***Verse 8: Nugget of Goodness***

After a few hundred Werms in the Chaos cave had been destroyed, they stopped coming.

After a bit, Richter stood and said, “I’m going in there to get this Chaos. You don’t have to come but I recommend it. If you haven’t noticed, we are practically invisible when it comes to Chaos magic.

Without hesitation, Richter turned and started walking towards the barrier that was easily delineated by the ring of blood on the floor around the nugget of Chaos.

Zev quickly popped up and followed excited to gain some Chaos points.

A few steps later and they both stood in front of the Chaos.

Richter used Analyze.

Chaos Nugget

This ultra-rare and unique item is similar to its more refined counterpart, the Chaos crystal, which imparts purified Chaos.

While a Nugget is raw.

This Nugget contains unstable energy.

This Nugget will self-destruct in 14 minutes and 39 seconds.

They had a minute, so, Richter modified the plan.

“Zev, the last time I gathered a Chaos particle, it was bracing, to say the least. My suggestion is that we try to take this together. We can hold hands and both touch at the same time.

Given your powers, I need two oaths from you now. One, you won’t puppet me ever unless I ask you to. I need this now.

Zev seemed to understand and stated, “I promise to never puppet Lord Richter unless he asks me to. I promise. Yes, I promise indeed.”

Thrice Witnessed.

Second, I need to keep our relationship a secret for now. Will you swear loyalty now?

“Yes, Lord Richter. It is my quest after all. I’m just not pushy. I want you to trust me because I earn it and I’m a good guy too. You know?”

Richter nodded. He did know. He needed this too. “Let’s do this. Say the words.”

When Zev had finished the ritual words that seemed to come unbidden, Richter got a notification.

A Good Aligned Chaos seed has sworn loyalty to you. Would you like to make them a Vassal?

You presently have 2 slots available. Prime Vassal: <none>, Vassal: <empty>.

Prime Vassals have many two-way benefits but one of the biggest is all rewards start as doubled. This is scalable with time, trust, and adventure.

Not seeing a downside, he made Zev his Prime Vassal.

Congratulations! You have chosen wisely. Your Prime Vassal is a +5 Chaos alignment. Weekly Chaos point yield: 20. See the War Leader screen for additional benefits.

“Kick-Ass Man!”, Richter exclaimed.

Zev excitedly shared the completion of the secret quest and Richter got a notification.

Your Prime Vassal has completed a Quest. Shared reward 1500 XP

Richter and Zev took the others hand and on the count of 3, they both placed their other hands on the Nugget completing a Chaos circuit.

Chaos bliss surged through both of them. The energy was rough and raw. They both screamed in pain for a moment. And then the cavern was quiet for the next few hours with only the occasional giddy laugh or euphoric sigh.

You have claimed a Chaos Nugget. Raw Chaos has been converted. You have 1286 Chaos points.

Zev got a little less but was over the moon, nonetheless.

Per the plan, Richter bought the “Change Description” Talent.

A complex spell would be easy to detect but his “Change Description” talent gave him a fun option. He could “blur” the description information making it impossible to tell if the wand had 1 charge or 10.

Richter made three small changes. First, he changed the description of the charges to 3. Next, he placed a warning to the user. Finally, he inserted a user recommendation.

The warning: “This wand cannot be recharged. This wand will self-destruct upon depletion.”

And the strong recommendation, “Holders of this Wand must use one Charge to take possession for more than 3 seconds. Not filling this need will cause the Wand to explode fabulously. You best not be there when that happens or just duck.”

All of the slight changes were blurred just enough to make it look required and there were 3 charges.

Once done Richter called out. “Xitrix! I have your wand! Let’s go! Where are you?!”

Zev and Richter looked around for any sign of the Imp and suddenly a powerful cloud of sulfur and ask poofed into existence. In the middle of the little death cloud was Xitrix covered in soot and flames.

He turns on them both and stated, “You better have the fucking Wand human! You should not have been able to forcibly summon me like that!!”

Xitrix proceeded to grumble in Demon-ese and curse the make as well as his employers. Richter picked up a few choice words and phrases over the next minute or so.

“The Wand is right here Xitrix.”

Once the Imp was close enough Richter picked up the wand and handed it to Xitrix, thereby completing his infuriating, Quest.

But as Richter made lemonade out of lemons, Xitrix’s s expression changed in succession. As he tried to read the description, he got to the warning and recommendation. First, he looked confused, then frustrated, and then smirked a little. He turned to face the back wall of the vault and blew. A billow of dust and ask few away from the wall exposed a runic crest. Richter tried to catch it in his mind but was not fast enough.

Xitrix pointed the Wand at the wall and fired. The wall lit up like Christmas and the wand turned to dust. A very confused Xitrix began to crumble and was suddenly absconded through a rip in space but not before a handful of sand fell to the ground.

As the light show dimmed, in front of Zev and Richter stood a Portal.

Quest Update:

The quest giver has failed to keep his promise. All rewards doubled.

Additional rewards:

Quest: Get Home Now!

Task: Traverse the Ancient Portal system through The Land to find your way back to the Kist Village.

Reward: A way home. Portal Multi-Key. A time-release map. A boon. Imp Sand.

Due to the negligence of the Quest giver, the powers that be have awarded you a consolation prize - a time-bound solution.

You will be given 3 hours from the time of the first Portal activation to make it through the 5 portals on the path to bring you home.

Not all portals are difficult to find but their unbidden use may have consequences. All penalties were reduced by 90%.

An updated map appeared in my HUD.

It wasn’t huge, but it was detailed and had smart routing for quick passage between portals.

It was evident that it would reveal the right parts of the map when needed. It even had an arrow pointing directly at the portal in front of us. Right above the arrow was a symbol… it looked like the others he had seen.

Excited, he took the Portal Multi-Key and found he could use the map overlay to examine the key and push the symbol onto the key. It was impressive magic.

The Multi-Key glowed for a moment and then looked just like the symbol on the map.

Zev watched in anticipation, his puppet standing guard.

Richter gently placed the key into the indent on the side of the giant black ring. Both the key and portal glowed and then the portal opened in a whoosh of fresh air.

They could see a meadow and a small dirt road leading into a forest.

“Well Zev, I guess this is it. You ready?”

A large flashing timer hit the screen. 10…9…8…

They jumped through and started to run. Richter shared the map and they both followed the arrow into the forest where the next portal was hidden in the middle of a pond on a little island.