

This is the continuation from Chapter 289: The Killing Room of Forsaken.

Wednesday, 22nd June, 2016

Vengeance Command Centre

United Kingdom, Scotland

It was one of those very rare occasions when the three girls were unable to speak.

For most, it was a blessing as silence had become a rare commodity ever since the girls had come on the scene. The return from the United States had heralded the unveiling of *Vengeance* to the three ex-Predators. The girls had been stunned by the Command Centre and amazed at the building which housed it. In total silence, they had each taken in Q with his enormous screens and other high-tech wizardry in the basement. They had taken in the combat suits and the three girls were each tinged with envy as they ran their hands over the armour.

Cassie had allowed each of them to hold her Katana – with a warning not to touch the wickedly sharp blade. A few whispered words were exchanged between the girls as they were led to the out-buildings and the transport. There, they stood in awe as they took in the KTM 1290 Super Duke GT in dark grey which belonged to Nemesis, the Triumph Tiger Sport in dark blue which Drift rode, and the Triumph Speed 94 in crimson – which of course belonged to Crimson. Next had come the two armoured 4x4 Range Rover Sentinels known as *Sabre* and *Scimitar*.

Kaitlin had looked like her brain might explode with all the new information. As for Harper and Naomi, their eyes were open wide enough to endanger their eyeballs.

There was one more surprise – not just for the girls, but for all.

That evening

The combat suits for the girls were not yet ready, but their on-duty uniforms had arrived along with those for all of *Vengeance*.

The uniforms were based on the Royal Navy's new action working dress referred to as the Personal Clothing System or PCS. For *Vengeance*, the system consisted of a navy-blue T-shirt over which a blue fire-retardant lightweight jacket was worn. The jacket was, in turn, tucked into a pair of blue fire-retardant trousers with a blue stable belt. Both the jacket and trousers were lined with multiple layers of lightweight Kevlar. The trousers had large pockets on either leg. The jacket was designed to allow the sleeves to be easily rolled up and had an open collar.

On the left arm, a Union Flag was worn. Above the left breast pocket, the wearer's name was embroidered in black on white tape while on the opposite side there was a similar embroidered tape that read '**VENGEANCE**'. In the centre of the shirt, there was a front sternum strap for a vertical rank slide which bore the rank of the wearer.

Black, lightweight boots were worn on the feet, with a mask to finish off the uniform.

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Everybody took their time checking each other out, not to mention themselves in a mirror.

Crimson and Drift were both 'Senior Operators' and therefore each bore a single red and gold crown on their rank slide. Nemesis bore two red and gold 'pips' on her rank slide as a 'Junior Operator'. Q bore the same insignia. There was but a single member of *Vengeance* of 'Operator' rank, with three red and gold 'pips', and that was Scorpion. As well as the embroidered badges '**SCORPION**' and '**VENEGANCE**', she also bore a set of embroidered 'wings' above her name. The rank insignia was based on that worn by officers of the Royal Marines.

That just left the three *Predators*.

Polaris was the 'Senior Trainee Operator' and as such she bore a single 'pip' on her rank slide. Prowl and Glide each had a single gold and red rank stripe based on that of a lance-corporal of the Royal Marines. The three girls wore their uniform smartly and with considerable pride. Extra effort had gone into ensuring that they were perfect in every way – that was the *Predator* embedded in each one of the girls.

Scorpion put her foot in it and she made the mistake of saying that they all looked 'sweet'.

"Sweet!" Harper had groaned. "I am embarrassed to call you my sister . . ."

"You take that back!" Glide growled with added menace.

"I'll allow 'deadly', or maybe 'lethal' . . . but 'sweet' – I ask you!" Prowl added in disgust.

"Sorry . . .," Scorpion muttered to laughter from Nemesis and Crimson.

Later . . .

Keira faced her sister on the mat.

The two girls were spaced about three feet apart and they were both barefoot. They each wore a navy-blue t-shirt and shorts, both of which sported the twin-sabres of *Vengeance*. Harper studied her sister and she concluded that her sister had kept herself reasonably fit while in the Royal Navy.

"Hit me!" Harper ordered out of the blue.

After a second's hesitation, Keira slapped her sister.

"What the *fuck* was that?" Harper cried out in disgust. "You a fucking pussy or what? Get a goddamn grip, Scorpion, or you ain't going to last thirty fucking seconds out there!"

Keira's temper flared and she slapped her younger sister hard around the face. Harper screamed out in pain then dabbed the left side of her mouth and she looked down at her hand – a small amount of fresh blood was visible.

"Better – still a pussy strike . . . close your hand and use your fist. Again!"

Keira went to strike Harper but the strike was intercepted and Harper seemingly effortlessly flipped her sister over and down onto the mat, pinning her.

"I am *not* a china fucking doll, sis; the sooner you understand that, the fucking better! I am a fucking *Predator*. I am a killer. I can take a beating, believe me. Now, I know we both want each other to live, so let's get back to trying to kill each other, right?"

Keira felt humiliated. Her nine-year-old sister was ordering her about like she was some damn new recruit down at HMS Raleigh – no goddammit, enough was enough! Keira rammed her left elbow behind her and caught Keira in the stomach. The younger girl fell back and Keira was able to get back to her feet ready for the next strike.

Harper smiled as she struggled to catch a breath.

Thursday, 23rd June

***Vengeance Command Centre
United Kingdom, Scotland***

For some reason, Jasper felt concerned about where they were going and what they were going to do once they arrived; it was like nothing he had ever done in his eighteen years of working for the British Government.

Jasper slowed and then turned the Jaguar XJL to the left, off the B-road. He stopped, almost immediately, before a pair of black-painted, wrought-iron gates. Just as he was about to climb out of the car, the gates began to open. Jasper looked over at his wife who just shrugged and she nodded towards the driveway which beckoned ahead and then curved around to the left. The driveway was quite stunning and the majority was tree-lined before it swept around to the right and the main house came into sight.

“Very nice!” Jasper commented and his wife nodded approvingly.

Jasper pulled his Jaguar up alongside a smaller F-Type Jaguar and a larger Overfinch Range Rover. The large wooden door at the top of a flight of steps opened and a stunning young woman came bounding out and down the steps.

“You must be the Collins’. I’m Natasha King . . . please, come this way.”

Jasper and Lynn left the car and followed the bubbly young woman up the steps and into the house. Jasper’s eyes were everywhere as he walked. He took in the stout wooden door and the ballistic glass in the adjacent windows. As they passed through the door, Miss King closed it behind them and she waved them up a trio of steps and through another stout wooden door set into a mullioned partition made up of three groups of six square panes on top and nine square panes below with a solid wood base. The door matched the partition and was made up of nine panes on top and solid dark-stained wood below. Each pane was also of ballistic glass, Jasper noticed.

The happy carefree King woman soon turned serious as she closed the inner door and she picked up a Glock 17 pistol from a side table and as Jasper looked upwards, he saw a tall young man with similar facial features to the woman. He held an H&K G-36C in his hands and the muzzle was pointed directly at Jasper and his wife. Jasper noticed that Natasha King was out of the line of fire from the staircase.

“May we see some identification, please, Mr and Mrs Collins,” the young woman asked.

Joshua considered testing them but both held their weapons with a natural confidence and Jasper could see from their eyes that they were ready and obviously willing to kill to protect their secret.

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After the necessities of identification had been exchanged the weapons were lowered.

"Sorry about that, Commanders," the young man said as he came down the stairs and held out his right hand. "Cameron King."

"Mr King," Jasper replied. "Jasper Collins – and this is my wife, Lynn."

"Very pleased to meet you, Mrs Collins," Cameron said as he shook hands. "I believe you have met my sister, Natasha."

"We have," Lynn chuckled.

"Please, call us Cameron and Natasha. Let's go through to the Orangery and talk," Natasha suggested as she led Jasper and Lynn into the Drawing Room and out the opposite corner and into a large glazed room where they all sat down in a pair of comfortable couches facing one another.

"I have to admit," Jasper commented. "I am very pleased to see that you are both very serious about what you do."

"You thought we were just two stupid kids playing dress up?" Natasha growled.

"Down Crimson!" Cameron chuckled.

"While I was initially dubious; *Vengeance's* professionalism is definitely growing on us both," Jasper replied with a smile.

"Okay," Cameron began. "We know as much about you, as you do about us – a quid pro quo on the part of Commander Lawrence. Our condolences by the way."

"Thank you, Cameron."

The following afternoon

Friday, June 24th

Stirling

I had had no choice but to go.

The horror of what I was about to do appalled me. Even worse, I was putting innocent members of the general public squarely in the crosshairs. How could I live with myself if somebody was hurt? I had considered everything – including any way to avoid the worst idea ever. However, I soon ran out of time and before I knew it, we were there and ready to unleash the three vicious creatures onto the world. It was Cassie who began the inevitable slide into total anarchy as she held open the door to allow them onto the premises where a young woman approached us.

"Welcome to Pizza Hut – table for five?"

"Got one with restraints?" I enquired somewhat hopefully.

"Sis – will you stop trying to embarrass us," Harper hissed as she led the surge towards a circular booth over to one side of the restaurant floor.

Cassie and I followed the girls and once they had slid into the booth, we positioned ourselves to cover the entrance and prevent the girls from leaving. The moment Harper had sat down, she spied the cutlery and seized hold of a knife.

"If you value your dignity, you'll return that knife, *immediately!*" I hissed. "At this setting, you'll be pissing your knickers and worse . . ."

Harper looked down and she saw the Taser in my hand.

"You wouldn't . . . not in public!" Harper hissed back.

"Now I know you're a mini-Rambo, anything goes," I responded with a smile.

Harper took a moment to think about the consequences and then she returned the knife and smiled sweetly. Naomi and Kaitlin giggled as they grabbed a menu each, plus some crayons and a large A3-sized colouring sheet.

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After a substantial, and heated argument, we settled on three large pizzas. One was stuffed-crust, another cheesy-bites, and the other deep pan. Once we had ordered the pizzas, along with mountains of garlic bread, Naomi apologised to Harper for threatening to stuff a crayon up the latter's nose if she did not go for a stuffed-crust pizza. Kaitlin also, grudgingly (the Taser reappeared), apologised to everybody for her comment: '... I'm going cheesy bites and you can all go to fuck!'

Then came such a bad idea – unlimited fizzy drinks from a touch screen dispenser. Somehow, I thought that two nine-year-olds and an eight-year-old could handle that; I was *so* wrong! Cassie and I were just talking when we started to hear loud, raucous giggling and then the sound of glass breaking – quite a bit of glass as several glasses ended up on the floor – apparently, none of the girls were within a mile of them at the time . . . In the end, I got the drinks – twice as Kaitlin split all three glasses (why her feet were actually *able* to knock them off the table was *way* beyond what my strained sanity could adequately cope with).

By the time the pizzas arrived, I wanted to cry – Kaitlin (yes, her again) suggested that they see how high they could pile the 'free salad' into the tiny bowls provided. Several feet of salad ended up all over the floor and I resolved to leave a large tip at the end of the meal – assuming we actually made it to the end of the meal . . .

"Kaitlin!"

"Wdfheh?"

"Stop cramming so much into your mouth."

"She's got a big mouth; plenty of room!" Naomi commented with a snicker.

"Yso kiu jo uuk orelf!" Kaitlin retorted through her slice of Meat Feast.

"I just wish the world would end . . ." Cassie groaned.

"Yours is bigger," Harper offered between bites.

"You can fit a whole slice in yours," Naomi retorted.

"Oh, God!" Keira wailed as Harper decided to take up Naomi's challenge.

To make things worse, the antics of the three girls had attracted the attention of other kids who were then keen to emulate Kaitlin and Harper. The glares from annoyed parents were like laser

beams and both Cassie and Keira wished that they were anywhere else but in that restaurant with three badly behaved young girls. It was also obvious that their appalling behaviour had come to the attention of the restaurant staff.

The manager kept walking past the table and she gave Keira and Cassie dirty looks each time.

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"Oh, thank God!" Keira breathed as the three girls finished their pizza and then vanished off to the bathroom together.

It was after several minutes had passed that a cold chill crept up Keira's spine.

"Was it a good idea to let them all go together?" she asked Cassie.

"I smell trouble . . ." Cassie replied – just as there was a commotion over by the door which led to the toilets – Keira groaned.

"I see trouble!" Keira replied as the three girls reappeared from the toilets.

Kaitlin was grinning, Naomi looked guilty as hell, and Harper was looking anywhere but at Cassie or Keira as they headed back to their seats. Keira and Cassie watched as a staff member vanished into the toilets before reappearing and calling for assistance. Keira focussed on the three very guilty looking young girls.

"The tap just kind of broke off . . ." Harper tried.

"The toilet paper wasn't us – it was somebody else," Kaitlin offered helpfully.

"Anything I say will just be incriminating so I'm staying quiet," Naomi added as she rested her forehead on the table-top.

Keira looked around and spied a waitress. "Bill, please!" she called, somewhat urgently.

Needless to say – Pizza Hut, Stirling, was now off-limits. It came as a surprise (not), but I never knew that you could actually get black-listed from a Pizza Hut restaurant!

Blairhoyle

The ride back had been tense.

The girls knew that they were in big trouble and neither of them dared to say a word. Keira was seething and Cassie would not even look at her two charges. As they all entered the house, Keira turned to the three girls – each one flinched as they caught her expression.

"If either of you three are heard, just the once, I will Taser each of you to hell and back!"

Harper opened her mouth but she wisely thought better of whatever smart comment she was about to make and made for the staircase, closely followed by her partners in crime.

"Any punishment I can think of," Cassie commented. "They'd probably enjoy!"

"They are going to learn to behave, or so help me God . . .!" Keira growled.

"Cassie!"

“Yeah, mum.”

“You have a call on the Hit-Phone!” Alexandra Perrin responded.

Cassie rolled her eyes as she grabbed for the proffered handset.

“Mindy! What can the *Vengeance* house of hell do for you? Please make it quick; I have three small corpses to dispose of . . .”

Later that night

***Atomic Weapons Establishment
Aldermaston, United Kingdom***

“I don’t want to!”

“You’ll do what you’re fucking told, you little wretch!”

“No . . .”

The small girl screamed as the hand slapped her across the face. The girl glared at the man who had just assaulted her and she wiped away the tears from her cheeks as well as the small amount of blood from the side of mouth.

“Move . . . or I put a bullet in that little head of yours – your choice!”

Reluctantly, the small girl, clad in black joggers, black top, and black boots slipped out of the car and headed towards the security fence a hundred yards distant. The camouflage paint on her face prevented any light reflections from alerting the security force.

“You think the scratty bitch’ll come back with the goods?” one man queried.

“If she wants to see the boy again, she will,” the other man chuckled.