

**Author's Note:** *This chapter picks up from Chapter 366: Marauder Fallout of my other story: Forsaken.*

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**Three days later**

**Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Burbank Airport**

Sky had driven to the airport to collect the visitors.

"How are you doing, Saoirse?" Sky asked as she watched the girl limp over to the car.

"It's a little painful, but I'm healing. I can walk with a single crutch which is better than two."

"This is a surprise!" Sky announced as the timid-looking Morgan Hella stepped down after Saoirse.

"Hello, Sky."

"Welcome to L.A., Morgan."

"Thanks - brace yourself, Sky: here comes annoying bitch one and two."

"Believe me," Saoirse commented. "They could give you and Chrissy a run for your money."

"That bad, huh?" Sky grimaced.

"If I wasn't reformed. . ." Saoirse growled ominously.

"Hello world!" Stephanie announced from the aircraft doorway. "L.A., I have arrived!"

"I'm here, too!" Abigail added loudly as she pushed past Stephanie. "Wait'll they get a load of us!"

"Fuck this!" Sky commented as she opened the trunk of her Ford Focus and rummaged around before producing two rolls of duct tape, throwing one to Morgan.

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The trip to the house did not take long and was very peaceful - so long as you ignored the struggling girls in the trunk.

"Did you have to strip them?" Saoirse asked.

"It might get too hot in there for them," Sky responded reasonably.

"Maybe they'll enjoy staring at each other's snatch," Morgan giggled.

"I hope we don't get pulled by the cops - I don't wanna have to explain this," Sky commented.

"Stick to below the limit, then," Saoirse suggested.

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Stephanie and Abigail were seething with anger, but they had both reasoned that they had, probably, brought it upon themselves.

Sky had threatened them both with the duct tape, but neither had paid the tape any heed and they had got a little bit mouthy. That had resulted in them both being stripped naked and their ankles and wrists bound with duct tape - their

mouths too. Just to add insult to injury they had both been stuffed into the boot of the Ford Focus head to snatch. The only thing between their faces and the other girl's vulva were their bound hands. They had driven for several miles before the car pulled sharply to a halt. Seconds later, the boot lid opened and both girls glared up at Sky.

"You two going to behave?" she asked with a broad grin on her face.

Stephanie and Abigail nodded. Sky hauled them both out and she dropped them onto the ground which was very rough on their bare skin. Both girls began swearing violently as Sky cut their bindings and ripped the tape from their mouths. Both girls stood beside the car looking angry and very naked. Sky grinned at them both as she slammed the boot lid and jumped smartly back into the car.

"We'll leave your clothes around the corner!" she yelled out as she stepped on the gas, spinning her wheels and sending a cloud of dust swarming around the two very sweaty and very naked girls.

"Fucking arseholes!" Stephanie exclaimed as the car vanished around the bend.

They both heard the car slither to a halt a short distance ahead and Abigail simply shrugged as she tried to wipe away the dust which was now sticking to her body. Both girls started jogging after the car, hoping that they wouldn't meet anybody else on the road. After a good three hundred or so yards, the two girls puffed to a halt where there was a very limited scattering of clothes across the road. Stephanie found her knickers and her trainers, as did Abigail. Forty yards away, the girls spied their 'friends' laughing at them as they pulled on the knickers. They were on the road which had switched back on itself, a little below them.

"Smile!" Morgan yelled out as she took a photo of the two knicker-clad girls.

As Stephanie and Abigail ran towards the car, Sky sped off, leaving them both standing in the road half naked.

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### ***Oak Pass Road***

Erika was waiting for them as Sky pulled up outside the house.

She studied the two very dusty girls who climbed out of the back seat wearing just the lower-half of their underwear and trainers. She raised an eyebrow as Sky emerged, grinning like the proverbial Cheshire cat. Then she frowned at Saoirse and Morgan who were both just as happy.

"Do I even want to know?" Erika asked.

"No," Stephanie replied.

"They got a bit gobby, so we decided to teach the little twats a lesson," Saoirse grinned.

"Both of you - go shower; you can use the second guest bedroom, where you two will be sleeping," Erika suggested.

Stephanie and Abigail slunk past James, Maddie, and Chrissy who were each grinning broadly.

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Forty minutes later, Stephanie and Abigail returned from their showers looking a lot cleaner and both were dressed.

"Sorry," Sky said as the girls sat down in the kitchen with the others.

"We can take it," Abigail replied with a sheepish grin.

"We can handle anything you pussies can think up," Stephanie replied. "And thanks for making me stare at Abigail's snatch for twenty fucking minutes!"

"Wouldn't have seen it as a major problem - she ain't got much to see," Saoirse quipped.

"Enough!" Erika said from a chair. "Stephanie, please start us off."

"Hi, Maddie," Stephanie said.

"Hi, Stephanie."

"Steph, please. You remember Abigail - impossible to forget her, really."

"Hi, Maddie," Abigail grinned.

"Hello, James," Stephanie said. "You won't have met Abigail before, but she is a *Predator*, just like you, me, and these two."

Sky and Chrissy looked confused at the outward talk about *Predators*.

"Hello," James replied, himself looking a little confused as he had been told not to mention what he was in front of Maddie.

"Maddie," Stephanie began. "You ended up here because you hacked a file which got you pinched, am I right?"

"Yes," Maddie replied, looking a little anxious.

"You want to know what is in that file?" asked.

"How would you know what is in that file?"

"Because it is about me."

"What?"

"I am in that file - me and many more just like me. Sky is in that file, so is Chrissy, and so is James."

"And me," Abigail added.

"Me, too," Saoirse said.

"What are you all talking about?"

"You were promised a look into that file. I am going to show you that file and I am going to expose you to horrors that you would never believe."

"I don't understand," Maddie replied with a fearful expression.

"What is in that file, is pertinent to Sky, Chrissy, and James, plus a whole lot more."

"I still don't understand."

"We are *Predators*."

"Maddie," Erika said. "We believe that it is time to tell you the rest of the story and how it relates to everyone here, excluding you, me, and Morgan."

"It will be gruesome, and Erika insisted on me telling you that," Stephanie explained. "If at any time you have heard enough, just say, and we will stop for a break. My mother thinks that it is important that you know everything."

"Are you ready to enter the world of the *Predator*?" Abigail asked. "We never had the choice, but you will."

Maddie nodded after receiving a reassuring nod from Erika who sat beside her.

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"We were kidnapped, taken from our former lives and initiated into a CIA scheme to create child assassins," Stephanie explained before she nodded at the twins. "Your two friends, here, were among the first to be taken."

"You asked about my tattoo," Sky said. "We all have a dagger tattoo behind our right ears - it is a means of positive identification. My sister and I were taken when we were ten-years-old. We were what was called the First Intake. James arrived about six months later as part of the Second Intake. We suffered, badly. We were stripped of everything: our clothes, our dignity, our hair, our identity, our former lives. They drugged us and manipulated us into learning to fight, to maim, and to kill. We were not the first, though. The first *Predators* were a pair called Lucy and Leo - they had been there for a year before we turned up."

"Somebody at the CIA saw the internet video of Hit Girl kicking ass when she was around eleven-years-old," Stephanie went on. "They considered how effective the vigilante was in taking people down. They considered that turning kids into the same thing would be beneficial. They extended a previous CIA project called *Treadstone* and *Blackbriar* into what was called, *Urban Predator*. To be honest, the plans for Lucy and Leo were not bad, and were focussed on using homeless kids, but then somebody decided to change the program and they profiled kids and seized them, often along with their families. The families were disposed of during an identity reassignment phase . . . I shot my own mother, father, and somebody who I thought was my brother."

Maddie gasped in horror, as did Morgan. Though Morgan knew most of the story, it still horrified her.

"We were treated like animals, at times," Abigail stated. "Stephanie and I first met when they threw us both into a forest and made us fight to the death, even depositing an innocent girl into the mix. Stephanie was better than me - she won, but thankfully, she spared my life. Though she was forced to take a leather strap to my bare arse - that was one of the many and varied punishments dished out to us."

Maddie saw the looks of pain on the twins faces. The same look of pain existed on Stephanie's face, and James'. She was truly horrified by what she was hearing. It sounded unbelievable, but she believed every word of what she was being told.

"You met Shannon and her father, on the last visit, right?" Saoirse asked and she received a nod in return. "Well, Patrick was an instructor on *Urban Predator* and he had been there since the very beginning with Lucy and Leo. He firmly believed in the program as it was being applied to Lucy and Leo, but he hated how it was perverted to apply to us. He eventually walked out of the program. In revenge, Shannon was kidnapped and taken for the program. She suffered worse than the rest of us as she was ritually humiliated on a daily basis for who her father was. Lucy took pity on her and she trained the girl as nobody else would. We all hated Lucy as she was a bitch - worse than Sky and Chrissy. But she was fair and a good teacher - she actually kept us all alive with what she taught us. She suffered, just as much, only we never realised it at the time. We saw her as the instructors' pet - Lucy and Leo had their own apartment where they lived. Us mere mortals were stuck with large mixed-sex dormitories, and yes, we often showered with the boys."

"We first realised how dangerous Lucy and Leo were when two First Intake *Predators* tried to make a break for freedom," Chrissy said. "Robert and Trina, they were called. We went to breakfast one morning to find Leo and Lucy dressed in combat gear, weapons and all, with dried blood on their clothing. After breakfast, we were treated to the sight of our former colleagues' dead bodies lying stark naked on tables in the vehicle garage. They had each died from knife wounds. That showed us that there was no escape and it also marked Lucy and Leo as killers - they were rewarded by becoming the first ever Phase 2 *Predators*."

"We have found and rescued over forty kids, so far," Abigail continued. "There are many more out there, but we have no idea where. They were trained to disappear and blend into society. We know of almost a hundred that were murdered near the end of the program."

"I was there when we breached an *Urban Predator* site to find twenty-five kids dead - all executed," Stephanie said quietly. "Some of the kids were no older than eight - I remember one little girl with a single bullet hole in her forehead. Many were killed from behind as they tried to run away. We took the entire program down, including those who had designed and run it. Saoirse and I now spend some of our time searching for more *Predators*. Another was just recovered this week. When we recover them, they are given new homes, just like James here. You've seen the twins fight, and now you know how they came to be what they are. It is not their fault that they are bitches. Ask James - most *Predator* boys feared *Predator* girls."

"True," James admitted.

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"How come you are all friends?" Maddie asked. "I saw the way the girls looked at James when he first walked in the door - they hated him."

Stephanie looked over at Saoirse and Abigail who both nodded, then she began to speak.

"I came to the attention of the powers that be when I was just eight-years-old. I had had enough of being teased, sworn at, insulted, humiliated, treated like shit for no goddamn reason at all. I snapped. The twelve-year-old girl who had tortured me for so long opened her mouth one time too many - I killed her, beat her head in while we were both stark naked in the shower. Ask Saoirse, she saw me directly after the event."

"It shocked the hell out me, but it summed up the brutality of *Urban Predator*," Saoirse commented. "Stephanie was rewarded for killing that girl. She was given her much-coveted codename: Psyche. That kind of painted a target on the back of a girl who already had enough problems. We all hated her, and I was one of her worst bullies before she killed that girl - it could have been me being slaughtered there that morning. We went our separate ways until Psyche went rogue and I was called in to terminate her."

"She's still alive," Maddie pointed out.

"I tried my best, three times. She was too good for me, and she survived each attempt. Then the little bitch turned me. I gave in and went with her. The CIA burned down my apartment in retaliation - luckily, I was not there, or I would have been killed. Found out later that that was Lucy herself whom they sent after me."

"Despite Abigail trying to kill me, and Saoirse being my nemesis, I survived. I need them both to keep going, and I think that they both need me, too. We need each other. We've all suffered. We've all been forced to do bad things against

our will. However, we all survived. We have bad memories and I won't lie when I say that first meetings have not always gone well."

Maddie saw Stephanie's face showing intense sorrow and she could see tears in her eyes.

"I've taken so many lives. I've seen so many die. I've held people in my arms as they died. I've cried myself to sleep on many, many nights. Some nights I've cried into my phone with Saoirse at the other end. She's done the same, crying while I listened. Abigail tends to be a bit more private, but we've had our cry-fests. We are the best of friends and I'm so glad that I have them both - I could never imagine life without either one of them."

Stephanie really started crying then, and Maddie could see tears on Abigail's cheeks and those of Saoirse.

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"I think we need a break," Erika suggested.

"I'll go get some drinks," Sky said, jumping up and wiping tears from her own cheeks.

Sky returned within ten minutes carrying two large jugs of iced tea while Chrissy followed up with several glasses. For several minutes, the conversation changed to anything other than *Urban Predator* to raise the mood slightly. Parts of the conversation loitered a bit on the inglorious arrival of the two girls clad only in a pair of knickers each, not to mention copious amounts of dust.

"I can't believe that you two opted to run around topless," Maddie commented.

"We opted for nothing," Abigail replied, somewhat defensively. "Bitchy stripped us."

"I said I was sorry," Sky grinned and everybody laughed as Stephanie and Abigail both grimaced.

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Maddie sat down next to Stephanie.

"I know this is hard for you, Steph - I have no real idea, but thanks for letting me in on this."

"I've heard good things about you, Maddie. I have nothing against geeks - geeks have saved my life on numerous occasions."

Maddie grinned.

"You mentioned your brother."

"His name is Jamie. For a while, I thought that I had lost him. For quite a while, I thought that I had killed him. He was just five when we were taken. We stayed together for a short while . . . but then they separated us - that was really hard on me. I never knew that he was alive and that he had eventually become a *Predator*, just like me. He was a tough little boy, and that probably saved his life. A girl took him under her wing and trained him. Then, when we took down *Urban Predator*, he was left to his own devices when he was just eight. Thankfully, he came across Shannon who was in the same position and they teamed up. After a few adventures and tight shaves, they found Abigail. Apparently, Shannon's Dad was on their tail, but he kept missing them. Then they got themselves into a lot of trouble before they were separated. Finally, me and him came face to face. He wanted to kill me for being a traitor. The boy

was brainwashed, but I pushed through it and . . . and I had my baby brother back."

Stephanie broke down again, but Abigail grabbed hold of her and hugged her while Maddie looked up to find an audience listening to Stephanie's tale in rapt silence.

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Once Stephanie had calmed down from her emotional exclamation and shrugged off Abigail, she gave her friend a sly glance.

"Of course, Abigail appears to have a thing for my brother, too," she said loudly.

Abigail blushed bright red as she attempted to splutter her innocence.

"No . . . maybe . . . no!"

That gave everybody a much-needed good laugh, after the emotional rollercoaster of that morning's briefings. Stephanie took a short break to sort herself out and Saoirse took over.

"Predators have no inhibitions - as you've seen, we have no issues with nudity. We have no scruples when it comes to hurting people. We kill with as much remorse as you might show when stamping on a bug. None of us like it, but it is who and what we are. We cannot shake it. We will always have these skills in our minds for us to call upon. For many things, our reactions are automatic, they are pure instinct. I'm sorry, Maddie, but you have been living with a pair of psychotic individuals who enjoy hurting and maiming people."

"I figured that," Maddie grinned. "Thanks for being so open about it all. Sky, Chrissy? I'm really sorry to hear about what you went through."

"We survived, Maddie," Sky replied.

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"Hi, Maddie."

"Hello, Morgan. You're normal, right?"

"I don't think I'd quite go that far, but I'm as normal as you."

"That bad, huh?" Maddie quipped.

"The twins will need you, so will James. I have a *Predator* for a sister. Yeah, she plays tough, but inside, she's soft and caring. I've seen her cry her heart out beside a hospital bed. I've seen her cry her heart out after a vicious nightmare. Ever since they were rescued, they have been off the drugs they were forced to take. That has allowed them to remember. They've remembered some horrible things. They've remembered their lives since they were taken. They've begun to remember their lives from before they were taken. For many, that has been very hard. Take it from somebody who has been around *Predators*, they need outside support to keep them going. I'm hoping that you can do that for the twins and James - now you know what they really are inside."

"Thank you, Morgan. I really care about those two - they may be wacky and sometimes downright strange, but they've made me feel like I'm part of the family. I'm glad I found out what they really are and why."

"You take care, Madeline. This is a dangerous world which you have joined. They will protect you no matter what, but you need to protect them from themselves."

"I understand."

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### ***That afternoon***

"I want to know what this place is!"

Erika looked up to see James looking directly at her and his facial expression was one she most often saw on the girls when they were in professional *Predator* mode.

"It is your home, James, if you want it to be," Erika replied carefully.

"May I show you something, please, Erika?"

Erika followed the boy outside and he strode around the area pointing things out.

"There, there, there, there, there, and there. Claymore mines, all command detonated. I've identified fifteen of the bloody things, all strategically placed around the main building to ward off an armed assault. There are a few more near the main drive forming a kill box. Now, I want to know what kind of a shit storm I'm walking into."

"You are very good, James," Erika commented. "Come with me."

James followed Erika into the car garage and over towards the Corvette. He never saw the swift movement that quickly had him face down on the capacious hood, his body and head pinned. Erika lowered her lips to his right ear.

"You have stuck your nose in where it does not belong, James. However, I am under instructions to let you live. If you breathe a word or if you put my people at risk, then Hit Girl will be the very least of your worries. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Get in the fucking car!"

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During the drive into Los Angeles, James figured that he had really stepped into the shit - the story of his life - only, he had no idea if he would come out smelling of roses . . . or come out very, very dead.

The ride was long and apparently a roundabout route as they crossed over the same intersection twice, but from different directions. Wherever they were headed was obviously important, and Erika was checking for anybody trailing them. Every question answered simply led to another one, James felt, and he began to feel a little apprehensive about the final question with the final answer.

However, a few minutes later, after a good forty minutes of driving, that final question left his lips as Erika drove into a vehicle garage with more hidden security features than a bank - or maybe a nuclear missile silo.

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### ***Safehouse C***

"What is this place?" he asked as he climbed out of the Corvette.

"Your worst nightmare, Arcane!" Foxtail growled.

"Hi, Foxy!"

"Little bastard!"

James grinned - he knew that she hated the abbreviation to her codename.

"My question still stands," James persisted as he studied the other masked individuals.

None wore body armour, just masks.

"You've got no tits, so you must be Fury. You've got little bumps, so that makes you Psyche. That then just leaves the twins."

"How do you know I've got no tits?" Abigail demanded as she pulled off her mask.

"You did arrive topless, this morning," James pointed out.

"Oh, right," Abigail conceded as a grinning Stephanie pulled off her own mask.

"I have to admit, I did not see this coming. You're all *Fusion* vigilantes."

"I would just like to point out, James, that Erika will cut off your dick and make you eat it, should you reveal anything of what you have discovered today," Chrissy pointed out.

"Where'd you get that from?" Stephanie asked. "Nobody in their right mind would make a guy eat his own dick - that's just sick!"

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James received a very brief tour on the essentials, but he was not allowed to see the armoury, the command centre, or anything deemed classified.

"Am I here because you want me to become a vigilante?" James asked without much enthusiasm. "Is this what Hit Girl does to bolster her resources? She rescues hapless *Predators* and forces them to fight for her? Maybe FEAR was right."

"You fucking dickhead!" Saoirse growled. "Nobody forced me to fight. I fight for myself. Yes, I fight under Hit Girl's banner, but she forces me to do nothing. I kill when I choose to kill."

"What happens from this point on, is entirely up to you, James," Erika replied. "No one is forced into the life of being a vigilante against their will. You are your own person, and nobody will violate that, ever."

"I have no fight left in me. I gave all I had for FEAR and I don't want to fight anymore."

"Then don't," Abigail said.

"You don't even have to be involved," Stephanie added. "If you want to help, there are plenty of things to be done that don't involve fighting."

"Let me think about it."

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### **Oak Pass Road**

To say that things were complicated, that night, was a major understatement.

After dinner, which had been bad enough, Erika decided to leave the hormonal, impossible youths to themselves for the evening. The language had been beyond disgusting and fowl. The behaviour had been downright animalistic at dinner which had resulted in the kitchen being splattered with food in all directions. Finally, the twins and Abigail had stripped off and dived into the pool naked. Not to be outdone, Saoirse pulled off her own clothes - with a little help from

Stephanie - and slid into the jacuzzi, just as naked. Surprisingly, she was joined by the seemingly shy Morgan in the naked soak. Not to be outdone, James had all the girls cheering when he streaked naked across the lawn and divebombed into the swimming pool. Maddie and Stephanie just stood to one side and watched the melee, cheering occasionally, and they both giggled as they commented on James' equipment which was apparently a first for Maddie, her having never seen a boy that age naked.

"I've seen bigger," Saoirse commented. "I've had bigger."

"Ewww!" Stephanie growled as she sat a few feet from her friend.

"You not joining us, Stephy?" Saoirse asked.

"Nah - I'm fine," Stephanie replied as she indicated her friend who was running around the pool, still naked, and being pursued by an angry Chrissy who apparently wanted to kill her - or maybe eat her out - Stephanie was a little unsure. "I like to leave the depraved shit to Abigail - she enjoys it."

"Yeah - I noticed that," Maddie commented as she followed the naked girl around the pool. "You don't seem to have the same habits as Abigail."

"I'm reclaiming my body - it is mine - and I intend on exposing it only as I see fit."

"She's saving her body for Tommy," Saoirse commented.

"Shut up, SD!"

"He likes it - Tommy says the little patch of pubes on her vulva is really cute," Saoirse continued.

Maddie began to giggle uncontrollably as Stephanie began muttering under her breath while her face went bright red and she crossed her legs.

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Maddie had invited Stephanie and Abigail to sleep on the floor in her room while Saoirse and Morgan went to join the twins in Sky's bedroom.

James was very pleased to be alone - he had had enough of girls for one evening, naked or otherwise! The boy was happy just to curl up in bed after a really crazy day. He was very tired, and he needed sleep - lots of sleep. He also had a lot to think about: could he go back to what he was trained to do. Being captured by *Fusion* had been a blessing in disguise. He had fallen for that sly bitch and her smooth talking. He had bought into what she was selling too damn easily. FEAR had played him and everyone else. Well, she was dead, but he was alive. He could now carve out his own future, but how did he want his life to go? He had had his fill of killing. He had seen enough blood split as his own hands to last a lifetime. But it was there, the bloodlust which had so far guided his every move since he had gained his dagger - it would never go away, and he knew that for a fact.

James turned over in his surprisingly comfortable bed and he closed his eyes.

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"Keep your hands off me!" Stephanie growled. "What the fuck are you - a lesbian in training?"

"I was just reaching for my drink!" Abigail retorted.

Maddie laughed as the two girls mock-fought. She knew that both girls were the best of friends . . . despite a rather rocky time when they were younger.

"Are you two going to behave?" Maddie asked, and the two girls looked up at her.

"Just messin' with yah!" Abigail grinned, and Stephanie nodded.

"Maddie - I noticed that you did not join in with the err, naked shit," Abigail commented.

"Sensible girl," Stephanie commented.

"I've never gone in for any of that stuff - up till a few weeks ago, nobody had ever seen me naked, then I stripped off and jumped in that damn pool. It felt relay exhilarating, but no, I don't feel like doing it again - and definitely not in front of James. Besides, I'm still healing from my bullet wound."

"Bullet wounds hurt, don't they?" Stephanie said.

"Too damn right!" Maddie replied. "Thanks for today."

"You always welcome, Maddie," Stephanie replied. "Anything you need, we're there for you."

"Definitely," Abigail added.