

**Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

**Fulford Road Police Station**

It was difficult to see much as the only lighting was that of the battery-powered emergency lighting.

Natasha and Naomi were both figuring out the tactical situation. Kaitlin was still secured, as was Olivia. They were both out but handcuffed. They were both wearing underwear and disposable white suits. As Naomi watched, the sergeant tried to make use of her phone - she slammed it down in disgust.

"Dead!"

"Your radios?" Naomi asked.

"No response on the net," the other police officer commented as he looked over at his colleague. "We're on our own."

"We're in danger," Naomi said and she raised her wrists towards the police officers. "Can you undo us?"

"No chance, honey," the custody sergeant replied as she stared into the darkness. "Both of you, get behind the desk."

Naomi and Natasha did exactly as they were directed and they made their way behind the desk. The male police officer secured the sturdy door just as a man, clad all in black, appeared in the doorway to the custody suite. He was illuminated by the emergency lighting above his head as he raised his weapon - an H&K MP5 submachine gun fitted with a suppressor - but before he could open fire the custody sergeant slammed her hand down on a red button to the right of the desk and with a crash, a steel shutter shot upwards and secured the office area.

Bullets could be heard pinging off the shutter on the far side.

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Natasha looked over at the sergeant.

"You need to let us go," she said. "We can help you."

"Come on, honey - you think I was born yesterday?"

"You have people down, out there. We have the skills to protect you and whomever remains. We can get you all to safety. Give us a chance, please?"

The sergeant and her colleague studied Natasha and Naomi for a full minute.

"What have we got to lose, Sergeant?" the male officer asked his superior who simply shrugged in response.

"In for a penny. . ." the custody sergeant grimaced as she stepped over towards Naomi and unlocked the cuffs from her wrists before turning to Natasha. "If you two make me regret this. . ."

"We won't!" Naomi said sweetly with a huge grin.

"Our weapons . . . where are they?" Natasha asked the officers once her hands were free.

"The firearms are locked in the basement . . . but your bodysuits and other kit is in the locker over there."

Naomi ran over and she began to ransack the indicated locker, throwing kit out onto the floor. She and Natasha ripped open the evidence bags and they quickly pulled off the disposable white suits before pulling on their slimline combat suits and clothing. The two police officers looked on in awe as the two females dressed and armed themselves in a very speedy, orderly, and professional fashion.

"Keys, for the cells where our friends are," Naomi demanded as she pulled on her mask and held out a gloved hand.

"In for a pound. . ." the custody sergeant chuckled as she handed over the keys to the cells. "Cell 5 - down and around the corner for the older girl - and cell 14 for your psycho friend."

"Can I borrow this?" Naomi asked as she swiped a yellow Taser from a holder beneath the custody desk.

"Be my guest."

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The next problem was escaping from the custody office without getting a bullet in the head which would *not* be a desirable end to the day.

Natasha studied the ceiling tiles for a moment or two and then she smiled. Dragging a table over, she jumped up and pushed aside one of the tiles from the suspended ceiling before peering into the void. Natasha looked down at the diminutive form of Naomi Ward who looked back and groaned.

"I think you're going to fit, just fine!" Natasha chuckled as she pulled Naomi up onto the table.

"The bad side of being thin and gorgeous," Naomi muttered.

The custody sergeant laughed as Naomi was stuffed into the ceiling void.

"Take it slowly. Can you see the vent? Go see what's going on," Natasha directed.

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The nine-year-old girl grumbled to herself as she nimbly moved from aluminium stretcher to aluminium stretcher, hoping that the wire mounts were firm and strong. Naomi did not weigh very much but the ceiling was not designed to have somebody crawling through the void, so she had to be very careful. Despite the steel shutters being

bulletproof, they were not soundproof, and neither was the air vent a few feet away. There was the sound of shouting and gunshots from beyond and Naomi was well aware that if anybody was below her, they would be able to hear her, should she make a noise.

Once she reached the air vent, Naomi listened for any movement immediately below - she could hear nothing - but she kept listening for another minute, just in case. Beyond the air vent, it was dark - the nearest emergency light was a few yards away at the opposite end of the custody suite - so Naomi took a chance and she unclipped the rectangular air vent, then pulled it back inside and laid it down on top of the roof tile to her right. Tentatively, the young girl stuck her head out of the gaping hole and she peered downwards - pay dirt!

Slowly, the girl replaced the air vent before moving carefully back towards the open tile.

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"Well?" Natasha asked.

"One man, just to the right of the door - he's waiting for us to come out," Naomi reported.

"Not good."

"If you can make a noise at the door - you know, as if you were coming out - I can take him from above using you as the distraction."

"You sure?"

"I need to find Kaitlin."

"Okay."

Naomi returned to her air vent while Natasha pulled out a six-inch knife and walked over to the door where she made noisy efforts to work the bolts. Naomi, meanwhile, had removed the air vent for the second time and she used her flexibility to hang downwards, her back against the steel shutter. In her right hand, she held a four-inch blade while her left held the borrowed Taser. The man, clad in black, and with his sub-machinegun aimed at the doorway had no idea that a vicious killer was dangling just above and behind him.

"Hi!" Prowl hissed.

The man's head jerked around and he found himself staring at an inverted masked object which was just visible in the dim illumination. He had no time to say or do anything as the Taser was jammed into the bare skin on his neck and he shuddered as 20,000-volts tore through his body, convulsing his muscles as he dropped to the lino flooring.

Prowl followed, dropping to the ground silently where she slit his throat.

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"Oh, my God!" the custody sergeant exclaimed when she saw the obviously dead body lying in a pool of its own blood.

It was not the sight of the body which shocked her - she had seen many in her career - it was the coldness of the tender-aged killer. The murderer, or should that have been executioner, was checking out the nearest corridor. She held the dead man's H&K MP5 like a pro, the veteran police officer thought.

"We go for Olivia, first," Crimson suggested and Prowl nodded. "You two - stay in the office until we've cleared the building."

The two police officers nodded at the masked individuals as they retreated back into the custody office as Natasha took custody of the dead man's pistol and three spare magazines. She passed two full MP5 magazines over to Naomi who shoved them into her pockets. The pair moved off down the corridor to the right and towards the sound of voices. They moved slowly in the darkness watching out for an ambush or friendlies. They passed two dead police officers - the attackers did not appear to care about who they were putting down.

As they neared the voices, they heard a scream - it was a young girl's scream and they both recognised it as being Olivia. She was obviously no longer in her cell. The two vigilantes increased their pace but stopped at the next turn in the corridor.

"Shut up, you snivelling bitch!" a voice snarled and there was the sound of a slap followed by a scream of pain.

"You . . . you will all die, you know!"

Prowl looked over at Crimson in surprise - it had been Olivia's voice. The voice was full of fear but she was obviously digging deep for some courage.

"In your dreams . . . there is nobody here who can prevent us from completing our mission."

Surprisingly, Olivia laughed.

"You have *no* idea *who* you're dealing with, do you?" came her voice with a lot more conviction.

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"What are a bunch of fucked up kids going to do?"

"We are *not* kids," came an electronically enhanced voice from behind the man. "We are *Predators!*"

"What the fu. . ."

The man never completed his sentence as a triple burst from the MP5 blew his skull apart, showering Olivia with blood, bone, and brain matter. Before the shocked and horrified teenager could scream, Crimson put two bullets into the head of the other man, adding some more blood, bone, and brain matter to the shaking, petrified youngster. Olivia just stood there until Prowl reached up and

slapped the older girl around the face - twice. Olivia looked down at Prowl.

"Slap me again, Prowl, and I'll fuckin' floor you!" she growled as tears of relief ran down her face.

"Good on ya, Ajax!" Prowl replied.

"Who were they?"

"Good question," Crimson replied. "But they aren't here for our health."

"Let's move we need to find Kaitlin," Prowl pushed.

As they moved off, with Olivia in between them, Prowl asked her friend a question.

"Glad you came out with us, Ajax?"

Olivia actually laughed.

"Ask me again when we get home."

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### ***Outside Fulford Road Police Station***

The three S015 Ford Mondeo hatchbacks drove into a firestorm as they turned off the Fulford Road.

The first car was struck by a hail of bullets which shattered the windscreen and wounded the driver and the front passenger. The car skidded into a lamppost coming to halt blocking the entrance road. The second car slammed on its brakes but not before it collided with the first car's boot but the driver pushed past and he drove at two black-clad gunmen, hitting them both, throwing one over the top of his car. The third car stopped short and the driver shifted into reverse and accelerated back out into the street before stopping dead and everybody dived out, automatic weapons in their hands. A fourth vehicle, a Range Rover skidded to a halt beside the Mondeo and disgorged a man who wore a suit and tie along with three others, all armed. A gunfight ensued between the occupants of the Mondeos and several gunmen firing from cover.

"Bloody hell!" Commander Haig groaned. "This is going to take a lot to explain - talk about a jurisdictional nightmare!"

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### ***Inside Fulford Road Police Station***

Kaitlin knew something was up, but she had no idea what.

She banged on her cell door but she received no response for several minutes during which she heard shouts, screams, and what she swore had to be gunshots. Finally, she heard the lock being turned.

"About fucking time!" she growled as the door was heaved open.

Kaitlin froze as a man came into view - he was no police officer; he was clad from head-to-toe in black with body armour protecting his torso. He was also pointing an automatic weapon directly at her.

"Go ahead," Kaitlin drawled as she stared at the man without any outward hint of fear. "Make my day."

"Get down on the floor - keep your hands where I can see them," the man ordered, ignoring the little girl's misplaced bravado.

Kaitlin followed the man's orders as she went down on her knees but before she could drop face down, she heard three suppressed gunshots at close range and she cringed thinking that the man was shooting at her.

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"What are you doing down there?"

Kaitlin looked up at the voice, surprised to recognise it, and even more surprised to hear it in the police station during a vicious attack.

"That expression looks anything but clever and you don't need to kneel before me, but it's good to see that you know your place," the young girl grinned as Kaitlin scowled and quickly jumped to her feet. "Bit chilly for underwear, I would have thought, and I didn't know you were into cuffs."

"You finished being funny?" Kaitlin demanded with a scowl before she grinned. "Good to see you, Rigour."

"Likewise," Rigour replied from behind her mask, an H&K MP5K sub-machinegun held loosely in her hands.

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A corridor away, Prowl stayed in cover until the man emptied his magazine in her direction, and then she stepped out, her own MP5 raised.

"You're out of bullets," she growled. "And you know what that means: you're shit outta luck."

A brief squeeze of the trigger and the man's face vanished in a cloud of blood. Prowl calmly ejected the weapon's magazine and she inserted a fresh one before slapping the cocking lever down and forwards. Prowl moved off with Olivia close behind and Crimson covering their rear. Olivia was stunned by what she was seeing. She knew what Vengeance did and for the first time, she had witnessed them killing but seeing the dead bodies, both friendlies and enemies, was a nasty shock to the thirteen-year-old. Memories pushed far back in her mind were beginning to resurface of other dead bodies, including those of her own parents. She knew that she would have vicious nightmares that night - assuming she actually survived to go to bed.

The place stank of death and there was a coppery taste in the air which Olivia could not place. Whatever was going on with *Vengeance*, Olivia realised that she was smack in the middle of it whether or not she wanted to be there. It was time for her to step up and be an asset rather than a hindrance - she owed them all that for saving her life and she vowed to stop being a bitch who did not really care about the training which she was being offered to save her life.

The girl was hauled back to reality as Prowl yelled out.

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"Rigour!"

Rigour spun around to find Prowl running down the corridor with Crimson and another girl close behind. Prowl hugged her friend. After a minute, Rigour noticed the older girl.

"Who's the bloody spare?"

"That's Olivia - she's an apprentice called Ajax," Prowl replied.

"Cool," Electra replied as she looked the blood-covered Olivia up and down. "She one of us?"

"No chance!"

"She any good?"

"Fucking useless!" Kaitlin replied with a wink at Olivia who scowled at the gibe.

The group made their way back towards the custody suite and hammered on the office door.

"We're back!" Prowl called out.

The door opened slowly and a very relieved Sergeant waved them inside. Naomi pulled off her mask and she showed Kaitlin and Olivia where their own suits and clothing were.

"So, how did you all get out?"

"We just had Kaitlin be obnoxious and difficult," Natasha advised Electra. "Then Naomi pretended to be ill."

"You mean, Kaitlin just had to be herself?" Electra questioned.

Kaitlin glared up at Electra as she dressed, ignoring Olivia who was giggling.

"Oh, ha, fuckin', ha - my sides are splitting!" Kaitlin growled.

Natasha brought up her pistol as she heard movement outside the custody office.

"Well, if you lot have finished, we have gunmen at large!" Commander Haig suggested with an annoyed tone. "Not to mention several Armed Response Vehicles."

"Let's move," Natasha ordered once everybody was suitably attired with masks and Kaitlin and Olivia had finished dressing.

"Thank you," the custody sergeant said to Prowl.

"You're welcome," Prowl responded. "We're the good guys. I'm sorry about your colleagues."

"You're going to need this," the sergeant called out.

Prowl reached out as something came flying through the air. She caught the small black object and looked at it - it was the key to the Audi S8.

"Thanks."

They moved off towards the exit. Commander Haig led the way, striding ahead while the others followed with Sergeant Woodward covering their rear as they went. They had almost reached the exit into the car park when a not-quite-dead body moved and a bloody hand tried to raise a pistol.

"No, you bloody don't!" Commander Haig growled as he pressed a highly-polished brogue onto the almost-dead man's wrist, pinning it to the ground.

The Commander reached down with a gloved hand and he pulled the pistol from the bloody hand before putting a bullet in the man's head and dropping the pistol.

"Bloody menace!"

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Outside, there was carnage.

Natasha gasped as she took in the crashed, bullet-ridden cars, the dead bodies and the muted sound of injured people. Four men and a woman stood near the main road, waving the Commander forwards - they were obviously his people. They hurried over to the armed S015 officers who stood close by where their Audi was parked.

"Can you take Electra?" Commander Haig asked. "She insisted on coming but if they find that I brought my granddaughter on a raid - well, you can just imagine."

"Of course," Natasha replied.

A grinning Electra ran off towards a Range Rover where she pulled a backpack from the boot and then returned to the Audi, still grinning.

"Get in," Natasha directed the young girl. "Thanks, Commander."

"Go - quickly."

Natasha slid behind the wheel and she quickly checked that she had four girls with her before starting the engine and pulling away.



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## ***Safehouse VY***

"Only you, could get caught up in a police chase!"

Natasha grinned at her twin brother who hugged her tightly.

"Oh, thank, God!" Cassie exclaimed as she swept forwards and drew both of her girls into a hug.

Naomi and Kaitlin were very happy for the attention after their unfortunate day out and both tried to hide their tears of joy at seeing Cassie again. Olivia was pounced on by her sister and then by Jasper and Lynn, followed by Christopher. Olivia didn't care that she was crying, she as just glad to be safe.

"Always knew that you two would become jailbait," Harper commented with a smirk.

Secretly, she was very happy for the return of her friends, but she could not pass up the opportunity to have a dig at them. She was about to make a few more derogatory comments when she saw the diminutive form of another girl partially hidden behind Natasha. Electra's eyes went wide as she was all but flattened by Harper who came thundering towards her before the older girl wrapped her friend in a bearhug.

"Good to see you, Electra," Craig said with a grin. "Obviously took a proper *Predator* to rescue these pretenders!"

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Electra almost purred with pride at the compliment. Having come up the hard way, from being a Yellow, the youngster always felt second-class to those who had been selected directly as *Predators*. The moment she had heard that her friends were in trouble, she had insisted on going with her grandfather to help. He had said, no - at first - but then Electra had detailed her capabilities to him and shown him her slimline combat suit. He had given in, knowing that Electra was not about to back down when her friends were in danger.

She had relished the chance to do something for them and while the attack had been scary, Electra had enjoyed it. There was a part of her that enjoyed the danger and . . . to some extent . . . the killing. She had dived into the police station with Sergeant Woodward a few yards behind her - *that* had been non-negotiable! The corridors had been dimly lit by emergency lighting which created dark shadows where an enemy might be lurking. They had stopped in one corridor where a police officer was dying - he had been shot in the stomach and was bleeding badly, internally. Sergeant Woodward remained with him while Electra ran off down the corridor where she heard voices - more specifically, the obnoxious voice of her friend, Kaitlin.

"I'm glad to be here - I just wish it was under happy circumstances."

"Yeah," Kaitlin agreed. "Tell us about it!"

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Despite the late hour, there were many discussions ongoing. The arrest and then the attack had come as a very rude awakening to all. The danger had just increased to an almost unimaginable level and the adults sat down to discuss the way forward while the youngsters chatted for a short time before those, who had spent many hours incarcerated, soon fell asleep. However, it all came to ahead soon after midnight.

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***Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>***

***Safehouse VY***

Jasper was musing things over while the other adults talked animatedly as a news bulletin started on the TV.

"Shut up, all of you!" he called out and all turned to face the television.

*BBC News*

*'Seven police officers are dead, after a police station in the North Yorkshire city of York was attacked by unknown forces. It is not believed to be terrorist-related, however, the Home Office has yet to comment on the deaths.'*

"Not good. . ." Jasper commented as he turned off the television.

"I think it is time to leave for pastures new," Cameron declared.

"We have extra intelligence which we need to address. The current information available to us shows the trail beginning in the north, therefore, I would suggest that we head north. Nats, how about we head up to Loch Ewe?"

Natasha thought about that for a moment.

"Check in on Hull 67? Maybe go for a cruise?" she prompted.

"We could do with the break and it would get us out of harm's way for a few days," Cameron replied.

"What are you two on about?" Keira demanded.