

Saturday, October 8th, 2016

CALEDONIA

2130 hours

"We believe that Harper is being held at a property south of Coventry," Debbie had announced to Keira. "The big problem is how we go about it. It will be in the centre of the UK and just getting there will be a challenge as me and my team are under intense suspicion at the moment. You are all not exactly welcome on the mainland, either."

"Screw that - we can sneak ashore and do what we need," Cassie commented. "I have a plan."

"Really, Cassie?" Sarah commented. "A cunning and subtle one?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"As cunning as a fox who's just been appointed Professor of Cunning at Oxford University?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And Cassandra Perrin goes forth," Sarah chuckled, ignoring her sister's glare of death.

Cassie vanished to make some phone calls.

Sunday, October 9th

Just off the A27

Chichester By-Pass

Southern England

10:00

"We safe here?" Kaitlin queried.

"It's a derelict house, Kaitlin - nobody lives here, and it serves our purposes as a meeting point."

Keira was pacing back and forth - there were fifty hours left and they had barely a plan. They had each arrived in Chichester in small groups from different directions. Keira, Kaitlin, Naomi, and Cassie had been the first group, arriving by taxi from the city centre and completing the last mile on foot. The four females were soon joined by Craig, Jessica, Jeremy, and Trevor. Trevor drove the 2014 Ford Mondeo hatchback which had seen better days. Then, came a surprise. A Land Rover Discovery 4 pulled up and Kaitlin smiled enormously as Andrew Bedford, Cassie's fiancé stepped out and he hugged Cassie before picking up Kaitlin and Naomi in turn, hugging each girl tightly.

"Where did he come from?" Kaitlin demanded.

"He's been down on the south coast for a few days," Cassie explained. "He's been to pick up all of our kit. Better get it spread out - stick some in the Mondeo."

"Would have taken some explaining, if I was pulled," Andrew chuckled.

With Andrew were Natasha and Cameron. The team was growing as three more vehicles pulled up. One was a dark green Jeep, another a compact Vauxhall Corsa, while the other was a rather run-down Ford Focus. The Corsa held Debbie,

Electra, and Yvette. As for the Jeep, two women stepped out. One, Natasha instantly recognised.

"Hi, Mac!"

"Hello, Nats," the American woman replied.

"This is Colonel Sarah MacKenzie, Judge Advocate General's Corps, United States Marine Corps."

"Just call me, Mac," Mac replied as she introduced her companion. "This is Lieutenant Mathilda Grace Rabb."

"I prefer, Mattie," the young American woman grinned.

"Harm sends his greetings, as does Jen. I understand you are in a bind?" Mac said.

"Yes," Natasha replied. "We are in hot water and persona non-grata on the shores of the United Kingdom. We have invited yourselves as you are Americans and therefore not being tracked like we might be."

There was movement from the remaining vehicle and a tall man stepped out.

"*This* was your plan?" Natasha growled. "You bring *that* cock-sucking bastard?"

"He's promised to be nice - assuming he wants to get his career back on track," Cassie commented.

"You weren't there when he fucked us all up," Cameron pointed out, anger growing.

"I understand he's reformed, besides - nobody's watching a washed out Royal Navy officer with no career prospects."

"Bit harsh," Lieutenant-Commander Bob Mitchell commented. "I may have been an asshole to Hit Girl, but I have reformed and besides, I serve the Queen and this Government; I will do everything I can to help you in your quest."

"One slip and you die," Natasha advised the officer.

"What's with the kids?" Mattie asked.

About ten minutes later, it was time to depart.

"What vehicle are we using?" the ever-observant Kaitlin asked as she saw no space for them.

"Andrew left it parked around the corner - go look," Cassie said.

Kaitlin ran around the corner excitedly, but the grin vanished very quickly. Cassie followed, along with Keira and Naomi.

"Has it got a five-litre V12?" Kaitlin demanded.

"Nope."

"Hidden machine guns?"

"Nope."

"Three-litre V6?"

"Nope."

"*Anything* special?"

"Nope - just a standard car."

Kaitlin gave the rather mundane looking Volkswagen Passat estate a grim glare.

"It's so demeaning."

"Just get in - and honey?"

"Yes?" Kaitlin asked as she pulled open the rear door."

"Belt up in the back, there's a good girl!" Cassie chuckled.

Kaitlin scowled as Naomi laughed.

That afternoon

Hunningham

The three-hour drive had been tiring, but they had all rested upon arrival about eight miles to the south of Coventry.

Mac and Mattie cruised around the area relying on their American accents to protect them should they be stopped. They took photos, plenty of them. Also on a reconnaissance mission, Jason and his family were out looking for anything and everything. The two *Predators* knew what was at stake; one of their own was in danger. Their training had kicked in the moment that they had arrived in the area, taking in cars and faces as they drove around the area. The assault team was to be Craig, Naomi, and Kaitlin. Cassie, along with Natasha and Cameron were backup for the *Predators* with Jessica and Jeremy on lookout. Electra and Yvette were with Debbie and Jack, positioned in case of a break out to the west, as were Jason, Nicky, and their kids covering the east. Mac and Mattie were on hand should interference be required. Keira, Trevor, and Mitchell were the grab team. Considering the video, they had witnessed, it was expected that Harper would not be able to move on her own. They also had medical supplies available should their assault prove successful.

Their assault *had* to be successful.

Later that night

It was a little before ten when they moved in.

Glide as the smallest led the assault team, NVGs on her head. Over to her right, Prowl, with Stripe further over. Each held a suppressed automatic rifle to their shoulders as they moved toward the target building. The tactical situation was lousy, and they were limited in their points of advance. The biggest problem was the proximity to civilians and the fact that armed police support was only minutes away from them. To add to the problems, there was heavy rainfall, which from the other side of the coin would mask their approach.

Glide paused as she came closer to the main group of buildings. A light had just come on, illuminating a rear section of the guardian. She raised her left fist and her team halted. Glide lifted her NVGs and she brought up a set of binoculars. As the astounded girl watched, a door was thrown open and two people stepped out into the rain.

"I have Polaris in sight!" Glide radioed. "Repeat, I have Polaris in sight!"

Glide could not believe her eyes as her friend was thrust outside into the freezing rain, completely naked apart from some medical dressings. The other

person was apparently a girl in a hooded waterproof jacket. Then Glide was appalled as Harper was shoved down into the mud and then mud was kicked in her face. Harper spluttered, as she choked on the mud before she was yanked to her feet and hosed down. Forty seconds later, the door slammed shut and the light went out. With her left hand, Glide waved her team forwards. They made it all of ten yards before Naomi caught an unseen tripwire.

There was a loud bang, and a bright white flare rocketed into the sky.

Several minutes earlier

Despite her not having a watch, she knew roughly the time of night because of the routine.

Once again, she was roused from a deep sleep, stripped naked, soaked, and thrown into the mud. From Harper's point of view, it was getting really old. On top of the original three broken fingers on her left hand, she now had numerous, painful, cigarette burns on her front and a nasty cut on her left thigh - a gift from Instructor Morris the previous afternoon. On the plus side, she had received another meal and a trip to the toilet. Unfortunately, there was the negative side, too - another visit to Room 14 and that delightful bitch.

"Hello, Harper, so nice of you to join us."

Harper was about to respond with some snarky comment, but then she saw who else was in the room and the fear took over and she shook from head to toe as she shivered in her towel. She recognised the smirking face of Susan Cummings as the woman sat in a chair beside Morris.

"So, this is one of the little shits that burnt down my house in the Isle of man, almost taking me with it," she hissed.

Harper figured that she was in deep trouble. The woman looked really angry and the left side of her face was covered in a field dressing, as was the lower part of her left arm. It looked like she got burnt some after they had left her inside her burning house.

"If you would," Cummings directed.

Harper screamed as Morris lifted the nine-and-a-half-year-old off the floor before slamming her down on the table and ripping the towel away. Cummings produced a device which Harper recognised from her torture training. It was the device cooks used and was basically a pressurised blowtorch. Harper shook and fought as Cummings lit the flame, but she was pinned down by Morris. Harper was transfixed by the bright blue flame knowing as the tip moved closer and closer that intense pain was awaiting her. Then the tip of the flame touched the surface of her skin, a short distance to the left of her navel. The pain was like nothing the young girl had ever endured in her 3,492 days of being alive. Harper screamed, and she screamed. Then the heat eased, but not the pain. Harper struggled to understand what was happening as she was bundled up in her towel and carried out of the room. There was frantic activity as people were shouting and doors were banging. Whatever was going on, it was bad.

But for Harper, she did not care as she mercifully lost consciousness and the unbelievable pain faded.

..._...

The gunfire was intense.

All attempts at stealth were abandoned as gunmen appeared from everywhere, including almost a dozen from across the road. Crimson and Drift moved to support the three *Predators* as they fought their way towards the buildings. Raptor and Mitchell ran to assist, leaving Keira to guard the Passat should they find Harper and need to make their escape. Then a group of people emerged from a side entrance and Keira saw that one of them, a man, held a bundle in his arms. Keira could not believe her eyes . . . it was Harper. Harper was bundled into the back of a BMW saloon by an armed man before the vehicle accelerated away, straight past where the Passat was hiding. Keira dived behind the wheel of the Passat and ten seconds later, Keira was in pursuit of the fleeing BMW which had her little sister aboard.

She radioed her situation but focussed on the chase.

The Passat

The BMW headed in a southerly direction at highspeed.

Initially, the BMW had no idea that they were being pursued but Keira was quick to notice the evasive behaviour which began about a mile down the road. A further half mile down the road, the BMW slowed for a left-hand bend, allowing Keira to close for a moment and she anchored on the brakes before flooring the six-speed automatic transmission. They were now heading east. The BMW narrowly avoided a smash at a dog-legged junction as it fishtailed across the junction. Inside the BMW, Harper was regaining consciousness - she was cold and barely covered in the towel. Her left side was burning, literally, and the pain was . . . Harper screamed as she was thrown to the side of the back seat as the car took a hard-right turn at a junction. The armed man beside her, yanked her back into the middle where he could keep an eye on her.

Keira was furious, she was so close. The right-hand turn was not easy with such a large car and she almost lost control of the almost two-tonne vehicle. She streaked down a long straight road at over eighty-miles-per-hour, closing on the BMW which suddenly slammed on the brakes. Keira could see a roundabout approaching on the map displayed in the dash and she too slammed on the brakes. She clipped the edge of the roundabout as she skidded around before heading down the B4455 Fosse Way. The next two miles or so was relatively straight, but narrow road, none of which was lit. Keira was able to catch up and pass alongside after just under a mile and she tried to nudge the BMW off the road, constantly aware that her little sister was aboard that very same BMW.

The road was too narrow, and the BMW kept slipping back into place on the tarmac. Keira accelerated ahead trying to pass and block the vehicle, but the BMW was able to nudge ahead, despite them approaching ninety-miles-per-hour. Then another vehicle came onto the road from the opposing direction and Keira backed down to avoid a disastrous collision, allowing the BMW to move ahead. The BMW driver then scared the life out of Keira as he did the unexpected. Instead of continuing in a southerly direction along the relatively straight road, the BMW suddenly anchored on the brakes and took a sharp right up a farm road.

Keira barely had time to make the same turn, clipping a road sign with the back of the estate, creating a loud bang. The farm road was gritty and that also caused the wide eighteen-inch tyres to struggle with grip and the rear end to fishtail as Keira took the varied turns along the very narrow road. A tight left turn approached, only visible because Keira had seen the BMW take the turn fifty or sixty yards ahead. A quarter mile ahead, they blasted through a farmyard and took a dirt track heading in a northerly direction. Over the next

mile or so, they took several sharp bends, and accelerated down some lengthy straights before they thundered into the sleepy village of Radford Semele. However, the BMW driver appeared to have made a mistake.

After dodging a few people out walking their dogs and scaring the crap out of a few people who were stumbling their way back home from the pub, the BMW approached a T-junction, but he misjudged it in a major way and he slammed on his brakes far too late and the BMW spun sideways in an effort to make the turn after an otherwise almost perfect six-and-a-half-mile chase.

Keira watched as the BMW slammed sideways into the hedge at speed, coming to a halt very quickly as it bounced back into the road junction.

Hunningham

The fighting had moved to close combat.

They all knew that Harper was gone, but they needed to push on and take down those who had taken and obviously tortured Harper. Assault rifles had been discarded and the *Predators* were resorting to knives and pistols. Stripe was in his element as he fought to avenge his missing comrade. He moved from man to man, stabbing and shooting as he waded through them. He was very angry, and he made damn sure everybody knew it. As for Glide, she was just as angry, and in partnership with Prowl, she made her own anger known as she put bullets into knees and she stabbed blades into hearts. Drift took on the larger men while Nemesis and Crimson pushed towards the house. They were all aware that three vehicles were speeding away from the site and the outlying teams had been notified to attempt intercepts.

Then, just as Glide approached the doorway where she had seen Harper not too long before, she was grabbed by some very strong hands. Then the girl screamed with fear as she looked up into a face, direct from her worst nightmares. The girl squirmed, and she fought as she tried desperately to escape the hold on her arms. The paralysing fear that Glide felt within her prevented the girl from properly reacting and thenceforth using her training to break out of the hold. Nemesis would never be able to forget the piercing scream nor who had uttered the instantly recognisable sound of intense pain and distress.

The scream cut through the night as Glide's shoulder was viciously wrenched from its socket. The ball of the joint tried to regain its former position in the socket, but it failed, only moving partially back into place. The girl continued to scream as she writhed in agony, all thought of fighting gone. Prowl was the next on the scene and for a very brief moment, she too froze when she saw who had hold of Glide. The face of Instructor Morris struck fear into her very being, but she fought through that and she brought her pistol up but not before she herself was struck by two bullets in the stomach, winding the girl who fell to her knees as she struggled to breath.

Stripe attacked the man who had shot Prowl while Nemesis raced for Glide.

The Passat

With a screech of brakes, the Passat slithered to a halt.

Keira dived out of the car and she ran for the immobilised BMW where she yanked open the rear door and she felt relief like nothing she had ever felt before. Harper was right there, tears spilling down her battered face. Keira yanked out the unconscious gunman who appeared to have taken the brunt of the impact,

saving Harper. Harper held out her right hand to her sister and Keira relished the first touch in days. Then, with a scream of pain, Harper was viciously ripped away from Keira by a girl with fiery red hair who had reached in from the opposite side. The girl grinned as she slammed the opposite door before throwing the screaming Harper into a waiting Range Rover. Keira pulled her pistol, but a fusillade of gunfire had her diving for cover.

Harper was beside herself with fear and desperation as she was shoved into yet another vehicle. To see her sister so near, to have actually touched her, but then for her to be moving away . . . leaving her . . . Harper's heart was ripped apart as she yelled out in desperation.

"Keira! Keira! Don't leave me! *Please . . . K-E-I-R-A!*"

Hunningham

The woman was firing off bullets from a large calibre pistol as she backed towards the house and perceived safety.

Mitchell broke from cover and he ran directly at the woman, putting three bullets into her skull. Glide fell to the ground screaming and writhing as Mitchell ran over and he put a fourth bullet into the bitch's head for good measure. Mitchell was many things, few of them good, but he despised cruelty to children. He was also an experienced officer who recognised the injury. With a sharp movement, he snapped the shoulder back into place; Glide's muscles accomplishing most of the job. Almost immediately, the level of pain dropped by a magnitude and Glide stopped screaming but she was shaking from head to toe as Mitchell guided her to safety.

"She's safe," Mitchell announced as he panted from all the exertion.

"Thank you," Nemesis said as she held her daughter.

It was time to move; Police sirens could be heard not too far distant. Over the radio, came the sound of failure. Harper's second disappearance was confirmed by Mac who had caught up with a distraught Keira. They all ran for their vehicles but as they ran, Mitchell collapsed to the road.

He was coughing up blood as he rolled onto his side.

Jason, Nicky, Tim, and Natalie

Two-thirds of a mile to the east of Hunningham

The first ambush of the night was on a smart Range Rover which came right at them, only their Land Rover Discovery 4 successfully blocked the road causing the large 4x4 to slither to a halt in the rain.

Jason and Nicky covered the attack while their *Predators* advanced on the stopped vehicle. Gunmen leapt out of the stopped Range Rover and a fierce firefight began, culminating in the two *Predators* closing in as a team and dropping the three gunmen in a little over a minute. Natalie, otherwise known as Siren, jumped onto the bonnet of the Range Rover and she shattered the windscreen with two well-placed bullets from her Heckler & Koch MP5 submachine gun. Tim, otherwise known as Snake Eyes, put a bullet in the driver's head before turning his attention to the one person remaining alive.

"Move and I fucking gut you, bastard!" Siren declared.

Debbie, Jack, Yvette, and Electra

One mile to the north of Hunningham

Debbie and Jack were very impressed as Rigour and La Terreur tore into the stopped Audi, shattering the windows and killing all but the protected passenger.

They were stunned at the skill and professionalism shown by the two young girls as they struck from both sides and then from above as Rigour used the sunroof to kill the driver from above.

"One in custody," La Terreur reported."

CALEDONIA

The silence was killing them.

No news had been forthcoming as it had been deemed essential to maintain total emissions control on *CALEDONIA*. The highly advanced snooping systems of GCHQ were only a short distance inland, and any signals would be instantly hoovered up and identified, betraying *Vengeance*, even as they fought a critical battle to rescue one of their own. All those not involved in the rescue mission directly were continuing with their duties aboard the yacht, but their minds and blessings were with those facing danger over a hundred miles to the north.

It was the first time that Olivia had really felt like part of the crew. Everybody was civil to her, and nobody was nasty. Nobody even mentioned what she had endured. Olivia hated the fact that everybody had seen her naked, the boys, the adults. She felt utterly humiliated, only she had a friend. A friend who was always there. To Olivia, Mary was more than a Princess; she was a friend. The two thirteen-year-olds had been together ever since Olivia had regained consciousness from her operation to remove the tracker. Ginny was very impressed with how her charge, Mary, had matured during her short time with *Vengeance*. The Princess had remained neutral during the Olivia situation and she had behaved with a maturity way beyond her years.

As Ginny watched, the two girls were whispering and giggling. Furtive glances were visible as the two girls checked to see who might have overheard them as they whispered conspiratorially. Olivia had wanted to be on the rescue operation, but her body was still recovering from the minor operation and she was not ready for action. Across the deck, Marinette and Adrien were concerned about their ward, Yvette. To them, Yvette was their daughter. Even Alya missed Yvette, despite her initial reservations at taking in a pint-sized killer. Amy, of course, was concerned for her only son, Craig. She had seen how angry the boy had been at the thought of betrayal and how worried he had been about Harper. To Craig, all the girls were like younger sisters to the boy and he ferociously guarded them as such.

Sarah paced the bridge as she kept the yacht three miles out at sea.

Hunningham

Nemesis and Crimson dropped down beside the man and they searched for injuries.

Crimson's gauntlet came back covered in blood. The man had taken a large calibre bullet in the gut and he was bleeding more in than out. He would not survive the night.

"Tell . . . tell Hit Girl . . . tell her that I am sorry for what I did. Tell her that I . . . am sorry for not being able to tell her in person."

"Don't talk, Mitchell," Nemesis advised as she tried to make the man comfortable.

"Forgive me. . ."

Mitchell died as his final breath passed his lips and Nemesis sank back onto her heels. The man had put Glide's safety before his own and then he had paid with his life for that choice.

A girl would live thanks to his sacrifice.

The next afternoon

Monday, October 10th

RAF OAKINGTON

The decommissioned Royal Air Force station no longer had runways and was no longer even an active military base.

However, it was 65 miles away from the previous night's failure. Jasper, Lynn, and David had met the returning teams in the early hours. The teams had stumbled out of their vehicles in the security of the large aircraft hangar. Over to one side, a group of eight portacabins were arranged, two high in a line of four, end to end. The heating within those cabins was on and the tired fighters, dejected by the night's lack of success, slumped onto bare mattresses falling asleep almost immediately. Keira was inconsolable, and she had cried herself to sleep.

That morning, David and Trevor had set to work on one of the portacabins, covering the insides of two rooms with thick plastic. Sawdust was scattered over the floor and one or two other alterations were made. The two men were very happy with their work as they headed to the far end of the hanger where two forms lay huddled under the watchful eyes of Nicky Parsons.

"Hello," David announced cheerfully. "I must apologise for your current accommodations - however, your private rooms are now ready."

Room 101

Lynn pushed open the door, chuckling at the 'ROOM 101' sign.

"Good morning!"

"What do you want?" the woman demanded.

"Information, Miss Pitt."

The woman blinked at hearing her name.

"You are Sebastian Radford's Personal Assistant?"

Miss Pitt glared at her captor, not answering.

"The question was rhetorical, so let's get down to business."

Lynn took the back of her gloved hand across the right cheek of the glamorously dressed woman. Or they would have been glamorous if she had not been forced to spend a sleepless night in the corner of a dusty aircraft hangar. The woman was

in her mid-thirties and highly intelligent, according to the hastily compiled file which Lynn held in her hands. Lynn could tell the type who supplanted their salary by offering the boss sexual favours to get a leg up, so to speak. The woman barely screamed as she was struck. She did not burst into tears, instead, she just glared at Lynn. Without warning, Lynn drove her fist directly into the smug bitch's face. There was an explosion of blood and mucus as the nose broke. After a very short screaming session, intermingled with some very creative language, the woman yelled at Lynn.

"Aren't you supposed to be asking me questions?"

"Silly me!" Lynn exclaimed. "I forgot all about that . . . thank you, so much," Lynn replied before she drove her fist into the woman's stomach.

The woman would have doubled over had her hands not been suspended above her head, attached to a discreetly installed steel hook high in the wall by her bindings.

"Back soon, Miss Pitt!" Lynn offered cheerfully as she left the room, securely closing and locking the door behind her.

Room 102

Next door, Jasper closed the door behind him and he simply stood there, staring at the man who hung from a meat hook hastily installed in the ceiling.

The man was one of Sebastian's staff. He was senior enough to know what was going on - at least that was what Jasper figured. He was operating on experience by that point. The man's shoes were barely touching the ground and after twenty minutes of hanging in such a position, his muscles were starting to elicit pain.

"Myself and my colleagues from Five have a thing about grown adults hurting kids."

"Those fucking abortions are not kids!" the man exclaimed venomously.

"They had no choice as to their upbringing, but they are kids - lovely kids. Let me introduce them to you."

Jasper knocked on the door which opened smartly and five *Predators* marched in.

"This is Craig - he is thirteen and he is a *Predator*. Beside him is Naomi - she is nine and also a *Predator*. Then we have Electra - she is ten and a slightly different type of *Predator*. Then we have Yvette - she is also ten and a French *Predator*. They are all friends of Harper, whom you bastards have tortured. I am going to leave you in their care. Goodbye."

"Now children, you have fun but please, don't play nicely," Jasper chuckled as he closed the door.

Kaitlin had refused to take part.

She lay on her mattress, just staring into space while Cassie lay with her. Naomi had explained how it had been Instructor Morris who had taken the strap to Kaitlin all those months before and Kaitlin had been traumatised by the woman back then. While Kaitlin was pleased that the woman was dead, it had all been a terrible shock for the eight-year-old. She had not slept very well on their return, experiencing horrific nightmares as a result of coming into contact with the woman again. It did not help that her shoulder hurt

constantly, despite the painkillers. Kaitlin was feeling a little better three hours later when her friends reappeared looking hot, sweaty, and bloody. Naomi grinned fiendishly, and she held something out on a paper plate for Kaitlin.

"A present for you, sister," Naomi grinned.

Kaitlin looked at Yvette and Electra who just shrugged. Kaitlin looked closer at what looked like a blob of meat on the plate.

"Is that a . . .?"

"A penis," nine-year-old Naomi confirmed happily.

"Ewww - and you say *I* have problems," Kaitlin commented with a grimace.

The following day

Tuesday, October 11th, 2016

Noon

"Keira! Keira! Don't leave me! *Please . . . K-E-I-R-A!*"

She had failed. It was the hardest thing that she had ever had to do . . . but there had been no choice. That fact was backed up when she checked her watch:

00:00:15 . . . 00:00:10 . . . 00:00:05 . . . 00:00:01

Keira began to sob as her watch beeped to indicate that the countdown was over. She knew in her heart that her sister was dead. Harper's final words echoed through her mind again, just as they had done ever since they had made their escape: "Keira! Keira! Don't leave me! *Please . . . K-E-I-R-A!*" Her heart was in tatters at the thought of what she had done.

She collapsed to the ground beside the vehicles and sobbed.

Two hours later

CALEDONIA

Keira's mobile rang - it was Commander Haig.

He struggled to speak, but he advised Keira that he was sending on an email which had been sent to his personal mailbox. Keira's hands trembled as she opened the email - there was a video file attached.

"I'll do it," Cassie offered as she took the laptop off her friend and she opened the video file.

It was Harper - only she lay on the floor, not moving. What appeared to be blood and other bodily fluids pooled around her body as she lay on her back, her eyes closed. There was no obvious movement in the girl's chest to indicate that she was breathing. From the bruising and visible wounds, it appeared that she had been beaten to death. Keira could not move. She just sat there staring at the image which went on and on.

"As you can see," the familiar voice sneered, "Little Harper has served out her purpose and thanks to your negligence, she has died. There was no need for her to have died but you insisted on ignoring my instructions. Have a good day."

The video ended, a still of the dead nine-year-old visible on the screen.