

MIDDLEMOST POST

#022 - "Ariel Force One"

Written by

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PARKER (O.S.) 1
<FIGHTING EFFORTS!>

Angus polishes and shines the RAIL of the ship.

Meanwhile, Parker and Russell play "pirate" in the background. They pretend-fight each other - Parker wields a cardboard SWORD, and Russell swings around a cardboard HOOK on her flipper.

Parker stops fighting, looks at Angus.

ANGUS 5
Uh huh. Sure.

6 PARKER 6
 <MORE FIGHTING EFFORTS!>

7 PARKER (CONT'D) 7
 <GASP!> Ye lily-livered liar! Ye
 had a flipper under ye hook this
 WHOLE time??

8 PARKER (CONT'D) 8

Angus? When you were on the high seas delivering mail, did you ever run across a pirate with a hook hand?

(glares at Russell)

Or someone pretending to have a hook hand?

9 ANGUS 9
Parker, I'm kinda busy here.
<SPITS!>

Angus <SHINES> his spit on the rail with a rag.

10 ANGUS (CONT'D) 10
(re: rail)
Look at that baby sparkle.

Just then, Angus notices a HOT AIR BALLOON in the rail's reflection, sailing straight towards them.

11 ANGUS (CONT'D) 11
Hmm?

Parker has an arm wrapped around Russell.

12 PARKER 12
It's okay, girl. Someday Angus will
tell us all about his epic, ocean
adventures.

The balloon is really coming in hot now. Literally. It catches on fire! Parker reads the mesmerized expression now on Angus's face all wrong.

13 PARKER (CONT'D) 13
Russell! I think he's reminiscing
about one of his grand adventures
right now!

14 ANGUS 14
Look out!

Angus swoops up Parker and Russell in his giant arms and dives out of the way. The balloon <CRASHES> into the ship, smashing down part of it. Angus opens his eyes.

15 ANGUS (CONT'D) 15
What in the sam heck?! My ship! My
beautiful ship!

Angus sets down Parker and Russell, then turns his attention to the wrecked balloon, stomping towards it.

16 ANGUS (CONT'D) 16
Hmmm... Hey, buddy! Wanna tell me
what in the world you were
thinking!?

The basket door pops open and out steps a shadow of a PERSON with glowing eyes. Parker and Russell <SHIVER> with fear. The shadow breathes like Darth Vader, then comes into full view.

It's ARIEL, a badass Amelia Earhart-type adventurer (but even cooler).

17 ARIEL 17
 <STRETCHING EFFORT!> I was
 thinking, "Is that a boat on top of
 a mountain? Then I thought, "Pfff.
 No way, dudes. No." <LAUGHS!> Turns
 out I was wrong. So sorry.

Ariel does a backflip out of the balloon's basket, landing next to Angus and Parker.

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18                                ARIEL (CONT'D)                                18
                                <BACKFLIP EFFORT!>

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19 ANGUS 19
You wrecked my ship, lady!

20 ARIEL 20

Technically, I wrecked this one
section of your ship. You wrecked
the rest, sailor.

PULL OUT to reveal the Steadfast wrecked permanently on top of the mountain.

21 PARKER/RUSSELL 21
<GIGGLE!>

22 ARIEL 22
Cool cloud. Cool walrus.

Ariel reaches into her utility belt, pulls out a SARDINE, and tosses it to Russell. <CHOMP!>

23 PARKER 23
I'm Parker J. Cloud, and this is
Russell!

24	ARIEL	24
	Name's Ariel. No middle initial. No last name.	

25 ANGUS 25
<GROANS!>

26 PARKER 26
Where'd you come from, Ariel?

27 ARIEL 27
I go where the wind blows, Parker
J.

28 PARKER 28
Me too! You know, because I'm a
cloud.

29 ARIEL 29

Respect.

39 PARKER 39
She was knighted by a real queen!
She joined an alligator fight club
and lasted two rounds! She once
swam all the way under an island
and came out on the other side!

We see little vignettes of the things Parker's just described. Then--

40 PARKER (CONT'D) 40
You should really hear some of her
stories. She's AMAZIIIIING!

Parker <ZIPS> off.

41 ANGUS 41
(mocking)
Oooh, "world explorer." Eh, been
there, done that. Not impressed,
right Russell? <LAUGHS>...

Russell nervously smiles at Angus, like she's trying to hide something.

42 ANGUS (CONT'D) 42
You wanna go below deck and listen
to her stories, don't ya?

Russell <NODS!>

43 ANGUS (CONT'D) 43
Fiiine.

Russell <ZOOMS> off, leaving an unamused Angus behind.

INT. S.S. STEADFAST - MAIN QUARTERS - LATER

Parker and Russell are transfixed by one of Ariel's stories. She acts it out.

44 ARIEL 44
... That's when I grabbed the
golden key, backflipped off a
baddie's face, slid under the laser
wire, then walked away calmly as
the whole place exploded. BOOM!

Parker and Russell's heads <EXPLODE!>

45 ANGUS 45
<CLEARS THROAT!>

Angus ruins the moment. He's holding something behind his back, looking smug.

46 ANGUS (CONT'D) 46
So I found out what caused your
balloon-y thing to crash into my
ship.

Angus whips out a GAS CAN.

47 ANGUS (CONT'D) 47
You ran out of gas! <CHUCKLES>,
It's okay, rookie mistake. Every
"world explorer" makes them. I'll
fill you up, get you on your way so
we can get back to normal.

48 ARIEL 48
Hold on there, sailor. Old Betsy
doesn't take regular gas. She's
fueled by the Boom Boom Gas only.

All the smugness drains from Angus.

49 ANGUS 49
You're kidding.

50 PARKER 50
What's Boom Boom Gas?

51 ARIEL 51
It's a special gas that can only be
tapped from the ancient and elusive
Kapow Tree.

52 PARKER 52
Kapow Trees!? Well, we have a whole
bunch of those on the mountain,
don't we Angus?

53 ANGUS 53
(reluctant)
Yes. Deep in Greenwood's Forbidden
Forest of Doom and Imminent Death,
there are "some" Kapow Trees.

54 ARIEL 54
Perfect, I'll be right back.

Ariel <GRABS> the gas can from Angus and heads off.

55 PARKER 55
Is she not the absolute coolest?
<GIGGLES!>

Russell joins the admiration. She and Parker follow Ariel as
Angus watches. He's stung a bit. Something comes over him.

56 ANGUS 56
<GROWLS>, I'll go too!

This surprises them all.

57 ARIEL 57
You sure about that, sailor? Seems
like you've been landlocked for a
while. Probably better if I do this
solo.

Angus <TAKES> the gas can back from Ariel.

58 ANGUS 58
I wasn't always stuck on this
mountain, you know. I've had my
share of adventures.

Angus and Ariel have a stare down for an uncomfortable beat.

59 ARIEL **59**

<GROWLS>

60 ANGUS 60
 <GROWLS BACK>

61 PARKER 61
(watching them)
<GASPS!>

Then--

62 ARIEL 62
Aight, cool.

Parker squeezes them all together for an unsolicited group hug.

63 PARKER 63
Ohhhhhh. Family adventure!

EXT. GREENWOOD - EDGE OF TREETOP NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

The MMP crew and Ariel stand on the edge of a cliff, looking down below.

64 ARIEL **64**

You know you don't have to do this,
right?

REVEAL Angus on the side of the cliff, getting ready to climb down with a couple of PICKAXES.

65 ANGUS 65
Pffft. I was born for this. Watch
and learn--

Suddenly, a CHUNK of the cliff breaks off. Angus FREEFALLS!

66 ANGUS (CONT'D) 66
WHOOOAAHHHHHHHH!

67 PARKER 67
Angus!

Ariel LEAPS off the cliff. Her outfit turns into a dope
WINGSUIT.

68 ANGUS 68
<MORE SCREAMING!>

Angus <SMACKS> into a branch!

69 ANGUS (CONT'D) 69
OW!

Then, he continues to fall.

70 ANGUS (CONT'D) 70
AHHHHHH!

He smacks into a protruding ledge, face first!

71 ANGUS (CONT'D) 71
OW!

He slides off.

72 ANGUS (CONT'D) 72
AHHH!

He slams into a BIRD's nest, accidentally taking the bird's
eggs with him. The bird <SQUAWKS> with concern.

73 ANGUS (CONT'D) 73
AHHHHH!

Ariel swoops in, grabs the eggs and returns them to their
nest, then catches Angus in her arms just before he hits the
ground.

Russell and Parker float in.

74 PARKER 74
(to Ariel)
Wow, you can fly!?

Angus jumps out of Ariel's hold.

75 ANGUS 75
Pfff, L-Let's not get too excited.
Ha, she can only fly straight down.
Follow me, I'll lead.

Angry, Angus stomps off.

76 ANGUS (CONT'D) 76
<GRUMBLES>...

EXT. FORBIDDEN FOREST - LATER

Angus swings a MACHETE, chopping through VINES and thick brush.

77 ANGUS 77
<CHOPPING EFFORTS!>

Following behind is Parker, Russell, and Ariel.

78 ARIEL 78
Um, excuse me. Tarzan? Is there a
reason we're not using that path?

She points to a manicured TRAIL that runs parallel to them.

79 ARIEL (CONT'D) 79
It looks a little easier.

Angus tosses his machete behind him. We hear an ELEPHANT
<CRY!>

80 ANGUS 80
Easier, huh? Okay, if that's your
thing. Some people like to blaze
their own paths, but whatever.

Angus walks towards the new path.

EXT. FORBIDDEN FOREST - RIVER - DAY

The MMP crew and Ariel reach a ROARING RIVER.

81 ARIEL 81
Looks pretty deep to cross, dude.
We should probably play it safe and
find another way.

82 ANGUS 82
This way is just fine. Look,
there's rocks. We can just hop
scotch across 'em no problem.

83 PARKER 83
Ooh! I love hop scotch!

84 ANGUS 84
See, Parker's not afraid.

85 ARIEL 85
I didn't say I was afraid.

86 ANGUS 86
Kinda feels like you're afraid.

More sparks of tension fly between Angus and Ariel.

87 ANGUS/ARIEL 87
Grrr...

88 ANGUS 88
Just do what I do, and try and keep
up!

He leaps to a rock, that is NOT a rock, but an ALLIGATOR
head! It opens its jaws wide and SWALLOWS Angus whole!
<GULP!>

89 ANGUS (CONT'D) 89
<SCREAMING!>

90 PARKER 90
Angus!

Ariel jumps onto the alligator and PRIES the mouth open with
her legs.

91 ARIEL 91
<PRYING EFFORTS!>

Then, she reaches into the beast, grabs Angus, and leaps to
shore right as the gator's jaws <SNAP> shut. Parker
helicopters in, carrying Russell.

92 PARKER 92
 (to Ariel)
You saved Angus again!

Ariel <DROPS> Angus on the ground.

93 ANGUS 93
I would've gotten out. Eventually.

94 ARIEL 94
Whatever you say, sailor.

MONTAGE - ARIEL KEEPS SAVING HEADSTRONG ANGUS

- Angus tries to read a map, but is puzzled.

95 ANGUS 95
Hmm?

Ariel flips the map around for him. It was upside down.

96 ANGUS (CONT'D) 96
Hmm!

Angus confidently points ahead.

97 ARIEL 97

<SIGH> . . .

- Angus gets tangled in a treetop TRAP.

98 ANGUS **98**

<SCREAMS!>

Ariel swiftly <CUTS> him down.

99 ARIEL 99

<SIGH> . . .

Parker looks at Russell, super impressed!

100	PARKER	100
	<HAPPY GASP!>	

- Ariel plucks a THORN out of Angus's finger.

101 ANGUS 101
 <PAINED EFFORTS!><KISSES HIS BOO
 BOO>

102	<GASPS!>	PARKER	102
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Again, Parker is super impressed by Ariel. But Ariel's looking irked.

103 ARIEL 103

<SIGH>...

- Angus is drowning in QUICKSAND!

104 ANGUS 104
 <DROWNING/BUBBLING EFFORTS!>

Ariel peers in. Seriously?

105 ARIEL 105
 <ANNOYED GROWL!>

She yanks him out.

- Angus is stuck inside the belly of a massive SNAKE.

106	ANGUS	106
	<NERVOUS EFFORTS!>	

Ariel jumps onto the snake's belly, freeing the big guy.

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107                ARIEL                                107
                <JUMPING EFFORTS!>

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The snake <HISSES> at Ariel, but Ariel gives the snake a "Don't mess with me right now" point. It backs off. Parker <POOFS> in, thinking that was awesome.

108 PARKER 108
<GIGGLES AT SNAKE!>

EXT. FORBIDDEN FOREST - LATER

Parker, Ariel, and Russell follow Angus who looks like he's been through hell.

109 ANGUS 109
<PANTING!> The Kapow Trees...
should be... oof, just around this
bend.

110 ARIEL 110
You said that four "bends" ago.

111 ANGUS 111
No. It's the same bend. It's just a
reaaaally long bend.

112 ARIEL 112
Parker, I think we're lost.

113 PARKER 113
Oh, no. Angus never gets lost. I
know, because I've never seen him
ask for directions.

114 ANGUS (O.S.) 114
A-ha!

Angus pulls apart some vines, revealing a GROVE of KAPOW TREES.

115 ANGUS (CONT'D) 115
Kapow! How you like me now!? <HAPPY
DANCE EFFORTS!>

Angus celebrates.

116 ARIEL 116
I'll give credit where credit is
due. Nice work, sailor.

AT THE KAPOW TREES - CONT.

Ariel admires one of the trees that looks an awful lot like a BOMB.

117 ARIEL 117
In order to extract the gas from
the tree, you have to "tap" it in a
very specific sequence.

118 PARKER 118
Or else what?

119 ARIEL 119
Or else KAPOW! The whole thing will
blow.

120 ANGUS 120
Ah, step aside, coming through.
I'll do it.

Angus <POPS> out one of Russell's TUSKS. Ariel takes it from
him as he passes.

121 ARIEL 121
It's gas for my balloon, so, it
makes sense that I tap the tree.

Angus snatches the tusk back.

122 ANGUS 122
A balloon that crashed into my
ship.

123 ARIEL 123
Do you even know the proper
sequence of tapping a Kapow Tree?

124 ANGUS 124
Duh. It's tap, tap, doink, tappity,
tap, tap. Everybody knows that.

Angus condescendingly boops Ariel on the head with the tusk.

125 ARIEL 125
Noooo. It's tappity, tap, tap,
doink, tap, tap, doinkity.

Ariel performs the sequence right on Angus's nose.

126 ANGUS 126
Nice try, ship-wrecker. Do I look
like a sucker?

127 PARKER 127
Not one that I would lick!

Ariel can tell she can't stop this guy.

128 ARIEL 128
<SIGHS>, Parker. Russell. You might
want to back up.

The three back up to a safe distance as Angus sticks his ear to the tree like a safe cracker. He confidently starts tapping it using Russell's tooth.

129	ANGUS	129
	Tap. Tap. Doink. Tappity. Tap. Tap.	

Everyone prepares for something to happen. Nothing happens.

130 ANGUS (CONT'D) 130
Eh, sometimes it takes awhile--

BOOOOM! The tree blows up, sending Angus flying!

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131                                ANGUS  (CONT'D)                                131
    AAAAAHHHHHHH!

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132 Angus! PARKER 132

He lands with a <THUD> behind Parker, Ariel, and Russell. Parker <RAINS> on him, trying to stop him from <SIZZLING>.

133 ARIEL 133

You stubborn, macho, meathead! Are
you trying to get yourself killed??

134	ANGUS	134
	(weekly)	
No.		

135 ARIEL 135

Then why am I constantly saving you
from doing just that!? It's getting
a little boring, buddy! Okay? Yeah!
And thanks for the no thanks that
you keep giving me. What is your
deal, dude?!

136 ANGUS **136**

I WAS JEALOUS! Okay? <BURSTS INTO
TEARS!>

Angus's tears are gross and snotty. It's a little weird for everyone.

137 ANGUS (CONT'D) 137

I saw the way Parker looked at you,
and I... I guess I wanted the
little nimbus to look at me like
that too. Like I was still some
cool adventurer guy. Aw but let's
face it, those days are gone! I'm
just the guy who crashed his ship
into a mountain and now delivers
mail.

138 PARKER 138
But that Angus is the coolest Angus
ever!

139 ANGUS 139
<SHUDDERS!> You're just saying
that!

140 PARKER 140
Nah-huh. All my adventures have
been with that Angus. And the
adventures we do together are
always the best adventures.

141 ANGUS 141
But, we don't go on adventures.

142 PARKER 142
Hello? Remember when you almost got
eaten by a witch? Or the time I
didn't do all the chores and the
whole boat almost fell off the
mountain?

143 ANGUS 143
Yeah.

144 PARKER 144
Or that time I learned magic and
tried to saw you in half? Remember
that super fun trip to the
hospital?

145 ANGUS 145
Yeah... wait, what?

146 PARKER 146
My point is, this Angus, the one in
front of me right now, sniffing
and crying like a little baby, is
all the Angus I need.

Parker and Angus hug tight.

147 ANGUS 147
Ahhh. Thanks, kiddo.

Ariel watches all this. She's moved. Angus holds out
Russell's tusk to her.

148 ANGUS (CONT'D) 148
You know what, I'm sorry, Ariel.
Here.

149 ARIEL 149
No. You should do it. BUT. You
follow my lead. Ya dig?

150 ANGUS 150
I dig.

Ariel and Angus fist bump.

151 PARKER 151
(hugs Russell)
Oooh look, Russell! They're making
friends!

Angus goes to the tree. He taps Ariel's commands as she calls
them out to him.

152 ARIEL 152
Tappity. Tap. Tap. Doink. Tap.
Doinkity.

Angus finishes the sequence. Then, there's an awkward moment
of silence. Nothing else happens.

153 ANGUS 153
Huh.
(to Ariel)
How do you know if it work--

BOOOOOM! The tree explodes again, sending Angus flying into
the distance.

154 ANGUS (CONT'D) 154
AAAAHHHHH!

Ariel smirks.

155 ARIEL 155
Sorry, Parker J. I had to do it.

156 PARKER 156
Totally get it.

EXT. S.S. STEADFAST - DECK - SUNSET

Ariel finishes loading her balloon's tank with Boom Boom Gas.
Angus, Parker, and Russell stand by.

157 PARKER 157
You sure you don't wanna stick
around a little longer?

158 ANGUS 158
Parker.
(covers to Ariel)
I mean, uh, you're more than
welcome, of course.

170

PARKER

170

Uh huh??

171

ANGUS

171

We're cruising along, it's a
gorgeous day...

THE END.