

All available assets were going into tracking down Jamie and Shannon.

Q and Hal spent many hours setting up facial-recognition routines to attempt to spot the youngsters, however, all they had were out of date *Urban Predator* photographs to go on. With the assistance of Wayne Enterprises and Lucius Fox, they had managed to create a suitable algorithm with which to scan London's thousands, upon thousands of cameras.

While that went ahead, *Vengeance* trained and trained.

Tuesday, September 6th, 2016

***Vengeance Training Facility
Scotland***

"When, are we going to get out there and kick some butt?" Kaitlin demanded one afternoon after school.

"There is much more to being a vigilante than going out and kicking butt," Natasha reasoned.

"Not as far as I can see," Kaitlin pointed out.

"Exactly."

"Am I missing something?"

"Yes, young lady, you are - you may be a *Predator*, but you are not ready to put on a combat suit and then go out into the big bad world," Natasha replied.

"I'm not scared. I can handle anything. I killed three men the other day, remember!"

"Honey, you are very brave, and I applaud you for it. But you are not ready - neither are Naomi and Harper. Abigail and Electra are readier than you are, Kaitlin. They've seen the harsh side of real life. You've seen what happened to Abigail and she is a very skilled *Predator*; much more highly skilled than yourself."

"I know, Nats - it's just that I hate sitting around when we could be doing something."

Handling frustration was not one of Kaitlin's better skills.

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"Okay - I want to see some sparring, please. Harper, you partner with Craig. Kaitlin, you partner with Electra. Abigail, you will face Naomi," Cameron directed.

The six kids moved out and each pair found a suitable space on the mat. The sparring began, with Cameron and Natasha monitoring and acting as referees where necessary. Harper and Craig were doing well and it was quickly apparent that Craig held no qualms when it came

to striking a female, let alone a young girl three or so years younger than himself. Harper was a little surprised to receive the first strike on her body, expecting Craig to be wary about striking a young girl. Nevertheless, Harper got over her unwelcome surprise and she fought well against the bigger *Predator*. Kaitlin and Electra were perfectly matched as they were each of comparable size and skill, despite there being a year and a half difference in age between them with Electra being older. Naomi was a good match for Naomi as they were both highly skilled, but Abigail was still suffering the effects of her medication, so her reactions were still a little off.

Cameron had no idea what had started it, but about ten minutes after the sparring had begun, there was a yell and then when he turned around, Abigail and Electra were quite literally kicking hell out of one another. Abigail was still a little weak, and that was obviously giving the younger, less experienced Electra an edge. The fierceness and the ferocity behind the fight was astounding. Cameron had never witnessed a true *Predator* on *Predator* fight, but he figured that what he was witnessing was just that.

Naomi attempted to intervene, but she received a punch to her jaw, putting her on her back. Kaitlin tried but failed, rubbing her own side where someone had kicked her. Craig was knocked down by Naomi so he failed to intercept Electra as was his intention. Abigail and Electra were not letting up as they fought and it was no simple sparring match either. The strikes were hard and very real. The anger in their eyes was very, very real. Abigail had blood on her face from a small cut below her right eye. Her nose was bleeding too, but she paid the blood no heed as she struck back at the younger girl with hatred etched on her face.

Electra, in turn, had blood streaming from her nose and a cut on her forehead. She was unrelenting in her fighting, ducking under Abigail's punches and sidestepping the kicks. Electra was a very agile little girl and she used every advantage that she could muster. But the fight had to stop before somebody was hurt badly - or worse. Cameron and Natasha waded in, each grabbing a struggling *Predator* who fought bitterly to get free and re-enter the fight.

"Let me go!" Electra growled as she punched Cameron in the face with her left fist. "I want to kill her!"

"Stop it, Electra!" Cameron hissed in the young girl's ear. "I am not letting you . . . ah . . . go."

Electra punched him again, catching him in the eye and simultaneously kicking his legs. Natasha wasn't faring much better as Abigail wriggled and twisted as she tried to escape the iron grip on her. Her legs kicked out and her feet caught Natasha. Her fists struck wherever they could find something to strike.

"Drop them!" Keira yelled out as she and Cassie appeared in the space.

Cameron and Natasha did as they were directed, throwing the two girls onto the mat. Abigail and Electra jumped back to their feet and they attempted to attack one another, but before either girl could move, thin copper wires flew towards them and the razor-sharp barbs at the tips dug into their clothing and through to their skin. Then 50,000 volts at half a milliamp coursed through the wires, contracting the girl's muscles and sending them both onto the mat, convulsing with the electric charge. Keira and Cassie quickly disengaged the Tasers. Both girls were then rolled onto their fronts and they were both restrained with rigid handcuffs.

"What the hell's going on?" Abigail demanded in a panic as she began to recover the use of her muscles.

"Lie still, honey," Cassie said as she tried to keep the girl calm. "You've just had a bad experience."

Electra was stirring. After a minute, her eyes opened and she began to struggle against the handcuffs in a similar panic to Abigail. Both girls were totally disorientated and neither knew what was going on.

"You've both just been Tasered," Cameron explained. "Lie still until the effects pass and then we'll talk about what happened."

"Release me!" Abigail growled.

"No," Cassie explained. "It's for your own safety."

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After a few minutes, both girls were helped to their feet and they were each escorted to separate holding rooms where they were sat down with the handcuffs remaining in place. Cameron sat with Abigail while Natasha stayed with Electra. Cassie and Keira spoke with the stunned Harper, Naomi, and Kaitlin who were all understandably worried for their friends.

"What in the fuck happened?" Harper demanded.

"I honestly don't know," Keira replied. "Some relapse. Something must have set them off - they both have a bad history with one another, remember."

"Still," Naomi commented. "They tried to kill each other."

"Yes - we saw two very angry *Predators*. It isn't their fault. . . ." Cassie said.

"We each have demons inside us and none of us knows when we'll snap - I should know," Kaitlin stated darkly.

Cassie then left the young girls to go check out Abigail and Electra. She cleaned their wounds and wiped away as much of the blood as she could. Both girls were very miserable and both were distinctly unhappy by the turn of events. Cameron turned to Abigail once Cassie had finished treating her wounds.

"Abigail, I am going to lock you in . . ."

"No!"

"I have to. We need to talk about what happened and it is for your own safety as well as for everybody else's."

"I'm not a threat," Abigail tried, tears running down her face.

"Please don't leave me alone."

"Someone will be back in a few minutes - hang in there, Abigail."

"NO!" Abigail screamed as Cameron left the room and pulled the door closed behind him - it latched automatically.

He could hear Abigail kicking the door - she could not strike the door with her fists as they were still secure behind her back. He felt really bad about leaving her, but he had to. Eric was watching both girls via the CCTV, so no harm would come to them. He saw the aggrieved face of his twin sister as she pulled the door shut on a screaming Electra.

"I hated doing that," Natasha said as they sat down at a table with Cassie and Keira.

"Me too, but sometimes, you have to be cruel to be kind," Cameron admitted.

"What do we do with them?" Cassie asked, clearly distressed by what she had witnessed.

"I don't know. I've never seen anything like it. I saw them both bang into each other, during the sparring - maybe that was the spark that set them off," Keira commented.

"They do have unfinished business, those two," Natasha admitted. "I think we should talk to Mindy - we are way out of our league, here."

"What about the girls; we can't keep them cuffed and locked up," Cameron pointed out.

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Abigail looked up at the door with very red eyes and with dried tears on her cheeks. Harper smiled at her as she entered the room. The door clicked ominously closed behind her. Abigail hung her head, ashamed by her actions. But she had no idea how, or why, she had acted in that way against Electra who she saw as her friend - even if they were not actual friends.

"Turn around," Harper ordered.

Abigail did as she was instructed and Harper unlocked then removed the handcuffs.

"Better?" Harper asked.

"Much - thanks," Abigail replied as she rubbed her wrists and flexed her arms. "What's going to happen to me?"

"Well, for now, I am going to sit with you and we can talk, or do nothing - I leave that up to you. I'm just want to be here for you."

"That did not answer my question, but thanks for being here and thanks for removing the cuffs."

"You are not our prisoner, Abigail - you just scared the fuck out of everybody. As to what is going to happen to you - I honestly have no idea, sorry."

"That's okay - just you being here is good," Abigail said with a forced smile. "I've really fucked up, haven't I?"

"Yes, Abigail - that was really bad. Why did you do it?"

"I have no idea - Electra was supposed to be my friend. Somehow, we started fighting and I saw red . . . I wanted to kill her. It was like I was back in Virginia."

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In the next door holding room, Naomi was sitting with Electra who was very pleased to be out of the handcuffs. She also had no idea what had possessed her to behave in the way that she had. It had scared her.

"I don't know what happened, Naomi."

"It was shocking - I've seen *Predator* v *Predator* fights before, but wow!"

Electra grimaced.

"I'm not proud of what I did - I like Abigail. I know we have a bad history, but she didn't hurt me all that time ago because she wanted to; she had no choice."

Electra felt so low, lower than she had in weeks. Finding out that Stephanie was still alive, and even better, seeing her again, had been a high for her. Meeting other *Predators* had also been amazing and she had felt so happy.

"Are you going to get rid of me?"

"No way!" Naomi exclaimed. "Don't you dare even think it!"

"Why not. . .?"

"Because you're our friend. I don't care about your past, Electra - we all have demons - we need each other. As far as I'm concerned, you are one of us and I know the others think the same. But you ever say anything like that again, and I will slap you stupid; you hear me, Electra?"

Electra said nothing for a few moments, but then she looked at Naomi and she smiled.

"Thanks, Naomi. You're a good friend and I'm sorry for what I said. All this is a struggle for me to cope with but I know I can get through it with all of you helping me."

"We'll be there - always."

"Oh, crap!"

"What?" Naomi asked.

"Stephanie's gonna kill me."

"Oh, yeah!"

That evening

Both girls were shocked and a very upset when, that evening, Cassie brought their nightclothes into their holding rooms.

They weren't the only ones as Naomi, Harper, and Kaitlin put up a valiant defence for their friends.

"No - I don't want to sleep here," Abigail tried as she burst into tears.

Electra had been the same but Cassie had explained to all five girls that Electra and Abigail both needed a 'timeout' until the following morning. Dejectedly, both girls had changed for bed and then climbed onto the very unappealing steel bunk. The light had been turned off, leaving a small nightlight illuminated near to the door of each cell. Both girls were scared but when the doors to their cells had clicked shut, both had cried themselves to sleep.

Cassie hated doing it, but it had to be done.

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Several hours later, Abigail came awake. She had no idea what had awoken her but it was still dark, apart from the nightlight which illuminated the area around the door. The door - it was ajar. It must have been the door mechanism which had awoken the girl as it was released. Abigail slid out of the bed and placed her bare feet onto the cold concrete floor - very cold! She padded over to the door and gingerly looked out into the darkened space outside.

"Don't hit me!"

Abigail turned to see Electra two feet away.

"Don't attack me and I won't hit you," Abigail retorted as she turned her back on Electra and moved forward into the shadows.

"Why did the doors release?" Electra asked.

"Can't you shut the fuck up?"

"Sorry - only trying to be friendly."

"We're bitter enemies, Electra - that fight proved that."

"How did that fight start, anyway?"

"I don't know, really."

"I think it was when you knocked into me, while you were sparring. .
."

"I did *not* knock into you! You knocked into me!" Abigail growled as she turned on Electra.

Abigail only turned a fraction before she yelled out as she received a strong punch to her left side. Abigail stumbled but then she kicked Electra in the stomach putting her down on her back, Abigail pounced on the young girl but then she froze for a moment as Electra's pyjama top came open and Abigail laid eyes on the stab-wound just above the younger girl's left collarbone.

Abigail pulled open the rest of the pyjama top and she followed the long scar from just above Electra's right breast and on downwards, passing to the left of her bellybutton then on to her left thigh. Abigail stopped and checked out Electra's other thigh, where there was another stab wound, scarred over. Electra watched the older girl's eyes and she could feel Abigail's fingers as they traced the massive scar.

Electra reached up and lifted Abigail's pyjama top to find the scar on her left abdomen which extended vertically downwards from her left breast. Then she took Abigail's left hand and checked out both sides for the small knife wound there.

"Look, before we start stripping each other naked and then fucking each other's brains out, can we just sit down, please," Abigail growled.

Electra giggled as she sat up.

"We're a pair of idiots, aren't we?" she said slowly.

"You got that one right, Electra - I'm sorry for that scar and everything else that I've done to you, including that kick. Let's end this and become friends before our lord and master comes back across the Atlantic and kills us both."

"I'm sorry, too, Abigail. Yes - I'm scared of her too."

"Friends?" Abigail asked as she held out her right hand.

Electra glanced at the scar in the palm extended towards her, but she took it readily and shook it firmly.

"Friends!"

The following morning
Wednesday, September 7th

Vengeance Training Facility

"Well, hello, girls!" Cassie called out as she entered the holding room.

"Morning, Cassie, Natasha."

"You two sleep well?" Natasha asked.

"I think so," Electra commented as she looked over at Abigail lying on the bunk beside her.

"Well done, the both of you," Natasha added.

"You were watching us, weren't you?" Abigail enquired.

"Of course - we had to ensure your safety; both of you," Cassie confirmed.

"Thank you," Electra said.

"I second that," Abigail added as she received a hug from Electra.

"Electra - people are going to start talking; less of the lesbian shit, okay?"

"I promise," Electra grinned.

"Are we off house arrest, now?" Abigail asked.

"Fancy breakfast?" Cassie asked the two girls who quickly bolted up off the bunk in response.

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There were yells of welcome and happiness as the two girls entered the kitchen, still dressed in their pyjamas. Naomi, Kaitlin, and Harper squealed in delight.

"I go out of town for a few days and this is what I find on my return!" Yvette offered good-naturedly.

"I thought you'd returned to France," Electra pointed out.

"Oui."

"And . . ." Abigail pushed.

"Marinette and Adrien are headed out of town - to some shithole called Gotham, I think."

"Well, we are always glad to have such a polite young lady to stay," Cassie said.

Electra laughed out loud at that and Yvette scowled.

"Yvette is no 'polite lady', Cassie."

"Va te faire enculer!"

"Not nice!" Natasha exclaimed. "You'd better shove five Euros in the swear jar, Yvette."

"Merde!"

"Six Euros!"

Yvette grinned sheepishly as she emptied six coins into a jar labelled 'Guests'.

"See!" Electra smirked.

The following afternoon

Thursday, September 8th

Fusion Command Centre

"Fuckin' hell!" Abigail breathed as she ran her eyes over the armoured combat suits, including those belonging to Prowl, Glide, and Polaris.

"They're amazing. . ." Yvette commented.

"When do I get one?" Electra asked.

Cameron laughed.

"Not quite yet, little one."

"Who're you calling 'little', huh?" Electra growled.

"My apologies, Rigour!" Cameron chuckled.

"I should think so, too!"

"I think she's trying to stand in for Stephanie," Yvette said to Kaitlin who giggled.

"Anyway - we called you all here because Abby and Eric have come up with something important," Natasha said. "We've found somebody who might help us - not willingly, I suppose, not at first; but he will help us."

"All we need to know is where to aim our weapons," Abigail growled.

"Six *Predators* - a force to be reckoned with!" Keira chuckled. "Rein it in, Fury - you'll get your chance to fuck 'em over."

"Promise?"

"Promise."