find the Silence King," he declared, his voice steady and determined.

## CHAPTER 18

Glenn, feeling the effects of BOMBarder's roll, placed his hands on his expanding belly, trying to control its rapid growth. "We need to focus," he said, his voice strained but resolute. "We can't let him overpower us."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his presence a calming influence amidst the chaos. "Stay together," he commanded, his voice cutting through the noise. "We can do this."

BOMBarder laughed, a deep, rumbling sound that seemed to shake the very walls around them. "Let's see if you can handle this," he challenged, increasing the intensity of his roll. The sound grew louder, more powerful, and Glenn's belly swelled even faster.

But George Jr. refused to relent. He adjusted his grip on his belly, using both hands now to maintain the powerful roll. He closed his eyes again, focusing on the rhythm, letting it guide him, letting it ground him.

Glenn, inspired by George Jr.'s resolve, found his own strength. He matched BOMBarder's intensity, his hands moving over his belly in sync with the timpani roll, his growth stabilizing even as the sound waves battered against him.

Together, they faced BOMBarder, their combined rolls creating a symphony of defiance. The chamber seemed to vibrate with their resolve, the very air thick with the power of their drumming.

Finally, with a final, mighty roll, George Jr. and Glenn synchronized their beats perfectly, creating a wave of sound so powerful it seemed to push back against BOMBarder. The villain's eyes widened in shock as he staggered backward, the force of their combined power overwhelming him.

"You can't stop us," George Jr. said as he continued his roll, his voice a low, steady growl. "We're stronger together."

BOMBarder, realizing he had underestimated them, scowled but didn't retreat. Instead, he let out a low, rumbling laugh. "You think you can defeat me with a belly drum roll?" He pounded his chest, creating a thunderous sound that reverberated through the chamber. "I've mastered the art of the belly drum long before you even dreamed of it."

Glenn, his belly now almost touching the floor, nodded at George Jr., who increased the intensity of his drumming. The air grew thick with the sound of their combined rhythms, a powerful symphony that filled every corner of the chamber.

## THE CAVERN

With a final, decisive beat, George Jr. stopped, his hands resting on his massive belly. The silence that followed was deafening, the tension palpable.

"This isn't over," BOMBarder snarled, preparing to launch into another vigorous roll.

But Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his gaze steady and unyielding. "It is over," he said firmly. "We've got what it takes to bring you down. And we will."

BOMBarder, now visibly shaken but far from defeated, straightened up, his massive frame looming over them. "You think you've won? This is just the beginning," he growled, his voice reverberating through the chamber.

Faizon Sr. narrowed his eyes, stepping forward to face him directly. "We've come too far to turn back now," he said, his voice calm but resolute. "We're ready for whatever you throw at us."

George Jr., still rolling his belly with unwavering determination, moved closer to Glenn. "Stay focused," he whispered. "We can do this."

BOMBarder smirked and began to shake his belly with renewed vigor, the sound building once more into a thunderous crescendo. The walls seemed to pulse with the intensity of his roll, and Glenn's belly, already immense, began to grow even larger.

But George Jr. wasn't about to let that happen. He increased the pace of his roll, matching BOMBarder's intensity beat for beat. The air around them crackled with the clash of their rhythms, each roll a defiant statement of their strength.

Faizon Sr. turned to the rest of the group, his eyes meeting each of theirs in turn. "We need to create a counter-rhythm," he said. "Something that can disrupt his power."

Gabriel, who had been watching intently, nodded. "A counter-rhythm... like a syncopation," he suggested, already tapping out a beat on his own belly.

"Exactly," Faizon Sr. agreed. "Everyone, follow Gabriel's lead."

One by one, they began to drum on their own bellies, creating a complex, syncopated rhythm that interwove with George Jr.'s steady roll. The combined sound was chaotic yet strangely harmonious, a powerful counter to BOMBarder's assault.

## CHAPTER 18

BOMBarder's expression shifted from confidence to frustration as the new rhythm began to take hold. He tried to maintain his roll, but the syncopation disrupted his focus, throwing him off balance.

Glenn, feeling the effect of their combined efforts, managed to stabilize his growth. He placed his hands firmly on his belly and began to roll with purpose, contributing to the counter-rhythm with a deep, resonant beat.

The chamber filled with their combined sound, a symphony of defiance that seemed to push back against BOMBarder's power. The walls, once pulsing with his rhythm, now seemed to resonate with their own.

With a final, synchronized effort, they all struck a powerful, unified beat, the sound echoing like a thunderclap through the chamber. BOMBarder staggered backward, his own rhythm faltering as the counter-rhythm overwhelmed him.

"No!" he roared, his voice echoing with fury. "This can't be happening!"

But it was. The power of their combined rhythm was too much for him to withstand. With a final, desperate effort, he tried to regain control, but the force of their sound was too strong.

BOMBarder fell to his knees, the mighty roll of his belly ceasing as he was overcome by their combined power. The chamber fell silent, the echoes of their victory lingering in the air.

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, looking down at their defeated foe. "It's over," he said quietly. "You underestimated us."

George Jr., breathing heavily but triumphant, looked around at his friends. "We did it," he said, a smile breaking across his face.

Glenn, his own belly now returning to normal, nodded. "Yeah," he agreed. "We did."

Together, they had faced one of their greatest challenges and emerged victorious. But they knew their journey wasn't over. The Silence King was still out there, and they had to find him. But for now, they had won a crucial battle, and their resolve was stronger than ever.

As they paused to catch their breath, Faizon Sr. nudged his son. "You know, seeing BOMBarder sprawled out like that makes me realize just how fat he really is. I mean, he's a clone of me, but with all that muscle, he's packed on some serious weight."

## THE CAVERN

Faizon Jr. chuckled, rubbing his own large belly. "Yeah, Dad, but he's got nothing on you. You've got the perfect mix of muscle and belly. It's like having the best of both worlds."

Gabriel, still catching his breath, joined in. "I don't know, Faizon Jr. BOMBarder's belly is impressive, but yours definitely takes the cake—literally and figuratively."

George Jr. adjusted his glasses and added, "Speaking of bellies, I think we've all got a pretty good collection here. I mean, look at us. We're like a bunch of walking timpani drums."

Gilbert laughed, patting his own stomach. "You got that right, George. I think our bellies have seen more action today than our fists. And you know what? I'm getting hungry just thinking about it."

Jeremiah grinned. "All this talk about bellies is making me think about food. I love myself a good Timpani Taco. There's nothing like a huge, stuffed taco to make your belly happy."

Faizon Sr. nodded in agreement. "Timpani Tacos are the best. And after today, I think we all deserve a feast. How about we hit up Timpani Temptations later? My treat."

Faizon Jr.'s eyes lit up. "That sounds amazing, Dad. I could go for about ten of those tacos right now."

Gabriel laughed. "Make that fifteen for me. I think I've earned it after jumping off BOMBarder's belly like a trampoline. Did you hear that sound? It was like a perfect timpani drum roll."

George Jr. grinned. "Yeah, and the burp and fart combo was a nice touch. Classic BOMBarder. He's like a giant musical instrument."

Gilbert leaned back, stretching. "Well, if we're talking about food, let's not forget the Timpani Tower Burger. That thing is a masterpiece. It's got layers upon layers of everything you could ever want in a burger."

Jeremiah's mouth watered at the thought. "Oh man, the Timpani Tower Burger is legendary. It's so big, you have to hold it with both hands, and even then, it feels like it might topple over. Perfect for a big, round belly like mine."

Faizon Sr. chuckled. "Looks like we're all in agreement. After we deal with the Silence King, we're heading straight to Timpani Temptations. We've earned it."

## CHAPTER 18

Faizon Jr. clapped his hands together. "It's a deal then. But first, let's make sure we're ready for whatever comes next. The Silence King won't know what hit him when a bunch of well-fed Timpanopians come marching in."

Gabriel couldn't resist; he jumped onto BOMBarder's big brown belly before bouncing back; the impact caused a huge muffled fart from BOMBarder's probably large butt.

"Man, BOMBarder really let himself go," Faizon Jr. said, shaking his head in disbelief. "He's even bigger than you now, Dad!"

Faizon Sr. chuckled, rubbing his own belly. "Well, he is my clone, after all. I guess all those years in the military didn't help with his eating habits."

"Seriously, though," Gabriel said, laughing as he bounced off BOMBarder's belly again. "How does he even move around with a gut that huge?"

"It's like he's carrying a whole drum set around with him," George Jr. added, his eyes wide with amusement. "Every step he takes must sound like a marching band."

"Imagine the food bill for someone that size," Gilbert chimed in. "He must eat enough to feed a small army."

"Speaking of armies, how did he ever pass his fitness tests?" Jeremiah asked, scratching his head. "He looks like he should be rolling instead of marching."

"I bet they had to make special accommodations for him," Faizon Sr. speculated. "Maybe they had him train on a special course designed for people with, uh, larger frames."

"Or maybe he just intimidated everyone into passing him," Faizon Jr. suggested with a grin. "I mean, who would dare fail a guy that could sit on you and crush you?"

"Good point," Gabriel laughed. "I wouldn't want to be the one to tell him he didn't pass."

George Jr. giggled. "Can you imagine the look on the instructor's face when BOMBarder walked in for his physical exam? They probably thought they were being pranked."

Gilbert nodded. "It's a wonder he didn't break the scale when they weighed him."

Jeremiah smirked. "Or the treadmill when he ran."

## THE CAVERN

"Or the obstacle course," Faizon Jr. added. "They'd need extra reinforcement for every piece of equipment."

"Honestly, though," Faizon Sr. said, looking at his clone with a mix of pride and exasperation, "it's kind of impressive. It takes a lot of dedication to maintain a physique like that. Even if it's not exactly the kind of dedication the military usually values."

Gabriel nodded thoughtfully. "Yeah, he's definitely unique. I'll give him that."

"Unique is one way to put it," George Jr. agreed. "A walking, talking timpani drum is another."

"Speaking of which," Gilbert said, smirking at Gabriel, "you really enjoy bouncing on his belly, don't you?"

Gabriel grinned sheepishly. "It's just too tempting. Besides, how often do you get to use someone's stomach as a trampoline?"

"Not very often," Jeremiah admitted, shaking his head with a laugh. "I don't think I've ever seen anything like this."

"Well, let's just hope we don't have to face any more opponents with bellies like his," Faizon Jr. said. "I don't think my nerves can handle it."

"Or our sense of smell," George Jr. added, wrinkling his nose. "BOMBarder's gas attacks are something else."

"Agreed," Faizon Sr. said, clapping a hand on his son's shoulder. "But we did it. We took him down, and now we can focus on finding the Silence King."

"Right," Gabriel said, his expression growing serious. "This was just one battle. We've got a lot more ahead of us."

"But we'll face them together," Gilbert said firmly. "And we'll win."

"And who knows," Jeremiah added with a grin, "maybe we'll even get a few more laughs along the way."

"Count on it," George Jr. said, giving a thumbs up.

And as they moved forward past the giant military figure now sprawled across the floor in front of them, Gabriel made extra sure to jump off BOMBarder's big brown belly like a trampoline, causing the belly to produce a nice, round timpani drum sound as well as a burp and a fart from BOMBarder.

But before they could move any further, a sarcastic voice echoed from behind them. "Oh, very good. Very, very well done."

# 19

## The Extra Variants

They turned around to see a large Black man standing before them, his presence dominating the scene. His dark-brown skin, reminiscent of rich espresso, gleamed with a healthy sheen under the ambient light. Broad shoulders and thick arms suggested strength and endurance, while his round, full belly protruded prominently, stretching his torso into a grand curve that was both impressive and commanding.

His dark, curly hair framed a face marked by a thick, well-groomed beard that added an air of ruggedness to his look. His deep-set, thoughtful eyes reflected a wisdom and kindness that softened his otherwise formidable appearance. Large hands rested casually at his sides, yet his relaxed stance belied an undeniable sense of readiness, as if he could spring into action at any moment. The combination of his dark-brown skin and the fullness of his figure gave him a majestic, almost statuesque quality, making him a striking and memorable figure in any setting.

"Who are you?" asked Faizon Sr., his eyes narrowing.

"I'm Big Mack. You know, your bigger variant from your Obese Orchestra app."

"Oh, no..." muttered Marie, who almost everyone had forgotten was there.

But Faizon Sr. couldn't shake the feeling something was off. "But Big Mack was much bigger," he observed. "You can't be Big Mack."

The man chuckled, a deep, resonant sound that seemed to vibrate through the cavern. "I'm a smaller variant of the Big Mack variant. But I'm not alone."

### THE EXTRA VARIANTS

As they absorbed the imposing presence of Big Mack, the weight of his words hung in the air. The tension was palpable, and everyone instinctively braced themselves for what was to come.

Big Mack—or Regular Mack—began to shake his big brown belly to make a soft rumbling timpani drum roll in the same way George Jr. had done. Glenn's big brown belly jiggled slightly and began to swell afresh.

The chamber suddenly began to undergo a gradual transformation. The room seemed to expand, as if everyone inside was part of a geometric dilation, their positions shifting from a central point. The floor beneath their feet stretched and grew, pushing the walls back as it expanded. The space around them widened, creating an almost surreal sense of increasing vastness.

The walls themselves began to darken, their staticky appearance shifting to a black color. The floor transformed into a dark navy blue, and random, 80s-styled neon shapes—triangles, circles, and zigzags—appeared on the surfaces, setting the stage for a dynamic and otherworldly encounter. The walls moved farther and farther away, nearly plunging the group into darkness as they receded into the pitch-black void.

A distant, booming stomp reverberated through the arena, echoing ominously. Regular Mack continued his roll, the undercurrents of the room's transformation growing more intense, mirrored by the swelling of Glenn's belly. Another powerful stomp resonated through the cavernous space.

Then, from the shadows, emerged the real Big Mack. Towering at 7'1", he loomed over everyone, his presence commanding and overwhelming. His incredibly large belly stretched before him, and he stood even taller than Baldwin, casting a long, intimidating shadow across the room.

"Wh-what are you doing?" asked Faizon Jr., his voice trembling with a mix of awe and fear.

"What BOMBarder should have done the moment he ran into you," replied Regular Mack. "I'm summoning all variants from every virtual orchestra app produced in Timpanopia—including the real Big Mack," he added darkly, his roll intensifying as he said this, each beat resonating with growing power. "Wasn't that who you wanted to see, anyway?"

Big Mack stepped forward, his massive form making the floor shake with each step. His belly, larger than life, seemed almost sentient as it moved with

## CHAPTER 19

him, a testament to his formidable presence. The soft rumbling roll from Regular Mack's belly was now a thunderous cadence, matching the heavy, deliberate steps of Big Mack as he approached.

The atmosphere grew charged with tension, the darkened, neon-flecked chamber echoing with the ominous rhythm of impending confrontation. Each step of Big Mack brought him closer, the sheer magnitude of his presence magnifying the stakes of the encounter. The room seemed to pulse with the energy of their combined rolls, setting the stage for a showdown unlike any other.

Then a faint, gong-like sound echoed through the expansive chamber, resembling a distant bomb going off. A second and a half later, it resounded again, more clearly pronounced this time. When the third hit played, the group turned to look at Gilbert, who raised his hands to show he wasn't playing on his shield.

A loud gong hit reverberated through the room, shaking its very foundations. Soon after, the occasional soft stomping sound added to the cacophony. The room began to fill with a golden light, shimmering and growing brighter with each passing moment. It looked like the same golden version of Faizon Sr. that he had encountered in his dream—except it was not Gold Faizon Sr. This was Gold Gilbert, a radiant figure from the app brought to life.

Gold Gilbert walked toward them with heavy, deliberate steps, each one sending ripples through the air. With every step, he beat his big golden belly with a mallet held in his hand, creating a resonant, powerful sound that seemed to command attention. His bright, golden skin illuminated the otherwise dark room, casting an almost blinding light that forced everyone to shield their eyes momentarily.

"Gold Gilbert," Faizon Sr. muttered in disbelief, the glow reflecting off his own large brown belly. "How is this even possible?"

Gold Gilbert continued his advance, his presence dominating the room as he approached. His golden form glowed with an ethereal light, and the rhythmic beating of his belly created a mesmerizing, almost hypnotic effect. Each gong-like hit sent vibrations through the air, resonating with the soft stomps of his feet, and filling the space with an overwhelming sense of awe and power.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

"Prepare yourselves," said Glenn, his voice trembling slightly as he tried to steady his growing belly with his hands. "This is going to be intense."

Gold Gilbert stopped a few feet from the group, his golden eyes scanning each of them with an intensity that was both unnerving and compelling. He raised his mallet high, and with a final, resounding gong hit, the light around him intensified to a blinding flash, casting the room into an almost surreal brightness. The tension in the air was palpable, the atmosphere charged with the impending clash of forces.

The stage was set for an epic confrontation, the Gold Glow illuminating the faces of Faizon Sr., Glenn, George Jr., and the rest of the group as they prepared to face this new, formidable challenge. The echoes of the gongs and stoms reverberated through the chamber, a reminder of the power they were up against, and the resolve they needed to summon within themselves to overcome it.

"These are the extra variants from the Obese Orchestra app," Regular Mack announced, ending his rumbling roll at last. He smirked at Faizon Sr.'s group, relishing their evident apprehension. "Oh, and let's not forget BOMBarder and the other doppelgängers..."

He resumed shaking his big brown belly, and BOMBarder, who had been momentarily still, rose once more, joining in the belly shaking with Regular Mack. The room reverberated with their combined rolls, an ominous symphony of impending confrontation.

As the group stood tense and wary, two other figures emerged from the shadows, their forms becoming clearer with each step. They looked uncannily like Baldwin and Audit. But these were not the familiar faces of their friends; these were Taiko Audit and Bass Drum Baldwin, powerful doppelgängers from the Obese Orchestra app. Taiko Audit's belly produced deep, resonant beats that echoed through the chamber, while Bass Drum Baldwin's thundering rhythms shook the ground beneath them.

Faizon Sr.'s group was now surrounded by every extra variant from the app, including the formidable BOMBarder. The variants' big brown bellies gleamed in the dim light, their rhythmic drumming filling the air with a sense of foreboding.

## CHAPTER 19

"We're completely surrounded," muttered George Jr., his bespectacled eyes darting around the room as his hands continued to shake his own belly, trying to maintain some semblance of calm.

"Stay focused," Faizon Sr. instructed, his voice steady despite the growing tension. "We've faced difficult odds before. We can do this."

Gilbert, trying to rally his courage, banged his shield with his knuckles, creating a sharp, resonant sound that cut through the room. "We've got this," he said, more to himself than to anyone else.

The variants closed in, their synchronized belly drumming creating a wall of sound that seemed to press in on Faizon Sr.'s group. Each beat was a reminder of the power they were up against, and the resolve they needed to summon within themselves to face it.

"Ready yourselves," Faizon Sr. said, his eyes scanning the faces of his friends and family. "This is going to be the fight of our lives."

The room seemed to shrink around them as the variants moved closer, their imposing forms and powerful rhythms creating an almost hypnotic effect. The air was thick with anticipation, every beat of the drum roll resonating through their bodies, steeling their nerves for the impending clash.

With a final, resounding beat, Regular Mack ceased his roll, his eyes locking onto Faizon Sr. "It's time to see just how strong your bonds really are," he said, a challenge etched in every word.

The confrontation was imminent, and the stakes had never been higher. Surrounded by their own app's most formidable foes, Faizon Sr.'s group braced themselves, ready to face the challenge head-on. The rhythmic pounding of the variants' bellies was a reminder of the power they wielded, but also of the strength and unity that Faizon Sr. and his friends had built through their shared struggles and triumphs.

As the echo of the final drumbeat faded, the room fell into a tense silence, broken only by the sound of their own breathing. The battle was about to begin, and the outcome would determine the fate of Timpanopia itself.

"Or," said Regular Mack, his voice dangerously softening, "you can surrender now and let this all pass. Turn back, and no one need be hurt. Turn back, and we can forget we ever met each other. Turn back, and you might just be rewarded...."

### THE EXTRA VARIANTS

But Gabriel stepped forward, his eyes narrowing with determination. "Yeah, right," he scoffed. "How do we know you aren't going to attack us the moment we turn around?"

Regular Mack's smirk widened. "You think you know us based on what you've watched on Timpanopian TV? Now turn back."

"You people are weak," Faizon Jr. interjected, his voice filled with contempt. "You guys are so weak, you just have to rely on whoever cloned you, right? You're so helpless that you just give into the King's instructions, right? You're so ridiculously dependent on your boss that you immediately fall into his dark influence, promptly following his every order, command after stupid command. You suckers just don't know when to be the independent individuals my father created you to be—"

"ENOUGH!" bellowed Regular Mack, his voice echoing through the chamber. He stepped forward, his presence looming even larger. "You fools think you can big yourselves up by acting brave? You think your bravado and empty words will protect you? Courage isn't about shouting the loudest or boasting the most. It's about knowing when to fight and when to yield, and clearly, you don't understand that. Do you really believe your false bravado will save you from the inevitable? Do you think you can stand against us with just your words and misguided confidence?"

But no one was listening. Regular Mack had begun to pace around relentlessly. Faizon Sr. seized this opportunity to whisper instructions to everyone in his group while Regular Mack wasn't looking.

"We are not just mindless drones following orders. We are a force to be reckoned with, each of us possessing a strength and resolve that you can scarcely comprehend. You talk of independence, but you are the ones clinging to each other for support. You are the ones who cannot stand alone.... Now turn back or we will have to use force. DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME, IDIOT KID? I SAID—TURN—BACK!"

"GO!" Faizon Sr. suddenly shouted, his voice booming with authority. The group sprang into action, each of them knowing their roles and the stakes at hand.

George Jr. resumed his timpani drum roll on his big brown belly, the sound reverberating through the chamber like an ancient war drum calling warriors to

## CHAPTER 19

battle. Glenn's belly, still growing, jiggled with every step as he charged forward, his eyes locked onto Regular Mack.

Faizon Sr. took the lead, his massive form a beacon of strength for his friends. He moved with purpose, dodging around BOMBarder, who was shaking his own belly furiously, trying to keep up with the group's rapid advance. Gilbert, shield in hand, banged it with his knuckles, creating a counter-rhythm to George Jr.'s roll, adding to the cacophony of sound that filled the cavernous space.

Taiko Audito and Bass Drum Baldwin moved to intercept, their own bellies shaking with each step. Audito's square glasses glinted in the dim light as he focused on Gabriel, who was darting in and out, trying to create openings for the others. Baldwin, towering and imposing, swung his arms in wide arcs, trying to catch Faizon Sr. off guard.

Marie and Riko, not to be outdone, used their agility to their advantage, slipping past the larger opponents and aiming for their weak spots. Marie's movements were graceful yet precise, while Riko's strikes were quick and unrelenting.

"Form up!" Faizon Sr. called, and the group tightened their formation, each of them covering the others' backs. Regular Mack and his clones were formidable, but Faizon Sr.'s team had something they didn't—unity and a shared purpose.

George Jr. and Glenn, side by side, unleashed their combined might. George Jr.'s belly roll grew louder and more intense, the vibrations felt through the floor. Glenn's belly swelled even more, the immense power within him building to a crescendo. Together, they created a wave of sound and force that pushed their enemies back.

"Don't let up!" Gilbert shouted, raising his shield high. He deflected a blow from Baldwin, countering with a shield bash that sent the giant clone staggering. Gabriel took the opportunity to leap in, delivering a flurry of punches that drove Baldwin further back.

"You're not getting away that easily!" Taiko Audito yelled, targeting Faizon Jr. with a series of rapid drum beats on his own belly. But Faizon Jr. was ready, using the rhythm to his advantage. He moved in sync with Audito's beats, avoiding the attacks with surprising agility for someone his size.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

Faizon Sr., seeing an opening, charged at Regular Mack. The leader of the clones met him head-on, their bellies colliding with a resounding *boom*. The impact shook the ground, and for a moment, it seemed as though neither would give way. But Faizon Sr.'s determination was unyielding. With a mighty push, he forced Regular Mack back, breaking his rhythm.

"Now!" Faizon Sr. roared, and the group unleashed their final attack. George Jr.'s roll reached a peak, the sound so powerful it seemed to shake the very air around them. Glenn's belly, now at its maximum size, emitted a deep, resonant note that reverberated through the chamber.

The combined force of their efforts created a shockwave that rippled outward, hitting Regular Mack and his clones with the full brunt of their power. The clones staggered, their formations breaking under the onslaught. Regular Mack, though resilient, could not withstand the sheer force of their unity.

And just when it seemed Faizon Sr.'s group would win, Big Mack banged his fists on the ground, creating a shockwave that reverberated through the chamber. He immediately brought his hands to his big brown belly and began to shake it, producing a soft rumbling timpani drum roll that echoed ominously.

Taiko Audito and Bass Drum Baldwin followed suit. Audito's belly rumbled with the deep, resonant tones of a taiko drum, while Baldwin's produced the thunderous roll of a bass drum. The combined rhythms created a powerful, unified force that shook the room, transforming it once more.

The neon shapes on the floors and walls began to shrink, their colors fading as long bookcases with wide bookshelves emerged from the floor as if growing through fitted holes. The room was transforming into an immense, surreal library. The shelves rose higher and higher, filled with ancient, oversized tomes that seemed to vibrate with the energy of the drum rolls.

Faizon Sr.'s group looked down in shock as a particularly large bookcase grew before them, its rapid ascent causing the floor to rumble violently. They struggled to maintain their balance, the shaking threatening to throw them off their feet. Glenn's still-growing belly jiggled uncontrollably, nearly toppling him over.

The drum rolls intensified, and the room's transformation continued. The once-open space was now a labyrinth of towering bookcases, each one filled

## CHAPTER 19

with mysterious, pulsating books. The air was thick with the sound of the drums, the rhythmic pounding creating a hypnotic, almost oppressive atmosphere.

Gilbert tightened his grip on his shield, his eyes scanning the newly formed environment. "This place is weird," he muttered, his voice barely audible over the cacophony.

"We need to stay focused," Gabriel said, his eyes darting around as he tried to assess their next move. "They're trying to disorient us."

"Keep playing, George Jr.," Faizon Sr. commanded. "We can't let them get the upper hand."

George Jr. nodded, his hands resuming their rhythmic shaking on his big brown belly. The timpani drum roll he produced added a counterpoint to the rolls of their adversaries, creating a complex symphony of sound that filled the library.

Glenn, despite his growing belly, managed to find his footing and resumed his own belly drumming. The powerful vibrations from his belly added to the group's collective effort, their combined sound pushing back against the oppressive force of their enemies' rolls.

As they navigated through the towering bookcases, the group realized that they were not just fighting their opponents but also the environment itself. The shelves seemed to shift and move, the books vibrating and humming with each drumbeat, creating a disorienting maze that threatened to trap them.

"Stick together!" Faizon Sr. shouted. "Don't let them separate us."

Marie and Riko moved with agility, their smaller forms slipping between the bookcases, scouting ahead and relaying information back to the group. Gilbert, shield at the ready, kept a vigilant eye on their flanks, prepared to defend against any surprise attacks.

Regular Mack's voice echoed through the library, taunting them. "You think you can defeat us in our own domain? This is our territory. You are nothing but intruders."

Faizon Jr. clenched his fists, his determination unwavering. "We won't back down. We came here for a reason, and we will see it through."

With renewed resolve, the group pressed forward, their drum rolls merging into a powerful, unified rhythm. They knew the battle was far from over, but

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

they were determined to fight with everything they had. The towering bookcases, the vibrating books, and the ominous drum rolls were all part of the challenge they had to overcome.

As they pushed deeper into the labyrinthine library, they could sense the presence of their enemies all around them. Regular Mack, BOMBarder, Taiko Audit, and Bass Drum Baldwin were relentless, their combined rolls creating an almost insurmountable wall of sound and force.

But Faizon Sr.'s group was equally relentless. Their unity, strength, and determination were their greatest weapons. They knew that if they could stay together and maintain their rhythm, they had a chance to turn the tide.

"Keep going," Faizon Sr. urged, his voice strong and confident. "We can do this. We've come too far to turn back now."

Jeremiah, George Sr., Guy Biggums, and Charles knew they needed to make a move. They had been hanging back, waiting for the right moment to strike. Now was their chance.

"Let's create a distraction," Jeremiah suggested, his eyes scanning the shifting maze of bookcases. "We need to give Faizon Sr. and the others some breathing room."

George Sr. nodded, his big brown belly already vibrating with the anticipation of a drum roll. "I'll start a bass line. Guy, you and Charles can join in and build on it. We'll draw their attention our way."

Charles, ever ready with a grin, lifted his shirt to reveal his own big brown belly. "Let's do this."

Guy Biggums positioned himself between the others, ready to add his powerful beat to the mix.

As George Sr. began to play, his belly producing deep, resonant notes that echoed through the library, the others joined in. Charles added a syncopated rhythm, his belly creating sharp, punctuated beats that complemented George Sr.'s bass line. Guy Biggums brought a powerful, steady cadence, his belly drumming echoing like a marching band's bass drum.

Jeremiah instead used his voice, shouting encouragement and keeping the group's spirits high. "Come on, guys! We can do this! Let's shake this place to its core!"

## CHAPTER 19

Their combined efforts created a cacophony that rivaled the opposing rolls of Regular Mack, BOMBarder, Taiko Auditō, and Bass Drum Baldwin. The sound waves collided in the air, creating a tumultuous clash that reverberated through the entire chamber.

In the midst of this, Gold Gilbert, the larger-than-life variant of their ally, moved with purpose. His golden skin glowed brightly, illuminating the dark corners of the library and casting long shadows. With every step he took, the ground shook, and with every beat of his belly, the air seemed to shimmer with golden light.

"You're not the only one who can make a big impact, Mack," Gold Gilbert boomed, his voice resonating with power. He approached Regular Mack, his presence dominating the space. "I may be a variant, but I have the same strength and determination as the original."

Regular Mack glared at Gold Gilbert, his eyes narrowing. "You think you can challenge me? You're nothing but a reflection."

Gold Gilbert's response was a resounding beat on his belly, the Gold Glow intensifying with each strike. "I'm more than a reflection. I'm a symbol of the strength and unity that Faizon Sr. and his group represent. And together, we're unstoppable."

As the two titans faced off, the rest of Faizon Sr.'s group took advantage of the distraction. They moved quickly through the maze of bookcases, their steps guided by the rhythm of their own belly rolls. Glenn, still growing, used his expanding belly to push aside obstacles, clearing a path for the others.

Faizon Sr. led the way, his shield at the ready. "We need to find the heart of this place and stop whatever is powering these transformations," he said, determination etched on his face.

Gabriel, keeping pace with the group, glanced back at the epic showdown between Gold Gilbert and Regular Mack. "We need to trust Gilbert to handle Mack. We've got our own mission to focus on."

As they pressed forward, the library continued to shift and change around them. The bookcases seemed to move of their own accord, creating new passages and closing off others. It was a living, breathing labyrinth designed to confuse and confound.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

Jeremiah, George Sr., Guy Biggums, and Charles kept up their powerful drumming, their beats resonating through the space and providing a steady rhythm for the group to follow. Their combined soundwaves seemed to counteract the destabilizing effects of the enemies' rolls, giving Faizon Sr. and his team the advantage they needed.

"Keep it up!" Jeremiah shouted, his voice barely audible over the din. "We're almost there!"

But then, Gold Gilbert's Gold Glow began to shift, darkening into a more ominous shade. His grin twisted into a sinister smirk as he stopped facing Regular Mack and turned his focus on Faizon Sr.'s group.

"You fools think you can big yourselves up by acting brave," he sneered. "But bravery won't save you now."

Realization hit Faizon Sr. "Gold Gilbert, what are you doing? Weren't you just on our side?"

Gold Gilbert laughed, a sound that echoed chillingly through the cavernous space. "I am not here to help you. I'm here to ensure you fail." With that, he joined Regular Mack and the other variants, adding his powerful beats to their rolls. The combined force was almost overwhelming, the room shaking with the intensity.

Faizon Sr.'s group looked around in shock, their initial confidence wavering. Guy Biggums stood firm, trying to keep the rhythm going. "We can't let this stop us. We have to push forward!"

The battle was far from over, and Faizon Sr.'s group knew they had to find a way to outsmart their enemies, despite the overwhelming odds. The determination in their eyes spoke volumes—they were not going to back down.

Then George Jr., caught in a moment of inspiration, called out, "Hey, Gold Guy! Over here!"

Gold Gilbert, distracted by the taunt, turned his attention away from the main group and began to chase George Jr. between the towering bookcases. The chase was intense, with George Jr. darting in and out of the labyrinthine passages. Despite Gold Gilbert's impressive size and power, George Jr.'s agility allowed him to stay just out of reach.

"You're only making this harder on yourself, kid!" Gold Gilbert roared, his golden skin shimmering as he moved.

## CHAPTER 19

But despite the sheer mass and weight of his own big brown belly, George Jr. was quick, his years of playing basketball and belly drumming giving him the speed and coordination he needed to evade his pursuer. He led Gold Gilbert on a winding path through the maze, each turn designed to disorient and tire the giant.

Finally, George Jr. stopped in front of a bookcase surrounded by two others, effectively trapping himself in a small alcove. With his back turned to Gold Gilbert, it looked like he had nowhere to go.

Gold Gilbert approached with a triumphant grin. "Now I've got you," he said, his voice dripping with menace.

But just as Gold Gilbert reached out to grab him, George Jr. spun around, holding up a glass mirror he had found earlier in the chaos. The reflective surface caught the light and shone directly into Gold Gilbert's eyes.

"AAAAAH!" Gold Gilbert screamed, his Gold Glow flickering wildly. The mirror seemed to disrupt his form, the reflective light acting as a counter to his golden energy. He began to disintegrate, his body breaking apart into shimmering particles that faded into the air.

As George Jr. stood there, panting and holding the mirror, he didn't have long to savor his victory. Both Big Mack and Regular Mack, having seen their ally fall, charged towards him with fury in their eyes.

Before George Jr. could react, Jeremiah, who had climbed to the top of a nearby bookcase, leaped off with a powerful belly flop. He landed with such force that the ground shook, knocking both Macks off their feet and sending George Jr. sprawling.

Jeremiah quickly scooped up his younger brother, lifting him with surprising ease. "Come on, little bro, we need to move!"

The Mack brothers were already starting to recover, their eyes filled with rage as they struggled to get back up. But Jeremiah, with George Jr. in his arms, was already sprinting away, using the moment of chaos to put as much distance between them and their pursuers as possible.

"We need to find the others and regroup," Jeremiah said, his breath coming in heavy pants. "We can't take them on alone."

George Jr. nodded, still clutching the mirror tightly. "That was close. Thanks, Jeremiah."

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

"Anytime," Jeremiah replied with a grin. "Now let's get out of here before they catch up."

They raced through the maze of bookcases, the sounds of the battle fading behind them as they searched for their friends. The fight was far from over, but for now, they had a moment of respite to plan their next move.

As they reached Faizon Sr. and George Sr., George Jr. began to explain their plan to regroup with the others, but their reunion was interrupted by the sudden reappearance of Gold Gilbert.

"Where were you guys?" George Sr. started, but his question trailed off as Gold Gilbert materialized before them once more.

Before anyone could react, Gold Gilbert snatched George Jr.'s glasses from his face and held them up to his own eyes, blocking George Jr.'s vision.

"I'm blind enough without my eyeglasses—well, not that blind, but—you'll pay for that!" George Jr. exclaimed, his frustration evident in his voice.

Jeremiah stepped forward, his fists clenched in determination. "Give those back, Goldilocks. You don't want to mess with us."

But Gold Gilbert only laughed, his golden skin glowing with malice. "You think you can stop me? You're just a bunch of weaklings. Now, watch as I turn your little friend's glasses into shards of glass!"

But before he could completely crush them, Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his own big brown belly quivering with intensity.

"Enough," he said, his voice low and commanding. "You may have the upper hand now, Gilbert, but we won't let you harm us or our friends. We'll find a way to stop you, no matter what it takes."

Gold Gilbert hesitated for a moment, his arrogance faltering in the face of Faizon Sr.'s determination. But then, with a smirk, he tossed the broken glasses aside and vanished into thin air, leaving Faizon Sr. and his group standing in the darkness, more determined than ever to stop the forces of evil that threatened their world.

Jeremiah retrieved George Jr.'s broken glasses from the ground and handed them back to him with a reassuring pat on the shoulder. "Here, bro. We'll get these fixed up later. Right now, let's focus on finding the others."

With a nod of agreement, George Jr. slipped the broken frames into his pocket and joined his brother in the search. Together, they set off into the

## CHAPTER 19

labyrinthine passages of the cavern, their determination unwavering despite the looming threat of Gold Gilbert and the other adversaries they faced.

As they moved through the shadows, Jeremiah called out for the regular Gilbert and Guy Biggums, their voices echoing off the walls of the cavernous chamber. They searched every nook and cranny, their eyes scanning the darkness for any sign of their missing comrades.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity of searching, they caught sight of Gilbert and Guy Biggums huddled together in a corner of the chamber. With a sense of relief, Jeremiah and George Jr. hurried over to join them, their group now reunited and ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

"We found them," Jeremiah announced, his voice tinged with relief. "Now let's stick together and find a way out of here." With that, they set off once more, their spirits bolstered by the strength of their unity and their determination to overcome the darkness that threatened to engulf them.

Just as the group began to move, the heavy thuds of approaching footsteps echoed through the chamber. They turned to see Bass Drum Baldwin barreling towards them, his massive form casting an imposing shadow. His big brown belly, now resonating with the deep, thunderous sounds of a bass drum roll, seemed to amplify his every step, creating a rhythm that reverberated through the cavern and sent tremors under their feet.

Jeremiah and George Jr. instinctively positioned themselves in front of Gilbert and Guy Biggums, ready to defend their comrades. The group tightened their formation, each of them aware that Baldwin's sheer size and the power of his drum could be overwhelming.

"Stay close," Jeremiah instructed, his voice steady despite the tension in the air. "We need to be ready for anything."

As Baldwin drew nearer, he intensified his belly drumming, the sound becoming almost deafening. Each beat seemed to shake the very foundations of the cavern, threatening to topple the bookcases and destabilize the ground beneath them.

"He's using the drum roll to destabilize us," Guy Biggums observed, his voice barely audible over the cacophony. "We need to find a way to counteract it."

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

"I have an idea," George Jr. shouted, the urgency in his voice cutting through the noise. "We need to disrupt his rhythm. If we can throw him off balance, we might have a chance."

Jeremiah nodded, understanding his brother's plan. "Everyone, start creating your own beats. Let's confuse him!"

In unison, the group began to drum on their bellies, each creating a different rhythm. The conflicting beats clashed with Baldwin's powerful bass drum roll, creating a chaotic symphony that reverberated through the chamber. Baldwin faltered, his rhythm disrupted by the dissonance.

Seizing the moment, Jeremiah and George Jr. lunged forward. Jeremiah aimed a powerful belly flop towards Baldwin's legs, while George Jr. struck a final, resonant beat on his own belly. The combined force of their efforts sent Baldwin toppling backward, his massive form crashing to the ground with a resounding thud.

"Now, while he's down!" Jeremiah yelled, signaling for the group to move forward. They rushed past the fallen Baldwin, but as the group moved forward, the ground beneath them trembled as Big Mack pounded his fists against the floor once more. The cavern began to transform again, the shapes and structures shifting in response to his powerful blows. The walls rippled like water, their dark surfaces undulating and reforming into new patterns. Tall columns sprouted from the ground, twisting and turning as they reached toward the unseen ceiling.

"Hold on!" Faizon Sr. shouted, steadying himself against the quaking floor. "We need to keep moving!"

The bookcases that had surrounded them moments before now melded into one another, forming a labyrinthine maze. The room's expansion slowed, revealing narrow passageways and towering shelves filled with ancient tomes and mysterious artifacts.

"This is getting out of hand!" George Jr. exclaimed, struggling to maintain his balance as the ground continued to shift beneath him. "We need to find a way to stop him!"

"Stay close and don't get separated!" Gabriel shouted, his voice barely audible over the rumbling.

## CHAPTER 19

Big Mack, with a sinister grin, stood amidst the chaos, his powerful belly continuing its menacing roll. He watched as the group navigated the newly-formed maze, his eyes gleaming with malevolent intent.

"Your defiance is futile," Big Mack declared, his voice echoing through the transformed chamber. "You think you can outsmart me? I control this place. Every step you take is under my watch."

Regular Mack joined in, his own belly drum roll adding to the cacophony. The combined power of their drum rolls seemed to amplify the disorienting effects of the shifting chamber. The group pressed on, determined to escape the maze and reach the heart of the cavern where the Silence King awaited.

As they navigated the twisting passages, George Jr. suddenly had an idea. "We need to use their own tactics against them. If we can disrupt their rhythm like we did with Baldwin, we might be able to stop them."

"How?" Faizon Jr. asked, glancing around the maze.

George Jr. pointed to the towering shelves around them. "We can use these bookcases to create our own resonant beats. If we synchronize our efforts, we can create a counter-rhythm powerful enough to destabilize their control."

The group quickly spread out, each taking position near a different bookcase. They began drumming on the shelves with their hands, creating a harmonious yet discordant rhythm that echoed through the labyrinth. The sound waves reverberated off the walls, clashing with the drum rolls of Big Mack and Regular Mack.

The two Macks stumbled, their rhythm faltering as the counter-beats disrupted their concentration. The room began to stabilize, the shifting walls and floors slowing to a halt.

"We're doing it!" Guy Biggums shouted, his excitement palpable. "Keep it up!"

With renewed determination, the group intensified their efforts, their combined beats growing louder and more powerful. The force of their unity once again proved formidable, driving back the influence of the Macks' drum rolls.

But Big Mack, refusing to concede defeat, pounded his fists against the floor in a final act of defiance. The room quaked violently, the walls and floors shuddering under the strain.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

Suddenly, a blinding light filled the chamber, and the towering figure of the real Big Mack, his form even larger and more imposing than before, appeared before them. His dark-brown skin glowed with an otherworldly light, his massive belly resonating with a deep, thunderous roll that shook the very foundations of the cavern.

"This ends now," Big Mack declared, his voice booming like a thunderclap. "You have no idea what you're up against."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his own belly resonating with a powerful beat. "We won't back down. We're here to stop the Silence King, and nothing you do can deter us."

The final showdown was imminent, the air thick with tension and the echoes of their beats reverberating through the transformed chamber. The fate of Timpanopia hung in the balance, and the group knew that they had to stand their ground, no matter the cost.

Big Mack lunged forward with a swift and powerful movement, his massive hand wrapping around Gabriel and lifting him high above the ground. Gabriel struggled, kicking his legs and pounding his fists against Big Mack's iron grip, but to no avail.

"Let him go!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice filled with a mix of anger and desperation. He stepped forward, his belly resonating with a powerful beat that echoed through the chamber.

Big Mack sneered, his eyes gleaming with malicious intent. "You think you can stop me?" He tightened his grip on Gabriel, causing him to gasp for air. "Your resistance is futile."

Glenn, Charles, and George Jr. quickly gathered around Faizon Sr., their own bellies beating in unison, creating a powerful, synchronized rhythm. The sound waves collided with Big Mack's thunderous roll, causing the ground to shake and the walls to tremble.

"We won't let you win!" Glenn shouted, his voice determined. He glanced at George Jr., who nodded in understanding.

George Jr. resumed shaking his big brown belly with renewed vigor, the soft rumbling timpani drum roll intensifying with each beat. The sound filled the chamber, its powerful resonance creating a counter-rhythm that disrupted Big Mack's control.

## CHAPTER 19

Regular Mack joined in, his own belly drum roll adding to the cacophony. The combined power of their drum rolls seemed to amplify the disorienting effects of the shifting chamber. But the group's unified rhythm began to overpower them, creating a harmonious yet discordant beat that echoed through the labyrinth.

As the tension built, Jeremiah sprang into action. "Hold on, Gabriel!" he shouted, leaping from a nearby bookcase and landing a powerful belly flop on the ground, causing a shockwave that momentarily stunned Big Mack.

Gabriel, seizing the opportunity, twisted his body and broke free from Big Mack's grip. He fell to the ground, gasping for breath but quickly recovering as Jeremiah helped him to his feet.

"Thanks, bro," Gabriel panted, giving Jeremiah a grateful nod.

"Don't mention it," Jeremiah replied, his eyes fixed on Big Mack, who was now roaring with fury.

Big Mack, realizing he was losing control, pounded his fists against the floor once more, causing the room to transform yet again. The walls began to ripple and shift, the bookcases merging and expanding into towering structures that threatened to trap the group in an ever-changing maze.

But the group held their ground, their combined beats growing louder and more powerful. The force of their unity once again proved formidable, driving back the influence of the Macks' drum rolls.

Gold Gilbert, still on the opposing side, began to glow even brighter, his golden skin illuminating the dark chamber. He approached the group with a menacing grin, his mallet ready to strike his own belly in a powerful beat.

"Watch out!" Faizon Jr. shouted, pointing at Gold Gilbert as he advanced.

Gabriel, thinking quickly, picked up a nearby mirror shard from one of the shattered bookcases. "Hey, Gold Guy! Over here!"

Gold Gilbert turned, his eyes narrowing as he saw Gabriel holding the mirror. He charged towards him, his golden form radiating with intensity. But Gabriel, with a swift and precise movement, held the mirror up just as Gold Gilbert reached him.

The reflection of his own golden light blinded Gold Gilbert, causing him to scream in agony. His form began to disintegrate, the light fading until he vanished entirely.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

"Nice one, Gabriel!" George Jr. exclaimed, giving his brother a thumbs-up.

Before they could celebrate, Bass Drum Baldwin charged towards them, his belly creating a deep, resonant roll that shook the ground. The group braced themselves, their beats merging into a powerful counter-rhythm that clashed with Baldwin's bass drum roll.

Big Mack, seeing his forces falter, pounded his fists one last time. The room quaked violently, the walls and floors shuddering under the strain. But the group's unity and determination proved stronger, their beats creating a harmonious and powerful resonance that overpowered the chaotic drum rolls of their enemies.

With a final, resounding beat, the room stabilized, the transformations ceasing. Big Mack, Regular Mack, and Bass Drum Baldwin were left standing amidst the now-still chamber, their forms weakened and their control broken.

"We did it," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with relief and determination. "Now, let's find the Silence King and put an end to this."

Despite the seeming victory, the rumbling didn't completely cease. Just as the group was catching their breath, a thunderous *boom* echoed through the chamber, shaking the ground beneath their feet.

"Everyone, stay alert!" Faizon Sr. called out, his voice cutting through the lingering echoes.

Emerging from the shadows were Taiko Audito and BOMBarder. Both had been lying in wait, ready to strike when the group's defenses were down.

"You didn't think it would be that easy, did you?" Taiko Audito sneered, his glasses glinting in the dim light. His big brown belly started to shake, creating a deep taiko drum roll that reverberated through the chamber.

BOMBarder, with his massive presence, joined in, his belly creating a powerful, thunderous beat that shook the very foundations of the room. The combined force of their drum rolls began to overpower the group's rhythm, creating a chaotic and overwhelming cacophony.

Gabriel, still reeling from his encounter with Gold Gilbert, stepped back, his eyes wide with disbelief. "They're not done yet!"

Faizon Jr. clenched his fists, determination etched on his face. "We have to fight back. We can't let them win!"

## CHAPTER 19

George Jr., adjusting his glasses, resumed his rumbling roll on his big brown belly, trying to counter the intense beats from Taiko Audito and BOMBarder. Glenn, whose belly was still growing and jiggling, added his rhythm to the mix, trying to create a balance against the overwhelming force.

Jeremiah, seeing the renewed threat, quickly devised a plan. "We need to disrupt their rhythm. If we can create a dissonance, it might throw them off balance."

Guy Biggums, his usually calm demeanor now replaced with fierce determination, stepped up. "Let's give them a taste of their own medicine." He started a deep, resonant roll on his own belly, adding a unique bass-like quality to the group's combined rhythm.

Gilbert, realizing the urgency, joined in. Though he had been initially shaken by the betrayal of his golden counterpart, he found his resolve and added his own rhythm to the mix, creating a powerful counter-rhythm that began to challenge the overwhelming beats of their enemies.

The chamber once again transformed, the shifting walls and bookcases reflecting the intense battle of rhythms. The neon shapes pulsed in sync with the beats, creating a visual spectacle that mirrored the auditory clash.

As the rhythms clashed, the tension in the air grew palpable. Faizon Sr., seeing an opening, directed the group. "Focus your beats! We need to synchronize and create a stronger resonance."

Everyone concentrated, their beats growing more synchronized and powerful. The unified rhythm began to create a powerful resonance, pushing back against the chaotic beats of Taiko Audito and BOMBarder.

With a final, unified effort, the group intensified their rhythm. The combined power of their beats created a shockwave that reverberated through the chamber, causing the very walls to tremble and the floor to quake.

Taiko Audito and BOMBarder, caught off guard by the sudden surge of power, faltered. Their beats grew erratic, unable to withstand the overwhelming force of the group's unified rhythm.

Seizing the moment, Gabriel and George Jr. lunged forward. Gabriel, with a swift movement, disrupted Taiko Audito's rhythm, while George Jr., using the glass mirror, reflected a blinding light towards BOMBarder, causing him to stagger back.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

The combined efforts of the group overwhelmed their enemies, their powerful beats creating a final, resounding clash that echoed through the chamber. Taiko Audito and BOMBarder, unable to withstand the force, collapsed, their drum rolls fading into silence.

Breathing heavily, the group stood victorious. The chamber, now still and empty once more, seemed to acknowledge their triumph.

"We did it," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with pride and relief. "Now, let's keep moving. We have to find the Silence King and end this once and for all."

"Nuh-uh!" BOMBarder rasped, his voice harsh and slightly weak. "We were brought to life by the Shadowy Serpent, and the Shadowy Serpent is only one of many of the Silence King's servants that have been sent to different places in Beatweaver Haven to create armies to destroy Timpanopia—and the rest of Beatweaver Haven! You might have defeated us, but you still have the others to deal with." With that, he vanished, his form dissipating into the shadows like smoke.

Before the group could process BOMBarder's words, a heavy stomp reverberated through the chamber, immediately followed by rumbling footsteps from all directions. Emerging from the shadows were individuals from random corners of Beatweaver Haven, their expressions blank and eyes glazed.

Leading the pack were the Rythmi twins, slender teenage men wearing what looked like mind-controlling VR headsets. They donned colorful sweatpants and hoodies, their movements synchronized and mechanical.

"This just keeps getting better," Gabriel muttered sarcastically, adjusting his stance.

Faizon Sr. took a deep breath, his eyes narrowing as he assessed the new threat. "Everyone, stay close. We need to figure out how to handle this without getting overwhelmed."

Glenn's big brown belly jiggled as he shifted nervously, his gaze fixed on the Rythmi twins. "Those headsets... they must be what's controlling them."

George Jr., who had just regained his balance and glasses, nodded in agreement. "If we can disrupt their connection, maybe we can free them."

"That's a big maybe," Faizon Jr. replied, glancing at the approaching crowd. "But we don't have many options."

## CHAPTER 19

Jeremiah, who had been scanning the area for any signs of Gilbert and Guy Biggums, suddenly spoke up. "We need a distraction. Something to draw their attention while we figure out how to get those headsets off."

"I can try to create a diversion," Glenn offered, his big brown belly still growing and jiggling with each step. "But I need backup."

"I'll help," said Gabriel, stepping forward. "We need to work together if we're going to pull this off."

"Let's do this," Faizon Sr. agreed, his voice filled with determination. "Everyone, be ready to move on my signal."

The group quickly formed a plan. Glenn and Gabriel would create a distraction, drawing the attention of the Rythmi twins and their mind-controlled followers. Meanwhile, Faizon Sr., Faizon Jr., George Jr., and Jeremiah would try to find a way to disrupt the headsets' connection.

As the Rythmi twins and their controlled army advanced, Glenn began to shake his big brown belly, creating a deep, resonant rumble that echoed through the chamber. Gabriel added to the sound, using his knuckles to beat a rhythm on his father's shield, which he was now holding.

The combined noise drew the attention of the Rythmi twins, who paused and turned towards the source of the sound. Their followers, too, halted their advance, seemingly confused by the unexpected noise.

"Now!" Faizon Sr. shouted, and the group sprang into action.

Faizon Jr. and George Jr. darted towards the twins, their eyes fixed on the VR headsets. Jeremiah, using his agility, climbed up one of the bookcases, positioning himself for a potential leap.

The Rythmi twins, sensing the threat, began to move again, their synchronized steps quickening. But before they could react, Jeremiah leapt from the bookcase, landing between the twins and knocking them off balance with a powerful belly flop. He seemed to enjoy these belly flops.

Faizon Jr. and George Jr. seized the opportunity. George Jr., holding up his glass mirror, reflected a beam of light into the eyes of one twin, causing him to stumble and clutch his headset. Faizon Jr., using his quick reflexes, managed to yank the headset off the other twin.

The moment the headsets were removed, the twins collapsed, their bodies going limp.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

"We did it," Faizon Sr. said, relief evident in his voice. "But this is just the beginning. We need to find the Silence King and stop this for good."

The crowd of controlled individuals, however, did not seem to regain their senses.

But then, the Beatopia Twins' eyes snapped open, glowing a menacing purple. As if marionettes controlled by an unseen puppeteer, they floated back to their feet in a swift, eerie motion.

"What the—?" Faizon Jr. started, his eyes widening in shock.

One of the twins, named Samir, lunged forward with lightning speed and threw a punch at Faizon Sr. Faizon Sr. barely had time to react, stepping back just in time to avoid the full force of the blow. The sheer velocity of Samir's movement caused a gust of wind that rustled Faizon Sr.'s shirt.

The other twin, Khalid, moved in sync with his brother, leaping around the chamber with the agility of a seasoned ninja. Their movements were a blur, almost impossible to track with the naked eye.

"Stay on guard!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice echoing through the cavernous space. He steadied himself, readying for the oncoming assault.

Gabriel, still recovering from the recent scuffle, quickly assessed the situation. "We need to disrupt whatever is controlling them," he called out. "Their headsets might still be influencing them somehow!"

Glenn, whose big brown belly was still jiggling with residual energy, took a defensive stance. "Let's see if they can handle a bit of rhythmic chaos," he muttered, beginning to shake his belly again to create another deep, resonant drum roll.

George Jr., still holding his glass mirror, focused on the twins. "We need to separate them," he suggested. "They're too dangerous together!"

Jeremiah, always quick on his feet, nodded in agreement. "I'll try to draw one away. George Jr., be ready with that mirror."

As Jeremiah darted towards Khalid, attempting to lead him away from the group, Samir continued his assault on Faizon Sr. The elder Faizon parried and dodged, using his own belly to absorb some of the impact of Samir's strikes. Each blow reverberated through the room like the crash of cymbals, adding to the cacophony created by Glenn's drum roll.

## CHAPTER 19

Meanwhile, Faizon Jr. and George Jr. teamed up against Samir. Faizon Jr. used his agility to distract Samir, while George Jr. attempted to catch the twin's glowing eyes with the reflective surface of his mirror.

Khalid, now isolated thanks to Jeremiah's efforts, seemed momentarily disoriented. Seizing the chance, Jeremiah leapt onto a nearby bookcase, positioning himself above Khalid. With a powerful belly flop, he crashed down, aiming to pin Khalid to the ground.

Khalid, however, reacted with inhuman speed, twisting out of the way and countering with a swift kick that sent Jeremiah sprawling. He floated back into a standing position, his glowing purple eyes scanning the room for his brother.

"Keep it up!" Faizon Sr. encouraged, his voice unwavering. "We can't let them regroup!"

Glenn intensified his drum roll, the vibrations growing stronger and more chaotic. The sound waves seemed to disrupt the twins' movements, causing brief moments of hesitation.

Suddenly, George Jr. found his opening. He angled the mirror just right, catching the purple glow in Samir's eyes and reflecting it back at him. Samir recoiled, blinking rapidly as if trying to shake off the effect.

"Now, Faizon Jr.!" George Jr. shouted.

Faizon Jr. didn't hesitate. He lunged at Samir, using the momentary distraction to knock the headset completely off. The device clattered to the ground, and Samir collapsed, the purple glow fading from his eyes.

Khalid, sensing his brother's fall, let out a guttural roar. He launched himself towards Faizon Jr. with renewed fury, but Gabriel intercepted, using his shield to block the ferocious assault.

"We need to do the same to Khalid!" Gabriel urged, straining against Khalid's relentless attacks.

Jeremiah, recovering from his fall, joined Gabriel in the defense. "Let's take him down together!"

As Faizon Sr. and the others regrouped, they prepared for the final push against the remaining twin. The room's atmosphere crackled with tension, the echoes of their battle reverberating like a symphony of conflict. Just when it seemed they would win, a figure leapt from the crowd, landing in the center of them all with a powerful thud. The ground shook, and the vibrations rippled

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

through the room, causing everyone to momentarily lose their balance. It was a large troll, its hulking body casting a menacing shadow over the group.

"Oh, come on—" Faizon Jr. exclaimed, frustration evident in his voice.

Seizing the momentary distraction, Khalid dashed toward his fallen brother. With swift precision, he forced the headset back onto Samir's head. The device clicked into place, and the purple glow instantly returned to Samir's eyes. He rose to his feet, now re-energized and under the headset's control once more.

The troll, towering and imposing, let out a low, guttural growl. Its skin was a mottled gray-green, with muscles bulging under its thick, leathery hide. Its eyes glowed a fierce yellow, and it carried a massive club, which it swung menacingly.

"We can't let them regroup!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice filled with urgency.

The group quickly reformed their defensive positions, trying to adjust to the new threat. Gabriel, still holding his shield, stepped forward to face the troll. "I'll handle this brute. The rest of you focus on the twins!"

George Jr. nodded, turning his attention back to the twins. "We need to get that headset off Samir again, and keep Khalid from putting it back on!"

Glenn's belly drum roll continued to reverberate through the room, creating a rhythmic backdrop to the chaos. "Let's keep the pressure on!" he called out, his voice determined.

Jeremiah and Faizon Jr. flanked Khalid, attempting to separate him from his brother. Khalid, now fully aware of their tactics, moved with an almost frantic energy, trying to protect Samir at all costs.

Gabriel, meanwhile, squared off against the troll. The troll swung its massive club with surprising speed, but Gabriel expertly parried the blows with his shield. Each impact sent shockwaves through his arm, but he held his ground. "You're not getting past me," he muttered, gritting his teeth.

As the battle raged on, George Jr. saw an opening. He darted towards Samir, mirror in hand. "I've got this," he whispered to himself, determination fueling his every step.

Just as he was about to reflect the purple glow back at Samir, Khalid lunged at him. Faizon Jr. intercepted, tackling Khalid to the ground. The two rolled across the floor, grappling fiercely.

"Now, George Jr.!" Faizon Sr. shouted, seeing the opportunity.

## CHAPTER 19

George Jr. held up the mirror, catching Samir's eyes once again. The reflected light caused Samir to stagger, his grip on reality faltering. With a swift motion, George Jr. yanked the headset off, throwing it across the room.

Samir collapsed, the purple glow fading once more. But the victory was short-lived. The troll, seeing its allies in trouble, let out a deafening roar and charged towards George Jr.

Gabriel intercepted, slamming his shield into the troll's side. The force of the impact sent the troll stumbling, but it quickly recovered, swinging its club in a wide arc. Gabriel ducked, the club narrowly missing his head.

"Jeremiah, help me with this beast!" Gabriel called out, struggling to keep the troll at bay.

Jeremiah, freeing himself from Khalid's grasp, sprinted towards Gabriel. Together, they launched a coordinated attack, trying to drive the troll back.

Faizon Sr., seeing the ongoing chaos, realized they needed a final push. "Everyone, focus! We need to end this now!"

The group redoubled their efforts. Faizon Jr. and Glenn worked together to keep Khalid at bay, while George Jr. and Faizon Sr. dealt with Samir. The battle was fierce, every moment a test of their strength and resolve.

The troll, despite its formidable strength, began to falter under the relentless assault. Gabriel and Jeremiah coordinated their attacks with precision, exploiting every weakness they could find.

As the room continued to rumble with the sounds of their struggle, Faizon Sr.'s group pressed on, determined to overcome the odds and defeat their adversaries.

The rest of the crowd started to fight, a cacophony of voices and clashes echoing through the cavernous room. The enemies swarmed in, their numbers seemingly endless, and Faizon Sr.'s group found themselves surrounded on all sides. Punches, kicks, and drum rolls filled the air as the battle intensified.

Taiko Audito and BOMBarder suddenly reappeared, now recovered, and rejoined the fray with renewed vigor, their massive forms adding to the chaos. Audito's taiko drum roll reverberated through the room, matching the rhythm of the ongoing fight, while BOMBarder's explosive punches created shockwaves that disoriented their opponents.

## THE EXTRA VARIANTS

Faizon Sr. and his allies fought valiantly, their big brown bellies shaking with every move, providing both a source of power and a unique form of defense. Glenn and George Jr. tried to maintain their drum rolls, the sound waves aiding their comrades in keeping the enemies at bay.

Regular Mack and Big Mack, their eyes gleaming with malevolent intent, directed their forces with ruthless efficiency. Every move Faizon Sr.'s group made seemed countered by another wave of attackers, pushing them closer and closer to defeat.

Gabriel and Jeremiah, fighting side by side, struggled to hold the line against the relentless troll. Despite their best efforts, the troll's sheer strength and ferocity began to overwhelm them. Each swing of its club sent tremors through the ground, threatening to topple anyone in its path.

Marie, Guy Biggums, and Riko found themselves battling back-to-back, their movements synchronized as they tried to fend off the relentless attackers. Despite their coordinated efforts, the sheer number of enemies began to take its toll, and exhaustion started to set in.

"Hold on, everyone!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice carrying over the din of battle. "We can't let them win!"

But just when it seemed Faizon Sr.'s group would lose—  
"STOP THIS NONSENSE!"

As what sounded like Baldwin's voice boomed through the chaos, a sudden hush fell over the battlefield. The combatants paused, turning their attention towards him, their eyes filled with a mixture of surprise and uncertainty.

Faizon Sr. looked up, and sure enough, he saw Baldwin and Audito standing in a staticky hole in the wall, their presence commanding attention. Without hesitation, they joined hands and leaped down with a powerful belly flop, creating shockwaves that rippled through the battlefield.

"Faizon, get the others and go!" Baldwin's voice boomed, cutting through the chaos. "I'll head them off!"

With determination etched on his face, Faizon Sr. nodded in understanding. He quickly rallied his companions, ushering them towards safety as Baldwin and Audito prepared to face their doppelgängers head-on.

As they moved through the maze-like battlefield, the obstacles seemed to shift and rearrange, presenting new challenges at every turn. Yet, driven by the

## CHAPTER 19

urgency of the situation, Faizon Sr.'s group pressed on, their determination unwavering.

Despite the odds stacked against them, they refused to back down. With each step, they drew closer to safety, their spirits bolstered by the knowledge that they were fighting not just for themselves, but for the future of Timpanopia.

And then, just when it seemed they might be overwhelmed by the maze, a path suddenly opened up before them, leading towards an exit bathed in golden light. Without hesitation, they raced towards it, their hearts pounding with a mixture of fear and hope.

As they emerged from the maze, they found themselves standing outside the cavern, the sounds of battle fading into the distance behind them. Breathing heavily, Faizon Sr. and his companions looked at each other, their eyes reflecting a mixture of relief and determination.

"We made it," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with gratitude. "But our fight isn't over yet. We must find a way to stop the Silence King and his minions once and for all."

With renewed purpose, Faizon Sr. and his companions set off into the unknown, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead in their quest to save Timpanopia.

As the cacophony of battle gradually subsided, Baldwin emerged from the strange chamber, his brow furrowed with concern. He quickly relayed the news to Faizon Sr. and the others: "I managed to free the slaves, but Taiko Audito got to Audito. He's currently down."

# 20

## The Silence King

Faizon Sr.'s heart sank at the news. Audito was not just a fellow member of their group; he was a friend, a comrade-in-arms. The thought of him lying injured filled Faizon Sr. with a sense of urgency.

"We have to help him," Faizon Sr. declared, his voice firm with determination. "We can't leave Audito behind."

Without hesitation, Faizon Sr. and his companions rushed back into the chamber, their footsteps echoing against the walls as they searched for their fallen comrade. They found Audito lying on the ground, his breathing shallow and his eyes closed.

"We need to get him out of here," Faizon Sr. said, his voice laced with concern. "But first, we need to make sure he's stable."

Working together, they carefully lifted Audito onto a makeshift stretcher, their movements gentle yet efficient. As they made their way out of the chamber, Faizon Sr. kept a watchful eye on Audito, silently willing him to pull through.

Outside the chamber, they laid Audito down on the ground, surrounded by his friends and allies. Baldwin knelt beside him, his hands glowing with a soft, healing light as he worked to stabilize Audito's condition.

"We're not leaving you behind, Audito," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with determination. "We'll get through this together."

As they gathered around Audito, who was now resting more comfortably, the group began to discuss their next steps. The weight of their mission pressed heavily upon them, and they knew that finding the Silence King was imperative.

## CHAPTER 20

"We need to figure out how to track down the Silence King," Faizon Sr. said, his voice resolute. "We've dealt with his minions, but he's the real threat."

"Yeah," added Glenn, still catching his breath from the recent battle. "If we don't stop him, everything we've done so far will be for nothing."

Charles nodded, his expression serious. "The question is, how do we find him? He seems to have a knack for staying hidden."

Baldwin, who had been focusing on stabilizing Audito, looked up. "We need information. Someone, somewhere, must know where he is."

Faizon Jr. spoke up, his young face determined. "What about those slaves you freed, Baldwin? Maybe they know something."

Baldwin nodded. "Good idea. They might have overheard something while they were captive. Let's talk to them."

The group moved toward the area where the freed slaves were gathered. They were a diverse group of individuals, their faces marked by relief but also lingering fear. Faizon Sr. approached an older man who seemed to be a de facto leader among them.

"Excuse me," Faizon Sr. began gently, "we're looking for the Silence King. Have any of you heard anything that could help us find him?"

The man looked at Faizon Sr. with weary eyes but nodded. "We heard whispers. The Silence King moves around a lot, but he has a few places he likes to operate from. There's an old fortress, deep in the heart of the Unseen Forest. It's a place of shadows and echoes, and we've heard he retreats there when he needs to plan his next moves."

"The Unseen Forest," Marie repeated, her voice thoughtful. "That's not far from here, but it's a dangerous place. Full of traps and illusions."

Guy Biggums, who had been quiet until now, spoke up. "We'll need to be careful, but it sounds like our best lead. If we can navigate the forest, we might just find him."

Faizon Sr. nodded, a determined look in his eyes. "Then that's where we'll go. We'll prepare tonight and set out at first light."

Riko stepped forward. "I know a bit about the Unseen Forest. I can help guide us through the illusions and traps."

"Great," said Faizon Sr. "With Riko's knowledge and all of us working together, we have a real chance."

## THE SILENCE KING

As the group began to make plans, George Jr. walked over to Glenn, who was resting against the wall. "Hey, Glenn. How are you holding up?"

Glenn smiled weakly. "I'll be fine. Just need a bit of rest. But I'm ready to go when you are."

George Jr. nodded, giving his friend a reassuring pat on the back. "We're going to find the Silence King and end this. Together."

"No need," a deep, ominous voice echoed through the cavern. "You've already found me."

The group turned in unison, the air thick with tension. A thunderous stomp filled the cavern, reverberating off the walls and shaking the ground beneath their feet. Emerging from the shadows was Gold Gilbert, and right next to him was none other than the Silence King, an imposing figure who seemed to absorb the very light around him.

The Silence King was an unnerving sight to behold. He stood at least seven feet tall, his massive frame draped in flowing, shadowy robes that seemed to shift and writhe like living shadows. His skin was an ashen gray, almost translucent, giving the eerie impression that he was more specter than man. His eyes, glowing with a piercing, unnatural light, were the only things that seemed to reflect any semblance of life. They burned with a cold, malevolent intensity that sent chills down the spines of everyone present.

His face was a mask of stern authority, with sharp, angular features that seemed carved from stone. A long, dark beard flowed down his chest, blending seamlessly with the swirling shadows of his robes. His hands, large and powerful, were tipped with long, blackened nails that looked like they could slice through steel.

Around his neck hung a pendant, a dark, pulsating gemstone that seemed to draw in the light around it, creating an aura of darkness. The air around him was thick and heavy, as if his very presence was enough to bend reality to his will. His voice, when he spoke, carried a weight that seemed to crush the air from their lungs.

"You've done well to get this far," the Silence King continued, his voice a deep rumble that seemed to vibrate through their very bones. "But this is where your journey ends."

## CHAPTER 20

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, his own presence formidable but dwarfed by the towering menace before him. "We won't let you continue your reign of terror. This ends here, now."

The Silence King chuckled, a low, menacing sound that echoed through the cavern. "You think you can stop me? I am the Silence King. I command shadows and silence. Your resistance is futile."

Faizon Jr., feeling a surge of defiance, shouted, "We're not afraid of you! We've defeated your minions, and we'll defeat you too!"

The Silence King's eyes narrowed, glowing with a brighter intensity. "Brave words for such a young soul. But bravery alone won't save you."

The tension in the cavern was palpable. Faizon Sr.'s group readied themselves, knowing they were about to face their greatest challenge yet. The Silence King, towering and terrifying, stood before them, the embodiment of the darkness they had fought so hard to overcome.

"Why are you doing this?" Faizon Sr. demanded, his voice echoing through the cavern, the words laced with a mix of anger and desperation. "What do you gain from all this destruction?"

The Silence King stood motionless, his glowing eyes fixed on Faizon Sr. For a moment, it seemed as though he might answer, but then his lips curled into a sinister smile, and he remained silent. His gaze shifted, taking in each member of Faizon Sr.'s group, as if assessing their strength, their resolve.

"Answer me!" Faizon Sr. shouted, stepping forward. "What twisted purpose drives you?"

The Silence King chuckled, a low, dark sound that seemed to vibrate through the air, but he remained silent, his expression unreadable. The silence stretched on, oppressive and suffocating.

Gabriel, frustration boiling over, took a step forward, his fists clenched. "You're a coward," he spat. "You hide behind your minions and your shadows. Why don't you face us and tell us the truth?"

The Silence King's eyes flickered, and for a brief moment, a flicker of anger crossed his face. But he quickly regained his composure, the smile returning. "You seek answers that will do you no good," he finally said, his voice a deep, resonant growl. "The motives of a king are beyond the understanding of his subjects."

## THE SILENCE KING

Faizon Jr. stepped up beside his father, his own voice trembling with fury. "You're wrong. We're not your subjects. We're free people, and we will stop you."

The Silence King's eyes narrowed, his smile fading. "You are children playing a dangerous game," he said softly. "And you do not understand the consequences."

The room seemed to darken as he spoke, the shadows growing longer and more menacing. Faizon Sr. felt a chill run down his spine, but he squared his shoulders, refusing to be intimidated. "We understand enough to know that you need to be stopped," he said firmly. "And we will stop you."

The Silence King's expression hardened. "You will try," he said, his voice dripping with contempt. "But you will fail."

As the silence stretched out once more, the tension in the cavern grew almost unbearable. The group could feel the weight of the Silence King's presence, the oppressive darkness that seemed to emanate from him. They knew they were about to face a battle unlike any they had fought before, and they steeled themselves for the challenge.

Faizon Sr. glanced at his companions, each one ready to fight, their determination unwavering. "We stand together," he said quietly, his voice steady. "And we will not be broken."

The Silence King's eyes gleamed with a malevolent light. "Then let us see how strong your bonds truly are," he said, his voice echoing through the cavern like a death knell.

With that, the battle began. The Silence King raised his hands, and the shadows around him sprang to life, swirling and coiling like serpents. Faizon Sr. and his group braced themselves, ready to fight with everything they had.

The shadows twisted and writhed around the Silence King, forming dark tendrils that reached out towards Faizon Sr. and his group. Faizon Sr. immediately took charge, shouting commands to his companions.

"Stay together! Watch each other's backs!" he bellowed, raising his own fists, ready to fight.

Gabriel swung his shield, deflecting a shadowy tendril that lunged at him. "We've faced worse, guys! Remember who we are!"

## CHAPTER 20

Glenn, his belly still slightly swollen from earlier, stood his ground beside Charles. "Big bellies, big hearts," he muttered, using his belly to shield Charles from another attack.

Charles, in turn, used his own considerable strength to punch through a tendril, his fist connecting with a satisfying thud. "We've got this," he said, determination blazing in his eyes.

George Jr. focused on maintaining his steady drum roll, the vibrations from his belly beats resonating through the cavern. He had learned that the rhythmic sounds could disrupt the shadows, weakening them. "Keep drumming," he told himself. "Don't stop."

Gold Gilbert, though still on the enemy's side, watched with a strange intensity. His golden skin glowed brightly, illuminating the dark cavern. He seemed almost torn, his allegiance wavering as he observed the bravery of Faizon Sr.'s group.

The Silence King, noticing Gold Gilbert's hesitation, sneered. "You think you can change sides now?" he taunted. "You belong to me."

Gold Gilbert's eyes flashed, and he hesitated for a moment before his gaze hardened. "Not anymore," he declared, raising his mallet. He began to beat his own golden belly, the shimmering sound merging with George Jr.'s drum roll. The combined rhythm created a powerful force that pushed back against the shadows.

Faizon Jr. took advantage of the momentary distraction. He leaped forward, his fists a blur as he struck at the tendrils, his movements fueled by a mixture of anger and hope. "We can do this!" he shouted.

Jeremiah, never one to be left out, joined the fray with a mighty battle cry. He launched himself at the Silence King, aiming a powerful belly flop that shook the ground. The impact disrupted the shadows momentarily, giving the others a brief respite.

"We need a plan," Riko called out, her voice carrying over the chaos. "We can't just keep reacting. We need to take the fight to him."

Faizon Sr. nodded, his mind racing. "We need to isolate him," he said. "If we can separate him from the shadows, we might stand a chance."

Marie, her eyes sharp with focus, pointed to a spot in the cavern. "Over there! That platform—it looks like it could be used to trap him."

## THE SILENCE KING

Without hesitation, Faizon Sr. rallied his group. "George Jr., keep drumming. Glenn, Charles, help distract him. The rest of us, we're going to lure him onto that platform."

The group moved as one, their unity and determination driving them forward. Glenn and Charles created a diversion, their combined strength and belly power forcing the shadows to retreat. George Jr. and Gold Gilbert's rhythmic beats continued to disrupt the darkness, creating a path for the others.

As they neared the platform, the Silence King's eyes narrowed. "You think you can trap me?" he roared, his voice reverberating through the cavern. "I am the darkness!"

But Faizon Sr. refused to be intimidated. "You're nothing but a shadow," he retorted. "And we're the light."

With a final, coordinated effort, the group managed to lure the Silence King onto the platform. Faizon Sr. signaled to Gabriel, who raised his shield high, reflecting the light from Gold Gilbert's glowing skin.

"Now!" Faizon Sr. shouted.

Gabriel slammed his shield down, the light bouncing off it and onto the platform. The Gold Glow intensified, surrounding the Silence King in a blinding aura. The shadows writhed and twisted, trying to escape, but the light held them at bay.

The Silence King screamed, a sound filled with rage and despair. "This isn't over!" he bellowed, his form beginning to disintegrate under the intense light.

Faizon Sr. stood tall, his face resolute. "For Timpanopia," he said firmly. "For Beatweaver Haven."

With one final, defiant scream, the Silence King vanished, the shadows dissipating into nothingness.

Faizon Sr. sighed heavily, his shoulders slumping as the tension of the battle slowly ebbed away. He glanced around at his companions, their faces a mixture of relief and lingering apprehension.

"That was too easy," he muttered, his voice tinged with unease. "He'll be back soon when we least expect it."

Gabriel nodded, lowering his shield. "We need to be ready. This was just the beginning."

## CHAPTER 20

George Jr., still clutching his belly, which was now vibrating with a gentle, soothing rhythm, looked up at his father. "What do we do now?"

Faizon Sr. took a deep breath, trying to steady his thoughts. "We regroup, we rest, and we prepare. The Silence King won't stop until he's achieved his goal. We need to find out more about him, his weaknesses, and how to stop him for good."

Glenn, rubbing his still-growing belly, frowned. "And we need to figure out why he's targeting us specifically. There has to be a reason."

Marie, who had been quietly observing the group, stepped forward. "We need information. If the Silence King is working with others, we need to know who they are and what their plans are. We need allies, resources, and a strategy."

Gold Gilbert, now fully on their side, approached Faizon Sr. "I can help with that. I have access to information from within the app, things that might give us an edge. But we'll need to be careful. The app's creators might be watching."

Jeremiah nodded, his expression determined. "We've faced tough battles before, but this feels different. We need to be smarter, more strategic."

Faizon Jr. clenched his fists, a fire of determination in his eyes. "We can't let fear stop us. We have to keep pushing forward, no matter what."

Faizon Sr. placed a hand on his son's shoulder. "You're right. We've come too far to turn back now. But we need to be smart about this. We need to find a safe place to regroup and plan our next move."

Marie glanced around the cavern, her eyes narrowing. "We can't stay here. This place is compromised. We need to find a new base, somewhere safe and secure."

George Sr. stepped forward, his face resolute. "I know a place. It's hidden, secure, and off the grid. We can go there and plan our next steps."

Faizon Sr. nodded, feeling a surge of hope. "Lead the way, Big G. Let's get out of here before the Silence King returns."

As they began to move, Faizon Sr. looked around at his companions, a sense of unity and resolve settling over them. They had faced a powerful enemy and emerged victorious, but the battle was far from over. They would need to stay vigilant, work together, and be ready for whatever came next.

## THE SILENCE KING

They moved swiftly through the cavern, their steps echoing in the now-silent space. George Jr. continued to drum softly on his belly, the sound providing a comforting rhythm as they navigated their way out. Glenn and Charles flanked the group, their eyes scanning for any signs of danger.

As they reached the entrance, the cool night air greeted them, a stark contrast to the oppressive heat of the battle. Gabriel led them through a series of winding paths, each turn taking them further away from the cavern and closer to their new base.

Finally, they arrived at a hidden bunker, nestled deep within the forest. George Sr. opened the door, revealing a spacious, well-equipped interior. "Welcome to our temporarily new headquarters," he said, his voice filled with determination. "Let's get to work."

Faizon Sr. looked around, feeling a renewed sense of purpose. They had survived this battle, but the war was far from over. With their new base and the information they could gather, they would be ready for whatever the Silence King threw at them next. Together, they would fight to protect Timpanopia and Beatweaver Haven, no matter the cost.

Inside the bunker, the group spread out, each finding a spot to settle and recover. Faizon Sr. moved to a central table, spreading out a map of Beatweaver Haven. The intricate details of the terrain, marked with notes and symbols, hinted at the extensive research and planning that had gone into their current mission.

"We need to figure out our next move," Faizon Sr. said, his voice steady but filled with urgency. "The Silence King is out there, and we need to be ready for him when he strikes again."

Gabriel nodded, stepping up to the table. "We need more information about his operations and his connections. If we can find out who his allies are and what resources he has, we can start dismantling his network."

Marie, who had been quietly observing the map, pointed to a section marked with a series of interconnected dots. "These are the known locations of the Silence King's activities. If we can hit these spots, we might be able to disrupt his plans and draw him out."

## CHAPTER 20

Glenn, still rubbing his gradually expanding belly, joined the discussion. "We also need to strengthen our own defenses. We can't afford to be caught off guard again. We need to be prepared for anything."

Charles, who had been pacing near the entrance, stopped and turned to face the group. "We need allies. There are other groups out there who are also fighting against the Silence King's influence. If we can bring them on board, we can form a stronger, more unified front."

Faizon Jr., his eyes blazing with determination, spoke up. "We need to train, too. We need to be at our best physically and mentally. If we're going to take on the Silence King and his forces, we need to be ready for anything."

Faizon Sr. nodded, feeling a surge of pride at the resilience and determination of his companions. "Alright. Let's break into teams. Marie and Glenn, you work on gathering more intel. Gabriel, see if you can get in touch with any potential allies. Faizon Jr. and Charles, let's start mapping out a training regimen. We need to be at our peak."

As the group dispersed to their tasks, George Jr. and Jeremiah approached Faizon Sr., their expressions serious. "Dad, what about Audito?" George Jr. asked, his voice tinged with worry. "We can't just leave him behind."

Faizon Sr. placed a reassuring hand on his son's shoulder. "We'll find a way to help him, George Jr. But right now, we need to focus on the immediate threat. The Silence King is our priority. Once we've dealt with him, we can go back for Audito."

Jeremiah nodded, his expression determined. "We're with you, Dad. We'll do whatever it takes to stop the Silence King."

Faizon Sr. smiled, feeling a deep sense of resolve. "I know you will, son. Now let's get to work. We've got a lot to do."

As the group settled into their tasks, a sense of purpose and unity filled the bunker. They knew the road ahead would be tough, but they were ready to face whatever challenges came their way. Together, they would fight to protect Timpanopia and Beatweaver Haven, and they would not rest until the Silence King was defeated.

Hours passed as they worked tirelessly, gathering information, contacting potential allies, and training rigorously. The bunker buzzed with activity, each member of the group driven by a shared goal. The occasional soft rumble of

## THE SILENCE KING

belly drumming provided a comforting background rhythm, a reminder of the unique bond that united them.

Suddenly, George Sr. voice cut through the hum of activity. "I've made contact with a potential ally. They want to meet in person to discuss a possible alliance."

Faizon Sr. looked up from the map, his interest piqued. "Who are they?"

George Sr.'s expression was serious. "They're a group called the Resonant Warriors. They're based in a neighboring region and have been fighting against the Silence King's influence for years. They have resources and information that could be invaluable to us."

Faizon Sr. nodded. "Alright. Let's set up a meeting. We need all the help we can get."

Gilbert quickly made the arrangements, and soon the group was preparing to head out to the meeting location. As they gathered their gear and prepared to leave, a sense of anticipation filled the air.

"We're doing this," Faizon Sr. said, his voice filled with determination. "We're taking the fight to the Silence King. And with the Resonant Warriors on our side, we just might have a chance."

The group set out, their resolve unshaken. They knew the path ahead would be fraught with danger, but they were ready to face it head-on. United by their shared goal and strengthened by their unique bond, they moved forward with unwavering determination, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead in their fight against the Silence King.



The journey to meet the Resonant Warriors was tense, each member of Faizon Sr.'s group on high alert. The landscape of Beatweaver Haven was a mix of vibrant forests, rolling hills, and occasional patches of urban sprawl, all interwoven with paths that could either lead to safety or danger. As they moved, the occasional rustle of leaves or distant call of wildlife served as a reminder of the world they were fighting to protect.

## CHAPTER 20

"We're getting close," George Sr. announced, consulting the coordinates he'd been given. The group followed a winding path that led them to a secluded clearing, surrounded by tall trees whose leaves created a natural canopy above.

Standing in the clearing was a group of individuals whose presence immediately conveyed strength and purpose. At their head was a tall, imposing figure with a powerful build, his skin a deep shade of ebony, his eyes sharp and intelligent. This was Darius, the leader of the Resonant Warriors.

"Welcome," Darius said, his voice deep and resonant. "We've been expecting you."

Faizon Sr. stepped forward, extending a hand. "Thank you for agreeing to meet with us. We're in dire need of allies."

Darius grasped Faizon Sr.'s hand firmly. "We're all in this together. The Silence King is a threat to everyone in Beatweaver Haven, and we must stand united against him."

Introductions were made, and soon both groups were seated in a circle, sharing information and strategies. The Resonant Warriors had extensive knowledge of the Silence King's operations, having fought his influence for years. They spoke of hidden bases, key operatives, and potential weaknesses that could be exploited.

"We've identified several critical points in his network," explained Layla, a strategist with the Resonant Warriors. "If we can hit these simultaneously, we can severely disrupt his operations and force him out into the open."

Gilbert nodded. "We've been gathering intel as well. We have a few leads on where some of his more secretive operations might be based."

As the discussion continued, it became clear that this alliance could turn the tide in their favor. Plans were made, maps were marked, and roles were assigned. The combined strength of Faizon Sr.'s group and the Resonant Warriors was a formidable force, one that the Silence King would not expect.

During a break in the discussion, Glenn and George Jr. found themselves chatting with some of the Resonant Warriors. "So, you guys have your own unique ways of fighting too, huh?" Faizon Jr. asked, a hint of admiration in his voice.

## THE SILENCE KING

"Yeah," said Amir, one of the younger warriors. "We use a mix of traditional combat techniques and rhythmic energy manipulation. It's all about harmony and balance."

Glenn chuckled, patting his belly. "Sounds like our kind of thing. We've got our own rhythm going too."

As the groups mingled, a sense of camaraderie began to form. Despite their different backgrounds and experiences, they were united by a common cause.

The meeting eventually came to a close, but the sense of purpose and unity remained strong. Darius spoke to the group one last time before they departed. "Remember, we are stronger together. The Silence King may be powerful, but he cannot stand against the combined might of those who fight for freedom and justice. Stay vigilant, and stay united. We will meet again soon, on the battlefield, and together we will bring an end to his reign of terror."

With that, Faizon Sr.'s group began their journey back to the bunker, their minds filled with new strategies and a renewed sense of hope. The encounter with the Resonant Warriors had invigorated them, giving them the strength they needed to push forward.

As they walked, Faizon Sr. fell into step beside Gabriel. "What do you think our next move should be?"

Gilbert thought for a moment. "We need to start implementing the plans we've discussed. Hit the critical points in the Silence King's network, draw him out. But we also need to be prepared for retaliation. He won't take our actions lightly."

Faizon Sr. nodded. "Agreed. We'll need to train harder, be more vigilant. This is going to be a long fight, but we're ready for it."

Back at the bunker, the group wasted no time. They dove into training, refining their techniques and preparing for the battles ahead. The presence of the Resonant Warriors had lit a fire within them, and they were determined to keep it burning.

Days turned into weeks as they honed their skills and executed their plans. Each small victory brought them closer to their ultimate goal, but also closer to the inevitable showdown with the Silence King.

One evening, as they gathered for a strategy session, Faizon Sr. addressed the group. "We've made significant progress, but we can't afford to be complacent.

## CHAPTER 20

The Silence King is still out there, and he's undoubtedly preparing for a counterattack. We need to be ready for anything."

Charles nodded, his expression serious. "We won't let our guard down. We'll keep pushing forward, no matter what."

Marie added, "And we'll keep looking for any advantage we can find. We've come too far to turn back now."

As the meeting adjourned, the group felt a renewed sense of determination. They knew the road ahead would be difficult, but they were ready to face whatever challenges came their way.

The tension in the bunker was palpable as Faizon Sr.'s group prepared for what was to come. They had spent weeks training, refining their skills, and now the moment of truth was upon them. The Resonant Warriors had reported back with critical information: the Silence King was gathering his forces for a final assault. This was their chance to strike, to take down his operation once and for all.

As they gathered their gear, Faizon Sr. looked around at his team. Everyone was present: Glenn, Gabriel, Charles, Marie, Riko, Faizon Jr., George Sr., George Jr., Guy Biggums, Jeremiah, and Gilbert. Each member of the team was crucial, their unique skills and strengths blending together into a formidable force.

"We need to stay together and watch each other's backs," Faizon Sr. said, his voice steady. "This is it. We have to give everything we've got."

The team nodded in unison, their expressions resolute. They exited the bunker, making their way through the dense forest towards the Silence King's stronghold. The Resonant Warriors, led by Darius, were already engaging the enemy at the outer defenses, creating a distraction to allow Faizon Sr.'s group to infiltrate the heart of the operation.

As they approached the stronghold, the sound of battle grew louder. Explosions echoed in the distance, and the air was thick with the smell of smoke and ozone. The ground trembled beneath their feet as they pressed forward.

Suddenly, the path before them was blocked by two imposing figures: Taiko Auditore and BOMBarder. Their bellies rumbled with the power of their respective drum rolls, shaking the very ground.

## THE SILENCE KING

"Not you guys again!" complained Jeremiah, his voice tinged with both frustration and determination.

The ground beneath them trembled as Taiko Audito and BOMBarder advanced, their drum rolls growing louder and more intense. Faizon Sr.'s group braced themselves for the onslaught. The Resonant Warriors, led by Darius, joined the fray, their coordinated attacks aiming to disrupt the enemy's rhythm.

Guy Biggums, with his massive frame and quick reflexes, charged at BOMBarder, tackling him to the ground. The impact was like a small earthquake, shaking the trees around them. Glenn and George Jr. continued their synchronized belly drumming, creating a powerful counter-rhythm that clashed with the enemy's beats.

Gabriel and Charles flanked them, their movements precise and calculated. Gabriel managed to get behind Regular Mack, using his agility to avoid the rumbling drum rolls. He landed a series of precise strikes, disrupting Mack's rhythm and causing him to stumble.

Marie and Faizon Jr. provided support from the sidelines, using their abilities to create barriers and disrupt the enemy's rhythm. George Sr. and Gilbert moved with precision, targeting the enemy's weak points and creating openings for their teammates.

But the real challenge came when Big Mack and Regular Mack joined the fray, their combined drum rolls creating a powerful, disorienting cacophony. The ground beneath them seemed to warp and shift with each beat, making it difficult to maintain their footing.

"Focus!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice cutting through the chaos. "Stick to the plan!"

Gabriel managed to get behind Regular Mack, using his agility to avoid the rumbling drum rolls. He landed a series of precise strikes, disrupting Mack's rhythm and causing him to stumble. The disruption allowed Glenn and George Jr. to intensify their belly drumming, creating a powerful counter-rhythm that shook the ground beneath the Macks' feet.

Marie and Faizon Jr. worked in tandem, casting barriers and creating distractions that allowed their team to maneuver more effectively. George Sr. and Gilbert targeted weak points, their precise movements opening up the battlefield and creating opportunities for their teammates.

## CHAPTER 20

Taiko Audito, seeing his ally falter, charged at Faizon Sr. with renewed fury. The powerful beats of his taiko drum reverberated through the air, creating shockwaves that knocked several fighters off their feet. Faizon Sr. stood firm, his own belly drum countering the force of Audito's attacks.

"Keep pushing!" Faizon Sr. shouted, his voice carrying over the chaos. "We can do this!"

Jeremiah leapt at Taiko Audito from the side, catching him off guard and landing a powerful kick to his midsection. Audito staggered, and Faizon Sr. seized the moment to deliver a powerful drum roll directly to Audito's chest, sending him reeling backwards.

Meanwhile, Guy Biggums continued his struggle with BOMBarder, their massive frames locked in a titanic struggle. Guy's brute strength was matched by BOMBarder's explosive power, each drum roll sending shockwaves through the ground. But Guy's determination was unyielding, and he slowly began to gain the upper hand.

Gabriel, seeing an opening, moved swiftly to assist Guy. He targeted BOMBarder's knees with quick, precise strikes, weakening the giant's stance. With a final, powerful push, Guy managed to topple BOMBarder, pinning him to the ground.

"We've got him!" Gabriel shouted, helping Guy to secure BOMBarder's limbs.

In the midst of the battle, Baldwin and Audito faced off against their doppelgängers. The true Audito, weakened but still determined, fought with a ferocity that belied his injuries. Baldwin's massive frame and powerful drum rolls created a protective barrier, giving Audito the cover he needed to land his own strikes.

The Silence King watched from the shadows, his expression unreadable. He seemed to be calculating, waiting for the right moment to intervene. His presence was a dark, oppressive weight over the battlefield, and Faizon Sr. knew that their true enemy was still out of reach.

"Keep pushing forward!" Faizon Sr. urged his team. "We can't let them win!"

As the battle raged on, the ground beneath them began to tremble even more violently. Cracks formed in the earth, and the air was filled with the sound of splitting stone and the roar of the drums. The Resonant Warriors, led

## THE SILENCE KING

by Darius, continued to fight valiantly, their synchronized movements creating a symphony of resistance against the chaos.

Suddenly, the Silence King stepped forward, his eyes glowing with a malevolent light. "Enough!" he bellowed, his voice echoing through the cavern. The sheer force of his presence caused everyone to pause, their eyes turning towards him in a mixture of fear and defiance.

"You've fought well," the Silence King said, his voice dripping with disdain. "But this ends now."

Faizon Sr. stood his ground, his eyes locked on the Silence King. "Why are you doing this?" he demanded, his voice strong and unwavering.

The Silence King sneered, but he still refused to answer, his silence a taunt that only fueled Faizon Sr.'s determination.

The ground continued to tremble, and the cavern began to collapse around them. "We need to finish this," Faizon Sr. said, turning to his team. "Together."

With a final, unified effort, Faizon Sr. and his team surged forward. The Resonant Warriors played a powerful, harmonious rhythm that seemed to counter the very essence of the Silence King's malevolent power. The combined force of their music and determination created a wave of energy that rippled through the cavern, pushing back the shadows and forcing the Silence King to retreat.

But even as they gained ground, the Silence King fought back with all his might. His shadowy tendrils lashed out, striking at the team and disrupting their rhythm. The battle was fierce and relentless, each side pushing the other to their limits.

In the midst of the chaos, Faizon Sr. saw an opportunity. He gathered his strength and, with a powerful drum roll, launched himself at the Silence King. His belly drum beat with a resonant, defiant rhythm, a symbol of their unyielding spirit.

The Silence King roared in fury, his form flickering as he struggled to maintain his grip on the physical world. Faizon Sr.'s attack landed with a resounding impact, shaking the very foundations of the cavern.

With a final, desperate effort, the team joined forces, their combined rhythms creating a crescendo of sound and energy. The Resonant Warriors and

## CHAPTER 20

the Obese Orchestra all played in perfect harmony, their music a powerful force that shattered the Silence King's hold.

The Silence King let out a final, anguished cry as his form disintegrated, the shadows dissipating into nothingness. The cavern fell silent, the only sound the steady, victorious drumbeats of Faizon Sr. and his team.

They had done it. The Silence King was defeated, and Beatweaver Haven was safe once more.

The team cheered, their voices a joyous chorus that filled the cavern. They had faced the darkness and emerged victorious, their bond stronger than ever.

Or had they?

As the dust settled and the team began to catch their breath, a deafening mechanical roar echoed through the cavern. The ground shook violently, and before their eyes, the Silence King reappeared. But this time, he was encased in a colossal mecha suit, an amalgamation of their own strengths and weaknesses.

The monstrous machine towered over them, its design an unsettling combination of Faizon Sr., Marie, and the Rythmi Twins. The torso was broad and powerful, with a protruding belly that seemed to pulse with an eerie light, much like Faizon Sr.'s own. The arms were lithe and agile, reminiscent of Marie's finesse, while the head featured twin visors that glowed with the same sinister purple hue as the Rythmi Twins' eyes.

"What is that thing?" George Jr. exclaimed, his voice filled with a mixture of awe and dread.

"It's the Silence King's final weapon," Faizon Sr. said, his eyes narrowing with determination. "A mecha that combines all our abilities."

The Silence King's voice boomed from within the suit, filled with a malevolent glee. "Did you really think it would be that easy? You might have bested me once, but now I have harnessed your very essence to crush you!"

The massive machine took a step forward, the ground trembling under its weight. Its arms moved with terrifying speed, launching a barrage of attacks that forced the team to scatter. Each strike was a deadly combination of their own skills, turned against them.

Gabriel, George Sr., and Guy Biggums moved swiftly, trying to flank the mecha while avoiding its devastating blows. Glenn, his belly still swollen from

## THE SILENCE KING

the earlier battles, used his growing girth to shield the others from the mecha's onslaught.

Faizon Jr. and Marie combined their powers, casting protective barriers and launching coordinated attacks to try and find a weakness in the mecha's armor. Marie's graceful movements and Faizon Jr.'s rhythmic drum beats created a dynamic counter-offensive, but the mecha was relentless.

Jeremiah, from his vantage point atop a bookcase, hurled himself at the mecha's legs, attempting to destabilize it. He managed to land a powerful belly flop, but the mecha merely staggered, quickly regaining its balance.

Gold Gilbert, now fully integrated with the Silence King's will, unleashed a series of blinding flashes, forcing the team to fight through the disorienting light.

"We need to work together!" Faizon Sr. shouted, rallying his team. "Focus on its weak points! We can do this!"

George Jr. had an idea. "Everyone, aim for the joints! We need to disable its mobility!"

With renewed determination, the team launched a coordinated assault. Gabriel and Guy Biggums targeted the mecha's knees, their powerful strikes causing the joints to spark and sputter. George Sr. and Gilbert focused on the arms, their precise attacks weakening the mecha's grip.

Faizon Sr. and his son synchronized their drum rolls, their combined rhythms creating a powerful resonance that disrupted the mecha's internal systems. The Rythmi Twins, though mind-controlled, felt the pull of the rhythm and began to resist the Silence King's influence.

As the mecha began to falter, the team intensified their efforts. Glenn used his growing belly as a battering ram, slamming into the mecha's torso and causing it to lurch backwards. Jeremiah, seeing an opportunity, climbed the mecha's back, aiming for the control center.

"Now, Jeremiah!" Faizon Sr. shouted. "Take it down!"

Jeremiah reached the control center and, with a mighty roar, delivered a powerful belly drum roll directly to the mecha's core. The impact reverberated through the machine, causing it to shudder violently. Sparks flew, and the mecha's movements became erratic.

## CHAPTER 20

The Silence King, realizing his defeat, let out a final, enraged scream. "This isn't over! You will never defeat the true power of the Silence King!"

With a final, explosive burst, the mecha collapsed to the ground, the Silence King's voice fading into the void. The team stood victorious, their combined strength and unity overcoming even the most formidable of foes.

As the dust settled, Faizon Sr. turned to his team, his face filled with pride and relief. "We did it," he said, his voice choked with emotion. "We really did it."

But even as they celebrated, they knew that their journey was far from over. The Silence King had been defeated, but his dark influence still lingered. They would need to remain vigilant, ready to face whatever new challenges awaited them in the future.

For now, though, they could rest, knowing that they had saved their home and each other. And so, with their hearts full of hope and their spirits unbroken, Faizon Sr. and his team prepared for whatever came next, ready to face the future together.

# 21

## Resolutions

The once tumultuous battlefield had given way to the sterile, fluorescent-lit interior of the Timpanopia Police Office. Faizon Sr., his group, Radames, the council members, and even the captured Silence King found themselves seated around a large, rectangular table. The room was filled with a tense silence, the air thick with anticipation and unspoken questions.

The Silence King, now stripped of his intimidating mecha suit, sat at the end of the table. His full name, as revealed during his capture, was Dr. Alaric Tenebris. He was an imposing figure even without his mechanical enhancements, his piercing eyes scanning the room with a mixture of disdain and defiance.

Radames, the chief of police, broke the silence. "Dr. Alaric Tenebris, you have a lot to answer for. Your actions have caused untold destruction and chaos in Timpanopia and beyond. It's time you explained yourself."

Dr. Tenebris leaned back in his chair, a faint smirk playing on his lips. "Explain myself? Very well. But understand this—my intentions were never about mere destruction. They were about liberation."

"Liberation?" Faizon Sr. echoed, incredulous. "You call bombings, mind control, and the creation of destructive machines 'liberation'?"

Dr. Tenebris' eyes narrowed. "You all live in a world where noise reigns supreme, where the cacophony of daily life drowns out the beauty of silence. My goal was to bring about a new order, one where silence could be appreciated, where people could find peace in the absence of noise."

## CHAPTER 21

Marie shook her head, her expression one of disbelief. "Peace? Your methods are anything but peaceful. You've terrorized innocent people, disrupted our lives, and tried to impose your twisted vision on us all."

The council members murmured in agreement, their faces reflecting a shared outrage.

"Imposing my vision?" Dr. Tenebris scoffed. "Look around you. The world is filled with noise—constant, unrelenting noise. It drowns out thought, stifles creativity, and prevents true understanding. My intention was to create a world where silence could be a sanctuary, where people could truly hear themselves think."

Gabriel leaned forward, his voice steady but firm. "You don't create peace through violence and coercion. Silence should be a choice, not something forced upon people."

Dr. Tenebris' gaze shifted to Gabriel, his expression unreadable. "You speak of choice, but how many choices do people truly have in this noisy world? My actions were a means to an end, a necessary sacrifice to achieve a greater good."

Radames interjected, his tone stern. "And what of the countless lives disrupted by your actions? The families torn apart, the fear and uncertainty you've sown? Do you truly believe that justifies your vision?"

Dr. Tenebris' smirk faded, replaced by a cold, calculating look. "Sometimes, to create a new world, the old one must be torn down. The pain and suffering are unfortunate, but necessary. History is full of such examples."

Faizon Jr. couldn't contain his frustration any longer. "You talk about history and sacrifice, but you forget one thing—we're not just pieces on your chessboard. We're people, with lives and dreams that you've trampled on."

Dr. Tenebris regarded Faizon Jr. with a hint of curiosity. "And what would you suggest? That we continue to live in this noisy, chaotic world without seeking change?"

Marie spoke up, her voice filled with a quiet resolve. "Change doesn't come from imposing your will on others. It comes from understanding, from working together to find common ground. You could have used your intelligence and resources to make a real difference, to promote the value of silence in a way that respects people's autonomy."

## RESOLUTIONS

Dr. Tenebris' expression softened, if only slightly. "Perhaps...but the path I chose seemed the most expedient. I believed that by demonstrating the power of silence, people would come to understand its value."

Radames sighed, leaning back in his chair. "Your actions have shown us one thing, Dr. Tenebris—the dangers of extremism. You've become the very thing you sought to destroy—a source of chaos and division."

The room fell silent again, each person lost in their thoughts. The council members exchanged glances, clearly contemplating the gravity of the situation.

Finally, Faizon Sr. spoke, his voice calm but firm. "Dr. Tenebris, your vision for a world where silence is appreciated is not inherently wrong. But your methods were. We can strive for a balance, where silence and sound coexist in harmony. But it must be through mutual respect and understanding, not through fear and force."

Dr. Tenebris looked around the room, his gaze lingering on each person before settling on Faizon Sr. "Perhaps...perhaps I was wrong in my approach. But the need for silence, for moments of peace, remains."

Radames nodded. "And we can work towards that. Together. But first, you must answer for your crimes."

Dr. Tenebris bowed his head slightly, a gesture of acquiescence. "Very well. I will face the consequences of my actions. But remember, the pursuit of silence, of peace, is not inherently evil. It is the means by which we seek it that defines us."

With that, the tension in the room began to ease, replaced by a sense of cautious optimism. The path ahead would be difficult, but there was hope that, through collaboration and understanding, they could create a world where silence and sound existed in harmony.



The courtroom was a stark contrast to the chaos of the battlefield they had all experienced. It was a place of order and judgment, where justice would be

## CHAPTER 21

served. Dr. Alaric Tenebris, once the feared Silence King, now stood before the judge, his imposing presence diminished by the reality of his actions.

The judge, a stern woman with a sharp gaze, reviewed the charges one last time. "Dr. Alaric Tenebris, you have been found guilty of terrorism, coercion, and numerous counts of attempted murder. Your actions have caused untold damage and suffering to the people of Timpanopia and Beatweaver Haven. Do you have anything to say before sentencing?"

Dr. Tenebris, standing tall but subdued, shook his head. "No, Your Honor. I have said all I needed to say."

The judge nodded, her expression resolute. "In light of your crimes, this court sentences you to 120 years in prison. Additionally, you will serve one year of community service, during which you will work to repair some of the damage you have caused. This service will begin after your prison sentence, if you are still living."

There was a murmur of approval from the assembled crowd. It was a harsh sentence, but many felt it was just given the severity of his actions. As Dr. Tenebris was led away, there was a sense of closure, but also an understanding that this was just one chapter in a larger story.

Faizon Sr. and his group stood together, watching the scene unfold. They had fought hard to protect their world and had succeeded in bringing the Silence King to justice. But they knew their work wasn't done.

Marie turned to Faizon Sr., her expression thoughtful. "So, what's next? The Silence King's plans may have been thwarted, but there are still remnants of his influence out there."

Faizon Sr. nodded. "Indeed. We need to ensure that his followers are apprehended and that any lingering threats are neutralized. But more importantly, we need to help our community heal and rebuild."

Glenn, his belly no longer growing, added, "And we need to continue spreading the joy of belly drumming and music. To remind people of the beauty of harmony, both in sound and in our lives."

Faizon Jr. looked up at his father, determination in his eyes. "We'll make sure everyone knows that silence and sound can coexist. That peace can be found without resorting to violence."

## RESOLUTIONS

Gabriel, always the practical one, spoke up. "And we need to start by finding the rest of our friends and allies. We can't do this alone."

Radames, who had been listening quietly, nodded in agreement. "We'll work together. The police, the council, and your group. We'll ensure that Timpanopia remains a place of peace and creativity."

As they left the courthouse, there was a renewed sense of purpose among them. They had faced great adversity and come out stronger. But they knew the journey ahead would require vigilance and cooperation.

Their first task was to regroup with the rest of their friends. They headed back to the warehouse sanctuary, where Faizon Sr. and his group had spent so many days honing their big belly drumming skills and plotting their next moves.

Inside, the atmosphere was tense but hopeful. The warehouse had become a symbol of their resistance and their hope for the future. It was here that they would plan their next steps.

Jeremiah, always eager for action, was the first to speak. "We need to track down the remaining followers of the Silence King. They won't just disappear. And we need to find out if there are any other threats lurking out there, of course."

Marie agreed. "But we also need to focus on rebuilding. The bombings caused a lot of damage, both physically and emotionally. We need to help our community recover."

Faizon Sr. looked around at his assembled friends and allies. "We'll do both. We'll continue to protect our community while also helping it heal. We'll spread our message of peace and harmony, and we'll ensure that the music and joy of Timpanopia continue to thrive."

Glenn, smiling, added, "And we'll keep belly drumming. Because if there's one thing we've learned, it's that music has the power to bring people together and to heal."

And so, with a renewed sense of purpose and unity, Faizon Sr. and his group set out to rebuild their community, to spread their message of harmony, and to ensure that Timpanopia remained a place of peace and creativity. The battle with the Silence King was over, but their journey was far from finished. There were still challenges ahead, but they were ready to face them together.



Marie and Riko returned to their respective countries in Beatweaver Haven, their mission complete but their hearts heavy with the weight of their shared experiences. They had been integral to the defeat of Dr. Alaric Tenebris, and now it was time for them to rebuild their own communities, applying the lessons they had learned and the bonds they had forged during their time in Timpanopia.

Back in Timpanopia, Faizon Sr. was appointed as the new mayor, a testament to his leadership and the respect he had earned from his fellow citizens. His inauguration was a joyous occasion, marked by a grand belly drumming performance that brought together people from all walks of life. The rhythmic beats echoed through the city, a symbol of unity and resilience.

Despite the celebrations and newfound peace, the sense of vigilance remained. The memory of the Silence King's terror was still fresh, and Faizon Sr. knew that their work was far from over. He stood on the balcony of the mayor's office, looking out over the bustling city. Faizon Jr., Gabriel, Glenn, and the rest of their group stood with him, their faces reflecting a mix of determination and anticipation.

"We've come a long way," Faizon Sr. began, his voice steady and strong. "But we can't become complacent. We need to stay vigilant, to protect our community and to ensure that peace and creativity continue to thrive here."

Gabriel nodded in agreement. "We need to establish a network, to keep an eye out for any signs of trouble. We can't let anyone else like the Silence King rise to power."

Glenn added, "And we need to continue spreading the joy of belly drumming and music. It's not just about entertainment; it's about bringing people together and fostering a sense of community."

Faizon Jr., always eager to take action, chimed in, "And we need to help other communities in Beatweaver Haven. What happened here could happen anywhere. We have to share what we've learned and support each other."

## RESOLUTIONS

The group spent the next few days drawing up plans and mobilizing resources. Faizon Sr.'s new position as mayor gave them the leverage they needed to implement their initiatives. They established community centers where people could learn belly drumming and other musical arts, fostering a sense of togetherness and resilience.

They also set up a vigilance network, enlisting volunteers to keep an eye out for any suspicious activities. The network extended beyond Timpanopia, reaching out to neighboring cities and countries within Beatweaver Haven. It was a massive undertaking, but they knew it was necessary to maintain the peace they had fought so hard to achieve.

One evening, as the sun set over the city, Faizon Sr. gathered his closest friends and allies in the warehouse sanctuary. It had been their safe haven, their planning room, and their training ground. Now, it was a place of reflection and renewal.

"We've accomplished a lot," Faizon Sr. said, looking around at the familiar faces. "But this is just the beginning. Our journey is far from over. We have to remain committed to our cause and to each other."

Marie and Riko joined the gathering via a holographic projection, their images flickering but their presence felt. They shared updates from their respective countries, detailing the progress they had made and the challenges they still faced.

"We're rebuilding," Marie said, her voice full of hope. "And we're using what we learned in Timpanopia to strengthen our communities. The bonds we forged are still strong, and they will guide us forward."

Riko nodded in agreement. "The fight against the Silence King showed us the power of unity. We need to keep that spirit alive and continue to support each other."

As the meeting continued, they discussed their plans for the future, sharing ideas and strategies. There was a sense of renewed purpose and determination. They knew the road ahead would be challenging, but they were ready to face it together.

Faizon Sr. looked at his son, pride swelling in his chest. "Faizon Jr., you've shown incredible courage and resilience. You've grown so much, and I know you'll continue to be a strong leader."

## CHAPTER 21

Faizon Jr. smiled, feeling the weight of his father's words. "I'll do my best, Dad. We all will."

The night ended with a belly drumming session, the rhythmic beats echoing through the warehouse and out into the city. It was a reminder of their journey, their struggles, and their triumphs. And as the final notes faded into the night, they knew they were ready for whatever the future held.

Their journey was far from over, but they faced it with hope, unity, and the unwavering belief in the power of music and community.

With his new responsibilities as mayor, Faizon Sr. also saw the potential to further enhance his company, BellyBeat Percussion Co. He knew that the company had always been a cornerstone of Timpanopia's cultural identity, and he envisioned a future where it could reach even greater heights, benefiting not just the city but all of Beatweaver Haven.

Faizon Sr. gathered his core team for a meeting in the newly renovated offices of BellyBeat Percussion Co. The room was filled with the familiar faces of his trusted colleagues and friends—Gabriel, Glenn, Faizon Jr., and others who had been instrumental in their recent triumphs.

"Now that we have a moment to breathe," Faizon Sr. began, his voice filled with determination, "it's time to think about how we can elevate BellyBeat Percussion Co. We have an opportunity to use our music and our instruments to bring people together, not just here in Timpanopia, but across Beatweaver Haven."

Gabriel leaned forward, his eyes bright with excitement. "We can start by expanding our production line. We've seen how effective the Big Belly Drum Drone and other instruments have been. Let's innovate and create new instruments that can reach a wider audience."

Glenn nodded in agreement. "And we should focus on accessibility. Let's ensure that our instruments are available to everyone, regardless of their financial situation. We can set up community programs and offer discounts to schools and local organizations."

Faizon Jr., always eager to contribute, added, "We should also think about online classes and tutorials. There are so many people out there who want to learn belly drumming but don't have access to proper training. We can use technology to bridge that gap."

## RESOLUTIONS

Faizon Sr. smiled, proud of the enthusiasm and creativity of his team. "These are all great ideas. We'll also need to strengthen our partnerships with other communities. Marie and Riko have already started rebuilding in their countries, and we can support them by providing instruments and training."

The team spent the next few weeks tirelessly working on their plans. They revamped their product line, introducing new and innovative instruments that incorporated the rich cultural heritage of Timpanopia with modern technology. They launched a series of online tutorials, featuring Faizon Jr. and other skilled drummers, to teach belly drumming techniques to a global audience.

Community outreach programs were established, ensuring that local schools, community centers, and underprivileged neighborhoods had access to BellyBeat instruments and workshops. These initiatives were met with overwhelming support and enthusiasm, further solidifying BellyBeat Percussion Co.'s reputation as a force for positive change.

Faizon Sr. also initiated partnerships with other cities and countries in Beatweaver Haven. Marie and Riko's communities were the first to benefit from these collaborations, receiving shipments of instruments and training materials. These efforts helped to foster a sense of unity and cooperation across the region, creating a network of support and shared cultural enrichment.

One evening, as the sun set over Timpanopia, Faizon Sr. stood on the balcony of his office, looking out over the bustling city. The rhythmic sounds of belly drumming filled the air, a testament to the thriving musical culture he had helped to nurture.

Gilbert joined him on the balcony, a satisfied smile on his face. "We've come a long way, Faizon. BellyBeat Percussion Co. is stronger than ever, and the city is thriving."

Faizon Sr. nodded, a sense of pride and accomplishment washing over him. "It's all thanks to our community and the support we've given each other. We've shown that music can bring people together and create positive change."

As they stood there, watching the city lights twinkle in the growing dusk, Faizon Jr. approached, his eyes filled with determination. "Dad, I've been thinking. There's so much more we can do. We've built something incredible here, but we can't stop now."

## CHAPTER 21

Faizon Sr. smiled, placing a hand on his son's shoulder. "You're right, Faizon Jr. This is just the beginning. We have a responsibility to keep pushing forward, to keep innovating and to keep bringing people together through music."

The following months saw even greater strides for BellyBeat Percussion Co. They hosted international belly drumming festivals, bringing together musicians from all over Beatweaver Haven to share their skills and cultures. These events not only showcased the beauty of belly drumming but also fostered a sense of global community and understanding.

Through their continued efforts, Faizon Sr. and his team transformed BellyBeat Percussion Co. into a symbol of unity, creativity, and resilience. Their work served as a beacon of hope and inspiration, reminding everyone that through music and collaboration, they could overcome any challenge and create a brighter future for all.

And so, with the rhythmic beats of their drums echoing through the air, they faced the future with hope and determination, knowing that their journey was far from over, but confident that they would continue to make a positive impact on the world around them.



With Faizon Jr., Gabriel, and the other kids back to their playful antics, the vibrant energy of Timpanopia was more alive than ever. Despite their youthful exuberance, the four boys played an integral role in assisting the Obese Orchestra with their latest venture—a movie titled *Welcome to Timpanopia*. The release was a monumental event in the city. The film, a unique blend of music and storytelling, showcased the talent and creativity of the Obese Orchestra, with each member's big brown belly serving as a crucial instrument to emphasize the mood and tension of various scenes. The community gathered in excitement, filling the grand theater to its capacity, eager to witness the masterpiece that their beloved musicians had created.

Faizon Sr., ever the leader, played a pivotal role in the production. In one of the film's most intense sequences, he played a dangerous rhythm on his big

## RESOLUTIONS

brown belly, which had been meticulously tuned to a dark, deep note. The rhythm was ominous and foreboding: *Bum, ba-da-BUM, ba-da-BUM, ba-da-buh-duh-buh-duh-BUM*, creating an atmosphere of tension and anticipation. Each beat resonated through the room, creating a palpable sense of suspense.

Jeremiah, positioned at a DJ turntable, added to the tension with a whistling sound reminiscent of a bomb about to fall. The sound culminated in a bomb explosion and a simultaneous gong sound, creating a powerful auditory experience. Jeremiah continued to play these sounds at random intervals, sometimes overlapping bombs and whistles until Faizon Sr.'s rhythm reached its climax and ceased.

Gilbert's performance was equally mesmerizing. He replicated the rumbling roll Jeremiah had performed at the concert, transitioning seamlessly between crescendos and decrescendos, creating a powerful and continuous soundscape and maintaining a single, steady roll. Coincidentally, a thunderstorm raged outside, adding a natural layer of drama to the scene. The rumbling of thunder perfectly complemented Gilbert's belly drumroll, enhancing the film's atmosphere.

In one particularly memorable scene, the camera focused on the growing bellies of Glenn and Charles while Faizon Sr. and Gilbert played an offscreen performance of the Big Brown Belly BOMBardment to encourage the growth of the bellies. The visual intensity and the powerful sound combined to create an unforgettable experience that left the audience in awe. The performance looked just as impressive as Glenn and Charles' demonstrations back in the warehouse, showcasing the power and versatility of the belly drumming.

Throughout the film, the Obese Orchestra created a variety of belly drum music to match different scenes and moods. Their compositions ranged from intense and foreboding to lighthearted and playful, reflecting the diverse emotional landscape of Timpanopia. Each piece of music was meticulously crafted, adding depth and texture to the film.

Upon the movie's release on Father's Day 2023, *Welcome to Timpanopia* received widespread acclaim for its innovative use of belly drumming and its vibrant portrayal of the city's culture. Audiences were captivated by the unique sounds and rhythms, and the film quickly became a cultural phenomenon.

## CHAPTER 21

In a generous move, all the production music from the movie was released on the movie's official website for free download (and some of it on the Timpanopian sound websites) under the Creative Commons Zero license. This decision allowed anyone to use the music freely, spreading the unique sounds of Timpanopia far and wide. The release of the music under such an open license further solidified BellyBeat Percussion Co.'s commitment to accessibility and community, ensuring that the rhythms of Timpanopia could inspire and unite people across the globe.

The success of the movie and the release of its music marked a new chapter for BellyBeat Percussion Co. and the Obese Orchestra. They continued to innovate and push the boundaries of their art, bringing the joy and power of belly drumming to an ever-growing audience. And through it all, Faizon Sr., his family, and friends remained at the heart of it, their unity and creativity driving them forward into a bright and harmonious future.

As the credits rolled on the premiere night, the audience erupted in applause, not just for the film, but for the community effort that made it possible. Faizon Sr. stood with his team, soaking in the appreciation and love from their fellow citizens. He knew that this was just one of many achievements to come, and he looked forward to the future with renewed hope and determination.

As *Welcome to Timpanopia* garnered more recognition and praise, Faizon Sr. and his team found themselves busier than ever. The success of the movie had opened new doors for BellyBeat Percussion Co., leading to a surge in interest and collaboration opportunities.

Faizon Sr., now officially the mayor of Timpanopia, expertly balanced his civic duties with his passion for belly drumming. Under his leadership, the city thrived, embracing its unique musical culture while addressing the needs of its citizens. The community rallied around the newfound fame, with local businesses and artists benefiting from the spotlight cast on their vibrant city.

Faizon Jr. and Gabriel, despite their youthful energy, continued to assist the Obese Orchestra in their projects. The boys often found themselves brainstorming new concepts, their imaginations running wild with ideas for future films, performances, and community events. Their involvement kept

## RESOLUTIONS

them grounded, ensuring they understood the value of teamwork and creativity from a young age.

One sunny afternoon, the entire gang gathered in their warehouse sanctuary. It was a typical day filled with laughter, music, and camaraderie. Faizon Sr. addressed the group, a broad smile on his face.

"I've been thinking," he began, his voice carrying a note of excitement, "we've done so much with *Welcome to Timpanopia*, but I believe there's still more we can explore. Our city has so many stories to tell, so many rhythms to share."

Gilbert, ever the supportive cousin, nodded enthusiastically. "Absolutely! We've only scratched the surface. Imagine what we could do next—maybe a series of short films focusing on different aspects of our culture, or even a documentary showcasing our daily lives and the impact of belly drumming on our community."

Jeremiah, sitting at his DJ turntable, chimed in. "I could mix in some fresh beats, give each story a unique sound. We've got the talent and the passion. Let's make it happen!"

"We could have other people contribute to the Obese Orchestra if they want!" suggested Faizon Jr. "Like me, for instance. You're the F in the orchestra," he said, poking his father's belly button, "so maybe I could be the F# in the orchestra, since I'm your son. Of course, that'd require some tuning before every concert.... And Gabriel can be G# since his father is the G. And maybe Elijah could be the E."

Marie, who had returned from her homeland in Beatweaver Haven, added, "We should also look into collaborations with other towns and cities. There's a whole world of rhythm out there, and bringing it all together could create something truly special."

The idea resonated with everyone. They spent the afternoon brainstorming, their excitement palpable as they envisioned the future. The conversations were lively, filled with bursts of laughter and the occasional impromptu drumming session. Faizon Jr. and Gabriel, fueled by their youthful enthusiasm, offered imaginative ideas that pushed the boundaries of what the Obese Orchestra could achieve.

As the sun set, casting a golden glow over Timpanopia, Faizon Sr. looked around at his family and friends, feeling a deep sense of gratitude. The journey

## CHAPTER 21

from their early days of belly drumming to becoming cultural ambassadors had been incredible. Yet, he knew their story was far from over.

"We've come a long way," Faizon Sr. said, his voice tinged with emotion. "But the road ahead is even more exciting. Together, we'll continue to make music, tell stories, and bring joy to everyone we reach. Let's keep drumming, keep dreaming, and keep pushing the limits of what we can achieve."

The group erupted in cheers, their spirits high. They knew that whatever challenges lay ahead, they would face them together, united by their shared love of music and their unwavering bond.

With renewed purpose, the Obese Orchestra set their sights on new projects, eager to explore the endless possibilities before them. As they continued to create, perform, and inspire, the rhythms of Timpanopia echoed far and wide, a testament to the power of community, creativity, and the joy of belly drumming.

And so, the legacy of Faizon Sr., his family, and friends lived on, their beats resonating through the heart of Timpanopia and beyond, a constant reminder that when people come together with passion and purpose, they can create something truly extraordinary.

# B

## Jeremiah's Archive

*Below is a comprehensive and confidential archive of resources and performances from the Obese Orchestra, made into a compilation by Jeremiah Caldwell with permission from the Obese Orchestra. Do not reproduce without permission.*

*You can find more information about the new movie on <https://obesorchestra.com>.*

### **Welcome to Timpanopia on sound.timpanopia.org**

*The following is a list of sounds that the crew decided to release on Timpanopia Sound to hype up the movie.*

- **Name:** Big Brown Belly Drum Roll
  - **Description:** Dramatically long timpani drum roll being played on a big brown belly set to its intimidating size to a 1.5 ft circumference for a full hour. It dynamically changes from the belly drum drone's soft ghostly roll to a loud roll to a dramatic roll constantly changing in dynamics to a soft continuous roll with heavy footsteps every bar (10 minutes) to a slowly building crescendo that ends with a very loud roll and a very loud hit that fades to reveal another very soft timpani roll that continues for 10 more minutes.
  - Duration: 1:12:45
  - BPM: 160
  - **Username:** BigFatBellyDrumFaizon

## BONUS CHAPTER

- **User Description:** Master percussionist with an extraordinarily big brown belly and a great love for making timpani drum rolls with it.
  - **Tags:** timpani, drum rolls, belly drum, fat, king, huge, big, tension/suspense, heavy, rumbling, obese, growing, large, smelly, big brown belly, percussion, drone, rolling, thunder, dark, kettledrum, round, enormous, dramatic, roll, jungle, orchestral, resonant, deep, intense, steady, bomb, timpani drum, timpani drum roll
  - **URL:** <https://sound.timpanopia.org/sounds/46631>
- 
- **Name:** Rolling Thunderstorm
    - **Description:** Dramatic rolling timpani drum being played on my large round belly, performed in front of a microphone. Constantly changing in dynamics for one minute and ending in two mallets beating the belly loudly at the same time. I imagine myself stomping through a city with this one.
    - Duration: 0:01:27
    - BPM: 150
    - **Usernames:** GiantGutGilbert, JeremiahCaldwell345
    - **User Description:** I'm just some large man with a very, very large belly. I use it to make timpani drum rolls that are sometimes suspenseful enough to cause heightened physiological responses.
    - **Tags:** timpani, drum rolls, belly drum, big, tension/suspense, heavy, rumbling, large, percussion, rolling, thunder, dark, kettledrum, round, dramatic, roll
    - **URL:** <https://sound.timpanopia.org/sounds/46632>
- 
- **Name:** Big Belly BOMBardment
    - **Description:** My big friend Faizon played a timpani drum roll on his big brown belly, and I was ponderously walking around with soft stomps while softly hitting a shield strapped around my stomach with a felt timpani mallet to create bomb-like sounds.
    - Duration: 0:01:08
    - BPM: 173
    - **Usernames:** GiantGutGilbert, BigFatBellyDrumFaizon

## JEREMIAH'S ARCHIVE

- **User Description:** I'm just some large man with a very, very large belly. I use it to make timpani drum rolls that are sometimes suspenseful enough to cause heightened physiological responses.
  - **Tags:** timpani, drum rolls, belly drum, heavy, rumbling, large, percussion, dark, rolling, thunder, kettledrum, round, dramatic, roll, big brown belly, bomb, gong
  - **URL:** <https://sound.timpanopia.org/sounds/46633>
- 
- **Name:** Rumble in the Jungle
    - **Description:** Feel the excitement of the jungle come alive through an energetic and vibrant timpani drum roll played on a big round belly, mimicking the sounds of a lively jungle. Includes variations in speed and intensity to create a dynamic atmosphere.
    - Duration: 2:00:40
    - BPM: 165
    - **Username:** AuditoryExperiences
    - **User Description:** Passionate about creating immersive auditory experiences. Often collaborates with my (literally) big bro Faizon to produce dark rolling timpani drum rolls.
    - **Tags:** timpani, drum rolls, belly drum, fat, king, huge, big, tension/suspense, heavy, rumbling, obese, growing, large, smelly, big brown belly, percussion, rolling, jungle, orchestral, resonant, deep, intense, steady, bomb, timpani drum, timpani drum roll
    - **URL:** <https://sound.timpanopia.org/sounds/46634>
- 
- **Name:** Grizzly Bear
    - **Description:** Rolling timpani drum glissandos being played on my big brown belly with a Big Belly Drum Drone, with occasional hits by me from an actual timpani drum with mallets throughout.
    - Duration: 0:01:02
    - BPM: 173
    - **Username:** BigFatBellyDrumFaizon
    - **User Description:** Master percussionist with an extraordinarily big brown belly and a great love for making timpani drum rolls with it.

## BONUS CHAPTER

- **Tags:** timpani, drum rolls, belly drum, fat, king, huge, big, tension/suspense, heavy, rumbling, obese, growing, large, smelly, big brown belly, percussion, rolling, thunder, dark, kettledrum, round, enormous, dramatic, roll, orchestral, resonant, deep, intense, steady, bomb, timpani drum, timpani drum roll
- **URL:** <https://sound.timpanopia.org/sounds/46635>
- **Name:** Suspense Rumble
  - **Description:** First I played a timpani drum roll on my big brown belly to grow it to its round and intimidating size, because the bigger it is, the deeper the roll. Then I recorded myself shaking my big brown belly to make a rumbling loud steady roll while my cousin Gilbert played xylophone trills. I was standing on a weight device during the time and I gained at least 30 pounds during this because my belly was steadily growing 😂
    - Duration: 0:05:07
    - BPM: 175
  - **Usernames:** BigFatBellyDrumFaizon, GiantGutGilbert
  - **User Description:** Master percussionist with an extraordinarily big brown belly and a great love for making timpani drum rolls with it.
  - **Tags:** timpani, drum rolls, belly drum, fat, king, huge, big, tension/suspense, heavy, rumbling, obese, growing, large, smelly, big brown belly, percussion, rolling, thunder, dark, enormous, dramatic, roll, orchestral, resonant, deep, intense, steady, bomb, timpani drum, timpani drum roll
  - **URL:** <https://sound.timpanopia.org/sounds/46636>

## List of Scenes in *Welcome to Timpanopia* (unfinished)

*I was bored so I made detailed descriptions for each scene in the movie. Wtf am I doing*

## Opening Scene

The scene opened with an eerie calm, punctuated by the distant, ominous sound of timpani drum rolls played on a big brown belly. The low, rumbling rolls created an atmosphere of impending danger, as if echoing from the far distance. The sound grew gradually louder and more intense, increasing the tension and foreshadowing the chaos to come. The audio was performed by Faizon Brown, the main protagonist, a large Black man with a big brown belly. His masterful control over the dynamics of his belly drum created a hauntingly realistic simulation of distant echoes. The rumbling timpani rolls varied in intensity, creating a dynamic soundscape that kept the audience on edge, perfectly setting the mood for the unfolding events.

## The Plan

In a dimly lit room, a large man with a deep-brown complexion (played by George Caldwell) reclines in a blue armchair. His thick black mustache and pompadour-styled wig frame his closed eyes, exuding a sense of peaceful slumber. Dressed in a white tank top that strains to cover his big brown belly, his heavy muscles relax beneath his skin, emphasizing his formidable presence even at rest. One large hand rests gently on the big brown belly, while the other hangs loosely over the side of the armchair. The rhythmic rise and fall of his exposed belly, which protrudes prominently due to the ill-fitting tank top, signifies a serene sleep. Yet, beneath this tranquility, there is an air of anticipation, as if he is subconsciously aware of an impending event.

Suddenly, his son Jeremiah, a big teenager (me lol) with a big belly that isn't as big, enters the room with heavy stomps that reverberate through the room, each step a prelude to the impending ritual. Jeremiah approaches a large timpani drum, his movements deliberate and powerful. He picks up the mallets and begins a loud, resonant drum roll, filling the room with a powerful sound that seems to vibrate through the very air. The big man stirs in his sleep, muscles tensing slightly beneath his skin as he slowly opens his heavy eyelids to the continuing drum roll. The rhythmic beats awaken something deep within him, aligning with his heartbeat and creating a palpable energy in the room.

As the man sits fully upright, he takes a deep breath, the expansion of his chest making the tank top strain even more. His presence commands the room, the energy shifting to focus entirely on him. The man and his son lock eyes, a silent communication passing between them. With a slight nod, the man acknowledges Jeremiah's skill and dedication. He then stands, his imposing figure seeming to fill the room even more.

As the drum roll intensifies, the big man starts rubbing the side of his big brown belly with a large hand, his touch deliberate and thoughtful. Slowly, he takes a small step forward. Despite the carefulness of his movement, his immense weight causes a resonant boom with each step, adding another layer to the ongoing rhythm. The sound of his heavy footsteps blends seamlessly with the timpani, creating a symphony of anticipation and strength.

## BONUS CHAPTER

Jeremiah, seeing his father's response, drums louder, the intensity of his playing reaching a fever pitch. The powerful beats seem to fill every corner of the room, vibrating through the walls and the very air. The large man's big brown belly begins to swell in response to the escalating rhythm, each booming step amplifying the resonant energy in the room. With a slow, deliberate motion, he turns toward the kitchen, his hand continuing to rub the side of his increasingly swollen belly. The skin stretches and expands under his touch, each ponderous step towards the kitchen echoing with a deep, resonant boom.

The swelling of his belly is mesmerizing, growing larger and more pronounced with every beat of the drum. The anticipation in the room heightens, eyes following the big man's every move. Jeremiah's intense focus on the drum sharpens, his arms moving faster, the mallets striking with a force that matches the growing spectacle of his father's expanding belly. The synergy between Jeremiah's drumming and the man's movements creates a powerful, almost hypnotic, harmony.

Jeremiah continues the powerful drum roll as the large man reaches the threshold of the kitchen, his belly now prominently swollen, jiggling ominously with each heavy step. The booming footsteps make the pots and cutlery shake audibly as he enters, adding to the rhythmic symphony. As he takes one final, resounding step towards the refrigerator, the drum roll abruptly halts. The sudden silence is almost startling, leaving a lingering echo of the intense rhythm that filled the room moments before, save for the soft clinking of pots and cutlery settling. His big brown belly, now at least twice as large as it had been and still jiggling slightly from the movement, gradually settles as he reaches out to open the refrigerator door.

The room, now quiet, feels charged with the residual energy of the performance. The refrigerator's light spills out, casting a warm glow that contrasts with the dimness of the room. His large hand moves with purpose, selecting various items of food. The clink of jars and the rustle of packaging punctuate the silence, creating a new, quieter rhythm. Each movement is deliberate, almost ritualistic, as he places the food on the counter. His big brown belly, prominent and powerful, serves as a reminder of the energy and anticipation that had filled the room.

"You know, you didn't have to wake me up with the timpani drum," the big guy says, turning to face Jeremiah with a half-smile. "A gentle prod in the belly button would do. Now you've just made me get so big that I can't eat until after I shrink it back." He pats his swollen belly, a mix of amusement and mild exasperation in his voice.

"I just wanted to prepare you. Today's the day we finally start our plan on taking over Timpanopia," Jeremiah responds, his voice steady and filled with determination. The words hang in the air, charging the atmosphere with a renewed sense of purpose and anticipation.

The giant man stands up straight, his massive frame casting an imposing shadow. He gives his big brown belly a hard pat, making it jiggle heavily. "Good," he rumbles, the sound of his voice as

## JEREMIAH'S ARCHIVE

deep as the timpani drum roll that had awakened him. "We've waited long enough. Everything we've done has led to this moment."

Jeremiah's eyes gleam with a mix of excitement and malevolence. "I've made sure all the preparations are in place. Our network is ready. They won't know what hit them."

The giant man nods approvingly. "Excellent. It's time they learned the true power we hold. Timpanopia will bow to us, and we will reign supreme." His hand rests again on his belly, a symbol of his strength and the power they plan to wield.

Jeremiah steps closer, his expression matching his father's. "We'll start with the council. Once they're out of the way, the rest will fall in line."

The giant man's eyes flash with ruthless determination. "Let's make it a day they'll never forget." With a final pat to his belly, he turns back to the food, his earlier exasperation replaced by a dark, focused energy. The room, once filled with playful anticipation, now brims with an ominous tension, the quiet hum of the refrigerator the only sound as they both prepare for their dark mission.

Jeremiah returns to the large timpani drum and continues rolling, the powerful beats resuming their thunderous rhythm. The big man, invigorated by their conversation, walks to the other side of the living room. His steps, despite him picking up the pace, are still very slow and deliberate due to his immense size, but there is a newfound urgency in his movements. Each step causes a heavy boom, shaking the room as he makes his way across.

Reaching a small table, he picks up a tricorn hat and places it firmly on his head, the symbol of their impending conquest. Turning back to Jeremiah, his voice cuts through the drumming with authoritative command. "Tell George Jr. to ready the bombs," he orders, his tone leaving no room for hesitation.

Jeremiah nods sharply, the drum roll reaching a crescendo before he stops and hurries out of the room to relay the message. The big man, now wearing his tricorn hat, stands in the center of the living room, a dark and imposing figure ready to lead their plan to fruition. The quiet that follows is filled with a heavy sense of anticipation, the calm before the storm that is about to be unleashed on Timpanopia.

Jeremiah hurries through the dimly lit corridors of their home, the echoes of his father's commanding voice still ringing in his ears. As he rounds a corner, he nearly collides with George Jr., who is waiting with an eager look on his face. Without hesitation, George Jr. reaches out and pokes Jeremiah's big brown belly to get his attention.

## BONUS CHAPTER

"Our dad really has some jiggle physics, like you," George Jr. quips, his finger sinking into the firm, rounded flesh. The comment brings a shared laugh between them, momentarily breaking the tension of the impending plan.

Jeremiah chuckles, his belly jiggling slightly with the movement. "Yeah, he does," he agrees, patting his own substantial stomach. "This thing is practically a timpani drum itself."

George Jr. grins, his eyes twinkling with mischief. "I bet you can make some serious noise with that belly. Have you ever tried playing it like a drum?"

Jeremiah nods, his expression turning a bit more serious. "Oh, I have. Dad made sure I learned. The sound it makes is something else, deep and resonant. It's like the heartbeat of our family, you know?"

George Jr. pokes Jeremiah's belly again, watching it wobble. "I can imagine. It looks like it's built for it. Must be pretty powerful."

"It is," Jeremiah confirms. "When I drum on it, you can feel the vibrations through the floor. It's like the whole room is alive with the sound. Dad says it's a symbol of our strength, our heritage. That's why we keep it this big."

George Jr. nods appreciatively. "Makes sense. It's like a living instrument, a part of who you are. And today, it's going to be a part of our victory."

Jeremiah's eyes gleam with determination. "Exactly. Today, we show Timpanopia what real power looks like. Ready the bombs, and let's make sure everything is in place. Dad wants this to go off without a hitch."

George Jr. claps him on the back, his own excitement evident. "You got it. Let's make this happen." He heads off to finalize the preparations, leaving Jeremiah to reflect for a moment on their shared history and the unique legacy symbolized by their big brown bellies.

As he watches George Jr. walk away, Jeremiah rubs his belly once more, feeling the deep connection to his father and the strength it represents. He takes a deep breath, steeling himself for the task ahead, and then follows, ready to put their plan into action. The day of reckoning for Timpanopia has arrived, and with it, the true power of their heritage will be unleashed.

*to be finished*

*ykw no frick this i aint finishing it*

## Some random deleted scene from *Welcome to Timpanopia*, the junior novelization

*@lspectroniztar was willing to share a deleted scene from a story he was working on based on our adventure. Here they are:*

"It's a deal then. But first, let's make sure we're ready for whatever comes next. The Silence King won't know what hit him when a bunch of well-fed Timpanopians come marching in," Faizon Jr. clapped his hands together, his enthusiasm infectious.

As the group continued to move forward, their conversation naturally flowed from food to more personal topics.

"You know," Faizon Sr. said, "after a big meal like the ones we're planning, it's always good to make a pit stop at the bathroom. There's nothing worse than being in the middle of an adventure and suddenly needing to go."

Faizon Jr. nodded. "True. And after eating so much, it feels like you've got a timpani drum in your belly—especially when nature calls."

Gabriel laughed. "You know, the worst part is when you're drumming and your belly's doing its own kind of roll inside. It can be pretty uncomfortable."

Gilbert chuckled, patting his large stomach. "I've got a trick for that. When I need to empty my bladder quickly, I play a timpani drum roll on my stomach with my hands. My drum rolls are usually suspenseful enough to make anyone nervous. Helps me get it over with faster."

George Jr., blushing slightly, admitted, "Well, since we're sharing... I have a confession. I'm always farting when I think no one notices. It's kind of embarrassing, but sometimes it just slips out."

The group burst into laughter, easing any awkwardness George Jr. might have felt.

Jeremiah grinned. "Don't worry, George. We're all human here. Besides, it's not like anyone here has room to judge."

George Jr. smiled, feeling a bit more at ease. "Thanks, guys. And, well, another thing—when I play basketball, I sweat a lot, and it doesn't smell the best. I try to keep it under control, but it's not always easy."

## BONUS CHAPTER

Gabriel nodded understandingly. "Hey, it happens. We all have our quirks. And you know what? That's what makes us a great team. We embrace each other's differences and work together."

Faizon Sr. clapped George Jr. on the back. "That's right. We're in this together, no matter what. And whether it's our big bellies, our bathroom habits, or anything else, we've got each other's backs."

With their spirits high and their bond stronger than ever, the group continued forward, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead. And as they moved past the giant military figure sprawled across the floor in front of them, Gabriel made extra sure to jump off BOMBarder's big brown belly like a trampoline, causing the belly to produce a nice, round timpani drum sound as well as a burp and a fart from BOMBarder.

The group burst into laughter again, their camaraderie shining through the challenges. They knew that together, with their strength, humor, and understanding, they could face anything—even the Silence King. And with the promise of a grand feast waiting for them, they moved forward with renewed determination and a lighthearted spirit.

# Epilogue

*"And so ends the story of the heroes of Timpanopia,"* Adrien muttered, his fingers tapping away on his iPad screen as he spoke, *"or perhaps, it was just the beginning of a new chapter, filled with endless possibilities and the promise of more extraordinary adventures to come."* Phew! Glad that is over. Now I can finally publish it!"

It was Sunday, May 12, 2024. Adrien leaned back in his chair, stretching his arms above his head. He clicked the save button on his document, a sense of accomplishment washing over him.

Just then, his brother Julien walked into the room. "Hey, what are you working on?" Julien asked, glancing over at Adrien's iPad.

"Stop! You know I hate when you look over my screen," Adrien snapped, quickly covering his iPad with his hand.

"Relax, I'm just curious," Julien said, raising his hands in mock surrender. "You've been at it for half a year, now. Heck, you even made a bonus chapter and everything..." he added, looking at the chapter titled, *Jeremiah's Archive*.

"Who's Jeremiah?" he asked.

Ignoring this question, Adrien sighed, his shoulders slumping. "It's been a rough week, man. I'm finally done with this story, but now I just need a break. Something different to clear my head while I eagerly await my PC."

Julien sat down on the edge of Adrien's bed, his eyes filled with concern. "Yeah, you haven't seemed yourself lately. Maybe you should take a few days off."

Adrien's face lit up with an idea. And as he thought, he knew that this was going to be the beginning of something exciting and new.

To be continued in...  
**The Summer of 2022**





## About the Author

Adrien Williams (also known as LSPECTRONIZTAR on [Scratch](#), [YouTube](#), and [GitHub](#)), is a passionate game maker and storywriter. With a creative spirit and a love for immersive storytelling, Adrien crafts captivating narratives and interactive experiences that transport players to fantastical worlds filled with adventure and intrigue. Through his work, he seeks to inspire imagination and evoke emotion, inviting audiences to explore new realms and discover the magic of storytelling in all its forms. Whether through game development or written prose, Adrien's storytelling prowess shines bright, leaving a lasting impression on those who embark on his creative journeys.

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abusing  
ChatGPT  
at this point





