

"GROK, CAVEMAN INVENTOR"

By Rob Biesenbach

CAST

Grok - caveman, inventor, gruff and blustery

Bork - sidekick, believes in Grok so forgives him the abuse

Kid 1, Kid 2 - Grok's children

(Grok and Bork's relationship has sort of a Ralph Kramden/Ed Norton dynamic. At lights up, Grok is seated, pounding a hammer loudly. Bork enters.)

BORK

Hey, Grokkie Boy!

GROK

Bork! What are you interrupting me in my workshop for? Can't you see I'm hard at work on my inventions?

BORK

Well, I could hear it, that's for sure - even from three caves down! In fact, the whole clan is complaining about the noise ...

GROK

Oh, what do they know? A bunch of Neanderthals!

BORK

Now, Grok, not everyone is fortunate enough to have your excessively large brain pan. So, uh, what's this thing you're working on?

GROK

My most important project ever, Bork. Why this invention could propel our people right out of the Old Stone Age and into the Middle Stone Age! And, I don't mind telling you, it will surely help elevate my status within the clan.

BORK

That's good! Especially after the fiasco with your last big idea.

GROK

And I still say the saber-toothed tiger can be domesticated and made to serve man!

BORK

Sure, sure, tell that to the Chief.

GROK

(Dismissive) Oh, he's still got one good arm left! (Pause) Now then, imagine, if you will, a system for moving our goods in a way that's far more efficient than ever before.

BORK

Sorry, Grok, I'm not following you there ...

GROK

Okay, Bork, let me dumb it down for you. When we move from our winter camp to our summer camp, we all have to bear these heavy loads on our backs, right?

BORK

Yes! The loads are very heavy. And it requires many trips!

GROK

Correct! But with this new conveyance system, we can carry the burdens of ten men in a single trip!

BORK

That's amazing - what do you call it?

GROK

I call it ... "The Wheel."

BORK

The wheel, huh? And this is it? This giant square rock?

GROK

Well, it's not done yet ... but I'll figure it out ... as sure as the sun is carried across the sky on the back of the great winged bird! Anyway, what is it you want?

BORK

Oh, I was going to tell you, the most terrible thing happened this morning. It seems Blark was on the hillside gathering roots ...

GROK

Those gatherers!

BORK

I know, I know, "a dying breed." Anyway, he was pulling up a root and it dislodged this giant, round boulder, which rolled down the hill with great speed and power, almost crushing him.

(Long pause as Grok stares at Bork, the wheels turning. Ultimately, it doesn't compute, and he erupts.)

GROK

Bork, why do you bother me with this irrelevant nonsense!?

BORK

Sorry, sorry ... I know you're under a lot of pressure - especially with all the attention young Crag has been getting.

GROK

(Scoffs) Crag! And what great idea is he working on now?

BORK

Something called the "written word."

GROK

Ridiculous! What do we need writing for? Our stories and our ways will continue to be passed along from generation to generation by pictograph ... for as long as Cro-Magnon man rules this land!

BORK

You are truly a visionary, Grok.

GROK

Thank you, Bork. Now why don't you make yourself useful and throw another log on the fire. If that goes out, I don't want to wait around for lightning to strike another tree!

BORK

Tell me about it! Okay, another log for the fire ...

GROK

And be careful there, Bork! The wood stack is very high and unstable.

BORK

Yeah, yeah ... whoa! Look out!!

(Bork jumps back.)

GROK

What did I just tell you?

BORK

Sorry, sorry! Geez, did you see that? That log just fell off the stack and rolled right across the ground!

GROK

Um ... yeah? I'm right here, aren't I? Of course I saw it. Now throw it on the fire, and leave me to my work, will ya?

BORK

Okay, okay! Sheesh!

(Bork throws log on fire, exits.)

GROK

(Sigh) Look at me! I'm middle-aged - almost 17 years old - with nothing to show for it! I've got to make this work ...

(Two children enter, yelling and chasing each other.)

GROK

Kids, kids! What did Daddy tell you about interrupting him when he's working?

KID 1/KID 2

Sorry, daddy!

KID 1

But lookit, lookit! Look what we can do!

(The kids somersault around the stage as Grok watches for a moment.)

GROK

(Condescending) Okay, okay, that's very nice, children. Now Daddy doesn't have time for your childish games - he's busy inventing the wheel!

KID 2

Daddy, what's a wheel?

GROK

Never you mind, honey, you wouldn't understand! Now you two run along, okay?

KID 1/KID 2

Okay, Daddy!/Okay!/Bye!

(They exit, as Grok huddles over his work.)

GROK

(Shakes his head) Oh wheel, why do you torment me so?

(As he sits pondering, a wooden ball bounces from behind curtain across the stage. Grok, picks it up, studies it a moment, then yells.)

And what did I tell you kids about picking up your toys?

(Lights out.)