

**Cape Wrath**  
**Northern Scotland**

The helicopter appeared almost black as it flew through the looming darkness.

The forward air traffic controllers on Cape Wrath struggled to see the large machine before it flew directly over them, the giant 9.3-metre diameter five-bladed main rotor threatening to blast them over the cliffs into the raging North Sea beneath.

*"Nightshade, Nightshade, Nightshade, this is Cape Wrath on Range Safety Channel. Over."*

*"Cape Wrath, this is Nightshade. Standing by. Over."*

*"Nightshade. Range is clear. Weapons free. Good hunting. Cape Wrath out."*

Aboard Nightshade, the co-pilot began to set his switches on the extended centre console which separated the two pilots.

"Master Arm is on. Pylon two selected, station three, for CRV7 rockets," he announced.

"Confirm Master Arm is on for CRV7," the pilot replied as she pulled the fourteen-tonne flying machine around in a hard right bank.

"First target coming into range - have it on FLIR," the co-pilot advised as the second of the five full colour, widescreen flat panels which were spread across the cockpit showed a washed-out image of what could only be a tank.

It was a tank - an old Centurion main battle tank, long abandoned to target practice.

"Cleared hot!" the co-pilot directed as he locked the targeting system onto the tank. "Three-round salvo."

The pilot studied her heads-up-display where a red circle had appeared and as the circle shrunk in size, she squeezed the trigger on her cyclic and with a roar and a flash, three 2.75-inch rockets left the nineteen-round cylindrical launcher on the starboard side of the aircraft and immediately deployed their folded wings, accelerating into the gloom. Within seconds, the FLIR image bloomed as one after the other, the three rockets impacted their targets and the warheads detonated.

*"Target! Target! Target!"* came the response from the Range Safety Officer, indicating direct hits.

The pilot grinned as she turned towards the next target.

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The second target was a fast-moving watercraft somewhere amongst the heaving waves two thousand feet below the helicopter.

Raptor adjusted the Seaspray 7000E AESA (Active Electronically Scanned Array) radar which was nestled in the nose of the helicopter. The long-range search was activated in small target mode, the processors identifying contacts and automatically ignoring returns from the wave caps or the nearby cliffs. The watercraft would most probably be a Royal Marine Offshore Raiding Craft - nobody else would have the balls to be out on such a night, he reasoned.

"Contact!" Raptor announced. "Four miles, bearing . . . three-two-two!"

Scorpion increased forward speed and she dropped the helicopter down to obscure herself in the ground clutter from the waves. The ORC had radar, but only

surface search, so she only needed to hide from the human eyeball. Just as Scorpion was beginning to think that the exercise was very one-sided, along came a curveball.

"Active J-Band radar . . . designated as CAPTOR!" Raptor reported as his instruments lit up with a tracking warning. "Bandit, two o'clock high!"

"So," Scorpion replied. "The Crabs are coming out to play . . . let's show them what Vengeance is all about."

Scorpion had her work cut out to avoid the supersonic fighter aircraft which was fitted with the highly advanced CAPTOR-M radar as well as PIRATE electro-optical guidance system. The three engines atop the helicopter burned hot and would be easy for PIRATE to spot from above.

"Tracking lock!"

Scorpion advanced the throttles to maximum, pushing the helicopter to over 160-knots IAS.

"Going air-to-air," Raptor commented as his gloved hands ran over the radar controls. "Bringing ASRAAM online."

On the left pylon, an ASRAAM training round was fitted to the outer point of the weapons' pylon. The missile had a functional seeker, but no rocket motor. As the seeker scanned the sky ahead of it, Scorpion heard beeps in her helmet, then after several seconds, she heard a rapid tone as the missile seeker found something hotter than the surrounding sky. . . then came a single tone.

"I have tone!" Scorpion announced as she squeezed her trigger as Raptor got on the radio.

"Nightshade, fox two! Nightshade, fox two!"

"Bollocks!" came an annoyed voice over the radio twenty seconds later.

"Nightshade has a kill!"

The controllers calculated the odds of a kill and radioed the 'dead' aircraft as necessary. It was not a proper test as neither aircraft was fitted with the correct equipment, but it gave Nightshade and her crew the relevant training for the moment. Testing the aircraft's systems was critical as it was a prototype and unique in the world of military aviation.

"Copy kill - Nightshade out!" Raptor acknowledged.

Raptor quickly readjusted his radar to bring up the position of their surface target. The radar had remembered the previous contact and it was simple for Scorpion to follow the prompts on her heads-up-display. There it was, a small contact, just one mile away.

"Tracking!" Raptor announced.

They were not authorised to attack the target with their rockets or missiles, so as they streaked overhead, Scorpion triggered off an even dozen flares, scaring the living daylights out of the four Royal Marines aboard the ORC.

"Knock it off! Knock it off!"

Scorpion rose to five thousand feet and she levelled off on a heading of zero-nine-zero - the exercise was over.

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**Earlier that day**  
**Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**RAF LOSSIEMOUTH**

Keira was struggling to comprehend what lay before her.

Almost 8,000 shaft horsepower. Capacity for two crew and thirty passengers. Ability to mount machine guns, missiles, rockets – the potential was endless. The giant three-turbine helicopter shimmered with a vibrant pearlescent paint overall but with a light grey underside. The five-bladed main rotor towered over four metres above the ground but even that was topped by the tail rotor at the far end of the over nineteen-metre fuselage which topped off at 6.6-metres above the ground. To the port-side, immediately behind the state-of-the-art glass cockpit, an air-stair allowed easy access into the main cabin. The first seat faced the air-stair and the forward hatch – that was for a crew-member or for a pilot to rest. After passing through a curtained bulkhead, there were four seats, two per side of the aisle, each pair facing the other across a folding table. Aft of them, to port, four seats faced inboard while four more seats sat to starboard, two facing aft, and two facing forward, each pair facing the other. The leather seats were a tasteful light grey and fully crashworthy. All told, there was seating for thirteen, plus the two pilots. Further aft, past the seating, there was a small toilet and a galley before you reached a cargo storage area and the aft ramp.

The aircraft was a hybrid. It was ostensibly a VVIP version of the venerable Augusta-Westland AW.101 Merlin, however, integrated beneath its skin and fancy paintwork, the electronics and capabilities of the Combat Search and Rescue (CSaR) version could be found. That included the ability to mount weapons pylons, additional fuel tanks, cabin-mounted machineguns and miniguns, as well as radar and FLIR. It was a genuine wolf in sheep's clothing. With a growing smirk, Keira tried to rid herself of an image from her childhood – another helicopter which had been a wolf in sheep's clothing: Airwolf. Unlike the fictitious Airwolf, the Merlin could carry passengers in a high level of comfort, or it could be stripped out to carry up to thirty troops or a combination of troops and light attack vehicles.

As Keira walked around the helicopter after striding down the aft ramp beneath the tail boom, she met up with Trevor who was to be her co-pilot for the check-ride.

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**The following afternoon**  
**Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Edinburgh Airport**

It was the first official use of the aircraft which was officially registered to a British company, Convey Limited with the registration: G-CNVY.

Unofficially, the aircraft belonged to *Vengeance* and bore the military registration: ZJ998. The aircraft had begun life at the Westland Helicopters Limited factory in Yeovil, England, as a Dutch Mk.512 Merlin known as M-509 at the end of February 2006. It had a short career, just a year, as a Dutch rescue helicopter before being returned to Westland Helicopters Limited (as it was then) in June 2007 and refurbished for use with the Royal Air Force as a Merlin HC.3A transport helicopter. Then, in 2014, all active Merlin helicopters were handed over to the Royal Navy as part of its Commando Helicopter Force. Latterly, the helicopter was converted to the latest Merlin HC.4 standard

towards the end of October 2016, before undergoing further work to convert it into a prototype covert support helicopter for use with *Vengeance*.

As such, *Vengeance* had taken custody of the £20million helicopter that very Saturday.

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"Oooo!" Kaitlin exclaimed as she entered the main cabin.

"Very nice!" Naomi agreed.

"I could get used to this," Cassie chuckled.

"Everybody buckle up, please!" Keira called out from the cockpit.

For the trip that morning, she would be flying the massive helicopter solo with the help of David as Trevor would be piloting *TWILIGHT*. Both helicopters would be flying heavy as there were twenty-four people to be transported that day. *NIGHTSHADE* would carry fifteen, including the pilots while *TWILIGHT* would carry the balance of nine. The flight would be short, about thirty-five minutes. Both helicopters took off and headed north in a loose formation. As they flew across the Forth Estuary, they altered course onto a heading of 003.7-degrees. They flew east of Perth and then over the summit of the 3,789-foot Lochnagar before descending and curving around the west side of Cairn-na-Cuimhne and flaring for a formation landing on the west lawn. None of the kids had been told where they were going - they were provided with smart clothing and told to brush their hair, but that had been that.

Keira and Trevor changed in the back of *NIGHTSHADE* - flight suits were not suitable for their intended destination.

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**Balmoral Castle**  
**Royal Deeside, Aberdeenshire**

For probably the very first time in her life, Kaitlin had nothing to say.

She gazed up at the towering building as they stepped off the helicopters. A few yards away, they were being watched by eight men, all dressed in suits. Kaitlin looked around at her friends as they joined her. She had never seen everyone looking so smart. Keira, David, Trevor, and Sarah were all wearing their relevant military uniforms, all of whom, except for Sarah, were still in the Reserves. Captain Trevor Lai, Army Air Corps, in his British Army uniform, was severally outnumbered by Lieutenant Keira Sharp, Sub-Lieutenant Sarah Perrin, and Chief Petty Officer David Montgomery, all of the Royal Navy. Jasper, Eric, Cameron, Craig, Jeremy, Christopher, and Adrien all wore smart suits. The women; Alexandra, Amy, Lynn, Natasha, Cassie, Marinette, and Alya, plus all the girls; Olivia, Jessica, Naomi, Harper, Kaitlin, and Yvette, wore smart dresses with white gloves. Yes, the French Honneur team had flown in, just that morning for the trip.

As Kaitlin turned back towards the castle, she smiled as she saw two girls in immaculate dresses striding towards them.

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"Kaitlin!"

"Hi, Electra!" Kaitlin replied before she curtsied. "Hello, Your Royal Highness."

Her Royal Highness Princess Mary of Kintyre and Lorne grimaced. She hated being treated like something special by her very special friends. However, Kaitlin was right - for a change - they all had to behave very properly when at one of the Royal Palaces . . . as she herself well knew. After a few more curtsies, and more grimaces from Mary, the large group were led towards the Castle by the armed men in suits.

They passed inside and after following corridor after corridor, they were led into the Ballroom.

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As the group stepped into the enormous room, they were met by a woman of indeterminate age wearing a smart dress.

"Welcome, *Vengeance*."

Just about everybody recognised the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom as she smiled at them. A man with a very snooty expression strode over to face *Vengeance*.

"Her Majesty will be with us very soon. When she arrives, you will each be called up, one by one. Do not dilly-dally. Do not talk. Walk up to Her Majesty, bow or curtsy, then stand absolutely still. Her Majesty, in her own time, will affix your decoration and congratulate you. You will bow or curtsy, before turning to your right and walking back to your seat. There will be no skipping, jumping, dancing, or any equally frivolous behaviour. Do not turn your back on the Monarch. Please take your seats as allocated by the ushers. Thank you."

The man moved off smartly and two men in morning-suits appeared as if from nowhere to direct each person to a seat to await Her Majesty. Everybody was apprehensive - all except for Mary, of course, who was not feeling out of her depth. To an extent, David Montgomery was familiar with events having received his Distinguished Service Medal from Her Majesty back in the early nineties.

"Take it easy," Mary offered to her friends. "Gran is perfectly friendly."

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Minutes later, the ushers indicated for everyone to stand, mere seconds before a pair of Gurkha Orderly Officers entered the room.

The Officers were followed by Mary's father, Prince Robert, who smiled at *Vengeance* as reassuringly as he could. Next, there came the Lord Steward and his Equerry. They were closely followed by Her Majesty the Queen who smiled pleasantly. It was a smile which was both warm and welcoming.

"Please, be seated," she announced as she took her position at the west side of the room. "I wanted this investiture to be as genuine as possible so that you all could enjoy the experience. However, this is your day, so please enjoy it."

There was a nod as the Lord Steward announced the very first name.

"Miss Natasha King; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

Natasha stood up and she walked towards Her Majesty before she curtsied - for the very first time in her eighteen years of life - and she stood with her head bowed.

"Thank you, Miss King, for your services," Her Majesty said quietly as she hung the circular medal onto the hook affixed to the left chest of her dress.

"Thank you, Ma'am."

The thirty-six-millimetre diameter circular medal was silver with the crowned effigy of The Queen on the obverse. The rear of the medal bore the image of St Edwards's Crown above the words: 'The Queen's Gallantry Medal' in four lines flanked by laurel sprigs. The 1.25-inch ribbon was of three equal stripes of dark blue, pearl grey, and dark blue with a narrow rose-pink stripe in the centre.

With a smile, Her Majesty gently shook Natasha's hand. Natasha took the signal and she stood, took a step back, and curtsied once more before turning to her right and walking around the room back to her seat. She was barely three feet from Her Majesty before the next name was announced.

"Mr Cameron King; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

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The names were called, and the medals were invested.

"Mr Eric Cunningham; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

"Miss Cassandra Perrin; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

"Mr Eric Cunningham; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

Then came the first investiture for the younger members.

"Miss Harper Sharp; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

The nine-year-old struggled to her feet and she hobbled over to Her Majesty before executing a somewhat wobbly curtsey, but a curtsey nonetheless. The Queen smiled as the young girl stood up straight.

"Thank you, Miss Sharp. Your sacrifice for this country has been bodily, and I warmly thank you for service."

Harper grinned, enormously, as the medal was hung from her upper chest and the young girl swelled with pride. The Queen shook her hand and the girl turned to her right and made way for the next name.

"Master Craig Montgomery; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

Craig was followed by, "Miss Naomi Perrin; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!" and "Miss Kaitlin Perrin; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!" Then, there came a very special announcement.

"Miss Electra Haig; the George Medal for actions in the face of grave danger and for services to The Queen, The Country, and The Royal Family!"

The diminutive ten-year-old meekly stood and walked over to Her Majesty.

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The Queen smiled very warmly, indeed, as the youngster approached and curtsied perfectly.

"Hello, Electra."

"Ma'am."

"I am very happy to be able to invest you with his medal. You put yourself in the line of fire and you protected my granddaughter. There are no words which can assuage what you went through. Thank you."

"Yes, Ma'am."

The humbled Electra grinned as the medal was invested. The thirty-six-millimetre diameter circular medal was silver with the crowned effigy of The Queen on the obverse. The reverse of the medal bore the image of St George on horseback, slaying the dragon on the coast of England with the legend: 'The George Medal' around the top edge of the medal. The 1.25-inch ribbon was crimson with five narrow blue stripes.

"Good luck, Electra."

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Christopher, Jeremy, Olivia, and Jessica followed, each receiving the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country.

The four visitors from France were feeling very humbled by their experience, as they each received the same medal for their services to Queen and Country. Next came the two MI5 agents who had helped *Vengeance*, despite their own organisation actively hunting the vigilantes. Debbie Grey and Jack Foster both received the same medal for their services, and they were very happy to have been invited to the investiture.

Jasper and Lynn followed, both receiving the QGM. Alexandra and Amy each received the Queen's Commendation for Bravery. Finally, it was the turn of the uniformed members of the armed forces to receive their medals.

"Lieutenant Keira Sharp, Royal Navy; the Distinguished Flying Cross for valour and devotion to duty in the skies during operations against those who deem to do The Country harm!"

Keira rose and strode over to Her Majesty, stopping and curtsying.

"Good work, Lieutenant. It cannot have been easy for you, after the loss of your sister."

"Thank you, Ma'am."

The decoration was a cross flory, 2.5-inches wide. The horizontal and bottom bars are terminated with bumps, the upper bar with a rose. The decoration's face features aeroplane propellers superimposed on the vertical arms of the cross and wings on the horizontal arms. The ribbon was white with purple broad diagonal stripes.

"Captain Trevor Lai, Army Air Corps; the Distinguished Flying Cross for valour and devotion to duty in the skies during operations against those who deem to do The Country harm!"

For Trevor, it was his second award of the DFC and as such, he would gain a Bar to his previous award.

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"Sub-Lieutenant Sarah Perrin, Royal Navy; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

Sarah grinned happily as she walked up and curtsied. The Queen hung the medal.

"You have demonstrated exactly what our armed forces are all about, Miss Perrin. You have shown integrity and bravery beyond your rank, and I thank you for your loyalty to The Crown.

"Thank you, Ma'am."

"Chief Petty Officer David Montgomery, Royal Navy; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to Queen and Country!"

The Chief proudly strode up before bowing to Her Majesty.

"I believe that we have met before, Chief," The Queen commented as she noticed the DSM ribbon on the Chief's chest.

"Yes, Ma'am, 1990."

"Vengeance is lucky to have you."

"Definitely, Ma'am."

"Keep up the good work, Chief."

"Yes, Ma'am, and thank you."

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"There are two final investitures," Her Majesty announced. "The first is to someone who has suffered more than most, having had to endure more than two years of looking after a veritable monster."

Mary was seen to scowl.

"Sergeant Ginny Turner of the Royalty and Specialist Protection Branch; the Queen's Gallantry Medal for services to The Queen, The Country, and The Royal Family!"

Mary struggled not to cheer as Ginny walked up to the Queen and curtsied in her smart trouser-suit.

"You have suffered, Sergeant," Her Majesty chuckled.

"Thank you, Ma'am, it has been an adventure."

"Very diplomatic, as always, Sergeant."

Ginny returned to her seat as The Queen began to speak.

"Last, but not least, a very special award," The Queen announced with a nod toward the Lord Steward who called out one last name.

"Her Royal Highness Princess Mary of Kintyre and Lorne; the Royal Family Order of Queen Elizabeth the Second!"

The thirteen-year-old Princess hesitated for a moment, unsure of what was happening. She had not expected to be involved in the investiture at all. Nonetheless, she very quickly gathered herself together and she strode up to her stand before her grandmother before executing a perfect curtsy, just like the hundreds she had performed since she was just three-years-old.

"Mary. You are very special to me and you have grown into a remarkable young woman. Your father put you in charge of a very important mission - one which ultimately saved the country as we know it, and also saved the lives of my son and yourself. Your selfless acts have not been without sacrifice, but you quite literally fought through everything which stood in your way. As such, I am investing you with an award that no other has ever received at your tender age."



With that, The Queen affixed a chartreuse yellow ribbon to the shocked youngster. The Royal Family Order depicted a young Queen Elizabeth II in evening dress wearing the ribbon and star of the Order of the Garter. The miniature, painted on ivory, was bordered by diamonds and surmounted by a Tudor Crown in diamonds and red enamel. The reverse, in silver-gilt, was patterned with rays and depicted the Royal Cypher and the St Edward's Crown in gold and enamel. The watered silk ribbon was chartreuse yellow and formed into a bow.

Mary was pulled into a hug by her grandmother who smiled proudly.

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After the final award to Mary, the atmosphere changed dramatically as footmen appeared with trays of food and drink.

There were no cucumber sandwiches or fancy beverages in delicate china, no, The Queen was worldly-wise, and she had taken the required advice and the food was less delicate and much tastier. There were also fizzy drinks, something The Queen usually abhorred, but she was a modern Queen, and it was not her day. She watched as the kids dug into the food, all of them with happy smiling faces. The Queen loved seeing her granddaughter happy, and the Princess' enormous smile as she talked to her friends was wonderful to behold.

Also watching from the sidelines, was Commander Patrick Haig who was immensely proud of his own granddaughter. It had not been all that long since the little girl had re-entered his life, but every minute together had been cherished by not only him but his son and his grandson. How Electra had landed on her feet after such a traumatic experience, he could not fathom. His granddaughter was best friends with a Princess of the Realm, The Queen's own Granddaughter.

"You must be very proud, Commander."

"I am, Your Royal Highness," Commander Haig replied to Prince Robert. "As must you be."

"More than you could ever think," the Prince confided. "I worried about Mary. I worried about how she might develop without a mother. She surprised me with how she has coped with events and I am so very proud."

"I am certain your wife would have been very proud of how you have kept her on the right path, sir."

"I hope so. Daughters are not the easiest to bring up."

Commander Haig chuckled.

"You can say that again, sir."

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Mary was having the time of her life.

To have her friends to visit her in her normal environment was a dream come true. She struggled to behave like she should, not wanting to embarrass her father, her grandmother, nor her own title. She was still partially stunned by her own decoration. She knew full well what it meant and how important it was to both herself and her father. She wished that her mother could have been there, but that was something which was not to be.

All her friends were happy and smiling, a far cry from a few months ago. Then they had been fleeing and fighting for their very existence. Mary could remember the fear. She could remember the pain of waiting for her friends to return to safety. She could remember the pain as she was punched to the mat and

thrown down, again and again. The training had been hard - very hard - but it had been necessary, and she was grateful to her father for allowing it. She had killed to save her father, and she would do it again, should the need arise. Her best friend had taken two bullets for her - that was something which had created a bond between her and Electra. Whilst in Chicago, Mary had noticed another bond; that between Electra and the girl called Stephanie. There was something very deep between them.

After almost an hour, the Prime Minister approached the uniformed officers and she smiled warmly as she stopped before the most junior officer.

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The sounds of chatter subsided as all eyes turned onto the Prime Minister.

"Sub-Lieutenant Sarah Perrin, in recognition of your superlative naval instincts under fire, and under instruction from their Lordships at the Admiralty, I am very pleased to be able to promote you, effective immediately. Congratulations: Lieutenant Perrin."

After the applause and cheering had subsided, the Prime Minister continued.

"Lieutenant Keira Sharp, in recognition of your unswerving command and piloting ability in the face of extreme adversity, and under instruction from their Lordships at the Admiralty, you are gaining your half stripe, effective immediately. Congratulations: Lieutenant-Commander Sharp."

The two officers grinned as they considered their promotions. For Sarah, she could not wait to tell her father who she knew would be very pleased to see his daughter well on her way into her naval career. The promotion included a hefty pay rise, too, as well as more responsibility and a new posting. For Keira, it was a happy event. Yes, the pay rise was nice, but gaining the rank was a major step, considering her fluidity of service at that point in time. Keira could see Harper grinning proudly and they both exchanged a glance of pride and happiness.

Harper then looked very shy as The Queen headed her way.

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"Miss Sharp," Her Majesty began.

"Mary has informed me, quite graphically, about what you endured. I had hoped that a lot of it was the result of her very overactive imagination, however, the Prime Minister has confirmed that Mary's accounts are disturbingly accurate. It sickens me that such events could occur within the borders of this country. You were taken while you were protecting my son and my errant granddaughter from harm. As such, I feel partially responsible for what you went through. You have my thanks, Harper, and you also have my thanks for the training which you forced upon said errant granddaughter. Without that training, she would not be alive today, and neither would my son. I hope that you recover fully from your injuries, both within and without."

Harper was rarely lost for words, but she was totally speechless and as such she could only mumble one word in return.

"Thanks."

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It was getting very close to the end of the afternoon.

The ushers gathered everybody together for a final speech by the Prime Minister.

"Her Majesty and my Government wish to thank you all for what you did to prevent something unthinkable. You saved my life. You saved the life of the Prince and his daughter. You saved this country from dire consequences. Despite being hunted, you remained true to your morals and you ran the source of the troubles to ground. I have to apologise for the delays in Wales, however, those behind those delays have met justice."

Jasper, Cameron, and Natasha grinned.

"Please continue to cooperate with our security services in protecting this country and her possessions, both at home and abroad. You are all a credit to this fine nation. Great Britain has never allowed itself to be overridden by tyranny and we shall not start now. I would also like to take this opportunity to apologise to all you *Predators* for what your government allowed to happen. I was appalled the very first time that I read a file entitled '*Urban Predator*', and I had to read that same file several times to convince myself that it was all true. Having spoken with the Princess, I understand that you are all very special youngsters, who have each been hurt in your own unique ways. I am very pleased that you have all been able to find families and some have even been able to return to their own kin. After the battle, I received some very favourable reports on you all from a Captain Sinead McFadden and her men. It is not often that *anybody* receives such glowing reports from the Royal Marines. It is even rarer for those same Royals to gain the levels of respect which they have for *Vengeance*. You have the respect of us all and your country thanks you for everything which you have done."

There was a round of applause for *Vengeance* from all present.

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Mary, Electra, and her father stood to watch the helicopters depart.

The two girls were sad to see their friends departing but depart they must. They too were due to head south and back to school. It had been an amazing day and one which would never be forgotten. As the helicopters vanished from sight, The Queen stopped beside the girls.

"One day, Electra, I would like to meet the person who trained you," Her Majesty commented. "Stephanie, I believe her name is."

"I owe her everything, Your Majesty. I am in her debt."

"In that case, I owe her the life of my granddaughter, and I am also in her debt."