

Since the Dawn of Man

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EXT. ANCIENT CITY - DAY

A field full of crops and little huts.

In the middle of it all is a large stone tablet, labeled "IMPORTANT PEOPLE" with names carved into it. In front are THREE INVENTORS giving demonstrations to a crowd.

Inventor One presents a wheel.

INVENTOR ONE

I call it... a wheel.

The crowd oohs.

INVENTOR TWO

I call them--

Inventor Two takes out some leaves and powders.

INVENTOR TWO

(CONT.)

--Drugs!

The crowd aahs, Inventor Two gets arrested, and Inventor Three holds up a little stone tablet with symbols carved into it.

INVENTOR THREE

I call them laws!

The crowd boos.

CHIEF NOB (O.S.)

Silence!

The crowd goes silent. On a throne next to the tablet sits CHIEF NOB, a large, gross, middle-aged man. He stands up, the inventors anxiously wait for him to speak.

CHIEF NOB

I'll take...

The inventors are holding their breath.

CHIEF NOB (CONT.)

...All of them.

The inventors breathe sighs of relief.

CHIEF NOB

You may all add your names.

The inventors carve their names into the tablet.

Out in the crowd are FLUB and GROG, both 18, the only two not enjoying the ceremony. They exit the crowd.

FLUB

This whole thing is rigged.

GROG

Totally rigged.

FLUB

The only inventions that get selected are the ones that benefit him. The wheels are for his throne, the laws are so he can control us more, I have no idea what the drugs do.

GROG

Maybe they look nice on a coffee table.

FLUB

Still, it would be pretty nice to get our names on there.

GROG

Yeah, I don't even care what for.

FLUB

You shouldn't say that. I wanna make something that'll be good for everyone. Everyone in the world.

GROG

All twenty of us?

FLUB

Exactly.

GROG

Flub, that might be impossible. Nothing's gonna please everybody.

FLUB

I know, but I have to try.

Flub looks back at the tablet.

INT. FLUB'S HUT - NIGHT

Grog sleeps on the floor using a pelt as a blanket. Flub walks in through a hole in the front.

FLUB

Hey, Grog!

Grog wakes up.

GROG

Ugh... what?

FLUB

Y'know how I can just walk in here anytime?

GROG

Yes.

FLUB

Well, what if I couldn't? What if there was something blocking me? Check this out--

Flub reaches outside and moves a thin piece of wood in front of the hole. Flub is proud of himself, but Grog is unimpressed.

GROG

Flub, it's called a door, it was invented three days ago by Gnurshk.

FLUB

I know, but if you didn't know that, you would've thought I'd invented it, right?

GROG

Sure, I guess.

FLUB

Well, check it out--

Flub hands Grog a little stone tablet.

FLUB

I call it "copyright". It's to make sure that nobody can steal anyone else's idea and pass it off as their own.

GROG

Huh. That's pretty good.

FLUB

Isn't it? I'm gonna present it to Chief Nob tomorrow, it'll definitely get my name on the tablet.

GROG

(beat)

Just your name?

FLUB

Of course, I-- Oh.

GROG

No, no, it's fine.

FLUB

I'm sorry, Grog, it's just... you kinda didn't--

GROG

It's fine, it's fine.

FLUB

I want you to be free to create something for

yourself, to have your own
legacy separate from mine.

GROG

That makes perfect sense to
me.

FLUB

I'm glad it does. Good night,
Grog.

GROG

Good night.

A pause. Flub snatches the tablet away from Grog.

FLUB

I'm sure you'll do great with
whatever it is you invent.

GROG

I'm sure I will.

EXT. ANCIENT CITY - DAY

Another inventor's ceremony. Grog is presenting a little stone
tablet to the crowd.

GROG

I call it... copyright!

The crowd applauds Grog, Chief Nob seems particularly pleased.

CHIEF NOB

This is really something,
Grog. How'd you come up with
it?

GROG

Uh... well... Y'know... I just really care about credit going where it's due.

CHIEF NOB

Wow, that's very noble.

FLUB (O.S.)

Wait a minute!

Flub pushes his way through the crowd.

FLUB

Grog, what are you doing?!

GROG

Uh... just showing off copyright to everyone, they all seem to like it.

FLUB

You stole my idea?!

GROG

Don't worry, you'll be credited too.

FLUB

I should be the only one credited, you had nothing to do with it!

CHIEF NOB (to Grog)

Is this true?

GROG

Of course not, we invented copyright together.

FLUB

No, I invented it, he stole it.

CHIEF NOB

Okay, this is getting annoying, you can both carve your names as the creators of copyright.

Chief Nob gives Grog a chisel. Grog smiles sincerely at Flub, who refuses to take his own.

FLUB

You know what? You can have copyright, tomorrow I'm coming back with something even better.

Flub walks off. Grog frowns and looks at the tablet.

INT. FLUB'S HUT - NIGHT

Flub carves vigorously into a tablet.

FLUB

They're all gonna think he was the inventor... forever. But I'll make sure they remember me too.

Finished, Flub holds it up and smiles sinisterly.

INT. CHIEF NOB'S HUT - DAY

Chief Nob reads Flub's tablet.

CHIEF NOB

Anytime I want? For anything?
And them not doing it is
illegal?

FLUB

Yes. I call it... taxation.

CHIEF NOB

This is the greatest idea
anybody's ever had. I'm gonna
erect an entire other stone
tablet for your name alone.

FLUB

That sounds perfect.

EXT. ANCIENT CITY - DAY

Flub is presenting, in front of two large stone tablets, to a very angry crowd.

PERSON IN CROWD

That sounds terrible!

The entire crowd is furious. Chief Nob stands up from his throne.

CHIEF NOB

Silence! Or the first tax
will be put on not
appreciating Flub's amazing
invention!

PERSON IN CROWD

Tax this!

Flub's head is hit by a rock, he stumbles around dazed for a beat, then focuses in on the angry crowd.

FLUB

Maybe this wasn't such a good
idea.

GROG (O.S.)

WAIT! WAIT!

The crowd goes silent, Grog comes charging through.

GROG (to Flub)

How dare you try and take
credit for my idea?!

FLUB

What?

GROG (to Chief Nob)

Look at this.

Grog gives Nob a tablet, which he reads.

CHIEF NOB (to Flub)

It's the copyright for
taxation, with Grog's name on
it. So he was the real
inventor of it.

GROG

That's right, taxes were my
idea, and Flub was the real
creator of copyright.

CHIEF NOB

Oh goddamnit, now we're gonna
have to fill in the carvings
on this one and switch the
name on this one and-- Y'know
what? You two are exiled, and
I'm keeping your inventions!

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Flub and Grog wander away from the city.

FLUB

Thanks for taking the fall
for creating taxes, even if
it means everyone's gonna
hate you forever.

GROG

Y'know what? I don't even
care what they remember me
for. We're all probably not
gonna last that long anyway.

FLUB

Yeah. That's a good thing to
remember. You should
copyright it.

GROG

From now on, every time you
mention copyright, I'll tax
you.

FLUB

Yeah, yeah.

The two keep walking.

EXT. ANCIENT CITY - SUNSET

Chief Nob watches as men work on the two large tablets.

CHIEF NOB

Let's go! Let's go! Don't
make me invent micromanaging!

Both tablets fall over, crushing him.

END