

They looked up at me, but I didn't know any of them. All the men I had cared about were dead. I didn't know any of these, except the guy who had carried me, but he wasn't even here.

"You stupid nitwits!" I yelled. "This is bollocks! I shouldn't be dying! You should be dying! I'm the one eating food!"

Some men came out of their caves and came down into the pit, presumably to see what the fuss was. I cursed at them all, all these derelicts.

"Stop this flute nonsense!" I cried and I collected myself, trying to reason with them, still keeping a lid on the pain in my side. "We could have found a cure. There's a disease out here, all of you. What if there's radiation out here? What if it's the stupid god-forsaken flutes? What if these piccolos speed up your brain?" A crowd had gathered around me and, again, they took the primate form, hanging their arms aside, scratching at their faces. "You aren't thinking!" I yelled. "I figure that most of you only have two days to live. Two days MAXIMUM! Do you realize that? You're going to be groundmen in two days. This is crazy, to be spending all of your time on these blasted..." Someone had got me by the neck and was trying to haul me off, but I clawed at them and shook myself away. "No! No! Listen! You need to start looking around, what could be causing this? Is it the leaves? Is it the trees? What is it?"

The man who had grabbed me came forward again, with a humorous look on his face. "I am Slupchik," he said, patting his chest with one of his club-like hands.

"Now, see. They don't understand you." He pointed around at the men's faces. "They don't understand you any more than you understand them."

I said, "I am one of them. Look at me! I understand them completely." I cried out in pain and fell to the ground. "Gah!" I yelled, in total agony. "Gahhh!" I was disgraceful, writhing, unable to die.