

Friday, December 16th, 2016

Anniesland, Glasgow

The teams had gathered, and departed, in record time.

Glide was over the moon at being allowed to ride behind Nemesis on her KTM 1290 Super Duke GT while Prowl rode with Crimson on her Triumph Speed 94. Rigour rode with Scorpion in *SABRE* leaving Stripe astride his brand new 2016 Honda VRF1200X Crosstourer motorcycle. The motorcycle was jet-black with a blood-red stripe running down each side of the machine from the headlights towards the rear. Drift rode his own machine, the Triumph Tiger Sport racing along at a little over seventy miles-per-hour, leading the *Vengeance* posse into Scotland's largest city.

The City of Glasgow had recently gained a dubious accolade - it was in the top ten of a select group of European cities. Despite Glasgow's murder rate having more than halved in the previous three years, it was still rated number nine in the list of top ten most dangerous cities in Europe. Surprisingly, only one other British city was higher on the list, and that was Coventry at number seven. Number one was the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don (Eric had joked that it would be on Hit Girl's summer holiday list for a recreational break cum killing spree). Other cities were: Bari (2nd place), Turin (3rd place), Naples (4th place), Marseilles (5th place), Lille (6th place), Rotterdam (8th place), and Sarajevo (10th place).

That dubious honour had been shown to everyone and that had sharpened their resolve as they made their way towards a district of eastern Glasgow, partway towards Clydebank. The delightful residential area teemed with crime and more specifically, a criminal gang whose tentacles had wormed themselves throughout Glasgow as a whole, controlling drugs, vehicle crime, extortion, and other equally gainful criminal employment. The gang employed sophisticated counter-surveillance equipment to ensure that they were never caught red-handed. The police never had any evidence against those who were obviously guilty, and witnesses were regularly intimidated as court hearings approached. Links between the criminal gang and certain other criminal organisation within the United Kingdom had brought them to the attention of *Vengeance*.

Vengeance was about to start a war of attrition against the crime gang.

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It was the first night for Stripe in his new combat suit.

He was clad in black body-armour from head to toe. A broad blood-red stripe wrapped horizontally around his torso with identical stripes around his biceps and thighs. His mask was black and covered his full head and face with eyes which glowed a fiery red. The design was intended to instil fear into his enemies as he fought them. For weapons, the boy carried an H&K SFP9 9-millimetre pistol on his right hip and a pair of 18-inch Tanto swords on his back which would be drawn downwards from above each hip. Poor Kaitlin had looked very uneasy when she had first seen the glowing eyes and she had not been amused when somebody (Electra) had turned out the lights in the changing rooms.

As for Craig, he was very happy with his new combat suit.

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As they approached the target area, they all spread out to cover wider sections and so as not to stand out too easily.

They all knew that the Bowman criminal gang had immense resources at their disposal and that those resources would also include snouts and spies who would report on the comings and goings of law enforcement . . . as well as quasi-legal vigilante groups. To provide extra intelligence, Q had deployed *EAGLE-2* over the area. The drone would provide high-definition and infra-red video as well as electronic surveillance to the entire area from two-thousand feet in the air. As such, Q was able to provide advance warning of trouble. A camera zoomed down to a certain location: Sutcliffe Road - it was a major drug deal which had just got underway. The Bowman gang supplied several smaller dealers, much in the same manner as a cash and carry supplied stock to small shops.

Such an exchange would bring out the 'big guns' as well as the major players.

Vengeance Auxiliary Command Centre

Harper and Mary were entranced by what they were witnessing.

The computer screens displayed a replica view of what Q was using to guide the teams on the ground. One screen showed a giant moving map with small dots, each labelled with what they were designating. For example, an orange dot pulsing in the Morrisons carpark, less than five-hundred yards from the drug deal was labelled:

SABRE: SCORPION/RIGOUR

Another dot, on Spencer Street was labelled:

NEMESIS/GLIDE

There was another dot on Knightscliffe Avenue, outside the Aldi:

CRIMSON/PROWL

Harper could see other dots, all strategically located around the perimeter. It was not airtight, but it would suit the purposes of intimidation. She also noticed that *Vengeance* was spread rather thinly, although she grinned at the names listed at the bottom of the screen:

VCC: Q

VACC: SLEUTH/POLARIS/BELLE

It meant a lot seeing herself listed. At one point. she never thought that she would ever see that name active again, there she was. Despite the pain which still existed as a dull throbbing in her feet and left hand, she was able to focus on the task at hand which helped to push the pain away. The lesson, a short while earlier, for Mary had taken a lot out of Harper and she was a little sore and very tired. Jasper had noticed and he guided the youngster over to a chair and plonked her down.

"Sit down, before you fall down!" he chuckled.

Mary scowled when she saw that Harper was hurting.

"I'm fine - just get on with things," she growled.

Harper's 'lesson' had been a major wakeup call for the girl and when Ginny had checked on Mary, she had been very concerned by her protectee's manner. Mary had reassured Ginny that while it had been humiliating - and somewhat painful - she had learnt a valuable lesson which she would not easily forget.

"Did you have to yank my pubes - they hurt like hell!" Mary grouched, and Harper just laughed out loud.

"First time I've ever touched some," Harper replied, somewhat nonchalantly, "and I don't have any myself - so, I was curious."

"I hate you!" Mary smirked.

Anniesland, Glasgow

Naturally, the spies had clocked *Vengeance's* arrival in the area and the information had spread like wildfire.

From high above, Q had seen the subtle movements as vehicles and people moved to defensive positions. The police were less of a threat and rarely sent in armed units, however, the deadly vigilante force was something else entirely.

Robert Bowman was the figurehead for the criminal organisation. He was in his early forties and an all-round arsehole. Most normal people would cross over to the other side of the street rather than pass within twenty feet of the man. A scar on his left cheek from a bar fight in his youth made identification easy, even if the dangerous expression did not scare you away the moment you laid eyes on the man. His lieutenants were all family members - his sister: Anna Bowman (a confirmed lesbian and unmarried), his brother-in-law: Ryan Turner (an ex. soldier kicked out of the Parachute Regiment), and his younger brother: Ethan Bowman (a man in his early twenties with pathological tendencies). There were many others below them who enjoyed the power given to them by the Bowman family. The Bowman's looked after those who served them, encouraging almost unfailing loyalty. However, the loyalty was also ensured by a few bloody demonstrations - kneecapping was a favourite, as was pistol whipping; two ends of the same scale for those who upset the Bowman family.

It was with militaristic precision that the drugs were encircled, and more men appeared out of the woodwork to protect their haul.

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Crimson and Prowl had dismounted from their motorcycle at the first sign of impending trouble, and they had both quickly vaulted the fence surrounding the store, before running towards ground zero.

They made it as far as a row of garages before they found themselves impeded by a semi-circle of with men, all armed with varying items, all of which could ruin your day: machetes featured heavily, along with baseball bats, and some truly impressive sections of steel scaffolding. Crimson drew the two sections of her bō-staff while Prowl deployed her Bagh Naka claws from each of her gauntlets. Both vigilantes received mixed looks. As expected, the men enjoyed studying Crimson's curves, and most ignored the diminutive form of Prowl, barely giving her a glance, but those that did, smirked. Four of the men stepped forwards, making aggressive movements with their melee weapons. Crimson simply span her swords, studying each of the men, as Prowl moved a good distance out to one side, allowing Crimson freedom of movement.

"What wall hit you?" Prowl growled as she faced off against a man twice her height and width. "Ugly fuck!"

The man growled as he swung his four-foot-long section of scaffolding at the smaller vigilante. Not surprisingly, he missed as Prowl jumped up, burying her right fist in the man's nose, smashing it.

The man bellowed out in pain as he dropped the section of scaffolding to hold his nose.

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SABRE, with Scorpion and Rigour had bolted out of the Morrison's carpark before racing over the busy traffic junction and taking a shortcut over the pavement and some grass before roaring down Sutcliffe Road towards where Nemesis and Glide were just closing in from Blackwood Street.

The armoured Range Rover Sentinel slide to a halt almost eighty yards from ground zero, their path blocked by a twin vehicle which had roared out from behind some trees. Nemesis slammed on her brakes after turning to outflank the enemy Sentinel as three men jumped out of the Sentinel and aimed automatic weapons at *SABRE*. Glide deployed, pulling an H&K MP7A1 Personal Defence Weapon around from her back while Nemesis produced an FN P90 PDW. Out of nowhere, a Jaguar XF skidded to a halt and a man jumped out of the driver's seat.

"Okay!" a loud voice bellowed. "This is getting a little out of hand."

Everybody turned to see the man from the Jag standing in the street, his hands visibly at his sides, palms visible. It was Robert Bowman himself. His men had stopped dead at his command. Nemesis raised her own hand, forestalling any further action as Scorpion and Rigour emerged from *SABRE*.

"Get out of my fucking way!" Crimson growled as she shouldered her way past the seven remaining arseholes with Prowl giving them the benefit of her middle finger as she passed.

Crimson strode directly towards Robert Bowman, ignoring the sneering expression from Anna Bowman. She stopped when she was six feet from the man who towered over her with an extra ten-inches on the vigilante.

"Your reputation precedes you, Crimson," Bowman opened. "Thought we were rid of you earlier this year - then we see you marching triumphantly into fucking Downing Street. Well, well, well."

"Hope you are not *all* talk," Crimson growled in her electronically enhanced voice. "We came here to say hello. We came here to give you your marching orders."

"Go fuck yourself, you fuckin' bitch!" Anna Bowman cut in.

"Thank you, Anna," Bowman said with a raised hand and his rabid bitch took a step back.

"Nice!" Crimson commented. "I think you need to increase her meds."

"I'll fuckin' kill yah!"

"Anna!" Ethan Bowman warned.

"Where were we?" Bowman mused. "You think you can take us down? Better than you have tried and they're fucking six feet under. Why don't you take your little circus and fuck off out of my city?"

"Now - that is the crux of the problem, Bob - mind if I call you Bob . . . no? Cool."

'Bob' was silently fuming as Crimson continued.

"We don't like abominations like you, Bob. This country has enough problems without arseholes like you causing shit every night. We are here to take you down, Bob. However, we are fair. Should you and your rabid bitch leave town peacefully, then you get to live. If not, we take you apart. Should you not believe us, Bob, go see Craig Allan and Jack McNafferty."

'Bob' was well aware of his competitors being 'taken out', however, there were very few accurate details concerning *how* they were actually taken out. 'Bob' was actually getting annoyed, not to mention that he *hated* being called 'Bob'.

"Fuck you, Crimson, and fuck the motorcycle you rode in on!"

Robert Bowman snapped his fingers and a man stepped out of the Jaguar XF which was parked just a few yards away. The man held a Fostech Origin-12 magazine-fed semi-automatic 12-gauge tactical shotgun and he calmly blasted Crimson in the chest with the weapon, and as the vigilante fell to the ground, he ran for cover while Bowman jumped into the Jaguar XF and accelerated away just as all hell broke loose.

Prowl fired off several rounds from her SIG Sauer P938 BRG pistol, but she quickly discovered that the bastard's Jag was armoured.

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The man with the Fostech was pursued by a dozen rounds from Glide's MP7 as he ran to the nearest cover, diving behind a brick wall just as Glide herself came under fire from another of Bowman's men.

There was the roar of high-powered V8 engines as two more armoured vehicles appeared on the scene. *SCIMITAR* raced to cut off any escape for the men protecting the drug hoard while *CUTLASS*, an armoured Land Rover Discovery Sentinel raced across pavements and grass to place itself between the gunmen and the prone form of Crimson. Ajax and Forager dived out of *CUTLASS*, H&K G36K sub-machineguns to their shoulders. They covered Doc as she jumped out of the drivers' seat and then went straight to work, checking on Crimson.

SCIMITAR, being driven by Raptor, blocked the escape of a Mitsubishi Shogun, forcing the 4x4 into the side of a parked car on Blackwood Street. Harrier, Overrun, and Viridian deployed to provide covering fire as Drift and Stripe rode directly at the men guarding a small Ford van loaded up with illegal substances. The men, five of them, opened fire with pistols. Drift kicked one of the men in the face as he rode past, skidding around as Stripe knocked another to the floor. Stripe hauled his machine around and he made for the next man, cringing as bullets struck his chest.

"Stripe - look out!" came a yell over the radio and Stripe blanched as a man began firing off shotgun shells at him. He veered off to one side, clipping the curb and putting his motorcycle onto its side on some grass. The young teen rolled off his machine and across the grass onto the road. As he came to a stop, the boy felt shotgun pellets striking his combat suit and he quickly drew his Heckler & Koch SFP9M pistol, putting four rounds in the gunman's torso. Bullets were flying in all directions and Stripe quickly pushed off his helmet then dropped it beside his motorcycle. He swiftly dropped another man with a double-tap and he joined up with Overrun, Harrier, and Viridian who were still engaging the three remaining men guarding the small Ford van.

They began to close in on the men who were now very much alone.

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Crimson was fighting sharp pains in her chest, but the seasoned vigilante was otherwise uninjured.

Doc scrambled back into cover inside *CUTLASS* while Ajax and Forager went after the man who had attacked Crimson so blatantly. Glide was already on his tail, having killed one of Bowman's men and reloaded her MP7. She waved at the two older vigilantes as they closed, directing them into flanking positions around

her. Ajax and Forager both followed direction from the younger vigilante and they raised their P90s to their shoulders as they moved forwards.

They had barely moved two dozen feet when several shotgun blasts echoed out from the Fostech Origin-12 shotgun as the gunman ambushed the three vigilantes. Ajax reacted fast, and she shoved Forager and Glide to the ground, taking a shotgun blast in the back as she dived after them. Despite the pain from the dozens of pellets which had struck her armour, Ajax swiftly triggered off a burst from her P90 PDW in the direction of the shotgun blasts and she heard a yelp of pain, followed by two more shotgun blasts.

"He's empty and wounded!" Glide growled as she regained her feet, running forward with Forager covering her back.

Ajax pulled herself into a kneeling position and she covered the approaches to their position with her P90 as Glide and Forager moved in for their attack.

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A short distance away from all the fighting, in the Aldi carpark, Crimson's unattended motorcycle sat beneath a lamppost.

The powerful Triumph Speed 94 in crimson was a wet dream to many hot-blooded males - and enough to get some biker chicks wet where it mattered. The 1,050-cc three-cylinder engine could propel the naked machine to 157.7 miles-per-hour. Such a machine sitting so alluringly naturally drew the attention of those who only saw pound signs in the shape of a motorcycle.

One man braved the lights and the temptation grew too much - he knew exactly who owned the machine; the **V3 NGE** registration plate spelt that out perfectly well - but it was a beautiful machine and it just had to be taken. The man sat astride the machine and as he considered the best way to make off with the machine, he noticed the display beside the speedometer coming to life. The words appeared one at a time:

GET . . . THE . . . FUCK . . . OFF!

He grinned to himself - it was just some simple anti-theft gizmo. He ignored it. But more words appeared.

YOU . . . HAVE . . . TEN . . . SECS!

Considering the owner of the machine, he began to get a little worried, but he figured that there was nothing that could be done to him.

TEN . . . NINE . . . EIGHT . . . SEVEN . . . SIX

He began to get more than little worried, and he seriously considered legging it.

YOU . . . WERE . . . WARNED . . . TWO . . . ONE!

There was a small bang and he suddenly found himself covered in what appeared to be a substance which was more than liquid, but not quite a gel - it tasted salty. Then the man braced up as a 50,000-volt 2-milliamp charge surged through the motorcycle and the substance covering the front of his body. He fell off to his right, landing on the ground, his body still twitching from the capacitance gel which held the charge for a little over two seconds before the current subsided completely.

The man scrambled to his feet and he did his best to run away from the motorcycle.

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The man fumbled swapping out his eight-round box magazine - his last magazine.

He finally got it inserted and locked, then he released the action just as he caught sight of a *Vengeance* vigilante making an appearance to his left - it was a short one, and for a moment he chuckled. But as he brought his weapon up and fired off his first round, the vigilante dodged left and rolled, avoiding all but a few pellets which struck the side of her facemask. Glide came up onto one knee before emptying her entire fifteen-round magazine into the man, disintegrating his torso and peppering the brickwork of the building behind.

"Fucking cunt!" Glide growled as she inserted a full fifteen-round magazine and turned away from the bloody scene.

The diminutive vigilante soon re-joined her friends and they headed back into the melee.

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A short distance away, Prowl was pushing her luck.

The nine-year-old *Predator* was operating on her own. When Crimson had gone down, she had headed odd into the darkness after Anna Bowman who had scarpered pretty quickly when things went sideways. Prowl knew that she was breaking just about every rule in the book, but she wanted to take one of them down. She liked the dark - she felt safe and she enjoyed the power of stealth it gave her. The bitch had bolted between two sets of flats where the street lighting was minimal at best. Anna Bowman appeared to be taking a roundabout route, through the darkened sections of grass that surrounded and infiltrated the housing estate. After running a good three hundred yards, the younger sister to Robert Bowman slowed down and she eventually stopped in the shadow of some trees alongside a row of flats. Prowl moved closer, keeping to the shadows and the darkest parts of the area. She was highly trained in making use of available camouflage and her combat suit blended in well to the dark wispy shadows. She took a moment to study her surroundings and she found herself very much alone with the murdering bitch. Anybody who was innocent was inside, cowering from the noise, leaving the stage wide open for Prowl to prowl.

Anna Bowman appeared very pleased with herself. She made no effort to make her way back into the fight - no, she had minions for fighting. Anna Bowman was a coward who made good use of her big brother's reputation to enforce her will on people. Like many cowards, she was also a vicious bully, and she took great joy in hurting people who had no way to defend themselves. She cared less for any minions who were injured or killed in the name of the Bowman family. She also believed herself to be invincible - and to a point, she was. Nobody dared touch her or even to look her in the eye, such was the fear instilled by her big brother. She enjoyed being an untouchable. Her life had been hard, but that was no excuse for her chosen profession. One aspect of having brothers was that Anna Bowman knew how to fight, and she could give as good as she got, but only when she knew that she could win.

Prowl struck out of the darkness and when she was mere feet from the enemy, she ran hard, putting every ounce of energy into her arms and thighs as she broke into a sprint before cannoning into the woman, knocking her down to the ground. Anna Bowman was stunned by the attack - nobody ever attacked *her*! She had not heard her attacker approach, but she quickly figured out that it was not a large attacker as Prowl punched her in the face. Anna's brain quickly processed what was going on and she figured that it was one of the smaller *Vengeance* vigilantes who had tracked her through the darkness. Anna could see the shape of her attacker and the unnervingly blue eyes, twinkling in the darkness. Anna rammed an elbow into the vigilante's chest, shoving the attacker away from her.

Prowl rolled onto the grass, springing back up and lashing out with her claws, ripping into clothing on the first swipe, and then skin with the second. Her target bellowed out in pain as her flesh was ripped open on her stomach. Prowl used her armoured elbows, knees, and feet to good advantage against Anna Bowman who had no such protection. Anna swiftly reached behind her back and she produced a wicked looking combat knife of about eight inches in length. Prowl was not fazed one bit by the weapon - she knew that she was safe from blades of any type.

"That all you got, bitch?" Prowl growled in her electronically synthesised voice.

"It's enough to put an end to you, you little fuck!" Anna responded as the two fighters circled one another.

Prowl blocked the first attack, then the second, but she fell back on the third, falling onto the grass. The blade came down towards her head, but Prowl was able to block the blade with the claws on her right gauntlet. The deadly blade was forced away from Prowl with all her considerable strength which surprised Anna enough for her to give way. Prowl quickly rolled to regain her feet and a better fighting stance - the ground was decisive death for any fighter. As the fight progressed, Prowl began to realise her mistake in moving away from the others and her decision not to use her pistol; she had wanted to kill the woman in close quarters combat.

Then things went very bad for Prowl as three men appeared out of the darkness and attacked her.

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Back in the melee, Drift was engaged in a gunfight with three men using a crashed Mitsubishi Shogun as shelter from the gunfire.

He was being supported by Viridian and they were both hammering away at the Shogun 4x4 with FN P90s. The bullets were easily shedding the steel bodywork, but the vehicle had Kevlar layers which were causing problems. With covering fire from Drift, Viridian moved closer, rolling on the tarmac into a position from where he could direct his gunfire in a flanking movement to blindside the enemy. However, he found himself blindsided by a large man armed with a machete. In the blink of an eye, the blade came down on Viridian's left leg. The man grinned, but not for long as a stunned expression crossed his ugly mug.

"If you've scratched my good leg, I'll fucking come back and kill you again!" Viridian growled as he fired a three-round burst up into the ugly bastard's groin.

Two of the bullets rushed vertically up the man's body, blowing apart his skull while the third shattered the man's pelvis. Viridian did not hang around to witness the man's destruction but instead, he moved into his intended flanking position and gunned down two of the men taking cover behind the Shogun. The third man was shredded by Drift.

As Drift studied the area, he could see the fighting coming to an end - the final few men opting to scatter rather than fight the seasoned vigilantes.

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Four-on-one may be deemed easy odds, even unsportsmanlike, but to a *Predator*, it was just extended exercise.

The girl did not panic, instead, she took stock of the situation and she altered her fighting style accordingly to put herself into a better position

and even out the odds. That meant using all her weapons and skills. She put Anna Bowman out of her mind and she focussed on the major threat - the three men. They did not bother to coordinate their attack which was a huge mistake on their part, and the main reason for their downfall. The first man tried to strike Prowl, but his arm was seized by Prowl's clawed right palm and wrenched around, tearing the ligaments located around the man's right elbow, almost destroying the joint. The man fell to one side cradling his damaged right arm. He was quickly replaced by another attacker who managed to grab Prowl around the neck, but only for a moment as three sharp cracks later and the man fell to the ground grasping his right thigh which was spilling copious amounts of blood out onto the grass. As for the third man, he dodged around his fallen colleagues and tried to outmanoeuvre the armour-clad vigilante. He was able to close and as he tried to grab for Prowl, the youngster jumped up and scrambled onto the man's shoulder, before putting three rounds into the man's torso from above.

As the body slumped to the ground, Prowl focussed on Anna Bowman who had been watching the fight, waiting for what she saw as the inevitable downfall of the scrawny vigilante. Her grin had rapidly faded as the third man had died and she saw the blue eyes focussing back on her. She flinched as the vigilante rolled on the grass and brought her pistol up. Prowl squeezed the trigger of her SIG Sauer 938 BRG pistol, but nothing happened. There was no time to clear the jam as Anna Bowman bolted for safety. The woman never saw death pursuing her as she faced away from the vigilante. She never heard death coursing through the cold night. She barely felt the razor-sharp point of the combat knife entering her back on her left side, the point piercing her heart and causing the vital organ to rupture and spill precious blood inside her chest cavity, but most importantly, all blood flow to her body stopped.

Prowl grinned inside her mask as she saw the woman fall to her knees and then face down into the grass, twitching for almost a full minute before all movement ceased forever.

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As Glide had looked around after the fight, she wondered why she could not see *SABRE* - nor Scorpion and the ever-happy Rigour.

As soon as the fighting had kicked off, Scorpion had grabbed hold of Rigour and all but thrown her into *SABRE*. The girl had made an attempt at arguing, but she had quickly sat down and fastened herself in as Scorpion executed a perfect highspeed J-turn before roaring off up the housing estate.

"What the hell are we doing?" Rigour demanded, angry that she had been pulled out of the fight just as it was kicking off.

"We need to cut off any of Bowman's reinforcements," Scorpion responded as she slewed the heavy armoured Range Rover around the corner into Hemlock Street.

"Okay - where might they be coming in from?"

At the end of the street, Scorpion turned sharp right into Fulton Street where she then put *SABRE* across the street, blocking the road completely. She jumped out and walked around to the rear of *SABRE* where she was rapidly joined by the ever-eager Rigour. Scorpion opened the rear of the 4x4 and she pulled out a weapons tray, selecting a Kel-Tec KSG bullpup 12-gauge shotgun which she proceeded to load with fifteen rounds while Rigour pulled open another drawer and she selected an FN P90 and swiftly inserted a loaded fifty-round magazine, taking another pair just in case. Once done, the pair of vigilantes closed up *SABRE* and took up positions to watch for reinforcements.

They did not have long to wait.

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Within ten minutes, headlights could be seen blazing brightly and headed directly for them.

The vehicles came at speed, three of them - they were not Police, nor any other kind of law enforcement, but they were there to enforce the law: Bowman's law. The three vehicles slewed to a stop; their route blocked. They could have easily backtracked and gone a different way around, but the route currently blocked by *SABRE* was the most direct route to reinforce their comrades and avoid *Vengeance*. Twelve men climbed out of the three 4x4s and they immediately came under fire from *Scorpion* and *Rigour*, forcing the men into cover behind their vehicles which were rapidly shredded with the 5.7-millimetre rounds of the P90. *Rigour* loved firing the awesome weapon with the large capacity magazine and she felt right at home with it as she targeted the men. For the most part, the men stayed hidden which suited *Scorpion* as she had no desire to kill the men, just to keep them pinned down. After several minutes, some of the reinforcements appeared to lose heart and they ran - away from the fighting.

Over the radio, they could hear the results of the main fight as each group of Bowman's men were put down. The sound of gunfire began to diminish, replaced by the sound of hand-to-hand fighting and the yells of the wounded. *Rigour* took a chance, running forwards and jumping onto the bonnet of a Land Rover Discovery, continuing up onto the roof of the vehicle. She ran along the roof and put a bullet into every leg which she saw, putting down four men, just as *Scorpion* came up and covered the rest with her shotgun. They all gave up the fight then and there. Seven men were left lying on the pavement beside the road, their wrists bound with plastic ties. *Scorpion* and *Rigour* climbed back into *SABRE* and headed off down the street, taking a right onto Succoth Street, racing along and taking a brief dogleg across Sutcliffe road into Glencoe street where *Scorpion* slammed on the brakes beside *Prowl*.

"What the fuck are you doing all the way down here?" *Scorpion* demanded. "Get the fuck in!"

Rigour turned to look at her friend expectantly.

"I just killed Anna Bowman."

"You sure?" *Rigour* countered.

"She ain't getting back on her feet, any time soon - I cleaved her heart in two."

"That'll piss off Bowman," *Scorpion* commented.

"I can live with that," *Prowl* responded.

Later that night

Vengeance Command Centre Edinburgh

Jasper had brought Harper, Ginny, and Mary through to Edinburgh while the teams were on the way back home.

Keira grinned as Jasper pointed the returning vigilante over to her sister. Harper was fast asleep on the sofa, at peace and worn out by the night's escapades. Beside her, Mary was keeping her company and telling anybody and

everybody that came near to be quiet. Electra, of course, had to push that a little.

"Of course, Your Royal Highness; we'll be as quiet as a mouse."

Mary had scowled at her friend as Keira just laughed.

That same evening

Auchenross

The two girls were both feeling guilty and the looks they were receiving from Sinead across the table at dinner were not exactly pleasant.

"What did you do?" Charlotte asked Dakota.

Dakota looked up at Sinead or glared pointedly in response.

"I've been speaking my mind rather than keeping my big mouth shut," Dakota explained. "I told my maths teacher that his class was boring and he was mind-numbingly sleep-inducing."

There were a few muffled coughs emitted by Sinead.

"The teacher was not amused and he said so - I swore at him and stormed out of the class," Dakota went on. "The same thing kind of happened in Biology when I fell asleep and the teacher woke me up by banging the desk - I told him to go, err . . . sexually assault himself."

"I understand that you were quite explicit in what he should do, too," Sinead pointed out with a raised eyebrow.

"I kind of suggested that he should take his dick and ram it up his arse."

"But he did say that he was very impressed with your anatomically correct terminology," Sinead commented dryly.

Dakota's face went very red and she slunk down in her chair. Charlotte giggled but then stopped as she received a glare from Sinead.

"You, Charlotte, are in worse trouble as you actually hit a boy and you hurt him."

"But . . ."

"No!" Sinead said loudly and pointedly. "There is no excuse for it, Charlotte. The both of you are not doing well. Maybe these should make a comeback."

Sinead threw two items down onto the dining table and both girls recoiled in fright at the sight of the ankle monitors.

"You were both warned, yes?"

Both girls nodded.

"I can't hear you!"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"Do you both understand why you are being punished?"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"Do you both understand that you have done something wrong?"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"That's a start."

Both girls had been concerned to find that Sinead's parents had gone off for the entire weekend, leaving the girls at Sinead's mercy.

"Finish your dinner, please, and then it's bed for the both of you. No messing about. If you can be good, Charlotte, you can sleep in the same room as Dakota."

Both girls grinned and nodded.

"Tomorrow will be hard on you both, but I know that you can both take it. Get a good night's sleep - you *will* need it," Sinead said ominously.

..._...

As the girls changed for bed, they did not talk much.

However, as they both slid under the covers in Dakota's bed, Charlotte grinned fiendishly. She looked over at her older friend.

"What?" Dakota asked.

"Please keep your hands to yourself, 'kota," Charlotte said.

Dakota scowled but then she grinned.

"You have nothing worth touching, Charlie."

"That's low!" Charlotte retorted with a hurt expression.

"Just 'cause I don't fancy boys, does not mean that I'm going to have my hands all over a girl sharing my bed, Charlie - besides as I said, your tits are tiny."

"Thanks, 'kota - night!"

"Night, Charlie."

A short time before midnight

Glasgow

Robert Bowman struggled with his emotions as he looked down at his sister's dead body.

He felt sadness, but mostly it was anger. He wanted vengeance, and he would get *Vengeance*. A line had been crossed and the war which neither side had outwardly declared had suddenly ignited into something that Bowman would not back down from. He had resources. He had friends. He would not stop until *Vengeance* was destroyed and he had sought revenge for the death of his sister. Her killer would pay with more than their life. They would suffer a fate worse than any death.

A man stepped out of the shadows in the morgue and Bowman turned to face the man.

"Chief Inspector, I hope I can count on your assistance in this," Bowman commented.

"Of course, Mr Bowman."