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Opening extract from

Hunk and Thud Wrestling Trolls: Match Two

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1

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CHAPTER 1

The harsh lights shone down on the wrestling ring, picking out the three huge muscular figures pacing around inside the ropes, each watching the other two warily.

The event had been billed as the Battle of the Giants. It had begun with nine wrestlers, all massive and powerful, with three in the ring at a time for each bout. Now the winners of the three earlier bouts were building up to the finale of the Battle: Genno the Giant, who really was a giant, towering head and shoulders over his two opponents; Billy Bigfoot, a yeti, covered in thick fur from the top of his head to his feet; and Big Rock, the Wrestling Troll.

The crowd was roaring encouragement,

chanting and singing their names, while some waved home-made signs and pictures of their favourites.

'Genno! Genno!' came the chant from one section of the crowd, while another group chorused: 'Billy Bigfoot is the best! Billy Bigfoot is the best!'

The only two yelling out in support of the Wrestling Troll, Big Rock, were his young manager, Milo, and his thin little assistant trainer, Jack.

'Come on, Big Rock!' yelled Jack. 'You can do it!'

Big Rock was definitely the outsider in this contest. Genno and Billy Bigfoot were big stars on the wrestling circuit. Big Rock was becoming more famous, but he was still not as well known to this crowd as either of the other two. Milo's decision to put Big Rock into this contest had been part of a plan to spread his name and reputation, to build him up into a Championship contender.

Plus, there was the money to consider. This Battle of the Giants was a 'winner takes all'

contest: the winner took the whole prize money, a leather bag filled with gold coins. Money had been scarce for some time for Milo and Jack and Big Rock. A win here would mean a change of fortunes for them, as well as giving a huge boost to Big Rock's wrestling career.

'Genno! Genno!' The yells from the giant's supporters grew louder and louder, and as they did, so did the shouts from those backing the yeti: 'Billy Bigfoot! Billy Bigfoot!'

Still, all three wrestlers stayed near the ropes, eyeing each other up. It was Big Rock who made the first move, jumping into the centre of the ring and turning to face Genno, and then Billy Bigfoot.

'He's taking a chance,' whispered Milo nervously. 'If they both rush him, he'll be squashed!'

'I think that's his plan,' whispered back Jack.

Milo shook his head.

'You call that a *plan*?' he demanded. 'Being squashed by those two?'

'Wait and see,' said Jack, his eyes fixed on

the ring. He was sure that Big Rock was going to try a strategy that he and the Wrestling Troll had worked out during one of their practice sessions. The problem was, they'd never tried it for real. Certainly not against powerful opponents like Genno and Billy Bigfoot.

Big Rock stood in the centre of the ring, waiting. And then he turned towards Genno and blew a loud raspberry at the giant.

Immediately, Genno's supporters erupted into angry shouts at seeing their hero insulted this way. Genno, certainly, was upset by it: he scowled, his huge face creasing and looking like an angry squashed doughnut.

Big Rock then turned towards Billy Bigfoot, and this time he made a fart noise.

The yeti's fans yelled out loud at this, and it was possible that Billy Bigfoot might also have been scowling, if anyone could see his face beneath his fur. All that could be seen of his expression were two large green eyes – and they certainly looked angry right now.

There came a growl from Billy Bigfoot, and

he leapt forward towards Big Rock, his long arms outstretched and his huge paws closing in on the troll. At the same time, Genno jumped up into the air and aimed himself in an arc towards Big Rock, his massive feet heading at speed for the troll's head.

For a second it looked as if it was all over for



the troll: he was going to get crunched by the yeti, smashed by the feet of the giant and sandwiched between them.

Instead, Big Rock suddenly did a roll to one side and then bounced back to his feet with surprising agility for someone so big.

In the centre of the ring, Genno and Billy Bigfoot met at a crunching speed, colliding with the force of their two separate attacks. The leather-hard soles of Genno's feet hit Billy Bigfoot in the chest, while Billy Bigfoot's head smacked hard into the giant's stomach.

The two huge figures collapsed in the centre of the ring, tangled up in each other's arms and legs, momentarily stunned by the impact of their collision. Both were lying on their backs, semi-conscious, with their shoulders touching the canvas.

Immediately, Big Rock leapt on top of both of them, his weight holding both wrestlers down in their dazed state as the referee began to count:

'One. Two . . .'

Too late, Genno and Billy Bigfoot realised

that they were about to be counted out on a pinfall, and they both struggled to lift one arm each into the air; but they were so tangled up and the weight of each wrestler so heavy that, along with the weight of Big Rock holding them both down, neither could force an arm up and a shoulder off the canvas.

'Three!' shouted the referee.

Big Rock scrambled off the two wrestlers, and the referee grabbed one of the troll's hands and raised his arm into the air.

'I declare the winner of this Battle of the Giants to be . . . Big Rock!'

The crowd went wild. There was some booing and angry shouting from some of Genno's and Billy Bigfoot's supporters, but gradually a new chant could be heard, building up, getting louder and louder as the crowd expressed their appreciation for a great victory: 'Big Rock! Big Rock! Big Rock! Big Rock!'

Milo and Jack turned and grinned at each other.

'What did I tell you?' beamed Milo. 'I knew he'd win!'