Microscopy_{and} Microanalysis

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Dear Abbe

Dear Abbe,

I have a coworker (whom I'll refer to as "Bill") who can't seem to stop talking like a pirate and keeps a parrot in the lab! It wouldn't be so bad, but he insists on keelhauling his fellow technicians and giving no quarter as he takes over bench space. The parrot sits on his shoulder while he uses the TEM. Consequently we find bird droppings all over the view port and keyboard. The rapscallion's shoulder is almost always stained and reeks of parrot guano. And the ghastly parrot spouts pirate curses on everyone and uses foul language at inopportune moments. I keep finding cracker crumbs in the oddest locations. Bill keeps going off with "Shiver me timbers" this and "Splice the main brace" that. It gets rather annoying since we aren't all piratey and don't know the lingo. Last Wednesday Bill came in bathed in an aura of rum and complaining about some strumpet when he "cracked Jenny's tea cup!" He's even begun dressing the part and wearing an eye patch. Says it helps to see in the darkened room when viewing samples. At least we've made lemonade from the lemons by claiming his missing eye as a handicap for EEO purposes. I'm afraid he may start bringing in cutlasses and cat-o-nine tails next. Our technicians are threatening to mutiny. What can be done?

Hornswaggled in Hampton

Dear Hornswaggled

Two words: "Parrot Stew."

Dear Abbe,

I'm attempting to train students to section using glass knives before I let them move up to a diamond knife. Our problem is they are dull from the start and won't cut the tissue samples. Any advice on how to get sharper glass knives? Dull in Dartmouth

Dear Dullard.

I have no time for your petty glass knife problems involving dull students! So I enlisted one of the grad students in a friend's lab to address your issues. Herr Brooks, who apparently spends way too much time sniffing the mounting media, responded thusly: "Your first problem is that you're making your own glass knives. The only glass knives worth ein verdammt are shaped by the nimble hands of elf-kind from glass created by Dwarven Smiths. The best glass (as I'm sure you know) is made from the quartz mined deep below the Misty Mountains, but that source has long since been ... compromised. (Between you and me, dwarves are an obstinate bunch, and frankly they got what they deserved.) I recall a knife the elves made for my professor: Glamrist. Roughly translated as 'Tech cleaver,' and mein godt she was a beauty. Able to slay an orc, and then section his liver down to 40 nm thin sections for TEM. Glamrist saw a lot of use during a particularly disastrous road trip to a conference. Our PI was mugged in the subway, two of the undergrads were lost during a drinking contest, and the tall, shapely blonde I'd had my eye on fell for a short, hairy guy from Mississippi Tech who never bathed. Worst. Trip. Ever."

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World Scientific Series in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology - Vol. 7 SCANNING PROBE MICROSCOPY FOR ENERGY RESEARCH

edited by Dawn A Bonnell (The University of Pennsylvania, USA) & Sergei V Kalinin (Oak Ridge National Laboratory, USA)

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Prof. Dawn A. Bonnell is elected as a Member of NAE in 2013

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