

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2016**

**Afternoon**

**West Columbia**

Marcus had to admit to himself that he had never thought he'd ever see the day . . .

Megan grinned up at her step-father and he felt like he had somehow drifted back a few years.

"You're gonna need a bigger jar . . ." Megan laughed as she made a vain attempt to stuff a dollar bill into the very full swear jar.

"I have to admit that I did *not* expect *anybody* to ever beat Mindy."

Megan grinned enormously.

"That is nothing to be proud of, young lady," Paige cautioned.

"It's not often I beat Mindy at *anything*," Megan pointed out.

"I must have been a very bad person in a former life to be punished like this," Marcus groaned.

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**Morton Grove**

Megan was very special to me, in every way.

Most people who did not really know her found her rude and arrogant. Okay, I would be the first to admit that she had some rough edges, but I still loved her without reservation. I would always remember the first time that we met: it was just after my parents had been killed, about eighteen months ago, in Washington DC. It was a Saturday at a place called D-JAK.

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*"Hi, I'm Megan!"*

*"And I'm busy!" I replied, curtly.*

*"Hey! I'm trying to be nice here, ass!" Megan retorted, with quite a bit of sassy attitude.*

*I took a moment to look over towards Mindy before I turned back to Megan.*

*"Sorry, that was unfair; I'm Curtis!"*

*"I lost my Dad a few months ago; I'll listen if you want to talk," Megan said.*

*I looked at Megan, then looked over at Mindy again; I was uncertain about opening up. Finally, I smiled and Mindy nodded her encouragement so I walked over to a corner and sat down. Megan followed and she sat down across from me and then we both started to talk.*

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I had been taken by Megan straight away. She was funny. Her language was coarse and a little foul at times, but I had grown up around Chloe, so I was not put out. We had both been ten at the time, but I still thought Megan was cute and I loved her auburn hair. Her smile was beautiful too and I found that I could sit and listen to her talking for hours. Megan could talk for hours, too – believe me!

We began to become close. We would go everywhere together; Chloe thought it was cute. Megan was the first girl that I had seen naked other than my cousin. Megan was also the first girl to allow me to touch her – never mind where! When Megan became Wildcat for real, she changed, but only for the better in my view. My love for her grew and we were inseparable. I always hated it when Megan got hurt, as did everybody.

A lot changed in Gotham. Megan was hurt, and we both got a little carried away! That was a first for both of us. We also found it incredibly embarrassing that Erika had figured out what we had been up to almost straight away. More than once, we both got caught up to no good, but I did not care as long as I was with my Megan.

Gibraltar had been a wakeup call to us all. I had almost died until Chloe had given me the kiss of life – yuck! Megan had teased me about that kiss for quite a while which was typically Megan; that girl could find fun in the darkest of moments. I had not even started puberty the first time that I had been able to play with Megan's body. Megan had never commented on my own lack of development, just as I had not commented on hers the first time that I had seen her naked in the Medical Center of Safehouse F. Megan could be kind when she wanted to be and she always was with me.

I had done my best to help her when Paige had been shot – that was hard on us both.

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### **West Columbia**

"So, *this* is the Kitty Lair!"

"Funny!" Megan replied as she grinned at Saoirse.

"I expected less pink," Morgan commented as she looked around the room.

"You seem to have a thing for Hit Girl," Saoirse went on as she noticed the posters that adorned the walls. "Jackal, too."

"Yeah, I *really* had a thing for Hit Girl and Jackal, back in the day."

"She talks like a veteran!" Morgan laughed.

"I *am* a veteran!"

"An eleven-year-old veteran?" Saoirse queried with a chuckle.

"I've fucked up more cunts than both of you put together!"

"Feisty!" Morgan laughed and she ignored Megan's scowl.

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The teenage girls began to poke around.

"Wow!" Saoirse blurted out as she dug around in a drawer. "Never knew you could get Rainbow Dash bras!"

"Get off those!" Megan retorted as she grabbed the aforementioned bra from Saoirse's hands.

"You still only a double-A, Megan?"

“Yes!” Megan scowled as her cheeks went very pink. She quickly stuffed the bra back into the drawer and slammed it shut.

“Nice choice in tampons,” Morgan commented. “I use the same brand – you find them comfortable?”

“Yeah . . .,” Megan groaned as Saoirse smirked.

“What’s *this* . . .?” Saoirse muttered as she sat down on the bed. She reached under the duvet and . . .

“No!” Megan exclaimed as Saoirse examined what she had discovered.

“A dog . . . no, a *kitty* collar?”

“You, dark little kitty, you!” Morgan laughed as Megan blushed a bright red.

“I know nothing about it . . .” Megan tried only to receive disbelieving smirks from the two older girls.

“SD – pin her!” Morgan ordered.

The three girls scuffled on the bed for a minute but brawn overpowered size and Megan was pinned, face down on the bed, by Saoirse. Morgan placed the collar around the struggling and very mortified Megan’s neck and she secured it at a well-used hole.

“Her size, too,” SD chuckled.

“Now,” Saoirse mused. “Is this just for when you play with your clit, *alone* – or is it for when Curtis *comes* . . .”

“Nice double entendre, SD!” Morgan laughed.

Megan shrugged knowing that she had no choice.

“The latter . . .”

“She’s been spending too much time with Josh,” Saoirse chuckled. “Does Chloe know what her cousin gets up to?”

“Yes, she does . . .”

“You know, Megan – all joking aside – you’re a lovely girl and Curtis is a very lucky boy. As you grow up, he’s going to be even luckier,” Saoirse commented.

“Thanks,” Megan offered grudgingly. “Please don’t tell anybody about. . .”

“I’m not the total bitch that Stephanie makes me out to be, Megan,” Saoirse said as she removed the collar. “We won’t tell a soul – just between us girls.”

“Thanks.”

“I meant what I said, Megan. You’re a lovely girl . . . and a great friend. You’ve made us both feel welcome and neither of us ever want you to change.”

“Why don’t we have a girls’ night out – just Foxtail, Raven, and Wildcat,” Morgan suggested.

“Will Mindy allow it?” Saoirse enquired doubtfully.

“She’s my big sister and we’re all Operators – of course she will; she can only say one word . . .”

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### ***That evening***

#### ***Glenview***

“NO!”

“Why not?” Megan demanded.

“It’s way too dangerous out there.”

“Nobody has seen FEAR in almost two weeks,” Megan pointed out. “The only fun I’ve had all week is kicking some Brit *Predator* butt!”

“Megan – I don’t want anything to happen to you. You’re going to be twelve in less than three months and if anything should . . .”

“I’ll be fine; I’ll have Foxtail and Raven with me. Foxtail is way better trained than me and Raven put together.”

“You want to go out on your Ducati?”

The smile said it all.

“On two conditions.”

Megan groaned but nodded.

“You have backup . . . don’t interrupt . . . backup which will be out of sight but close enough if trouble starts. That is non-negotiable. Second – all three of you are inspected by Chloe and Josh before you go anywhere and you carry extra ammo. You also sharpen those damn blades of yours.”

Megan nodded her acceptance to the terms.

“Thanks, sis. I know you’re just looking out for me but this is the new Wildcat; I know my limits.”

Megan scowled as Mindy howled with laughter.

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### ***The following evening***

#### ***Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> June***

#### ***Safehouse F***

“Give me a break!”

“Wildcat – shut it!” Jackal growled as he checked out every inch of Wildcat’s combat suit and utility belt. Shadow came next and double checked the more feminine areas that Jackal would not touch.

Next came Foxtail and Raven. Foxtail was fuming as Psyche stood mere feet away; Psyche grinned at Foxtail as Jackal checked out every item of her kit and combat suit. Raven went along with the charade but both girls were kitted out perfectly as was Wildcat. Jackal had noticed Psyche’s attempts to humiliate her friend.

“Psyche – you next.”

Jackal grabbed Psyche before she could run and he flipped her upside down and he violently shook the giggling vigilante for a few moments before setting her – actually dropping her – back down onto the ground. Psyche scowled with embarrassment as Foxtail and Morgan laughed.

“Good to see you secure your kit, Psyche!” Jackal grinned.

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“You take care out there,” Shadow said to Wildcat when they were both alone for a few moments.

“I’ll be fine.”

“I care about you, you know – despite everything . . .”

“I know, Chloe; you can’t get rid of me *that* easily!”

“I hope not. I need somebody to annoy the fuck out of and I couldn’t stand Mindy and Joshua moping over your being injured . . . or worse.”

“Thanks, Chloe,” Megan replied as she gave her former adversary a hug.

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### **North Cicero Avenue**

#### **Wildcat with Foxtail and Raven**

I had heeded Hit Girl’s advice and so we stuck to open streets.

Three powerful machines rode down the street. My Ducati Hypermotard SP led with Foxtail’s Aprilia Caponord 1200 Rally to my left and just behind. Raven’s Yamaha Super Ténéré cruised to my right and level with Foxtail. Three girls enjoying an evening on the streets of Chicago. The place was peaceful – at least it was until a Kawasaki Versys 1000 LT in metallic black and plasma blue cruised past us. It was flanked by a pair of Kawasaki Versys 650 LT machines in metallic black. My eyes were drawn to the black and red armour.

“FEAR!” I growled.

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### **Safehouse F**

Hal’s head snapped up at the single word. She hit the alarm and began to issue commands.

“Ready One and Ready Two: Scramble! Medic prepare to move! Psyche, Mist: Scramble!”

Beyond the armoured glass which enclosed the *Fusion* Command Centre, Psyche and Mist could be seen running for *Brute*.

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### **Ready One**

#### **North Milwaukee Avenue**

Hit Girl and Shadow started their engines and they both accelerated north-west towards the red cross on the map projected onto their visors.

Hit Girl was angry at being caught out, but she knew that FEAR was unpredictable. She cursed herself for allowing Wildcat to be out without close protection.

“You even dare blame yourself, Hit Girl, and I’ll fucking kick your arse!” Shadow growled as the two of them weaved in and out of the light evening traffic.

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### ***Ready Two***

#### ***North Cicero Avenue and West Shakespeare Avenue Two miles behind Wildcat, Foxtail and Raven***

“Fucking knew it!” Jackal growled as he accelerated his Triumph Tiger 800 XCA towards sixty.

“The hand of fate falls,” Kick-Ass added as he followed Jackal on his Ducati Diavel Carbon. “Bet you anything that Hit Girl’s blaming herself.”

“No bet,” Jackal replied sourly.

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### ***Medic***

#### ***Safehouse K***

The Honda Fireblade Black Edition accelerated out of the Safehouse and up South Iron Street.

At the South Damen Avenue on-ramp for I-55, Medic headed northeast to the I-94 where she took the ramp northbound.

Medic was hitting ninety mere seconds later.

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### ***North Cicero Avenue***

#### ***Wildcat with Foxtail and Raven***

FEAR accelerated up the tree-lined street.

“Hit Girl, this is Wildcat – we’re giving chase!”

“Copy *that!*” Hit Girl replied – her tone was none too pleased and all three girls winced behind their helmets.

The chase was at speed – about fifty – but not excessive as the traffic was medium to heavy. We were moving too fast to use firearms and so far, FEAR had not made any overtly hostile actions. Mind you, just her mere presence was a hostile action! I knew that help was on its way so we were not alone. Neither of us were delusional enough to think that we could take FEAR alone – although Foxtail had her moments . . . just joking!

FEAR’s two cohorts did nothing more than prevent us getting too close to their Mistress. I worried that FEAR might have had a plan. Was our meeting planned or just a coincidence? I ran through my training looking for answers but nothing came. I was surprised to see FEAR bear left at West

Sunnyside Avenue. Not only did she bear left, she almost got creamed by a large semi as she made the illegal turn over the concrete median and up the wrong side of the avenue. One of her cohorts accelerated ahead and turned right through some steel mesh gates.

We followed and found ourselves passing beneath the railroad and then making a hard right up a dirt slope. We rode across two railroad lines and then made a left over a bridge and followed an old raised track bed that headed north. Every machine had dual-purpose tyres which were perfect for the off-road activity.

It was a struggle to ensure that I had the correct focus on events and not to allow my judgement to be clouded by past events.

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### ***Safehouse F***

#### ***Brute***

As Mist and Psyche reached the armoured Range Rover, a voice called out.

“Hey! Wait for me!”

Psyche turned to see Trojan a few yards away and running towards them.

“You’re not rostered for duty, tonight?” Mist said quickly as she climbed into the driver’s seat.

“It’s Megan – I need to be out there.”

Psyche studied Trojan for a moment.

“I can’t stop you; you outrank me,” Psyche admitted to Trojan.

“But I outrank *you*, Trojan, so get in!” Mist ordered.

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### ***Wildcat with Foxtail and Raven***

We paralleled North Cicero Avenue for about a quarter mile before we angled northeast and passed over both North Cicero Avenue and I-94.

The route was then arrow-straight and we hurtled through some dense greenery as we passed through LaBagh Woods. To be honest, it was a very scenic ride and for a moment I began to enjoy the ride before I was snapped back to the reality of the situation by Hal demanding an update. I knew that we were being tracked and that cameras mounted on our motorcycles were sending back full-colour 4K images to the Safehouse.

“No overt threat from FEAR at this time,” I reported.

It was surreal racing through northern Chicago in pursuit of a murderous criminal who was not actually attacking us – there had to be another angle . . . all became clear as we approached West Devon Avenue and FEAR clammed on her brakes along with her cohorts. We did the same a few yards back with warning after warning flowing through my mind. Foxtail noticed the subtle change in the FEAR’s two cohorts as they reached down for something and then turned, each with an MP5K in their hands.

We spun our tyres as we rapidly reversed direction and headed back down the retired railroad track. Four more machines appeared out of the trees – FEAR had friends!

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### ***Ready One and Ready Two***

Under the direction of Hal, both Hit Girl with Shadow and Kick-Ass with Jackal had been diverted via I-94 where they were all able to blaze north at over one-hundred-and-twenty-miles-per-hour. The average speed of advance for Wildcat and her team was only twenty-miles-per-hour.

One minute and two miles later, Ready Two left the I-94 at West Peterson Avenue. Ready One continued north for another mile and a half before coming off at West Touhy Avenue. Hal had already realised that FEAR was following the old railroad tracks and therefore, she spread her forces along the route in an acceptable gamble.

Ready One was closing steadily on Wildcat and her team.

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### ***Brute – (Mist, Psyche, and Trojan)***

Mist had her foot to the floor as they hurtled up I-94 before Hal directed them to leave and head north up North Western Avenue.

There, they were met by a marked CPD unit which provided an escort north. Trojan was not happy; he knew that his partner was in trouble and over the comms he heard Wildcat's chilling report.

*"Ambush! Ambush!"*

"Put your fucking foot down, Mist!" he growled.

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### ***Wildcat with Foxtail and Raven***

We opened fire before they could as we fell to the ground from our machines.

Two men fell immediately as the others dove for cover. We were caught in a crossfire and I noticed FEAR accelerating away.

"No fucking way!" I yelled. "Let's move, fuck these wankers – frag 'em!"

Foxtail threw a fragmentation grenade at the remaining two men while I did the same with the one man remaining after FEAR had taken one man with her. Two explosions later, we heaved our machines vertical and gave chase after FEAR.

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### ***West Devon Avenue***

A quiet wait for his girlfriend had turned into an entertaining evening for the young man.

First, the peaceful evening had been shattered by the sound of multiple motorcycle engines and then gunfire before two loud explosions had ripped out. Two motorcycles and roared across the road, just before the explosions, both very similar with somebody clad in red and black armour on



the first machine. They were followed, a few minutes later, by three more machines, each bearing a Chicago vigilante before they vanished after the other two motorcycles.

Just as his girlfriend pulled up in her car, several minutes later, the sound of high-powered motorcycle engines could be heard again and a purple Ducati Panigale motorcycle burst out of the old railroad and pulled a wheelie as it shot across the street. Another almost identical machine in blue followed behind.

"I think somebody's pissed off Hit Girl," the man commented to his confused girlfriend.

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### ***Ready One***

Pissed off was an understatement!

Hit Girl had seen the dead bodies and she had heard the sharp reports of the two grenades. Against her better judgement and against her emotions, she knew that she had to let Wildcat take responsibility and keep after FEAR – at least until she herself could arrive.

There! FEAR had stopped a distance ahead . . . and Wildcat was engaging!

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### ***Wildcat with Foxtail and Raven***

FEAR had stopped and climbed off her motorcycle.

She just stood there on the old track bed, seemingly oblivious to the three vigilantes' approach. Her cohort stood off to one side, his arms at his sides in a non-threatening stance. Wildcat stopped and so did Foxtail and Raven. The younger vigilante swung her left leg off the Ducati and she pulled off her helmet as her own cohorts did the same and the three girls faced off against FEAR.

"My, my, three little ones!"

"We're way more than you can handle, bitch!" Foxtail replied as she drew her beautifully lethal butterfly swords.

"Fuck you, you whacked out bitch!" Raven threw in as she drew her Katana.

"Let's have some fun!" FEAR drawled as she brought her own sword to readiness.

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FEAR's cohort had stepped well back, away from the impending action. FEAR drove forward as the three vigilantes spread out to reduce the chances of a single strike tacking down more than one of them. The large sword was truly fearsome and nobody had any desire to find out just how well it could cut through flesh and armour. Wildcat already knew that her claws were apparently useless against FEAR's armour so she decided to rely on her Katana which she knew had a keener blade.

The war sword came down towards Wildcat but Wildcat's own sword blocked the strike only the power behind the strike and the weight of the sword were too much for Wildcat but Raven joined in and lent her own weight to the fight. Foxtail slashed out with her twin blades and FEAR yelped as the ultra-sharp blades slashed through the weak armour of her left side. The strike gave Wildcat a chance to recover her stance and move out of the arc of the war sword.

“Hope I didn’t damage your expensive looking suit!” Foxtail hissed.

“Oh, Foxy, nothing that a needle and thread can’t fix,” FEAR drawled in reply.

Raven and Wildcat dove forwards while FEAR was conversing with Foxtail and they struck from the left and the right. Raven’s katana struck the heavier armour of FEAR’s right upper arm while Wildcat managed to catch a pouch on the left side of FEAR’s utility belt. Whatever was in the pouch cooked off and smoke was emitted which began to hide FEAR from view. FEAR ripped the pouch from her utility belt and she threw it to the ground in anger.

Wildcat narrowly dodged the tip of the war sword as FEAR swung it viciously and kicked Raven in the chest sending her backwards and down the embankment of the railroad track. Foxtail blocked the next swipe with her own swords but only just.

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Wildcat struck at FEAR’s left leg with her sword but FEAR saw it coming and she kicked out at Wildcat. Wildcat fell backwards and she scrambled away from FEAR. For a moment, it looked like FEAR had the upper hand and Wildcat was about to be kitty food. Neither noticed the motorcycle skid to a halt on the loose gravel, nor the angry vigilante who leapt off the machine and threw her purple crash-helmet off to one side.

“Get away from her . . . you bitch!”

FEAR turned her attentions from Wildcat to the newcomer who was drawing the matched Katana swords from her back.

“Hello,” FEAR drawled.

“Enjoy your swim?” Hit Girl growled as the seasoned vigilantes circled each other. “Wildcat – get back!”

“It was refreshing – just what I needed after a night’s workout.”

“No water around here but I’m happy to give you that workout.”

Hit Girl raised her blades just as FEAR brought her war sword to bear and the cold steel clashed together. Hit Girl pushed back with all her might and FEAR stepped to one side, parrying Hit Girl’s thrusts away from her own body. There was limited space to fight but that just meant a higher skill was required.

FEAR’s remaining cohort made a move but Shadow stopped him.

“You keep out of this, cunt!” she growled as she put a bullet into his forehead before she went after Raven.

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Whatever could be said about FEAR, she was a very proficient melee fighter. She could move with a finesse that kept her alive before the blades of Hit Girl as they were brought to bear with practiced ease by the purple vigilante queen. FEAR’s strength was also apparent as she wielded the heavy weapon. Hit Girl was ready for anything that came her way and she used her agility to stay away from the keen blade.

Then everything changed. Wildcat and Foxtail spun around as Raven came scrambling back up the embankment.

“Trouble!” she called.

Her statement was punctuated by gunfire and the sounds of large vehicles pulling up either side of the embankment. Then another voice called out.

“Am I too late?” Sunset Phoenix asked as she ran up behind Raven and took a swing at the young vigilante with her double-bladed ninja sword staff. Raven blocked the strike with her Katana and quickly rolled off to one side.

Wildcat was worried. Something about Sunset Phoenix was off – she was full of herself, which was nothing new, but she exuded confidence where previously there had been none. Her character was different somehow. Her pink outfit still made her look a joke but as Wildcat struck out, her Katana was expertly blocked by the sword staff and the bitch smirked down at her younger adversary.

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### ***West North Shore Avenue***

A growing crowd was gathering from the nearby properties, drawn in by both the sounds of gunfire and by the clashing of cold steel.

The sight before them was way better than any news report showing *Fusion* in action. Most Chicagoans would have given away their children to witness Hit Girl fighting. Most had never laid eyes on FEAR, nor the pink hussy, Sunset Phoenix. But at that moment, they were able to watch the spectacle of two famous Chicago vigilantes, Hit Girl and Wildcat, plus the lesser vigilantes, Foxtail and Raven, fighting Chicago’s most wanted criminal, FEAR. Not to mention that it was incredibly rare for *Fusion* to operate so far north of the City, in what was a good neighbourhood.

Down on the street, Shadow was keeping Sunset Phoenix’s cohorts occupied while up on the track bed, swords flashed in the streetlighting as they span at speed. The sword wielders span almost as fast as they intercepted the inbound strikes from their opponents. Cheers erupted from the crowd as FEAR and Sunset Phoenix were pounded. The crowd watched and yelled out in awe when Wildcat executed a perfect backflip as she dodged a strike from Sunset Phoenix.

Then, just as FEAR and Sunset Phoenix appeared to be on the losing end of the fight, several of their cohorts rushed forwards with a selection of weapons that varied from short ninja-to style swords to metal baseball bats. Shadow was seriously outnumbered but still on her feet.

*Fusion* had no choice but to disengage FEAR and Sunset Phoenix so that they could defend themselves from the new attack.

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Hit Girl was furious as she gave FEAR a sharp kick in the chest which sent the bitch reeling and in her shock, she dropped her war sword – Hit Girl raised an eyebrow behind her mask at that faux pas.

“Go!” Sunset Phoenix appeared to order and FEAR ran for her motorcycle before roaring off northeast towards Lincolnwood.

In the resulting melee, Wildcat and Foxtail took off after FEAR on their own motorcycles while Hit Girl turned her attentions towards Sunset Phoenix as she ran for her own motorcycle with her

cohorts providing a shield for her retreat. Hit Girl and Raven killed three, with Shadow adding a couple more to that number before the rest broke off the fight and ran for their vehicles.

Hit Girl ignored the cheering crowd and quickly replaced the twin Katana swords securely on her back and remounted her Panigale. Raven and Shadow followed suit and within a minute the trio were accelerating after Wildcat and Foxtail. They all raced through the industrial heart of Lincolnwood, still on the abandoned railroad bed. FEAR dodged a large truck and several cars as she bolted across North Central Park Avenue and was closely followed by her five pursuers.

*"We have contact with Sunset Phoenix!"* came the call over the radio from Jackal.

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### ***Brute with Ready Two***

#### ***Mist with Psyche & Trojan plus Jackal & Kick-Ass***

Strictly speaking, it was *Brute* that made contact with Sunset Phoenix – or maybe Sunset Phoenix made contact with *Brute* . . . either way, Sunset Phoenix was not a happy bunny!

"I don't care what universe you're from; that's gotta hurt!" Psyche chuckled as Trojan groaned at her reference.

Mist said nothing as she was just a little stunned having gotten a very close up view of the pink-clad vigilante as she had hurtled across the hood of the Range Rover SUV.

"Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10R – nil. Range Rover Sentinel – one," Jackal quipped as he came to a rapid halt beside Mist.

He dismounted, pulled off his helmet and left it on his machine before he stepped over the twisted superbike and advanced on Sunset Phoenix as she struggled to her feet. Her black armour and combat suit with the almost-pink, purple pizzazz highlights was badly scored from the impact with the armoured SUV and the road but she appeared uninjured as she threw down her equally gouged crash helmet.

"I think she's a little pissed!" Psyche growled as she leapt out of *Brute* to stand beside Jackal.

"Another fucking whelp!" Sunset Phoenix growled.

Trojan followed Psyche but turned towards a pair of loud bangs as Kick-Ass rammed the heads of two cunts into the side of *Brute*.

"Hey!" Mist yelled. "I signed for this SUV, you know!"

"Take it up with Ares!" Kick-Ass retorted with a chuckle.

"You gonna take us all on?" Trojan drawled as Sunset Phoenix was encircled.

"Fuck the lot of you!" Sunset Phoenix growled as she threw something to the ground.

There was a large explosion, a bright flash, and a copious plume of pink smoke erupted from what had to be a combined flash-bang smoke grenade. Nobody dared fire into the smoke for fear of hitting an innocent member of the public. The roar of a motorcycle could be heard from beyond the dissipating cloud and Jackal ran through with Psyche before they were left glaring after the rapidly departing Sunset Phoenix.

“Run, bitch,” Psyche growled. “We’ll find you and we’ll fucking gut you . . .”

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### ***Hit Girl with Shadow, Wildcat, Foxtail & Raven***

At Howard Street, we left the abandoned railroad and turned east before taking McCormick Boulevard north at highspeed.

For a mile and a half, the five motorcycles and riders dodged in and out of the traffic before Raven dropped out with a mechanical issue on her Yamaha Super Ténéré just below Dempster Street. As FEAR turned right onto Dempster Street, Shadow and Foxtail continued north to the next junction with Church Street to block FEAR’s advance north.

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### ***Dempster Street***

FEAR had something about Wildcat and she seemed determined to destroy the younger vigilante in as long and drawn out a method as possible.

She also appeared to have scum-of-the-earth types scattered all over the city. This became rapidly apparent as a truck appeared from a side-road and something about the way it was being driven gave me cause for thought. My suspicions were confirmed when it veered across the road headed directly at us before fine tuning its path and heading for one particular individual. I barely had time to yell a warning before the truck crunched into what I had to assume was its intended target. My heart missed several beats as Wildcat and her Ducati vanished from sight behind the behemoth. Once the truck had moved on, I was stunned to see that all which remained was the twisted and crushed remnants of the brown and silver motorcycle.

I felt sick to my stomach as I slammed on my brakes and my eyes darted everywhere as I looked around for the bloodied and broken corpse of my sister.