

**Author's Note:** This story is a continuation of **Chapter 30: Epilogue** from my story **The Fusion Ultimatum** and follows James Carter as he seeks to regain his life.

**Synopsis:** *James Carter is eight-years-old and he was part way through Phase 2 of the Urban Predator program that was operated by the CIA and ultimately terminated by Fusion. See my story **Forsaken, Chapter 243: Urban Predator** and my story **The Fusion Ultimatum**. At the end of that story, in **Chapter 30: Epilogue**, James was abandoned by the CIA and he must fend for himself.*

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**Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016**

**Leeds, United Kingdom**

The echo of the slamming door was still reverberating around the Safehouse as my mind began to plan my next move.

Nothing happened in my life, without a plan. That was a lesson that had been literally kicked into us – plan everything, miss nothing. Despite my tender age of eight-years-old, I was not the average boy of the that age – I had killed before my seventh birthday, for one. I could strip down, reassemble, and accurately fire the H&K P30SK Compact pistol that lay a few inches from my right hand, for another. There was much more that I could do too – I would need each and every skill to survive.

I was not in an alien country, quite the opposite; I was in the country of my birth. Unlike when I had been taken.

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**September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Atlanta, USA**

**Marriott Hotel**

“Steph?”

“I’m here, Jamie.”

“What are we doing today?”

“Mum and Dad are taking us to see some stuff in the city.”

“Where?”

“I think the fish place – you know...”

“We’re going to the Georgia Aquarium,” Mum interrupted.

“Cool!” I exclaimed. “I want pancakes for breakfast...”

“You *always* want pancakes, Jamie!” Steph replied with a laugh.

“I’m almost six; I’m a growing boy...”

“You’ve still got two weeks to go, little brother!”

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## ***The Present***

***Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016***

***Leeds, United Kingdom***

The Safehouse could no longer be considered 'safe' – so really it was just a house.

With my adult supervision gone, and I assumed the security and support, I had to decide on staying or leaving. I had money, but nobody – except maybe a paedophile – would help a boy as young as I was to find alternative accommodation. I could turn myself in as a homeless child and hope they placed me in a foster home – it was an option. I figured that I could stay in the house for maybe two or three nights before I began to tempt fate.

I had no idea what would happen to the house without the CIA's protection and involvement. I also had to consider that the CIA may return to 'tidy-up' and that would mean tidying me up too...

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Within an hour, I had the essentials packed, just in case I returned and the place had been gutted.

My first task was to find some emergency accommodation – preferably two places as a minimum. Currently, I was in north-central Leeds, near Chapel Allerton. The first place to visit, was Menston, a short train ride to the northwest. I had a pass that allowed me free travel around the area and I had often used it to scope out possible escape routes and such like.

I must have been tired as I soon dozed off to the gentle rocking of the train carriage.

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***September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013***

***That afternoon***

***Georgia Aquarium***

***Atlanta, USA***

The place was brilliant and I was really eager to see *everything*!

Steph seemed just as excited to be there. I gripped her hand tightly so we would not get separated in the crowds. I was wide-eyed with awe as we wondered around the place. I had never seen so many fish. Steph was really excited too and I got the impression that Mum and Dad were getting more than a little annoyed with our almost constant, 'look at this' and 'oh, wow, you must see that'.

It was the best holiday that I had ever had and I could not have been happier than I was at that very moment. The place was very busy with people *everywhere*. There was a lot of noise, too – mainly kids as they yelled at the fish. My favourite was the sharks – I liked sharks, I liked that they were predators. It was really awesome to see the way sharks did; they really were the ultimate predator.

By the afternoon, I was getting really tired and I was annoying Steph to the point where she was being mean to me. We began to snipe at each other and Dad was getting very angry with our behaviour. It was almost time to leave and we were headed back to the carpark when I heard Stephanie scream and as I turned, I saw my big sister with a gloved hand over her mouth. Her eyes were wild with fear.

I looked around for Mum and Dad – I began to panic when I could not see them anywhere.

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***The Present***

***Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016***

***Leeds, United Kingdom***

The train jerked to a stop and I jerked awake.

I was sweating from the nightmare. The same nightmare that I had endured almost every night since I had been taken. I looked out the window and jumped up as I read the sign 'MENSTON' and ran to the doorway where the conductor smiled at me and chuckled as I jumped out onto the platform.

As I left the station, I turned left and walked a couple of hundred yards before I turned right and then headed up a long road. About a third of a mile later, I found myself at a roundabout. There ahead of me were some gates which were securely locked. Highroyds was a psychiatric hospital which had been abandoned in 2003. The main buildings were derelict and while some of the site had been renovated into flats, the majority had been left to fall apart.

Security was good, but I was a *Predator* and no security could stop me!

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I wormed my way through the security fence – being small had its benefits...

I had scouted the site out before, twice in fact. I made my way to a certain part which had not shown any signs of recent activity on the past two visits. I checked the tell-tails – a carefully placed rock, a seemingly misplaced piece of wood – things that would need to be moved for somebody to gain entry. As I made my way deeper into the forbidding facility, I found my previous stash of equipment, and it was all accounted for and seemingly untouched.

I was in a sub-basement and apart from my torch, it was in total darkness. My 'stash' consisted of batteries, torches, three pistols with an adequate supply of rounds, some high-energy food and plenty of fresh water. The CIA had no idea that I had scoped the place out and stashed equipment there. I had planned it as a bolthole if the CIA should suddenly turn on me. I was loyal to them, but my training had taught me to distrust everybody – even my sworn masters.

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Okay, I had a base to use. I would spend the next couple of days transferring what I could from the well-equipped Safehouse. Unfortunately, I could only carry what would fit in a pack, and for a lot of the items, under cover, and then on the train. I would need food and plenty of weapons... Once I was settled, I would go and check out my other previously surveyed site which would require a long bus ride to get to.

For the moment, I hopped back onto the Metro and then off at the next stop towards Leeds, which was Guiseley. I was hungry and so, after a short walk, I pushed open the door into McDonalds and I ordered a large Big Mac meal with a vanilla milkshake. As a *Predator*, I had been trained in a lot of things, but cooking had not been one of them. The Big Mac and vanilla shake was my favourite and it felt comforting to me.

We had been trained to fight alone, but I hated to be alone, even if the company *was* only a pair of CIA brutes who treated me like shit. Once I had shoved down the burger, fries, and milkshake, I grabbed a hot apple-pie to go and headed back to the station.

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Once back at the Safehouse, I set about packing.

First, I raided the armoury. I had to ignore the M60s, the LAWs, and the Stingers. Instead, I concentrated on what was 'boy-portable'. I grabbed a pair of SIG Sauer P320 Compact pistols, a Walther P22 and two Glock 26 pistols. I threw onto the table the relevant accessories which included holsters, suppressors, cleaning kits and magazines. Next came one SIG Sauer MPX-P and a pair of H&K MP5K submachine guns. I also grabbed magazines, cleaning kits and a standard MPX Accessory Pack. I moved then onto the explosives.

Some C-4 would not go amiss, plus some remote detonators and some det-cord. I grabbed a reasonable selection of grenades: smoke, HE and stun. A pair of Tasers joined the grenades along with several packs of spare cartridges. Finally, I ransacked the ammunition and selected the relevant calibres for my weapons.

It was a tidy haul, worthy of Hit Girl, I thought. Next I would have to shift it all – not an easy job!

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I made myself a dinner of cheese-on-toast with Marmite, that night.

I washed it down with some Pepsi Max and watched about an hour of TV. With that task out of the way, I secured the Safehouse, after having changed the codes to the access doors, and then arranged a pair of M18A1 Claymore mines ready to tear apart anybody who entered the house without *my* authorisation.

I took a shower before bed and then crawled under my duvet, fully dressed, and with a pistol under my pillow. That was when the nightmares came... They came every night and varied only in ferocity.

I continued where I had left off earlier that day, on the train.

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**September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

***That afternoon***

***Georgia Aquarium***

***Atlanta, USA***

As I watched, my sister struggled in vain against her captors before she was slapped roughly across the face and she stopped her struggling; a black hood was then pulled over her head. That was when my own last sight of freedom vanished as a similar hood was pulled over my own head.

"Mummy!" I yelled.

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The hood blocked out the light, but not the sound.

I felt myself being picked up by a pair of strong hands. I heard the sound of a car as it stopped nearby and then the sound of a car door as it was opened. I was thrown onto the seat of the car and when I tried to sit up, I felt a hand force me down onto the seat. I was terrified and I was crying.

I heard a scream; it was Steph. She was being forced into the same car and I felt her body against my own – that helped reassure me. As long as I was with Steph, I knew that I would be okay. I was

amazed how much I could hear going on all around me. I heard two people talking as they got into the front of the car, then the engine started and we moved off at speed.

We were both squished into the back seat and I felt the movement of the car as it changed direction, several times. I was very aware of my sister sobbing next to me – she was just as scared as I was.

I thought that nothing could ever scare my big sister.

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***The Present***

***Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016***

***Leeds, United Kingdom***

I jerked awake, back in my bed.

As usual, my pillow was soaked with sweat, as was my face and hair. I was also crying and shaking. No one ever came when I awoke screaming, so I calmed myself down and I just stared into the darkness that surrounded me. It was by no means the worst version of the nightmare – my big sister used to tell me that nightmares were generated by Nightmare Moon and that she was just trying her best to scare us, but that each time she failed, she would make the nightmare worse the next time.

I had asked if letting the nightmare scare me would stop her, Steph had replied that being scared would just encourage Nightmare Moon to scare us again. Back when I was five, I was really scared – Steph got into a lot of trouble with Dad for scaring me – and it took many nights for me to learn that nightmares were just a part of life. Now I was eight, I saw the nightmares as a penance for murdering my parents and the big sister that I still loved so much.

I was tired and I soon fell back to a fitful sleep.

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***September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013***

***Atlanta, USA***

The ride was not short, but not long either.

When we stopped, the men in front talked – they were Americans and they discussed me and Stephanie like we were objects. Then the men opened their doors and climbed out. I heard the door beside me opening and then I was dragged out of the car and I fell down into cold concrete. I screamed. My sister landed almost on top of me where she seized my hand and gripped it tightly.

“I love you, Steph...”

“I love you, too, Jamie... If we ever get separated; I will find you . . . I promise.”

I had no idea what was happening as Steph was dragged off me. I could not see anything, but I could hear my sister crying. I could tell that she was only a short distance away, though. My wrists hurt where the plastic ties dug into my skin and I was very scared. Then I heard movement close to me and I felt a sharp pain in my neck and I began to feel sleepy.

I drifted off into blackness.

