

**ZADORABLE**

What is so pressing, you couldn't wait?

**ALAOGMAR**

I need to know what you found out about the...the small ones.

**ZADORABLE**

The small ones? Did you hear that, Droppo, he calls his own children "the small ones."

**CELESTEROL**

Our concern is with all children of Mars. Brunomar and Emanemar are just test subjects to determine what ails the youth throughout the planet.

**ALAGOMAR**

I trust you have completed your assignments. Zadorable, what did you find out in studying the minds of the children?

**ZADORABLE**

It is difficult to analyze brain activity while they are reading or learning in school or socializing with schoolmates.

**CELESTEROL**

And why is that?

**ZADORABLE**

Their brains are fresh, unscathed and pure. When the young brain is active, it moves rapidly and is thus difficult to monitor. I attempted an experiment, taking a sample of an available brain as a way of comparing.

**ALAGOMAR**

A sample?

**ZADORABLE**

More like a portion. A substantial portion, of...a brain similar in size to that of a child.

**CELESTEROL**

Where does one procure such a portion...that is of a brain with those specific qualities?

**ZADORABLE**

I have my sources.

**ALAGOMAR**

Droppo, were you part of this mission?

**DROPO**

Don't blame me, please, I was only following orders, of which there were none!

**ZADORABLE**

You weren't part of the mission, were you Droppo? I didn't need you, did I? Anyway, you were

asleep the whole time, were you not, Droppo?

**ALAGOMAR**

Am I to understand that the brain you removed and studied...was...at hand?

**ZADORABLE**

Yes, you could say it was...at arm's length, at my fingertips. Proximity was not an issue.

**CELESTEROL**

We commissioned you to study the brain activity of two children, and you—

**ZADORABLE**

You have never understood scientific process!

**CELESTEROL**

You stole the brain of a—

**ALAGOMAR**

Droppo! Remember your assignment?

**DROPO**

I remember my assignment, like it was yesterday. I know my assignment like the back of my head. ***(She makes a future attempt to examine the back of her own head.)*** What's this gaping hole in the back of my head?

**ALAGOMAR**

Droppo, focus!

**DROPO**

My assignment--

**ALAGOMAR**

Was to bring us some appetizer pills. This is a place to eat, drink and be...miserable, isn't it! So go to it, chop chop!

**DROPO**

Appetizer pills coming up right away, hold the mustard, and don't be stingy, baby! ***(Exit)***

**ALAGOMAR**

You stole Droppo's brain!

**ZADORABLE**

Yes, I stole a portion of Droppo's brain! It was fast and easy, not unlike stealing a portion of *your* soul!

**ALAGOMAR**

I don't have to take this! You think you are the only two-bit chanteuse slash covert neurosurgeon on the planet? There are plenty of other amoeba in the craters, darling, plenty!

**CELESTEROL**

That's enough, both of you! Did this fool's errand yield anything useful?

**ZADORABLE**

It did. But clearly you've both lost faith in me. I didn't want to excise the poor slob's brain, I was after a sliver, a fraction, a paltry sum no one would miss. Well, this was no ordinary no one. Dropo was asleep. It was an unusually vacant slumber, much more than usual. I concocted my story, in case she woke up. I was performing a complimentary lobotomy, which I would convince Dropo was a good and valuable thing. I...gained access...Dropo did not awaken, and what I found was an expanse, a vast expanse, a vacuum you might say. I was so astonished, I said "How can this be?" and my words echoed in this hollow orb. Echoed!

**CELESTEROL**

We appreciate you falling on your laser, we do, but removing someone's brain...that's stepping over the line.

**ZADORABLE**

And isn't that what I am hired to do? Step over the line? Well, I stepped over it alright, and guess what I found. Nothing. Nothing in Dropo's head and nothing going on in the brains of the children, when they were engaged in their primary activity.

**ALAGOMAR**

Primary activity?

**ZADORABLE**

Yes, what do they spend most of their time doing?

**CELESTEROL**

Watching television?

**ZADORABLE**

Zingo! The boob tube, the idiot box, the plasma plate, the Marconi with pictures...

**ALAGOMAR**

Their brains were as inactive as Dropo's.

**ZADORABLE**

Healthier, more...absorbent...solid, yet pliable, but equally inactive.

**CELESTEROL**

Did these findings lead you to any other discoveries?

**ZADORABLE**

They did. In the past few weeks...brain activity has decreased.

**ALAGOMAR**

You mean in Dropo? It stands to reason, she's no longer got a smidgen, she's got a quarter-of-a-smidgen.

**DROPO**

*(Entering with some boxes.)* Did someone call my name? Here I come to save the night!  
Just what you ordered, assignment all done.

**ALAGOMAR**

Why are they serving appetizer pills in large boxes?

**DROPO**

*(Proceeds to pull a snake out of each box.)* Appetizer pills for all! Who's famished? *(Hands out the snakes)* Eeny meeny miney moe—

**ALAGOMAR**

*(As Zadorable and Celesterol valiantly wrestle the snakes back into the boxes.)* Dro-po.  
Change of plans. Bring us some snakes. Please.

**DROPO**

Ooooh, snakes, snakes are scary but not too scary for Dro-po. Snakes coming up! *(Exit)*

**ALAGOMAR**

You were saying...

**ZADORABLE**

Brain activity has, in recent weeks, decreased in the children.

**CELESTEROL**

What could be the reason? A virus, perhaps, sending brain-deadening waves from the screen?

**ZADORABLE**

Possibly, but when away from the screens, I detected a type of brain activity I hadn't seen before.

**ALAGOMAR**

Of what sort?

**ZADORABLE**

Having to do with emotion.

**ALAGOMAR**

Ahhh, emotion! Your pet project! It always comes around to emotion, doesn't it?

**ZADORABLE**

In this case it did.

**CELESTEROL**

Alagomar, please keep your dispassion in check. Zadorable, what do you think is the cause of these...feelings?

**ZADORABLE**

I don't know. This is where my research hit a dead-end. I do, however, believe that, armed with my findings, we can consult with someone who'll get to the top of this entire dilemma.

**CELESTEROL**

Who?

**ZADORABLE**

Crochem.

**ALAGOMAR**

Crochem? I knew you would say that! Still propping up this mystic, this charlatan, this dried up mountebank!

**ZADORABLE**

Crochem is never wrong. Most of the time.

**CELESTEROL**

She's right. Crochem can assess what Zadorable has found and offer a wise and accurate

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