

Title: Griphook Takes a Holiday

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Summary: Griphook's story after he escapes from the Lestrangle's vault in Gringotts.

Timeframe: The day Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Griphook break into the Lestrangle's vault

Audience: PG-13

Category: The Untold Story

Warnings: Violence

Length: 9 pages

Griphook Takes a Holiday

Chapter 1 -- Racing the Dragon

Hardly aware of the pain from the burns covering his body, and still borne along on the swell of replicating treasure, Harry shoved the cup into his pocket and reached up to retrieve the sword, but Griphook was gone. Sliding from Harry's shoulders the moment he could, he had sprinted for cover amongst the surrounding goblins, brandishing the sword and crying, 'Thieves! Thieves! Help! Thieves!' He vanished into the midst of the advancing crowd, all of whom were holding daggers and who accepted him without question.

Griphook did not stop as he joined the group of advancing goblins. He roughly pushed his way through, keeping a tight grip on the hilt of the sword. Once free of his angry fellows, he continued up the dark stone passage until he arrived at one of several carts ridden by the attacking goblins in pursuit of his former conspirators.

As he jumped into the last cart, he heard a roar from the dragon and even felt the heat from a blast of dragonfire as the passageway suddenly filled with light. It died away just as quickly as he set off in the cart back toward the safety of the bank's visitor lobby -- and his escape.

He mentally urged the cart to go faster but he knew it had but one speed. He laughed aloud at his triumph -- securing the sword of Ragnuk the First while outwitting the famous wizard Harry Potter and his equally foolish friends. How dare they think they could steal from Gringotts without suffering the ultimate penalty? He had initially trusted Harry Potter based on being rescued from Malfoy Manor and then Potter's respectful burial of the dead house elf. But that had been betrayed by his theft of the small gold cup. Harry Potter and his friends had just proved themselves to be nothing more than thieves after all. Though it was curious they only seemed to care about a trivial cup when the vault had been filled with much greater riches.

There were loud rumblings coming from the passage behind him, but Griphook was too focused on his thoughts to notice. The airflow from the speeding cart was pleasantly cool on his face.

Griphook had expected them to take the fake sword stored in the vault. He was surprised they did not ask him to point it out to them. Taking the fake sword would have been acceptable since it had clearly been stolen from Hogwarts by Severus Snape. Once they had stolen the cup, the deal was off as far as Griphook was concerned. Still, he was surprised to find himself disappointed in Harry Potter. Unlike other wizards, he had shown respect for non-humans and had sworn not to be out for personal gain. It just proved that wizards could simply not be trusted in matters of gold and treasure.

Griphook was startled from his reverie by roaring and explosions behind him. It should not possibly sound so close. He looked back to see the cavern roof collapsing and an outline of the dragon through a curtain of dust as another blast of dragonfire exploded up the passage towards him.

Griphook was terrified. His heart and mind were racing. Somehow the dragon had gotten loose and was pursuing him. It had to be gaining on him to be so close already.

Griphook looked ahead. He was still too far away from the lobby. He would not make it before the dragon did. Without thinking, he quickly steered the cart onto a side track and veered sharply down a side passage toward the low security vaults. He looked back and saw nothing but dust and debris as he heard the dragon roar again. He cowered in fear but it was soon apparent the dragon had not followed him. The thundering noise was diminishing. It was not after him; it was trying to escape too. He was safe.

Griphook slowed and stopped the cart. He took a great deep breath and let it out. Then he shuddered in relief and sank to bottom of the cart to recover... and think.

He should warn the goblins in the bank. He could do that. The carts had communication devices which only goblins could use. But if he did so, there would be questions afterwards -- awkward questions. Why had he and Gornuk left the bank? Why had he returned and how had he gotten in? Why had he been in the Lestrangle's vault with the thieves? And why did he have the sword of Ragnuk the First?

Well, he thought, he could hide the sword in the tunnels until later, but they *must* have seen him with it down below. He could say he lost it while escaping the dragon. But then, he might not get the chance to retrieve it. It was too risky to part with it.

As his mind turned back to whether or not to warn the bank of the approaching dragon, he heard a tremendous roar and felt a shuddering concussion. Then he heard screams. It was too late -- the dragon had broken through to the lobby.

It was unfortunate. The goblins in the bank had decided to stay and work under the domination of dark wizard masters. They had chosen *their* fate; he had chosen *his*. If there had been more time, he might have decided to warn them. As it was, the chaos and destruction in the bank lobby would ease his departure.

There would be no questions.

Chapter 2 -- A Quick Bite

Griphook decided he deserved a decent meal after his long time on the run. Before leaving the vaults at Gringotts, he used a deception spell on the sword so it would appear to be a walking cane. It now rested beside him on the bench in a back corner booth of his favorite pub in Goblinton.

The pub seemed busier than usual for lunch, and there was a much louder buzz of conversation than you would normally hear.

Griphook smiled. He knew they were all talking about the break-in at Gringotts.

The server came over with his meal -- raw lamb and nightcaps. His mouth watered. He already planned on having a nice blood sausage pie for desert. He was already enjoying his second flagon of firewhisky-barrel-aged stout.

"I have not seen you in a while, Griphook," said the server. "Since you work for Gringotts, perhaps you know more about what happened? Everyone is talking about it."

"I know nothing," said Griphook testily. "I have not worked at Gringotts for some months now."

"You have not?" said the server, sounding surprised. "I did not know. Then, it must be a shock to you to as well. How could Harry Potter possibly break into Gringotts and escape on one of their Dragons?"

"What did you say?" asked Griphook in shock. Harry Potter had escaped? How was that possible?

"Have not you heard?" said the server sounding even more surprised. "Harry Potter and two other wand-carriers broke into Gringotts early this morning. They must have stolen something from one of the vaults guarded by the dragon and they used it to make their escape." He paused and then concluded, "Well, that is how the rumors have it."

Griphook was no longer listening. He waived the server off and considered the implications of Potter's apparent escape. They were not good. He had expected Harry Potter and his friends to be killed. That was Gringotts policy. Gringotts security guards never showed mercy, and Gringotts management never involved humans in their internal matters. Now, Potter would probably be captured by the Death Eaters -- and talk. Griphook knew he needed to get very far away, probably to Australia or South America.

He was no longer hungry. He picked up the cane and quickly left the pub.

Griphook was no more than a few steps into the torch lit street of the underground goblin community when he suddenly found himself face down on the damp stone with his head ringing. The cane was wrenched from his hand and he was roughly dragged to his feet by the armpits. Dark shapes stood on either side of him holding him tightly.

Griphook's head lolled with his bearded chin resting on his chest. Then someone grabbed him by his hair and yanked his head back. He saw a sweaty faced goblin with his face inches from his own. He had an intense look of hatred, his lips drawn back in snarl.

He spat one word at Griphook, "*Traitor!*" Then stepped back and hit Griphook on the forehead with tremendous force using the handle of the cane which had been taken from him.

Griphook saw stars explode and knew no more.

Chapter 3 -- The Interview

Griphook awoke with a jolt. He was sitting shackled, arms and legs, to a wooden chair in a small well-lit room. Standing before him was Grandak, the Senior Manager of Gringotts bank. He had a shrewd looking face with narrow piercing eyes. He was holding a short metal rod with two sharp points between which lightning arced and crackled menacingly. Griphook knew of this device. Gringotts security guards often used it during interrogations.

Griphook was terrified. He knew his only hope was to pretend ignorance. Goblins did not use truth potions or magic to learn the truth. They used brute force. If he could maintain his story under torture, he would have a chance.

"I was surprised to hear you had returned to Goblinton, Griphook," said Grandak evenly. "If you tell me the truth, you have nothing to fear."

Griphook knew this was a lie. He said nothing.

"This morning, a dozen Gringotts security guards and employees were killed by one of our dragons. Many others were seriously injured, including Bogrod. This occurred when Harry Potter and two accomplices somehow managed to break into the Lestrangle's high security vault." Grandak spoke quite calmly, as if he were reading aloud a newspaper story at the breakfast table.

Griphook remained silent but kept his eyes on the metal rod in Grandak's hand.

Grandak continued. "Bogrod was forced by wand-carrier magic to help the thieves enter the vault. He says *you* were helping them."

"No!" exclaimed Griphook. "They also forced *me* to help them."

Griphook expected Grandak to challenge his story, but he instead asked, "Why did you switch the sword of Ragnuk the First with the fake one we found in the vault?"

This question threw Griphook off guard. He stammered, "I did not *switch* them. The sword I put in the vault months ago was the fake. The humans brought the real sword *with* them. They *knew* it too; I did not have to tell them."

"You say *they* brought the real sword with them?" asked Grandak sounding incredulous. "Why would they bring a priceless sword to switch with a fake? You just said they *knew* they had the real one. That makes no sense whatsoever."

"I *do* not know," said Griphook. "They did not even take the *fake* sword. They only wanted a small gold cup."

"Yes, we know a cup was taken," said Grandak. "We thought that was an accident. A cup that small could have easily fallen into one of their pockets when everything was multiplying and filling the vault. You are telling me they broke into a Gringotts high security vault for the *cup*?"

Griphook nodded.

"Utter *nonsense!*" exclaimed Grandak. "Clearly, switching the swords was the objective... You *lied* to them about the sword. You double crossed them and took the *real* sword for yourself." He moved toward Griphook extending the metal rod.

"No!" shouted Griphook. "They promised me the sword if..." and his words trailed off.

Grandak stopped. Then he smiled and finished, "...if you *helped* them." He paused and added, "Is this a *confession*?"

"No!" cried Griphook desperately. "I wanted to return the sword to us... the Goblins... to whom it rightfully belongs."

Grandak looked disappointed with his answer. “Yet, you *left* the bank with the sword. You *left* the security guards, your rescuers, behind to deal with the dragon. You led them to believe you were *escaping* the thieves. Only *you* escaped the dragon uninjured. How *is* that?”

“I was... lucky,” said Griphook lamely. “I was fleeing from the dragon like everyone else.”

“And yet, you did not warn the bank that a dragon had gotten loose. Only one bank cart that went after the thieves was undamaged. How *is* that? Unless *you* took it and left the others behind? Did you hide and wait for the dragon to rampage through the bank thinking it would cover your escape?” Grandak stared at Griphook waiting for an answer.

But Griphook did not answer.

Grandak looked disgusted. “Well, it did... *initially*. The chaos and destruction delayed our investigation.”

Without warning, Grandak lunged forward and jabbed the metal rod into Griphook’s ribs. He left it there a full ten seconds. Griphook screamed and writhed violently with spasmodic muscle contractions. It felt like he was on fire. He thought all his bones would break.

When Grandak withdrew the rod, Griphook collapsed. Blood was seeping from his mouth, nose and ears. It also dripped from new cuts on his wrists and ankles from straining at the shackles. He whimpered pathetically.

“You must be a very *stupid* goblin, Griphook,” sneered Grandak. “I cannot believe you did not realize Gringotts would have ways of detecting and tracking objects as consequential as the sword of Ragnuk the First when they leave the bank without permission? Your deception spell was *pathetic*. How long did you work at Gringotts...? Ah yes, eight years... Well, that is nothing at all.”

Grandak was just getting started. “And your little escapade with Gornuk... a stupid and pitiful show of defiance toward the Death Eaters. It took me some time to smooth that over. Do you think we care who rules the world of wand-carriers? We were here before humans left their *caves*. Wizard rulers come and go; but we endure -- Gringotts endures. We grow *stronger* whenever the wizards war among

themselves. Someday, they will destroy each other and we will rule once again. Goblins must remain unified. You endangered that, Griphook.”

“Let me make amends...” begged Griphook.

“Griphook, I think you need to take a *long* holiday... just like *Ludo Bagman*,” said Grandak contemptuously.

Griphook screamed.

He was still screaming as Grandak left the interrogation room and slammed the door shut.

Chapter 4 -- Making Amends

“Put Griphook in the vault next to Bagman,” Grandak told his sweaty faced Chief of Security. “They can keep each other company.” Both goblins laughed wickedly.

Then Grandak said, “I would accompany you myself for the pleasure of it, but I have important business to attend to. Feel free to amuse yourself, Gornrok” he added as he handed the metal rod back to his security chief. “It was enjoyable to use.”

Grandak walked confidently back toward the devastated lobby where repairs were already well under way. The staff would work all night until everything was as it had been. Tomorrow’s customers would detect nothing amiss.

The break-in had been an embarrassing and regrettable incident, but not without compensation. Hidden safely in his personal vault was the sword of Ragnuk the First. What an incredible prize! He bristled at the audacity of Griphook to think himself worthy of such a treasure. His boss, the President of Gringotts bank, need not know about it. Grandak had more than enough dirt on his security chief to keep *him* quiet. He would share the sword with no one. Perhaps someday he would use it as a bargaining chip to achieve a much higher position within the bank -- perhaps even Bank President itself.

He looked at his watch. It was almost evening. He should tarry no longer.

He had to inform the Dark Lord of the break-in. The Dark Lord had left explicit instructions to be personally informed if anyone entered the Lestrangle's vault. The Dark Lord would not be happy of course, but Grandak felt reassured because only the one small gold cup had been stolen.

He would kneel and grovel and play his part properly in front of the Dark Lord.

However, he eagerly awaited the opportunity to fully examine the sword. One of the first things he intended to do was remove the disgraceful inscription of Godric Gryffindor and replace it with the proper inscription of Ragnuk the First.

The End

End Notes:

Excerpt in **bold** in Chapter 1 is from Chapter 25 of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows by J.K. Rowling.