



ROCK



PORTER



STITCHERS

A Short Story by Marjoleine Moeijes

Around the turn of the 51th century, there has been a heated discussion as to the true origin of the game **ROCK. PAPER. SCISSORS**. Historically it was thought to have originated from the sunken Island of Japan, though this theory has long since been debunked. The now popular believe is that the current name is in actuality a corruption of the words Rock. Porter. Stitches. which points to some true events a 1000 years prior to our own.

To some the general rules of the game - *in which porter envelops rock, sticher cuts off porter and eventually rock hits sticher*- describes the fate of the Sewing Sisters of Ipswich and their paraportation of little Sarah. This is their story:

Up until recently Pam Burquin had lived a rather uneventful life up in her little apartment on Northern High Street. Pam was a Porter and like any Porter she had a rather obnoxious tendency to jump all over the place; Literally and figuratively. She was impatient and never quite seemed to have grasped the meaning of stairs. Which is understandable if

you make holes in the fabric of space and time for a living. To stop her from constantly ending up in her neighbours' front lawns and turning reality into a slice of fine Emmentaler cheese, she was appointed a *sticher*: Cil Parcel.

Similar to Hans Brinker sticking his thumb in a collapsing dike, if porters are people who can create holes in the fabric of

space and time, then naturally, *stitches* are the ones propping them back up again.

Cil Parcel was Pam's friend, colleague and housemate. And contrary to her more chaotic and impatient friend, she was tolerant and diligent in her work.

Like many paraportioners, they ran a small business in Transdirectional

Transport. A little plaque sign outside their door read:

Burquin & Parcel
Sewing Sisters of
Ipswich

Paraportation for your
convenience

3098 A.D.

It needs to be said that apart from the practical pleasantries and privileges, work in the field of paraportation coincides with an awful lot of paperwork.

Ever since the Porter-Incident of 3062, in which a team of paraportioners accidentally misplaced the entire parliament of New-Colonial-Britain, only to find them back weeks later in the Amazonian Preserve; A revision and extension of the paraportation administration, was put in place, to prevent any more politicians from going native.

With the regular piles of filling forms sent by the Bureau of Paraportation and Transdirectional Affairs, it was therefore no wonder that at first the invite to the 'Little Sarah's Initiative' went overlooked. It was only when Pam Burquin's sister came to visit

and her two loving, but over-energetic children knocked over the aforementioned stack of papers, that the letter was even discovered at all. The letter read:

In name of Her Majesty's Court and the B.P.T.A., you are hereby selected for the honour of participating in the "Little Sarah's Initiative".

In the face of Our Nation's gravest challenge - which due to its sensitive nature shall not be discussed within this letter - We call upon you, brave paraportioners, to deliver a solution for a dire situation.

May you accept this invitation, then you are required to accompany your signed agreement with an attachment of the correct forms. Please note that the future depends on your swift response.

*Yours truly,
Margret Ogony,
Deputy Chairman of the
Department of Interdimensional Science.*

Pam turned to Cil.
"They can't be serious."
She said astonished.
"They sound serious." Cil responded.
"Well what should we do?" Pam asked.
"I don't think we can decline." Cil said studying the letter.

Pam's mouth skewed. She sighed.
"I'll get the paperwork."

That next Thursday the Sewing Sisters travelled to a small white conference hall, just outside Suffolk, where they would be filled in on the mysteries of the letter.

Upon their arrival they were surprised to find a lot of spectators around: Newscasters, film crews, men and women in expensive looking suits. Sunglasses. Ear radios. All waited outside. A group of pedestrians demonstrated, calling slurs in the distance. The held up signs saying:

THE END OF DAYS IS NIGH

and

JUDGEMENT IS UPON US.

Everyone seemed to want to know the secret that was yet to be revealed.

Pam and Cil met with Grand Meister Apellin, Head of the B.P.T.A., who firmly shook them by the hand in front of the dozens of flashing cameras, before leading them into the building and down the hall. They entered a brightly lit room and took a seat. With the door closed shut, Grand Meister Apellin's broad confident smile wavered, as if the weight of his moustache suddenly became too much.

"Let us speak plainly." He began the meeting, like the

true Suffolkian businessman he was.

“Long story short, Ladies, our world is about to come to an end. Our colleagues at the D.I.S. have noted that an asteroid is not keeping its predicted trajectory, but is in fact heading straight for Earth.” Grand Meister Apellin ignored the expressions on Pam and Cil’s faces and continued calmly: “As you can imagine this is cause for concern and it has been decided that something has to be done about it.”

“I take it, you want us to transport the asteroid elsewhere?” Pam suggested. “Should be doable.” Cil said nothing.

“Not quite.” Grand Meister Apellin spoke. “And here is where it gets complicated, so bear with me.” He rummaged through a folder of files and laid the papers spread out on the desk in front of him. Intrigued Pam and Cil bend over the thousands of scribbles and scientific notes. Grand Meister Apellin explained:

“This data collected by our manual rockets shows that the genetic make-up of the asteroid matches that of the *Cretaceous Period* exactly. It is theorised that under the Paraportation Principle, this particular rock is in fact *the* cause for the extinction of the Dinosaur, 65.5 million years ago. The asteroid isn’t in the wrong place, but rather in the wrong time and we need

your help to send it back onto its correct course.”

“You mean time travel?” Pam and Cil voiced eagerly in unison.

Grand Meister Apellin curled his brisk moustache and smiled.

“Indeed.” He said.

Having a hole in the fabric of space and time isn’t as much of a problem as one might think. If it is far enough away from civilisation it can remain *unstitched*, or so says the *Guide of Paraportation*. An unstitched hole can become a problem however, when it decides to tear. Whenever this happens even time itself will begin to unravel.

Bill “Porter” Brown from 3274 Illinois, experienced this first hand:

Allegedly he was said to be so fed-up with the opposite sex rejecting him, that after a night of heavy drinking the gap he had made in his careless intoxication, tore, sending him back to the year 1982. Where he was instantly deemed the most attractive person there.

In order to protect historic and futuristic events from being tainted by petty love affairs, the B.P.T.A. outlawed this type of transportation as soon as it was invented. Henceforth time travel was only permitted on special occasions, such as *The End of Days*.

As it turned out, *The End of Days* fell on a Tuesday,

in the middle of Chinese New Year. Documentation of the asteroid, now commonly referred to as little Sarah, was broadcast live, worldwide.

Not since the first moon landing was there this much anticipation around the launch of a rocket. Carrying our two paraportationers the Roque 4-9 was launched successfully into space.

At exactly 10,000 km above the Earth’s surface, the rocket’s main thrusters were separated and the rocket was pinned to a precise point in space. Thus the real work began:

The Sewing Sisters worked tirelessly on creating and securing a hole large enough for the space rock to pass. Pam patterned a portal, while Cil hemmed the edges, as to prevent the gap from prematurely collapsing in on itself.

Right before the asteroid’s arrival, her stitching needed to be undone. This, according to the Department of Interdimensional Science, would create a tear accurate enough to send little Sarah back onto her timeline.

After what felt like hours of work, Pam and Cil hung in the empty vacuum of space. They both watched breathlessly as little Sarah came into view. The dark menace, drifted closer and closer to her mark. Little did they know, the asteroid was not traveling alone.

Not many people know this, but asteroids have a tendency to grow quite lonely.

Around the 6th moon of Jupiter little Sarah decided she had had enough and made herself a little sister from a rocky outcrop sticking from her surface: Penelope.

Penelope turned out to be a rather spoiled little space rock and she was not at all happy that two paraporationers had decided on sending her and her sister back to the age of overgrown lizards. As they curved around the side of the moon Penelope decided quite rudely, even in the conduct of space rock etiquette, to hit one of them before exiting the 40th century in a blaze of fire.

The paraporation of little Sarah was deemed an overall success and the victory of Pam Burquin's and Cil Parcel's efforts was celebrated for over a month, after which everyone was quite over the consumption of alcohol.

It was the beginning of summer when Pam Burquin walked into the cemetery alone, clutching a bundle of sunflowers. She halted in front of a headstone, her expression clouded.

After a moment a voice behind her said:

"Please hurry up, some of us have jobs, you know!"

Pam turned.

"Since when are you the impatient one?" She asked, looking as Cil Parcel straightened her arm sling.

Luckily for Cil Parcel, little Sarah's sister-asteroid, Penelope, had turned out to be the mere size of a rather large space rock and only casually bruised her cubit bone.

Cil ignored her friend's remark.

"We've got another letter from the B.P.T.A." She said. "Time waits for no one, not unless we have something to say about it." Pam laid down her flowers and sighed.

"Here comes the paperwork." She said.

With one last look at the headstone, she turned and followed her friend out.

A moment later they had both disappeared into the gap of space and time.

In Memoriam

Here lies Penelope, beloved sister of Little Sarah.

Crashed 1831 A.C.

Kanagawa, Japan

Crashed 65.5 Million B.C.

Chicxulub, Mexico

MORS CERTA, HORA INCERTA I.E. CARPE DIEM

FANTASTIC STORIES COMPETITION 2020

ROCK. PORTER. STITCHERS.

A Short Story & Art by Marjoleine Moeijes

Special Thanks to my friends and family.

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