

PART II
of
PREDATOR

Sunday, 10th July, 2016

London, United Kingdom
Mayfair

“Yeah,” Jamie agreed as he took a bite out of his toast with Marmite.

“That is so disgusting, on so many levels,” Shannon complained as she wrinkled her nose.

Jamie just opened his mouth so Shannon could see the mass of Marmite on toast as he chewed.

“You are a disgusting little rat!”

“At least we agree on *something*, Stormy!”

Shannon gave up and she just growled as Jamie laughed.

Oakland Quay, Canary Wharf

The office of William Frasier,
Managing Director, Scorpio Enterprises

“That’s all you got. . . *fucking nothing!*”

“We’re still investigating, Boss – we have extra security on all couriers.”

“Why the fuck, do I waste my money on you useless bloody tossers!”

“Yes, Boss!”

Nottingham

“Yeah, I had a girl and her brother staying here for a couple of weeks. Had to give them their marching orders, so to speak, when they stopped payin’ me for the room. They left a bloody mess, too – I had to ditch the mattress; blood on it, see.”

“Were they hurt?” the tall man asked urgently.

“Didn’t look like it, but I likes to give my tenants some privacy.”

“If anything happens to those kids, then I’m coming back for you.”

The landlord cringed as he saw the dark eyes burn into his own for almost a full minute before the man turned and vanished down the street.

That night

Lambeth Palace Gardens

Shannon and Jamie

“It’s a bit dark.”

“You scared of the dark, you little shit?”

“You scared of me slapping you, Stormy?”

“Stop – calling – me – that!

“Or what?”

“Or I rip your balls off and turn you into a little girl.”

“I would sure like to see you try. . .”

After another fifteen minutes of sniping at each other, their mark for the evening came into view.

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As before, the courier was alone. The Park was dark, but with the paths dimly lit. The night was warm but a little muggy, so most people wore very little to combat the heat. The mark for the night was a young woman in her late teens and she was walking very purposely towards Waterloo Station. Over her right shoulder was a small rucksack which was like many that women carried as a handbag. To anybody looking, she was just a young woman headed home, or maybe out to meet a boyfriend.

The two waiting *Predators* knew differently. Both knew the plan, so no words needed to be spoken. Jamie was hidden in darkness where he could not be seen by the mark. Shannon moved closer, but headed in the opposite direction to the mark. As they came closer, to within a dozen yards, Shannon moved to intercept.

Then the mark looked directly at Shannon – the mark smiled. Jamie and Shannon both sensed the danger – it was a trap!

Eighty yards to the east

Trevor Turner

Head of Security, Scorpio Enterprises

“It’s the girl – she’s the one attacking us!”

“Is she alone?” Turner demanded.

“Looks like it – she’s moving to intercept Tricia.”

“Oh, shit!”

“What?”

“I think Tricia’s given the fucking game away!”

“Move in – everybody!”

Shannon and Jamie

Shannon's mind was working overtime.

Were they rumbled?

Was it just her imagination?

Were they in danger?

Could they still pull off the strike?

The mark was just feet away but then Shannon saw the blade appear out of nowhere into the mark's right hand. In response, she slapped her left thigh with her left hand – the danger signal – as she simultaneously reached for her own blade with her right. The edge of the blade caught on the bottom of her jacket, slowing the draw. The mark brought her blade across in a horizontal arc – Shannon arched her back and the blade passed inches from the tip of her nose. The mark made to adjust, but Shannon brought her own blade into play and slashed at the passing woman, catching the small rucksack and severing the strap, allowing the bag to fall to the ground.

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Forty yards away, Jamie made to support Shannon, having seen the danger signal, but then he heard pounding feet on the dry grass of the park and turned to see eight men heading in Shannon's direction. He had not been detected – yet. . . He felt nervous, but pushed it down as he rechecked his XD MOD.2 pistol – he had fifteen rounds available and no spare magazine. They had not planned to use firearms as they knew that it would only bring the Metropolitan Police into the fight – something to be avoided at all costs.

Jamie kept to the shadows, trying to figure out what he should do. Then one of the approaching men made the decision for him, just as Shannon put the mark down on the ground. The man pulled a pistol and he sent several rounds downrange towards Shannon. In response, Jamie dropped the man with a single shot and then dropped the next man before he, himself, came under fire.

Shannon and Jamie both dove for cover, Shannon drawing her own pistol and kicking the mark unconscious. She grabbed up the discarded bag as she ran past towards the nearest trees.

Scorpio

The attack by Jamie had come as a very rude surprise to the men as two of their number had suddenly gone down hard to some very accurate gunfire.

The remaining men scattered and hit the ground, rolling into the shadows. None of them had any idea where the shots had come from, but either way, Jamie was yards away from his firing point and he was ready for another attack. The men stared into the darkness trying to pick up any hint of movement.

Then the sirens began to wail.

Jamie

Jamie worked his way around to the east end of the gardens, toward the railway lines about 240 yards distant.

After about eighty yards, he skidded on his knees into some bushes as he heard feet coming towards him – three men ran past; all carried overt firearms. His brain was overloaded with everything that had suddenly taken place. He filed away the two dead men; they were not important. Shannon – where was she? What should he do? Should he make a break for it?

So many damned questions and so few answers. . .

Shannon

Everything had gone to crap!

She had heard the pistol shots – was Jamie still alive? Two men had gone down; she had seen those events in her peripheral vision as she had run for deeper cover in the trees. There were the sounds of running, some screaming – and the sounds of approaching sirens. She had to find Jamie and then get them both the hell out of there.

The noise helped to cover her movements as she made for the south-east corner of the gardens. As she went, she scanned for movement and any sounds nearby that might be an ambush or some other unwelcome surprise. Shannon was very worried – the mark had turned on her; how had she known? How *could* she have known? All she and Jamie had done was knock over a few couriers . . .

Shannon cringed and aimed her pistol as she heard rustling in the bushes beside her.

Jamie

Finally, he thought, he was almost out of the damn place.

The railway was close and he knew that he could lose any tails as he wound his way up towards Waterloo Station. The boy had used his small size to allow him to keep to the shrubbery borders, but then, he heard movement ahead. In response, he froze for a moment and then steeled himself to move.

With pistol in hand, aimed ahead of him, he burst out of the shrubbery and almost immediately, he collided with something. He heard a scream as he fell to the ground, but quickly brought up his pistol and he found himself staring down the barrel of P30SK pistol.

“For fuck’s sake, Jamie!”

“Hi, Stormy!”

Jamie and Shannon

Jamie was very surprised to find himself being hugged tightly.

“Are you okay? Any injuries?”

“Nah – I’m fine, thanks – get off me!”

“Let’s move, Rage!”

The two *Predators* ran out onto Lambeth Road where they rapidly stowed their pistols as a Metropolitan Police BMW surged past, siren screaming and blue lights flashing. They turned east and jogged towards the railway overpass and just as they thought they were in the clear, a bullet struck the parapet about a foot above Shannon’s head. They both broke into a run. Shannon looked back and saw six men in pursuit.

After running through the tunnel beneath the railway, they turned left at the next lights and headed north up Hercules Road. A screech of tyres a few yards behind announced that a vehicle was pursuing them. Shannon dived behind a low brick wall, pulling Jamie with her. The first pair of men to approach were dropped with single shots to the chest. In response, a large Range Rover skidded to a halt and the remaining men took cover behind the 4x4.

“We don’t have the rounds for a firefight!” Jamie pointed out to Shannon.

“I fucking know that!” she retorted angrily.

Jamie kept his head down as bullets pinged off the brickwork behind them sending sharp pieces of brick on top of them.

“Crap!” Shannon almost screamed as a Ford Mondeo screeched to a halt a mere twenty yards behind them having come out from under the railway via another tunnel.

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Shannon and Jamie jumped up, sprinting towards the car. They had to head off the occupants of the car before they could open fire on them. Bullets struck the ground around them as the men around the Range Rover continued to shoot – at least until somebody told them to stop for fear of hitting their own people.

Three people exited the Mondeo – two men and a woman. Jamie jumped up onto the bonnet of a convenient Fiat and he launched himself at the woman as he drew a knife. The boy’s feet struck the woman in the chest and she was shoved backwards into the road. Jamie did not hesitate as he smacked his pistol into the surprised woman’s face. He followed up by driving his knife into her chest. She screamed out and threw Jamie off her and into the path of an approaching Transit van which slammed on its brakes as Jamie quickly rolled out of the way.

Shannon was taking on the two men, the first had been shot in the left shoulder while his colleague had struck out at Shannon’s pistol which had fallen to the pavement beneath them. Shannon drew her knife and slashed out at the closest man, catching him on the arm. He backhanded her out of instinct and then came at her. Shannon deflected his punches before wrapping a leg around his neck and dragging him down to the pavement where she drove her blade through his skull.

Then a hand grasped the back of her top and yanked her into the air.

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Jamie sprung up and once back on his feet he found himself on the opposite side of the road to Shannon. The woman he had stabbed sat on the pavement leaning against a lamppost as she held a hand against the knife wound. She did not see Jamie as he ran across the road and jammed his knife into the left side of her throat. He twisted the knife, first one way, and then the other. Blood flowed out as the carotid artery was torn apart. Jamie jumped away from the flowing blood and ran towards Shannon who was just being yanked into the air by a bull of a man wearing a suit.

“Put her down, you fucking bastard!” Jamie yelled out.

The man smiled and shook his head in disbelief as he dragged the kicking Shannon towards the Ford Mondeo. Then the man stopped and gave Jamie a patronising look. Jamie stood stock still, his pistol held out in front of him in both hands.

“Put – her – down.”

The words were slow and steady. Jamie was in full control of his emotions and his hands were rock steady as he aimed for the man’s forehead. The man dropped Shannon, but kept a hold of her left arm, tightly enough to make Shannon grimace with the pain.

“Or you’ll what?” the man sneered.

Jamie did not reply – well, not in a spoken manner – he just squeezed the trigger on what he knew was his last round.

July 8th, 2014

An unknown location in the USA

“You will all learn to use your weapons. You will learn to look after your weapons. You will learn to fix your weapon in the field. You will learn weapons’ safety. You will learn so damn much your tiny brains will fucking implode.”

It was a re-run of what we all knew, but weapons’ safety was critical to any armed organisation and *Urban Predator* was no exception. Partly it was the fault of Abigail and Jamie for almost shooting an instructor by accident – either way, all *Predators* were going through a refresher course. For Jamie, it was important as he was lagging behind some of the older Phase 1 kids.

“What do you do if you weapon jams?” the instructor demanded to the class.

“You die?” Abigail quipped.

There was a little laughter from the class.

“She might me a fucking smart-ass, but she ain’t far wrong. Jams are usually preventable, but shit happens. It could be a dodgy round, or you not cleaning your weapon – or any one of a hundred different things. Right, clever dick – answer the damn question!”

“Slap your magazine to ensure it is secure. Rack the action to clear any round stuck in the breech or not ejected fully. If that doesn’t work, you need to lock back the action and remove your magazine, then you can rack the action violently several times,” Abigail replied with a big smile to finish.

“Fucking smart-ass! Otherwise, correct. You each hold a magazine with a mixture of live rounds and spent cases. When you have a misfire, you will follow the drill – or so help you God!”

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Jamie moved to the firing point and he unholstered his weapon, placing it down on the firing point. No messing about; Jamie was one hundred percent professional, as was Abigail. They both loaded their weapons and then pulled back their slides before releasing the slides to spring forwards, stripping off the top round.

“Commence firing!”

Jamie and Abigail both opened fire at the same moment. After the third round, Jamie’s pistol misfired. He tapped the magazine and racked back the slide. A spent casing flew out and landed on the firing point beside him.

“Good – carry on!” came the instructors voice as he felt a hand on his right shoulder.

Jamie opened fire again, just as Abigail struggled with her own jam. She cleared it – or she seemed to – and continued to fire. Then the air was rent with a loud bang and then screaming. Jamie automatically safed his weapon as he turned to his right to find Abigail writhing on the floor in agony. She was cradling her right hand in to her chest with her other hand. Her pistol lay on the floor beside her – the slide was partially back and the right side of the slide was twisted outwards and badly cracked.

An instructor rushed over after hitting a panic alarm. He grabbed hold of Abigail and forced her hands apart. Her right hand was black and there was blood in evidence. The eight-year-old was screaming as two more instructors came running and after wrapping a gauze bandage around her hand, they whisked Abigail off to the hospital wing. The remaining instructor picked up her discarded pistol and dumped it into a sand bunker, covering it up with sand. He left a red marker flag on the spot.

“That, class, was what is known as a catastrophic barrel failure – not fun. Assuming Wilde still has a hand to shoot with, she’ll pay better attention to clearing her weapon in future.”

Sunday, 10th July, 2016

***London, United Kingdom
Lambeth***

Nothing happened.

Jamie almost began the automatic task of clearing his weapon but there was no time – he threw it at the man and dove for Shannon’s fallen P30SK which he scooped up and fired in one smooth movement. Thought his aim was off, the man grabbed hold of his left shoulder and he ran for cover. Shannon fired a round into the Mondeo’s windscreen as she made to run.

“Run!” Shannon yelled as she grabbed Jamie’s arm and roughly pushed him ahead of her, down the road towards Waterloo Station.

Shannon knew that they could not escape using the roads. They could hear vehicles moving as they ran. A few hundred yards further on, they made to dive under the railway again but they saw a vehicle stop at the far side and men ran towards them. They had only seconds to act. The railway was thirty feet or so above them.

“Climb!” Shannon growled and she pushed Jamie at the brick wall to the left of the roadway. There were cables clipped to the brickwork and these provided a way to climb the sheer thirty-foot wall. Jamie scampered up with ease as Shannon followed.

Then the men appeared.

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Bullets began to strike the steel bridge front and the brick wall.

“Move it!” Shannon yelled as Jamie swung out to return fire.

There was no choice, Shannon swung past Jamie and continued to climb. She made it to the top of the brickwork and swung over the top to safety. She looked down and was very relieved to see that Jamie was only a few feet below her. As soon as he was high enough, Jamie passed up the pistol so he could climb faster and Shannon could cover him. Then the cable he was climbing began to come away from the brickwork. Shannon reached down and grabbed Jamie’s left hand.

“I’ve got you – climb!”

Jamie struggled to regain grip on something that was fixed and then his feet slipped leaving all his weight on his left hand held by Shannon. Despite his small size, the boy was heavy. Jamie’s sweaty hand began to slip in Shannon’s equally sweaty one.

“Climb, you little bastard, climb!”

“I am – *don’t drop me . . .*”

Shannon pulled with all her might but then Jamie yelled out as bullets impacted the brickwork around him.

“*Jamie!*”

Shannon felt his small hand slipping through her own despite all her attempts to hang on tight. She returned fire but she needed both hands to haul him up. She threw the pistol down behind her and reached for his other hand, but it was too late.

“Shannon . . .!”

“*JAMIE!*”

Jamie fell . . .