

Tuesday, September 13th, 2016

Scorpio Special Projects Division

First Floor

Stephanie was smiling and she looked so happy.

Then her smile vanished as the sound of heavy gunfire erupted not too far away from the little group.

"We've got this!" Hit Girl growled as she pulled her mask back on.

"Both of you head in that direction," Kick-Ass ordered, pointing in the opposite direction, away from the gunfire.

Psyche, her mask in place, swept up her weapons and then grabbed Jamie with her left hand and ran. She pushed through a doorway and stopped to get her bearings. Her mind told her that there was a staircase heading down about seventy feet ahead and on the right. She pulled Jamie forwards but then she froze.

"What a cheery sight that was, Jamie," a voice sneered. "What is it, your girlfriend?"

Jamie's expression gave him away.

"Sister . . . so, you have a sister . . . well, if you do not wish to join me, then perhaps, she will. . ."

"Fuck you!" Jamie spat.

Psyche could do nothing - six men had materialised as if out of nowhere and they were all armed.

"You move, girl - he fucking dies. Your admittedly impressive armour will not protect *him*. Unmask her!"

One of the underlings stepped forwards and he reached for the base of Psyche's mask. He got the shock of his life - literally! The man jumped back holding his hand which was shaking.

"Oh, very good!" Fraser laughed as Psyche seethed.

Hit Girl and Kick-Ass

First Floor

"Hit Girl, flash message from Spook - CTC is inbound in two helicopters with Commander SO15. They have been apprised of our presence - they will see us as friendlies empowered by the Home Office," Q called over the encrypted communications.

"That's all we need!" Hit Girl growled. "Arrange for Nemesis to go meet him and I'll get there when I can."

"Copy that!" Q replied. "Break! Twilight, be advised, you will have traffic at your three o'clock in four minutes - two inbound

helicopters flying without lights. They will call on one-one-three-decimal-four-two."

"Thanks, Q - will keep a lookout," Scorpion replied.

Outside

Right on cue, the pair of AS365N3+ helicopters entered the area.

Both were jet black and flying without lights. Each helicopter flew low, just above the trees.

"Twilight, this is Charlie Flight, we are a flight of two, callsigns: Charlie One and Charlie Two. We have you at our two o'clock high. We are descending to land to the front of the main house and will then pick up a two-mile orbit at two-thousand, over."

"Charlie flight, Twilight. Go ahead: area is clear. We are orbiting at one-thousand, over."

"Copy. Charlie out."

As Scorpion and the Chief watched, the two black helicopters dropped down and landed one at a time, sixty feet from the front of the main building. Twelve passengers disembarked from each helicopter before both aircraft took off and began to orbit two miles away from the house at two-thousand feet giving the ominously-armed *Twilight* priority closest to the main building.

Scorpion watched as the armed passengers spread out and their leader was greeted by Nemesis.

First Floor

William Fraser walked around Psyche, examining her armour in detail.

"I'm impressed, little girl. You fancy yourself a fighter, do you? The Sai is a difficult weapon to master. I assume that you are one of these *Predators*, too? I can help you understand your skills and I can help you put them to good use."

"I saw what you did to me and my friend. She was kept as a prisoner, just as I was," Rage retorted angrily.

"You do understand that if you do not come with me, Jamie, then neither of you are leaving this place . . . alive?"

"If any one of us is dying, it will be you, you old bastard!" Rage retorted and Psyche felt intense pride in her brother's courage.

Fraser gripped Psyche by her right shoulder and the young girl struggled to control the pain which lanced through her body. Fraser had noticed the change in body language, even if he could not see her face. With an evil smile, he squeezed again, eliciting an electronically enhanced scream of agony. Rage looked up at his

sister in surprise and with concern in his eyes. Fraser made to squeeze again but Psyche seized his wrist with her left hand and squeezed, causing Fraser to release her shoulder, wincing with pain as he did so. The man stood back from his mini adversaries and he studied them for a moment before coming to a decision.

"Bring them!" he ordered.

Rage was seized by two men, as was Psyche.

Ground Floor

Main Entrance

"Good evening. *Vengeance*, am I right?"

Nemesis took the proffered hand and she shook it.

"Nemesis . . . and yes, I am a senior member of *Vengeance*."

"Commander Haig, S015 - you appear to be having some fun here, this evening, Nemesis."

"Hit Girl is a little busy, but I can escort you inside and your men can take over the site - our mission is almost complete."

First Floor

Hit Girl and Kick-Ass were in a major gunfight.

Somehow, fresh gunmen had appeared in the building - they had pinned down Jackal and Stripe. Caught in the crossfire, Foxtail was using her armour to protect a young girl who was huddled beneath her. In her headset, Hit Girl could hear snatches of conversation - she recognised Jamie's voice, then Psyche's scream of pain. She had to support her team, but her heart was with her daughter. The needs of the many had to outweigh the needs of the few . . . for the moment.

"Command, Nemesis - I'm making for Psyche with elements of Assault Force two and three!"

Hit Girl felt relief but she wished she could be there, although she trusted her teams, including *Vengeance*.

Twilight

The orbiting was starting to get boring, plus fuel was soon going to be an issue.

"*Scorpion* - we have an alert call from *Shadow*. Sending you vectors now."

"Copy new vectors, Hal. Leaving orbit now and making for *Shadow*. Will confirm ETA en-route."

"Go have fun, Scorpion!"

Elements of Assault Force One and Two

First Floor

Nemesis was accompanied by Polaris, Prowl, Glide, Fury, and Rigour.

The six vigilantes were running hard as they made for Psyche's last known location. It did not take them long to find the corridor and then an open space. It was the correct space, too, as Fury held up an MPX-K assault rifle and a SIG Sauer P225-A1 pistol. Rigour held up a Sai in each hand. Nemesis knew she had to report it - but she hated doing it. From a plus side, it was over the comms . . . and not face to face with Hit Girl.

"Command, Nemesis - Psyche and Rage are missing. We . . . we have Psyche's weapons. . ."

"Hit Girl copies."

The response was short and very cold.

"Let's go!" Nemesis ordered and the team ran down the corridor.

Psyche and Rage

With William Fraser

Psyche was trying to find a way of escaping Fraser without hurting Rage.

The bastard had demonstrated his resolve by pistol whipping Rage around the face, leaving a vicious red mark which would, over time, turn into a vicious bruise. Psyche had retained her mask which at least protected her identity, as well as providing protection for her head. Each man carried an automatic weapon as well as a large knife. The six men remained close to their principal, Fraser, as well as to the captured children.

They had been taken down a short passageway and then through a small doorway which Psyche had not seen before and which appeared to merge into the surrounding white-painted panelling. As she had passed through the door, she had made a point of punching the panelling before she had been shoved, very roughly, through into an adjoining corridor. After descending a set of stairs, Psyche was very surprised to find herself outside. The sounds of battle were still easily audible around them, indicating that the night's action was far from over.

Psyche made a hard choice and she quickly decided that she needed to delay things. To Rage's surprise, he was struck, hard in the back by his sister and the bewildered boy fell to his knees.

"You are fucking worthless!" Psyche growled at the stunned Rage. "I should have fucking left you - now *I* am caught up in your fucked up whatever it is with this tight-arsed bastard!"

Fraser spun around to observe the fight. At first, he was amazed but then his lip curled as he saw his charges bickering.

"I did nothing - I thought you were here to help me?" Rage retorted having caught onto what his sister was playing at. "I thought you were my sister and that we were going to stay together."

"I don't think finding you was worth it, James. I was better off thinking you were dead."

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A few dozen yards away, five sets of feet approached stealthily. Ahead of them, they could hear an argument - a young boy's voice and the electronically enhanced voice of a vigilante.

"We need to move - shut the fuck up, you're both fucking worthless as far as I am concerned!"

They all recognised that voice and they moved faster, closing the distance fast before they slowed to spread out around the tight grouping of targets. As they watched, they could see a young boy, lying on the ground, and Psyche berating him from above.

The men never knew what hit them as the four Predators attacked as one, with Nemesis in support.

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Electra had talked with her friend, just a few hours before. Electra had told Stephanie that she never wanted to kill again. Only, she was wise enough to know that a time would come when she would have no choice but to kill. There was but one person in the world which she would kill for, and that was Stephanie Lizewski.

Psyche, while berating her brother, was keeping a wary eye on her surroundings. Her show had taken the attention of the six men, as well as Fraser. Then, her keen eyes detected movement and she recognised Rigour moving towards Fraser. A similar shadow came up behind each of three men, with the fourth man picking up a larger shadow. Psyche nodded towards Rigour as she dove on top of her brother, almost crushing the youngster.

William Fraser yelled out in agony as Rigour drove her eight-inch knife into his side catching internal organs as she twisted the blade with all her strength. The man sagged to his knees searching for help from his men, but his astonished eyes saw four of his men dropping to their own knees. Two of them had visible steel emerging from their chests and blood splashing down their fronts. The remaining two men had barely been able to react when Rigour threw two items through the air at Psyche, who deftly caught a Sai in each gauntlet as she stood up before she spun around and drove each

razor-sharp point into the hearts of the two gunmen who were just about to fire their weapons.

Nemesis smiled as she keyed her communications.

"Psyche and Rage are safe . . . repeat Psyche and Rage are safe!"

Psyche pulled her brother back to his feet and she looked around at her fellow *Predators*. Each of which stood there before her, blood dripping from their combat knives.

"Thanks, guys!" Psyche growled with a nod at Nemesis.

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The sound of running feet had each of them spinning around to face the next threat. Psyche visibly relaxed as she saw Hit Girl running towards her from one direction, and a group of black-clad men in body armour and helmets approaching from the other. Nemesis stepped in quickly and she prevented any of the black-clad men from getting shot by the over-eager *Predators*.

"I thought that I had seen everything," Commander Haig announced as he stopped and studied the seven prone forms and the masked, armour-clad youngsters with the bloody knives who stood over their kills. "I saw the execution of that rescue and I have to say that I was enormously impressed."

Hit Girl nodded.

"Thank you - I, too, was very impressed," she added.

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Hit Girl noticed something strange in the body language of Rigour as the young girl and her friends had left the scene and heading towards the Rendezvous Point.

"What's up, Rigour?"

Rigour stopped and she hesitated before she turned to look up at Hit Girl.

"That voice - I recognised it from somewhere . . . but I can't really remember where from."

"What voice?"

"That policeman."

"Commander Haig?"

"Him - funny he has the same name, huh?"

"Yeah. . ." Hit Girl mused. "Hal - I need a discrete channel!"

"Go ahead, Hit Girl."

"I want you to run a check for me, please - I want to know all about Commander Haig's family and I need it now!"

"Copy that!"

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Ten minutes later, after an in-depth conversation with Hal, Hit Girl sought out the Commander with Rigour, Psyche, and Rage (he wouldn't leave his sister's side) in tow. She found him on the upper floor of the building and she motioned the three kids to wait beside the sweeping staircase that led below.

"Commander, may I have two minutes in private?"

"Of course, Hit Girl."

The two of them entered one of the rooms which was empty. Hit Girl turned to the Commander.

"May I ask you a personal question, Commander?"

"Just don't expect a personal answer!"

"Tell me about your family - you have a son, I believe?"

"Yes - Edward. He is currently in a coma and he has been for a number of years. His family was attacked. His wife was killed, his teenaged son lives with me, but he still bears the scars from that attack to this day. His daughter, my granddaughter was taken - I have no idea where she is or even if she is still alive. My dearest Electra, she was the soul of that family. I miss her so very much and I would do anything to have her back with me."

"Thank you for your candour, Commander. Maybe I can make your dream come true. Have you ever heard of a program called: *Urban Predator*?"

"No."

"I am about to let you in on some very dirty laundry that both your country and mine, amongst others, intend to keep secret and buried . . ."

Hit Girl explained on for several minutes and she watched Commander Haig's expressions which showed anger, intrigue, horror, and finally sorrow.

"You mean my Electra was taken and inducted into that heinous abortion?"

Hit Girl's silence spoke volumes.

"Those kids in the body armour?"

Hit Girl nodded.

"Rigour!" she called out.

Primary Rendezvous Point

Half a mile to the east

Shannon and her father were patrolling around the parked vehicles, keeping them safe.

The teenage girl's emotions were yo-yoing and she was still struggling to see everything around her as real and not some cruel dream. She expected to wake up at any moment in her cell - another day and the rest of her life ahead of her as a plaything for Fraser and his men. She could not believe that she was standing with her father in a copse, in the dead of night, defending a rendezvous point with automatic weapons. The last time she had spent time with her father, she had been nine-years-old and instead of an automatic weapon, she would have probably had a Barbie doll in her hands.

She almost missed the crack which was emitted by some careless clot as they stepped on a loose twig. Stormtide lifted her assault rifle to her shoulder, her father mirroring her action - he had heard the same sound.

"Command, Primary RV is under attack!" Astute radioed.

Inside the Command Van, Hal and Q checked their weapons and combat suits prior to returning to their activities. It was not the first time for either of them - coming under attack; they were both veterans - a reluctant veteran as far as Q was concerned.

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Astute moved forwards, signally his daughter to move out and to come around from the left while he flanked to the right. It was a novel experience for him, fighting alongside his daughter. He knew her training. He knew everything that she would know. He knew that she was highly-skilled - she had to be to have survived as long as she had. He knew that his daughter was a killer; he had witnessed the girl take two lives like they were nothing. How could he have allowed her to endure five years of hell? His lovely little girl had been so innocent - yet she had turned into a killer who could dispatch a life with barely a moment's thought.

A few yards away, his daughter moved silently, flanking the approaching enemy from the left - then she froze. Astute did the same, picking up his daughter's signals - she had seen something. Stormtide was the first to open fire and, it seemed, she was spot on as yells were heard from the target zone and bodies began to fall. Astute ran forwards, under the cover of Stormtide's gunfire. He found two men moving ahead of him - both died as he fired two three-round bursts into each man. He moved towards his daughter to find three bodies at her feet as she scanned the surrounding trees for any more gunmen.

"Very good, Shannon - I'm impressed."

"Thanks, Daddy."

First Floor

Commander Haig watched as one of the armoured vigilantes whom he had seen kill earlier, entered the room. His mind began to add things up. She was about the right size. She would be nine-years-old. The young girl bore a single pistol on her right hip and there was a large knife in a scabbard on her left thigh. The Commander could see blood on the body armour and there was dried blood around the scabbard of the knife. He had also seen the very girl with a bloody knife in her hand, mere minutes previously. The girl was a killer, no doubt about that.

The young girl hesitated as she approached and she stopped beside Hit Girl. Despite the mask, it was obvious that she was extremely nervous. Commander Patrick Haig felt the same way as he considered what was happening.

"Commander Haig - please meet your granddaughter, Electra."

Hit Girl reached over and she deactivated the anti-lift on Electra's mask. She then lifted the mask clear of the shaking girl's head to reveal a young girl, her short brown hair soaked in sweat. Commander Haig's face went from one of sorrow and anticipation to one of immense happiness and tears spilled from his eyes.

"Grandpa?" Electra whispered.

That was all it took; just one solitary word.

The young girl bolted forwards and she jumped into the Commander's arms, wrapping her legs around his waist. Both were crying with happiness as they hugged. Finally, after several minutes, they split apart but Electra was holding on tightly to her grandfather's hand.

Electra had the biggest smile imaginable on her tear-streaked face.

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There was a knock on the door and Hit Girl turned to see Psyche.

"One of the Commander's men is here," she called over.

Electra quickly pulled on her mask and the Commander took control of his emotions before the man came in.

"Yes, Sergeant?"

"Sir - the body of William Fraser . . . it's gone."

*That really is the end of **Predator**. The story continues in **Chapter 328: New Kids in Town of Forsaken** and simultaneously in **Chapter 24: Family of Vengeance**.*