

# FUTILE FANTASY CREATIONS PRESENT...

## *SILLY SHORTS*

### THE RAGE OF THE PHOENIX

*Chosen by the UK government to test run a privatised policing scheme, the city of Faxbury has suffered ever since. The private police force, motivated only by profit, recruited thugs rather than police officers to save on wage costs. Only interested in throwing their weight around and shaking down civilians, the officers did nothing to stop crime and allowed a particularly violent gang to thrive. Within a year, it reached the point where nobody even knew who the worst criminals were; the police or the gang. Ten years into the scheme, however, the people started to fight back.*

#### *City of Faxbury, Southern England...*

Beneath the glow of the city's street-lights, a black hatchback headed down a quiet, suburban avenue. It was rapidly approaching midnight on this warmest of summer nights and there wasn't another car in sight. Inside the vehicle a young man, Kevin, aged 25, glanced nonchalantly at the road ahead as he sung along to his favourite cheesy rock anthem.

KEVIN: Take me down to the paradise city where the girls are green and the grass is pretty, oh won't you please take me home, yeah, yeah...

(Starting to get into the song, he then started to bob his head in time with it.)

KEVIN: They don't write them like this anymore.

(He then commenced howling along to the guitar solo. Three seconds into it, however, a loud bang rose up from the rear of the car and he had to wrestle with the steering to get it back under control again.)

KEVIN: Fuck!

(Having managed to resume control, he then slowly pulled over to the side of the road, beneath the glow of an orange street light. Looking more than a little miffed, he then pushed open the door and stepped out to look at the back tyre.)

KEVIN: Bollocks!

(He threw his arms up in frustration. The tyre was so flat, the bottom was literally squigged into the asphalt.)

KEVIN: I don't bloody believe this.

(With that, he reached into the car to release the latch on the boot. As soon as it popped open, he then paced towards it; scowling bitterly as he mocked what his mother had said before he set out.)

KEVIN: "Do me a favour", she said. "Pop to the twenty-four hour chemist for me, Kevin", she said. "It won't take a minute", she said. Yeah, right, mum.

(He then delved into the boot and began to fumble with the spare tyre. As he did so, however, he heard the sound of three pairs of feet racing towards him.)

KEVIN: What the...

(Deeply troubled by the sounds, he swiftly lifted his head and thudded it into the raised boot lid.)

KEVIN: Ouch!!!

(Furious with himself, he then stepped back from the boot with a 4-way tyre spanner in his hand. As soon as he turned to face the noise however, a fist came swinging

towards his face. Taking a whack full on the chin, he staggered backwards and banged his head on the open boot lid; much to the delight of his assailant.)

THUG 1: Take his wallet and fuck him up, lads!!!

(The thug then took a blow to the head from Kevin's flailing tyre spanner. He wasn't about to let them defeat him without a fight.)

THUG 1: Wanker!!!

KEVIN: Just giving as good as I got, you fucker!

(Very much ready to defend himself, Kevin then leapt on the balls of his feet determined to fight off the next attack. Unfortunately, however, against three of them, it was never going to be easy. Sure enough, when one of the thugs threw himself head first into his stomach, he was far too slow to react and he ended up being tackled to the ground.)

THUG 2: Do him, lads; do him!!!

(Grounded, Kevin was powerless to fight back as the three thugs then proceeded to put the boot in. Enjoying themselves immensely, the three thugs laughed and cheered as they continued to kick their floored victim repeatedly. Their joy, however, proved to be short-lived. Just moments later, there was a flashing blue light behind them and the single wail of a siren.)

THUG 1: It's the fuzz.

THUG 2: Shit!

THUG 3: Let's fuck *them* up too!

THUG 2: Fuck off! We aint armed.

THUG 1: Right. Fuck it then. Let's bounce.

(And with that, the three thugs took off down the street, heading for the darkness of a nearby housing estate. Greatly relieved that the assault had ended so quickly, Kevin sat up and held his aching side. Battered, bloodied and bruised, he then squinted at the headlights on the police car as it pulled to a halt.)

KEVIN: Blimey. I never thought I'd be pleased to see *them*.

(He then watched as two police officers emerged from the car and paced towards him.)

KEVIN: Perfect timing, officers.

(As he pulled himself up via his bumper, however, one of the officers snarled then shot him with a taser, making him collapse back onto the ground and writhe in agony.)

KEVIN: What the hell did you do that for???

(Moments later, however, once the effects started wear off, he sighed despondently.)

KEVIN: Idiot. Why the hell was I surprised?

(Staring bitterly up at the police officers, he shook his head.)

KEVIN: Seeing as I've been the victim of a crime, would it be too much to expect a little sympathy for once?

(Completely ignoring his question, one of the police officers bit his lip.)

POLICE 1: So, been fighting with The Savages, have you?

POLICE 2: Nasty business, mate.

POLICE 1: It *is* a nasty business. And very telling! You see, only two kinds of people pick fights with The Savages. Policemen and members of their rival gang.

POLICE 2: I see. Well, he's not a police officer...

POLICE 1: Therefore, he must be a member of The Savages' rivals.

POLICE 2: The Wyverns!

POLICE 1: That's the one!

KEVIN: No. Like I just told you, I'm the victim of a crime! I was just out getting...

(The first policeman swiftly intervened.)  
POLICE 1: I didn't ask for your life story!  
(He then glanced to his partner.)  
POLICE 1: Did I ask for his life story?  
POLICE 2: I'm pretty sure you didn't, Derek.  
POLICE 1: I didn't think so.  
(He sneered.)  
POLICE 1: Got any ID on you, son?  
(Kevin looked at the officer angrily.)  
KEVIN: You just want me to reach into my pocket so you can claim I was going for a gun and shoot me! I aint falling for that.  
(The second officer laughed.)  
POLICE 2: We don't do that anymore. There's no point; there's no cameras on the cars these days.  
POLICE 1: Yeah, which leaves us free to do things like this!  
(With that, he used his taser on him once again then the pair of them proceeded to batter him senseless with their batons. Powerless to defend himself, Kevin was swiftly beaten unconscious. Not about to let his lack of consciousness spoil their fun, however, the two officers continued to put the boot in.)  
POLICE 1: Think, mate. They actually *pay* us to do these things.  
POLICE 2: Best job ever, mate.  
POLICE 1: Certainly is, my friend; it certainly is.  
(Almost a full minute later, once they were worn out from their exertions, the officers then stepped back from Kevin's motionless body; laughing to themselves as they did so.)  
POLICE 1: That was fun.  
POLICE 2: Yeah, I enjoyed that. Shame he passed out so soon though.  
POLICE 1: Yeah. Bloody pansy.  
(He then shrugged it off.)  
POLICE 1: Tell you what, mate; grab his wallet and we can head off to the rib shack.  
(He gestured towards Kevin.)  
POLICE 1: Lunch is on *this* geezer.  
POLICE 2: How very kind of him.  
(The second officer then reached into Kevin's pocket and took his wallet. Content to just leave him laying there, bleeding on the road, they then got back in the car and drove away.)

With his eyelids fluttering, his body twitching and blood oozing from his mouth and nose, Kevin remained unconscious and alone on the quiet tarmac at the mercy of the next passer-by. His very life was now dependant on that passer-by being a benevolent soul, with enough compassion to get help.)

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## **FOUR WEEKS LATER.**

*Headquarters of Saxon Systems and Software Ltd...*

Looking somewhat embarrassed, Kevin paced into a busy office suite; immediately receiving a round of applause from the twenty or so people inside it. Delighted to see

him, they swiftly gathered round him; shaking his hand or patting him on the back as they did so.

MAN 1: Good to have you back, Kev.

WOMAN 1: How you feeling?

MAN 2: I told you he wasn't dead!

(Smiling warmly, Kevin absorbed the attention and tried to reply to some of the comments.)

KEVIN: Thanks, everyone. It's good to *be* back. Who said I was dead?

(One of his co-workers then cupped his hand around his mouth to mimic a loud-hailer.)

MAN 2: Speech!!!

(At once, everyone copied his cry. Kevin could only laugh and shake his head.)

KEVIN: Fine, fine, fine.

(As everyone fell quiet to listen, Kevin shrugged modestly then begun.)

KEVIN: What can I say? The last four weeks have been hell. All I can tell you is, I must have skin like a rhino and my bones must be made of steel, 'cause three muggers and two baton-wielding pigs later, I'm still standing. They made some dents yeah, but they couldn't break me.

MAN 3: Nice.

WOMAN 2: Good for you, Kevin.

KEVIN: Oh, and thanks for the cards and the chocolate everyone. I'm fine now but if you want to keep sending me the chocolate, I'll be eternally grateful.

(One of his male co-workers scoffed.)

MAN 1: Dream on, Kev. You're better now, so *you* can buy *us* chocolate.

KEVIN: Fair enough. Get yourselves hospitalised and I will.

MAN 1: It's a deal. I'll drive into a tree on my way home.

(Everyone laughed at his quip then the crowd started to disperse.)

MAN 1: Oh well, back to the grindstone I suppose.

KEVIN: That's the plan, yeah.

(He then headed over to his desk and sat down. With a sigh, he looked about the desktop then delved into a draw and pulled out a flash-drive.)

KEVIN: So, we meet again, ball and chain.

(He shook his head.)

KEVIN: I hate Mondays.

(He allowed himself a smirk.)

KEVIN: Good thing it's Thursday, really. Taking three extra days off was a master stroke.

(He then looked up and smiled. A pretty 23 year-old woman was smiling back at him as she took her seat at the desk opposite his.)

KEVIN: Hello, Misty.

MISTY: Hi. Good to have you back, Kev. You're all better now, are you?

KEVIN: Yeah, pretty much. I'm certainly not dead, put it that way.

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: I have to say, you don't look very dead.

KEVIN: Exactly. I'm the opposite of dead.

MISTY: Alive!

KEVIN: That's the one.

(They shared a grin, then Kevin grimaced.)

KEVIN: No thanks to the Savages and the Police though. I actually thought they were going to kill me.

(Misty gave him a warm smile.)

MISTY: Well, it's in the past now. You can put it behind you.

(Kevin sneered.)

KEVIN: I could, but I'm not going to.

(Misty raised a curious eyebrow.)

MISTY: No?

KEVIN: The Savages, a crap name for a gang if ever there was one... *and* the bloody police... I aint gonna let it go *this* time. Two years ago they put my brother in a wheelchair. He got attacked by some Savages and fought back; the police took great joy in shooting the lot of them. He lived but he'll never walk again.

(He snarled.)

KEVIN: He begged me to let it go and I did, but not this time. I'm not gonna turn a blind eye and wait to be a victim again.

MISTY: But... what can you do? You can't go to the police and taking the law into your own hands would be suicidal!

(Kevin sighed.)

KEVIN: I'm well aware of that.

(He nodded determinedly.)

KEVIN: I'm not gonna do anything stupid like take them on. There's other things I can do though.

(Misty looked uncertain.)

MISTY: Such as?

KEVIN: Well... the police and the Savages like to fight each other, don't they? So it can't be too difficult to set them against each other. Even if it's something simple like tipping the police off to Savage member's whereabouts. I haven't really thought it through yet, but I'm pretty sure I can stir up trouble between them somehow. And if a fight does kick off, hopefully they'll end up wiping each other out.

(Misty was stunned.)

MISTY: So... you're gonna try to get them to attack each other?

KEVIN: Yeah. I'd much rather they were shooting at each other than shooting at me.

(Misty bit her lip.)

MISTY: True.

(Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: Besides, it beats doing nothing. As I was laying there in hospital, I realised life's too short just to take this crap and do nothing. This city has turned to shit and we're all victims waiting to happen.

(He then leant forward and smiled nervously.)

KEVIN: Speaking of life being too short. I've had my eye on this beautiful woman for a couple of years now and I've decided to tell her how I feel.

(Misty beamed excitedly then glanced around the office.)

MISTY: Oh, who is it? Someone here?

(She pointed to a blonde at the photocopier.)

MISTY: It is Kelly?

(Kevin's shoulders slumped.)

KEVIN: No. I was talking about you!

MISTY: Me?

(Kevin nodded nervously.)

KEVIN: Yeah... see, you're beautiful... *and* you're a really nice person.

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: This is an ugly city, Misty; full of greedy and despicable people. You're not like them though; you're decent, innocent... a breath of fresh air.

(Turning red, he then took a deep, uncertain breath.)

KEVIN: So, yeah... I like you... and I decided life's too short to wait, so I'm gonna ask you out.

(Misty looked nervously from side to side then grinned.)

MISTY: Well... if it makes it any easier for you, I'll probably say yes.

(Kevin looked mightily relieved.)

KEVIN: You have no idea.

(He beamed.)

KEVIN: Fancy a drink after work tonight?

(Misty blushed and fiddled with her hair.)

MISTY: Sure, sounds like fun.

(Kevin sighed then shook his head at her apologetically.)

KEVIN: It won't be. I'm gonna talk about cricket all evening.

(Misty giggled.)

MISTY: That's fine, I'll be home by seven then I expect.

KEVIN: Half six, realistically.

(They shared a laugh together then Kevin clenched his fist under the desk triumphantly.)

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(That very afternoon, Kevin paced up to the office water cooler then glanced up at the clock. Seeing it was only half past two, he sighed despondently then proceeded to pour himself a drink.)

KEVIN: So this is my reward for making a full recovery, is it? Spending my life in this dump, watching the bleeding clock again.

(He then stood up and took a sip of his water. Upon lowering his cup from his face, he then smiled at a workmate who was pacing towards him.)

KEVIN: Alright, Gary?

(Gary stopped at the water cooler and reached for a cup.)

GARY: Alright, Darren?

KEVIN: Darren? Who the hell's Darren?

GARY: You are. Aren't you?

KEVIN: No! I'm Kevin!

GARY: Really?

(He looked stumped.)

GARY: Then who the hell's Darren?

KEVIN: I don't fucking know, do I?

(Just then, another workmate called out to him from the doorway of a nearby side office.)

STEVE: Kev! Come here, mate!

KEVIN: Gladly!

(He rolled his eyes at Gary then headed towards Steve.)

KEVIN: What can I do for you, mate?

(Much to his bewilderment, Steve glanced around cautiously then dragged him into the side office.)

KEVIN: What are you doing?

STEVE: Shush.

(He then spoke in a quietened voice.)

STEVE: I overheard what you were telling Misty earlier.  
(Kevin was horrified.)  
KEVIN: You did?  
STEVE: Yeah, and I can help!  
KEVIN: I don't need your help. I'm more than capable of taking a bird out for a drink.  
(Steve furrowed his brow at him.)  
STEVE: Not that! What you were saying about getting back at the police and the Savages!  
(Kevin looked enlightened.)  
KEVIN: Oh! Right!  
(He gave him a doubting glance.)  
KEVIN: How are *you* gonna help me with that?  
(Steve glanced over Kevin's shoulder to make sure nobody was in earshot then looked into his eyes.)  
STEVE: Ever heard of the Wyverns?  
(Kevin looked at him emptily for a moment.)  
KEVIN: The Wyverns?  
STEVE: Yeah!  
KEVIN: The gang?  
(Steve gave him a sarcastic glance.)  
STEVE: No, the mythical beast. Of course I mean the gang!  
KEVIN: What about them?  
STEVE: You should join them.  
KEVIN: Mate...  
STEVE: I'm serious. They were formed to take back the streets from the police and the Savages by fighting fire with fire! They match violence with violence and use the revenue from their crimes to keep their neighbourhoods safe. They're just a bunch of pissed off people, like you, fighting back.  
KEVIN: Well, yeah; I know that, mate, but...  
STEVE: But what? Given your desire to get back at the fuckers who battered you, joining them just makes sense.  
KEVIN: And I would if I could, but it's not like I can just pick up an application form and apply, is it? I wouldn't even know how to begin contacting them!  
(Steve nodded knowingly.)  
STEVE: No, but you know somebody who does.  
KEVIN: Who?  
(He gasped.)  
KEVIN: Not Kelly, is it? That really *would* be weird.  
STEVE: What??? No! Me, you cock. *I* can get you in!  
(Kevin raised a distrusting eyebrow.)  
KEVIN: You?  
STEVE: Yeah...  
(A deeply offended frown then crossed his brow.)  
STEVE: Don't act so surprised! I can handle myself, you know.  
KEVIN: It's not that... I didn't mean to offend you, mate; I just didn't think you were the type to be in a gang.  
STEVE: Yeah well, just like you, I knew I had to do something.  
(Kevin nodded.)  
KEVIN: I hear you.

STEVE: You want me to set you up?  
(Kevin looked uncertain.)  
KEVIN: If you're sure you can get me in.  
STEVE: Trust me!  
KEVIN: Just tell me; are the rumours true? Is their leader really a psycho? The Phoenix, is it?  
STEVE: Don't worry about that. Yeah, The Phoenix is a bit extreme when it comes to the violence but as long as you keep your nose clean, *you* won't be in any danger. (He shrugged.)  
STEVE: Quite the opposite, in fact. Someone like that is a damn good ally. When the shit comes down, you'll be glad The Phoenix is on your side, put it that way. (Kevin nodded firmly.)  
KEVIN: Okay. Do whatever you can do. I don't know how much use I'll be, but if I can help them take back the streets, even in the tiniest way, it'll be worth it.  
STEVE: You've got it.  
(Steve then started to pass him on his way back to the main office, but stopped in the doorway.)  
STEVE: Oh, by the way, this conversation never happened.  
KEVIN: What conversation?  
(Steve just nodded then paced onwards.)

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Inside a quiet pub that evening, Kevin stood with a pint of beer in his hand, watching as Misty leant over the pool table with her cue at the ready. Her stance was awkward and she didn't look very confident at all.  
MISTY: Don't laugh!  
KEVIN: Why would I laugh?  
MISTY: I'm really bad at this!  
(Kevin shrugged.)  
KEVIN: I'm hardly brilliant myself.  
(Misty glanced up at him and grimaced.)  
MISTY: Am I even holding the cue right? The *first* thing a guy tells me is I'm holding it wrong normally.  
KEVIN: Well... I didn't want to make you feel bad but you are kinda holding it funny, yeah.  
MISTY: See; I'm useless at it.  
(She then fired the cue ball forth and missed everything.)  
MISTY: I rest my case.  
(Kevin watched her stand tall then grimaced.)  
KEVIN: Didn't you say you used to be a rhythmic gymnast?  
MISTY: Yeah, why?  
KEVIN: Just wondering. With that kind of dexterity, I'd have thought pool would have been easy for you.  
(Misty sighed.)  
MISTY: What can I tell you? I'm just horrible at this for some reason.  
(She then gave him a coy glance.)  
MISTY: It's cute though, right?  
(Kevin nodded.)  
KEVIN: Everything about you is cute. Not to mention hot!  
MISTY: You know, that kind of flattery is going to get you far.



(They shared a grin then Kevin paced around the table and prepared to take his shot.)

KEVIN: You wanna get something to eat after this match?

(Misty nodded.)

MISTY: Yeah, sounds nice.

(She then glanced to one side nervously.)

MISTY: So, had any more thoughts about how you intend to get the police back for what they did to you?

(Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: Not really. Though I *was* wondering if it was possible to hi-jack police radios. You know; to send them into gang hotspots to get their arses kicked. That's one idea I could work on.

(Misty nodded.)

MISTY: Just be careful, whatever you decide to do. Messing with them could be dangerous. I'd hate to see you get hurt again.

(Kevin smiled.)

KEVIN: So would I.

(He then took his shot and watched in horror as the white went into the corner pocket.)

KEVIN: Hmm... looks like this game is gonna take a while.

(Misty giggled then retrieved the white ball and set it on the table. As she bent to take her shot, however, Kevin stepped behind her and eyed up her backside.)

KEVIN: You know, if you weren't so sweet and innocent, I'd probably make a crude comment about what an amazing arse you've got, right now.

(Misty wiggled her backside at him briefly then stood up again.)

MISTY: What makes you think I *am* sweet and innocent?

(Kevin smiled.)

KEVIN: You saying you're not?

MISTY: I'm just asking!

(Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: You're always smiling and you never bad-mouth *anyone*.

(He nodded approvingly.)

KEVIN: You're kind of a miracle, actually. You're absolutely beautiful with a body to die for. Most women like that would be a bit of a bitch, but you're nothing like that. You're just so nice. It's awesome.

MISTY: Doesn't mean I'm innocent.

KEVIN: No? So, if I looked down your top right now you wouldn't slap me in the face?

MISTY: You've been staring at my chest all evening; have I slapped you yet?

(Kevin looked somewhat uneasy.)

KEVIN: I haven't, have I?

MISTY: Well, not all evening, but quite often, yeah.

KEVIN: Well, I apologise. Though in my defence, that's a pretty awesome chest and I'm only human!

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: Apology accepted. Can I take my shot now?

KEVIN: Be my guest.

(As she bent over the table, Kevin sucked his teeth.)

KEVIN: Peachy!

(Misty chuckled then stood up again.)

MISTY: I'm gonna slap you in a minute.

(Kevin beamed.)

KEVIN: See? You're as innocent as the day is long!

MISTY: You really believe that, don't you?

(Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: Why wouldn't I?

MISTY: You know, you might be surprised.

KEVIN: I doubt it.

(Two hours later, Kevin found himself laying stark naked on Misty's bed, being ridden like a pony. Staring at her in delight as she rocked back and forth violently upon him, he couldn't help but cry out joyfully.)

KEVIN: You're not so innocent after all, are you?

MISTY: I told you!!!

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Later that evening, looking like the cat who got the cream, Kevin stepped away from a small block of flats whistling to himself. He had a spring in his step and his fist clenched triumphantly.

KEVIN: Kevin, you legend; get in.

(He then punched the air and paced away when suddenly, an unfamiliar voice piped up from behind him.)

BRIAN: Legend are you, Kevin?

(Kevin swiftly spun around and raised his fists.)

KEVIN: Who the hell are you?

(The stranger stepped forth from the shadows and approached him.)

BRIAN: The name's Brian; Brian Lowe.

KEVIN: And?

BRIAN: And, word has it you're interested in joining the Wyverns!

(Kevin raised a suspicious eyebrow.)

KEVIN: Is that so?

BRIAN: Apparently!

(Kevin looked uncertain.)

KEVIN: And you're here to recruit me, are you?

(Brian scoffed.)

BRIAN: Don't get ahead of yourself, mate. I'm here to test you.

(Kevin sneered.)

KEVIN: Forget it, you could be anybody!

BRIAN: Not exactly, mate. I'm obviously not a pig or a Savage. If I was I'd have jumped you when you weren't looking. So, I'm either a random crazy guy or I'm exactly who I say I am.

(Kevin looked to him uneasily.)

KEVIN: So you're a Wyvern then are you?

(Brian rolled his eyes.)

BRIAN: Yes! Your mate Steve at work got you a trial, okay? Now, you wanna try out for the Wyverns or go home? You choose. I aint got all night.

(Kevin took a breath then nodded.)

KEVIN: Fine, okay. I'm in.

BRIAN: Excellent. Let's go.

(As Brian headed away, Kevin puffed out then followed him towards the car park.)

BRIAN: So, how was your date? And before you ask how I know you were on a date, I've tailed you all evening. Since you left work, in fact.

(Kevin scowled.)  
KEVIN: Obviously! You wouldn't have known I was here otherwise.  
BRIAN: Precisely. So, how was it? The date?  
(Kevin glared at him for a moment then relented and nodded with satisfaction.)  
KEVIN: Pretty damn good, actually.  
BRIAN: Cool. Did you fuck her?  
(Kevin looked appalled.)  
KEVIN: That's none of your damn business!  
(He then beamed to himself.)  
KEVIN: And yes!  
(Brian laughed.)  
BRIAN: Awesome. I can't wait until the lads meet *you*.  
KEVIN: What?  
BRIAN: They'll all want to shake your hand I expect. You might even have to sign autographs.  
KEVIN: What, why?  
BRIAN: You're kidding, right? You just took a bird out on a first date, got her back to her place, gave her a seeing to and you're out of there by half past ten! If you could teach that shit, you'd make a fortune on the lecture circuit.  
(Kevin looked deeply suspicious.)  
KEVIN: How do you know it was our first date?  
(Brian scoffed.)  
BRIAN: I followed you all night, remember? At one point you mentioned how awkward first dates can be and how "amazed" you were that you two were so comfortable together.  
(He chuckled.)  
BRIAN: Why do women always fall for cheesy crap like that?  
(Kevin grinned.)  
KEVIN: I don't know... I'm just glad they do.  
(With that, Brian led Kevin to his car and they headed off into the night.)

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A short while later, Brian parked the car and led Kevin down a quiet moonlit street. Careful not to disturb any of the street's sleepy inhabitants, they spoke in subdued voices.

KEVIN: Where we going exactly? A moonlit walk is all very romantic and all, but you're really not my type.  
BRIAN: Patience, mate. A little walk should be the last of your concerns, right now.  
KEVIN: And why's that?  
BRIAN: You're about to commit a crime!  
(Kevin looked a little on edge.)  
KEVIN: I see.  
BRIAN: That's why I parked a few streets away.  
(Kevin nodded.)  
KEVIN: Fine. As long as it's not 'cause you wanted us to spend quality time together.  
(Brian covered his mouth and laughed.)  
BRIAN: Perish the thought, mate.

(Just then, a young man dressed in black, took a single step out from the bushes in front of one of the houses. Brian immediately acknowledged him with a nod and led Kevin towards the bushes with him.)

BRIAN: Alright, Mike? Everything in place?

(The man nodded then spoke in almost a whisper.)

MIKE: Yeah, you're all set. The lights went out about an hour ago.

BRIAN: Access?

MIKE: Side window's wide open.

(Brian nodded then turned to Kevin with a serious expression upon his brow.)

BRIAN: There's a bloke in there; a member of the Savages. He hospitalised two of our guys last week and raped one of our girls.

KEVIN: Wanker!

BRIAN: Yeah, he is. Question is, what are you gonna do about it?

KEVIN: Me?

BRIAN: Yeah, this is your test.

(Kevin bit his lip.)

KEVIN: Well...

BRIAN: Nah, don't. Don't tell me a thing. Just do what you think appropriate.

(He then gestured towards the house.)

KEVIN: Right... and you're sure you've got the right bloke?

BRIAN: Yeah, he was caught on one of the CCTV feeds we've hacked into. Two people recognised him instantly.

KEVIN: I see. Well, in that case...

BRIAN: Say no more, mate. Just come back out here when you're done.

(With that, Brian and Mike ducked into the bushes leaving Kevin staring nervously at the house. Taking a deep breath to calm himself, he nodded then whispered to himself.)

KEVIN: Right, do what I think is appropriate.

(He then crept towards the house and sneaked around the side. Watching him go, Mike whispered to Brian.)

MIKE: What do you reckon?

(Brian sighed.)

BRIAN: He got laid just before I picked him up.

MIKE: Hmm... never a good sign.

BRIAN: Nope. Nothing destroys a man's desire to kill like getting some pussy.

MIKE: So, another one not up to the task, you reckon?

BRIAN: Dunno. Probably. Guess we'll see.

(At the house, a few moments later, Kevin slipped himself into the darkened hallway through an open window. Keeping low, he looked about himself to make sure the coast was clear then crept towards the stairs. Breathing heavily and clueless as to what he was about to do, he looked far from comfortable. To make matters worse, as soon as he reached the bottom step, an upstairs door suddenly creaked open and a light appeared on the landing. Panic stricken, he swiftly ducked into the living room and pinned himself against the wall, just inside the door. With his adrenaline flowing, he panted heavily and whispered to himself.)

KEVIN: Not good, not good.

(In something of a dither, he then looked all around himself for somewhere better to hide when he heard footsteps on the stairs.)

KEVIN: Shit!

(Pinning himself tighter to the wall, his breathing became heavier and heavier with every loudening footstep. Looking about for a better hiding place again, he grimaced to himself when suddenly, the hallway light went on and a man paced into the living room, straight past him without even spotting him. At once, Kevin's eyes bulged and he slowly started to sidle towards the door to make good his escape. He hadn't got very far, however, when he noticed the man's jacket resting on an armchair. Spying the Savage gang logo which was stitched to the sleeve, his nostrils flared and his fists clenched. A rage swelled inside him and all he could picture was several Savage gang members mocking him as he raced into the hospital with his brother on a gurney. With his anger rapidly continuing to rise, he then pictured the three gang members who'd almost beaten him to death four weeks earlier. In this moment, he simply snapped. Burning red with unadulterated fury, his face contorted and he raced forwards grabbing a metal trophy from the shelf. Like a man possessed, he then whacked the gang member over the head with it. Having seen red, he then proceeded to batter the Savage with it, snarling ferociously. Time and time again he brought the heavy object down powerfully on the man's head until blood started to ooze out all over the carpet. Moments later, as the heat of his rage started to simmer, he stepped back then stared down in horror at what he'd done.)

KEVIN: Holy crap!!!

(Barely able to believe what he'd done, he ran distressed fingers through his hair then whimpered.)

KEVIN: Oh, fuck. Shit. What did I do???

(Having gaped in horrified silence for a few moments, he then raced out of the room with the trophy. In a blind panic, he zoomed straight at the front door then used his sleeve to fumble with it; whimpering as he did so. Moments later, once he'd finally got it open, then charged outside towards the bushes. In a stressed yet hushed voice, he implored to Brian and Mike desperately.)

KEVIN: We need to get the fuck out of here! I killed him!!!

(Much to his dismay, Brian and Mike emerged nonchalantly from the bushes, with no sense of urgency whatsoever.)

BRIAN: You were supposed to!

MIKE: Yup.

(Mike then calmly headed for the house. Left behind, Brian gestured to the trophy in Kevin's hand.)

BRIAN: Kill him with that, did you?

(Kevin held out frantic hands towards him.)

KEVIN: Yes! We've got to go.

BRIAN: Nice, didn't leave the weapon at the scene. Impressive. Not that the police will bother investigating a Savage's death. Still, nice touch. Did you leave any prints on the front door?

KEVIN: What? No!

BRIAN: Excellent.

KEVIN: Now can we go?

BRIAN: Patience!

KEVIN: Patience??? Mate...

BRIAN: Calm down, will you? We'll just wait and see what Mike has to say, okay?

(Far from happy about the idea of hanging around, Kevin gaped at him anxiously for a moment then sighed in defeat. They'd arrived in Brian's car, therefore he wouldn't be going anywhere until he was ready. Reluctantly accepting that fact, he then turned and watched the house; hoping Mike would be quick about whatever it was he was

doing. Mercifully, he only had to wait about thirty seconds before Mike strolled back out the house again.)

KEVIN: Thank fuck.

(As he approached them, Mike raised an impressed eyebrow.)

MIKE: Result, mate. He caved his head in good and proper.

(Brian nodded.)

BRIAN: Awesome.

(He then looked to Kevin.)

BRIAN: *Now* we can go!

(With that, Brian jogged off down the street and Mike raced away in the other direction. Not about to hang around a second longer than he need to, Kevin stuck close to Brian.)

KEVIN: Mate. Seriously! I can't believe I did that!

BRIAN: Freak you out, did it?

KEVIN: Of course it did. I just killed someone.

BRIAN: Yeah, first time *is* a bit freaky. It gets easier though.

(Kevin puffed out in despair.)

KEVIN: I just killed another human being.

(Brian smiled at him.)

BRIAN: Yeah, you can look at it like that and feel guilty for the rest of your life or you can be real about it.

KEVIN: What?

BRIAN: By killing him, you potentially saved more Wyverns from getting killed. Or raped come to that.

KEVIN: Well...

BRIAN: That guy was a brutal, violent killer, Kevin. And you just took him out. Killing that bastard saved the lives of good people. Don't look at it like you killed someone; take it for what it was. You just stopped a killer from ever walking our streets again.

(As they raced forth Kevin absorbed his words for a moment then nodded sternly.)

KEVIN: That's exactly what it's about, isn't it? Doing it to them before they can do it to us.

BRIAN: In a nutshell, yeah.

(Kevin's entire demeanour changed in that moment. His anxiety vanished and he snarled determinedly.)

KEVIN: Then I can't wait until next time!

(Impressed with his attitude, Brian nodded.)

BRIAN: You'll go far, mate. You'll go far.

KEVIN: So what happens next?

BRIAN: I'll drop you back at your car, tell the boss what happened then someone will be in touch.

KEVIN: Okay. How long?

BRIAN: Soon, I expect.

KEVIN: Good, I can't wait to get started now. I wanna kill them all.

(Brian laughed.)

BRIAN: Seriously, the lads are gonna love you.

---

The following afternoon, Brian paced up and down on the pavement outside the plush headquarters of Saxon Systems and Software Ltd. Puffing on a cigarette and

checking his watch, he was clearly getting impatient. Moments later, much to his delight, Kevin then strolled out of the building chatting with Misty. Upon spotting him, he threw down his cigarette then started to approach. As he did so, he saw Misty wave goodbye to Kevin dismissively, before sauntering away in a different direction; cutting their conversation off mid-sentence. More than a little baffled by her coldness, Kevin watched her blankly for a moment then shook his head. Having seen it all, Brian grinned then called out to him.

BRIAN: Kev, mate. Over here.

(Kevin looked across at him then glanced towards Misty again before heading over to him.)

BRIAN: Was that the bird you hammered last night?

(Kevin scratched behind his ear.)

KEVIN: Yeah, she's been acting really weird all day.

BRIAN: Yeah?

KEVIN: Yeah, really pleased to see me one minute, scowling at me the next. I don't get it.

(Brian laughed.)

BRIAN: Maybe she was being nice 'cause you're a good bloke, then when she remembered how shit you were in bed she couldn't *help* scowling.

(Kevin glared at him.)

KEVIN: Up yours. I was awesome.

(He ruffled his neck.)

KEVIN: I was so good I nearly called out my own name.

BRIAN: Well, if either of you were going to...

KEVIN: Less of that! What do you want?

(Brian gestured towards the car park.)

BRIAN: The verdict on last night's little test... you're in.

(A minute or so later, Kevin found himself sitting in the passenger seat of Brian's car, heading down a busy city road.)

BRIAN: I hate traffic.

KEVIN: Who doesn't?

BRIAN: Good point.

(Kevin puffed out.)

KEVIN: I really can't figure Misty out. We were having a lovely conversation as we left work, as soon as we stepped outside though... whoosh, she was off. Couldn't ditch me quick enough.

(Brian shrugged.)

BRIAN: I can't help you, mate. Women are a complete mystery to me. Maybe you should ask her about it; she seems like a nice enough girl.

KEVIN: Well yeah, nice is the word. That's why her scowl looked so out of place. She's a really kind, warm and friendly person; she wouldn't hurt a fly, you know?

(Brian suddenly started to cough.)

KEVIN: You alright?

BRIAN: Yeah, I'm okay... need to quit smoking; it's really doing me no favours.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: Clearly. So, anyway, yeah... I'll ask her about it tomorrow.

BRIAN: Cool.

KEVIN: Yeah...

(He then spanned his forehead despairingly.)

KEVIN: Fuck. No, I won't. It's Saturday tomorrow.

(His shoulders slumped.)

KEVIN: Great. Now I'm gonna have *all weekend* to stew over it.

BRIAN: Well that sucks.

KEVIN: And then some.

(Kevin groaned to himself then glanced out of the window. They were just about to pass a sign reading "Welcome to Westport".)

KEVIN: Westport...

BRIAN: Home of the Wyverns, mate. I could park anywhere round here and leave the doors open and the key in the ignition, and in the morning, it'd be exactly how I left it. Not a single copper in sight and yet no crime whatsoever. Says it all really.

KEVIN: No crime... certainly explains why houses cost so much round here.

BRIAN: Price worth paying, mate.

(A short while later, Brian turned off the road then drove down a slope into an underground car park.)

BRIAN: Here we are.

(Heading down the slope with claustrophobic walls on either side, Kevin puffed out nervously.)

KEVIN: This is nerve-wracking. I hate meeting new people.

BRIAN: Nah, you'll be fine.

(Feeling more than a little uneasy about the whole thing, Kevin then fell silent.

Trying not to let his nerves get the better of him, he watched on with wide-eyes as they turned a corner at the bottom of the slope and continued on down a second, tight passageway. At the end of this second passageway, they then turned again and slowly drove up to a manned, metal barrier. At once the car was converged upon by a group of large men, wearing black suits with sky blue patterned ties. As a unit they virtually swarmed towards the vehicle. Upon spotting Brian, however, they stepped back then waved him through into the car park. For Kevin, it had been extremely unnerving. The Wyverns may have been the good guys, but to be swarmed upon in a such a way had been extremely intimidating.

---

A minute or so later, Kevin found himself heading down a well-lit corridor inside a large building, listening to a lecture from Brian. Very much acting as a tour guide, his hands were as active as his mouth.)

BRIAN: On this floor we have the offices. This is where the business transactions are handled. Laundering, protection rackets, embezzlement...

(He made inverted commas with his fingers.)

BRIAN: Donations from wealthy supporters.

(Kevin grimaced at him with uncertainty.)

KEVIN: Protection rackets? I thought the Wyverns were the good guys!

(Brian scoffed at him.)

BRIAN: You've got a lot to learn, mate. Before we took over, the local businesses were paying the police and the gangs like a grand each. That was just to stop *them* from attacking them; they didn't actually get *any* protection. We stepped in with a miserly charge of fifty quid and drove them other bitches out. They can't wait to pay us now. Some pay more every week as a thank you.

KEVIN: Really?

BRIAN: Yeah, the people love us round here; you won't hear a bad word against us.

(Kevin looked most impressed.)



KEVIN: Cool. I guess dishing out fifty quid to make the neighbourhood safe is a small price to pay.

BRIAN: Exactly, and we have to get our funding somehow. Weapons and shit cost money. So do computer hackers. Expertise comes with a price.

(He nodded proudly.)

BRIAN: I tell you, mate, this is a seriously professional operation here. Like any *other* highly successful business. But apart from trading we operate as an organised crime gang. With a conscience though; that's the difference!

(He nodded.)

BRIAN: We don't just extort money from any old millionaire, only ones who made their fortune screwing the people of the city. Like the mayor. He's taken so much in bribes to overlook the police's activities he could buy his own island. We figured he should hand some of it to us in order to protect the public, so we made it so.

KEVIN: Nice!

(Brian nodded.)

BRIAN: Yeah, we do good shit here, Kev. Yeah, we use methods some might find disturbing but it's for the good of the people and they appreciate that. Like I said, nobody bad-mouths the Wyverns in this part of the city.

(He then chuckled.)

BRIAN: Though if they did, the Phoenix would probably tear their arms off.

(Kevin grimaced.)

KEVIN: You mean that literally, right?

BRIAN: Nah... well, not tearing anyway. Cut their arms off with a chainsaw maybe. I tell you, the Phoenix is a proper psycho when provoked.

(Kevin shuddered.)

KEVIN: I look forward to meeting him.

BRIAN: Anyway, on with the tour...

(He gestured to the left.)

BRIAN: Stairwell to the next floor there. The armoury's up there. You'd be amazed at some of the heavy artillery we're got stashed away up there.

KEVIN: Really? You keep the heavy artillery on an upper floor? Won't that make it a bit awkward to get out again?

BRIAN: No. There's an industrial lift down to the basement car park.

KEVIN: Gotcha.

BRIAN: Anyway, as I was saying... what *was* I saying?

KEVIN: You were giving me the tour.

BRIAN: Oh, yeah.

(He smiled.)

BRIAN: There's a swimming pool in the sub-basement in case you fancy a swim. Olympic size, of course. And the canteen is on the ground floor. Don't have the steak though; the chef thinks burnt is medium rare.

KEVIN: Suits me; I like mine well done anyway.

BRIAN: Yeah, so does the Phoenix, that's probably why they gave that chef the job.

(He couldn't help but chuckle.)

BRIAN: I was surprised to hear the Phoenix likes it well done; I expected it'd have to be raw and still attached to a living cow. Proper maniac, mate.

(He laughed to himself then paced forwards gesturing to a glass shop front in the corridor.)

BRIAN: And this is the gift shop.

KEVIN: Gift shop?

BRIAN: Well, more of a shop, really.  
KEVIN: Right!  
BRIAN: They've got every type of paraphernalia in there. Mugs, key rings, mouse mats, umbrellas, all with our light blue camouflage pattern on it. There's also an aisle packed with all the clothes a bloke could ever need, all in a unique Wyvern design.  
(He then rolled his eyes.)  
BRIAN: And about *fifteen* aisles full of clothes and accessories for the ladies. That shop makes a fortune from female gang members, I swear.  
(He shrugged.)  
BRIAN: Oh, and they sell snacks too.  
(He then rubbed his hands together.)  
BRIAN: Right, let's show you some of the hang-out rooms. We've got a gym, a cinema, a five-a-side football pitch, a volleyball court...  
KEVIN: Volleyball? I used to be good at that.  
BRIAN: Used to be?  
KEVIN: I aint played for a while.  
BRIAN: Right, anyway, let's start with...  
(Just then, a young woman carrying a clipboard stepped from a side room and paced towards them.)  
LISA: There you are!  
BRIAN: Yes, it's me. The man you've been searching for all your life.  
LISA: In your dreams, Brian. The boss wants to see the new guy. Now!  
(Brian looked at her blankly.)  
BRIAN: The Phoenix?  
LISA: Who else, numb nuts?  
BRIAN: But...we're in the middle of my grand tour.  
LISA: Fine. Refuse then; they're *your* limbs! Now, if you'll excuse me...  
(With that, she rolled her eyes then strolled on. Hiding his face from Kevin, Brian allowed himself an amused grin then turned round to face him looking somewhat horrified.)  
BRIAN: The boss wants to see *you*?  
(Kevin looked extremely uncomfortable.)  
KEVIN: That's bad is it?  
BRIAN: The rank and file only get summoned up there for two reasons, punishment and interrogation. What did you do?  
(Kevin was stumped.)  
KEVIN: Nothing, I just got here!  
BRIAN: Well, whatever. You'd better come with me. If you try to run, the security team will rip you a new one... or shoot you *several* new ones.  
(Kevin shrugged nervously.)  
KEVIN: Fine, I didn't do anything wrong.  
BRIAN: I just hope that's true, for your sake.  
(As they headed for the lifts, Kevin puffed out fearfully and chewed on a fingernail. Brian, on the other hand, couldn't help smirking, clearly amused by something.)

---

A short while later, Kevin and Brian emerged from a lift then headed for a set of glass double doors. Giving Kevin a nod, Brian pushed them open then led him into a plush modern suite. With several large sofa's, a giant television, a stripper pole, a pool

table and various other forms of entertainment strewn about the room, it was quite obviously the hangout of the privileged elite Wyverns.

Inside the room, a giant of a man of African descent, sat arrogantly slouched on a sofa staring back at them. Behind him, a pretty woman of Oriental descent watched them emotionlessly from where she was playing pool with a bald, white guy. The white guy was seemingly disinterested by their presence. All three of them were in their mid twenties.

Made to feel quite uncomfortable by the big black guy's harsh glare, Kevin quietly mumbled to Brian.

KEVIN: He's the Phoenix, right?

BRIAN: He wishes.

(As they approached the sofa, the black guy, looked them up and down and sneered.)

TAVARES: This him?

BRIAN: Yeah. Kevin, this is Tavares.

(He then gestured towards the pool table.)

BRIAN: And this beauty here is Xia... and that's Covert.

(In that moment, the bald, white guy suddenly looked interested.)

COVERT: My name's Graham!!!

XIA: Yeah, but you can call him "Covert".

COVERT: No. He can't.

(Feeling somewhat out of place, Kevin just smiled.)

KEVIN: Nice to meet you all.

(At this point, Tavares stood up, towering over them both.)

TAVARES: After you meet the boss, *then* you can decide whether it was nice to meet us or not!

(He then sneered over his shoulder.)

TAVARES: And it's Covert.

(Covert pointed at him bitterly.)

COVERT: That's a shit nickname and I aint having it.

TAVARES: We'll call you what we want to call you, arsehole.

COVERT: Yeah, whatever.

(Tavares then looked to Brian and pointed to a door at the back of the room.)

TAVARES: The boss is in there. Don't forget to knock.

(Brian whimpered.)

BRIAN: Me? Can't *you* knock? I'm just a marshal, I don't have the authority to...

TAVARES: Coward.

(Just then, the door in question started to creep open and Brian stepped back.)

BRIAN: I'll be on my way.

(As he paced backwards nervously, the door swung wide open then Misty stepped out. Kevin's jaw almost dropped onto the floor.)

BRIAN: Psych! You aint really in trouble!

(Misty looked to Brian and smiled.)

MISTY: Ah, he's here. Thanks, Brian!

(Brian whimpered.)

BRIAN: You're welcome, your ladyship. I mean, ma'am.

(Misty furrowed her brow.)

MISTY: Brian, enough! Stop talking to me like I'm the bloody queen all the time.

(Brian gulped.)

BRIAN: Yes, ma'am. Sorry, ma'am. Can I go?

MISTY: I insist that you do.

BRIAN: Right.

(And with that, he left the room as fast as his legs would carry him. Having watched him go, Misty rolled her eyes then looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: So... oh, dear.

(Kevin was staring at her agape; lost in a world of confusion. Tavares found it highly amusing.)

TAVARES: Uh-oh, he's broken.

XIA: Well, let's be honest, we knew it'd be a shock to his system.

COVERT: He looks like he's seen a ghost!

(Xia gave Covert a belittling glance.)

XIA: That's the whole point of her anonymity, stupid. She's supposed to *be* a ghost!

COVERT: Yeah, and he looks like he's seen her.

(As they rolled their eyes at one another, Misty stepped closer to the dumbfounded Kevin.)

MISTY: You alright there, Kev?

(Kevin's lips quivered for a moment then he spoke up.)

KEVIN: You're... what? No! Eh?

TAVARES: He has a point.

XIA: Yeah, if he was standing for parliament, he'd get *my* vote!

(Misty furrowed her brow.)

MISTY: Enough, guys. Someone fetch him a Coke.

(She then gestured to an armchair.)

MISTY: Sit.

(Looking like a pale shadow of his former self, Kevin started to sit on the floor where he was standing.)

MISTY: On the armchair, silly.

(In a daze, he glanced over his shoulder then slowly found his way into the seat in question. As he did so, Misty sat down next to Tavares and smiled at him.)

MISTY: So, you're probably wondering...

(Her words were then interrupted by Kevin's raised voice.)

KEVIN: What the fuck's going on? This is wind up right?

(He glanced around the room.)

KEVIN: Seriously! I am on TV? Only, this can't be happening.

(Misty ran a hand through her hair.)

MISTY: Calm down, will you? I can explain everything.

KEVIN: I don't wanna calm down.

(Tavares snarled at him.)

TAVARES: You're gonna calm the fuck down right now.

(Kevin looked him up and down coldly then faced Misty and grimaced.)

KEVIN: He could snap me like a twig.

MISTY: Oh, easily.

KEVIN: Fine, I'll calm down then.

(He took a deep breath.)

KEVIN: What the hell's going on here, Misty? Why are you here? You aint the Phoenix! I heard he's a big, psychotic bloke with giant fists and let's face it, you're not. You're a good girl!

(Misty bit her lip.)

MISTY: Oh, boy. There's so much you don't know.

KEVIN: Clearly.

(Misty puffed out.)

MISTY: Okay, let's address that then. Everything you need to know. I *am* the Phoenix. I got that nickname because I've been hospitalised twice and on both occasions I was given less than 48 hours to live. It's got nothing to do with having amazing strength; it's because I keep coming back from the dead.

KEVIN: But...

TAVARES: Shut up and listen!

KEVIN: Okay!

MISTY: My mum and my sister were killed by Savages when I was eight because my dad owed them money. It's called "pulling the root". I survived; just. I had to go and live with my grandparents and didn't meet my dad again until I was twelve. He was on the run still, but made the decision to risk seeing me anyway.

(She sneered.)

MISTY: A sniper shot him dead right in front of me then shot *me*. Again, I survived; just.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: Anyway, a child therapist said I should take up sport to overcome the trauma, so I did. By the time I was fifteen I was national champion at rhythmic gymnastics and a black belt at Karate and Jujitsu. So when I left school, I had a choice. I could either use my skills to compete internationally or use them to get back at the scum that are a fucking up our city.

(She nodded defiantly.)

MISTY: I chose the latter.

(Kevin just looked at her in astonishment.)

KEVIN: You swore! You never swear!

(Misty furrowed her brow.)

MISTY: Did you hear a bloody word I said?

(Kevin scratched his head.)

KEVIN: I did, yeah... black belts and all that... damn.

(He puffed out.)

KEVIN: This is doing my head in.

(Just then, Xia appeared at his side and handed him an ice cold can of drink.)

XIA: Get that down you.

(Kevin took it and smiled.)

KEVIN: Thanks, appreciated.

XIA: You're welcome.

(She then placed herself down on another armchair and watched Kevin's discomfort.)

KEVIN: So, you're like... tough?

(He scoffed.)

KEVIN: But you're Misty; the nice girl at the office.

MISTY: It's the perfect cover. Nobody will ever suspect *I'm* the Phoenix, especially when I have a full-time job doing office admin. That's all it is though; a cover. In truth I'm nothing like that, I'm... well, you'll find out what I'm like in time.

TAVARES: She's a psycho!

(Misty scowled at him.)

MISTY: I'm not a psycho!

(As Tavares leant away from her nervously, Misty shrugged.)

MISTY: I'm just not afraid to hurt bad people.

(Kevin was utterly stumped.)

KEVIN: I really had no idea.

MISTY: Nobody does. I play the cute and innocent role well.

(Kevin winced.)

KEVIN: Well yeah, you had *me* fooled. After last night, I actually thought I'd found the future mother of my children. Instead you're this...

(He nodded towards Tavares.)

KEVIN: He's like eight feet tall and even *he* reeled back in fear when you scowled at him just now.

(Covert laughed.)

COVERT: So he should. This was *his* gang until Misty beat him up and took it.

(Misty rolled her eyes.)

MISTY: You can shut up an' all!

TAVARES: Seconded!

(Covert hung his head.)

COVERT: Sorry!

MISTY: Truth is, I joined the gang and Tavares saw me fight a few times, so he made me a general. Well, I thought I could do better job so I... took over.

(Tavares nodded.)

TAVARES: Best thing that ever happened to us. We were just a gang before. She turned us into a going concern with *real* power. Respect.

(Tavares held his knuckles towards Misty and she met them with her own; her fingers dwarfed by his giant hand.)

XIA: Respect! Totally.

(Kevin scratched his head again and looked to Tavares.)

KEVIN: Really? She beat you up with those tiny fists?

(As Tavares snarled at him, Misty patted him kindly on the knee.)

MISTY: He doesn't like to talk about it.

(Kevin sat back and puffed out.)

KEVIN: No disrespect meant, Misty...

MISTY: Don't disrespect me then.

KEVIN: It's just, I've known you for years as this sweet, harmless, kind person. This is all little much to take in.

MISTY: Soon remedied!

(She then glanced over her shoulder at Covert.)

MISTY: Come here!

(Covert whimpered.)

COVERT: But...

MISTY: Are you defying me?

(Covert sighed, hung his head then headed towards her.)

COVERT: No.

MISTY: Right then.

(With that, she stood up and watched as Covert stepped in front of her.)

MISTY: Hit me!

(As Kevin watched in amazement, Covert took a deep breath, nodded, then jumped back into a Karate stance. As cold as ice, Misty just stood there and waited as he psyched himself up. A few seconds later, Covert launched into her with a flurry of lightning fast attacks. Barely flinching, Misty blocked and parried them all with ease before countering and punching Covert from one side of the room to the other. In the blinking of an eye, she swept across the carpet then knocked him down to the ground with a roundhouse kick.)

KEVIN: Holy... what the?

(Misty then skipped back to the seated area in the girliest manner, leaving Covert motionless on the carpet.)

MISTY: Not bad considering I've got heels on.

(She then sat back down, crossed her legs and looked into Kevin's bewildered eyes.)

MISTY: Now listen, Kev. When you said you wanted to fight back against the police and the Savages it was music to my ears. You're an extremely mentally-resourceful guy and that's exactly what we need right now. So I set the whole thing in motion. I told Steve to talk to you. Then I got Brian to follow us on our date so *he* could test you if you passed *my* test.

(Kevin was lost.)

KEVIN: *Your* test?

MISTY: Yeah, over the pool table I asked you if you had any ideas how to get the police back. You didn't mention the Wyverns.

KEVIN: Steve told me not to.

MISTY: And you didn't.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: So, here's the deal. I'm looking for an ideas man; someone who can think outside the box. In all the years I've worked opposite you, that's what you've excelled at.

(She sat back.)

MISTY: So, what do you reckon? You want to join us?

(Kevin looked to her blankly for a moment then started to smile.)

KEVIN: Try and stop me.

TAVARES: Never challenge her to do that, mate; that's asking for trouble.

(Misty slapped Tavares' leg playfully then smiled at Kevin.)

MISTY: Let's get you started then. First, I want you to get a feel for what we do here. So I'm gonna send you out with these guys on missions for a while. You up for that? Do it right and you could be up here at the top level in no time. What do you think?

(Kevin looked thoughtful for a moment then nodded at Misty.)

KEVIN: Of missions to screw over the police or the Savages?

MISTY: That is what we do here after all.

KEVIN: I think wild horses couldn't stop me.

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: Perfect.

KEVIN: There is one thing though...

(Misty gave him a sideways glance.)

MISTY: Oh?

(Kevin looked to where Tavares and Xia were watching him and grimaced.)

KEVIN: It's kinda private.

(Misty gave him a pitying smile.)

MISTY: I know where this is headed. Look, you're an awesome guy but I'm not looking for a relationship right now.

KEVIN: Right. So that date was just...

MISTY: That was me playing the good girl.

(She sat forward.)

MISTY: You're an awesome guy and if things were different, hell yeah. I'd have you down the aisle already, but they're not. That doesn't mean we can't do the filthy a lot though. Hell, I'm gonna do it whether *you're* with me or not.

XIA: What can she say? The girl loves her sex!

(Kevin grimaced at where Tavares was staring into space nodding joyously to his thoughts.)

TAVARES: Yes, yes she does.

MISTY: Guys, you're making me sound like a right slut.

XIA: You *are* a right slut, Misty.

MISTY: Good point.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: Anyway, Kevin, you can go with Xia and her crew later. Prove yourself in the field and you'll go far.

KEVIN: I won't let you down.

MISTY: And sorry about the whole, you know, turning you down but, I aint that girl.

(Kevin scoffed.)

KEVIN: Hey, you said we can do the filthy a lot. *That* works for me too.

(Misty laughed.)

MISTY: Good to know.

(Just then, Covert sat up and rubbed his aching face.)

COVERT: Misty? Why do I always have to be the punch bag?

(Tavares glared in Covert's direction.)

TAVARES: Because people like hitting you!

COVERT: *You* aint *quick* enough to hit me, you overgrown tortoise.

TAVARES: So my size slows me down a bit? I'd rather be built like this than short and skinny like you. You look like a half-eaten Twiglet.

COVERT: Short? I aint short! I'm the average height for a bloke!!!

TAVARES: Yeah, a short bloke!

COVERT: Screw you!

TAVARES: Whatever... Covert!

(Covert was livid.)

COVERT: It's Graham!!!

TAVARES: You were asked if you could handle a covert operation and you said, "Hey, I *am* covert." So, Covert it is!

COVERT: Wanker!

TAVARES: Look. Five seconds into the job, all the alarms in the building were ringing out and we had to rescue you! If you hadn't been so cocky maybe we'd have let it go, but you were. So Covert it is, and shall forever remain.

COVERT: It's Graham!

(Misty shook her head then raised her voice.)

MISTY: It's Covert! Now pack it in, both of you!

(Watching them, Misty sighed then looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: They're always like this.

XIA: Yeah, but they love each other really.

TAVARES: Fuck off!

COVERT: Bollocks!

MISTY: Enough!

(She then looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: Go to the armoury with Xia, she'll set you up for the mission, okay.

KEVIN: Gotcha.

XIA: You can handle a gun, can you?

KEVIN: I guess we'll find out.

(As the two of them stood up, Misty smiled to them both.)

MISTY: Good luck!



(Her face then clouded over.)

MISTY: Don't fuck it up!

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*One hour later...*

Like most big cities, the city of Faxbury had been founded on the banks of a major waterway. In Faxbury's case, that waterway was the river Peria. Running through the heart of the city, it was once used to funnel supplies to the now defunct docks in Westport. In recent times, however, it was mostly used by the Savages for smuggling contraband from Europe. Naturally, the Wyverns weren't about to let this continue.

On the north bank of the river, two wooden jetties reached out in the shallow water. Next to them was a small car park; accessible from the major two lane road that ran parallel to the river. On the other side of the road, was a fifty foot high cliff. It was from this lofty position, overlooking the jetties, that Xia would be carrying out her mission.

Eager to get everyone in position with plenty of time to spare, Xia had led her team of five to the cliff top then given them orders to lie down and wait. They'd obliged without question. And so, their formation was set. Xia was laying in the middle of the five with Kevin to her left and another member of the team on *his* left. Two more Wyverns lay to Xia's right, all stealthily keeping vigil on the water's edge. Laying face down on the grass, they were all armed with rifles; even Kevin. Far from delighted by that fact, he grimaced uncomfortably at his weapon then looked to Xia.

KEVIN: I've never used one of these before, Xia.

XIA: I don't suppose you have, no.

KEVIN: Right. Not confident.

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: Did I *mention* that I'd never used a gun before?

XIA: You did, yes! Once or twice.

(She smiled.)

XIA: Look, just see how you get on, okay? If you miss, you miss. It probably won't matter anyway. Excluding *you*, there's four of *us* and there should be four of *them*. If we can take them out with one shot each, nobody's going to care where *your* bullet ends up.

KEVIN: Well, you say that. What if I shoot a pigeon by mistake?

XIA: There'll be one less airborne spreader of disease in the world.

KEVIN: Right...

(He bit his lip.)

KEVIN: So, do this a lot do you?

XIA: Shoot people? Yeah.

KEVIN: No, I mean hi-jack boats.

XIA: We're not hi-jacking the boats; we're gonna steal whatever it is they're smuggling. As soon as they bring it ashore, bang, bang, bang, then we go down there and take it.

KEVIN: That was only three bangs. Did one of them get away?

(Xia laughed.)

XIA: Idiot.

KEVIN: So... you know what they're smuggling, do you?

XIA: Nope. We got an intelligence tip off this afternoon; two Savage boats leaving Rotterdam. No idea what they're carrying.

KEVIN: Right... and how do you know they're heading here?

XIA: You ask a lot of questions.

KEVIN: Well, yeah; Misty told me to learn the ropes.

XIA: Okay, well... it's an educated guess. They've used those jetties before. This is a neutral place, you see; less likely to have the police's beady eyes watching them if they come ashore here.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: Makes sense.

(He looked thoughtful.)

KEVIN: Rotterdam, huh?

XIA: Yeah, which means it's more than likely gonna be blood diamonds or drugs. The illegal trade in both is rife in Rotterdam. Either way, they'd have paid a lot of money for their haul and they ain't gonna be happy when we take it.

(Kevin smiled.)

KEVIN: No, I don't suppose they are.

(Just then, the sound of speed boats rose into the air from down river.)

XIA: Okay, get ready!

(At once, Xia and her three crew members all steadied themselves and peered through the sights of their rifles. Watching them Kevin raised an impressed eyebrow then looked down river to where two speedboats were heading for the jetties.)

KEVIN: Right, here goes then.

(He too then steadied himself and took aim. For a good few seconds they all lay perfectly still, preparing themselves for action. A few seconds later, however, Xia peered over her sight and grimaced.)

XIA: That's not good. There's five people on each boat.

KEVIN: You said there'd be two.

XIA: That was the intelligence.

(She puffed out then refocused her aim.)

XIA: Okay everyone, heads down, this could get nasty.

(Without a word they then watched as the two speedboats pulled up alongside the jetties.)

KEVIN: When do we shoot?

XIA: When I say so!

KEVIN: Right.

(Down at the water's edge, the Savage's tied up the boats then stepped onto dry land, gathering on the jetties. Neither boat was unloaded and the ten men all stood and laughed together.)

XIA: They're not unloading!

(She puffed out in frustration.)

XIA: They're waiting for transport.

KEVIN: So, what are we gonna do?

XIA: We can either take these ten out now or wait for the transport then take them all out!

KEVIN: The transport could be anything though; we might get seriously out-gunned.  
(Xia sighed.)

XIA: That's exactly what I'm thinking!

(She snarled.)

XIA: This is awkward, I really don't wanna screw this one up.

(She then nodded firmly.)

XIA: Okay, it's not gonna be a simple case of sniping them in one go then going down there for the stuff; forget that. We're gonna have to take ten of them out then get down there before their transport comes. Take aim guys, left to right.

(She looked to Kevin.)

XIA: That means the one of the far left of us, shoots the one on their far left.

(Kevin looked to the one guy on his left and nodded.)

KEVIN: So, I take the guy second the left?

XIA: You learn fast. Okay, guys; take aim and fire on my instruction.

(At once, they all focussed their sights again then took aim. Seconds later, Xia spoke up firmly.)

XIA: Fire!

(With a deafening succession of gun blasts, four of the five men on the left jetty fell to earth with bullet holes in their foreheads. The survivor was the one who'd been standing second from the left. The bullet meant for him had hit a lamppost several metres away. Reacting swiftly to his comrades sudden demise, the Savage that Kevin missed zoomed back to one the speedboats and speed off at full throttle, snapping the rope that had tied it to the jetty. To make matters worse, as he fled, the five Savages on the other jetty returned fire with automatic sub-machine guns. With the cliff top in front of them being peppered with bullets, Xia bellowed furiously.)

XIA: Fuck! The boss is gonna kill me!

(Kevin grimaced and yelled over the gunfire.)

KEVIN: My bad!

XIA: No, it's mine; you were always going to miss. I just didn't expect him to take off with the boat and I didn't think they'd have machine guns.

KEVIN: So now what?

XIA: Now we try and get some shots off of our own and hope for the best.

(With that, she fixed her aim then flinched as a bullet whistled past her ear.)

XIA: No time to take aim, just shoot as well as you can.

(Kevin looked thoughtful and nodded.)

KEVIN: Yeah, keep them busy. I've had an idea!

XIA: What?

(Much to her annoyance, Kevin started to rapidly crawl away from the danger zone.)

XIA: Where are you going, you chicken shit?

KEVIN: Like I said, keep them busy!!!

(Xia just growled then resumed aiding her crew in getting shots in amid the bombardment from below.)

In a blinding hurry, Kevin crawled away from the area where the bullets were flying then got to his feet and raced away across the grass. For all Xia knew, he'd fled the scene. The mission had been too much for him and he'd simply scarpered. She couldn't have been more wrong, however. This was a man with a plan. Sprinting for all he was worth, he'd headed down to the path below the cliffs; thirty feet to the right of the gun battle. From this relatively safe vantage point, he had the perfect view of the situation. The Savage's had taken refuge behind trees and were continuing to bombard the clifftop with rapid fire. It was gunfire that the Wyvern contingent were matching bullet for bullet. Assessing the situation, Kevin bit his lip then nodded.)

KEVIN: I must be out of my mind, but... fuck it... here goes...

(From up on the cliff top, Xia couldn't believe her eyes. Kevin had reappeared into view, charging across the road, just to the right of the Savages. A few moments later,

having got behind the Savages, he then proceeded to race towards the jetties. Enlightened as to his intentions, she nodded determinedly then barked orders to her fellow Wyverns.)

XIA: Keep them focussed on us!!!

(Much to her delight, with the Savage's fully focussed on shooting at the Wyvern's, Kevin raced onto the jetty unhindered, untied their boat then took off down the river in it. Unfortunately for Kevin, having been alerted by the sound of the engine, three of the Savages then turned their attention to firing at *him*. With a shriek, he immediately dived out of harms way onto the floor of the boat. It was just the opportunity Xia needed. Having turned their attention to firing at the boat, those three Savages had stepped out from behind the trees; leaving themselves open. Fully focussed on their task, her crew wasted no time in gunning them down.

Outnumbered, the remaining two then tried to flee, only to be taken out by head shots a few seconds later. It was over. Mightily relieved, Xia turned and flopped onto her back.)

XIA: Thank fuck we salvaged *something* from that.

(She snarled.)

XIA: What a total fucking screw up; the boss is gonna beat the living shit out of me for this.

(She shook her head then offered her team a smile.)

XIA: That's for *me* to worry about though. You guys were awesome as always; nice work, team.

(She forced a smile.)

XIA: Come on; let's go back to the base.

(She then climbed to her feet and exhaled with relief at the sight of Kevin's boat speeding away out of sight.)

XIA: Thank fuck.

(She then headed away with her crew, nodding in awe as she did so.)

XIA: On his first day, he's managed to nick a Savage speedboat and whatever they were smuggling on it.

(She smiled.)

XIA: He's gonna go far.

---

Back at Wyvern HQ, a short while later, Misty was standing with her hands resting nonchalantly on her hips as she listened to Xia's mission report. Mortified about how her plan had gone so awry, Xia could barely even look her in the eye.

XIA: Five of them on each boat, Misty, not two. Five. So I had to improvise. We took out four of them then all hell broke loose. One fled with a boat and we ended up embroiled in a no-holds-barred gun battle against the remaining five.

(She shook her head.)

XIA: I screwed it up so badly! If it hadn't have been for Kevin, god only knows what would have happened. It's a miracle we're not all dead on the cliff top right now.

(She sighed dejectedly.)

XIA: I'm so sorry, Misty, I really messed this one up. Just... do what you have to do; I deserve it.

(Misty gave her a condescending glance.)

MISTY: The intelligence was wrong, Xia, it's not your fault. And to be fair, the intelligence was always going to be vague. They told us all they could find out. It's just one of those things. Don't sweat it.

(Xia was crestfallen.)

XIA: But, I fucked up, Misty. You can't just let it go!

MISTY: I can and I will, because it wasn't your fault.

XIA: But it *was*...

MISTY: Why are you arguing? Do you *want* me to hit you? I said it's alright!

(Xia just hung her head.)

XIA: Doesn't feel alright to me.

(Misty smiled and stepped close to place a hand on her shoulder.)

MISTY: And that's *why* it's okay. You care about your results, Xia. That's what I need in a general, someone who takes failure this badly.

(Xia tried to force a smile.)

XIA: Thanks.

MISTY: It was really noble of you to try and take the blame, Xia, but there's no blame to be attached.

(She grimaced.)

MISTY: Having said that...

(With that, she punched her in the stomach then stepped back as Xia folded to the floor in agony.)

MISTY: When I tell you it's not your fault, fucking pay attention.

(She then lowered her hand to help her up.)

MISTY: Come on.

(Looking oddly satisfied, Xia reached for her hand and Misty pulled her up.)

MISTY: You okay?

XIA: Yeah, sorry, Misty.

(They then shared a warm hug.)

MISTY: You're my best mate, Xia; I love you.

XIA: I love you too.

MISTY: Now go and get a shower or something; we'll have a drink later.

(Xia nodded then headed out of the room via a side door. Misty watched her go then looked to Tavares.)

MISTY: Did I read that wrong? She *wanted* me to hit her then, didn't she?

TAVARES: Yup.

(He shrugged.)

TAVARES: It's a respect thing. If you *didn't* punish us for our screw ups, it'd feel like you *expected* us to screw up. Like you'd lost faith in us or something. That'd suck.

MISTY: Yeah, but she *didn't* fuck up.

TAVARES: Well, she clearly *feels* like she did.

(Misty rolled her eyes.)

MISTY: You guys baffle me sometimes.

TAVARES: Yeah, but you love us anyway.

MISTY: Though god only knows why.

(Just then, the glass doors opened and Brian nervously led Kevin inside. Kevin was carrying a small crate.)

BRIAN: Um... sorry to disturb you, Kevin said it was urgent and he doesn't have the pass code for this floor. So I...

(With a firm gait, Misty then stormed towards Brian and punched him back through the glass door, smashing it to pieces. As he lay in a crumpled heap, she then stood over him and bellowed.)

MISTY: *You* don't come up here without an invite; you *know* that!!! Now ring maintenance and get that bloody door fixed. Prick!

(She then about turned and glided towards where Tavares and Kevin were setting the crate down on a table.)

MISTY: Hiya.

(She placed a limp hand on Kevin's shoulder.)

MISTY: So, there's a new hero in town, I hear.

(Kevin shrugged modestly.)

KEVIN: I just did what I needed to do.

(He then nodded to the crate.)

KEVIN: I didn't know who to give this to, so I asked Brian to bring me up here.

(Misty shrugged.)

MISTY: Shame he didn't ring ahead, like he's supposed to. Still, hopefully he learned his lesson.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: So this is what you liberated from the Savages, is it?

KEVIN: Yeah.

(He chuckled.)

KEVIN: This and a brand new speedboat.

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: And I've already found a buyer.

(She then nodded to Tavares.)

MISTY: Open it up, Tavares. Let's see what we've got.

TAVARES: On it.

(He paced away then grabbed a crowbar from under the coffee table before heading back again.)

TAVARES: It's like Christmas.

KEVIN: You open your presents with a crowbar, do you?

MISTY: Yeah, dude. Santa bring you a *lot* of wooden crates does he?

TAVARES: Witty. I hate to be the one to break this to you, Misty, Santa doesn't exist.

(Misty pouted.)

MISTY: Aw, does this mean I can't do my sexy Santa thing this year?

TAVARES: No, it *doesn't* mean that. You can do *that* everyday if you like.

(Kevin looked lost.)

KEVIN: Sexy Santa thing?

(Misty gave him a knowing glance.)

MISTY: You'll see!

KEVIN: Can I see *now*?

MISTY: You can wait!

KEVIN: Shit.

TAVARES: Right, let's crack this bitch open, shall we?

(With that, he dug the crowbar into the lid of the box then wrenched it off.)

TAVARES: Open sesame.

(Misty peered inside the open box then groaned with disappointment.)

MISTY: Heroine?

TAVARES: Or Coke.

MISTY: Wankers. Burn it!

TAVARES: You've got it.

(Kevin couldn't believe what he was hearing.)

KEVIN: Burn it? All that effort to get it and you just wanna burn it?  
(Misty glared at him.)  
MISTY: Yeah! We don't sell drugs! We keep them *off* the streets!  
TAVARES: And out of people's arms and nostrils!  
MISTY: Yeah. So what else can we do other than destroy it?  
KEVIN: You could give it back to them.  
(At once a cold atmosphere engulfed the room.)  
TAVARES: Let me smack his bony white arse all around this room.  
(Misty sneered at Tavares.)  
MISTY: Enough of the racism, you.  
(She then rounded on Kevin.)  
MISTY: Why the fuck would we give it back???  
KEVIN: Once you've laced it with a lethal substance, why wouldn't you?  
(Misty suddenly looked thoughtful.)  
MISTY: That might just...  
(She shook her head.)  
MISTY: No, they'd sell it on, you see? To ordinary people.  
KEVIN: Not if we wrap it in individual packets for an end user and see to it those end users are cops or Savages.  
(Misty bit her lip.)  
MISTY: Is that possible?  
KEVIN: It'd take some planning but I reckon so. Do they have Savage only parties?  
If we could get a dealer into one of those...  
(Misty grinned from ear to ear.)  
MISTY: See? I told you! An ideas man!  
(She then glanced to where Covert was reading an adult magazine.)  
MISTY: Hey, Covert, you lazy shit. Get this stuff, identify it and then stash it.  
(Covert looked up over his magazine and sighed.)  
COVERT: Fine.  
KEVIN: There's another crate of it actually. I left it behind in reception.  
(Tavares laughed.)  
TAVARES: Go fetch, Covert!  
MISTY: Actually, Tavares, you can go and get that one, I want a moment alone with Kevin here.  
(Covert couldn't help but laugh.)  
COVERT: Brilliant!  
TAVARES: Shut the fuck up!  
(He then stuck then crowbar in waistband of his trousers and headed for the door.)  
MISTY: You're not planning on hitting Covert with that, are you?  
TAVARES: No, I'm planning to open the other crate with it, Misty.  
MISTY: Right. Good. Nobody's allowed to kill Covert except me.  
TAVARES: Aw. You spoil all my fun.  
COVERT: Wankers. You lot are just... cunts.  
(The two of them headed out of the door. Having watched them go, Misty smiled then placed her arms around Kevin to hug him.)  
MISTY: Outstanding work, Kev. I knew you wouldn't let me down.  
(Kevin nodded then hugged her back.)  
KEVIN: Beginners luck.  
MISTY: Don't be modest.  
(She stepped back from his arms then smiled.)

MISTY: I'm gonna make you a marshal. One step below general; not bad for a first day. Play your cards right, and you'll be a general within a week. I've got big plans for you, Kevin.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: I won't disappoint you, Misty.

MISTY: I know!

(He stroked his chin playfully.)

KEVIN: Do those plans involve any sex on this fine evening by any chance?

MISTY: It'd be nice but I aint got the time. I promised Covert and his friend a threesome.

KEVIN: Eh?

(Misty shrugged.)

MISTY: Xia's in the spa having a shower. You should go and shag her instead.

(Kevin raised an eyebrow in her direction.)

KEVIN: Don't you think I should consult her about that first?

MISTY: You saved her mission today, I'm sure she'll pay you back the only way she knows how. Go on, enjoy a taste of the Orient.

(As Misty stepped away from him, Kevin grinned.)

KEVIN: Is a taste of the Orient as delicious as what *you* serve up?

(Misty grinned.)

MISTY: You have no idea what I can serve up; that was only the first course.

KEVIN: And how many courses are there.

MISTY: All you can eat, darling.

(She then minced away leaving Kevin nodding smugly to himself.)

KEVIN: I'm gonna be happy here.

---

*Two hours later...*

With several stitches and bandages on his face and arms, Brian paced down a corridor then pushed open a door marked "Marshal's Lounge". Once inside, he continued on to the window where Kevin was staring outside, deep in thought.

BRIAN: What you doing in here, Kev?

(Kicked from his train of thought, Kevin glanced at him then replied.)

KEVIN: I'm a marshal now.

(Brian was most impressed.)

BRIAN: Already? Not bad going, mate. Congratulations.

KEVIN: Thanks.

(Brian then stepped alongside him and joined him in staring down at the city.)

BRIAN: You enjoying it so far?

KEVIN: Yeah, I am.

(He then looked Brian up and down.)

KEVIN: You okay?

BRIAN: Yeah, it's not the first time she's punched me through a glass door.

(Kevin gave a single laugh.)

KEVIN: She's so not the person I thought she was.

BRIAN: I know. That's why I almost choked to death when you said she wouldn't harm a fly.

(Kevin looked to him then pointed a playful, angry finger his way.)

KEVIN: That reminds me. You utter git!!!



(Brian laughed.)

KEVIN: I was shitting myself when you told me the boss only wants to see people when they've messed up.

BRIAN: Sorry, mate. I couldn't resist it.

(He chuckled to himself.)

BRIAN: I've enjoyed the last couple of days. Hearing you refer to the Phoenix as a big muscular bloke was bloody funny. And hearing you talking about Misty as this innocent goddess, well that was priceless. Knowing you already knew the boss and had her figured out so wrong was...

(He patted Kevin on the back.)

BRIAN: You've been great entertainment.

KEVIN: Thanks.

(He gave him a sympathetic glance.)

KEVIN: That's a lot of stitches, mate.

BRIAN: It was a lot of glass.

KEVIN: True.

BRIAN: Still; my own fault. I know not to walk into the general's penthouse without an invitation. I just assumed that because you had that box for them, they wouldn't mind me guiding you up there. I assumed too much. These scars will remind me never to do that again.

KEVIN: I'll bet. You must really hate Misty right now.

(Brian shrugged.)

BRIAN: Not at all. I screwed up. I'm just lucky she didn't get all Jackie Chan on my arse.

KEVIN: I guess so.

(He glanced across at the skyline and laughed to himself.)

KEVIN: This morning my biggest worry was that Misty wouldn't like me if I got involved with the Wyverns. Can you believe that?

BRIAN: That thought's pretty redundant now.

KEVIN: Yeah, she *is* the Wyverns.

BRIAN: Worked out pretty well, hasn't it? You don't have to cuddle her and watch soap operas with her but you'll still get to shag her.

KEVIN: That's the plan.

BRIAN: That's a nailed on certainty. Misty must have shagged every bloke who ever walked in this building. And half the women.

KEVIN: What?

BRIAN: Even *I've* had her. Twice! She's said it a few times; she's gonna live every second, cause she might just die tomorrow. Having nearly died twice, I guess it makes sense she'd live her life by that. And I suppose living for her means a lot of you know what.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: I guess so.

(He then laughed to himself and glanced at Brian.)

KEVIN: Does Xia have the same motto then? I boned *her* earlier an' all.

BRIAN: Really? You lucky git. No, she's a far harder nut to crack. Still gets a fair bit I hear but she's far more picky. It's like, if you take five cuts of steaks in there, Xia will pick the one she likes best and go with it. Misty, she'll try a bite of all five, even if some of them don't look too appetising, just in case they surprise her.

KEVIN: That's a weird simile, Brian.

BRIAN: I'm a weird bloke, Kevin.

KEVIN: Nah, you're a pretty decent bloke, I reckon. Thanks for showing me round... you know... and for all your help.

(Brian shrugged.)

BRIAN: Just following Misty's orders. But yeah, it's been fun. You feel settled now?

(Kevin nodded then glanced back out of the window.)

KEVIN: Yeah, I do. I feel good. Empowered, you know? The savages and them doughnut munching shit-stains fucked everything up for my brother and me. Ruined our lives.

(He looked to Brian.)

KEVIN: We used to make a good living on the pro beach-volley scene until they put him in a wheelchair.

(He then stared from the window again.)

KEVIN: Well, it's pay back time. Finally I feel in a position to do something about it. The ball's rolling, Brian, and from hereon in it's gonna be all about putting them bastards back down into the sewers from whence they came.

(Brian nodded, patted him on the back then paced away.)

BRIAN: Spoken like a born Wyvern.

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*The following morning...*

This was not how Kevin could possibly have foreseen his Saturday going. When Misty had told him she wanted him to see first hand what the Wyverns do, she'd meant right away. She was fast-tracking him. As such, by ten o'clock in the morning, on this, only his second day, he found himself heading out on a mission again. This time, he was shadowing Tavares.

Sat in the back of a white minibus with blacked out windows, he felt extremely out of place. He was surrounded by Tavares's crew; a hoard of boisterous thugs, all dressed in black. With balaclavas balanced on their foreheads in readiness to be pulled down over their faces, they made for quite the intimidating sight. Far from comfortable in the presence of what was essentially a group of hooligans, he just sat quietly and observed with a disturbed expression on his face. An intelligent bunch, they were not.

TAVARES: Okay, lads, not long now.

THUG 1: The sooner the better!

(The other thugs all replied with a cry of "yeah".)

TAVARES: Patience, lads. Good things come to those who wait!

(He smirked devilishly.)

TAVARES: Now tell me, boys; what's our motto???

(Everyone except Kevin called back at him.)

ALL: If it aint broke, break it!!!

(They then cheered excitedly. As they did so, Tavares looked to Kevin and beamed.)

TAVARES: You're gonna love this. There's nothing more satisfying than smashing shit up.

KEVIN: I'm sure there is.

(Tavares scoffed.)

TAVARES: Like what? Name me one thing!

KEVIN: Sex, sirloin steak, punching politicians...

TAVARES: I said name *one*!!!

(He rolled his eyes.)

TAVARES: You'll see. Once we get busy, you're gonna love it.

(He then turned to address the other gang members.)

TAVARES: Lads, lads, listen up.

(At once they all fell silent and looked his way.)

TAVARES: Remember the rules. No hitting members of the public! Just don't go there! Unless they try to hit you, of course, in which case, go nuts. Unless they're old! Look, just use your common sense. No hitting women though, or I *will* rip your bollocks off. We're not here to harm the public; we're here to scare them out of going to shops owned by the cabbages!

(Kevin gave him a sideways glance.)

KEVIN: Cabbages?

TAVARES: What?

KEVIN: You said "cabbages".

(Tavares shook his head.)

TAVARES: Try not to act so new, Kevin.

KEVIN: I *am* new!

TAVARES: Doesn't mean you have to act like it! We call the Savages "cabbages" and they cleverly refer to us as the "Gay-Vern's".

KEVIN: Wow, that *is* clever!

TAVARES: Genius, right?

(He laughed then looked to the rest of the lads in the minibus.)

TAVARES: Any questions before we go inside?

THUG 2: Yeah. Is it *my* turn to do your mum tonight or are we *all* gonna go?

(Everyone laughed except the scowling Tavares.)

TAVARES: *They're* all going back to mine; *you* can't though. You've got a date with your sister!

(As the thugs all fell about laughing, Kevin faked amusement then grimaced out of the window. He felt like he was being mistakenly transferred to an idiot sanctuary and these were his new cell-mates.)

KEVIN: What the hell have I signed up for?

TAVARES: What? Sorry. Didn't quite catch that, Kev.

KEVIN: Um...

(Just then, much to Kevin's relief, the driver of the minibus glanced in his rear view mirror then addressed them in an excited voice.)

DRIVER: We're here, lads.

(Tavares snarled then pulled his balaclava over his face.)

TAVARES: Hood up, lads, it's fun time.

(At once, everyone including Kevin pulled their balaclavas down then stared at the back doors of the minibus. Moments later, the van pulled to the side of the road and the mission got underway for real. Having barely waited for the wheels to stop turning, Tavares and his crew leapt from the back of the minibus then charged into a sporting goods shop, howling and cheering like Vikings on the warpath.)

TAVARES: Have at it!!!

(Feeling somewhat out of place, Kevin raced into the store after them then watched in dismay as they proceeded to tear clothing to shreds, smash up the sports equipment and devastate the fixtures and fittings.)

KEVIN: Holy shit!

(Tavares glared at him as he tore the head off of a mannequin.)

TAVARES: Get stuck in, geezer.

(With a shrug, Kevin then proceeded to barge over some clothing racks. As he did so, terrified shoppers raced out into the street in severe distress. It was absolute chaos. If they could break it, they broke it; just as their motto had suggested they would. Every light was smashed and the store was torn apart in no time. In just over sixty seconds time, they'd devastated the entire store. Delighted with their handiwork, Tavares then bellowed out at the top of his voice.)

TAVARES: Time!!!

(He then grabbed Kevin and dragged him towards the exit.)

TAVARES: That means we're leaving!

KEVIN: I gathered that; I'm not an idiot!

TAVARES: No? Then your face does you a disservice.

KEVIN: Hey!

(In a blinding hurry, Tavares, Kevin and the rest of the crew then jumped back into the minibus. Before the rear doors had even been closed, it then sped off down the road. They'd left as suddenly as they arrived and in little time at all, had absolutely destroyed the shop and everything in it.)

---

At the Wyvern base that afternoon, Kevin paced into the upstairs penthouse, where Misty, Xia, Tavares and Covert were watching the television in the seated area. First to spot him, Xia waved, causing a succession of verbal greetings from the others.

KEVIN: Yeah, Hi.

(He stopped walking and looked to Misty.)

KEVIN: You rang?

(Misty glanced from the television and into his eyes.)

MISTY: I what?

(She suddenly looked enlightened.)

MISTY: Oh, yeah. Sit down, babes.

(With a nod, Kevin sat himself down then looked to the smiling Misty.)

MISTY: How was it? The raid.

(Kevin glanced to Tavares uneasily.)

KEVIN: Honestly?

MISTY: No. Lie your arse off; that always ends well for people.

KEVIN: Okay.

(With Tavares staring straight at him, Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: Lies it is then. It's was a wonderful way to a spend a morning; not at all beneath me. Petty vandalism?

(He clenched a triumphant fist.)

KEVIN: Yes!!! That'll win us the war. I hope I can go on another raid really soon.

(Misty nodded.)

MISTY: Okay. Sticking with the lying theme, I really enjoy it when people talk to me sarcastically, and nobody has ever been hospitalised for it.

(Kevin bit his lip nervously.)

KEVIN: I see.

MISTY: Also, you're a fantastic lover. The other night in my room, you really rocked my world.

KEVIN: Switched to being truthful have we?

MISTY: Nope.

KEVIN: Shit.

(He sighed.)

KEVIN: I apologise.  
MISTY: For the quality of the sex or...  
KEVIN: For being sarcastic!  
(He then furrowed his brow at the sight of Misty chuckling. Her mirth, however, was the least of his worries. The man mountain, Tavares, was snarling at him furiously.)  
KEVIN: Uh-oh.  
TAVARES: You cunt!  
KEVIN: Mate...  
TAVARES: Thought it was beneath you, did you? You too good to do what I do?  
(Just when Kevin was starting to fear that a beating was on the cards, Misty rolled her eyes then interrupted.)  
MISTY: Tav, sweetheart, even Covert is too good to do what you do.  
TAVARES: You what?  
COVERT: She's right!  
TAVARES: Fuck off!  
MISTY: It has to be said, Tavares, you do a thick bloke's job.  
(She gestured to Kevin.)  
MISTY: Of course it's beneath him!  
TAVARES: Well it's nice to know I'm appreciated.  
(Covert laughed.)  
COVERT: Sucks to be you, dude.  
(Xia shook her head.)  
XIA: Covert? Why would *you* take the piss?  
COVERT: Misty said Tavares is beneath me, why *wouldn't* I?  
XIA: She said *even* Covert is too good to do the job. Emphasis on *even*.  
COVERT: So?  
XIA: Implying you're completely bloody useless.  
COVERT: Not as useless as fat boy there; so I don't care.  
TAVARES: Fat???  
(Misty rolled her eyes.)  
MISTY: Enough! Look, Tavares and his crew do exceptional wrecking work. That's yet another Savage owned business down the drain and he deserves a pat on the back.  
TAVARES: Thank you!  
MISTY: He does good work, it's just not something that requires much thinking.  
TAVARES: Well, I can't argue with that.  
MISTY: Good, that's all I was saying. Oh, and Covert?  
COVERT: Yeah?  
MISTY: When I said the job was beneath you, I was trying to think of the most inept git I knew and your name came up. *That's* why you shouldn't gloat.  
XIA: See?  
COVERT: Yeah, whatever. And it's Graham!  
(Misty then smiled at Kevin.)  
MISTY: So, anyway, it's done now. Now you know what Xia and Tav do. That just leaves Covert here. You can accompany him on his mission later.  
KEVIN: Fair enough.  
(Misty smiled.)  
MISTY: Right; two things. Firstly, well done for successfully completing your second mission already. Superb stuff.  
KEVIN: It was nothing. An untrained chimp could have completed it, to be fair.  
MISTY: True, but I didn't send a chimp, I sent you.

KEVIN: Right.

MISTY: And secondly, just to be fair, I insulted your sexual prowess a moment ago and I feel it's only appropriate to give you a chance to prove me wrong. So, with that in mind, let's go in my office and fuck.

(With that, she upped and minced away. Kevin watched her for a moment then beamed.)

KEVIN: Later, guys!

(He then raced after her.)

TAVARES: Whatever.

XIA: Bye, Kev.

COVERT: Wanker!

(As Kevin and Misty disappeared, Xia and Tavares glared at Covert.)

COVERT: What?

XIA: What the hell, Covert?

TAVARES: Why did you call him a wanker?

(Covert looked stumped.)

COVERT: I was talking to you!

(He rolled his eyes.)

COVERT: Cock!

---

*That same evening...*

Just after sunset, clad all in black, Kevin found himself standing in the shadows of a large clump of trees. A good fifty feet ahead of him was the Headquarters of Fitchett's Funding and Finance; a twelve story office building at the edge of the city's commercial area. Hiding in the shadows with him were Covert and half a dozen other black-clad Wyverns; two of whom were sitting on the grass, typing on laptops. Covert's mission was about to get underway.

Not about to get started without going over the details one last time, Covert placed his hands behind his back then stepped before his fellow gang-members, making sure to remain out of sight from the security officers inside the building. Eager to see the ball rolling, he then nodded and said his piece.

COVERT: Okay, you all know why we're here, but just to be on the safe side, I'll go over it one last time. Our intelligence suggests that this company are laundering money for the police. Annoyingly, the account details we need are on a PC in there which isn't connected to the internet, so we can't hack into it. So we're gonna have to sneak in there, find it, copy the account numbers then get out of there again.

(He nodded then gestured to the two Wyvern's with laptops.)

COVERT: As for disabling the alarms and stuff, as you can see, Helena and James are hacking the system as we speak. Once they're done, we can get going.

(One of the black clothed women among their number looked to him sternly.)

HELEN: It's Helen; not Helena.

COVERT: Right.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: Almost done, are we?

(Helen gestured to the laptop she was holding.)

HELEN: Almost, but there is one small snag.

COVERT: Shit. What is it?

HELEN: There's an internal security system on the upper levels. Disabling the entry alarms isn't going to be a problem, but the internal security isn't something we can hack into.

COVERT: Meaning?

(The other laptop user then glanced up from his screen.)

JAMES: We're going to have to be wary of motion sensors once we get up there.

COVERT: Okay. Anything else?

JAMES: Nope; that's the only unforeseen obstacle *I* can see.

HELEN: Same.

COVERT: Cool!

(He nodded.)

COVERT: Just one last thing then. One of you needs to chaperone Kevin here. He's learning the ropes and we're saddled with him for the night.

(One of the females stepped forward.)

MELANIE: I'll do it!

(She then fluttered her eyelashes at Kevin.)

MELANIE: I'm Melanie, by the way.

(Kevin beamed.)

KEVIN: Kevin!

COVERT: Cool. Sorted.

(He folded his arms assertively.)

COVERT: Okay, so before we go, remember, keep low, keep your eyes open and don't say a word.

(He nodded sternly.)

COVERT: Okay, let's go!

(He then looked directly at Kevin.)

COVERT: Just follow quietly. Concentrate. Pay attention and you won't fuck it up.

KEVIN: Got it!

COVERT: I mean it; the last thing we need is you fucking it up. Focus.

KEVIN: What part of "got it" confused you?

(Covert nodded.)

COVERT: Alright then. What are you waiting for, guys. Let's get this show on the road.

(He then started to head away, much to the disdain of his crew; none of whom went with him.)

HELEN: Wait! We haven't finished hacking the entry alarm yet.

(Covert grimaced then came to a halt.)

COVERT: I meant... in a minute.

(He looked to Kevin.)

COVERT: See? That was a test. That's what happens if you don't focus.

(As everyone smirked at him, Covert ruffled his neck indignantly then turn to face the building.)

COVERT: Whenever you're ready, Helena.

HELEN: It's Helen! And I just need a couple of minutes, Graham!

(Kevin was utterly stumped.)

KEVIN: What? Who the hell's Graham?

(Covert snarled.)

COVERT: *I'm* Graham!!!

HELEN: The question ought to be, who the hell's Helena?

(Covert growled.)

COVERT: Look. Let's all just stand here in silence until Helena's finished, shall we?

HELEN: Fine!

(Everyone else just shrugged back at him.)

COVERT: Thank you!

HELEN: But for fuck sake, my name's Helen!!!

COVERT: Right...

(An uncomfortable silence ensued. Covert felt quite the fool and Helen was not in the best of moods. Figuring it'd be best to just say nothing, therefore not adding to the sour atmosphere, the others just looked away and waited patiently for Helen to finish.)

Mercifully, after a mere two minute wait that felt more like an hour, Helen finally uttered the word they'd all been longing for.)

HELEN: Done!

COVERT: Yes! About time.

HELEN: Excuse me?

COVERT: Um... I said well done.

HELEN: Right...

COVERT: Anyway, that's enough bugging about; let's get cracking, shall we? Come on!

(With that, he ducked down and raced across the car park towards a side entrance to the building. Following Melanie's lead, Kevin did the same, his eyes revelling in the sight of Melanie's backside packed tightly into her black leggings.)

KEVIN: Nice arse.

MELANIE: I know. Now be quiet.

(Upon arriving at the side door, Covert yanked it open then they all slipped inside the building. Once they were all gathered inside an internal corridor, Covert glanced back at his team then placed a silencing finger to his lips. He then sneaked down the corridor to where two guards were standing. Staying put, Kevin and the rest of the team just watched as he knocked them both out. Job done, Covert then hurried back to the group.)

COVERT: Okay; up we go. Remember to look out for motion sensors when we get to the top floor!

(With that, they all raced after him and made their way into a stairwell. Bringing up the rear, Kevin whispered to Melanie.)

KEVIN: That was pretty impressive.

MELANIE: That's why he's the boss.

KEVIN: I guess so.

(He grinned.)

KEVIN: Seriously, Mel, nice arse.

(Melanie furrowed her brow.)

MELANIE: If you like it that much, you can do me later. In the meantime, be quiet and concentrate.

(Kevin raised a delighted eyebrow.)

KEVIN: Really? Cool. This gang is awesome.

(With that, he put his head down and proceeded to follow Melanie lustfully up the stairs.)

---

Upon reaching the top floor of the building, Covert checked the intelligence he'd been given then led his team to a corner office. Having informed his two hackers, Helen



and James that the PC in the far corner contained the files they needed, he then went and sat down at the desk opposite. Having done so, he then instructed two of the others to guard the door. Melanie was given strict orders to babysit Kevin. Despite objecting to the word 'babysit', Kevin was quite happy to accept the sentiment. And so, he sat himself down on a sofa by the wall then gestured for Melanie to join him. She duly obliged. They then sat there chatting flirtatiously while they waited for the two hackers to complete their work.

Watching Kevin and Melanie flirt, Covert rolled his eyes then glanced at his watch. Breaking into places unnoticed was his strongpoint; his forte; the one thing he excelled at above all others. Waiting patiently for other people to do *their* part in proceedings, however, was something he struggled with. Having spent the first full minute tapping his fingers together and fidgeting, he groaned despondently. He was already bored.

COVERT: I hate this bit.

(Eventually deciding that anything beat just sitting there, he then glanced to Kevin and Melanie, hoping he could find a way to butt into their conversation, just to keep himself occupied.)

KEVIN: Really? Even there???

MELANIE: Well, yeah; a girl likes to look and feel her best.

KEVIN: Yeah, but... your butt cheeks? You moisturise your butt cheeks?

MELANIE: You wait until you feel how smooth they are; then you'll understand.

KEVIN: Oh, trust me; I can't wait. And when I say I can't wait, I mean it.

(Very quickly having second thoughts about jumping into such a ridiculous conversation, Covert groaned with frustration then looked to Helen demandingly.)

COVERT: How long is this gonna take?

(Helen looked over her shoulder at him and grimaced.)

HELEN: About ten more minutes, I think. It's a lot of data and this PC is really slow.

COVERT: Ten minutes? It'd be quicker to just write the dodgy account numbers down on a bit of paper, wouldn't it?

HELEN: It's not that simple, Graham. First we need to decipher which accounts are dodgy and which ones aren't. That'll require proper, in-depth forensic accounting. In order to do that we'll need to copy *all* the financial data so we can analyse it at length back at the base.

COVERT: Shit.

(He sighed.)

COVERT: Boring!

(He then leant forward to the PC on the desk he was sitting at.)

COVERT: I'm gonna watch some porn while we wait.

(With that, he clicked on the mouse to open the web browser then furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: No internet connectivity? What?

(He leant back then glanced beneath the desk. Spying an Ethernet cable, his face lit up.)

COVERT: Problem solved. It's not plugged in; that's all.

(With that, he threw himself then down and crawled across the floor to gather the cable. A few seconds later, however, he froze in horror.)

COVERT: Uh-oh; that can't be good!

(At once, a collective groan rose up from everyone in the room; almost as if his words had an air of familiarity about them.)

COVERT: Um, guys? Remember when I said to look out for sensors?

HELEN: Oh, you didn't!  
(Covert's head then popped up from around the desk.)  
COVERT: I kinda did. Crawled straight in front of one.  
JAMES: Not again!  
HELEN: Every bloody time.  
(Covert furrowed his brow.)  
COVERT: Look, never mind complaining and finding fault. Let's take stock of the situation, shall we? We need to wait for that data to copy over. It's gonna take a while. In the meantime, the police are gonna turn up in response to that sensor triggering. There'll be no security guards to meet them.  
KEVIN: So they'll take a look around, find the two security guards unconscious then sound the alarm.  
COVERT: Yeah. And as a result this place will end up *swarming* with pigs.  
(He nodded.)  
COVERT: So prepare yourselves; it looks like we're gonna have to fight our way out.  
JAMES: Again.  
COVERT: Shut up, you.  
(He looked to Helen.)  
COVERT: You had a detailed plan of this building, right? Is that the only stairwell?  
HELEN: Yes and yes.  
COVERT: Good.  
(He nodded defiantly then glanced at the two Wyverns by the door.)  
COVERT: Dave, you take up a position covering the stairwell.  
DAVE: Gotcha.  
(He then glanced to the other one.)  
COVERT: Stewart, you and I will I'll go and disable the lift.  
STEWART: Cool.  
COVERT: Kevin, Melanie, you two stay here and cover James and Helena.  
HELEN: Helen!  
COVERT: Nobody cares! Look lively, people.  
DAVE: On it!  
(As Dave rushed away to cover the stairwell, Melanie sighed then looked to Kevin.)  
MELANIE: See, this is *also* why he's in charge. When it comes to sorting out *his* many fuck up's he's in a class of his own.  
(She then rolled her eyes, much to Kevin's amusement. Having just been about to head out of the room with Stewart, Covert glanced at Kevin then furrowed his brow.)  
COVERT: Stop smirking, Kevin.  
KEVIN: I know the law, Covert; no smirking in a public building.  
COVERT: My name's Graham and that joke was rubbish.  
KEVIN: It was funny when Harry Enfield said it.  
COVERT: Yeah, but you're no Harry Enfield.  
KEVIN: Hit me where it hurts, why don't you?  
COVERT: I don't have time for this. You wait here.  
(With that, he raced out into the corridor, swiftly followed by Stewart.)

---

Within two minutes of Covert triggering the motion sensor, the first police patrol car arrived. Having alighted their vehicle, the two officers paced into the main reception area then glanced around.

POLICE 1: No security guards to greet us? That's not a good sign.

POLICE 2: No, it's not.

POLICE 1: I bet it's those fucking Savages again.

POLICE 2: Twenty quid says it's the Wyverns.

(The first officer then paced around the reception desk and shone his torch down the corridor beyond it.)

POLICE 1: Well, it's definitely one of the two, look!

(The second officer glanced over his fellow officer's shoulder then snarled. In the glow of the torch, at the far end of the corridor, he could see the two security men unconscious on the floor.)

POLICE 2: Guards down; alarm recently tripped; I bet they're still in the fucking building. I'll call for back up!

(He then proceeded to do just that. Sure enough, within a matter of minutes, two more police cars pulled to a screeching halt outside the building. They would not be the last; as signified by the sound of further sirens in the distance. Watching their flashing lights from up on the top floor, Covert could only grimace uncomfortably.)

COVERT: Whoops!

---

Back at the Wyvern base, at this time, Misty was sat upon the very edge of the sofa between Xia's knees, allowing her to brush her hair for her. Watching them from an armchair, Tavares could only shake his head despairingly.

TAVARES: So, you're gonna brush each others hair and talk about make-up all morning, are you?

(As Xia and Misty glanced in his direction, he rolled his eyes disdainfully.)

TAVARES: The legendary Phoenix, a warrior whose names strikes fear into battle hardened warriors, preening while she gushes about lipstick.

MISTY: What of it?

TAVARES: It aint right!

XIA: Why? Because it makes *you* feel uncomfortable?

TAVARES: Yeah! The only girly activity I wanna see from you two is, some heavy lesbo action!

(Misty just growled then pointed to the door.)

TAVARES: What?

MISTY: We're girls; we do girly things. And we'll enjoy doing them a lot more once you've slung your hook.

(Tavares sighed then climbed to his feet.)

TAVARES: Fine. I'll go to the gym then.

(As he paced away, Xia grinned playfully at Misty.)

XIA: Let's make out in a minute, Misty.

MISTY: Awesome idea.

(Tavares immediately stopped and turned to face them both excitedly.)

TAVARES: You're gonna make out?

MISTY: Keep going, you!

TAVARES: But...

MISTY: I said *go*! Spectator privileges denied!

(Tavares gaped like a fish for a few moments then hung his head despondently.)

TAVARES: Fine.

(As he ruefully trudged away, Xia called out to him.)

XIA: And no sneaking back for a crafty peek.

(They then watched on coldly as he headed to the lift, glancing back forlornly every few steps. A few moments later, when he left in the lift, however, Misty started to chuckle.)

MISTY: I wonder where his head is right now.

XIA: Fixed firmly in the gutter I expect.

MISTY: He's probably picturing all sorts of filthy things.

XIA: And crying because he's missing it.

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: What a wally.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: He's not gonna miss *anything*. I'm not in *the mood* for getting my gay on tonight.

XIA: No, me either.

MISTY: *He* doesn't need to know that though.

XIA: He really doesn't.

(They chuckled together gleefully for a moment then Misty climbed to her feet.

Having allowed Xia to pass her the hairbrush she then sat down next to her and proceeded to run it through her own hair.)

MISTY: I wonder how Covert's mission's going?

XIA: You mean, you wonder if he's fucked it up yet.

MISTY: Pretty much, yeah.

XIA: It'll be fine. I doubt he'd screw up *two* missions in a row.

MISTY: He'd better not, Xia. It'll be a disaster if Kevin gets killed before he's even really got started with us.

(Xia looked to her thoughtfully.)

XIA: You've got big plans for Kev, haven't you?

MISTY: I have. That's why I don't want him killed before we've even got a chance to show him the ropes.

XIA: So, if you don't mind me asking, what have you got in mind for him?

MISTY: Of course I don't mind you asking; it's not a secret. I want to make him our general in charge of ideas. He's what's been missing. I lead, you handle armed work, Tav handles the thuggery and Covert does the sneaky stuff. We've been crying out for a thinker and Kev's perfect for the job.

XIA: I have to say, from what I've seen he does seem pretty quick-minded. And he's no coward either.

MISTY: Precisely.

(She gave her a sorrowful glance.)

MISTY: His lovemaking skills could use some fine-tuning though.

(Xia furrowed her brow.)

XIA: More like a major overhaul!

MISTY: That *would* be a more honest way of putting it, yes.

XIA: Seriously, babes, it was like shagging a plank of wood.

MISTY: I know, right? He doesn't bend in the middle!

(She grimaced.)

MISTY: No joke, Xia, it was like he was laying to attention; making love for queen and country. He was rigid from head to toe.

XIA: Like I said; a plank of wood.

(They laughed for a moment then Xia sighed merrily.)

XIA: He does have an impressive dong though.

(Misty nodded joyously.)

MISTY: Yes. Yes, he does.

---

A short while later, inside the Fitchett's Funding and Finance building, Covert made his way down a corridor followed closely by his fellow Wyvern, Stewart. Proceeding forth, he glanced back over his shoulder with a determined glint in his eye.

COVERT: Now we've disabled the lift, the only way up here is via that stairwell. We need to keep it covered. Protecting this floor is our *only* concern; they can do what they like to the rest of the building.

STEWART: Within reason.

COVERT: What?

STEWART: Well, if they set fire to it...

(Covert furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: This is the headquarters of a major financial institution! They're not going to set fire to the building.

STEWART: I was only saying.

COVERT: Well, don't.

STEWART: Okay, I won't.

COVERT: Good.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: Idiot.

(Just then, he froze to the spot and tipped back his head to listen. Some mumbling voices could be heard from around the corner behind them. Looking extremely urgent, Covert glanced back and whispered to Stewart.)

COVERT: Sounds like two blokes.

(Stewart nodded then followed Covert back to the end of the corridor. Having pinned themselves against the wall, they then listened carefully as the two voices approached.)

POLICE 1: It's bloody spooky up here.

POLICE 2: What?

POLICE 1: I don't like this building, Reg.

POLICE 2: You poof! How did you ever pass the police exam? You're afraid of *everything*!

POLICE 1: That was easy; I like hitting people and I do what I'm told.

POLICE 2: Well, I suppose that *is* all you need these days.

POLICE 1: Exactly. See? Passing was easy. If anything, I'm *overqualified*.

POLICE 2: Right...

(They then soldiered onwards in silence. As soon as they reached the corner, however, Covert and Stewart leapt out at them ferociously. Taken completely by surprise, they were way too slow to react and ended up disarmed and unconscious almost instantaneously.)

STEWART: Perfect! Now let's kill them!

COVERT: No need, mate! They're already out of the fight. Let's just lock them in a cupboard then return to the others.

STEWART: Fine.

COVERT: And let's be quick about it. We need to find out how the fuck those pigs got up here. The lift is out and the stairwell is at the *other* end of the building. So my guess is, there's *another* stairwell that's not on our building plan.

STEWART: Shit. That's gonna make things awkward.

COVERT: Yes. Yes, it is.

---

Back in the corner office as this time, Kevin and Melanie were deep in discussion. Sitting extremely close to one another, their flirting was far from subtle. It was almost as if they'd forgotten James and Helen were in the room with them.

MELANIE: That big, huh?

KEVIN: Big? Big??? *Big* doesn't even *begin* to do it justice, love. It's massive!

MELANIE: Yeah? And how massive is massive?

KEVIN: Well... put it this way, last time I did backstroke with an erection some pirates boarded me and tried to hoist a sail on it.

(Melanie couldn't help but chuckle.)

MELANIE: Me thinks you exaggerate.

(Kevin grinned.)

KEVIN: Oh, I'm lying my arse off.

MELANIE: I figured as much.

KEVIN: They weren't pirates, it was the coastguard.

(Melanie chuckled into her hand.)

MELANIE: You talk so much shit.

KEVIN: I do. I *am* well hung though.

MELANIE: Like a horse I suppose.

KEVIN: Only if the horse has a huge cock!

(Melanie laughed.)

MELANIE: Idiot!

KEVIN: Don't believe me?

(He then gestured to his manhood majestically with both hands.)

KEVIN: Be my guest; have a feel.

(Melanie smiled into his eyes.)

MELANIE: Fine, I will.

KEVIN: I hoped you would.

(With that, she reached for his thigh then slowly slid her hand across it. Staring harder into his eyes, she then licked her lips and gently pushed her fingers forth; slowly edging them towards his manhood. Before her fingers could quite reach their destination, however, Covert bounded back into the room, aggressively.)

COVERT: Okay, listen up, you lot!

(Melanie shrieked then withdrew her hand. Suffice to say, Kevin was not very happy about it.)

KEVIN: You bastard, Covert!!!

(Covert snarled at him.)

COVERT: I said listen!

KEVIN: Fine, but I won't forget this in a hurry.

COVERT: Forget what? I've got no idea what the hell you're on about.

KEVIN: You...

COVERT: Shut up! This is important.

KEVIN: Right. Fine. Consider me silent.

COVERT: Good! Now...

KEVIN: My talking days are at an end!

COVERT: Do you mind?

KEVIN: Sorry; entirely my fault!

(Covert sighed.)

COVERT: Okay. Anyway...

KEVIN: Won't happen again!  
(Covert clenched his fist and growled.)  
COVERT: Fuck off. Interrupt me again and I'll just talk over you.  
(He snarled then began.)  
COVERT: A shit load of armed police have arrived.  
KEVIN: I wasn't going to interrupt anyway.  
COVERT: I need to know where they've gathered. In the foyer, just outside the building; where? Where are they? James, while Helena...  
KEVIN: Helen!  
HELEN: Thank you!  
COVERT: While Helen finishes what she's doing, try to hack into the CCTV feed. Find out what we're up against exactly.  
JAMES: Okay.  
COVERT: Also, we just took out two pigs who were searching this floor. Well, they couldn't have come up the stairwell, because Dave has it covered. And the lift is out of order. Find out how the fuck they got up here. There must be a second stairwell.  
HELEN: I can do that while the download continues.  
COVERT: You can?  
HELEN: Yes. On my laptop.  
COVERT: Aren't you using that to download the files.  
HELEN: No. I'm just saving them to a USB stick.  
COVERT: I see...  
KEVIN: You don't, do you? You haven't got a clue.  
COVERT: Computers aren't my strongpoint!  
HELEN: Evidently.  
(Covert furrowed his brow.)  
COVERT: Don't judge me! I help *other people* sneak in so *they* can hack things. It's not my job to know about...  
(He then took a deep breath to calm himself down.)  
COVERT: Doesn't matter.  
(He nodded.)  
COVERT: I just hope that download is quick. Once the two pigs they sent to the top floor fail to report in, it won't take the others long to figure out there's something amiss on this floor. And when they do, we can expect all hell to break loose.  
KEVIN: Thanks to you and your insatiable lust for porn.  
COVERT: Shut up, you. This isn't the time for childish finger-pointing, we've got work to do.  
(He mused to himself.)  
COVERT: Like planning a way to get out of here once we've got the data.  
(He nodded.)  
COVERT: Hopefully we'll be able to find a way to escape without being seen. The last thing we need is a chase and a running gun battle.  
KEVIN: Yeah. Seeing as we don't *have* any guns, I can see why that'd make sense.  
(Covert growled.)  
COVERT: Will you shut up???  
KEVIN: What? I was agreeing with you!  
COVERT: I don't know why you're trying to piss me off...  
KEVIN: I don't know either. I just can't seem to help myself.  
MELANIE: He has that effect on a lot of people!  
COVERT: Melanie!!!

(Melanie grinned at him.)

MELANIE: Sorry!

(Covert sighed.)

COVERT: Okay, enough of this crap.

(He snarled.)

COVERT: Misty wanted you to see some action, Kevin; well, now's your chance.

Come with me. You too, Melanie.

(Sharing a baffled glance, Melanie and Kevin stood up.)

COVERT: We need to patrol this floor. If any other pigs make it up here, we need to take them out before they spot us and alert the others.

(He then hurried out of the door. With a shrug, Kevin and Melanie quickly followed suit.

A few moments later, Kevin found himself slowly advancing down a quiet corridor just behind Covert and Melanie. Far from happy about being there, he could only furrow his brow.)

KEVIN: Covert?

COVERT: Keep your voice down. Whisper if you have to talk to me.

KEVIN: Fine.

(He then proceeded to do just that.)

KEVIN: Covert?

COVERT: It's Graham! And, what?

KEVIN: Armed police everywhere and you've got untrained and unarmed *me* hunting them down.

COVERT: And?

KEVIN: Is this revenge for me being lippy? You're hoping I'll get killed?

COVERT: Don't be stupid. The boss would kill me if you died.

KEVIN: That's... reassuring.

COVERT: I've dragged you along because Misty ordered me to show you the ropes. To get you involved. So that's what I'm doing. She'd beat me senseless if I didn't.

KEVIN: I see. In that case, seeing as you just robbed me of a good genital fondling, I'm gonna tell her you didn't bother.

COVERT: What?

(Melanie pulled on Kevin's sleeve, furrowing her brow.)

MELANIE: Stop it.

(Covert paced on, frowning.)

COVERT: "Stop it", is right. If I find out you were feeling him up during a mission, Melanie...

KEVIN: She wasn't. I was just winding you up, mate.

COVERT: Good. We're on a mission, for fuck sake. Concentrate at all times. There's plenty of time for the filthy stuff. It's not like sex is hard to come by.

(Melanie and Kevin shared a grin then paced after him.)

KEVIN: Fair enough; you've got my full attention.

MELANIE: And mine, as always.

COVERT: Glad to hear it.

(With that, they paced on silently for a moment when suddenly, several more unrecognisable voices rose into the air from ahead of them. At once, Covert jumped to the wall and gestured behind him for Kevin and Melanie to do the same. They obliged without hesitation. Staring ahead with concentration etched on his brow, Covert then crept forth, slowly followed by his two comrades.)



COVERT: Quietly now. Remember, we need to take them out before...

(Just then, a group of four armed police officers strode into the corridor. Alarmingly, upon sighting the three Wyverns, they immediately reached for their firearms. Within seconds, Melanie had had to duck under a bullet.)

KEVIN: Nope!

(With that, Kevin took off down the corridor with his head ducked low. Seeing as they were unarmed, running for it just made sense. He was the only one who felt that way, however. Highly trained in the art of hand to hand combat, it felt far more natural to Covert and Melanie to come out fighting. They did so with extreme gusto. Having dived into rolls upon the ground to avoid the initial gunfire, they immediately set their martial arts skills to work. Before one of the policemen even got the chance to fire again, Covert leapt up and high-kicked him in the chin; breaking his neck. He then dived to avoid a bullet before performing a low kick to sweep another police officer off of his feet. It was a move he followed up, by knocking the officer unconscious. At the same time, Melanie was repeatedly punching a third officer, snarling furiously as she did so.)

MELANIE: Pass out, you... oh, there you go.

(As the third officer crumpled the floor, she instantly spun around then furrowed her brow in dismay.)

MELANIE: Where the fuck did Kevin get to?

COVERT: And where's the other copper?

(At once, they both raised horrified eyebrows.)

COVERT: Shit!

MELANIE: We've gotta find him!

COVERT: You aint kidding!!! If anything happens to him, I'm on the next flight to Mongolia. There's no way I'm going back to the base and telling Misty about it.

MELANIE: Never mind that; let's just go and find him!

COVERT: Agreed

(With that, he raced off up the corridor with Melanie hot on his heels.)

---

In a quiet office elsewhere on the top floor at this time, Kevin was crawling forth on his hands and knees beneath the multitude of desks that dominated the room. Just across the room from him, a police officer was creeping crept forwards; his gun drawn and ready to fired as soon as he caught a glimpse of his target.

POLICE: Come on, mate. Give yourself up and I won't have to shoot you.

(He then held his radio to his face.)

POLICE: This is 264, we found a group of them on the top floor. Send reinforcements.

(The radio hissed then responded with a soft feminine voice.)

RADIO: Affirmative, darling.

POLICE: Not while I'm at work, Carol!!!

RADIO: Sorry; sorry, darling. Affirmative 264.

(The officer released his radio and sneered.)

POLICE: And she wonders why I keep having affairs.

(Just then, he heard a quiet "ouch" and spotted a table wobbling on the other side of the room.)

POLICE: Gotcha!!!

(With that, he opened fire on the table. Much to his annoyance, however, Kevin raced from behind it then charged towards the door on the other side.)

POLICE: Fuck. You jammy bastard  
(He then fired off three more rounds at the fleeing Kevin, narrowly missing each time.)  
POLICE: This wanker's bulletproof.  
(Much to his further annoyance, Kevin then bolted out of the door and fled down the corridor.)  
POLICE: No, you fucking don't, sunshine.  
(He then raced after him. Seconds later, he bounded out of the doors in pursuit, just as Covert and Melanie raced into the room from the other side. Spying the police officer's back as he raced away, Covert gritted his teeth.)  
COVERT: There he is!  
MELANIE: You know he's bound to have called for reinforcements, right?  
COVERT: No doubt about it!  
MELANIE: Shit!  
COVERT: Look, for now, let's just concentrate on getting Kevin back. Mongolia is a bloody long way away and I'd rather avoid the long flight if I can.  
(With that, they took off across the room.)  
COVERT: Not only that, but I don't fancy telling people I'm on the run from a girly, five-foot-two inch brunette whose interests include ballet, gymnastics and shoe shopping.  
MELANIE: That would make you look kinda lame.  
COVERT: Yeah well, you ever been on the receiving end of her anger?  
MELANIE: No. I'm not dumb enough to cross her!  
COVERT: Yeah? Well, *I* am! It's painful enough when she's simply angry; I don't wanna be on her wrong side when she sees red.  
MELANIE: Well, with any luck that won't be an issue.  
(With that, they bounded out into the corridor on the other side, in desperate pursuit of Kevin.)

---

A short while later, in a toilet block in an adjacent corridor, the police officer paced quietly in front of a row of cubicles. He knew Kevin was inside of them, he just needed to decipher which.  
POLICE: Come on, mate; I like hide and seek as much as the next guy but this is getting a little silly.  
(He furrowed his brow.)  
POLICE: Like I don't know you're in here!  
(Hearing no reply he shrugged then cocked his weapon.)  
POLICE: Your call, dipshit. Let's do this the hard way then.  
(He then stepped back and fired his gun through the first cubicle door. Having blasted a small hole in it, he then cast it open and raised his gun again.)  
POLICE: Fuck. A swing and a miss for the policeman, I see. Never mind.  
(He laughed to himself.)  
POLICE: Let me have another try.  
(With that, he fired into the second cubicle then once again, pushed open the door.)  
POLICE: Strike two. Another miss for the copper.  
(He grinned.)  
POLICE: Good thing I have endless chances really.  
(He then fixed his stance and snarled.)

POLICE: What's it like to know you're gonna die, huh? It's only a matter of time, mate. Sooner or later, I'm gonna pick the right door.

(With that, he fired his gun into the third door. Before he could kick it back, however, a toilet roll suddenly bounced off his face and Kevin charged at him from where he'd been hiding in the cupboard at the end of the row. Thrown by the unexpected toilet roll, the police officer reeled back and failed to get a shot off before Kevin could leap at him and grab his arm. Struggling wildly, they both snarled and growled as they wrestled with his arm; Kevin trying to make him drop the gun, the policeman trying to shoot him.)

POLICE: Bastard! Get the fuck off me.

KEVIN: Drop it, you wanker!!!

(Just then, Melanie rushed into the toilet block and came to a screeching halt.)

MELANIE: There you are!!!

(The policeman was horrified.)

POLICE: This is the *men's* toilet!!!

(Melanie gasped in horror.)

MELANIE: Oh my god, you're right!!!

(With that, she swiftly raced back out again, leaving Kevin utterly exasperated.)

KEVIN: Melanie!!!

(The police officer grinned.)

POLICE: Your friend's an idiot!!!

KEVIN: She's fit though!

POLICE: Well, *I* would!

(Having struggled and circled for a few moments longer, Kevin snarled then aimed a head-butt at the officer. Trained to avoid such attacks, the policeman ducked back then twisted Kevin's arm and pushed him away from him. Thrown off balance, Kevin tripped to the ground then swiftly rolled over and stared up at the policeman in horror.)

POLICE: Ha! Unlucky, mate!

KEVIN: Shit!

POLICE: Say your prayers, asshole.

(With that, he raised his gun and smirked.)

POLICE: See you.

(With that, his neck twisted horribly to the right and he collapsed dead to the floor. Covert had arrived just in time. Sneering coldly, he stared down at the corpse then scoffed.)

COVERT: Nobody puts Baby in a corner.

(Kevin gasped for breath for a moment then raised a baffled eyebrow.)

KEVIN: What?

COVERT: I wanted to use a cool film pun, but that came out.

KEVIN: I see...

(Covert sighed.)

COVERT: I should have stuck with Hasta La Vista, Baby.

KEVIN: That would have been better, yeah.

(Covert then leant forwards and pulled Kevin to his feet.)

KEVIN: Thanks, Covert. I owe you one.

COVERT: Yeah, you do. And you can start by calling me Graham.

(Kevin bit his lip.)

KEVIN: You're asking a lot there.

COVERT: Well, you can at least stop trying to piss me off all the time?

(Kevin sighed.)  
KEVIN: Again...  
(He smiled.)  
KEVIN: Tell you what, I'll buy you a pint when we get back to the base. How's that?  
COVERT: The beer's free in our suite!  
KEVIN: Then I'll bring you one from the Marshal's lounge.  
COVERT: It's free there too!  
(Kevin shrugged.)  
KEVIN: Well, I tried.  
(With that, they headed outside to the corridor where Melanie was pacing up and down.)  
MELANIE: Oh my god; you're okay!  
KEVIN: I am, yes. No thanks to *you* though!  
(Melanie cringed.)  
MELANIE: Yeah... I kinda let you down there, didn't I? I guess this means we're not gonna see each other later.  
(Kevin held his palm out to her.)  
KEVIN: Hey, I might be angry, but you're still fit. Of course it's on. Besides, I wanna check out those smooth buttocks of yours.  
(Covert nodded.)  
COVERT: They're awesome. She moisturises them, you know?  
KEVIN: So I'm told.  
(Melanie furrowed her brow.)  
MELANIE: How would you know, Graham?  
(She looked to Kevin.)  
MELANIE: I swear I never have... or ever would. Not with him.  
KEVIN: Then how does he know?  
COVERT: Easy.  
(He grinned at Melanie.)  
COVERT: That guy you beat up for fondling your arse in the busy high street that time? He might not have been as guilty as I made out.  
MELANIE: What???  
COVERT: His pain was my gain.  
(With that, he paced away.)  
COVERT: Let's get a move on! Reinforcements will be on their way by now, so we need to get back to the others.  
(Kevin and Melanie looked to one another, shrugged then paced after him.)

---

Back at the base, at this time, Misty and Xia were stood face to face in the Wyvern shop, just outside the changing rooms. Leaning against a rack, filled with blue camouflage t-shirts, Xia looked more than a little baffled.

XIA: I don't get it, Misty.

MISTY: No?

XIA: No. If we go out in our gang colours, we're *supposed* to look intimidating; surely? So why is our entire clothes range so smart? We don't look intimidating, we look well-groomed.

(Misty grimaced.)

MISTY: Really? I thought *you'd* understand it better than anyone.

XIA: I guess not.

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: Then allow me to explain.

XIA: Please.

MISTY: It's pretty simple really. Violent acts are *far* more intimidating when those doing them *aren't* dressed like thugs.

(Xia bit her lip.)

XIA: I don't see it.

MISTY: Put it this way then. If a greasy, badly-dressed thug smashed up your house, you'd think he was just a hooligan. A thug appeared at the wrong time and you were unlucky. Smashing things up is what thugs do, after all. It was just another senseless act of violence.

XIA: Okay...

MISTY: If the guy who smashed up your house looked like an accountant, on the other hand, you'd know he must be fucking pissed off at you about something. Then you'd know it's personal. And that's far more intimidating than thinking you've been the random victim of a mindless thug.

(Xia nodded along slowly.)

XIA: Actually, that makes sense.

MISTY: Of course, another point is, dressing like we do, we don't intimidate innocent members of the public; those we represent. To them, we're just well-dressed citizens. To the people we're *out* to intimidate, on that other hand, our uniformity of colour means they know who've they've pissed off and what's gonna happen to them.

(She nodded sternly.)

MISTY: That's intimidation done right. We only scare those who ought to be fucking scared.

(Xia smiled.)

XIA: I hear you. Loud and clear, actually. Thanks, Misty. I love it when you put things into perspective like that.

(She nodded.)

XIA: Coming here makes sense now. You were right. Tav's does dress like a slob, and he does need a makeover.

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: Yeah, but you're overlooking one small point there, love.

XIA: Oh?

MISTY: Tav will *never* look smart, Xia. A guy his size is always going to look like a slob. Put him in anything other than a vest and he just looks uncomfortable.

(Xia raised a baffled eyebrow.)

XIA: Then why are we giving him this makeover?

MISTY: For my amusement of course.

(Xia chuckled then gave Misty a devious glance.)

XIA: Nice one.

(Just then, Tavares paced from the changing rooms in a tuxedo. His face bore the most thunderous expression.)

TAVARES: Look at me!

(Misty gushed excitedly.)

MISTY: Oh wow, you look amazing.

XIA: You really do.

TAVARES: I look like a gay penguin!

(Misty gave him a sideways glance.)

MISTY: Why a *gay* penguin?

TAVARES: What? Never mind that! I can't go beating up Savages and raiding shops looking like this! Nobody would take me seriously.

MISTY: They will when you punch them!

XIA: Yeah, that's what your fists are *for*.

TAVARES: You'll *find out* what my fists are for in a minute, Xia!  
(He furrowed his brow.)

TAVARES: Why have we even got tuxedos in here anyway?

MISTY: They go nice with the Wyvern coloured bow-ties!

TAVARES: Are you for real?

(Misty shrugged.)

MISTY: Do I look like I'm joking?  
(She smiled.)

MISTY: Okay, now take the trousers off and put on the kilt I gave you. Off you go!  
(Tavares held his palm towards her.)

TAVARES: No! This suit is bad enough; I draw the line at wearing a fucking skirt.  
(Misty sneered.)

MISTY: Excuse me?

TAVARES: I'm not wearing a skirt like some Scottish turd-burgling cissy boy!

MISTY: *I'm* wearing a skirt, does that make *me* a Scottish turd-burgling cissy?

TAVARES: You're a woman! You're allowed!  
(Misty snarled.)

MISTY: Put the fucking kilt on, Tavares!!!  
(Tavares bellowed angrily then stormed back into the changing rooms.)

TAVARES: Fine... fuck sake...

(Listening to him thrashing about angrily in the changing rooms, Misty and Xia grinned at one another then immediately pulled out their mobile phones.)

XIA: This picture definitely has to go on our weekly newsletter.

MISTY: We don't have a weekly newsletter!

XIA: Misty, if I get a picture of him in a kilt, *this* week we will!  
(They shared a devious laugh then readied their phones to take a photo as soon as he emerged.)

MISTY: We definitely need a new poster in the office.

XIA: And in reception.

(Misty laughed.)

MISTY: That'd be too cruel.

XIA: Spoilsport.

MISTY: Hey, I didn't say we couldn't!  
(She smiled.)

MISTY: It's fun picking on Tav.

XIA: Isn't it though?

MISTY: Covert... he's fun to bully, but mostly that's me being mean.

XIA: Well, he *is* annoying.

MISTY: Oh, totally.  
(She smiled.)

MISTY: Tav though, he likes to act so butch and manly, it's almost our duty as girls to bring him to earth again.

XIA: Yup, when he bowls into the office, scratching his nuts and growling like he's the king of the jungle, it just has to be done.  
(Just then, Tavares emerged from the changing rooms wearing a kilt. His shoulders were slumped and he looked horribly defeated.)

TAVARES: Happy now?  
(He was then blinded by two camera flashes. With a shriek, he instantly raced back into the changing rooms.)  
TAVARES: You bitches!!!  
(Misty and Xia couldn't help but laugh hysterically.)  
MISTY: Oh my god... wait, wait, I've gotta see this.  
(She held up her phone then laughed out loud again.)  
XIA: Let me see!  
(She checked Misty's phone then showed Misty her own.)  
MISTY: Oh my god.  
XIA: Awesome!  
MISTY: Aw, yours is better than mine. You caught his horrified expression.  
XIA: Slow shutter speed for the win! That's what you get for having a good camera, bitch!  
(She beamed.)  
XIA: I'm off to make the newsletter.  
(Misty laughed.)  
MISTY: You're a cruel woman, Xia.  
XIA: That's why you hired me!  
MISTY: There is that.  
(Xia faced the door then looked to Misty.)  
XIA: Unless you need me for anything...  
MISTY: Nah, you go ahead. I'll hang around and cheer him up. After all this teasing, the least I can do is suck his cock.  
XIA: Like you ever do the least.  
(Misty shrugged.)  
MISTY: I like cock; sue me!  
XIA: That'd make me a hypocrite.  
MISTY: Yeah it would. Slut.  
(Xia grinned then headed away.)  
XIA: *You're* a slut!  
MISTY: And proud.  
(As she headed out of the door, Misty grinned then headed into the changing room.)  
MISTY: Don't put your pants back on yet, Tav; Misty needs a seeing to.  
(Tavares growled.)  
TAVARES: I'm not in the mood.  
MISTY: Yeah, but you're gonna do me anyway.  
TAVARES: Excuse me??? I'm not your sex slave, Misty!  
MISTY: Aren't you though?  
(Tavares could only sigh in defeat.)  
TAVARES: Fine. But I refuse to enjoy it.  
MISTY: Right...

---

In the headquarters of Fitchett's Funding and Finance, a short while later, Covert raced down a corridor with Kevin and Melanie in tow. They were now on the floor below where James and Helen were overseeing the download. Covert had come with a new plan, and to say the least, Kevin was not a fan of it.

KEVIN: Are you sure about this, Covert?

COVERT: If I wasn't, we wouldn't be doing it.

MELANIE: Relax, Kevin. His plans always come good eventually. Somehow.

COVERT: Thank you!

KEVIN: Yeah, but... decoys?

COVERT: For the good of the mission, we have to keep the police away from Helena and James!

MELANIE: Helen!

COVERT: Her too. And the best way to do that is to get them to focus on *us* instead. (He nodded sternly.)

COVERT: It's the perfect plan. Leading them a merry dance on the wrong floor pretty much guarantees James and Helena's safety.

MELANIE: It's Helen, for fuck sake.

COVERT: Who cares? The point is, this plan keeps them safe!

KEVIN: I get that, Covert, but why do *I* have to come? I've got no fighting skills whatsoever!

(Covert furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: Stop panicking. Nothing's gonna happen to you; trust me!

KEVIN: Trust you? You almost got me killed once already!

COVERT: And then I saved you! That's how I work! You'll be fine. (Kevin raised a belittling eyebrow.)

KEVIN: You're not filling me with confidence here, Covert.

MELANIE: You'll get used to it. His plans are kinda like disorganised perfection.

KEVIN: Eh? That sentence makes no sense whatsoever!

(Suddenly, a hoard of police officers raged around the corner behind them. Without a moment's hesitation, their leader swiftly drew his weapon.)

POLICE 1: Open fire!!!

(Mercifully, as a plethora of bullets peppered the walls, Kevin, Covert and Melanie managed to swiftly dart down a side corridor. It had been an extremely close call.)

POLICE 1: Damn it!!! Come on!

(With that, he raced forth talking into his radio.)

POLICE 1: We've got them on the run on the ninth floor. Two male, one female, one of the males has no shirt or shoes on. Thinks he's Bruce bloody Willis. (Down in the ground floor reception area at this time, two senior officers were listening to the transmission. The taller of the two nodded then replied with a stern expression on his face.)

SENIOR 1: Roger that. Remember, this is a shoot to kill operation. I repeat, shoot to kill. Leave no suspect alive. (He ended the transmission then looked to his colleague.)

SENIOR 1: The higher-ups really aren't taking any chances with this one, are they?

SENIOR 2: You're not kidding. We got the order to kill from HQ under a minute after the break-in was reported. (His colleague nodded.)

SENIOR 1: Clearly there's something in this building they're eager to protect.

SENIOR 2: So it would seem. (He shrugged.)

SENIOR 2: Shame really. I much prefer catching these light fingered little bastards and torturing them for information.

SENIOR 1: Me too, but clearly the higher ups don't need any information; they already know what those thieving bastards are looking for.

SENIOR 2: I wonder what it is.

SENIOR 1: Me too, but it's not our place to ask. So we'll never know.



SENIOR 2: Then we'll just have to console ourselves with killing them... and any other bugger who pisses us off.

SENIOR 1: That is why we signed up, old chap. Killing is fun.

SENIOR 2: Yes; yes, it is.

(Up on the ninth floor in the meantime, Melanie, Kevin and Covert darted down yet another corridor, once again, just about managing to evade a barrage of gunfire. So far they'd been extremely lucky. Knowing all too well that they were doomed if the situation didn't change, however, Kevin was quick to speak out.)

KEVIN: Your decoys idea was fucking stupid, Covert!!!

COVERT: It's working, isn't it?

KEVIN: Only because those fuckers can't shoot straight!

MELANIE: Chill out, Kevin! Covert knows what he's doing!

COVERT: It's Graham!!!

(He snarled.)

COVERT: And yes, I *do* know what I'm doing!

KEVIN: So do I! Getting shot at! Because of you!

COVERT: Relax, you cock.

(He smirked.)

COVERT: I have a plan.

(Kevin glowered at him coldly.)

KEVIN: Oh, goody. Another plan.

(He sighed.)

KEVIN: I just hope Misty's kind enough to help my mum pay for my funeral.

(Frustrated to the core after their near misses, the hoard of police officers rampaged onwards. Their luck, however, showed no sign of improving. Every time they turned a corner, they'd just about catch sight of their three targets racing around another one. It was starting to grate somewhat. Thwarted time and time again, they were beginning to lose their tempers. They weren't about to give up the chase, however. Letting their targets escape would undoubtedly have severe consequences for their futures in the force. The higher-ups were not forgiving. And so, they raced onwards down corridor after corridor, growling and snarling. As they charged around what felt like their hundredth corner of the evening, however, the officer at the back of the pack received a nasty surprise. Having hidden inside an office at the side of the corridor, Covert stealthily jumped out on him then dragged him in the office with him. Two seconds later, the policeman was dead.)

COVERT: One down...

(With a clenched fist, he then peered around the corner and watched as the police officers raged onwards; clueless as to their colleague's fate.)

COVERT: Pathetic.

(Way up ahead, at this time, Kevin and Melanie bounded around yet another corner in their seemingly endless bid to escape. More than a little fed up with it all, Kevin could barely keep the sneer off his face.)

KEVIN: I love the way Covert opted out of being shot at!

MELANIE: He's picking them off from behind! Would *you* rather do it?

KEVIN: I'd rather be sitting in a comfortable office with James and Helen actually!

MELANIE: So would I, but we play the hand we're dealt.

KEVIN: Yeah? Well, next time *Covert* deals the cards, I'm gonna fold!

(Just then, Melanie's phone beeped. At once, she yanked it from her pocket then read the screen.)

MELANIE: Oh, thank fuck. They've got the data.

KEVIN: Excellent! So we can go?

MELANIE: Once we've come up with an exit strategy that'll get us *all* out safely; yes.

(Kevin spanned his forehead.)

KEVIN: You mean once Covert's come up with one, don't you?

MELANIE: Anyone can come up with a strategy, Kevin! But, yeah, we *usually* go with his!

KEVIN: Fuck. We're as good as dead.

(Just then, Melanie's phone beeped again.)

MELANIE: Another message!

(As they raced around another corner, yet again just about evading the officers in their wake, Melanie stared at her phone then whimpered.)

MELANIE: Aw, crap. It's from Covert. He says seeing as we've got the police's attention, he's going to collect Helen and James and smuggle them outside. He wants *us* to lose the police and find our *own* way out.

(Kevin sneered.)

KEVIN: Fine by me! I'd *rather* find my own way out than rely on *him* to come up with a plan.

(He then raised an enlightened eyebrow.)

KEVIN: And I think I know just how we're gonna do it.

(He looked to Melanie urgently.)

KEVIN: You can do martial arts, right?

MELANIE: Yeah, and?

KEVIN: Then listen up.

---

A minute or so later, Covert emerged from the ground floor stairwell with the entire Wyvern party, minus Kevin and Melanie. Seeing nobody around, he nodded then pointed to the side entrance from which they'd gained entry.

COVERT: Is it clear, James?

(James glanced at the CCTV feed that he'd redirected to his laptop.)

JAMES: It's clear. There's just two officers in reception and the rest are upstairs chasing Melanie and that randy bloke you brought along.

COVERT: Sweet. Let's go.

(With that, they all raced out of the building then sprinting across the road to the relative safety of some nearby trees. At once, they all lay low then stared back at the building.)

COVERT: Shit. I hate leaving people behind.

JAMES: Do you think they'll be okay?

COVERT: They'd better fucking be.

(He then mused to himself.)

COVERT: I'd better help clear the way, I think. Just a minute.

(With that, he upped then stealthily raced his way back to the building. Moments later, he slipped into the side entrance again. Keeping himself pressed to the wall, he edged along an interior corridor then sneaked into the reception area. Spying the two senior officers, leaning against the counter, he nodded to himself then crept forth. Moments later, once he was no more than a few feet away, he sprung into action. In a devastating display of his martial arts skill, he snapped both their necks then instantly raced away again.)

COVERT: Now there are *no* fuckers downstairs.

(Moments later, having exited the building once again, he raced into the trees then jumped down to the turf with the rest of his crew.)  
COVERT: I've taken out the two cunts in reception, so there'll be no surprises once they make it back downstairs.  
(He nodded to himself.)  
COVERT: It's just down to those two to make it down here now.  
(He then grimaced.)  
COVERT: I just hope they can come up with a decent strategy.  
HELEN: Relax. *You* never do but we always seem to survive somehow. They'll be fine.  
COVERT: They'd better be.  
(He grimaced.)  
COVERT: Give me that USB thingy, Helena. If they survive, I'll take it to Misty. If they don't, I'll post it to her from the airport.  
(Helen furrowed her brow then passed him the flash drive.)  
HELEN: It's Helen!  
COVERT: Nobody cares. Now, go. And be careful.  
(James nodded.)  
JAMES: You gonna be okay?  
COVERT: Yeah, I'm just gonna wait and watch.  
JAMES: Right. Well... don't get spotted.  
COVERT: Me? Spotted? Hey! They don't call me Covert for nothing, you know? Even though I wish they wouldn't.  
JAMES: Fair enough.  
COVERT: Now go!  
(The others then sneaked away, leaving Covert grimacing at the building in despair.)  
COVERT: Oh, boy.

---

Inside the building, at this time, Kevin and Melanie charged down a corridor looking determinedly at one another. They'd settled on an exit strategy and now they were about to enact it.  
KEVIN: You ready?  
MELANIE: I'm ready.  
KEVIN: Good. Me too. I just hope this works.  
MELANIE: We'll be fine. It's a far better plan that Covert's ever managed to come up with.  
KEVIN: I don't doubt that for a moment!  
(Just then, the large group of police officers appeared at the end of the corridor behind them.)  
POLICE 1: Don't miss this time, your tossers!!!  
(Much to his annoyance, however, before a single shot could be fired, Kevin and Melanie ducked into a side office leaving them nothing to shoot at.)  
POLICE 1: For fuck sake!!!  
(Looking absolutely furious, they all sprinted down the corridor then the leader darted into the side office after them. Seeing Kevin race through a door at the other end, he growled angrily.)  
POLICE 1: After them!!!  
(Heeding his orders, the officers all sprinted into the room, desperate to finally catch and kill their annoyingly evasive targets. As the last one charged in, however,

Melanie suddenly leapt out on him, striking a fatal death blow to his throat. Watching as the rest of the police officers raced on, she grinned then bent down to pull his gas mask from his belt. Slipping the strap over her arm, she then plucked three canisters from his belt.)

MELANIE: Thanks, pig!

(With that, she rolled the police officer's corpse out of sight then went and stood aside the door again. And now she waited. Psyching herself up, she rolled her neck then listened hard. For a minute or so, she heard nothing until at last, the sound of desperate footsteps rose into the air from the corridor outside.)

POLICE: Shoot the cunt!!!

(Just then, Kevin darted through the door once again. Charging like a rocket, he was at the other end in no time. Just as he exited, as expected, the police officers charged in after him. In a carbon copy of her earlier move, as soon as the last one entered, she ended him then watched on gleefully as his colleagues vanished out of the other door once again.)

MELANIE: Amateurs.

(She then took the dead officer's mask and canisters from his belt.)

MELANIE: It's like taking tear gas from a dead pig.

(Grinning to herself, she then darted back out of the door and hurried to the nearest stairwell. Upon arrival, she slipped inside it then paced up and down impatiently.)

MELANIE: Come on, Kev. Come on. You can do this.

(Nervously bouncing on the balls of her feet, she ran her fingers through her hair then puffed out. It would be a nervous wait. Thankfully, just under a minute later, Kevin burst into the stairwell; much to Melanie's relief.)

MELANIE: Thank fuck! Quick!

(With no time to lose, she thrust a gas mask into Kevin's midriff. With extreme urgency they both rushed the masks on then nodded to one another. Melanie then ripped open a gas canister and dropped it in the stairwell. With a snarl, they then raced off down the stairs. Moments later, the hoard of officers charged in and immediately started to choke.)

POLICE 1: Mask up!!! Mask up!!!

POLICE 2: It stings!!!

(Rampaging down the stairs, Kevin lifted his mask slightly and puffed out.)

KEVIN: Now, if that pillock Covert has done his job properly and made sure all the exits are clear, we should be home and dry.

MELANIE: Fingers crossed. You never know with Covert. It rarely goes as planned. I just know it goes well in the end.

KEVIN: Let's hope his luck holds out then.

(He then pulled his mask down and hurried on. Moments later, the two of them bounded out of the stairwell on the ground floor and immediately set about opening the rest of the gas canisters. Having created a blinding fog, they then darted out of the side entrance and closed it behind them. Shortly after, the group of officers raced from the stairwell and started to batter the smoke with their hands. Visibility was so poor, they couldn't even *see* the side entrance. For well over a minute, they could only waft at the fog. They had no idea where they were or where to go.

Once the mist finally started to disperse and the corridor leading to reception became visible, the leader removed his mask, prompting the others to do the same.)

POLICE 1: Fuck!!!

POLICE 2: Double fuck!

POLICE 1: We need to find them, you cunts!!!  
(He growled furiously.)  
POLICE 1: Losing them would be very, very bad for our careers!  
(His shoulders then slumped.)  
POLICE 1: And our life expectancies. I really don't fancy telling the boss!  
POLICE 2: Me either. If we don't find them, I'm off to Heathrow!  
(With that, they all raced outside via the main reception area and proceeded to search the grounds. All they found were two abandoned gas masks on the grass. Melanie and Kevin were long gone.)

---

Having raced quite a distance away through a nearby housing estate and into an adjacent woodland, Melanie and Kevin came to a halt beneath a tree then bent to catch their breath. It had been a terrifying ordeal, but somehow they'd got through it.  
MELANIE: Oh my god. That was amazing. Scary but awesome.  
KEVIN: And by that you mean horrifying.  
(Melanie chuckled.)  
MELANIE: Pretty much, yeah.  
(Kevin smirked.)  
KEVIN: Still, we came through it alive and in one piece, so our next move is obvious.  
MELANIE: Is that so?  
KEVIN: Yup. Let's celebrate with some dirty sex.  
MELANIE: Ooh. I could go for some of that right now.  
KEVIN: Good to know.  
(Kevin then slipped his hands around her waist. No sooner had he done so, however, Covert peered around the tree at them.)  
COVERT: Nice work, guys. Thanks for surviving. I really didn't fancy life in a Mongolian monastery.  
(Kevin and Melanie growled at him.)  
KEVIN: Do you mind, we were just about to...  
COVERT: I can see that, you cock, but duty comes first; numb nuts. I didn't follow you all the way here for poops and giggles, you know? There's work to be done.  
(He rolled his eyes.)  
COVERT: Here.  
(He then held up a flash drive.)  
COVERT: Give that to Misty. I need a beer before I go back. You know, to celebrate my liberation from a monastic lifestyle.  
(Kevin snatched the flash drive from him then pointed across the woodland.)  
KEVIN: Fine, now sod off.  
COVERT: Now that I can do.  
(He half turned to leave then paused.)  
COVERT: Oh, there's no need to tell the boss about my screw up, by the way.  
KEVIN: I'm not a grass, Covert. Now go away!  
(Covert nodded.)  
COVERT: Fine. Enjoy her.  
(As he strutted away, Kevin looked to Melanie and beamed.)  
KEVIN: Where were we?  
MELANIE: We were about to have dirty sex.  
KEVIN: That's right!  
MELANIE: Then you stupidly took that flash drive from Covert.

KEVIN: What?

MELANIE: What do you mean “what?”. You don’t keep the boss waiting. That can be bad for your health.

(Kevin sighed.)

KEVIN: I see.

MELANIE: Take it back to her then come and find me, okay? I kip at the base, room 17, 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

KEVIN: Okay.

MELANIE: Consider yourself on a promise.

(As she paced away, Kevin beamed to himself.)

KEVIN: Sweet. Different day; different bird. Gotta love this shit.

---

Later that evening, Covert was standing in the lift at the Wyverns base, whistling a happy tune. He was very much the embodiment of a man without a worry in the world. Watching the floor numbers rise, he bobbed his head in time with his tune until the lift finally reached his floor. Seconds later, the doors pinged open and he strutted out with a satisfied grin on his face. With a swagger, he then pushed open a set of glass doors and paced into the general’s lounge. Spying Kevin, Misty and Xia watching TV on the sofa and Tavares playing darts just behind them, he offered up a cocky salute.

COVERT: Evening all. The wandering hero returns!

(Much to his dismay, Misty returned his greeting with a furious snarl.)

MISTY: Don’t you dare come swaggering in here like that, you cunt! Not after fucking up your mission again!

(Covert froze on the spot then sneered at Kevin.)

COVERT: You told her?

(Kevin just shook his head solemnly.)

KEVIN: Nope.

XIA: He didn’t say a word.

MISTY: *You* just confessed!!!

(Covert palmed his forehead.)

COVERT: Aw, crap; I walked right into that one.

MISTY: So, what happened this time?

(Covert forced an embarrassed grin then shrugged.)

COVERT: Well, you know... I forget.

(Misty snarled.)

MISTY: Don’t bloody lie to me!!!

COVERT: I’m not!!! What with dozens of policemen chasing us round the building all evening, I’ve kind of forgotten.

(Misty was horrified.)

MISTY: Dozens of policemen???

COVERT: Yeah, but... let’s not get uptight about it. All’s well that ends well. No harm done.

(Misty growled.)

MISTY: Covert!!! What happened?

(Covert seemed to shrink at this point.)

COVERT: Fine! Well, I think maybe someone might have set off an alarm by mistake.

MISTY: That someone being you, no doubt.

COVERT: Hey! My crew and I are a team. We don't single people out. If one of us fucks up, we all fucked up.

MISTY: Covert!!!

COVERT: Fine! Okay... I suppose it might be fair to say that, on this occasion, I may have inadvertently been the one responsible.

(He held out his palms.)

COVERT: Look, it was an innocent mistake. These things can happen in the heat of a delicate operation.

(Misty nodded calmly.)

MISTY: I'm going to thrash you now. You realise that, right?

COVERT: Don't be like that! It was unavoidable.

(Misty looked to Kevin sternly, causing him to reel back.)

MISTY: What happened? Be honest!!!

(Kevin shuddered, set on edge by her fiery glance.)

KEVIN: He accidentally tripped a sensor while trying to reach for an Ethernet cable.

COVERT: I just wanted to watch some porn on the net while we waited, that's all!

(Kevin spammed his forehead then mumbled under his breath.)

KEVIN: Why would you tell her *that*?

(As Misty slowly stood up and growled, Covert gulped and held his palms out.)

COVERT: Now, look, let's not be hasty, Misty. Let's just be adult about it and let bygones be bygones.

(Misty shook her head then beckoned him towards her calmly.)

MISTY: Come here.

COVERT: Aw, come on, Misty. Be fair! I mean, only the other day Xia fucked up royally and you forgave her!

(Xia furrowed her brow.)

XIA: I was working from dodgy intelligence. You... well, different kind of dodgy intelligence. I mean, fancy *telling* her you were looking up porn!

TAVARES: Yeah, that was plain dumb.

MISTY: No, no. I might even reward his honesty by being lenient!

COVERT: Really?

MISTY: Of course not!

COVERT: Fuck!

(Covert then hung his head and paced towards her. At once Tavares turned away and Xia sucked her teeth.)

TAVARES: Look away, Kev.

KEVIN: Really?

XIA: Seriously.

(Before Kevin could avert his gaze, however, Misty grabbed Covert's testicles in her palm and squeezed. At once, both Covert and Kevin bent double and reached for their privates.)

KEVIN: Why didn't I look away???

(He then turned his back, finally sparing himself from the horror show. Showing Covert now mercy whatsoever, Misty was squeezing his testicles tighter and tighter. In excruciating agony, all he could do was take a swing at her in desperation to free himself. It was just the invitation Misty was looking for. Utilising her skills with devastating speed, she then set about knocking him into the middle of next week. Within fifteen seconds, he was out for the count on the carpet, having been beaten across the room. Standing over his prostrate body, Misty shook her head and snarled. Right now, she was in a foul mood.)

MISTY: I'm not having it, guys!!!

(Hearing the anger in her voice, Xia, Kevin and Tavares looked at her attentively.)

MISTY: This isn't some kind of joke.

(She then spun around and paced towards the window at the rear of the room.)

MISTY: Come with me. And be quick about it.

(At once, they all followed her to the window then joined her in staring down at the city.)

MISTY: What do you see when you look down there, guys?

KEVIN: Um... Faxbury?

(Misty turned to face him.)

MISTY: Is that *all* you see? A city?

(Kevin was stumped.)

KEVIN: Well... yeah, I guess.

MISTY: What about you, Tav? What do you see?

(Tavares also looked blank.)

TAVARES: Cars... people doing stuff!

MISTY: Xia?

(Xia shrugged.)

XIA: Buildings?

(Misty shook her head.)

MISTY: Look again, guys.

(She then placed her forehead on the glass. Having allowed herself a sigh, she smiled then glanced to Kevin.)

MISTY: Yeah, it's a city down there, Kevin. But not *just* a city; it's so much more than that.

(She looked to Tavares then to Xia.)

MISTY: Those people doing stuff, those cars, those buildings you see; they're all part of something bigger.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: I don't care how clichéd it sounds, this city has a pulse, a heartbeat. It's a living thing. And every single one of us is like the blood that keeps it alive.

(She then shook her head then her voice became saddened.)

MISTY: But if we're not careful this city isn't going to be long for this world.

There's two cancers out there slowly destroying it from within. Bleeding it dry.

(She looked to Kevin again.)

MISTY: Someone has to help it, Kevin. Someone has to be antibodies in this cliché. It'll die otherwise. And that's where we come in.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: I *could* have been a professional ballerina. I *could* have been an Olympic gymnast. Hell, I *could* have done anything I set my mind to, but I chose this.

Fighting back! Why? Because some things are just more important.

(She then looked to Tavares.)

MISTY: You fight because you're afraid that if you let things go on, your family are going to be victims one day.

(She then looked to Xia.)

MISTY: You fight because you've seen the sick things that go on. You've been a victim of the horrors and you want them to end.

(She then looked to Kevin again.)

MISTY: You've been a victim of it too. And so have I.

(She looked to the window again then nodded sternly.)



MISTY: But being a Wyvern has to be about more than what *we* want. We can't fight *only* for personal revenge. We can't fight *only* to save those *we* love. We have to fight for *everyone*. Everyone! Because if nobody's looking after all those people down there, the cancer *is* going to win. And if the cancer wins, we'll all lose our personal battles anyway. So we fight for *all*. And we fight hard. With passion and aggression, because this war matters! Winning this war is everything!

(She then snarled and glanced over her shoulder.)

MISTY: And that's why it pisses me off when some idiot who's only fighting because he wants an excuse to use his martial art skills, fucks up all the time and treats his mission like a fucking joke.

(At this point, Covert spoke up apologetically from across the room. His nose was bloodied and he was one big bruise.)

COVERT: I'm sorry, Misty.

(Misty just glared at him.)

COVERT: You're right. It's not good enough. I apologise.

(Misty shook a disdainful head then glanced back out the window again.)

MISTY: Freshen up then go home. I don't want to look at you right now.

(Covert nodded then limped away.)

MISTY: Arsehole.

(Xia forced a smile then put an arm around Misty.)

XIA: I hear you, Misty. If we don't fight the war for everyone, we'll never win the personal battles we joined up to fight.

(Tavares nodded.)

TAVARES: True.

(Misty just nodded silently and continued to stare out of the window. Feeling it was best just to leave her to it, Xia forced a smile then gestured to Tavares with her head. Tavares nodded in return then the two of them sloped away. Left behind, Kevin stepped up behind Misty and sighed.)

KEVIN: Misty?

MISTY: Yeah?

(He took a deep breath then shrugged uneasily.)

KEVIN: I really want to get the police and the Savages back for what they did to me and my brother. I mean it burns away at me and I won't be happy until I've done it. Well, you've given me the chance to do that now, so I'll be forever in your debt for that.

(He nodded firmly.)

KEVIN: So whatever happens, I'm gonna see this thing through to the end. By your side. Whatever you need, Misty. I won't rest until *you're* satisfied it's over. I might not share your love and enthusiasm for the city and everything in it, but whatever you need me to do, I'll do it. I'm in it for the long haul, mate, and I won't let you down.

(Misty turned from the window and smiled.)

MISTY: I never doubted that for a moment.

(She gave a single laugh.)

MISTY: I can't believe you called me "mate".

(Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: Well "snookums" seemed inappropriate.

(Much to his surprise she then walked into him for a hug.)

KEVIN: Oh... cool.

(Placing her head on his shoulder, she smiled warmly.)

MISTY: By the way, you passed. You've seen what the guys do and you didn't mess it up. You even survived Covert's mission.

(Kevin beamed.)

KEVIN: Kinda proud of that, actually. Our exit strategy was *my* idea.

(Misty leant back and looked up at him.)

MISTY: Really?

(She sighed.)

MISTY: He left it to you? Covert really is skating on thin ice.

KEVIN: Well, to be fair, you did ask me along as an ideas man.

MISTY: And to be fairer still, Covert is a dick.

KEVIN: That's true.

(She then stepped out of the hug.)

MISTY: So anyway, no more marshal's lounge for you. You'll be based up here with the other generals and me. Intelligence and counter-intelligence is gonna be your thing.

KEVIN: Okay.

MISTY: If you need people for a mission, you can take from Xia or Covert's crew.

Tav's lot are just thugs.

KEVIN: Thugs can be useful.

MISTY: Well, they're at your disposal if need be.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: Tomorrow, I want you to go and see the girls in the computer room. Liaise with them for a bit and they'll bring you up to speed on how we gather our intelligence. That will be your department, after all.

KEVIN: Cool. I can Liaise with girls. In fact there's nothing I like more.

MISTY: Yeah well, they're not a pretty bunch, so be warned. Well, one of them is. I would anyway.

(She rolled her eyes.)

MISTY: What am I saying? Look, just... congratulations, General.

(Kevin nodded proudly.)

KEVIN: Thanks, Misty. I appreciate this.

MISTY: I know.

(She grinned.)

MISTY: Just be warned, Xia and I will pick on you a lot.

KEVIN: I can take it.

MISTY: We tend to gang up though.

(Kevin whimpered.)

KEVIN: Okay, now I'm scared.

(Misty grinned then paced away.)

MISTY: Anyway, I'm off. I've got a date.

KEVIN: Oh? Anyone special?

MISTY: I can't remember their names.

KEVIN: *Their* names?

MISTY: Just three guys I met the other night.

(Kevin stared at her agape as she minced away then started to chuckle.)

KEVIN: She's fucking awesome.

---

*That evening. Wyvern building, Room 17; 4<sup>th</sup> floor.*

Having just finished being intimate with Melanie, Kevin rolled onto the other side of the bed then smirked at her knowingly. He liked what he saw. She was still staring at the ceiling with an astonished look on her face; barely even blinking. Taking it as a sign that she was catatonic with delight at his performance, he exhaled joyfully.

KEVIN: Amazing wasn't it? I can't describe it either.

(In that moment, she broke from her catatonia and gave him a baffled glance.)

MELANIE: Amazing? Who were *you* shagging 'cause it couldn't have been me!

(Kevin was most taken aback.)

KEVIN: What?

MELANIE: That was rubbish!

KEVIN: Rubbish?

MELANIE: I've had less predictable *dildos*!

(Kevin could only gape.)

KEVIN: Steady on!

MELANIE: Seriously; I'm a woman not a trampoline!

KEVIN: But...

MELANIE: It was almost as if you were trying to bypass me and hump the mattress!

(Kevin furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: It wasn't *that* bad!!!

MELANIE: Sure, it was great if you like being bounced on by some heavy oaf with a stupid grin on his face.

KEVIN: That's crap! If it was that bad why were you whimpering?

MELANIE: I was snoring!

(Kevin just sneered coldly.)

KEVIN: Now we both know that's a lie.

MELANIE: Fine, I wasn't snoring but they weren't whimpers of delight. They were whimpers of 'oh my god, you're crushing me'.

(Kevin looked to her blankly for a moment then shook his head.)

KEVIN: Think I'll be on my way.

(Before he could leave, Melanie sat up a little and looked to him urgently.)

MELANIE: No, wait. I wanna know. What the hell *was* that? You must *know* it was bad, surely.

(Kevin looked to her angrily for a moment then hung his head.)

KEVIN: Who am I kidding? That was fucking terrible.

MELANIE: Exactly. But, why? I mean, who in their right mind has sex like *that*?

(Kevin sighed.)

KEVIN: You wouldn't believe me if I told you. And anyway, it's kind of a long story.

MELANIE: I have all night. And after *that*, the *least* you can do is explain.

(Kevin looked to her uneasily for a moment then groaned in defeat.)

KEVIN: Fine.

(He sighed.)

KEVIN: It's all Misty's fault!

MELANIE: The boss?

KEVIN: Yeah. I worked with her for three years without a bloody clue who she was. I thought she was this innocent, sweet girl. I had no idea she was a psychotic gang leader. Or a nymphomaniac come to that! As far as I knew she was a cute, little thing who wouldn't hurt a fly.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: Well, I'd had the hots for her for a while. A good year or so actually, so after I came out of hospital I asked her out.

(Melanie gasped in amazement.)

MELANIE: So you're the one!

KEVIN: What?

MELANIE: I heard someone had asked her out. We all had a good laugh about that, actually.

(Kevin furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: I'm happy for you. Always the entertainer, me.

MELANIE: Oh, come on. Now you know what she's like, you have to admit, it's pretty funny.

(Kevin just stared at her.)

MELANIE: Or not!

KEVIN: Maybe I'll see the funny side in time.

(Melanie shrugged.)

MELANIE: Hopefully. So, what's that got to do with your pathetic love-making?

(Kevin furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: Tell it how it is, Mel; don't spare *my* feelings.

MELANIE: I never would.

(Kevin sighed.)

KEVIN: Thing is, I liked Misty for so long... well, I really wanted to impress her.

We went on what I thought was our first date and, you know, once we ended up in bed I really wanted to leave a lasting impression.

MELANIE: Well, if it was anything like the sex *we* just had...

KEVIN: Anyway!!!

(He rolled his eyes then continued, tuning out her giggling.)

KEVIN: I'm not great under pressure. I used to play volleyball a lot, and sometimes when things were going badly I tensed up and my joints felt like they were made of lead.

MELANIE: Ouch.

KEVIN: Yeah, ouch. Well, same thing as soon as I lay Misty down on her pillow. My chap went hard but so did the rest of me. I put so much pressure on myself to impress her, I ended up as stiff as a board.

(Melanie laughed.)

MELANIE: Loving the irony of that statement. Never heard a guy complain about being stiff in bed before.

KEVIN: You can laugh, Mel, but I tell you, it hurt. Every thrust was painful. At first it was just an ache but in the end... shit.

(He puffed out.)

KEVIN: So yeah, I failed to impress her but she was kind enough not to let on. Unlike a certain person I could mention.

(Melanie beamed.)

MELANIE: Me!

KEVIN: Yeah, you!

(He rolled his eyes.)

KEVIN: Anyway, shortly after that, I ended up doing Xia over the pool table.

MELANIE: Really? I heard she's a bit frigid.

KEVIN: She isn't. Unless you're comparing her to Misty, in which case everyone's frigid.

MELANIE: That's true.

KEVIN: Anyway, I had it in the corner of my mind that Xia would tell Misty what the sex was like. Well, I figured if I give her a good seeing to, she'd tell Misty I'm not as bad as she thinks.

(He groaned.)

KEVIN: Put myself under pressure to succeed again, didn't I? I tightened up and almost killed myself doing *her*. A knee-trembler against the pool table when your legs don't wanna bend is excruciating.

MELANIE: I'll bet.

(An enlightened expression then swept Melanie's brow.)

MELANIE: Wait a minute... so that's why you messed it up with me just now? You thought I'd tell Xia or Misty how it was?

(Kevin bit his lip.)

KEVIN: Was I wrong?

MELANIE: I don't really know Xia and I never talk to Misty. She scares the crap out of me.

(Kevin furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: So, there was no need for me to panic.

MELANIE: None whatsoever.

(She then grimaced at him enquiringly.)

MELANIE: Say, why does it matter what Misty thinks anyway? She's not gonna be your girlfriend and you know that now. Who cares what she hears? You don't have to impress her in that department anymore... unless you're clinging onto...

(She sighed apologetically at him.)

MELANIE: You still like her!

(Kevin shrugged.)

KEVIN: I liked her for over a year; it doesn't just go away overnight.

MELANIE: Wow! Does she know?

KEVIN: No. I don't think so.

MELANIE: I see.

(She then smiled and laid back on her pillow comfortably.)

MELANIE: So anyway, you can relax. What we do in this room, stays in this room. I don't know those two well enough to talk to them anyway.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: Thanks.

MELANIE: Now you know that, do you feel any more relaxed?

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: Actually, yeah. My legs feel good again and...

(He flexed his arms.)

KEVIN: Yeah, I'm fine now.

MELANIE: Good. Now, roll over here and give me the seeing to you promised me.

(Kevin was most surprised.)

KEVIN: Really?

MELANIE: Yeah. I really wanted sex tonight and let's face it, what we just did wasn't it.

KEVIN: I can't argue with that.

MELANIE: Now stiffen up in the right place and relax everywhere else. Let's do this thing.

KEVIN: Don't mind if I do.

MELANIE: I'll help you forget your pointless feelings for Misty; don't you worry about that.

(Kevin rolled on top of her smiling, then his face straightened up as soon as he knew she couldn't see it. Relinquishing his love for Misty wasn't going to be that easy.)

---

The following morning, Kevin strolled into the general's suite with something of a spring in his step. Being able to enter as an equal, rather than a mere trainee, felt wonderfully empowering. He was no longer Misty's guest, on trial for his position; he'd arrived among the elite. For many, to have reached this dizzy height so soon would have been bewildering; maybe a little intimidating. Kevin, however, felt no such humility. Misty had been seeking an ideas man, and he genuinely believed that he was the perfect man for the job; that she'd made the right decision. As such, he strutted in there confidently then stopped and took a deep satisfying breath.

KEVIN: Fucking excellent.

(He then headed over to the sofa where Covert was reading a magazine. The others were nowhere to be seen.)

KEVIN: Alright, Eddie?

(Covert glanced over his magazine.)

COVERT: What the fuck did you call me?

KEVIN: Eddie.

COVERT: It's Graham!

KEVIN: Nah, mate, it's Eddie, as in Edward the confessor.

(Covert blinked at him nonchalantly.)

COVERT: What the fuck are you on about?

(Kevin took a seat then smirked.)

KEVIN: Yesterday, when Misty asked about the alarm going off. You *could* have said you were *so* busy watching everyone else, making sure *they* didn't trip an alarm, you accidentally triggered one yourself. Instead you straight up confessed that you were trying to plug in the Ethernet cable so you could watch some porn. That was dumb.

COVERT: Was it?

KEVIN: Unfeasibly so. She beat you to a pulp.

COVERT: Yeah, well...

(He glanced at his magazine again.)

COVERT: As you'll come to understand, lying to Misty is a bad idea.

KEVIN: Confessing didn't do you an favours either!

COVERT: Oh, but it did. Misty would have found out what happened. I don't know how, but she always does. And if she ever finds out someone lied to her...

(He sucked his teeth.)

COVERT: You really don't want to know, mate. It's too gruesome to think about. Trust me; I did the right thing. Lying to Misty can be fatal.

KEVIN: Right.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Thanks for the tip.

COVERT: Whatever.

KEVIN: Not that I needed it.

(Covert glanced up again.)

COVERT: Excuse me?

KEVIN: Just saying. Seeing as I'm *not* an incompetent buffoon, I'm not likely to have any need to chose between confessing or lying. I'll just do the job *right*.

COVERT: You...

(He then spotted Kevin grinning to himself and shook his head.)

COVERT: Twat.

KEVIN: What?

COVERT: I called you a twat.

(Kevin chuckled.)

KEVIN: Says the numpty who set off all the alarms and fucked up his entire mission.

COVERT: You...

(He then shook his head.)

COVERT: Are you always this chirpy? Only it's really annoying.

(He then looked enlightened.)

COVERT: I get it. You're happy because...

KEVIN: I've arrived among the elite, mate.

COVERT: You banged Melanie last night.

KEVIN: That too. But mostly it's about being among the elite.

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: Speaking of which, where is everyone? Misty messaged me. She's called a meeting for this morning.

COVERT: Yeah. At ten o'clock.

KEVIN: That's right.

COVERT: It's ten past eight, you cock.

KEVIN: Right...

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: I may have been a bit overexcited this morning. First day as a general, an' all.

COVERT: Knob.

KEVIN: Fair comment.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: So what's your excuse? Why are *you* here so early?

COVERT: I felt like it.

(Kevin looked through him blankly for a moment then chuckled.)

KEVIN: Bullshit.

COVERT: What?

KEVIN: Misty's seriously pissed off at you right now, so you came in early to make sure you arrived before she does, didn't you? Being the *last* one to arrive would look really bad after what happened yesterday, so you got up at the crack of dawn.

COVERT: Oh, piss off.

KEVIN: I'm right, aren't I?

COVERT: I said piss off!

KEVIN: So what time did you get here?

COVERT: Kevin...

KEVIN: Five? Six?

(Covert slammed his magazine down and snarled.)

COVERT: You're really fucking annoying!

KEVIN: Because I'm right?

COVERT: Yes!

(He furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: I mean no!

KEVIN: You mean yes.

(Covert shook his head.)

COVERT: Fine. Maybe there was an element of that.

KEVIN: I knew it.

COVERT: But you pointing it out is really annoying.

KEVIN: Couldn't be helped, mate. I'm here because I'm smart and have great ideas, but I'm *also* extremely perceptive; I can see right though people, you see? You're just gonna have get used to it.

COVERT: Yeah? *I'm* here because I have mad martial arts skills. I can hit people really hard without leaving a mark. And if you keep giving me lip, you'll be getting a demonstration. Get used to *that*.

(Kevin grimaced.)

KEVIN: Touché. Let's just sit here in silence then, shall we?

COVERT: Good idea.

(He then picked up his magazine and resumed reading it. Silence reigned once again and he was extremely grateful for it. He'd never been the most sociable person in the world, so the peace and quiet was very much appreciated. Hearing nothing but the sound of himself turning the pages suited him fine. Alas it was not to last.)

KEVIN: So what time *did* you get here then?

(Covert could only throw his magazine back down then sigh in defeat.)

COVERT: You're a cunt!

---

At shortly after ten o'clock that morning, once Misty and her four generals had all assembled, Misty called her meeting to order. Everyone had been served with a coffee and a Belgian bun and now she was ready to get down to business. Clueless as to what the meeting was about, Xia, Tavares, Kevin and especially Covert listened intently. After the previous day's events, he was determined to be more professional than ever. After all, only a fool would risk offending Misty twice!

MISTY: Thanks for coming, guys. Your punctuality is appreciated.

(She glanced at Xia.)

MISTY: Even if one of us did cut it fine.

XIA: Only because you sent me out to get these buns!

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: Relax, babe; I'm teasing.

(She smiled then gestured to her bun.)

MISTY: An excellent choice, by they way. They look like boobies.

TAVARES: Well, not really. They'd have to be three times the size of that before they look like *your* boobs, Misty.

XIA: Ahem!

TAVARES: Or yours.

XIA: Thank you.

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: Anyway, that's enough idle chatter.

(Her face then straightened and she adopted a serious tone.)

MISTY: Listen up, guys. As you know, I fast tracked Kevin here through training with a view to making him our general in charge of ideas. He passed with flying colours.

(She nodded to him.)

MISTY: Congratulations, again.

TAVARES: Well done, matey.

XIA: Nice one, you.

COVERT: Yeah...



KEVIN: Thanks, ladies.

TAVARES: Excuse me?

KEVIN: And gentlemen.

TAVARES: That's better.

KEVIN: And Covert, of course.

COVERT: You...

MISTY: Enough of that.

(She rolled her eyes.)

MISTY: No interrupting now, guys. This is serious. I've called this meeting because I want to know what Kevin here thinks.

(All eyes quickly switched to Kevin.)

KEVIN: Um...

MISTY: You've seen what we do first hand now. You've seen what our operation is about and how we go *about* those operations. In fact, having known you for a while now, I'll bet you're pretty much up to speed on literally *every aspect* of our operation.

KEVIN: Well... I believe so, yeah.

MISTY: Good.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: Now I need your thoughts. Complete honesty, please. Don't hold anything back in case you offend someone. If you see a flaw in our operation speak up. If anyone's hurt by it...

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: They'll just have to get over it.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: You're a smart guy, Kev. Perceptive. And you have great ideas. That's why I wanted you here. If anyone can see areas where improvements need to be made, it's you. I need to hear about it, so I can *make* those improvements.

(She then glanced at Tavares, Xia and Covert.)

MISTY: If his suggestions annoy you, just sit tight. I don't want to hear it, okay? It's important that he be heard. This is what I brought him in for and I don't want his input interrupted because one of you needs a good cry and a sticking plaster for your ego, okay?

(Seeing three uncomfortable nods coming her way, Misty nodded then looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: Begin.

(As all eyes turned his way, Kevin gulped.)

KEVIN: Just like that?

MISTY: Yes. Speak.

(Kevin leant towards her and whimpered.)

KEVIN: I'm in punching range.

MISTY: Nobody's going to punch you. They wouldn't dare.

KEVIN: Right...

MISTY: Look, just say it, okay? Even if I don't like what I'm hearing, you have my word as a Wyvern that I won't react adversely, okay? And nor will they. So relax and do your job. As your boss, I'm asking for constructive criticism, so let's hear it. What can we do better? What's your take? Go.

(Still a little unnerved by the distrusting glances coming his way from Tavares, Xia and Covert, Kevin scratched his head then looked to Misty.)

KEVIN: Right. Honesty, yeah?

MISTY: Yes. Because lying to me would be a huge fucking mistake.

KEVIN: So I'm informed.  
(He puffed out nervously.)  
KEVIN: You want me to be candid then, yeah? I mean... you *appreciate* candour, right?  
MISTY: Just say it, will you? Exactly what you're thinking.  
KEVIN: Right...  
(He then nodded to himself, resolved to telling her exactly what he thought.)  
KEVIN: Fine. Here it goes then.  
(He ruffled his neck.)  
KEVIN: Like... no offence, but...  
(He then became acutely aware of displeased shuffling in the seats around him.)  
KEVIN: Um... you're alright there?  
TAVARES: No. No offence? What's that supposed to mean???  
XIA: Yeah!  
TAVARES: *We'll* decide whether we take offence or not.  
XIA: And we already have!  
COVERT: Yeah; the no offence part was offensive enough.  
KEVIN: Right...  
(Misty rolled her eyes.)  
MISTY: Seriously, guys? Are you really that sensitive?  
XIA: Yes. He's criticising us!  
KEVIN: I haven't said anything yet.  
TAVARES: You said *no offence*. Everyone knows that nothing good comes after that.  
(Misty puffed out then furrowed her brow.)  
MISTY: Tav, Xia, Covert, you're going to be quiet now. You're *going* to let him speak. And you're going to *listen* to every word he says. And what's more, you're going to do it respectfully. If you make a single utterance or shift about to unsettle him, I'm going to get my nunchaku set out. Understood?  
(At once, Xia, Tavares and Covert all sat up and fell deathly silent.)  
MISTY: Good. The floor's yours, Kev. Say what you need to say. If we don't like it we'll just calmly tell you why you're wrong. There'll be no retribution, okay?  
(She then glowered at the other three again.)  
MISTY: None!  
(Her eyes then returned to Kevin.)  
MISTY: Go. What's your verdict?  
(Kevin winced then scratched his head.)  
KEVIN: Yeah, so... where was I?  
MISTY: You said no offence and they all took offence like a bunch of whiney college students.  
KEVIN: Oh, yeah...  
(He then looked into Misty's eyes. Avoiding eye contact with the others felt like a very good idea at this time.)  
KEVIN: As I was saying, no offence, but our current strategy is pretty much as productive as bailing out of a bucket of water with a spoon in the pouring rain.  
MISTY: Oh?  
KEVIN: Yeah. I mean, I liaised with the girls in the computer room last night; you know, like you asked me to. I checked out all the things we've got going at the moment and compared it with the amount of shit the police and The Savages are *known* to be getting up to.

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: It feels like we're barely scraping the surface, Misty. I mean, for a start, we're up against two enemies. So, even if we were operating on an even keel to the pair of them, it'd mean for every one percent of good we do, they both do one percent more damage. In that sense we're not even running to stand still; we're sprinting but still going backwards.

MISTY: Okay...

KEVIN: You asked for honesty, so here it is. Right now, we're no more than annoying flies as far as the other two entities are concerned; a nuisance but not a deterrent. Tav smashes up a shop. So what? The insurance will bail them out and in the meantime they've got hundreds of others under their control. In that sense, all we're doing is pushing up their insurance premiums.

(Dreading to think about the fierce glare he was probably receiving from Tavares right now, he gulped then continued.)

KEVIN: The other night with Xia, we ended up stealing two boxes of narcotics. A good result, yes, but what good did it really do? They'll switch routes now and the drugs will just continue pouring in. We made a dent, that's all. And dents can be beaten out.

(He then mumbled under his breath.)

KEVIN: Unlike the dents in my face when these guys get me alone.

MISTY: That's not gonna happen.

KEVIN: Right...

(He puffed out.)

KEVIN: As for Covert's operation; breaking in and stealing information... well, that's essential obviously. Not that last night's info will be any good. They know their systems were compromised, so by the time the computer girls can decipher the account numbers, that money will have been moved.

MISTY: I know. Why do you think I was so livid?

KEVIN: Yeah... thing is, you see, although breaking in and stealing information is invaluable, it's not enough. For every operation we compromise, they'll just start another. We'll forever be chasing our tails; you know?

(Misty nodded.)

MISTY: Okay... let's say that's all true. What can be done about it? How can we improve?

(Kevin puffed out.)

KEVIN: Well... it's simple really. We need to go nuclear.

MISTY: Nuclear?

KEVIN: Yeah. Not literally though. I mean, we have to go big.

MISTY: I realise that, Kevin; I'm not an idiot.

KEVIN: I wouldn't dare suggest you are.

MISTY: I know.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: So what do you suggest?

KEVIN: Well...

(In that moment, a way to dig himself out of trouble with his fellow generals popped into his head and his eyes lit up. He then sat forwards and spoke in a deeply sincere tone.)

KEVIN: Okay, this is it. The big picture, okay? You started off as just an ordinary gang, right? Beating bad people up and stealing things back; small scale Robin Hood stuff.

MISTY: We did, yes.

KEVIN: Then *you* took over, Misty. You turned the Wyverns from a small gang into a public limited company. An large scale operation. Using the same illegal methods the police and The Savages used to grow, you did the same; only acting as force for good, funded by blackmailing and embezzling from bad people.

(He nodded knowingly.)

KEVIN: During that growth process, I mean to get where we are now, Tav's wrecking work was invaluable. As were Xia's excellent weapon skills. And Covert's stealth skills, in terms of gathering information were essential. We wouldn't be where we are now without the amazing jobs they did while we were on the way up.

(He then sat back.)

KEVIN: But we're *not* on the way up anymore. We're up. We're a multi-million pound company now. A wealthy, going concern. We've arrived in a position where can make a difference now.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: And it's time we started doing that.

(Misty just blinked at him nonchalantly.)

MISTY: I didn't need a concise history of the Wyverns and how we got here, Kevin; I was orchestrating it every step of the way.

KEVIN: Right...

MISTY: I need to know what you meant by going nuclear. Nothing else.

KEVIN: I realise that.

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: I just wanted these three to realise my assessment was no slight on them.

MISTY: Noted.

KEVIN: By them?

MISTY: They don't look as homicidal as they did *before* you said it, so I think you'll be fine. Now what's this about going nuclear?

KEVIN: Okay, it's like this. We need to make moves to *end* this war now. Rather than merely battling just to stay in it, we need to end the police and The Savages once and for all. We're in a position to do that now.

MISTY: Okay...

KEVIN: Starting with Tav's favourite thing.

TAVARES: Lincolnshire sausages?

(Misty was quick to shush him with his finger to her lips.)

MISTY: Quiet. Kevin has the floor.

(She then looked to Kevin and saw him shaking his head despairingly.)

KEVIN: Sausages? Fucking sausages? How the fuck are we going to end a gang war with bloody sausages?

(He rolled his eyes.)

KEVIN: I meant violence! Fucking sausages indeed.

(As he sat there despairing, Misty looked through him coldly.)

MISTY: Violence, huh?

KEVIN: Yeah.

MISTY: Blimey. We'd never thought of using violence before. Well don't I feel a fool?

KEVIN: No. Not just *any* violence, Misty. I'm talking *grand scale* violence. Proper, out of control, wholesale civil disobedience. We need to start a riot. And not just a few blokes throwing bottles either; a riot so out of control, the army get called in.

(All eyes turned his way in utter astonishment.)

MISTY: The army???

KEVIN: Yeah.

MISTY: Kevin...

KEVIN: Hear me out, babe...

MISTY: Babe???

KEVIN: Misty, I mean. Hear me out.

(Misty snarled.)

MISTY: Make it good!

KEVIN: Okay. If the national guard have to come out, the news companies are gonna be all over it. A riot so out of control, the army have had to come in and quell things? The media are gonna *lap* that up.

MISTY: And how does that help us?

KEVIN: It'll be all over the media that the private company charged with policing Faxbury have lost control. Done a piss awful job. Well to save face, the government will have no choice but to strip them of their contract.

MISTY: And what good will that do? They'll just give it to *another* corrupt company and we'll be back to square one.

KEVIN: Not if that company is ours.

(Misty's jaw instantly dropped.)

MISTY: Oh.

KEVIN: You four have made the Wyverns a massive company. A company big enough to be considered for government contracts. I've seen the accounts. We're huge. Now imagine what we could do if we finagled the police funding contract. Imagine what we could do with all that money and the authority that comes with it. We'd crush The Savages, just like the police were *meant* to.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: *That* company just became a rival, equally corrupt gang. We, on the other hand, would grind the fucking Savages into the dirt where they belong. As for all those corrupt policemen we're currently saddled with... well, take away their guns and their powers and what have you got? A bunch of nobody's waiting for a revenge beating.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: And that's what I meant by going nuclear.

(He then noticed Misty staring back at him agog.)

KEVIN: Oh... you look... um...

(He winced.)

KEVIN: Are you still angry that I called you babe?

(Misty suddenly sat forwards and beamed with delight.)

MISTY: No, you cock. I'm far from angry; I'm fucking ecstatic.

KEVIN: About being called babe?

MISTY: No, that was really annoying. I'm ecstatic about this plan. Start a riot, get the police's parent company removed then bid ourselves. If that was to work...

(She puffed out.)

MISTY: All our troubles would be over.

(She then started to chuckle.)

MISTY: You weren't kidding, were you? That really *is* going nuclear.

KEVIN: Yeah.

MISTY: Love it.

(She then looked to Tavares, Xia and Covert.)

MISTY: What do *you* think, guys?

(Xia bit her lip then spoke up first.)

XIA: Well, if you ask me, he really shouldn't have called you *babe* like that.

MISTY: About the plan, I mean!

XIA: Right. Yeah.

(She nodded slowly as she mused to herself.)

XIA: I mean... it sounds good in theory. Sounds incredible even. But how do we make it a reality? How do we get chosen for the next police contract?

TAVARES: Exactly. We can't. It was a ridiculous plan. Overambitious and unworkable. Old Kevin here's got his head in the clouds.

COVERT: On the contrary, no he hasn't.

KEVIN: You tell him, Gordon.

COVERT: It's Graham!

KEVIN: Right. Sorry. Covert.

COVERT: It's...

(He gave him a sideways glance then continued.)

COVERT: Simple stuff really. We use hackers.

MISTY: Oh? To do what?

COVERT: Hack.

MISTY: I know that, you cunt!

COVERT: Oh. You meant...

(He scratched his neck nervously.)

COVERT: If we can get enough dirt on the corrupt cunt who'll decide where the next police contract will *go*, we're in. Good old fashioned blackmail.

MISTY: I see.

XIA: We'd need to get dirt on media editors as well then. A lot of them are *so* pro-government, they wouldn't publish *anything* negative about a politician unless we blackmailed *them* as well.

MISTY: Yup; she's right.

(She beamed.)

MISTY: Guys, I think we have ourselves a plan.

TAVARES: What? Seriously? You're actually considering this idea?

MISTY: Yes.

(She smirked then glanced away.)

MISTY: It's far better than your plan to defeat them with sausages.

TAVARES: I never said...

(He then groaned with annoyance, defeated by the giggling around him.)

TAVARES: Fuck sake.

MISTY: Anyway, guys, listen up. This is how it's gonna go.

(All eyes swiftly turned to Misty.)

MISTY: Kevin, go and liaise with the girls again. Tell them to get as much dirt on the guy who chooses companies to handle police contracts. And the editors of pro-government newspapers.

KEVIN: Right.

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: And who *is* the guy who chooses police contractors?

(Misty glanced at him coldly.)

MISTY: What? Seriously?

KEVIN: Yeah...

MISTY: You put all that thought into your plan but didn't think to look up who the relevant decision-maker was?

KEVIN: I was busy, Misty.  
MISTY: Doing what?  
KEVIN: Coming up with the plan.  
MISTY: Right.  
(She rolled her eyes.)  
MISTY: You can find that out first then.  
COVERT: No need. It's Sir Charles Fidget MP.  
(All eyes swiftly diverted to Covert.)  
COVERT: What? Aren't I *allowed* to know things?  
XIA: You're *allowed*, yes.  
TAVARES: You usually just don't.  
COVERT: Well this time I do.  
MISTY: Fair enough.  
(She then looked to Kevin.)  
MISTY: Double check that obviously. If you go blackmailing the wrong dude, the whole plan will be ruined.  
KEVIN: Consider it done.  
MISTY: I already do.  
(She then glanced to Covert.)  
MISTY: With your recent record, we're not just going to take your word for it.  
COVERT: Understood.  
(He then sunk in his seat.)  
MISTY: Anyway, like I said, Kevin, you get the ball rolling with the girls in IT.  
KEVIN: Will do.  
MISTY: Covert?  
COVERT: Yeah?  
MISTY: Sit up straight when I'm talking to you, dickhead.  
(Covert instantly did as he was told.)  
COVERT: Sorry.  
MISTY: I don't care. Find out where Charles Fidget lives. Even if the hackers in IT can't find anything on him, there has to be something in his personal safe we can use. Break in, find it then steal it.  
COVERT: Will do.  
MISTY: Good. Do it well, because it's your last chance. If you fuck this up, you'll be going out of that fucking window.  
(Covert gulped.)  
COVERT: I won't let you down.  
MISTY: You mean you won't let me down and live.  
COVERT: Right...  
(Misty then glanced to Tavares and Xia.)  
MISTY: You two are gonna come with me.  
XIA: Oh? Where are we heading?  
MISTY: We're going to engage in Tavares's second favourite activity, behind eating sausages, apparently. Violence.  
TAVARES: I'm not gonna hear the last of that am I?  
XIA: Nope.  
KEVIN: Just make sure you wear something red when you go.  
(At once, several pairs of angry eyes came his way.)  
MISTY: Red???  
XIA: That's The Savage's colour!

KEVIN: I know. But if you wear red and attack the police...  
(Cottoning on, Misty gasped.)  
MISTY: Fuck me, that's brilliant! Kevin, you're a genius!  
KEVIN: Well... yeah.  
XIA: Wait. *Why* is he brilliant?  
(She smirked.)  
MISTY: We're about to start a riot. Nay, a war. The police are gonna fight back hard. And if the rioters are all wearing red...  
(Xia mused for a moment then her face lit up.)  
XIA: The police will think it's The Savages and attack them back.  
TAVARES: Making The Savages come out and attack the police in return.  
MISTY: Exactly. Those two will go at it hammer and tongs doing half the job for us. In the meantime, Westport will remain safe while *we're* out there stirring the pot with as much violence as we can muster.  
TAVARES: Sounds like all my dreams coming true at once.  
MISTY: Oh, it will be. We'll just get out there and fuck shit up. Non-stop. We'll keep at it until half their territories are on fire and the national guard have to come in; just as Kevin planned.  
(She beamed.)  
MISTY: Kevin, I could fucking kiss you.  
KEVIN: Well that's disappointing; I got a shag the other day for *far* less.  
(Misty looked to him blankly for a moment then started to chuckle.)  
MISTY: You and a dozen others.  
(She then nodded sternly.)  
MISTY: Okay. Let's do this. Get down to the computer rooms, Kev. Xia, Tav, come with me. We'll get changed and wired for sound then head out. Covert?  
COVERT: Yes?  
MISTY: Wait for Kevin to give you that MP's address then figure out a way in an out of his house. And remember...  
COVERT: It's my last chance; I know. I won't let you down, Misty.  
MISTY: Yeah... we'll see.  
(She then upped and marched towards the door.)  
MISTY: Go!  
(At once, Xia and Tavares raced after her. For his part, Kevin climbed to his feet then nodded to Covert.)  
KEVIN: I'll let you know as soon I've got the address.  
COVERT: Good, good.  
(Kevin then headed out of the room and joined the others in waiting for the lift. Left alone, Covert sighed then sat back.)  
COVERT: The wait is on.  
(He puffed out anxiously.)  
COVERT: Do I dare watch some porn in the meantime?  
(He then sucked his teeth.)  
COVERT: Actually, that'd be a terrible idea.  
(He then picked up his magazine instead.)

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*Two Hours later...*



Having donned red T-shirts, Tavares, Xia and Misty had driven across the city with Tavares at the wheel. Misty had remained silent all the while. Tavares and Xia had initially thought she was focussing on the mission ahead. As they soon found out, however, she'd be rethinking the plan over and over in her head, looking for flaws in it. Kevin had proposed the idea and within fifteen minutes they'd headed out of the door to put it into action. She was worried they hadn't thought things through. In the end, however, she came to one simple conclusion. A full scale attack on the police was long overdue. They were, after all, the root of the problem. Had the police done their jobs and stopped The Savages, Fauxbury wouldn't be in this mess. In that moment, she'd become resolved. Even if the Wyvern's didn't get chosen to take over the policing, at the very least, successfully instigating a riot would get rid of the current crop. It had to be done.

Having made this realisation, Misty enlightened Tavares and Xia to her thinking then sat back and smirked. They could see from the look in her eyes that she was now looking forward to getting the violence started. And nobody knew how to instigate violence quite like she did. Having called two hundred other Wyvern's into action with orders to don red t-shirts and head into the city, she'd then set about coordinating a beginning to the fireworks. And what a beginning. Nothing says *shots fired* quite like a rocket propelled grenade. And at six minutes past eleven that morning, four different police stations felt the full force of one. Naturally, the police came out firing. They were then blown to smithereens by a second grenade. By now, of course, they'd called for back-up and reported that their attackers were all dressed in red shirts.

As a result of this initial attack, within ten minutes, known Savage hangouts and buildings came under fire from the police. As far as the police knew, The Savages had declared war on them. They would not be taking it lying down. Now, at last, all the centres of crime that the police knew of, but had done nothing about, were being destroyed. They'd largely left The Savages alone as part of an uneasy truce in which both groups ignored one another to focus on their own crimes and skulduggery. That truce was now at an end.

Out there on Waverley Street, Tavares was in his element. Along with a group of Savages who mistakenly thought he was among their number, he set about battering a group of stranded police officers with a baseball bat. It was like all his Christmases had come at once. Avoiding the temptation to turn his bat on The Savages as well, he was clubbing police officers with gay abandon; laughing maniacally as he did so.

Further down the street at this time, Misty was playing the role of an innocent civilian, caught up in the chaos. Having removed her red t-shirt, she was screaming and cowering in a doorway, all the while co-ordinating operations through a mouthpiece. Naturally, when nobody was looking, she'd also use her lightning quick skills to murder amorous Savages. With no top on, she looked like an easy treat for a Savage with rape in mind. They didn't get very far.

As the tenth lusty Savage dropped dead by her feet that afternoon, Misty rolled her eyes then spoke into her mouthpiece, all the while, pretending to be shying away from the fight.

MISTY: How's it looking from up there, Xia?

(A reply came through her earpiece.)

XIA: Not good, actually, boss. There's at least twenty police cars incoming, two armoured personal carriers and what looks like a tank.

MISTY: The army are here already?

XIA: No. Police special operations, I think.

MISTY: Okay. Bear with me.

(She then flicked a switch on her headset, which for all intents and purposes, looked like nothing but a cute headband.)

MISTY: Control, this is Phoenix. Artillery incoming; clear all Wyverns from Waverley Street.

CONTROL: Roger, Phoenix.

(Misty then flicked the switch on her headband again.)

MISTY: I'm clearing out, babes. Let the actual Savages take the hit on this one.

XIA: Roger that.

MISTY: Feel free to thin the pig herd before you move out though. If you're in a position to do so.

XIA: I'm in the *perfect* position to do so.

MISTY: That's my girl. Out.

(She then charged off up the road, away from the incoming police officers.

Remaining at her post atop an office block overlooking the street, Xia watched her race away then smirked. A good number were heading away from the area, all of them Wyverns. Only Savages would remain when the heavily armed officers arrived. Chuckling to herself as she continued to watch through the sights of her rifle, she couldn't have been more delighted by what she was seeing.)

XIA: Now the carnage can really begin.

(She then glanced down her sight and focussed on the incoming police vehicles.)

XIA: Seems a shame to help out The Savages, but what can I say? Every dead pig is a bonus.

(She then opened fire; blasting the driver of one of the police cars right between the eyes. At once, his car came to a crashing halt and the armoured personnel carrier behind drove straight over it, before the passenger could even get out.)

XIA: Holy crap. Two for the price of one.

(She then blasted another round into the windscreen of the personnel carrier, before cursing herself out.)

XIA: Daft bitch; that was never gonna work.

(Refocusing, she then set her sights on the police cars again. In quick succession, and with extreme accuracy, she fired off four shots in a row, taking out four drivers.

Delighted with herself, she lowered her rifle then nodded.)

XIA: It's a start. A very good start.

(Having taken a breath she then raised the rifle to her face again.)

XIA: Okay, boys, who's next for some Xia love? You'll do.

(Another driver then breathed his last.)

XIA: Next?

(With that, she turned slightly, staring into the sight intently for her next target. As she did so, however, she spotted a police officer yelling at the tank and pointing up in her direction.)

XIA: Right. That can't be good.

(Sure enough, within seconds the barrel of the tank started to rise in her direction.)

XIA: Uh-oh.

(She snarled.)

XIA: Nobody likes a tattler, pal.

(She then took aim and blew the police officer's head off.)

XIA: Sorry, mate; that's what happens. Snitches get stitches; or killed in your case. (Having allowed herself a chuckle, she then refocused her sight on the barrel of the tank.)

XIA: Nah. That's ridiculous. It can't reach up here, can it? I'm twelve storeys up. A rocket would reach; not a tank shell, surely.

(She nodded.)

XIA: I'm fine.

(She then took aim at another police officer, when much to her alarm, the tank fired off its round. Spying it zooming straight towards her, she screamed then dived for cover. Moments later, the rooftop wall she'd been resting against was blown to smithereens and bricks and mortar flew everywhere. Having luckily avoided being hit by the debris, she sat up and cringed.)

XIA: Nope. Time I wasn't here.

(With that, she charged away to the far side of the roof, removing the sight from her rifle as she did so. Upon arriving, she then placed it to her eyes and glanced down at the rooftop two blocks away.)

XIA: *Looks* okay.

(She then spoke into her sleeve.)

XIA: Control, this is X. Is the backdoor open?

CONTROL: Stand by, X.

XIA: Right...

(She puffed out.)

XIA: Be quick about it.

CONTROL: Confirmed; the door *is* open. Remember to lock it behind you, over.

XIA: Confirmed. Out.

(She then proceeded to sling all her equipment into her holdall. Having done so, she then yanked out a short, thick rope from inside it.)

XIA: Here we go then.

(With that, she stepped up to a thick metal cable which passed over the top of the lower building opposite and down to the *even lower* building beyond it. Without even pausing to brace herself, she then slung her rope over the cable and proceeded to slide down it.)

XIA: Wee!!!

(Enjoying herself immensely, she chuckled to herself for a moment before suddenly adopting a serious expression.)

XIA: Grow up, woman. You need to concentrate.

(Sliding at quite a pace, she very quickly cleared the road and started to slide over the top of the middle building. Once she was halfway across, she then let go of the rope with her left hand. At once, she plummeted downwards and crashed down onto a large, thick mat below.)

XIA: Perfect!

(She then proceeded to throw her small rope back into her bag again. As she did so, Brian raced up to her and nodded.)

BRIAN: Nice landing; perfect aim.

XIA: I'm a marksman, Brian.

BRIAN: With a gun; not your body.

XIA: Aim is aim. Now give me a hand with this mat.

BRIAN: Roger.

(They then grabbed an end each and carted the matt away towards a small storage shed.)

BRIAN: Fuck me, this thing's heavy.

XIA: No heavier than when you got it out.

BRIAN: Yeah, but there were four us then.

XIA: Right...

(Struggling onwards to the shed, Brian sucked his teeth then looked to her nervously.)

BRIAN: Can I ask you something, Xia?

XIA: No.

BRIAN: Oh.

XIA: I'm kidding, Brian. What do you want to know?

BRIAN: Right...

(He grimaced.)

BRIAN: I just wondered... what's the end game here? I mean, don't get me wrong; causing a riot is great fun; I'm having a blast. I'm just not sure why we're doing it.

XIA: If I told you it was just for shits and giggles...

BRIAN: I'd know you were lying. Misty doesn't do things just for the fuck of it.

XIA: Well, you're not wrong.

BRIAN: So...

XIA: It's all about getting Charles Fidget's attention.

BRIAN: The MP?

XIA: Yeah?

BRIAN: What for?

XIA: He decides who gets police contracts.

BRIAN: Right. Say no more. Misty wants this lot gone, so you've started a riot to show they've lost control; giving Fidget no choice but to relieve them of their tenure.

XIA: Pretty much. There's more to it than that, but yeah, that's the general gist.

(Brian nodded thoughtfully.)

BRIAN: I get it. Misty wants the police contract for herself, doesn't she?

XIA: No, Brian. She wants it for *us*. The Wyverns.

BRIAN: Yeah. That's what I meant.

(He nodded approvingly.)

BRIAN: Crikey. That's ambitious, but it's fucking brilliant. Kevin's idea?

XIA: Well it wasn't fucking Tav's, was it?

BRIAN: Right.

(They then shared an amused chuckle which continued all the way to the door of the storage shed.)

BRIAN: Good old Tav.

XIA: Right? Great guy but as dumb as they come.

(She nodded.)

XIA: Okay, let's get this stashed then get on with our jobs.

(A minute or so later, having deposited the matt inside the shed, Brian locked the door then the two of them raced away. The rope slide was left behind, specifically for the police to find. It was a tried and trusted Wyvern tactic. Upon investigating, the police would find the rope slide and believe she'd escaped to the lower building. They'd then use closed circuit television cameras to see who came rushing out of that building shortly afterwards. By exiting the middle building instead, she'd never be spotted on camera. There'd be no coverage of her at all, in fact. The police had access to all the CCTV feeds in Faxbury, but the Wyvern hackers knew exactly how

to turn the right ones off at the right time. By using this tactic, she was free and clear; never to be suspected.

Having exited the middle building, Xia and Brian parted ways. Xia headed for the main square where a gun fight was taking place, and Brian headed away to help some of the other Wyverns blow up the police's favourite restaurant. By now, the police and The Savages were embroiled in an all out war. In amongst them all, the Wyverns were constantly stirring the pot. By blowing up police haunts and destroying Savage hangouts, they were making the war look twice as severe as it already was. This, in turn, was making the two sides fight even harder. Right now, Faxbury was in total chaos.

When news crews arrived to begin their coverage of the carnage, just over an hour after it had started, they could barely believe what they were seeing. Police stations devastated by explosions, office buildings on fire, cars destroyed and shops ransacked to the point where their shelves were literally empty. Naturally, within minutes it was on every news channel and within the hour, it was going live on every channel in the country. Civil war had broken out.

Down there among the chaos, the shirtless Misty was having the time of her life. Acting like an innocent, defenceless diva was great fun. Savages were entirely predictable. It was the same every time. She'd act frightened, they'd approach her, promising her safe passage away from the danger then attempt to rape her as soon as they'd taken her somewhere quiet. Dozens of amorous Savages had tried their luck in this way and every single one had met a gruesome end. Going back for more, she could barely contain her joy. As she did so, however, Tavares raced up to her and furrowed his brow.)

TAVARES: Hold your horses, Misty; there's a tank heading this way. We need to move on.

MISTY: Fuck. I was enjoying that.

TAVARES: So was I, pounding on policemen's faces is great fun, but what are you gonna do? Tank, Misty.

MISTY: Right. National guard?

TAVARES: Police still.

MISTY: Fuck.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: I'm sure they'll come. Come on, let's head to Bartlett Road. According to control there's a massive fist fight. Savages against civilians.

TAVARES: Civilians?

MISTY: Yeah. Why? Are you surprised? The Savages have terrorised people for decades; they probably think this is a purge and want to be part of it.

TAVARES: Makes sense.

(He beamed.)

TAVARES: Let's go and help them out then.

MISTY: As I just bloody *said* we're going to.

TAVARES: Right...

MISTY: Come on.

(The two of them then raced away.)

MISTY: Careful when we get there. Don't go all out and crazy. Just hit Savages, not ordinary people.

TAVARES: I *can* control myself, Misty.

MISTY: Right. And remove that hideous t-shirt or the civilians will attack you by mistake.

TAVARES: Good point.

(He then ripped off his red t-shirt and threw it on the ground.)

TAVARES: There you go. I'm now an ordinary bloke.

MISTY: An ordinary bloke who can't afford a top.

TAVARES: You can talk.

MISTY: Touché. Now get a move on.

(Over the next few hours the carnage in Faxbury continued to worsen. The police and The Savages were going *all out* to destroy one another. And still they had no idea they were being manipulated. Using bombs, gun, knives, bats and everything else at their disposal, the Wyverns continued to sabotage them both then delight in the fact that they continued to blame each other. Unsurprisingly, Misty was overjoyed. She'd been looking to start a war, but it had gone way better than she'd ever imagined possible. Even ordinary citizens had joined it. She could never have dared dream of such an outcome. It was starting to look very much like a revolution. The city was in chaos and anarchy reigned. There was absolutely no way the police alone would be able to restore order now. The national guard would *have* to be called in.)

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All alone in the general's lounge, a couple of hours after sunset, Kevin was standing by the rear window, staring down into the city in astonishment. At his side, a TV was on, thrashing out non-stop coverage of the civil disorder unfolding in Faxbury. Now and again, he'd glance at the screen then stare out of the window again. He had a far better view of the chaos than the news crews would ever be able to cobble together. They could only show snippets of whatever coverage they'd managed to muster, whilst he had the perfect overview of the entire scene. On the other side of the river, smoke was billowing out from dozens of buildings and some had even been reduced to rubble. And still the disorder continued. The noise was horrendous and the television would never be able to do it justice. Gunfire, explosions, smashing sounds, the screams of those involved; from his lofty perch he could hear every act of violence that was unfolding. Barely able to believe what he was witnessing, he could only puff out in awe.

KEVIN: Fucking hell, Misty. You really don't fuck about, do you?

(He then got the shock of his life when Misty strode up behind him.)

MISTY: Nope. Why? Should I?

(Having almost had a heart attack, Kevin clutched his chest then gasped for breath.)

KEVIN: Fuck sake, you scared the shit out of me then.

MISTY: I know, right?

(She chuckled.)

MISTY: You almost hit the ceiling.

KEVIN: Hardly.

(He shook his head.)

KEVIN: What are you creeping about for anyway?

MISTY: I wasn't *creeping about*, this is a thick carpet and I have bare feet.

KEVIN: Right.

(He beamed.)

KEVIN: And no top on. Does this mean...

MISTY: Down, Fido. I've been walking about in just my bra all day; it's not for you.

KEVIN: Shit.

MISTY: At least not yet, anyway.

KEVIN: Good to know.

(They shared an amused smirk then Misty stepped up to the window.)

MISTY: If I didn't know better, I'd remark on what a spectacular sunset that is.

KEVIN: Beautiful, isn't it? You should set fire to the city more often.

MISTY: Right? That orange glow in the sky has such a calming effect.

KEVIN: Unless you're a Savage, in which case it means your house is probably on fire.

MISTY: Which *also* brings joy to my heart.

(She then glanced down at the Westport area below and started to chuckle.)

MISTY: Look at that. Westport is as peaceful as fuck still.

KEVIN: Yeah, some of Xia's team were sniping at any cunt in a red t-shirt who even *looked* like heading this way.

MISTY: Good, good.

KEVIN: They let ordinary, terrified citizens through though. Apparently the leisure centre and a few churches have opened up to give them refuge for the night.

MISTY: I know; I asked them to.

KEVIN: Oh.

(He then started to laugh.)

KEVIN: You've got a handle on literally everything, haven't you?

MISTY: Like *you* said, Kev. I don't fuck about.

(She then turned to face him.)

MISTY: Anyway, what's the latest *here*? What's happening in regard to that info?

KEVIN: There's nothing concrete yet. The hackers have managed to find some hidden files and documents, but they're still decrypting them.

MISTY: Okay.

KEVIN: Also, Covert's crew are outside Charles Fidget's house as we speak.

According to the news, the government are going to hold an emergency cabinet meeting, so as soon as he heads out, they're gonna break in and see what they can find.

MISTY: Perfect.

KEVIN: Thank you. So are you.

MISTY: I know.

KEVIN: Right.

(Kevin then looked at the chaos out of the window then across at Misty's face, illuminated by the orange glow.)

KEVIN: You're aching to get back out there again, aren't you? I can see it in your eyes.

MISTY: No. Well... yes. But I'm not going just yet. I'm gonna get a few hour's rest *then* head back out again. We decided we'd take it turns to get some kip and Xia insisted that I go first.

KEVIN: Makes sense.

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: Not to me it didn't. I said no at first, then the national guard turned up. At that point, I thought *fuck it*. Why not? Getting *them* here was the whole point in starting this shit and we've done it. I might as well take a break, right?

KEVIN: Yeah. This is gonna last a while, Misty; everyone's gonna need their rest.

MISTY: Exactly.

(Kevin then exhaled.)

KEVIN: National guard, huh?

MISTY: Yup.

(Kevin clenched his fist triumphantly.)

KEVIN: Yes!!! Perfect.

MISTY: It's all going to plan, Kev. Now we just need that blackmail information.

KEVIN: It'll come, babe; I'm sure of it.

(He then winced at himself.)

KEVIN: I called you babe again.

MISTY: I'll allow it this time. Seeing as we're about to fuck.

KEVIN: We are?

MISTY: Absolutely. Getting a seeing-to helps me sleep.

KEVIN: Then I'm happy to be of service.

MISTY: Good. Not that I care what *you* think. I want your cock, not your opinion.

(Kevin grimaced.)

KEVIN: Right... you know... that was actually a very rapey thing to say.

MISTY: Not at all. You *can* say no if you like.

KEVIN: Are you insane? What sort of cunt would turn down a shag from you???

MISTY: There you go then. Quit whining, bitch.

KEVIN: Ouch.

(They shared a chuckle then Misty placed her arms around his neck seductively.)

MISTY: Relax this time.

KEVIN: Of course.

MISTY: No, I mean it. Relax and enjoy the moment.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: Melanie told me you were a pretty good fuck once you stopped stressing about your performance. So relax for me.

(Kevin was horrified.)

KEVIN: She said what?

MISTY: She complimented you. On the *second* attempt, anyway.

KEVIN: But... she said... she told me she never speaks to you.

MISTY: She lied. Mel's one of my best mates.

KEVIN: She...

(He then shook his head and allowed himself a stifled laugh.)

KEVIN: She told you everything, didn't she?

MISTY: She told me a *few* things, yes.

KEVIN: Shit.

MISTY: Hey, don't be embarrassed. She complimented you, so just relax, okay?

(Kevin grimaced.)

KEVIN: I'd like to, Misty, but right now, I feel like finding Melanie and giving her a slap. She got me to open up just so she could tell *you* what I said.

(He then gasped as a realisation hit him.)

KEVIN: You were behind *that* an' all, weren't you?

MISTY: Like you said, I have a handle on *everything*.

KEVIN: So I'm finding out.

MISTY: Look, just chill out. It was just trying to get to know you better. To understand my general.

KEVIN: Right...

(Misty then blushed.)

MISTY: To learn more about the guy I've fantasised about since I first started sitting opposite him.



KEVIN: I see.

(He flinched.)

KEVIN: Wait. What?

MISTY: What? Did you think your love was one-sided?

(Kevin started at her agog for a moment then whimpered out one word.)

KEVIN: Yes.

MISTY: Well, it wasn't. It wasn't one-sided *at all*!

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: It was misguided and poorly-timed on *both* our parts. There's too much to do to worry about falling in love, but I did it anyway.

KEVIN: Right...

(He then grinned with absolute delight. Misty's words had been music to his ears.)

KEVIN: This is a really good day.

MISTY: For the Wyverns, yes. For our love, no. We've got other things to focus on, Kev. A relationship wouldn't work right now. Not until we've ended this thing.

(She snarled.)

MISTY: And not just this war with the police and The Savages.

KEVIN: Oh?

(Misty looked to him emptily for a moment then sighed.)

MISTY: Like everyone else, I signed up for this because of a personal grievance, Kev.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: Your family, right?

(Misty returned his nod then glanced away.)

MISTY: I won't be able to rest... to even *begin* living a normal life... not until I've rid myself of this pain. And that won't go away until I've destroyed the people who ordered my family's deaths. The fact that's never been resolved is *always* going to eat away at me. So until then, a relationship is out of the question. I'll keep jumping on anyone with a penis and you can continue shagging your way through our female contingent.

(She shook her head firmly.)

MISTY: We *can't* be together. Not yet! We can doink now and again, but that's it. I can't be with you or anyone else until I've avenged my family's death.

KEVIN: I hear you, Misty.

(He nodded sternly.)

KEVIN: And no matter what it takes, or how long, *I'll* help you do it.

MISTY: Kevin...

KEVIN: No. No arguments. You basically said you'll never be free until you've taken them down. Well *your* freedom is *my* happiness, so we're in this together.

Whatever it takes. We'll find them and end them accordingly.

(Misty couldn't help but smile.)

MISTY: You're a great guy, you know that? And you'll make a great boyfriend.

KEVIN: But not yet, right?

MISTY: Not yet.

KEVIN: Understood. Until that day, I'll do as you ask and shag everything in sight.

MISTY: If you wouldn't mind.

KEVIN: Of course not. It'll be hell, but if me getting loads of sex with loads of different women is what you need me to do, I'll close my eyes, think of England and hump them 'til their clunges dissolve.

MISTY: It's appreciated.

KEVIN: But once this over and we've taken them fuckers down...

MISTY: I'll claim you for my own and if any other bitch even *looks* at you funny, I'll poke her eyes out.

KEVIN: Right...

(Misty shrugged.)

MISTY: So yeah. That's how it is. Now you know.

KEVIN: I certainly believe I do, yes.

(Misty nodded.)

MISTY: Awesome. Now we can fuck.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: No pressure, okay? Just lay me down and do me with a smile on your face. Let the moment happen naturally, okay? You don't need to worry about *impressing* me because you already *know* how I feel.

(Kevin bit his lip.)

KEVIN: That's... yeah... that works, actually. I feel really good about that.

MISTY: Yeah? How good?

KEVIN: Well... fuck it. I'll *show* you.

(With that, he pulled her close and their lips met. This time, however, Kevin felt no pressure to perform whatsoever. Having been assured that his feelings for her were mutual, he no longer felt the need to make love to her like a modern day Adonis and pray his performance would garner her affection. He already had it. All he needed to do now was share his true self with her and he set about doing so in some considerable style.)

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A good fifty or so miles away, at this time, Covert and his team were crouched in a bush outside Charles Fidget MP's house. Hidden from view, they watched on silently as the MP bid farewell to his wife then jumped into a waiting government vehicle and sped away. Delighted that he was finally out of the house, Covert nodded then looked to Melanie.

COVERT: Okay, here's the plan. We'll gain access via a window then you can subdue his wife.

MELANIE: With violence or...

COVERT: Didn't you bring Chloroform?

(Melanie shrugged.)

MELANIE: Yeah, but I'd prefer to use violence to be honest.

COVERT: Against an innocent party?

MELANIE: She's an MP's wife. *She* spends half the money he embezzles.

(She nodded sternly.)

MELANIE: So if you ask me, she could *use* a good slap.

COVERT: Right...

(He looked coldly into her eyes.)

COVERT: Just use the bloody chloroform.

MELANIE: Aw...

(She gave a dejected sigh.)

MELANIE: Fine.

COVERT: Good. Now...

(He was then distracted by the sight of the MP's wife strutting from her house and slamming the door behind her. Moments later, she clambered into a sports car then

sped off down the driveway. Having watched her go, Covert nodded to himself then looked to Melanie.)

COVERT: Change of plan.

MELANIE: Yeah, I figured as much.

COVERT: Seeing as nobody's home, let's just bust in there and get this shit done. Come on.

(Just as he started to head away, however, a woman's voice rose up from behind him.)

HELEN: Hold your horses, Graham.

COVERT: What? Why?

HELEN: She put the alarm on before she left, obviously. I need to disable it.

(Covert grimaced.)

COVERT: Right. Good point. We'll wait then. We don't want the government's security forces on our arse. That'd be a nightmare. Nice catch, Helena.

HELEN: It's Helen!

(She shook her head.)

HELEN: And it *wasn't* a nice catch? I was just stating the bleeding obvious.

COVERT: Well...

(Melanie could only shake her head at him.)

MELANIE: Seriously, Graham? It's like you *want* Misty to throw you off the roof.

COVERT: Melanie...

MELANIE: One more fuck up, you said. One more fuck up and she'll throw you off the building.

COVERT: No, I didn't!

MELANIE: Yes, you...

COVERT: I said she'd throw me out of the top floor window.

MELANIE: Oh. Right. I apologise. Just a *hundred* foot drop rather than a hundred and six. Result.

(She rolled her eyes.)

COVERT: I...

(He furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: Stop giving me grief, woman! You're worse than that fucking Kevin.

HELEN: Ooh, speaking of Kevin. How was he, Mel? You two doinked last night, right?

MELANIE: Of course. I didn't have much choice. Misty gave me a direct order to give him a happy then get him talking.

HELEN: And how was...

COVERT: Never mind that!

(He rolled his eyes.)

COVERT: Get on with disabling the alarm. You can discuss boys and brush each other's hair later.

MELANIE: Fine. Don't think we won't.

COVERT: What?

MELANIE: Brush each other's hair. Helen's a demon with a hairbrush.

COVERT: You...

(Just then Helen spoke up, pointing to the house as she did so.)

HELEN: Done. The alarm's off and the sensors are down.

COVERT: Sweet. That just leaves smashing the door down and finding what we came for.

MELANIE: Or we could just climb through that open upstairs window.

(Covert glanced at the house then back at Melanie.)

COVERT: Melanie?

MELANIE: Yes?

COVERT: No-one likes a smart arse.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: Let's go, Mel. You guys wait here.

(With that, he charged off towards the house with Melanie in tow. Left behind, Helen just rolled her eyes.)

HELEN: Obviously. Where else would we go?

(Her team make could only nod in full agreement.)

JAMES: Right? He's such a numpty.

(They shared a disdainful shake of the head then glanced towards the house. Having scaled a nearby trellis, Covert and Melanie were now approaching the open window, via a thin ledge. Moments later, they reached the window then vanished inside.

Having emerged inside a darkened bedroom, Covert glanced about himself then furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: Melanie?

MELANIE: Yes?

COVERT: It's bloody dark in here. I can't see a thing.

MELANIE: Take your fucking sunglasses off then.

COVERT: I have!

MELANIE: Oh. Sorry.

(She then switched on a small torch.)

MELANIE: Better?

COVERT: Much.

(He bit his lip.)

COVERT: I forgot to bring mine.

MELANIE: Wow. You do, don't you? You *want* Misty to kill you!

COVERT: Oh, shut up.

(He shook his head.)

COVERT: Let's just find his study, shall we?

MELANIE: Agreed.

(Then they proceeded to creep towards the door.)

COVERT: But if you must know, I don't *want* Misty to kill me, no. I'm just a bit flustered because her threat to do me in was genuine this time. It's really thrown me! One more fuck up...

MELANIE: Then stop fucking up.

COVERT: I want to, Mel, but her words scared the shit out of me and now I'm having trouble focussing.

MELANIE: Then take a deep breath for a moment.

COVERT: Right...

(Covert breathed in then out deeply.)

MELANIE: Feel any calmer?

COVERT: A bit.

MELANIE: Good.

(She nodded.)

MELANIE: Now *listen* to me. Misty doesn't punish innocent mistakes. It's the lack of professionalism that gets you in trouble.

COVERT: Well...

MELANIE: No. It is. We talk. Deciding to watch porn during a mission, for example. I mean, what the fuck, Graham?

COVERT: Yeah... in hindsight, that was kinda dumb.

MELANIE: Kinda dumb? It was fuckwittery at its finest!

(She smiled.)

MELANIE: But it's in the past now. You've *had* your punishment. And as long as you focus one hundred percent while you're on a mission, she won't feel the need to punish you again, okay? So just... calm the fuck down and move on.

COVERT: I...

(He then gave a resigned sigh.)

COVERT: You're right. I can't argue with any of that.

MELANIE: Then don't.

COVERT: Right. Thanks, Mel. I feel a lot calmer now.

MELANIE: You're welcome.

COVERT: From now on, you'll see nothing but laser-like focus.

MELANIE: Perfect.

(Covert then nodded towards the door.)

COVERT: Let's go.

(With that, they crept to the door then headed out onto the landing. Without hesitation, Melanie instantly started to head towards the stairs. Covert, on the other hand, glanced around at the myriad of rooms then shook his head.)

COVERT: How many bedrooms do a childless couple need, for fuck sake?

(He then crept after her.)

MELANIE: You make a good point, actually.

COVERT: Don't I always?

MELANIE: I refuse to answer that on the grounds that it might incriminate me.

COVERT: It's fine, Mel. You've just broken into an MP's house; you're already a criminal.

MELANIE: Right...

COVERT: So what's this good point I made?

MELANIE: They don't need this many bedrooms. That's a lot of spare rooms; too many. So he might well use one as his office-cum-study.

COVERT: Yeah?

(He nodded approvingly.)

COVERT: Let's see if that's true, shall we?

(He then headed to the next door and pushed it open.)

MELANIE: Anything?

COVERT: A kinky sex dungeon.

MELANIE: Yeah... let's not go in there.

COVERT: I couldn't agree more.

(They then headed along to the next room, which Melanie duly opened the door to.)

COVERT: Well?

MELANIE: Desk. Filing cabinets. Large safe. I think we've hit the jackpot.

COVERT: Certainly looks that way.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: Nice call, Mel. I'd have fucked off downstairs without giving it a second thought.

MELANIE: Well, that is where you'd *usually* find a study.

COVERT: I know. I didn't say doing so would have made a complete and utter bell end. I was just saying; good call.

MELANIE: Thank you.

COVERT: Now let's set to work.

(He then edged past her and strode into the room first.)

COVERT: I'll crack open the safe; you see what documents you can find.

MELANIE: Roger.

COVERT: I'd love to, but let's wait 'til after the mission.

MELANIE: What?

(Covert instantly shrunk on the spot.)

COVERT: It sounded funny in my head.

MELANIE: Right... it wasn't.

(Covert furrowed his brow.)

COVERT: Just get on with your job, smooth butt.

MELANIE: Smooth butt?

COVERT: You heard me. You do *your* job...

(He flexed his fingers then ruffled his neck.)

COVERT: And I'll do mine.

(With that, he paced up to the safe then nodded sternly.)

COVERT: I'll have this open in a jiffy; you watch.

MELANIE: No, thanks. I'll be over here, doing my job.

COVERT: I didn't mean literally *watch*!

MELANIE: Right...

(With that, she sat down at the MP's desk then proceeded to rifle through it. Having spent a minute or so going through the drawers, scanning letter heads and checking various folders, she then stood up and sifted through his inbox instead.)

MELANIE: Nothing so far. How are *you* getting on?

(Covert glanced over his shoulder at her.)

COVERT: I've figured out the first number. It's 12.

MELANIE: Sweet.

(A short while later, having gone through the MP's inbox, Melanie sighed with frustration then headed for the filing cabinet. Delighted to find it unlocked, she beamed with joy then glanced over her shoulder at Covert.)

MELANIE: He doesn't lock anything, this fella. His office door, his desk drawers, his filing cabinet...

COVERT: I can't even *act* surprised. This is a couple who fuck off out and don't even close their windows first.

MELANIE: Right? It's almost like they *want* to be burgled.

(Covert glanced over his shoulder at her.)

COVERT: It's not that, Mel.

(He then resumed work.)

COVERT: They don't *want* to be burgled, they simply believe nobody would have the audacity to do it.

MELANIE: Do you think so?

COVERT: I do. People in a position of power develop a ridiculously inflated sense of self-importance. That sense of self-importance genuinely makes them believe nobody would dare to cross them.

MELANIE: Hmm... I guess.

COVERT: It's true. Just like all the great and powerful emperors of days gone by. They all believed nobody would dare to defy them then died at the hands of people who did exactly that.

MELANIE: Makes sense.

COVERT: Thank you.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: I looked into this guy a little this afternoon, you know? By all accounts he's a horrible cunt. As arrogant and self-important as they come. So, yeah, the fact he thinks nobody would dare cross him isn't news to me.

MELANIE: Fair enough.

COVERT: And that arrogance of his is good news for us. I've seen chip shops with better security than this fella.

MELANIE: Right? Helen said that alarm of his is one of the cheapest models on the market. And the *easiest* to disable from outside.

COVERT: Yeah, Helena said the same thing.

MELANIE: Graham...

(Covert chuckled.)

COVERT: I'm kidding, I'm kidding.

(He then flinched.)

COVERT: Oh, hello. The second number is 29.

MELANIE: Nice. One more to go?

COVERT: I reckon so, yeah. It's *usually* three numbers anyway.

MELANIE: Oh, well. Keep going and...

(She then gasped before yanking a file from the cabinet.)

COVERT: Keep going and what?

MELANIE: Huh?

(She wafted her hand towards him.)

MELANIE: Never mind that.

(She perused the file with her eyes for a moment then bounced excitedly.)

MELANIE: Graham?

COVERT: Yeah?

MELANIE: I've found a list of bank account numbers written up next to their official use and their actual use. The two don't match!

COVERT: Come again.

MELANIE: Like this one. Five million pounds; official use: police academy refurbishments. Actual use: Raymond Wilson, Cayman Islands.

COVERT: Raymond who?

MELANIE: Commissioner Raymond Wilson; the chief of police. Clearly he has a dodgy bank account in the Cayman Islands.

COVERT: Don't they all?

MELANIE: Yeah, but...

(She beamed.)

MELANIE: This is gold, Graham. It's there in black and white; not even coded.

Evidence of corruption. He hasn't even *tried* to hide it.

COVERT: Well, no. Like I said, why would he? He's a high-ranking government official. Governments have control of the police, the media *and* the judiciary, so they think they're in a position to do as they like and nobody will be able to take them down. That makes them sloppy.

MELANIE: Gloriously so.

(She then rifled through several more files before yanking out another seven.)

MELANIE: I've got eight folders *full* of this shit.

COVERT: Yeah?

(He smirked arrogantly then twiddled the knobs on the safe.)

COVERT: And I've got...

(He then proceeded to yank at the safe door with all his might.)  
COVERT: ... the combination wrong.  
(He winced.)  
COVERT: Fuck. I bet there's an extra number.  
(He nodded.)  
COVERT: I'll keep going.  
MELANIE: What for? These files I found are just what the boss needs. There's no point in cracking the safe as well. We've got what we came for.  
COVERT: Yeah?  
(He bit his lip.)  
COVERT: And you're sure, are you?  
MELANIE: Yes!  
(She nodded.)  
MELANIE: Graham, we've got the account numbers, the amounts, what the money was earmarked for and where it *actually* went instead. That kind of corruption can get you thrown in jail forever! He's embezzling state funds and we've got all the proof we'll ever need.  
(Covert upped then paced over to her to take a quick look at the files.)  
COVERT: Show me.  
MELANIE: Right. Look.  
(She then opened a file and pointed to a page.)  
MELANIE: See?  
COVERT: Fuck me. There's loads of them.  
MELANIE: I know!  
COVERT: And it's tax payer's money. These are all things the state have accounted for.  
MELANIE: Again; I know.  
COVERT: Mel?  
MELANIE: Yeah?  
COVERT: That's the fucking mother lode.  
MELANIE: Right?  
(Covert nodded sternly.)  
COVERT: Let's tidy up then fuck off. They'll never even know anyone was here.  
MELANIE: Well, they might figure it out when they realise several incriminating files are missing.  
COVERT: Yeah, but... do we care?  
MELANIE: No. No we don't.  
(With that, they set about hiding any trace of their intrusion before closing all the interiors doors and slipping out the way they came. Having jumped down from the trellis, Melanie then exhaled and patted her bag.)  
MELANIE: When Misty sees these... wow. She'll probably cum.  
COVERT: I think you might be right.  
(They then charged across the forecourt and into the bushes where the rest of their team were waiting.)  
COVERT: We're back.  
JAMES: Evidently.  
COVERT: Any problems while we were gone?  
HELEN: None. Why?  
COVERT: Because a responsible leader is *meant* to ask these things.  
HELEN: I know; that's why I was surprised you did.



COVERT: You...  
(He furrowed his brow.)  
COVERT: Stop giggling you lot.  
(He nodded.)  
COVERT: Let's get our arses out of here. We've got what we came for now.  
MELANIE: Big time!  
HELEN: Wait. I just need to re-enable their alarm.  
COVERT: Good point.  
(As Helen set about her task, James glanced up from his laptop.)  
JAMES: Well that's annoying.  
MELANIE: What is?  
JAMES: You've got everything, have you?  
MELANIE: It was all there waiting for us in his filing cabinet.  
JAMES: I see.  
(He sighed.)  
JAMES: I wasted my time hacking his emails then.  
COVERT: That's never a waste of time.  
JAMES: Oh, it was. I searched them in conjunction with any mention of his safe and I've just found one where he mailed his wife the combination.  
COVERT: Really? 12-29-16 and what?  
(James looked straight through him.)  
JAMES: No. 11-28-15.  
(Silence ensued for a moment then Covert hung his head.)  
COVERT: I weren't even close to getting it open.  
MELANIE: Well... no.  
COVERT: Do me a favour, guys. When we get back, can you put giant inflatable crash mats around all four sides of our building? Misty's going to introduce me to her old friend gravity when we get back.  
(As he stood there silently shaking his head, Melanie scoffed.)  
MELANIE: That's bollocks, Graham. She asked you to lead a successful operation and *this* was a successful operation. She never probes any further than that; you know that? She only wants details when there's been a horrendous screw-up.  
COVERT: Well...  
MELANIE: I'm serious. Mission complete. Mission successful. Extremely so. Like I said, Misty's going to have orgasms when she sees these files. The only thing you're in danger of is Misty jumping on you, demanding sex right away.  
(Covert looked to her blankly then his lips curled upwards.)  
COVERT: Let's hope you're right.  
MELANIE: I am.  
COVERT: Sweet.  
(He nodded.)  
COVERT: Now let's go.  
(An angry voice then rose up from below.)  
HELEN: Still not finished!!!  
COVERT: Right...

---

The following morning, all was quiet in the general's lounge. Having just received a copy of the files that Covert and his team had stolen, Misty was perusing them with a focussed glint in her eyes. In the seated area with her, Kevin, Xia, Tavares and

Covert were all deathly silent. They knew that if Misty liked what she saw, their blackmail plan could move onto the next stage. If she didn't, however, there'd be a fair chance Covert would be exiting the building via the nearest window. As such, Covert was especially tense. Shifting around in the seat opposite Misty, he could barely hide his discomfort.

Having returned from their continued, overnight sabotage mission on the streets of the city, specifically to see whether Covert lived or died, Xia and Tavares had spent the entire time glancing towards Misty's face in a desperate attempt to read her expression. The fact she kept smirking one moment then scowling the next, however, made her thoughts impossible to fathom. Undeterred, however, they continued to try. Kevin, on the other hand, had wisely given up trying, quite some time ago. Satisfying himself that they'd just have to wait until Misty was ready to address them, he was sitting back and staring at the ceiling, hoping she'd reach her verdict sooner rather than later.

Some ten minutes after Misty had started scouring the documents with their eyes, the moment Covert had been dreading finally arrived. Having closed the file then placed it down on the table, she was now ready to deliver her verdict. Slowly, she lifted her head then looked firmly into Covert's eyes. Fearing the worst, Kevin, Xia and Tavares could only suck their teeth on his behalf. Unsurprisingly, Covert was virtually dissolving by now, such was the amount of sweat that was pouring down his forehead.

COVERT: It's hot in here, isn't it? Really hot. It is, isn't it?

(Misty shook her head at him coldly.)

MISTY: And it's about to get even hotter.

COVERT: Oh, boy.

(Much to his astonishment, Misty then bounced in her seat and clapped her hands together like an overexcited teenage girl.)

MISTY: Because these files are fucking perfect!

COVERT: They are?

MISTY: Yes!

COVERT: So I get to live?

MISTY: Live? You, my friend, are gonna fucking *thrive*, never mind live!

(Covert instantly sat back and caught his breath, delighted to have been spared. Tavares on the other hand, could barely hide his disappointment.)

TAVARES: Shit. So close.

XIA: Tav!

TAVARES: What?

KEVIN: Mate, that just wasn't cool.

TAVARES: Nobody cares what you think.

MISTY: Enough of that, guys.

(She then beamed at Covert.)

MISTY: There's enough evidence there to get that MP thrown in jail forever. And I only read the first few pages.

XIA: Really? It's that good?

MISTY: Good? It's phenomenal. He's paid backhanders to so many people on behalf of the government, he'd had to live to be five hundred years old before he got out of prison. As would half the fucking cabinet! And they're all named! Bank accounts an 'all!

(She beamed.)

MISTY: The best part of it is, he's even named some of the newspaper editors we were looking for dirt on.

KEVIN: Blimey. So, it's *all* there, is it? Every bit of blackmail material we'll need to proceed?

MISTY: Several times over.

(She puffed out.)

MISTY: Damn it, Covert. This is quite the comeback for you. I wanted to kill you yesterday.

COVERT: I know.

MISTY: And then you go and pull off a mission like this. Outstanding.

TAVARES: Was it? Or did he get lucky?

MISTY: Does it matter?

TAVARES: Kinda, yeah.

(He shrugged.)

TAVARES: I want to see him take a dive out of the window.

XIA: Aw, he's so blessed to be able to count *you* among his friends.

COVERT: I *don't* count him among my friends.

TAVARES: Ditto.

MISTY: Put a sock in it, will you?

(She rolled her eyes.)

MISTY: You really have redeemed yourself here, Covert.

COVERT: Yeah? Then how about reverting to calling me Graham?

MISTY: Nah. That ship sailed as soon as we realised that calling you Covert was funny.

COVERT: Right...

MISTY: So it was a smooth mission, was it? I mean, the outcome is phenomenal, but the mission itself. Didn't get spotted, did you? There's not likely to be any blowback, is there?

COVERT: Nope. It all went as smoothly as fuck.

(He then sucked his teeth.)

COVERT: I won't lie, Misty, there's no point.

MISTY: Correct.

COVERT: It *did* go smoothly. I mean, as always, my team were bloody brilliant. Helena and James were excellent...

XIA: Her name's Helen, Covert.

COVERT: Whatever. Melanie was great too.

(He sighed.)

COVERT: I told her to search for files while I cracked the safe. She did *her* bit. Melanie's the one who found those files. Could I get into that fucking safe? Could I fuck.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: That's the truth of the matter. Successful mission, but I owe it all to my team.

TAVARES: And what an excellent team it is. The only weak link is their leader. You! Why do they even need you, in fact? You pretty much get in their way. You should just chuck him out of the window, Misty.

(Covert started to laugh.)

COVERT: Mate. You're a cunt.

TAVARES: Why, thank you.

(They shared a mutual grin then Covert looked to Misty again. At once, he flinched then sat back in his seat.)

COVERT: Too honest! I'm in the shit again, aren't I?

(Misty scoffed.)

MISTY: Far from it. You *picked* the team and you *led* the team. So it's *your* success. The fact you couldn't get into the safe is neither here nor there.

(She chuckled.)

MISTY: It's the fact that you *tried* to crack it that matters. You did your job rather than putting your feet up to watch porn and endangering everyone's life in the process. That's all I ask; that you do your job and focus on it.

COVERT: Right. Well, that I *did* do.

MISTY: Then nothing else matters.

(She exhaled.)

MISTY: You're forgiven. Completely off the hook.

XIA: Nice one, Covert.

KEVIN: Great work, mate.

MISTY: Now, I might just be in a good mood because Kevin gave me a world class seeing to last night, but...

(Xia instantly burst out laughing.)

MISTY: No, he actually did.

(Xia's jaw dropped.)

XIA: Really?

MISTY: Straight up. Properly rogered me into a coma he did. It was fucking awesome.

XIA: Blimey. Looks like Covert's not the *only* who transformed from being a useless lump into a legend overnight then.

MISTY: Exactly. I couldn't believe it either.

(Kevin was mortified.)

KEVIN: What? Girls! I'm sitting right here!

XIA: And?

KEVIN: And I'm not appreciating your critique; thank you, very much.

XIA: Yeah, but what are you gonna do? That performance *deserved* a critique. It was like you were performing the role of a lousy lover through interpretive dance.

MISTY: That's exactly what it was like.

KEVIN: Seriously?

MISTY: Until last night.

(She beamed.)

MISTY: My world was well and truly rocked.

XIA: Really? To orgasm?

MISTY: Thrice.

XIA: Ooh.

KEVIN: Yeah, I was great; now can we change the subject?

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: We can. To the next part of the mission.

(She looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: That's a job for you. Think of a way to get that MP on his own.

(Kevin shrugged emptyly.)

KEVIN: That's not exactly hard, is it? We can just do what Covert did last night and go to his house.

MISTY: Right. Well... that was obvious. We'll do that then.

XIA: Actually, it might not be that easy.

(All eyes turned to Xia.)

XIA: There's a crisis going on in his department right now. Our little revolution outside. He's going to be in government meetings and such for quite some time.

MISTY: Yeah, but he'll have to come home sooner or later.

XIA: Sooner or later isn't good enough though.

KEVIN: She's right. We need to strike before the national guard can end the civil disorder and reinstall the police again.

MISTY: And what sort of time frame are we talking about?

KEVIN: I think we need to get it done today.

MISTY: I see.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: Find a way, Kevin. Message the girls in the computer room and tell them to find out where he is, okay?

KEVIN: On it.

(With that, Kevin produced his phone then started to type a message.)

KEVIN: I'll tell them to make that their only focus. They can continue going through the documents once they're done.

MISTY: Thank you.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: As soon as we find out his whereabouts, we'll get going.

TAVARES: And then what? He's bound to have a huge security team. Getting him alone won't be easy.

MISTY: No, but we'll find a way, like we always do.

TAVARES: Understood.

XIA: So now we wait, yeah?

MISTY: Yup. But don't stand your teams down yet. They need to keep the riots going.

XIA: Gotcha.

MISTY: As for me, there's something I need to do.

XIA: Oh?

MISTY: Covert?

COVERT: Yeah?

MISTY: Stand up.

(Covert instantly obliged.)

COVERT: What do you need me to do?

MISTY: Not a lot.

(She then upped, stepped towards him and proceeded to undo his belt.)

MISTY: You just need to close your eyes and enjoy. Like I was trying to say earlier, it might just be because I'm in a good mood, but I feel like rewarding you.

COVERT: Result!

(Within seconds, his trousers fell to his ankles then Misty sunk to her knees. Not about to stand there and watch her fellate him, Xia, Kevin and Tavares all shared a horrified glance.)

XIA: Pool anyone?

KEVIN: God, yes!

TAVARES: Wait for me!

(They then hurried towards the back of the room.)

TAVARES: Dark times. I can't stand seeing that guy happy.

XIA: Right?

(Xia shuddered then proceeded to rack up the balls.)

XIA: You any good at pool, Kev?

KEVIN: I'm alright, why?

XIA: Just wondered. *Last time* we interacted over this table, you were fucking terrible.

(She then chuckled to herself, gleefully aided by Tavares. Watching them, Kevin could only shake his head disdainfully.)

KEVIN: Pair of cunts.

(Just then, his phone started to buzz.)

KEVIN: Just a sec. It's Brian.

(He then placed his phone to his ear and spoke up.)

KEVIN: Alright, Brian?

(Brian's reply came in something of a raised whisper.)

BRIAN: Alright, Kev? It's me; Brian.

KEVIN: I know that, you cock. That's why I said, "Alright, Brian" when I answered the sodding phone.

BRIAN: Oh. Right. Sorry.

KEVIN: Look, what do you want, mate?

BRIAN: Right, yeah. Listen, some copper just chased me halfway across Faxbury; he objected to me shooting his mate in the face, apparently.

KEVIN: Why didn't you shoot *him* in the face as well then?

BRIAN: Ran out of bullets.

KEVIN: Right...

BRIAN: Point is, I ran. I got away though.

(He puffed out.)

BRIAN: I ended up down by the river in Rashgrove. Right next to where the national guard have set up their operation.

KEVIN: Okay...

BRIAN: As soon as they saw me, they moved me on. Well, I weren't gonna argue with them, was I? So I left. And I was heading away... you'll never guess who passed me on the way into Rashgrove Manor next door.

KEVIN: I won't bother trying then.

BRIAN: No, go on. Have a guess.

KEVIN: Just tell me!

BRIAN: Fine.

(He rolled his eyes.)

BRIAN: Becoming a general has changed you, mate.

KEVIN: It's been one day.

(Now it was Kevin's turn to roll his eyes.)

KEVIN: Just tell me who you saw.

BRIAN: Fine. Charles Fidget MP is here. Misty wants his attention, right? Well he's here. I just thought you'd want to know.

KEVIN: I *do* want to know, yes. Down at Rashgrove Manor, you said?

BRIAN: Yeah. Him and his security team. I'm watching them now from a bench in the park. Hence the quiet voice. There's an old couple on the bench next to me, trying to listen in.

KEVIN: Perfect. *Stay* there, mate. Keep watching until told otherwise.

BRIAN: Roger. That I can...

(He then stared at his phone and sneered. Kevin had already hung up.)

BRIAN: Tosser.

(Delighted to have heard Brian's update, Kevin slung his phone down on the side of the pool table then looked to where Misty was gleefully fellating a rather delighted Covert.)

KEVIN: Misty, Brian just called to let me know that Charles...

(His phone then proceeded to vibrate.)

KEVIN: Fuck. Just a sec.

(Having quickly checked his messages, he then nodded sternly.)

KEVIN: And the girls in the computer room have just confirmed it. Charles Fidget's currently at Rashgrove Manor.

(Misty instantly sprung to her feet.)

MISTY: He is?

COVERT: Um...

KEVIN: Yeah. He's probably there to make bullshit speeches about how he and the police have everything perfectly under control.

MISTY: Hmm...

COVERT: Right. Cheers for the update, Kev. Back down you go, Misty.

MISTY: Yeah, right. Come on, guys. We're heading down there right now.

(Covert was crestfallen.)

COVERT: But my blow job...

(Ignoring him, Misty marched towards the door with Xia, Kevin and Tavares hot on her heels.)

MISTY: We'll scope the place out and figure a way to get in there. We must get him alone. This is our chance, guys.

(Left behind, with his trousers still firmly around his ankles, Covert whimpered pathetically.)

COVERT: Misty! You can't leave a man half-satisfied!!! Misty! Hey!

(He then proceeded to chase after her, waddling like a duck, courtesy of his trousers scraping along the floor.)

COVERT: Finish what you started, woman!!! Quitting halfway is *beyond* cruel. I'd rather you'd thrown me out of the window!!!

(He then tripped on his trousers and fell flat on his pride and joy. Defeated, he simply laid there in silence for a moment then let out a pathetic whimper.)

COVERT: Ow.

---

A short while later, once Covert had gathered himself and pulled his trousers up, he headed out of the general's lounge to join the others in waiting for the list. Needless to say, he was greeted with much in the way of mockery from his peers. As always, they were not subtle.

KEVIN: Here he is, look. You done scraping your knob along the carpet now, are you?

TAVARES: Rug rapist.

COVERT: Ha bloody ha.

(Xia shook her head at him.)

XIA: When we told you that carpet was a top quality shag, that's not what we meant.

(Everyone laughed, except the sneering Covert.)

MISTY: Can you imagine what he makes of a welcome mat?

KEVIN: An open invitation. He probably thinks he's pulled.

COVERT: Put a sock in it, you lot. It wouldn't have happened if Misty had just finished what she started.

MISTY: I'm just *about* to finish what I started!  
(Covert's face lit up.)  
COVERT: Really?  
MISTY: Yeah. This war against pigs and Savages.  
COVERT: Shit.  
MISTY: Excuse me?  
COVERT: I hoped you meant...  
MISTY: Well I didn't.  
(She nodded.)  
MISTY: I meant something important.  
(She then ruffled her neck and looked to Tav.)  
MISTY: Though I apologise for stealing the credit for starting this war. That was Tav.  
TAVARES: Yup.  
KEVIN: Punching one bloke a time with his mates.  
TAVARES: It had to start somewhere, you cunt.  
KEVIN: Yeah... but can you really call that a *war*? That was just pointless violence. It was never gonna lead anywhere.  
TAVARES: What the fuck do you know about it? You weren't even around back then.  
KEVIN: Yeah, but I'm right, aren't I?  
TAVARES: Is that so?  
(He sneered.)  
TAVARES: Misty?  
MISTY: Yes?  
TAVARES: Permission to punch this cunt?  
MISTY: Denied. Partly because we'll need him on this mission, but mostly because he was right. Your way was ridiculous.  
TAVARES: Seriously?  
MISTY: Well it was.  
(She smiled.)  
MISTY: But, fair play, you were the *first* to start fighting back, and you inspired *me* to do the same, so I owe you a debt of gratitude.  
TAVARES: Let me punch him then.  
MISTY: Tav?  
TAVARES: Yes?  
MISTY: Do shut up.  
TAVARES: Right...  
(Just then, the doors to the lift pinged open. Before they could all get inside it, however, Lisa, the head of the admin department, stepped into the foyer, holding a thin file in her hand.)  
MISTY: What the hell are *you* doing up here, Lisa?  
LISA: Please, before you batter me, I know I don't have clearance to come up here, but I've found something. You told me to come and see you *straight away* if I found anything out and I have.  
MISTY: Oh. So it's about *that*, is it?  
LISA: Yes.  
(She puffed out.)  
LISA: I knew you'd want to be updated as soon as possible, so I ran all the way here.  
MISTY: Ran? You came up in the lift!



LISA: I mean before I...

MISTY: Relax, I'm just pulling your chain, love.

(She then led her to one side.)

MISTY: You carry on, guys. I'll meet you down there, okay?

KEVIN: Righto.

MISTY: And Tav?

TAVARES: Yeah?

MISTY: Don't hit Kevin!

TAVARES: Aw.

XIA: Can I hit him instead?

COVERT: I'll help.

MISTY: No. Now behave!

TAVARES: Spoilsport.

KEVIN: Thanks, guys. I'm really feeling the love right now.

TAVARES: Just be grateful you won't be feeling our fists.

COVERT: Why not? Misty never said we couldn't fist him. Bend over, Kev!

KEVIN: You can fuck *right* off!

MISTY: You can *all* fuck off! Go on!

KEVIN: Right. See you downstairs.

XIA: Later.

(With that, Kevin, Covert, Xia and Tavares headed into the lift. Having waited for the door to close and the lift to start heading down, Misty puffed out then looked Lisa in the eyes urgently.)

MISTY: What did you find?

LISA: Well, as you know, the girls in the computer room were going through those documents you acquired from that MP last night. They were trying to find out exactly what those illicit payments were for. I mean, we had the names and the amounts, but not the *reason* for the payments. Blackmail is much easier when you know what dodgy payments were for.

MISTY: Agreed.

LISA: Well, checking through, they found a hundred or more of the payments went to six well-known killers. Government agents known to moonlight as hitmen.

(Misty furrowed her brow.)

MISTY: Go on...

LISA: The thing is, we hacked that MP's e-mails too. So I went back to the date of the payments and checked his e-mails from the time. And this one's interesting.

(She then pulled open the file and handed Misty a document.)

LISA: Here.

MISTY: Right...

(Misty perused it with her eyes.)

MISTY: What am I looking at here?

LISA: It says AF, AM, C1, C2. I think it means Adult Female, Adult Male, Child One and Child Two.

MISTY: You *think*?

LISA: Yes, but with good reason. There's a tick next to Adult Female and Child One. Adult Males says N/A and Child Two has an X next to it.

(Misty was somewhat lost.)

MISTY: Okay...

LISA: Now check the date.

MISTY: Oh...

(Misty then tensed up and started to shake with rage.)

MISTY: The day my mum and my sister were killed.

LISA: Yeah. Adult Female and Child One. Adult Male wasn't there, so non-applicable. And Child Two, you, survived; hence the X.

(Lisa then handed her a second piece of paper.)

LISA: And this is an e-mail from the day your father was killed. Adult Male has a tick next to it and Child Two has an X again.

(As Misty stood there physically trembling with fury, Lisa sighed.)

LISA: He replied shortly after saying case close. And the payments check out too, because he only got seventy five percent of the fee that time.

(She then stood there quietly grimacing, hoping against hope that Misty didn't take her anger out on her. Much to relief, however, Misty soon took a deep breath then offered a smile.)

MISTY: Thanks for the information, Lisa. I owe you.

LISA: You're welcome, boss.

MISTY: Call me Misty. You deserve that much at least.

(She glanced down at the documents.)

MISTY: So Charles Fidget *ordered* the hit on my family. Who did the job?

LISA: A guy by the name of Richard Holborn. He died in a car accident last year.

MISTY: Shit. So *he* won't be getting his comeuppance.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: That's okay. Fidget can pay for both their crimes.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: Lisa?

LISA: Yes?

MISTY: Thanks; you can go now. And don't tell anyone what we just discussed, okay?

LISA: Yes, boss.

(She then paced back over to the lift and pressed the button. Offering her one final grateful nod, Misty swiftly headed back into the general's lounge. Once there, she pulled out her phone then made a call.)

MISTY: Come on. Answer me, you. Come on.

(Seconds later, Kevin's voice rose up from the receiver.)

KEVIN: What's up, Misty?

MISTY: Go on without me.

KEVIN: What?

MISTY: No questions. Just go on without me. There's something I need to do here.

KEVIN: Oh. Well... okay.

MISTY: *You* make the plan. And get it executed.

(She then ended the call and puffed out.)

MISTY: Fuck. Now what?

(She then sat down and held her head in her hands. This was beyond any nightmare she could ever have envisaged. She'd become the person she was in order to wreak bloody vengeance on her family's killer. To now find out that he was the one guy in the world that she needed kept alive was mortifying. For several moments she rocked back and forth in distress then growled and sat back. It was a nigh on impossible choice. Letting him live would win her the war. At the same time, it would kill her inside. His gruesome death was something she'd yearned for, cried out for, dreamt about on countless occasions. As was winning the war. She could no longer have both. A decision had to be made. Flustered to the core of her being, she screamed at

the top of her lungs then her face turned entirely blank. In that moment, she'd made her choice.)

MISTY: Right...

(She then upped and marched towards the door.)

---

Some twenty minutes later, in Rashgrove Park, Brian was causally sitting on a bench, smoking a cigarette as he kept vigil on a large Manor house just downhill from him. Making mental notes in his head, he took a long drag on his cigarette then tipped his head back before blowing the smoke out into the air.

BRIAN: A cigarette is so much more satisfying when you stole it from a dead Savage. (His attention was then drawn by footsteps to his right. At once, he turned his head then nodded with approval.)

BRIAN: Ah, yes; here come the cavalry.

(Stepping up to him, Tavares scoffed.)

TAVARES: Cavalry? Like we're here to save *your* sorry arse.

BRIAN: You *are*, kind of. Now you're here, I can tell you the situation then get on with killing wankers; saving me from just sitting here like a cunt.

KEVIN: Actually, mate, we might need you to *continue* sitting there like a cunt, depending on the situation.

BRIAN: Right...

(He sighed.)

BRIAN: I think I preferred you *before* you were a general.

XIA: Yeah, well, never mind that, what's the situation?

(She then took a seat as his side. Spying one extra space, Covert and Tavares then attempted to bundle into it at the same time. The inevitable collision did Covert no favours. As if he'd ran headlong into a trampoline, he bounced off Tavares then fell flat on his backside.)

TAVARES: You're pathetic.

COVERT: Yeah...

(He clambered to his feet.)

COVERT: Even *I* can't pretend *that* went well.

(He then turned to face Kevin.)

COVERT: Looks like we're standing, mate.

KEVIN: All the best people do.

(He then looked to Brian.)

KEVIN: So? What are we looking at?

BRIAN: Well, right now, you and Covert and looking at me, and that's going to hinder my explanation somewhat. I need you to look at what I'm describing.

COVERT: What?

XIA: Stand behind the bench, you idiots!

COVERT: Oh, right.

KEVIN: Idiots, indeed.

XIA: Just go.

(Kevin and Covert both rolled their eyes.)

KEVIN: Fine.

(They then stepped behind the bench and leant on the back of it.)

COVERT: Happy now?

BRIAN: Not really, no. Having people standing behind me makes me a bit paranoid.

XIA: Then ignore them and get on with the briefing.

BRIAN: Right. Yeah...

(He then flicked his cigarette onto the grass in front of them before nodding down the hill.)

BRIAN: To your right, you can see old Fitchett's Fixtures and Fittings warehouse. It closed down last year. The national guard have set up shop in there. Hundreds of the fuckers, as you can see from the amount of vehicles and patrolmen. They won't let anyone even come close. When they shoed me on, they weren't subtle. They were pretty clear that I either fucked off or died in a hail of bullets. I chose the former.

XIA: Evidently.

BRIAN: Right?

(He nodded.)

BRIAN: And if you glance some fifty feet to the left of that warehouse, there's Rashgrove Manor. It has two men on the security gates, and from what I can tell, Fidget has a personal security staff of a dozen blokes. Armed.

TAVARES: Fifty feet away... I like that.

KEVIN: What?

TAVARES: A good distance apart. It means he's not being protected by the national guard. That makes our lives a lot easier.

BRIAN: Not really, no.

TAVARES: Excuse me?

BRIAN: The trouble is, it's on one road. A dead end road. You'll have to pass the national guard to get to Rashgrove Manor. And they're not gonna let you.

TAVARES: Shit.

(Kevin mused to himself.)

KEVIN: We can just come in from the *other* side then, surely.

BRIAN: You could, yeah, but there's a cliff that side. A sheer drop.

XIA: How far down?

TAVARES: About thirty feet.

(All eyes turned to him.)

TAVARES: My mum used to work at the Manor as a cleaner. I remember it well.

(Everyone looked enlightened then glanced back at Brian.)

BRIAN: What?

KEVIN: Anything else?

BRIAN: I'd have told you if there was. Two blokes on the gate, twelve personal guards and getting in will require climbing down that cliff or passing the national guard. And I don't recommend going anywhere *near* the national guard.

XIA: Then we climb.

TAVARES: From further along.

(He pointed to a woodland on their left.)

TAVARES: You can climb straight down into the Manor grounds from the woods.

KEVIN: Really?

TAVARES: Straight up. The cliff is less sheer from the woodland side an' all. It just means climbing over a barbed-wire fence, that's all.

XIA: Piece of piss.

COVERT: Not a problem for me.

KEVIN: Oh, boy.

XIA: So that's our way in then.

(She nodded.)

XIA: Thanks, Brian; you've been awesome.

BRIAN: Yes, yes I have.

(He beamed.)

BRIAN: Can I go now? I've got Savages to punch.

KEVIN: Sure.

BRIAN: Result.

KEVIN: Just as soon as you've found someone to relieve you. We need someone here to be our eyes and ears, just in case.

(Brian looked through him coldly.)

BRIAN: Seriously? I'm not loving the new you, mate.

(They shared an amused smirk then Brian pulled out his phone.)

BRIAN: I'll call someone. Someone with no combat skills. He can take my place. This job's perfect for someone who can't fight.

(A few seconds later, Kevin's phone started to ring.)

KEVIN: That's probably Misty.

(With that, he yanked out his phone, glanced at the screen then glowered at Brian.)

KEVIN: Seriously? You're calling *me*?

BRIAN: Yeah. This job's right up your alley, mate.

XIA: Wow. Do you want to slap him or shall I?

BRIAN: No, no; hear me out. Why would *you* go in there, Kev? There's gonna be violence; probably shooting. Xia, Tavares and Covert are experts at dealing with that kind of thing. You're not.

(Kevin grimaced.)

KEVIN: Well... you have a point there, actually.

BRIAN: See?

KEVIN: Why you didn't just *say* that rather than being a cunt and phoning me, I don't know.

BRIAN: I just wanted to make sure I was understood.

XIA: And you were. We now understand that you're a disrespectful little twat.

(She then slapped him across the head.)

XIA: He's a general. Show some respect.

BRIAN: Right... sorry.

XIA: And besides, Kevin *has* to come.

(She shrugged.)

XIA: Yeah, us three are good fighters, but Kevin is the one with the diplomatic skills. He's a good communicator. He'll get our message across to Fidget far better than any of us three.

TAVARES: I'd end up beating him up; completely forgetting to *tell* him about the dirt we've got on him. Or what we need him to do.

COVERT: Same.

XIA: And I'd get flustered...

(She ruffled her neck nervously.)

XIA: I'm not good at getting my point across; never have been.

KEVIN: Really? I've always thought you were pretty eloquent.

(Covert rubbed Xia's shoulders sympathetically.)

COVERT: Just leave it, mate.

KEVIN: Oh. Okay.

(Covert then looked to Brian.)

COVERT: So there it is; we need Kevin inside.

KEVIN: Meaning you're staying here, Brian.

BRIAN: Shit.

(He sighed.)

BRIAN: I might as well get comfortable then.  
KEVIN: Good idea.  
XIA: Agreed.  
(She nodded.)  
XIA: Anyway... shall we?  
TAVARES: Yes, we fucking shall. Before Fidget fucks off back to London.  
XIA: Let's go then.  
(With that, Kevin shared a fist bump with Brian before heading away with Xia, Tavares and Covert. Watching as they made their way towards the woodland, Brian could only suck his teeth.)  
BRIAN: Good luck, guys.  
(He glanced at the close proximity between the national guard and Rashgrove Manor then shook his head.)  
BRIAN: One gunshot from the manor and you're gonna have a hundred soldiers charging your way.

---

A short while later, having crossed the park, Tavares led Kevin, Xia and Covert into the woodlands adjacent to Rashgrove Manor. They'd only reached about ten feet inside it, however, when they'd had to come to an immediate halt. This particular stretch of the woods had been designated as a nature reserve quite some time ago. As a result, it had grown wild. You couldn't even see the woodland floor for thick bushes and foliage. Walking through it to the edge of the Manor grounds would not be easy. Mortified by the sight of the overgrown wilderness before then, Kevin's shoulder's slumped.

KEVIN: Well, so much for that.

XIA: What?

KEVIN: Obviously we're gonna have to find a different route.

COVERT: He's so new.

XIA: Right? Do your stuff, Tav.

TAVARES: Happily.

(With that, he produced a long machete from his trousers.)

TAVARES: This ought to do the trick.

(Kevin was dumbfounded.)

KEVIN: Where the fuck were you hiding that?

TAVARES: The same place Xia's hiding her guns.

XIA: Yup.

(She then yanked two pistols from inside her leggings, spun them around before slipping them away again.)

KEVIN: Holy crap. I had no idea you were armed.

XIA: Of course not. An untucked t-shirt can hide a multitude of sins.

TAVARES: As can baggy trousers with a sheath for my machete hidden inside.

KEVIN: Right... so that's how...

TAVARES: Yeah? Why else would I wear them this baggy?

(Kevin cringed.)

KEVIN: I just thought you we're a massive MC Hammer fan.

TAVARES: I am. Hammer's awesome. But that's not the reason.

(He then proceeded to chop and slash his way through the thick growth. With a shrug, the others then fell into line behind him.)

TAVARES: Once the war's over, I think I'll become a gardener, you know? I love this kind of thing.

COVERT: Butchering plants with a machete?

TAVARES: Yeah. I like making vegans cry, you see?

(Kevin looked most impressed.)

KEVIN: A noble undertaking.

COVERT: Yup. I can definitely get behind that.

XIA: Right? Eating my food's food. Wankers.

(They all shared an amused grin then Kevin puffed out.)

KEVIN: So...

XIA: So?

TAVARES: So what?

KEVIN: So, what do you think that Lisa person said to Misty?

COVERT: How the hell should *we* know?

KEVIN: Well...

(He sighed.)

KEVIN: I'm just curious that's all. I mean, it was weird. She was all excited about coming with us until Lisa appeared. Then she says she's not coming. I'm just curious about what Lisa said, that's all.

XIA: Well don't be. It's none of our business.

(She shrugged.)

XIA: Though, whatever it was, it must have been huge to get her to bail on *this* mission.

(She groaned.)

XIA: Great. Now you've got *me* thinking about it too.

COVERT: Same.

TAVARES: Full house.

(He turned and glowered at Kevin.)

TAVARES: Nice work, distract-o-boy.

(Kevin was livid.)

KEVIN: Did you just call me a fucking tractor boy???

XIA: He said distract-o-boy.

KEVIN: What? Distract?

(He then looked enlightened.)

KEVIN: Right. Sorry. For a minute there, I thought you called me an Ipswich fan. No cunt does that and lives.

TAVARES: Mate. I'd never sink *that* low. I'd gladly insult your mother's minge and take sly digs at your disabled relatives, but I'd never call someone *that*.

KEVIN: Fair enough.

XIA: Pair of idiots.

(She rolled her eyes.)

XIA: Anyway, let's get a move on, shall we?

TAVARES: I'm chopping as fast as I can, Xia!

XIA: Right. Yes. Sorry.

(She smirked knowingly.)

XIA: I'm just looking forward to watching that MP crap himself when I point a gun in his face, that's all.

(She beamed.)

XIA: Then watching him squirm when Kevin tells him our terms. That'll be a joy.

KEVIN: Right? I just hope he listens.

XIA: It's down to you to *make* him listen, Kevin. Make him understand the consequences for non-compliance, so he hangs on your every word with fear in his eyes.

KEVIN: Sure. Yeah. I'll give a go, Xia.

XIA: Don't *give it a go*; do! Make sure he knows exactly where he stands. Doomed if he doesn't.

KEVIN: Relax. I'll give it my best shot, okay?

XIA: No, see, that's not enough. I need you to make *sure*...

(Kevin furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: Xia, if you don't think I'm up to it, *you* do the bloody speech.

XIA: No!

KEVIN: Then shut up and trust me.

XIA: Right.

(She nodded.)

XIA: Okay.

KEVIN: Thank you.

(Xia then sighed emptily.)

XIA: I wish I *could* make speeches, but I can't.

KEVIN: That's fine. Like you said, that's *my* job anyway.

XIA: It is, yes. Just do it well.

KEVIN: Xia...

XIA: Right. Sorry.

(She then offered him a smile, only to seeing him staring back at her with a thoughtful expression on his face.)

XIA: Oh, god. You're wondering *why* I can't make speeches now, aren't you?

KEVIN: A little bit, yeah.

(Xia rolled her eyes then sighed in defeat.)

XIA: Fine. If you must know...

COVERT: No! You don't have to tell him about your issues if you don't want to, Xia.

XIA: Actually, Covert, I kinda *have* to tell him now.

COVERT: Why?

XIA: Because if I don't, he's going to be thinking about it all the time and getting on my tits.

(She furrowed her brow at Kevin.)

XIA: Aren't you?

KEVIN: Yeah... pretty much.

XIA: I knew it.

(She then shrugged and started to relate her story.)

XIA: Fine. It dates back to when I was in a children's home. My parents dumped me there when I was four.

KEVIN: Sorry to hear that.

XIA: And I was sorry to live it. It was shit. My teenage years especially. Savages would come into the home and take teenage girls out for the evening. The staff didn't even *try* to stop them. They were shit scared of them. And as you know, ringing the police wasn't going to fucking help, was it? So we had no way of resisting; nobody to turn to.

(She shook her head.)

XIA: Most of the time they wanted to use us for sex; the sick bastards. Quite often though, they got us to commit petty crimes for them. Pickpocketing or shop-lifting.



(She sighed.)

XIA: More often than not, we got caught. Of course, the police were interested *then*. They'd take us back to the cells and either sexually abuse us or beat us. Then we'd be returned to the children's home with a full police report.

KEVIN: Cunts.

XIA: Yeah... you don't need to sell me on that, Kev.

KEVIN: Yeah.

XIA: Thing is, the people who ran the home used to demand to know why we were such delinquents. Why we'd brought shame on the home. Apparently, raising a bunch of delinquents was bad for business. So they'd shout at us. Why this? Why that? And we'd try to explain, but...

(She sighed.)

XIA: Couldn't get a word in edgeways. I'd try but... they'd shout over me and I'd get flustered.

KEVIN: And that led to...

XIA: Yeah. Even now I can't make my case without getting flustered.

KEVIN: Gotcha. That really sucks.

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: But you know, you're not as bad at it as you think.

XIA: I am.

KEVIN: Nope. You just communicated your story perfectly. It was actually the most eloquent explanation for ineloquence anyone's ever elocuted.

(Xia looked to him blankly then started to giggle.)

XIA: Pillock.

KEVIN: Thank you.

XIA: But if I'd elocuted it that well, I wouldn't have said *we* every time I meant *I*. It's just easier to talk about when I distance myself personally.

(She shrugged.)

XIA: So I ended up *not* telling *my* story, but a group one. Not so well communicated after all, was it?

KEVIN: Right. Yeah. You're right. You *are* shit.

(Xia laughed out loud.)

XIA: And you're an arse.

KEVIN: So that's why you joined the Wyverns, is it? To get revenge for what happened when you were a kid.

XIA: That's my ultimate goal, yes.

(Kevin nodded as he absorbed her story then started to chuckle.)

KEVIN: So, how did *you* manage to find them? Misty didn't sit opposite *you* at work as well, did she?

(Xia smiled.)

XIA: No; nothing like that. When I was fifteen I was out with one of those Savages and he raised his hand to hit me. I refused to rob someone, you see? I closed my eyes, expecting a slap but nothing happened. So I opened my eyes and there was Misty standing over his dead body. She was only sixteen herself.

KEVIN: Really?

XIA: Yeah. She used to go out on her own at night, seducing Savages with a view to killing them as soon as they got amorous.

TAVARES: Just like she did during the riot. That was her *modus operandi*.

(He then carved across another set of thick weeds before glancing over his shoulder.)

TAVARES: She was out trawling for Savages to kill when she bumped into me and my mates beating one to death. We got chatting and then next thing I knew, I was shagging her. Good times. Oh, and yeah, she joined us.

KEVIN: Cool.

(He then grimaced with annoyance.)

KEVIN: Cunts. I mean... what a bunch of cunts. Savages *and* coppers! They killed Misty's family, abused Xia as a child, put my brother in a wheelchair...

(He glanced at Covert.)

KEVIN: And... whatever your here for.

COVERT: I like using my skills.

KEVIN: Oh, yeah. You're here for that and Tav's here for... no idea. Something about his family.

TAVARES: For my mum. She went shopping once and Savages robbed the place. Shot the poor shop owner. She was shitting herself. And I thought, I aint having that. So I started slapping the cunts about.

(He grinned.)

TAVARES: My story's simpler than most.

(Kevin smirked.)

KEVIN: As are you, my friend.

TAVARES: What?

KEVIN: Your story. Simple.

TAVARES: Yup. Just like chopping through bushes. But half as much fun.

KEVIN: Right...

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Anyway, that's enough fucking about; we need to discuss the plan, guys.

COVERT: No we don't. We've already *got* a plan.

KEVIN: No, we haven't. Not a *complete* one, at least.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: There's details that need finalising. We know we're going to gain access to the manor grounds through these woods, but we need to discuss how we're gonna *cross* the grounds to the house without being spotted.

(He mused to himself.)

KEVIN: Though come to think of it, we'll need to *see* the manor before we can decide exactly how to do that, won't we? Fuck it, that can wait.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: The *bigger* issue is, once we've found our way into the manor, how are we gonna go about it getting to Fidget; and getting him alone?

TAVARES: Easy. By charging in and battering all his guards.

COVERT: No chance. Using *stealth skills* to take them out would make more sense.

XIA: Or we could just shoot them. I have silencers.

(Kevin slowly nodded to himself then groaned in defeat.)

KEVIN: Great. You all want to do it a different way, meaning *I'll* have to choose and the other two will get all abusive.

XIA: That's why Misty pays you the big bucks.

KEVIN: She pays me?

XIA: Well, no, but she did put you in charge, so it's your job, I'm afraid.

(Just then, Tavares turned and raised his voice.)

TAVARES: Stop.

(At once they all came to a halt.)

COVERT: You didn't need to *say* it, mate. You're creating the path. When *you* stop, we have no *choice* but to stop.

TAVARES: Good point. I meant shut up. Happy?

COVERT: Ecstatic.

TAVARES: Good.

(He nodded.)

TAVARES: This it is, guys. The fence is five feet away, behind that bush. Once I cut through it, we'll be visible to any watching guards inside the manor.

XIA: Right. We'd better start thinking about that plan then.

TAVARES: What plan?

(Xia's shoulder's slumped.)

XIA: You've got a head like a sieve.

(She rolled her eyes.)

XIA: Kevin needs to figure out how we're gonna cross the grounds to the manor house undetected, Tav

KEVIN: And to do that, I need to be able to see the place.

(Tavares grimaced.)

TAVARES: Yeah, but you can't. The bush is in the way.

KEVIN: Then cut it.

TAVARES: If I do that, *they'll* be able to see *us*, you cock. I just told you that! What if they start shooting?

KEVIN: Right...

(He smiled the most condescending of smiles.)

KEVIN: I don't need you to cut it *down*, Tav. I just need you to cut a *little* hole in it big enough for me to peek through. You don't have to deforest the entire country like a Brazilian with a new bulldozer, mate. Simple stuff, even for an idiot like you.

TAVARES: Right...

(He looked to Xia and Covert.)

TAVARES: Have you two formed an attachment to this cunt yet, or can I kill him horribly?

COVERT: Be my guest.

XIA: It's fine by me, Tav. Misty might be a bit put out though.

TAVARES: Good point, yeah. She'd be in mourning for *minutes*.

XIA: Possibly even three or four.

COVERT: Yeah, but it's nothing a nice cup of tea wouldn't fix.

(Watching them snigger and giggle, Kevin couldn't help but grin.)

KEVIN: Right. Yeah... I guess I deserved that.

TAVARES: Yes, you did.

KEVIN: Agreed. Now cut the fucking hole.

TAVARES: In you?

KEVIN: In the bush!

TAVARES: Right. Disappointing.

(He then turned and slashed at the bush with an amused grin on his face.)

TAVARES: There. Done.

(He then stepped aside and gestured for Kevin to peer through the gap he'd created.)

TAVARES: Try not to fall in the thorns and hurt yourself.

KEVIN: What a superb idea. I'd never have thought of that.

(With a roll of the eyes, he then stepped up to the gap and proceeded to peer through it. Taking in the sight before him, he nodded to himself briefly then turned to face his three waiting allies.)

KEVIN: Right. What do you want first, the *good* news or the *bad* news?

XIA: Bad.

COVERT: Bad.

TAVARES: Always the bad news first.

KEVIN: Right. Well, that's not gonna work, you see? The good news is, it looks really easy. So the bad news was going to be that sometimes things aren't as easy as they look. Which was just pessimistic hyperbole, pretty much. If I'd led with that, you'd all think I'm a twat though.

XIA: Yeah, but we think that anyway.

COVERT: More so now. Why even do that?

KEVIN: It seemed like a good idea at the time.

TAVARES: It wasn't.

KEVIN: Well I know that now, don't I?

(He rolled his eyes.)

TAVARES: Never mind rolling your eyes, numb nuts. Tell us the plan. Starting with how we're gonna get over the fence without being spotted.

KEVIN: Fine. Here's the deal. There's no way we're getting *over* that fence...

XIA: That sucks.

KEVIN: But the ground beneath it has subsided. The bottom of the fence is a foot off the ground. We can just slide under it.

XIA: Which *doesn't* suck.

KEVIN: Just beyond the fence is a series of trees that we can hide behind.

XIA: Which also doesn't suck.

KEVIN: We can use the trees as shields until we're about thirty feet from the building. We'll just have to run to the manor house from there and hope we don't get spotted.

XIA: Thirty feet, huh? That *kinda* sucks.

KEVIN: But the two nearest windows are both wide open.

XIA: Which doesn't suck at all.

KEVIN: Yeah.

(He rolled his eyes.)

KEVIN: Thanks for the co-commentary, Xia. You've been most helpful.

XIA: You're welcome.

TAVARES: Helpful? Thanks to *her* cutting in, I completely lost track of that. Explain it again.

COVERT: Wow.

(He shook his head.)

COVERT: We'll slide under the fence, run to the trees, use them as a shield until we're thirty feet from the building then run to the open windows.

TAVARES: Then charge in, right?

XIA: No!

COVERT: Sneak in!

XIA: Or shoot our way in.

(Kevin gave them all an exasperated glance then spammed his forehead.)

KEVIN: Jesus Christ on a bike, you lot.

XIA: What?

KEVIN: You've never done a mission together before, have you?

TAVARES: Why would we? We all have different skills and our own teams.

KEVIN: Yeah, and it shows. You all want to do it your own way.

(He sighed.)

KEVIN: Look, I hate to be the bad guy here, but Misty put me in charge and I'm going to have to make a decision. Two are you gonna be disappointed, but there's nothing I can do about that. You're just going have to live with it, I'm afraid.

XIA: You tell them, Kev.

KEVIN: I'm going to. We're going with Covert's way.

XIA: Ha!

(She flinched.)

XIA: What???

KEVIN: It just makes sense. We're sneaking in. That's Covert's thing.

COVERT: Yes. Yes, it is.

(He beamed.)

COVERT: And in this, my moment of triumph, I'd just like to say, suck it, you two.

KEVIN: Right. You're a classy guy.

COVERT: I know. That's why you chose me.

(He smirked.)

COVERT: I'm so delighted right now, I can't even be bothered to remind you that my name's Graham.

KEVIN: Anyway, now that's decided...

TAVARES: You're off my Xmas card list.

XIA: And I'm gonna tell everyone you have a tiny penis.

KEVIN: Which is very mature of you both, but as I was saying, now it's decided, we can get going.

TAVARES: Right. Under the fence, head to the trees, run to the wall, sneaking in via the windows, Covert style.

KEVIN: Yes.

TAVARES: Then charge.

KEVIN: Y... no!

(He then spotted Tavares chuckling to himself.)

KEVIN: Right...

XIA: Anyway, who's going first?

KEVIN: The guy whose style we're going to use.

COVERT: That would be me.

KEVIN: Yes, it would.

XIA: Sweet. If we get spotted, he'll be the *first* one they shoot.

KEVIN: And that's why I *really* chose him.

COVERT: You...

KEVIN: I'm kidding, mate.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Anyway... no more pissing about. Let's get this show on the road.

COVERT: Right. Agreed

(He nodded sternly.)

COVERT: Games faces, people. We're about to get serious.

(In that moment, the air of light-heartedness vanished and everyone developed a focussed glint in their eyes. It was always the same when a mission began. Nobody wanted to let Misty down, so the blinkers would come on and the mission would become their sole focus.)

COVERT: Right. Whenever you're ready, Tav.

(Tavares nodded sternly.)

TAVARES: There's no time like the present, mate.

(He then stood there looking bewildered.)

TAVARES: What? Why are you all staring at me?  
COVERT: The bush, Tav.  
TAVARES: What?  
KEVIN: We need you to chop the bush, mate!  
(Xia palmed his forehead.)  
XIA: Fucking halfwit.  
TAVARES: Easy, woman.  
(He ruffled his neck.)  
TAVARES: Giving me shit; whatever next.  
(With that, he slashed across the final bush then nodded to Covert.)  
TAVARES: Done.  
COVERT: Sweet. Follow me.  
(With that, he hurried to the fence, threw himself beneath it then scrambled into the grounds of the manor. As the others hurried after him, he made his way to the nearest tree then stood there awaiting his comrades. Within ten seconds, they'd all assembled behind him; Kevin swearing like a trooper.)  
KEVIN: Well that's fucking annoying. I snagged my favourite t-shirt on the bottom of the bloody fence when I got up again. It's fucking ruined now.  
COVERT: Our hearts bleed for you.  
XIA: Yeah. We're truly sorry for your loss.  
TAVARES: Where shall we send the flowers?  
KEVIN: You...  
(He then flinched and hurried away. Covert had taken off as soon as Tavares had made his jibe and the others had followed suit. Arriving among them shortly afterwards, he furrowed his brow.)  
KEVIN: You lot aint funny.  
COVERT: Shut up and focus.  
KEVIN: I *am* bloody...  
(He then flinched once again. Covert wasn't about to wait around for him to finish complaining and had set off to the next tree. It was a process they repeated several times until, a short while later, they arrived at the tree nearest to the manor. Pressed tightly together to ensure they couldn't be seen, they then took a breath to prepare themselves for the next stage.)  
COVERT: Ready?  
XIA: Yup.  
TAVARES: Always.  
KEVIN: Say when.  
COVERT: Okay. Tav? You and I will go to the left of the bigger window. Xia, Kev, you go to the right of it, okay?  
(Everyone nodded firmly.)  
COVERT: Cool. If there's nobody inside, it'll be a piece of piss. If not, we'll try to the next window.  
XIA: And if there's someone in there too?  
(Tavares's face lit up.)  
TAVARES: We'll charge in and batter them!  
KEVIN: Xia can shoot them with her silenced.  
TAVARES: Fuck.  
(He snarled.)  
TAVARES: Why do you hate me, Kev?  
KEVIN: I don't. I just think your ways are stupid.

(He then gulped in terror. The angry glower coming back at him was deeply unsettling.)

KEVIN: I feel like that's gonna cost me later.

TAVARES: Correct.

COVERT: Never mind that shit, you lot. We're doing this on three, okay?

XIA: Okay.

COVERT: One, two, three...

(With that, they all sprinted out from behind the tree and raced towards their designated wall area. They kept as low as possible. Sneering determinedly, they all *looked* entirely fearless. This, however, was not the case. In this moment, they were open and exposed and it was extremely terrifying. Government security agents carried automatic rifles and machine guns. Should they be spotted, they could all be mowed down within seconds. Mercifully, they made it there unseen.

Standing with his back flat against the wall, Kevin puffed out anxiously then looked to Xia. He was just in time to see her offer Covert a thumbs up then steal a sneaky glance through the window. Within a second, she withdrew her head again then spoke in just above a whisper.)

XIA: Okay, here's the deal.

(She nodded.)

XIA: I did that too quickly, so I have no idea if anyone's in there or not.

(With three unimpressed glances burning into her soul, she scratched her neck in embarrassment then tried again. A second or so later, she withdrew her head a second time.)

XIA: It's a study and there's no bugger in there; we're good to go.

COVERT: Good. Nice work.

XIA: Thank you.

COVERT: Eventually.

XIA: Suck it, twat face.

COVERT: Right.

(He sneered.)

COVERT: Follow me.

(With that, he hurried to the window then dived inside it. Xia followed suit. Hot on her heels, Kevin climbed in after her. Bringing up the rear, Tavares then attempted to lug *his* hefty frame over the windowsill. Far from adept at climbing, however, he instantly lost his balance and *fell* into the room, landing with quite the thud.)

TAVARES: Shit.

(He instantly received three angry scowls and matching shushing noises. Feeling quite the fool, he blushed then climbed to his feet, dusting himself down.)

TAVARES: Right. Sorry.

(Kevin replied in barely in whisper.)

KEVIN: Good. You *be* sorry, just do it quietly.

TAVARES: Mate, when this is over...

COVERT: Button it, you two. This is no time playground flirting.

(He nodded.)

COVERT: We need to get out of here and sneak around until we find that Fidget cunt. Then we need to separate him.

(All eyes turned to Kevin.)

XIA: What's your plan for that?

(Kevin threw a thumb in Covert's direction.)

KEVIN: To do what our general in charge of stealth missions thinks is right.  
COVERT: Wise man.  
(He looked to Tavares.)  
COVERT: This is gonna suck for you. Being stealthy really isn't your strong point, is it?  
TAVARES: No, but then it's not *yours* either. If it was, you wouldn't have that ironic nickname, now would you, Covert?  
COVERT: It's Graham. And shut up.  
(He shook his head.)  
COVERT: I'll lead, okay? And I'll need you all to be silent. I have a heightened sense of sound when I'm the zone and I'll be listening out for guards. Just trust me to do my thing. If anyone is coming from behind, I'll hear them and there'll be less chance of us getting attacked from the rear, okay?  
XIA: Fine by me.  
KEVIN: As long as you're fully in the zone.  
TAVARES: Fully.  
KEVIN: One hundred percent.  
XIA: What they're saying is, don't do a half-arsed Covert special.  
(Covert furrowed his brow.)  
COVERT: Seriously? After getting back in Misty's good books, do you really think I'd be dumb enough to piss her off again? I'm not an idiot. I know that if I fuck this up, I'm a dead man. I know that better than anyone.  
KEVIN: Fair enough.  
(He nodded.)  
KEVIN: We trust you.  
XIA: We do.  
TAVARES: Repay that faith.  
COVERT: Thanks, guys. You know I will.  
(The three of them then shared a determined nod before heading for the door. Arriving first, Covert pulled the door open slightly then peered through the gap. Having observed the corridor outside, he then whispered over his shoulder.)  
COVERT: Bogey at twelve o'clock.  
(He then became acutely aware of the sound of muffled giggling and turned to face his three comrades.)  
COVERT: What's so funny?  
TAVARES: A bogey?  
KEVIN: You're not a World War II fighter pilot, mate.  
COVERT: Fine. There's an enemy cunt dead ahead. Better?  
XIA: Much. Want me to shoot him?  
KEVIN: No. We don't want Tavares to charge out there and batter him either. We're doing it Covert's way.  
COVERT: Actually, mate, it's a long corridor and he's pretty far down there.  
(He shrugged.)  
COVERT: It'd make far more sense to get Xia to shoot the cunt from here.  
KEVIN: Right...  
(Xia drew her weapon and smiled.)  
XIA: Don't worry, Kev; I won't say I told you so.  
(Kevin furrowed his brow.)  
KEVIN: And yet the last four words that came out of your mouth were exactly that.  
XIA: I know, right? I'm as shocked as you are.



KEVIN: Right...

(He then gave a stifled laugh.)

KEVIN: Just go and shoot the cunt.

(Affixing the silencer to her weapon, Xia sneered.)

XIA: Don't mind if I do. It'll be a pleasure in fact. Government agents are the worst.

TAVARES: Agreed.

COVERT: They'll kill anyone you pay them to; no questions asked.

XIA: They're just murderous thugs in tuxedos who murder on request without even a *hint* of remorse.

TAVARES: Exactly. The less of them in the world, the better.

XIA: Damned right.

KEVIN: Then hurry up and do the world a favour, Xia.

XIA: Happy to.

(With that, she stepped up to the door then nodded to Covert. Having returned her nod, Covert then proceeded to ease the door open. Moments later, the agent came into sight, standing at the end of the corridor with his hands cupped in front of himself. At once, Xia unclicked the safety catch on her gun then raised it before her face. Having taken a breath to steady herself, she then released a single shot. Almost instantly, the agent collapsed to the carpet in a pool of his own blood.)

XIA: Right...

(She chuckled.)

XIA: I forgot these were hollow points. I made a bit of a mess of his head.

KEVIN: I wouldn't worry about it. As a government thug, he probably never used it anyway.

XIA: Good point.

(Kevin then nodded to Covert.)

KEVIN: Okay, you're up.

COVERT: Good, good. Follow me, chaps.

(With that, he slipped out of the door with his four allies in close proximity.)

COVERT: With any luck, we'll find fuck-head Fidget before any of the guards find that dead cunt and sound the alarm.

KEVIN: Better still, we should go over there and hide his body.

COVERT: Right. Agreed. We'll do that then.

(With that, they hurried further along the corridor, all the while keeping a sharp eye out for other agents. Having reached the end of the corridor without incident, they then gathered around the corpse of the dead agent and grimaced.)

TAVARES: That really did make a mess of his head.

XIA: Yeah... hollow points kind of explode into shrapnel inside the body. Or indeed, the head.

(Kevin dry heaved.)

KEVIN: Nice...

COVERT: Don't be such a poof.

(With that, he yanked open a cupboard then nodded towards it.)

COVERT: Tav?

TAVARES: What?

COVERT: What do you mean, what? Dump him the cupboard.

TAVARES: Oh. Right.

XIA: He's such a dipshit.

TAVARES: Fuck off, you.

(With that, he lifted up the agent's body then unceremoniously slung it in the cupboard. Having done so, he then cooed with delight.)

TAVARES: Blimey, that's handy.

(He yanked a rolled-up mat from inside the cupboard and beamed.)

TAVARES: Talk about convenient.

XIA: What is?

TAVARES: This. Allow me to demonstrate.

(He then laid the mat out on the floor, covering the pool of blood.)

TAVARES: Now there's no trace of your handiwork.

KEVIN: Nice one, Tav.

TAVARES: I know.

(He then smirked at Xia.)

TAVARES: Now who's the dipshit?

XIA: Still you. But fair play, that's good thinking.

(She smiled.)

XIA: First time?

TAVARES: Xia...

COVERT: Never mind that, you lot. We need to get on and find Fidget. I'm thinking we should head down that corridor to our right.

(Kevin gave him a condescending glance then pointed to the door right next to them.)

KEVIN: Whereas I'm thinking that agent was *guarding* this door, so only a numpty wouldn't check in *there* first.

COVERT: Oh. Right. Yeah... I meant we should go down that corridor *after* checking this room.

TAVARES: No, you fucking didn't.

COVERT: *You* don't know what I was thinking. *You* barely know what *you're* thinking!

KEVIN: Yes, well, never mind bickering. We need to get cracking.

XIA: I concur. Pair of fucking...

(Just then, the door in question swung open and Charles Fidget stepped out, shaking his fists.)

FIDGET: Will you silly fuckers keep the noise down??? I'm trying to...

(He then froze in horror.)

FIDGET: You're not my security team.

(His eyes then bulged as Xia pointed a gun at his face and marched towards him.

Gaping in horror, he instantly started to backtrack into the room. Snarling furiously, Xia just stomped after him. Not about to waste this opportunity, Kevin, Tavares and Covert all hurried into the room with them, then Kevin turned to lock the door.

Having secured it, he then turned around, just in time to see Fidget walk backwards into his desk and come to a complete halt. Eager to make sure he knew where he stood, however, Xia kept coming. As a result, he ended up leaning backwards over the desk with the barrel of Xia's gun pressing into his nose. All he could so was whimper.)

FIDGET: Ow.

XIA: Not one fucking word, Fidget. Not one fucking word.

FIDGET: Okay.

XIA: That was a word.

FIDGET: Shit.

(His eyes then bulged in terror.)

FIDGET: I did it again.

XIA: For the last time though, right? Thumbs up if you agree.

(Fidget slowly raised his thumb and offered her a terrified, cheesy grin.)

XIA: Good. Now listen up. My friend is going to explain something to you, and whether you live or die depends on how you respond? Understand?

FIDGET: I...

XIA: Thumb!

(Fidget flinched then repeated his thumbs-up gesture.)

XIA: Now you're getting it.

(She glanced at Kevin briefly.)

XIA: You're up, General.

(Kevin nodded.)

KEVIN: Thank you, General.

(With that, he paced to the desk then sat on the edge, right next to the quivering MP.)

KEVIN: So... Charles, is it?

(Glancing sideways at him, Fidget could only raise his thumb and whimper.)

KEVIN: While my friend here keeps you interested with the help of her powerful handgun, and my other two friends guard the door, you and I are gonna have a little chat.

(He then rolled his eyes before glancing to Tavares and Covert.)

KEVIN: I said while my other two friends are guarding the door.

TAVARES: What?

COVERT: Oh, yeah.

(The two of them hurried away to stand in wait at the door, just in case any other agents came.)

KEVIN: Right...

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Things is, Charles, you made a decision a while back. A major decision. It was back when you were charged with choosing private companies to run the police force here in Faxbury. Remember?

(Fidget just whimpered.)

KEVIN: You made a really bad choice. No, wait... that's not fair. You made an abysmal choice. The city's been in the grip of corruption and crime ever since. And as citizens of this fair city, we're not very happy about it, you see?

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: That's why my friend here has a gun poking into your nostrils. You see, like the vast majority of this town's citizenry, your choice had horrendous consequences for her. In fact, it'd be fair to say, your terrible choice made her life a misery.

XIA: And then some.

(Fidget tried to offer her an apologetic grin, but had his attention immediately drawn away again.)

KEVIN: Pay attention to *me*, Charles or she *will* shoot you.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Good man. See? You *can* make good choices. Well... we're here to see to it that you make another one. Now here's what you're gonna do. You're gonna pull the current company's policing contract. Just take it back. Revoke it. I mean, it just makes sense to do that anyway, doesn't it? They've lost control, mate. Riots.

Fucking riots. Started by a gang running wild with rocket-propelled grenades, no less. I think it's fair to say they've *proven* themselves unworthy, right?

(Fidget whimpered again.)

KEVIN: You didn't answer me.

(Fidget slowly raised his thumb.)

KEVIN: Good answer. You're a smart man. Who knew?

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Now... after you've revoked the *current* contractors licence, we want you to install a *new* company to take over. I'll give you their name and registered company details after we've had our chat. I want you to install the new company then sit back and let them get on with cleaning up our fine city. Can you do that?

(Once again, Fidget raised his thumb and whimpered.)

KEVIN: Another good answer. You're on a roll.

(He then stood up, turned to face Fidget and folded his arms.)

KEVIN: I'm not satisfied yet though, far from it. The trouble is, Charles, you're being very agreeable, but you don't mean a word of it. You're only giving me a thumbs-up because you're scared my friend here will blow your head off. As soon as we're gone, however, you plan to go back on everything we've agreed.

(Fidget whimpered.)

FIDGET: I'm planning no such thing; I swear!

XIA: Silence.

FIDGET: Whoops.

(Kevin rolled his eyes.)

KEVIN: You are, mate. You just *are*.

(He smirked.)

KEVIN: But sadly for you, we've thought this through. As much as you'd *like* to go back on everything we just agreed, you can't.

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: I mean, let's be honest here. This is how you'd *like* things to go. You'd *like* to take the registered company number I'm about to give you and send your agents to kill all the directors. You'd *love* that, actually. And you'd love to get your chums in the media to put the current riots down to... let's see... asylum seekers, maybe?

Perhaps an angry and unruly trade union... I don't know. Whoever you cunts use as a scapegoat nowadays. I'm not really into politics. I have no idea who you're blaming all society's ills on nowadays; it changes every five minutes anyway. Point is, you'd blame someone else, compliment your current police contractor then go back to your cushy life having done fuck all about it.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: The thing is though, you can't do any of that. You're going to have no choice but to blame the current police force for their failings and appoint the successor we told you to. Why? Well... allow me to explain.

(He unfolded his arms and slipped his hands in his pockets.)

KEVIN: We've got enough dirt on you to build a full scale replica of Scafell Pike! You *and* the newspaper editors you pay off. And that's gonna be a real problem for you if you fail to comply, mate. You see, there's still a hell of a lot of papers and news outlets that despise your party and will *happily* publish every single detail of your dodgy dealings. The blackmail, the embezzlement, the murders. All of it. And your friends in the party friendly media won't be able to save you this time, because they'll be in the dock next to you.

(He sighed.)

KEVIN: You're probably thinking we're full of shit right now, don't you? You're the guy who chooses police forces. That makes you untouchable. You own the police, after all; so who's going to arrest *you*?

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: Well, I've got bad news for you. We kinda raided the filing cabinet in your house the other night.

(Fidget's eyes bulged.)

KEVIN: Yup. Exactly. The fucking United Nations will arrest you, even if the UK police won't. That's the level of dirt we dug up. You've even been paying third world leaders to vote against UN motions you don't like, for fuck sake.

(Xia was astonished.)

XIA: You're kidding!

KEVIN: Nope. The girls found the evidence last night; documented proof, in fact.

XIA: Holy crap. That's corruption on a global scale!

KEVIN: I know.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: There's no way out, Charles. You either make the very good decision we just agreed on, or you make a really, really bad one. Cross us, and the mountains of evidence we've got will go to every paper, every TV news outlet, every opposition MP and the United Nations themselves. We've got hundreds of copies of it in hundreds of different locations. So if you fail to honour our agreement and make the right choice...

(He grinned.)

KEVIN: Expect a knock on the door in the night. It'll either be law enforcement, coming to help you commence your lifelong internment or worse... an assassin sent by an ally of yours who doesn't want you spilling the beans in exchange for a lighter sentence.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: So tell me. What's it gonna be?

(He looked to Xia.)

KEVIN: You can let him up now, my friend with a gun.

XIA: Happy to, my friend with a silver tongue.

(Xia then stepped back and allowed Fidget to sit up. Trembling all over, the defeated MP could only shake his head solemnly.)

CHARLES: I should have burned that damned filing cabinet.

KEVIN: Yeah, but you didn't.

FIDGET: I know.

(He sighed.)

FIDGET: Look... if I do revoke the current police contractor's licence and give it to this new company of yours... what happens next?

KEVIN: As long as you keep your mouth shut and let them get on with their jobs, nothing. You can go back to living your happy, corrupt life.

FIDGET: With no repercussions?

KEVIN: None.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: All we want is the new company to take over the policing. That's literally our *only* demand. We went through all the aggravation of digging up all that dirt purely to make sure you'd be agreeable.

(Xia snarled.)

XIA: And are you?

FIDGET: You're telling me I have to comply or I'll go to jail forever; possibly get killed by an assassin. Of course I'm agreeable.

(He sighed.)

FIDGET: You people really did your homework.

KEVIN: Not really. You just did just did a terrible job at hiding the evidence.  
FIDGET: So it would seem.  
(He shook his head.)  
FIDGET: You have a deal. Just give me the new company's name and number and I'll announce the change this afternoon.  
KEVIN: Good. Make sure you do. Here...  
(He delved into his pocket, yanked out a business card then handed it to Charles.)  
KEVIN: Everything you need to know.  
(Fidget scanned the card with his eyes.)  
FIDGET: Wyvern Co. Ltd. Registered Company blah, blah, blah. Chairman... Miss T Phoenix. What sort of name is that?  
XIA: What sort of name is Charles Fidget?  
FIDGET: Touché. It's a very silly name.  
(He sighed.)  
FIDGET: It's my wife, Bridget I feel sorry for.  
KEVIN: Yes, well; never mind that. We've done what we came to do; now we'll be on our way.  
FIDGET: Good.  
KEVIN: Don't be a fool though, Charles. If you fail to come through...  
FIDGET: My life will be over; I know. You've made that abundantly clear. You've got me by the short and bloody curls. Of course I'll come through.  
KEVIN: Good, good.  
(He then looked to Xia.)  
KEVIN: Now we need to get back out again.  
(Xia's face lit up.)  
XIA: Sweet. Let's shoot our way out.  
(Kevin glanced at her coldly then rolled his eyes.)  
KEVIN: No. Let's not.  
(He then walked towards the door and nodded to Covert.)  
KEVIN: General? You're up.

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As Charles Fidget sat down at his desk and poured himself a very large whisky to calm his nerves, Covert slowly cranked open the door then peered outside. Seeing nobody in the corridor, he nodded to himself then slowly crept through the doorway. His three allies followed on closely. It all seemed oddly quiet. They'd been told a dozen agents would be present, but they'd only seen one. Hoping their luck would hold out, Covert puffed out then slowly started to head down to the corridor towards the room they'd gained entry to the manor from. Kevin stuck closely to his back and Xia stuck closely to his. Tavares brought up the rear; checking behind him every now and again for any sign of an approaching agent. None were forthcoming, and as a result, they were back in the room they'd entered from in no time at all.

The last to enter the room, Tavares slowly pulled the door closed behind him then glanced to where the others were creeping towards the window. Delighted with the ease of all, he allowed himself a smirk then spoke in a lowered voice.

TAVARES: Not very good, these agents, are they?

XIA: You can say that again.

COVERT: One guarding the MP's door and the others... just... where?

XIA: I bet he posted them all near the front.

KEVIN: Or they posted *themselves* there.

TAVARES: Amateur hour. Who doesn't cover their back door?

KEVIN: People who don't mind a rear entry, I suppose.  
(Everyone sniggered and giggled childishly.)

XIA: How old are you?

COVERT: He's clearly twelve.

TAVARES: I think you're giving him too much credit there. I used to make jokes like that when I was nine.

XIA: You made crude jokes about gay sex when you were nine? Who raised you?

KEVIN: Don't be sexist now, Xia. It's not about gay sex; women can enjoy a rear entry too.

TAVARES: He's right.  
(He mused to himself.)

TAVARES: You're actually rather fond of an anal intrusion yourself, if I recall.  
(And then the giggling stopped, replaced by an uncomfortable silence and Xia growling.)

XIA: Excuse me?

TAVARES: Um...

XIA: I've never done *that* with anyone!

TAVARES: Yes, you have. You did it with me, you...  
(An enlightened expression then crossed his brow.)

TAVARES: Fuck. Come to think of it, that was Misty.  
(Everyone looked enlightened.)

XIA: Right. Well that makes sense. She'll try anything once.

TAVARES: Yeah...  
(He chuckled.)

TAVARES: Once...

COVERT: I was gonna say, we've *all* been up there *more* than once.

KEVIN: I haven't.

TAVARES: Give it time, mate.

KEVIN: Right...

TAVARES: And savour the moment, my friend.

COVERT: She can ride you like a champion jockey with it in either hole.

KEVIN: Right... well... I don't even want to think about that.

TAVARES: You not up for that sort of thing then?

KEVIN: Oh, I'd do anything she *wants* me to in the bedroom. I just don't want to think about *you two* doing it.

COVERT: I certainly don't want to think about Tav doing it. The thought of her with a big, black knob up her arse makes me picture her taking a shit.  
(A round of childish chuckling then ensued from Kevin, Tavares and Covert. It was a giggling session that was soon cut short by the sound of Xia mumbling under her breath.)

XIA: I've been partnered up with imbeciles.

TAVARES: Easy, Xia. We're just having a laugh, that's all.

XIA: Well, you can do that once we're out of here. And when I'm no longer with you.  
(She rolled her eyes.)

XIA: And later on we'll see how much you're in the mood for a laugh when I tell Misty how you mistook *her* for *me*.

TAVARES: When?

XIA: When you thought you'd done *me* up the butt!

TAVARES: Oh. Shit.

XIA: Now can we just go, please?

COVERT: We mostly certainly can.  
(With that, he proceeded to sneak towards the window.)

COVERT: Guys?

KEVIN: What?

COVERT: This is starting to feel too easy.

TAVARES: It's always felt too easy.

COVERT: Yeah, but now it feels *way* too easy. We just stood there making childish jokes and I'm pretty sure we forgot to lower our voices, but still nobody came to investigate.

XIA: Hmm... those agents of his must have fallen asleep or something.

KEVIN: Yeah, but who's complaining?

TAVARES: Right? The fact they've posted themselves somewhere so ridiculous, we can break in, threaten their boss then stand around making silly jokes means we should be *applauding* them.

KEVIN: Exactly. I mean, I for one, appreciate their efforts.

XIA: As do we all. *If* that's the case.  
(She bit her lip.)

XIA: Something feels off to me.

COVERT: Same.

KEVIN: I think you worry too much.

TAVARES: I'm with Kevin on this one.

KEVIN: But despite that, I'm still pretty confident I'm right.

TAVARES: You cunt.

KEVIN: I'm kidding, mate.  
(He nodded.)

KEVIN: The only people who know we're here are Wyverns. And only those in a position of trust. So if you're worried this is all a trap or a set up, I'm sorry, but I don't see how it *can* be.

XIA: Well... that's true, I guess. The only people who could have arranged such a thing are Brian, Lisa or Misty. And they're Wyverns through and through.

COVERT: Well you say that. Misty kicked Brian through a glass door the other day. He might...

KEVIN: No. Don't even think that. Brian's a solid guy.

XIA: I concur.

COVERT: Well... here's hoping.  
(He nodded.)

COVERT: Anyway, this is it.  
(He pointed to the window.)

COVERT: Go back the same way we came in, guys. Sprint from here to the nearest tree. Do the tree slalom then exit via that fence.

XIA: Obviously.

COVERT: Don't be snarky, Xia.

XIA: Right...

COVERT: Okay, let's get this show on the road.  
(With that, he dived out of the window, landed in a roll then sprinted the thirty feet to the nearest tree. Having stashed himself behind it, he then turned and glanced to the others. At once, his jaw dropped. Xia and Kevin had jumped out of the window then



stopped. Tavares hadn't even got that far. He was just leaning out of the window, staring towards the front end of the manor house.)

COVERT: You...

(He then noticed Kevin and Xia were staring in the same direction. Adopting an uncertain grimace he then glanced to one side to follow their eye line. Much to his astonishment, a window near the front of the building had been smashed and a government agent was hanging out of it, covered in blood.)

COVERT: Holy...

(He then charged back to the others.)

COVERT: What the fuck's going on?

XIA: We just found out why no government agents came; that's what.

(Kevin shuddered as a chill ran down his spine.)

KEVIN: Guys... he wasn't there when we came in.

TAVARES: Yup. There were no signs of any guards anywhere.

COVERT: I know. We checked a million times.

XIA: And we'd certainly have noticed a dead one hanging out of the window, all covered in blood.

KEVIN: Meaning it's recent.

XIA: And whoever did it is probably still in there.

TAVARES: Fuck!

(He then stood back and allowed Kevin, Xia and Covert to clamber back inside.)

TAVARES: Hurry! Whoever did this is clearly after Fidget.

XIA: Shit. If he dies, so does our plan.

KEVIN: We've got to save him at all costs.

(Helping to pull Kevin back thorough the window, Covert snarled.)

COVERT: For fuck sake! Who do you think it is?

TAVARES: A savage, probably.

XIA: You think they heard Fidget was in town and they've come after him? He does represent the police after all?

COVERT: That makes sense. Who else would have a grudge against him?

(Kevin's eyes bulged at this point.)

KEVIN: Fuck. Guys???

(He then sprinted for the interior door.)

KEVIN: I think I just figured out what Lisa wanted to tell Misty.

(Racing after him, the others looked most perplexed.)

XIA: What???

KEVIN: Fidget kills people who threaten his corrupt empire. Misty's dad was investigating police corruption. It's not a difficult deduction to make.

COVERT: Shit!!!

TAVARES: What? I don't get it.

KEVIN: Misty's here, Tav. She killed that agent and she's going after Fidget!

XIA: She's gonna ruin everything.

KEVIN: Including her own dream of ending the violence.

XIA: We've got to get to Fidget before she does!

(Sprinting forth down the corridor, Covert, Xia, Tavares and Kevin's faces were contorted into snarls. The deal they'd negotiated with Fidget would save the lives of thousands of citizens and liberate the city from repression. This was something they'd longed for all their lives. Should Fidget die however, the dream would never come to fruition. They simply couldn't allow that to happen. And so, they charged

with everything they had, desperate to reach Fidget and drag him to safety. Alas, they were too late.

Upon arriving at Fidget's office door, Kevin slammed through it then came to a crashing halt. Moments later, Xia, Covert and Tavares raced in after him and joined him in staring towards Fidget's desk in dismay. Before them, Misty was sitting cross-legged on Fidget's desk, pushing his face into his smashed whisky glance. Unsurprisingly, he was screaming in agony. Caring very little for his pain, Misty glanced nonchalantly at her fingernails then smiled at her four subordinates.)

MISTY: Hi, guys.

(Nobody replied right way. What they were seeing before them was so dismaying they were lost for words. Misty was quite obviously going to torture then kill this man, scuppering all their good work in the process. So crestfallen were they, it was a good ten seconds before Kevin found it in himself to speak.)

KEVIN: Boss. You're...

MISTY: I'm what?

KEVIN: You're making mincemeat of that guy's face.

MISTY: I am, yes.

(Kevin shook his head.)

KEVIN: But he agreed to all our demands. He was going make Wyvern Ltd the new police authority. We did it; the plan worked.

MISTY Really? Sweet. Nice work, team.

KEVIN: Yeah, but it'll all be for nothing if you don't let him go.

(Misty nodded.)

MISTY: Then we've got a problem, haven't we? There's no way this guy gets to live.

KEVIN: But why...

(Misty furrowed her brow.)

MISTY: You're a smart guy, general. I'm sure you've *already* figured out why.

(Kevin sighed despondently.)

KEVIN: Yeah. He was the one who ordered the hit on your family, wasn't he?

MISTY: Correct. See? Smart guy.

KEVIN: Hardly. I figured out like five seconds before we ran back in here. And I only figured it out *then* because we spotted that dead agent.

MISTY: Which one?

KEVIN: Right...

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: You wiped out the lot, didn't you?

MISTY: Yeah, pretty much.

(He shook his head.)

KEVIN: I see. Boss?

(Just then, Covert stepped forward and patted Kevin on the back.)

COVERT: Just a minute, mate. I've got to know.

(He looked to Misty.)

COVERT: Boss?

MISTY: Hmm?

COVERT: What's with the school uniform and twin tails?

MISTY: Just props. I did my innocent schoolgirl routine to get past the national guard base. Cycled past them without anyone even batting an eyelid.

COVERT: I see.

(He beamed.)

COVERT: You look seriously hot.

MISTY: Dude. You need help! I look about fourteen.

COVERT: Yeah, but a hot fourteen.

XIA: Gross!

(Kevin furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: Never mind that. Boss?

MISTY: Just call me Misty, will you? We're the only ones who'll be leaving this room alive after all.

KEVIN: But for the plan to work we need him alive!

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: I know. But it's just not gonna happen, I'm afraid. Sorry, guys. Just know that this is no slight on you. The plan was great. It was. And the fact you pulled it off is fantastic. The trouble is, after you left, I had a change of heart.

KEVIN: You mean Lisa told you he ordered the hit, didn't she?

MISTY: She did, yes.

(She shrugged, making sure to push down on Fidget's face as she did so. His scream was horrifying. Entirely unfazed by it, however, Misty continued.)

MISTY: I was torn for a while. I was. Let him live; win the war. Kill him; we go back to square one.

KEVIN: Then...

MISTY: I decided I'd rather go back to square one. We can end the war *another* day.

XIA: But Misty...

MISTY: No, Xia. Just don't.

(She shook her head solemnly.)

MISTY: I sat there and thought about the right thing to do. Like I said, I was torn. But you know what? It's not even a difficult choice for me. Letting him go after what he did would eat me alive inside. Forever.

KEVIN: But the war...

MISTY: Pales into insignificance compared to the war inside my head, Kevin. The daily battle to stay sane.

(She sneered.)

MISTY: Every night when I close my eyes, I remember my mum hitting the floor with blood pouring out of her. Her wide-open, lifeless eyes, staring straight at me. I remember my sister grabbing my hand and dragging me away, only to be blown into the wall in a shower of red. I remember being unable to move in hospital, so weak and powerless; I couldn't even wipe my own tears. I just laid there and cried in silence and nobody came to help me. Then I remember the joy of seeing my father again. To feel a loving hug for the first time in years, only for half his head to explode and shower me with his brains. Then I remember being back in the hospital; crying alone once again.

(She looked into Kevin's eyes.)

MISTY: This guy did that to me. This guy who thinks glass in his face is painful. He doesn't even know what pain is. But I'm gonna show him. I'm gonna make him find out how it feels to have no hope. To be in pain for a long, long time, believing death is his only way out. I want him to know how it feels to be me.

(She then offered them all a smile.)

MISTY: I know I'm being selfish. I know this war is all of ours and I'm throwing away *our* victory to end *my* hell, but... I don't think I could live with letting him go. Knowing the man who did all that to me, is living a life of luxury because I wanted him to do me a favour.

(She shook her head.)

MISTY: I couldn't live with myself.

(She then turned and pushed Fidget's head deeper into the glass again.)

MISTY: I'm gonna take you away from here, Fidget. And I'm gonna torture you until you beg for mercy. Then I'll torture you some more until you beg for death. It's the least I can do to repay you for your kindness.

(Absorbing Misty's words Kevin, Xia, Tavares and Covert all shared a series of glances then Kevin stepped forwards.)

KEVIN: Misty?

MISTY: Yes?

KEVIN: You *say* you're being selfish, but I'm not so sure. I can't honestly say I can even begin to know how you feel. Is it really selfish to go through what you did then expect people to support your desire for vengeance? I'm not sure it is. But what I do know is, I promised to stand by you until the bitter end and I meant it. So... whatever you need. The war can go on and we can get my revenge another day.

(Xia nodded.)

XIA: Misty, I went through hell too, god knows I did, but I never suffered anywhere near as horrifically as you did. And if I came face to face with those who hurt me the most, there's no way I'd let them live. No matter what favours they offered to grant me. So yeah... in your shoes I'd do exactly the same. Do what you need to do, babes. I'm right behind you.

(Covert then stepped forward to have his say.)

COVERT: Same.

(He then stepped back again, forcing a roll of the eyes from Xia, Kevin and Tavares.)

TAVARES: Great speech, dude.

COVERT: It was from the heart.

TAVARES: Right...

(He then looked to Misty.)

TAVARES: You joined me in the fight when you were just sixteen, Misty. Only it wasn't really a fight. We were just nuisances. Well, you changed that. You turned us into somebodies. You turned us from a group of thugs into a force for good with real might. So in my opinion, you've earned the right to do whatever you like to that scumbag with our full support. And to be frank, it's not that much to ask. You want to end the person who ruined your life. That's not selfish, Misty; that's the most reasonable thing in the world. Like Kevin said, we'll get our revenge another day.

(He nodded.)

TAVARES: Now let's get him out of here, so you can torture him good and proper back at the base.

(Misty looked across them all wearing the widest of smiles. She then hung her head and groaned.)

MISTY: Great. Now I'm torn again.

(She sighed.)

MISTY: Why did you guys have to complicate things?

KEVIN: We didn't. We just gave you our full support.

MISTY: Yeah... that's the problem.

(She glanced at Fidget's head then back at her subordinates again.)

MISTY: You just selflessly offered to back me despite the fact I'm about to shit on all your hard work. Not to mention your dreams. Now I feel bad for *you guys*.

XIA: We'll get over it, Misty. Just do what you need to do.

MISTY: And what *is* that exactly?

(She gave an exasperated sigh.)

MISTY: I really want to end this guy. I do. *Not* killing him feels idiotic. If he dies, I can start to live again. But at what cost?

TAVARES: Your sanity.

MISTY: Yeah, right; that ship sailed a long time ago.

(She grimaced.)

MISTY: Until you guys came in, I was so sure. He was gonna die. But seeing you all here... it's got me thinking. The repercussions are gonna suck. If I kill him, it'll ruin our big chance to save this city. And you'll never take me seriously ever again.

KEVIN: Yes, we will.

XIA: Always.

MISTY: No. You won't. Every time I make my big speech about saving this city, this moment will be there at the back of your minds. We could have already saved it if I'd let fuck-head here live. That's what you'll be thinking. I know that, because I'll be thinking it too.

(She puffed out.)

MISTY: Everything I said about the city being a living thing will become bullshit. The people being the blood and the gangs being the cancer. All that will become nonsense.

(She glanced down at Fidget.)

MISTY: Because the cure to that cancer is right here under my palm. Killing him would be like pouring the antidote to all our ills down the drain.

XIA: Well, yeah, but when you think about it, that guy isn't just the *cure* to the cancer; he was the fucking cause. With a proper police force in place, the Savages might never have got going.

MISTY: Yes, but you see my point, right? As a leader, how could anyone take me seriously when I point out the importance of destroying the cancer, when *I'm* the dumb bitch who threw away the cure?

TAVARES: Well, if that's how you feel, just let him live, Misty.

MISTY: That's the problem, Tav. I don't want to. I want him to die. Screaming. I want him to feel pain beyond the boundaries of humanity then fucking die.

(She sighed then looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: See? Torn? Help me out here, ideas man, because I'm fucking stuck.

KEVIN: Um...

MISTY: Go on, have a proper think. It's fine.

(She snarled at Fidget then pushed his head down again, provoking a scream.)

MISTY: He's not going anywhere. Take your time.

KEVIN: Right...

(Kevin mused to himself for a moment then grimaced.)

KEVIN: No, that won't do it.

(In that moment an enlightened expression swept onto his brow and he placed thumb and forefinger to his chin.)

KEVIN: Actually... it really is that simple.

MISTY: What is?

(Kevin glanced to his subordinates then back at Misty again.)

KEVIN: Would you mind taking over from Misty, Tav?

TAVARES: Sure.

MISTY: What? Why?

KEVIN: So we can chat for a second.

MISTY: Oh, okay.

(She furrowed her brow at Tavares.)

MISTY: Be firm!

TAVARES: I always am.

MISTY: Good, good.

(She then watched as Tavares approached and held Fidget's head down into the glass for her.)

MISTY: And keep it there.

(With that, she slid off the desk then paced over towards Kevin. Upon arriving, she looked up into his eyes and nodded.)

MISTY: This had better be good.

KEVIN: It is.

MISTY: Go on then.

KEVIN: Okay.

(He then proceeded to speak to her in little over a whisper.)

KEVIN: If he lives, he gets to remain as the minster in charge of justice, right?

MISTY: Okay... I'm hating this already, but carry on.

KEVIN: He'll appoint you as the head of the police.

MISTY: Right. You're just repeating the original plan here, Kevin.

KEVIN: But with a twist.

MISTY: Ooh, I like twists.

KEVIN: And that's why we call you twisty Misty.

(He then shrunk a foot in height, defeated by her unimpressed glance.)

KEVIN: Maybe not then.

MISTY: Uh-huh.

KEVIN: Right. I'll carry on.

MISTY: Please do.

KEVIN: This is actually so simple, Misty, it's ridiculous. We let him put us in charge of policing then pretend to be keeping him onside.

MISTY: What do you mean?

KEVIN: Befriend him.

MISTY: Pass.

KEVIN: Fine. I'll befriend him. What I'm saying is, we can let him think Wyvern Ltd is now his ally. I'll handle that bit if you like.

MISTY: Okay...

KEVIN: Then six months from now, once we've cleaned the city up big time, we could invite him over here. You know, to do a press conference to highlight what a great job we're doing and how awesome he is for choosing us. Let him do his speech about how the city was rioting six months ago but now it's a virtual utopia then watch as he takes all the credit.

MISTY: Well, I'm hating this so far.

KEVIN: Then the poor bastard will get kidnapped by the last remaining Savages, pissed off at him for shattering his empire.

MISTY: Savages?

KEVIN: It won't really be Savages, of course. It'll be us. And while we're pretending to be investigating thoroughly, he'll be tied to a post in your basement with electrode strapped to his testicles.

MISTY: Hmm...

(Misty smirked.)

MISTY: Buying me several days to torture him.

KEVIN: And when you're done, he can turn up dead somewhere. We'll be devastated, of course. But next time we catch some Savages we can say *they* did it. They'll have died in a shoot out, of course.

MISTY: I see...

(She bit her lip.)

MISTY: Electrodes strapped to his testicles, huh?

KEVIN: That was an example, you don't have to do that, obviously.

MISTY: No, no. That's a definitely going to be part of it.

(She mused to herself.)

MISTY: So he just gets six more months, yeah?

KEVIN: Yeah. Then you get to do whatever you want with him.

MISTY: Right...

(She sighed.)

MISTY: Six months, knowing he's alive... that's gonna feel like a prison sentence.

KEVIN: With everything you ever dreamt of awaiting you upon release.

(Misty nodded thoughtfully.)

MISTY: Okay. I can work with that.

(She then looked to Xia, Covert and Tavares.)

MISTY: Guys. Your willingness to give up your dream and support me has inspired me to do the right thing. It'll hurt, but... he can live. I hate it, but... he can go.

(She sneered.)

MISTY: Just makes sure he knows how fucking lucky he is.

(She looked to Kevin and smiled.)

MISTY: Clean up here for me, Kev. I'm gonna leave before I change my mind.

(She then strutted out of the door.)

MISTY: Now where did I leave that bicycle...

(As Misty headed away, Tavares slowly released Fidget's face, allowing him to sit up. As soon as he did so, however, everyone turned away and winced.)

XIA: Damn!

COVERT: Dude. She made a serious mess of your face.

(Fidget whimpered in pain.)

FIDGET: She's a psychopath!

KEVIN: She is, yes. But to her credit, she just gave you an extra incentive.

FIDGET: Did she now?

KEVIN: Yeah. Like I said, if you don't put Wyvern Ltd in charge of the police, the dirt that comes up in your name is going to be enough to bury you forever. There are hundreds of people in hundreds of different places, just waiting to press send.

FIDGET: You've told me all this.

KEVIN: Yes, but I also said, once it gets out that you're up to your neck in corrupt shit an assassin *might* come. Might. Well, now you know that one will.

FIDGET: Her? Miss T, was it? Miss T Phoenix?

KEVIN: Yup.

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: And you really don't want to meet *her* again, do you?

(Fidget shuddered from head to toe.)

FIDGET: God, no. I'll do as you ask. I made that clear earlier. If I don't I'm finished.

KEVIN: Wise move.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: Now to tidy up. We've got a dozen dead agents and an MP with a smashed up face.

XIA: He needs to go to hospital.

KEVIN: He really does.

TAVARES: He can call a taxi once we've left.

COVERT: Then what? What are we gonna do about the rest of this mess? Just pretend a dozen agents all coincidentally had fatal heart attacks at the same time?

XIA: Why do we need to pretend anything happened? We weren't even here.

KEVIN: No, but we need Charles here to be in the clear, so we need to make it look like something bad took place here; something out of his control.

TAVARES: Shit. Good point.

FIDGET: I'll just say once of them turned out to be a gang member and killed the others then came and did this to my face.

KEVIN: Ooh, that might work.

FIDGET: Just get me to the hospital.

KEVIN: Nah, we're good. We'll escape the way we came in. And you can run out the front and get the national guard to take you. Just remember your story.

FIDGET: I will. A rogue agent attacked the rest then attacked *me*.

XIA: And how did you kill him?

FIDGET: Um...

KEVIN: Just say you managed to push him away and he fell into the already smashed window.

FIDGET: Fine. As silly as it sounds that he killed eleven trained agents then failed to kill me, I'll try to make it plausible.

TAVARES: Don't try; do.

XIA: Your future depends on it.

FIDGET: It'll be fine. That excuse will work for now. And if someone decides to investigate the incident at a later date, the *new* police force, these friends of yours, can investigate and clear my name.

COVERT: Hmm... that's a good point actually.

KEVIN: Yes. Yes, it is. We'll see to it you're cleared of all suspicion.

FIDGET: Good. Now go. Clear off, so I can get out there and find help before I pass out.

TAVARES: Now that we can do.

KEVIN: Yup.

(He then nodded towards the door and they all raced away. Left behind, Fidget hung his head despairingly then sighed.)

FIDGET: All I had to do was hide my filing cabinet, but no...

(He then staggered towards the door.)

---

That afternoon in the Wyvern building, tensions were high. Should Fidget decide to double cross them, chaos would ensue. Undoubtedly, he'd call in the army to assist the national guard in taking them down and life would become extremely difficult. Fidget would, of course, be ruined and his life expectancy would evaporate, but they couldn't be sure he wasn't foolish enough to attempt it.

Should Fidget take this foolish step, the first target for the national guard would be Wyvern Limited's company headquarters, as written on the business card he'd received. As such, Brian had been sent to keep an eye on the place from a safe



distance. The job didn't require any more than one person because the building the company was registered to was in fact a rundown bungalow, half a mile out of town. The actual Wyvern building was leased to a company trading as Raine Holdings; an anonymous name chosen in honour of Misty's dead sister. Brian performed his task with an uncomfortable grimace on his face. Should anyone attack the building, they'd know Fidget had gone back on his word. He achieve nothing by attacking this small dwelling, of course, but it'd undoubtedly mean that hell was about to descend on the Wyverns. Mercifully, no attack ever came.

Rather than attempting to taking The Wyverns down and risk his own life, Fidget remained true to his word. That evening, once he'd been patched up at the hospital, he made a statement to the media from outside the accident and emergency department to set the ball rolling. Watching the statement live from his six bedroom, luxury villa by the river, the leader of The Savages, Alfie Savage couldn't help but smirk with disdain.

ALFIE: Look at that upper class arse wipe.

(He then glanced to the sofa and furrowed his brow.)

ALFIE: Where did *you* fuck off to, Layla?

(A woman's voice rose up from the kitchen.)

LAYLA: I'm making us a cuppa, love.

ALFIE: Oh. Fair enough.

(He then scoffed at the TV and raised his voice.)

ALFIE: The head of the justice department's on the telly. The horrible twat who chose the current police force, enabling me to make a small fortune, only to let them turn on us yesterday. Cunt.

(Layla's voice rose up once again.)

LAYLA: I still can't believe they attacked all our people like that, love. What was that all about?

ALFIE: Fuck knows. It's certainly not about what they *claim* it was. Retaliation? Retaliating to what? We didn't do anything.

(He rolled his eyes.)

ALFIE: Let's hear it then, you wanker.

(He then turned up the volume and sat back to listen to Fidget's speech.)

FIDGET: And as you can see, I too was attacked by these appalling thugs. I barely escaped with my life.

ALFIE: What appalling thugs? No cunt went *near* him as far as I know.

(He shook his head then looked to the TV again.)

FIDGET: From what I understand, this gang, known locally as The Savages have been running amuck in this town for quite some time. And the police force I commissioned have done very little to stop them.

ALFIE: Because they've been too busy committing crime themselves. They make us lot look like law abiding citizens.

FIDGET: I have to hold my hands up and admit that commissioning that company to take charge of this city's policing was a mistake. One I shall rectify forthwith. I've contacted the home secretary and he's currently processing the paperwork to dismiss the current contractor on the grounds that they weren't fulfilling their end.

ALFIE: You think?

(He chuckled.)

ALFIE: Come on then, who's the mug that's gonna take their place?

FIDGET: In their stead, the national guard will keep law and order for the next few weeks until the new contractor is ready to take over.

ALFIE: Come on, spill the beans, son. Who am I gonna be shooting at next?

FIDGET: I've given the contract to a local company with a strong belief in law and order, whom I'm certain will clean up this city in no time.

(Alfie chuckled.)

ALFIE: Oh, yeah? Who? Bringing in Batman, are you?

FIDGET: As the head of the justice department, I will be working extremely closely with the new contractor, Wyvern Company Limited, to ensure we *never* see a repeat of the riots that we've witnessed in the last two days.

(Alfie very quickly turned pale. Sitting there, staring at the TV in horror, the word "Wyvern" seemed to echo around in his head a million times.)

ALFIE: Wyvern?

(He then jumped out of his seat and shrieked.)

ALFIE: The Wyverns???

(In something of a panic, he then turned and yelled to the kitchen.)

ALFIE: Pack a suitcase, babe!

(Layla poked her head around the door.)

LAYLA: Why? Where are we going?

SAVAGE: Any fucking where!!!

LAYLA: Huh? What's brought this on?

SAVAGE: That cunt in charge of choosing police forces has given The Wyverns the police contract.

(Layla grimaced.)

LAYLA: So? The Wyverns are nothing but a bunch of annoying poofs, you said. A nuisance and nothing more.

SAVAGE: And they were! But now that police force have gone and they're taking it over. That means it'll be just a two way war. Us verses them and *they'll* have the full backing of the fucking government.

LAYLA: Oh.

SAVAGE: Oh? Is that all you can say? They'll have an endless supply of guns; guns they'll be legally allowed to use on people like *me*!!! Not to mention armoured vehicles and fucking tanks. Our bunch of thugs armed with baseball bats and penknives can't compete with that, love!

LAYLA: Yeah...

(He sighed.)

SAVAGE: They'll come for *me* first, you know that, right? And there's no way I'll be able to hold them off. Not when they've got armoured vehicles and an endless supply of machine guns. Getting captured is a fucking certainty.

(He then shuddered from head to toe.)

SAVAGE: I'll get dragged into a room for a one to one interview with that Phoenix fella. No cameras. And rumour has it, he can tear a man's limbs right out of their sockets. He's a vicious cunt I hear. Seven feet tall and fucking ruthless. A barbarian.

(Layla nodded.)

LAYLA: I see. How does Jamaica sound?

SAVAGE: Better than here!

LAYLA: I'll book the tickets then.

SAVAGE: You can do that from the car!

(He nodded sternly.)

SAVAGE: We're fucking leaving.

(He then lobbed an ashtray through the TV screen before stamping towards the stairs.)  
SAVAGE: We just need enough clothes for a few days; we can buy more once we get there. Go.

---

In the Wyvern building at this time, the mood was very different to that of the Savage household. Whereas Alfie and his wife were preparing to flee the city, Xia was popping open a bottle of champagne. Along with Kevin, Tavares and Covert, she was in extremely high spirits. Misty, on the other hand was in a sombre, reflective mood. She'd let the man who'd been responsible for the gruesome and savage deaths of her family go free and it was eating away at her. She wouldn't however, change anything. The joy on the faces of every single Wyvern member she'd seen was enough to tell her she'd done the right thing, as much as it hurt her. Her personal anguish at letting Fidget go, however, was not the sole reason behind her lack of celebration. As yet, nothing had been confirmed. Fidget had made his speech on the television, but she wouldn't believe it was real until she had the official police contract in her hand. And so, she sat there and watched on as her four fellow generals stood by the pool table, chatting boisterously.

TAVARES: Nah, Kev, not you, mate. You're not cut out to be a copper. You'll be sitting behind a desk like a pansy. Constable Poofta; desk jockey.

KEVIN: And that suits me fine, mate. It's better than the job *you'll* end up with.

TAVARES: Tank driver?

KEVIN: Janitor.

(He chuckled.)

KEVIN: I'll *work* at a desk all day then you'll come and clean it.

TAVARES: Fuck off. I'm gonna be an enforcer; out there where the action is.

COVERT: Same. Special operations, I reckon.

XIA: Until you get fired a week later for too many screw-ups.

COVERT: Fuck off.

XIA: You will. This is gonna be a proper, paying job now, Covert. People who fuck up get the sack.

COVERT: Then I won't fuck up.

KEVIN: Ambitious.

COVERT: Piss off.

(He furrowed his brow then glanced to Xia.)

COVERT: What about you? What are you gonna do?

XIA: Open this champagne bottle.

COVERT: As a copper!

KEVIN: Police Liaison officer, I reckon.

XIA: Kiss my arse, you. I'm gonna be a markswoman, obviously.

KEVIN: Oh, yeah.

(Tavares chuckled.)

TAVARES: Liaison officer? Fuck sake, Kev.

KEVIN: I just thought she'd enjoy working with local people; especially at the children's homes, that's all.

XIA: And I will. I'll go out of *my way* to protect them, but I can do that in my spare time. Shooting people is my passion and I'm bloody good at it.

(Just then, Misty stepped up to them and smiled.)

MISTY: Calm down, guys. Until everything's official there's no point in allocating yourselves jobs.

TAVARES: We know. We're just in high spirits that's all.

MISTY: I get that.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: But there's still no point in allocating yourselves jobs. If it *does* come to fruition, as chief of police *I'll* be the one allocating them.

(She smirked.)

MISTY: You might want to buy a mop and overalls, Tav.

TAVARES: What???

MISTY: As chief of police I won't have time to clean *my own* office.

TAVARES: You...

(He then spotted the grin on her face and started to laugh.)

TAVARES: You evil witch. I thought you were serious for a minute.

MISTY: Of course not.

(Xia chuckled then passed Misty a champagne glass.)

XIA: Join us?

MISTY: Sure.

KEVIN: Result.

(Xia then cracked open the champagne and invoked a cheer from her four friends.)

COVERT: Come on, girl; get pouring.

XIA: Just for that, you can go last.

(She then chuckled to herself as she filled everyone's glass.)

KEVIN: Thanks, Xia.

MISTY: Cheers.

TAVARES: Sweet.

XIA: Thanks, me.

COVERT: Right... you even poured your own first.

XIA: Last means last, Covert.

COVERT: Wow.

XIA: Anyway... who wants to make a toast?

(Everyone glanced at one another, hoping someone else would accept the task.)

MISTY: Fine; I'll do it.

TAVARES: Thank fuck.

(Misty gave him a sideways glance then smiled.)

MISTY: If things go the way we think they might, this will go down as a momentous day for us. It'll forever be the day our final charge to victory began. Former police officers will have the choice to either scarper or be held to account. By us. Using the very same weapons and resources they always used to hide behind. It's ridiculously poetic.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: As for the Savages, as soon as we're officially confirmed, the purge will begin. And it won't end until every single one has been brought to whatever we decide justice is.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: Today could well be the day that brings *about* that change and we in Faxbury owe it all to the four of you here. You did amazing work today. You really did. So despite the aching in my heart, I just want to say, you guys fucking rule. Cheers.

(At once, everyone returned her offer of cheers then took an affirming swig of their champagne. Whether they liked champagne or not, it very much felt like a vindicating, victory sip.)

XIA: Nice speech, babes.

MISTY: Meh. It was nothing you don't already know.  
KEVIN: True, but it was nice to hear.  
TAVARES: That we fucking rule? Yes, yes it was.  
MISTY: Well, facts are facts. And you guys are fucking awesome.  
COVERT: Cool. So...  
(He ruffled his neck.)  
COVERT: Seeing as we were well and truly in your good books right now, Misty, can I have the second half of my blowjob now?  
(Everyone chuckled.)  
TAVARES: You're a sad man.  
COVERT: No, I aint. I mean, it was hardly an *unreasonable* request, was it? She left me hanging earlier... well... not hanging; pointing at the ceiling, but you know what I mean.  
XIA: Tragic.  
COVERT: Thank you!  
XIA: I meant you!  
COVERT: What?  
TAVARES: Begging for a blowjob. Have some self-respect.  
(He ruffled his neck.)  
TAVARES: Besides, it's my turn for some Misty love.  
MISTY: Wow.  
COVERT: How is it your turn?  
TAVARES: You had your chance earlier and Misty blew it.  
MISTY: Guys...  
COVERT: Half blew it! I just want the other half.  
TAVARES: Tough. Get to the back of the queue; you failed.  
MISTY: Hey! Neither of you are getting a turn!  
(Covert and Tavares gasped in horror.)  
COVERT: But, Misty...  
TAVARES: On tonight of all nights...  
MISTY: Stop.  
(She rolled her eyes.)  
MISTY: Fucking talking about taking turns on me. I'm not a bloody PlayStation.  
TAVARES: Oh, you're way more fun than a PlayStation.  
MISTY: Yes, but play time's over.  
COVERT: Huh?  
(She smiled then took Kevin's arm.)  
MISTY: Keep your bloody PlayStation; I've become a Kev-Box exclusive.  
TAVARES: What?  
MISTY: This guy...  
(She looked to Kevin and smiled.)  
MISTY: I love this guy. And once that contract is confirmed and the war is over, we're gonna pursue a relationship.  
(Kevin smiled back.)  
KEVIN: Yup.  
MISTY: Until then, *nobody's* getting any.  
(She then headed for her office, leaving Kevin grimacing.)  
KEVIN: Not even me?  
MISTY: Nope. Not with anyone, in fact.  
KEVIN: Aw.

(As Misty disappeared inside her office, Kevin sighed then glanced to his three fellow generals. Xia was giving him a warm smile. Covert and Tavares, however, were glowering at him as if he was the devil incarnate.)

KEVIN: Um...

TAVARES: You complete bastard.

COVERT: I should have let that copper shoot you when I had the chance.

KEVIN: Right...

(He then skulked away towards the seated area.)

---

Following a tense few days, awaiting confirmation of their police contract, Misty finally received the documentation she'd been hoping for. She was now the head of the new police force. She celebrated by dragging Kevin in her office to put an end to their brief period of celibacy. Their relationship had begun. And so did the purge.

Over the next few days, something of an exodus from Faxbury began. First the national guard moved on, as did any member of The Savage's who could afford to flee the city. Those who remained were rounded up and brought to the cells. Those who could be prosecuted for their crimes were subsequently punished by the courts. Those with minor offences that couldn't be proven, were given a beating then let go. Those with major offences to their names that couldn't be proven in a court of law simply went missing. Misty orchestrated it all from her office at police headquarters. In some of the more serious cases, she also carried out the punishment. She never returned to Saxon Systems and Software. Nor did Kevin. As Misty's second in command, he was the brains behind most of the police's operations. His brilliant, scheming mind conjured up ways to trick former Savages into outing themselves on a daily basis.

Now and again, an armed siege would occur. Groups of desperate Savages on the run from the police would barricade themselves in buildings then try to shoot their way out of trouble. Xia was there every time, leading her squad of armed officers and orchestrating the take down. After work, she'd then head to the city's children homes to talk to the children about their suffering. As a result of her information gathering, a dozen more savages and five children's home staff members vanished from their homes overnight; courtesy of Covert. He'd accepted a role as an independent police advisor, but it was in fact a cover. An excuse to pay him legally for his work as an assassin. Xia would hand him names and the person would never be seen again.

Tavares chose to be a beat cop. He didn't care if the salary wasn't that great. He had the job he wanted. He patrolled his mother's neighbourhood and if anyone misbehaved, they got a wallop. It was a policing style that many others opted to copy. As a result, within six months, crime in Faxbury fell to virtually nil.

Over that six month period, Kevin had made sure to keep in touch with Charles Fidget MP. He gave him daily, exaggerated reports of the Wyverns' progress to assure him he'd made the right choice. He'd also massaged his ego. As he promised Misty he would, he was very much keeping him sweet. Buoyed by what he was hearing, Fidget would often cite Faxbury as his own personal success in the houses of parliament. To have overseen a change in policing that took Faxbury from the edge of a revolution to

England's most crime free city was something he wanted the world to know about. A knighthood seemed likely. It was, however, not to be.

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*Six months after the confirmation of The Wyverns as the new police force...*

Misty couldn't have looked happier in this moment. Nestled into Kevin's side upon a patio sofa, she was loving life. The sun was out and all was right with the world. It was a feeling she wanted to share with her closest friends. As such, she'd invited Tavares, Covert and Xia over to the house she shared with Kevin for a barbeque and cocktails. Delighted to be there, they reminisced about old times and had many a laugh in the process. Xia, however, was about to spoil Kevin's fun entirely. Half way through them all laughing about Covert's screw up at the Fitchett's Funding and Finance building, she placed her glass down then said something that killed the conversation stone dead.

XIA: So, Kev, when are you gonna get around to putting a ring on Misty's finger? (As if someone had just broken news of a tragic death in their family, silence rapidly descended and everyone looked distinctly uncomfortable.)

XIA: Um... if you don't mind me asking...

(Kevin glowered at her coldly.)

KEVIN: Why would I mind? I love being put on the spot like that.

TAVARES: Chill out, mate; you haven't got to answer if you don't want to.

(He shrugged.)

TAVARES: We'll just assume you've got no plans to marry her because you don't love her, that's all.

KEVIN: Tav!

XIA: I'm starting to think I probably shouldn't have asked.

KEVIN: Really? You think?

COVERT: Blimey. He's being really defensive here, isn't he?

(He smiled at Misty.)

COVERT: Get out while you still can, girl. You deserve a bloke who's willing to commit.

KEVIN: I'll commit *you* in a minute!

XIA: I wouldn't bother, Kev. We had him committed once before, but he escaped.

KEVIN: Fine. Then I'll commit *myself*... to hitting him with a very large stick.

TAVARES: And still he's ducking the question.

XIA: It's fine; I'll withdraw the question, okay?

COVERT: It's too late now, Xia. You've opened a door than simply can't be closed.

(Misty chuckled.)

MISTY: Will you guys stop bullying my man?

TAVARES: Probably not.

COVERT: Doesn't seem likely, no.

MISTY: Right. Oh, well. I tried.

(She then looked to Kevin.)

MISTY: You might as well answer the question then.

(Kevin just stared back at her in dismay.)

KEVIN: You... that's...

(He furrowed his brow.)

KEVIN: I'm not discussing our future in front of these cunts.

XIA: Charming.

(Kevin ruffled his neck.)

KEVIN: I'll make my move when I'm good and ready. And I'll *tell you about it* when I'm good and ready.

(He smirked.)

KEVIN: Probably the day after we get back from our honeymoon.

XIA: Ouch. That's cold.

TAVARES: And yet, I'm okay with it. I hate weddings.

COVERT: Same.

(Misty chuckled into her glass then looked to Xia and smiled.)

MISTY: You know you'll be my maid of honour, right?

XIA: Aw.

(She beamed.)

XIA: I do now.

MISTY: And Tavares and Covert, if we bother to tell them, will be flower boys.

TAVARES: Flower boys???

MISTY: In kilts!

TAVARES: No!!!

COVERT: We repent!

KEVIN: Too late now, lads; it's been decided. I'm half tempted to propose right now, in fact. The sooner you two get humiliated the better.

(Everyone chuckled then Misty sat back.)

MISTY: All jokes aside, we have discussed it, but there's something I still need to do before I can even *think* about settling down.

XIA: Right...

MISTY: Speaking of which. I think it's time I got on and did it.

(With that, she climbed to her feet then paced back towards the house. Before quite reaching it however, she stopped and glanced down at where she'd tied Charles Fidget MP to a metal, garden bench. Battered and bruised, he was sitting slumped forwards, barely conscious. Misty had been torturing him for three solid days.)

MISTY: You don't look well, Charlie.

(Fidget could barely muster an audible groan.)

MISTY: Cheer up, misery guts.

(She then glanced over her shoulder to where her four subordinates were assembling behind her.)

MISTY: I'm starting to think Charlie here isn't enjoying the party.

TAVARES: Well that's just ungrateful.

COVERT: No, no, to be fair, it can't be easy for him. All the beer is in cans and they're a bitch to open without fingernails.

KEVIN: Yeah; you might have left him *one*, Misty.

MISTY: Sorry. I got carried away.

XIA: And it's fine. The main thing is, you enjoyed yourself.

MISTY: That I did.

(She sighed.)

MISTY: But now it's time for the fun to end.

(At this point Fidget managed to spit out a word.)

FIDGET: Good.

MISTY: What? Good?

FIDGET: Just kill me, you psychopath.

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: Nah.



(She shrugged.)

MISTY: I *was* going to kill you, but I've decided against it.

COVERT: Really?

MISTY: Yeah. I'm gonna let him go.

(Fidget slowly managed to lift his head and glance at her with his one usable eye.)

FIDGET: Let me go?

MISTY: Yeah. You can thank Kevin for that.

(She sighed.)

MISTY: Maybe I've mellowed a bit since we started dating; I don't know. But he's convinced me let you go and carry on with your life. As long as you continue to serve us, of course.

(Fidget whimpered.)

FIDGET: I will.

MISTY: Then consider your punishment over.

(Fidget sobbed then started to grovel.)

FIDGET: Thank you, Misty. I've learned my lesson. I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

MISTY: Meh. Water under the bridge. Be gone. And never kill again.

FIDGET: I won't. I'm really, really sorry.

MISTY: Fine.

(She then stooped to untie him.)

MISTY: Someone help him up, please.

TAVARES: Allow me.

(With that, he yanked Fidget to his feet.)

FIDGET: Thank you. Thank you so much.

TAVARES: Yeah, alright; don't make a big deal of it.

FIDGET: Thank you, Misty. I'll never hurt anyone again. I'm sorry.

MISTY: Fine. Now go. The exit is that way.

FIDGET: Thank you. Thank you so much.

KEVIN: Just remember, when you get back, tell the authorities you never saw the kidnappers!

FIDGET: I won't say a word. I promise.

(He then started to limp away. He was extremely weak and in tremendous pain, but the sudden and unexpected sense of freedom he was experiencing had given him a second wind; it was energising him. For three days now he thought he was going to die. To suddenly be free, therefore, he was experiencing a joy like no other. It went beyond relief. The life he cherished could now go on and he'd once again find happiness. It was a highly emotional moment and he found himself sobbing with joy as he limped away.)

FIDGET: I'm free. I'm free.

(Watching him go, Xia smiled.)

XIA: What do you think he's feeling right now?

KEVIN: Unbridled joy, I'd assume.

TAVARES: With a renewed appreciation for his precious life.

COVERT: It's probably the happiest he's even been.

MISTY: How lovely.

(She then sneered.)

MISTY: In your own time, Xia.

XIA: Righto.

(With that, Xia pulled out a revolver, took aim, then shot Fidget in the leg. With a scream, he crashed to earth then lay there writhing in agony. Delighted to see it, Xia beamed then passed Misty her gun.)

MISTY: Thanks, babes.

(She then slowly paced towards where Fidget was writhing in pain.)

FIDGET: Why? Why do that???

(Misty stared down at him coldly.)

MISTY: It's all part of the lesson, Charlie.

FIDGET: But I learned my lesson.

MISTY: Different lesson. I was teaching you how it feels to be me.

(Fidget whimpered.)

MISTY: First, I needed you to experience hopelessness. You did that during those three days where I mercilessly tortured you and promised you a grim death remember?

(Fidget could only whimper once again.)

MISTY: That's how I felt when my mum and sister died. Devoid of hope.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: Then I felt a second wind; like I *did* have a chance at life after all. You know, when I was reunited with my dad. That was the happiest moment of my life. You just experienced that yourself, did you not? A second wind. You thought you were going home. You thought life would go on, just like *I* did when I met my dad.

(She sneered.)

MISTY: Then you took it away.

FIDGET: But...

MISTY: Now I just took your second wind away too. Get it?

(She knelt by his head.)

MISTY: Now you know how it feels to be me. Lesson learned.

FIDGET: I'm sorry.

MISTY: You said.

(She rolled her eyes.)

MISTY: That was a lot for a twelve year old to go through, you know? At least you got to be an adult before you experienced it.

(She shrugged.)

MISTY: So there you go. We're the same now, you and me. We've both experienced hopelessness *and* the misery of losing a second chance to be happy.

FIDGET: I didn't mean to.

MISTY: Right... you *accidentally* paid an assassin to wipe my family out, did you? Twice! Okay, mate.

FIDGET: I'm sorry. Forgive me. I understand now. We're the same.

MISTY: Well... not really, no. There is *one* subtle difference.

FIDGET: What?

MISTY: After *my* second wind was taken away, I got to live to see another day. You won't.

(She snarled.)

MISTY: Any last words?

FIDGET: Forgive me!!!

MISTY: Now that I *can't* do. Forget you? Probably. Forgive you? Nope.

(She then shot him in the head.)

MISTY: And burn in hell, you sick piece of shit.

(With that, she threw the gun on the grass then turned around and marched towards her four subordinates. Tears were welling in her eyes.)

MISTY: Go away, everyone. Not you, Kev.

(Understanding she was extremely emotional right now, Xia, Tavares and Covert quickly obliged. Kevin, on the other hand, marched towards her and met her halfway, throwing his arms around her as he did so. She instantly nestled her head into his chest then burst into tears. Her hell was finally over. Vengeance and been had and she'd no longer be tortured by knowing that her parents killers were out there somewhere; enjoying life. It was a deeply overwhelming moment and she cried in Kevin's arms for quite some time. Watching on from the seated area, Tavares, Xia and Covert could only shake their heads solemnly.)

XIA: I know that's relief, and those are happy tears really, but...

TAVARES: Knowing she had that much pain pent up inside her sucks.

COVERT: Yeah.

XIA: She'll be happy once she gets her head around it though. I mean, once it sinks in that her enemies have all been extinguished.

TAVARES: Yeah. She can start living then.

COVERT: Yeah.

(Xia and Tavares both turned to glance at him.)

XIA: Is that all you're gonna say?

COVERT: Yeah.

XIA: Right.

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A minute or so later, as Kevin and Misty continued to hold one another, Brian and Lisa emerged from the house and gathered up Fidget's body. He'd now be taken to an abandoned dwelling in a town sixty miles away and dumped there. Kevin had planned it all out. He'd kept Fidget onside then invited him to Faxbury to help promote their fine work. He'd only done so, however, to trick Fidget into telling him his plans for personal security. Fidget had revealed that a personal team of guards would collect him from his house at nine am then take him to Faxbury. Armed with this information, Kevin had sent Covert and his team to the house three hours earlier to kidnap him. The blame had then been put on a gang from another town, courtesy of misleading clues and manipulation from the Wyvern computer room. His disappearance and subsequent murder would never be linked to Faxbury.

Watching as Brian and Lisa set about cleaning up the blood, before taking his body away, Kevin nodded then glanced down at the top of Misty's head.

KEVIN: Are you okay, babe?

MISTY: No. I'm the happiest I've ever been and yet I'm crying like a sappy teenage twat watching a bad talent show.

KEVIN: Right...

(Misty then stepped back and grimaced at him.)

MISTY: I'm overcome... overwhelmed... and now I'm going over there.

(With that, she marched over to where her friends were waiting. Kevin, of course, was right behind her. Upon arriving at the seated area, Misty reached down and grabbed her wine glass then stood up again.)

MISTY: Guys; a toast.

TAVARES: Cool.

COVERT: Fair enough.

XIA: Go, Misty.

MISTY: Right.

(She nodded.)

MISTY: Tav, your mum now lives in the safest street in the safest city in England.

Xia, children's homes have become exactly what they're meant to be. Homes.

They're no longer dormitories for scared orphans to lay in await for their abusers.

Kevin, we obviously couldn't give your brother the ability to walk again, but we have ensured nothing like that will ever happen again to the citizens of this town and we've punished those responsible. And now I've got what I desired too. I'll be able to rest a lot easier now, knowing those who ruined my life have suffered and died accordingly. We did what we set out to do.

(She smiled.)

MISTY: And even though it's over, Covert still gets to use his skills in action. So everyone's a winner. And so, please raise your glasses to what we need to aspire to next. A happy future.

(Everyone repeated "a happy future" then took a swig from their drink.)

MISTY: Guys, that wasn't it. I hadn't finished.

XIA: Oh. I thought...

MISTY: Nah, I'm kidding. A happy future it is.

TAVARES: Fuck sake, Misty.

MISTY: What? It's not my fault you're gullible, is it?

TAVARES: Yes!

MISTY: What?

TAVARES: I mean it's your fault for making it so obvious.

MISTY: I see.

(She chuckled.)

MISTY: Never change, Tav.

(Xia smiled.)

XIA: It's good to see you smiling again, babe. You're okay now, are you?

MISTY: I think so. I don't know. Will I ever be okay? Will I ever stop having the nightmares? Will I always be haunted by what happened right in front of my eyes? I can't answer that, Xia. But what I can tell you is, I'm going to fight to get past it.

And strive to be happy.

(She nodded towards Kevin.)

MISTY: Having love helps.

TAVARES: You've always had that.

COVERT: Yeah.

XIA: And you always will.

TAVARES: And can you stop saying "yeah" all the time, Covert!

COVERT: I'm a man of few words!

(He ruffled his neck.)

COVERT: And it's Graham. Start addressing me accordingly and maybe I'll consider being more talkative.

XIA: No, thanks. You'll just have to *keep* saying yeah; the Covert name is here for good.

COVERT: Shit.

(Kevin chuckled then raised his glass.)

KEVIN: Anyway, it's my turn to propose...

XIA: To Misty?

KEVIN: A toast!!!

(He glowered at her coldly.)

KEVIN: I'm gonna throw you in a bush in a minute.

XIA: I'd shoot you first.

KEVIN: Right...

(He ruffled his neck.)

KEVIN: Misty, people say you're a psychopath, but you're really not. You punish arseholes like a savage barbarian, but you're nothing like a psychopath. You put your dream on hold so that literally *everyone else* in the city could achieve theirs. A psychopath wouldn't even consider doing that! The fact is...

(He then gulped.)

KEVIN: Why are you sneering at me like that?

MISTY: This is the worst speech ever! I'm your girlfriend. I was expecting something loving and romantic; not a lengthy explanation to distinguish the fine line between myself and fucking lunatic!

KEVIN: Right...

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: If it helps, I was going to lead up to something like... Misty you're an extraordinary woman with amazing skills and incredible focus. And you have something special about you that inspires people to want to fight by your side.

MISTY: Aw, how sweet. Allow me to slip my knickers off.

KEVIN: Really?

MISTY: No!

KEVIN: But... I was just trying to say...

(He sighed in defeat.)

KEVIN: You have a way about you, Misty; something I can't describe. It draws people to you, babe. Nobody else could have turned Tav's ridiculous bunch of club wielding cavemen into what the Wyvern's became. Nobody.

TAVARES: Club wielding cavemen???

KEVIN: Right...

(He then sat down.)

KEVIN: I'll quit while I've still got all my limbs I think.

TAVARES: Wise move.

(Misty chuckled then sat down at Kevin's side.)

MISTY: I think I get what you were saying. That I was a good leader.

KEVIN: And that you still are.

MISTY: Right.

KEVIN: But if you were hoping for something romantic, how's this? I love you, Misty. Have done for years. And getting to know you as the real you, rather than the woman you were pretending to be at work, has only made me love you more. The real thing is even better than the one I fell in love with in the first place.

(Misty smiled.)

MISTY: That's awesome. And mutual. I loved you long before you joined the Wyverns. I used to get really annoyed about it too, because I was in no position to love anyone back then, and yet. It happened.

KEVIN: Then I guess we were made for each other.

MISTY: I guess we were.

(They then stared lovingly into one another's eyes.)

TAVARES: Well, I don't know about you, Covert, but I could use a good vomit right now.

COVERT: I'll grab us both a bucket.

XIA: Wow. You two have no romance in your souls whatsoever.  
COVERT: We do.  
TAVARES: That was just over the top.  
COVERT: Exactly.  
TAVARES: No romance indeed. We've got plenty. We're lovers and fighters.  
KEVIN: Wait. What? You two are lovers?  
TAVARES: Fuck off!  
MISTY: That's definitely what you said.  
TAVARES: I also said fuck off.  
COVERT: And now I'm gonna say it.  
XIA: Great idea, chaps. You keep telling Misty to fuck off. What's the worst that can happen? Probably not a lot, to be fair. I've heard that succumbing to the rage of the phoenix is like being tickled by a fluffy kitten.  
KEVIN: Let's find out.  
XIA: Misty! Kill!  
(She then pointed at Covert and Tavares.)  
MISTY: Great. They tell me to fuck off, now you're treating like a fucking golden retriever.  
KEVIN: If you ask me, babe, they're all cunts.  
MISTY: Evidently.  
(She then raised her glass.)  
MISTY: But they're the greatest cunts in the world and it's an honour to call them my friends. Cheers.  
(With that, they all raised their glasses then sat down to resume a fun afternoon of talking nonsense in the sunshine. They didn't have a care in the world right now, and that was something that, only one year ago, they'd never have believed possible.)

THE END

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