

Wednesday, 27th May 2016

Nürburg, Germany

We had closed in on the fleeing Audi Q7 SUV.

It was now a mere two hundred yards ahead and they knew that we had them – there would be no escape for them... It was four against one and we had the advantage – or so we thought... The Audi seemed to be heading somewhere and not just fleeing.

Patience, Mindy, patience.

Meanwhile, back in Munich...

I was gonna fucking kill 'em!

Either that, or Mindy was going to suffer when she returned – if she returned; maybe she did it on purpose to get away from the little shits.

"Cam, if I ever get into a sexual relationship with anybody, please remind me about these two, so I can take all precautions against getting pregnant."

Cameron just laughed and Eric hid behind his laptop screen.

"They are perfect little angels," Nicky commented.

"You don't know 'em, like we does!" I persisted.

"They're just acting up; they are only eight," Hailee pointed out.

"Can I Taser them . . . *please!*" I asked politely.

"Natasha!" Cameron exploded in mock anger. "You *cannot* Taser a pair of eight-year-olds!"

"Who says?" I retorted.

"Their mother might have something to say about it," Hailee warned.

I groaned.

"Anne-Marie! Daniel!" I yelled at the top of my voice and I heard a clatter as something collapsed in the room next door.

A few hundred kilometres north...

East of Nürburg

Audi S8L

Mindy and Megan

The Q7 turned off the main road and headed down a road that seemed to lead nowhere.

Nowhere was absolutely correct! They were mining something – limestone? I had no idea, but it was white and powdery – hey, I was no geologist; I killed people, I did *not* dig up rocks for a living! I was forced to drop back as the tarmac gave way to a rutted track – in my place went Dave and Jason with

their Range Rovers. Mathilda took a hard right into a grassy field and headed for the far side of the quarry.

She was headed for a good location from which to snipe.

Overfinch Range Rover

Dave, Joshua, and Stephanie

The Audi Q7 was rapidly lost in a cloud of white dust and I had to rely on the other sets of eyes to guide me as I was concentrating on avoiding anything that suddenly loomed out of the dust cloud – such as errant yellow diggers or giant mounds of white stuff!

My earpiece came to life...

"The Q7 has taken a left between two large piles of, err stuff..." Abby reported.

I had seen their Range Rover Sport take off to the right. They must have been in the clear and able to spot the vehicles as they moved.

"Dave, go left – Jason, go straight..."

I turned left and we jumped into the air as we coasted over a small bump in the track but the suspension easily absorbed most of the shock as we landed again. I saw the brake lights of the Q7 in the gloom ahead and they had turned to the right.

"Dave, turn right – Jason, slight left..."

Overfinch Range Rover

Jason, Cassie, and Chloe

I caught sight of the Audi Q7 as it emerged from behind a big pile of, err stuff and we headed directly at the SUV.

The CIA driver saw us too and he skidded on the loose powder in his effort to avoid us and dived up a short hill before dropping down a steep slope. I had to come hard right to avoid Dave as he came around the same pile and we both followed the track around the hill and found the Q7 as it cut across our path and then descended into the quarry itself.

Both Range Rovers dived after the fleeing SUV.

Overfinch Range Rover Sport

Mathilda and Abby

The Audi narrowly avoided being creamed by a big yellow digger thingy but rather annoyingly the Q7 swerved at the last minute.

Mathilda was lying in the back of the Range Rover Sport, with the trunk lids open. Her prized AX50 sniper rifle was set into her shoulder and she was tracking the CIA SUV via her sniper scope. She casually inserted the magazine and pulled back on the charging lever, then released it.

She was primed and ready.

Audi Q7

The CIA

There was no talking in the SUV.

All attention was on escaping and the driver was using all his concentration to avoid obstacles and they hoped to get into a position where they could take out their pursuers...

Suddenly, there was a rushing sound and a hole appeared in the windshield from which cracks radiated out. Next, there was an explosion of something warm and sticky and it took a moment for three of the occupants to notice that the forth, in the front passenger seat, no longer had a head.

“Holy fuck!”

Overfinch Range Rover

Dave, Joshua, and Stephanie

The SUV seemed out of control.

I knew that Mathilda was targeting them, so it was obvious that the end was nigh – for them. The left rear tyre exploded and then shredded as it came off the alloy wheel. Mathilda was toying with them; she could have ended it directly by taking out the driver – but where was the fun in that...?

Another tyre exploded and flew off the Audi and it slewed around and then flipped over in a cloud of powdered stuff. I came to a halt a few yards back and we all dived out with weapons raised.

Over the radio, I heard Mathilda and Abby heading toward Mindy as Mindy was ‘very keen’ to see first-hand what was happening in the quarry – the Audi S8L being too slow-slung to venture into the quarry without getting stuck.

Overfinch Range Rover

Jason, Cassie, and Chloe

It was over.

The final vehicle had been destroyed. Three men were still alive – for the moment. All three men were dragged out of the vehicle where they were laid face down and their hands were secured with plastic zip-ties. Mindy appeared with Abby in the Range Rover Sport.

Dave and Joshua were searching the Audi Q7 and they came up trumps. This particular Audi was the lead vehicle and it had been carrying as paper copy of their orders which had not been destroyed in any way. Abby collected all electronic devices and placed each of them in their own Faraday bag. I was impressed, *Fusion* was a slick and very professional organisation.

Mindy was reading through the papers.

“Holy shit!”

Audi S8L

Mindy, Joshua, and Megan

We were heading south again within twenty minutes and we intended to put as much distance between us and the wrecked vehicles that we had left strewn around the German countryside – not to mention the dead bodies.

I had a lot of reading to do and that had meant another driver; I had nominated Joshua, so Megan was relegated to the back seat where she was fast asleep. The miles flew past as we got closer and closer to Munich and the twins; I missed them a lot and I had never been this far from them, ever.

The papers that we had obtained were hot – burning hot!

Late that night

The Munich Safehouse

“Mom!”

I was so relieved to see them both and to know that they were safe and sound. Natasha looked very annoyed and also relieved – no idea why. After a meal and some time with the twins, it was time for bed. We would have a very big day ahead of us, so rest was critical for us all.

Actually, Dave and I were so tired that we started something, but then we both fell asleep before much occurred.

Early the following morning

Thursday, 28th April 2016

Everybody was up by ten that morning.

By eleven that morning we had started our briefing.

“Okay – we now know that they were not after us; at least not directly, they were heading to escort some critical data out of the country and back to the United States. That data has something to do with *Urban Predator* and we are going to retrieve it, first.

“Our task for today is to track down that data and figure out a way to seize it. The papers that we captured give us details on the protective measures involved – the CIA are taking no chances, so we will only have one chance at this...”

“Thanks, Mindy. Jason is returning our vehicles today...” Dave continued.

“Hopefully, they won’t notice the bangs, scratches, dents . . . bullet holes...” Jason said dryly.

“No hope of that!” Chloe laughed.

Three hours of skulking around to the north of Munich had proved to be time well spent as we had found the damn van.

"One thing we do know, is that if we simply ambush the van and force it to stop, the computers will be wiped. It must be taken on the move but I see no easy way to do that..." I commented.

There was continued discussion between Dave, myself, Nicky and Jason, with input from the others, but nothing came of all the brain-storming. Then the dubious duo had an idea...

"Steph and I had the idea that we could recover that disk... We know that it is in the van; we can board it – the van – and just take it. They're keeping it mobile; so we board the van while on the move *before* they can destroy the data. Simples."

"No way!" I retorted.

"We need the intel, right?" Stephanie retorted in kind.

"Is this because we're girls?" Megan cut in facetiously.

"Seriously?" I growled incredulously.

"We can do it; our small size will make it easier – you ain't got the monopoly for jumping onto moving vans and then taking over said van," Stephanie grumbled. "Our compact size will be an asset..."

"They have a point, Mindy – you did it only with Marcus' pistol and nothing else," Dave pointed out.
"They'll have the use of special equipment and *Fusion* support."

"But... Oh, hell – alright; they have a valid point and they are *both* more than capable..."

"You ready, Wildkitty?" Stephanie asked.

"Damn right, Psycho – let's pony up!" Megan replied with a grin.

"How the fuck did you two even *know* about that van? Dave!" I challenged.

"Don't look at me!" Dave responded, all innocent.

"You two been talking to Morgan?"

"Maybe..."

That night

It was dark, very dark.

The three vehicles moved fast across the muddy terrain. The two outer vehicles were Land Rover Discoveries; both painted in a very dark green and covered in mud; a direct and purposeful result of some earlier off-roading. As a result; the two vehicles, plus the third, a Range Rover Sport, were all but invisible in the night.

The drivers: Kick-Ass, Spectre and Leon, were keeping in a loose inverted 'V' shaped formation, the Range Rover being at the tip of the 'V' with Leon at the wheel. In each passenger seat was a vigilante; Shadow with Spectre, Jackal with Leon, and Hit Girl with Kick-Ass.

On the roof of the right hand Land Rover that was being driven by Kick-Ass, were three forms.

The Discovery Roof

"This is most definitely a first..." Psyche commented as she kept a tight grip on the straps that held her to the roof-rack of the Discovery.

"For me, too..." Wildcat replied as she lay beside her partner and hung on for dear life.

"Hold on tight, you two; we'd hate to lose either of you..." Crimson chuckled from behind them as, she too, held on tightly.

"Can somebody remind me; why did I volunteer for this?" Drift moaned from the roof of the other Discovery.

"Quit your bloody moaning!" Nemesis laughed from her position beside Drift.

Hit Girl and Kick-Ass

The van was, itself, off-road, hence the need for the 4x4 vehicles.

Everybody was using night-vision equipment, which therefore allowed a stealthy approach with lights off. The three vehicles changed their formation and reformed into a staggered line to the left so that only the Discovery with Wildcat and Psyche onboard were anywhere near the van.

"It's time, people – execute!" I ordered; Kick-Ass accelerated and we closed on the van.

The van was easy to see in the darkness via our NVGs and as far as I could make out, we had not been seen... I guided Kick-Ass into position as we approached.

"Closer . . . closer . . . slower . . . closer . . . tiny bit faster . . . looking good – Wildcat, Psyche, Crimson, stand by!"

The Discovery Roof

Psyche

We kept a good grip on the safety strap as we all stood up.

Crimson was there as a safety measure; just in case something happened to either of us as we jumped from one vehicle to the other.

"Kick-Ass, standby – keep it steady..." Crimson relayed.

I looked over at Wildcat; she betrayed no apprehension, but the tone of her voice said otherwise – I had to admit that I felt just the same!

"You ready, partner?" She inquired.

"Once more unto the breach, dear friend, once more!" I replied.

"Bloody Brits!" I heard Hit Girl moan.

I braced myself; kept my eye on my landing point and ran the specifications through my mind again – the Mercedes-Benz van was almost seven metres long and had a roof that was a little over four metres in length and just under two metres in width. We both had about eight square metres to land in, otherwise...

The high-roof was plastic and that would allow for both a quiet landing as well as to allow our gauntlet spikes to grip into the roof on landing.

"Standby, Wildcat! Standby, Psyche!" Crimson called out. "Three – two – one..."

I leapt into the darkness...

Wildcat

I leapt into the darkness...

I targeted the centre of the roof while Psyche aimed for the rear section. We jumped together and . . . we missed...

Just kidding!

As if we would – *honestly!*

I landed and allowed my legs to collapse beneath me as I dug the spikes on my lower arms into the plastic roof; they held fast. Behind me, I could see Psyche as she dug her own spikes in; we were both aboard.

"The pre-teens from hell, have landed," Crimson advised the team.

The operation was underway.

Psyche

I moved up close to Wildcat.

The roof was plenty wide enough for us both to lay side-by-side as we prepared to make our entry into the van. I reached over with my left hand and pulled out a length of detcord from Wildcat's backpack. As I fed it out, Wildcat stuck it to the roof of the van in the shape of a large rectangle. The length of detcord was pre-cut and pre-terminated with a detonator.

"Detcord secured," Wildcat advised.

"Detonating in five..." I added and we both turned our faces away from the detcord.

Four . . . three . . . two . . . one . . . I pressed the button on the detonator and just milliseconds later, there was a dull crump as a two-foot-square section of the roof vanished. We both moved as one and dropped into the van's interior before those inside could react to the explosives.

..._...

There were six men in the van – although that very quickly changed to five living and one dead man... One man was unfortunate enough to have received the severed section of roof on his head and he was stunned, so I blew his head off with my P30SK.

Wildcat gave me a look.

"He looked like he was suffering..."

Wildcat shrugged and she deployed her claws into the next pair of men and sent blood spraying down the length of the van. The man at the computer desk reached for his keyboard, only, his hands never made it but his severed wrists did as Wildcat brought her Wakizashi down in a single swift movement.

The man had barely registered what had happened; his eyes absorbed the blood as it erupted from his truncated limbs and soaked the desk before him. Belatedly, he screamed bloody murder – at least he died accurately...

Wildcat dived forwards as the van began to swerve from side to side – the driver was apparently more than a little unhappy about what was occurring behind him... I dived towards the computer equipment and ran my eyes across each item – bingo!

Hit Girl and Kick-Ass

I don't know *why* I felt anxious; it had only been mere seconds since they had detonated the explosives.

My problem was that they were out of sight and anything could be happening within that van which had begun to swerve erratically and it skidded around in the mud – Kick-Ass altered course to avoid a collision. I saw movement in the front of the van and then my NVGs showed a cloud of something hot as it hit the windscreen – I smiled to myself as yet another cloud exploded on the far side of the van.

The girls seemed to be having fun!

..._...

Then, moments later, the rear doors of the van burst open.

I took a deep breath as two small shapes dived out and rolled into tight balls as they hit the ground; both balls spun across the mud. I had heard the exclamations of both girls as they had struck the ground; their impact cushioned by the soft, soggy mud that liberally covered the area. The van continued to drive forwards as the two muddy bundles rolled across the road – then the van came apart as the explosives left behind by the girls detonated violently.

The wrecked van was now a convertible, its sides bowed outwards and it continued forwards a few more yards before it ground to a halt and burnt furiously.

"It's a hot day in hell, boys!" Wildcat declared as she lay on her back in the mud and watched her handy work from a few hundred yards away.

"I smell a barbecue – maybe we should get some of Hit Girl's marshmallows..." Psyche added.

"You two having fun?" I chuckled as we drove towards them.

"First you see me, riding on a fucking van..." Wildcat sang.

"... Got my H&K, shredding up my latest kill..." Psyche added.

"... There is nothing you can do to beat us; we're so good that you can't defeat us," both girls sang together. "Yeah, we're awesome, take caution; watch out for us, we're awesome as we wanna be!"

"Only you two could sing My Little Pony tunes after blowing up a goddamn van!" I growled back as the two young girls began to giggle. "You get it?"

Psyche held up her hands, a small box visible in her right gauntlet. "Hell, yeah!" she replied through her giggles.

"Fucking nutcases, the both of 'em!" Jackal growled.

I climbed out of the Land Rover and trudged through the mud to where the two girls lay on the ground.

"Very good!" I said as I took custody of the small piece of computer hardware and tucked it inside my combat suit.

I reached down and hauled first Psyche and then Wildcat to their feet. I looked them both up and down.

"What?" Psyche demanded.

"Neither of you are getting into any of these vehicles like that!" I warned.

Both girls were quite literally covered in mud from head to toe.

"You expect us to strip, out here, in the middle of fucking nowhere?" Psyche growled. "It's fucking freezing, not to mention child abuse!"

"It's either that or you're both walking..."

"It's not like you've got anything to see..." Wildcat pointed out to Psyche in a bitchy tone.

"That's *not* the point . . . I can hear Jackal grinning from here . . . You're a bitch, Hit Girl!"

"That I am..." I laughed as the two girls began to remove their muddy combat suits.

I did take pity on them and I allowed them to use the tailgate on the Range Rover to sit on while they stripped. Jackal's snide comments ensured that both girls were blushing as they performed their striptease in the middle of the German countryside in the dead of night, as a van burnt with half-a-dozen dead corpses inside, only a short distance away.

"Happy?" Stephanie growled as she climbed into the back seat of the Range Rover.

"Yeah," I laughed. "Nice choice in knickers – was that Rainbow Dash I saw?"

"Hey, leave Rainbow Dash alone; she's a pony vigilante at heart!"

The Safehouse

"That was a fun night!" Megan said as she finished washing her hair.

"It was fun, yeah – something different, too," I replied.

"We make the perfect team, Steph."

"We do, don't we."

"I'm starving – fancy something to eat?"

"Definitely..."

"Girls!"

"Yeah, Mindy."

"Don't forget to change the tags on the SUVs."

"We won't."

Friday, 29th April 2016

Early Morning

I was now little more than the damn car washer!

Mind you, it had only been five days since I had been beaten to within an inch of my life and an amazing amount had happened in those few days. Coming to terms with what I had suffered was going to take a while. The abuse had occurred while I had been Hailee and *not* Petra – somehow, that had made me feel a lot better. If I had been defeated as Petra, then that would have been very bad and I had no idea if I would have ever been able to come back from that.

I had talked to Mindy about it and she had told me about that night, long before, at the penthouse where she had been all but defeated herself. Mindy had told me that her almost defeat had haunted her for a while, but that Dave had helped her get past it. She also advised me not to dwell on defeats; it would damage my performance. So I just tried to block it out and I focused on the moment instead.

I was in a lot of pain, despite the painkillers and even something as basic as driving put strain on parts of my body that still ached.

"Sure you don't want me to drive?"

I looked to my right and smiled at the ten-year-old girl.

"Did you bring your drivers permit?"

"Funny – they don't give 'em to ten-year-olds, but I *can* drive, you know."

"I don't doubt it, Steph, but it's *so* not happening..."

"I can live with that – let's get this thing washed, then."

..._...

The Range Rover Sport was now cleaner than when it had been new. The temporary mud camo scheme was gone and we were about a mile from the carwash and on the way back to the Safehouse to collect the next vehicle when a large Mercedes-AMG SUV pulled up alongside us. The windows were tinted and it was black in colour. Nothing out of the ordinary – we were in Germany after all.

Another, identical, SUV was coming up behind us.

"I think we've got a problem, Steph..."

Stephanie looked around at the two Merc SUVs.

"You may be right – floor it!"

I did just that and the three-litre V6 diesel accelerated us down the Munich street.

Unfortunately for us, the Mercs were the AMG variant and appeared to be fitted with the 5.5-litre V8 bi-turbo model which meant that we could *not* outrun them.

As we reached an open stretch of Rosenheimer Straße, they both made their move and we had one on each side of us. The one to the left opened both side windows and I felt myself go cold as a pair of Heckler & Koch 416 A5 assault rifles with attached suppressors appeared.

Both weapons were discharged at the same time and I hated myself for admitting it, but I screamed as the 5.56-mm bullets struck the side of the Range Rover Sport alongside Hailee who flinched but kept her eyes on the road ahead; the glazing held, despite being heavily pockmarked by the bullets. Mindy had obviously chosen her armoured vehicle well.

I actually smiled as I caught the expressions on the faces of the gunmen; they seemed pissed for some reason or other.

The Safehouse

"Fusion – we have contact!"

I spun around to stare at the radio on the table as I heard Stephanie's voice.

"Where are they?"

"About six miles away – they were headed towards us," Abby replied. "They must have been ambushed."

"How...?" I asked myself, then I had a thought. "Megan, did you two change the tags last night?"

"Yeah..." Megan began as she walked over to where the tags were.

She picked up a set of plates – they were brand new and very clean. The girl looked horror-struck by the revelation.

"Fuck!" I growled.

The Range Rover Sport

I put my window down a couple of inches and sent a few bullets from my pistol towards the Merc SUV on my side of the car.

Damn!

"Armoured, too?" Hailee asked.

"Yeah!" I growled as I put my window back up and that was when Mindy called.

"You two having fun out there?"

"Just a normal day at the car wash!" I growled back in response.

"We're heading in your direction now – tell us what you're up against."

"Two Merc AMG armoured 4x4 vehicles," I replied.

"We can deal with that..." Mindy replied cryptically. "Take the slip down to the southern stretch of the Isar River off Zeppelinstraße at the Maximiliansanlagen. Head along the gravel banks towards the west, past the museum."

I looked over at Hailee who just shrugged.

..._...

Hailee had some really good driving skills and that kept us ahead of the Merc 4x4s – not far, but enough to allow us to get close to our destination.

Neither of us had any idea what Mindy had in mind, nor did we have any idea how she might actually get rid of two armoured vehicles! Nevertheless, we found our way down to the riverbed and surfed our way through the water and the gravel. We moved at less than thirty miles per hour and less than twenty in places, but we kept moving steadily forwards.

We raced beneath the Zenneckbrücke bridge and then approached the bridge beyond the German Museum called Corneliusbrücke and I saw two people standing on the bridge – they were aiming something *at* us.

"Hailee!" I shouted, just as I saw two bolts of flame and then two rockets shot towards us.

Corneliusbrücke

I watched the unguided rockets fly straight and true, past the Range Rover Sport, and into each of the pursuing Mercedes SUVs.

They never knew what had hit them as their vehicles exploded into flames and rolled to a stop in the water. The Range Rover Sport continued on under the bridge and climbed up the right side of the weir onto firmer ground before the SUV made its way towards land.

"Kentucky Fried..."

"Don't say it!" I interrupted my daughter.

The Safehouse

They were back at the Safehouse before we ourselves arrived back.

I climbed out of the Discovery and glared at the Range Rover Sport, followed by Stephanie and Hailee. The SUV was covered in mud and the bodywork on one side was peppered with bullet damage.

"Well that's the last bloody time I send you two to wash a car!" I growled.

An hour later

"Hailee?"

"Yeah, Steph."

"I am so sorry for putting your life at risk, especially after..."

"Me, too..." Megan added.

"Shit happens, guys. I don't blame either of you; we are all tired after a very rough week and we all make mistakes."

"That's not the point," Stephanie replied. "I am trained not to make mistakes..."

"You could have died, both of you, all because I forgot to switch the tags," Megan went on.

"It was my fault, too," Stephanie reminded her partner.

I decided that it was going to be impossible to reason with the two morose girls.

"Come here, both of you – I think I have a solution for this..."

I looked up to see Megan and Stephanie reappear from the direction of the bedrooms.

Both girls were red faced and both girls had a perfectly formed hand print on one cheek. I grinned at them and they both tried to hide their faces.

"You two been talking like bitches?"

"Something like that, yeah," Stephanie replied in a somewhat subdued tone.

"You okay, Hailee?"

"No more bruises, if that's what you mean."

"You did a number on those two," I chuckled.

"Only thing I could think of to snap them both out of it. They forgot to swap the plates; shit happens."

"Thank you for being so understanding – if I had known..."

"Do you want slapped as well?"

"Do you want another bruise?"