

## The Gang of Five

**Role Play => Random Role Play => Finished RP's => Topic started by: Serris on August 17, 2013, 10:35:46 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris on August 17, 2013, 10:35:46 pm**

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Soren Almaya awoke to the bleating of his home security system. Quickly throwing on his glasses, he hastily punched in a combination to enter his environmentally sealed and fireproof control center. Taking a seat in the main console, he gasped.

The bright red letters on the screen told him all he needed to know.

Quote

Threat: Fire Location: Home workshop
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Swearing profusely, he immediately ordered the CO2 fire suppression system to activate. The next words caused his heart to sink:

Quote

CO2 FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM IS OFFLINE
--

To make matters worse, another warning came up:

Quote

WARNING! POSSIBLE INTRUDERS APPROACHING HOUSEHOLD!
--

"Oh no," Soren muttered. Thinking quickly, he unlocked his gun safe and grabbed his Remington 870 shotgun. Despite the fact that compact laser weapons and magnetic accelerators existed and were commonplace, standard firearms were still very popular -- despite modern armor rendering them mostly obsolete. This was mainly due to their relatively low cost, low maintenance and sheer reliability.

He switched on the external cameras and saw a group of figures running away from his house. He also saw red and blue lights in the distance heading to his house.

He'd wait until they arrived before he got out of the safe room.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato) on August 17, 2013, 11:03:18 pm**

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"Captain, this is Officer Echo," Emilena reported from the lead squad car, without a trace of emotion in her voice. "Approaching the suspected augment's living quarters."

"I know; I'm watching online news," the Captain snapped back over his walkie-talkie, from his sealed penthouse in another country. "Why the hell can't you ever keep stings quiet?"

"Augments don't deserve anonymity," she said matter-of-factly, "the world deserves to know of their treachery. Will be using lethal force."

"At least make reasonably sure it's an Augment!" He sighed. "With legally verifiable evidence!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22 on August 17, 2013, 11:08:09 pm**

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out in the street, m a great dane named marita jones was walking diown the stret, taping away at her laptop, as a police car raced by, lights flashing ' wonder what perp they're going after ' Marita said to herself probably an augment of some kind. ' marita had little love augments, she prefered creatures to be natural, not something that looked like it came out of some old movie about a mad scientist.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 17, 2013, 11:12:48 pm**

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The police cars as well as several firetrucks pulled into his driveway. The firefighters got out and began dousing the blaze, fueled by the chemicals he used in his work.

Soren saw them approaching via the cameras. Making sure he *appeared* to be unarmed, he exited his safe room and made his way to the entrance of his house where he waited for the first available officer.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 17, 2013, 11:22:04 pm**

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Officer Echo marched up to the front door. Suspect appeared to be cooperating. Wonderful. Normally, she'd just shoot him (exposed inner cybernetic parts are her favorite legally verifiable evidence), but since she's on probation she cannot carry a firearm.

"Name, occupation, identification," she demanded. "Anything you say can and will be used against you in the court of law."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 17, 2013, 11:26:06 pm**

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Soren handed over his ID card. "Soren Almaya. Certified external augmentation service technician."

Inwardly, he didn't like the look this Fox was giving him. It was the look of a bitter law enforcement officer looking to pin someone with a crime.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 17, 2013, 11:27:39 pm**

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From a rooftop nearby, a fox crouched, a hooded jacket covering his entire body, save for the faint shimmer of his augmented eyepiece.

"Hmph. Damnit, I was too late. They already got here."

He muttered to himself, casting his gaze between the officer and the man from the building...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 17, 2013, 11:48:06 pm**

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"Mr. Almaya, did you know that if I punch you and you fight back any more than a sack of rice would, that legally counts as 'resisting arrest' and gives me authorization to haul you in for questioning?" She asked bluntly.

After giving a moment to let this sink in she swung her first in a low undercut, aiming for his stomach.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 12:00:30 am**

Soren staggered back from the punch. Luckily, the clothing he wore was impregnated with shear-thickening fluid to soften the blow. It was a necessity when working around things that could deliver blunt force trauma on par with a car crash. "By the way, choose your next actions carefully, all video and sound is recorded," he said. He looked around, hoping another officer would help him. If worse came to worse, he'd fight back.

But obviously, Soren did not want "assault on a police officer" on his currently clean criminal record. But if this rogue cop was intent on killing him, what choice did he have?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:03:47 am**

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"Everything everywhere is recorded, Mr. Almaya..." She narrowed her eyes. She didn't like it when she punched people and they didn't go down. "Mr. Almaya, have you ever constructed, used, or in any way interacted with biomechanical augments?"

Her fellow officers looked slightly uncomfortable but their professionalism stopped them from interrupting an interrogation.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 12:08:57 am**

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marita had passed by the open door, long enough to overhear echos threat to soren. ' with all due respect officer' she said coming up to her ' rule 17-B of the police handbook, sections 1-4 forbids use of force without probable cause. a mere 5 second search online can give me, an average jane, that information. surely you know the rules governing your conduct?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:11:53 am**

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"Miss Jane, turn around and walk away from these premises immediately or I will indict you for aiding and abetting a possible criminal. Which will give me probable cause to punch your pretty face!" Echo snarled, eyes flashing.

Of course, the dane was right, but if Almaya turned out to be an Augment (which she was sure of), he would void his rights on principal and it wouldn't matter.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 12:12:00 am**

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"I do not have any augments. However, as I said, I am licensed by the City of Lanthae to perform maintenance and repairs as well as modifications -- within the bounds of the law -- on class 1 and class 2 external augmentations. In addition, I have a restricted license to possess class 3 external augmentations, which as you may know, allows me to possess and work on them but I may not under any circumstances sell them."

(OOC - class 1 external augments are ones that are "normal specification" artificial limbs (no super strength or built in tools). Class 2 external augments are ones with super strength an/or built in tools. Class 3 external augments are limbs with weaponry built into them.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:16:27 am**

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"Have you ever operated on augmentations which do not fall under your legal liscensing, or sold augments to parties without proper government-issued permission?" She demanded.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 12:18:57 am**

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with all due respect officer, i know not what this gentlemen is doing nor do i care. but if you strike me, not only will you be in serious trouble with your superiors, i will not hesitate to defend myself. and of course, if is not assault if the officer initiates the fight. you have absolutely no right to threaten me, a regular citizen, when i have not committed any crime.marita replied curtly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 12:19:55 am**

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Soren's eye twitched. "No. Am I free to go now?"

He looked out of the corner of his eye and noticed that the firefighters were still trying to put out the blaze.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:23:52 am**

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Emilena ignored the chattering dane and answered Almaya's question. "No, now you must consent to a full searching of your residence, with the stated purpose of locating any evidence indicating illegal augment construction or vending."

(OOC: If you ask for the warrant, it will have a typo.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 12:28:43 am**

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thank you mam ' an oc wearing an Sergeant tag said coming up to marita ' we've got everything under control here.. please be on your way..' he said loudly.. 'dont get mixed up with Emilena, for your own safety. now go  
' he added softly.

Mariota nodded at the ox, and continued down the street...

A word emilena after you have served him the warrant."the ox whose name was Brownstreet said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:34:32 am**

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"Stay out of my business, Brownstreet," she muttered, struggling to keep her voice level.

"Officer Echo, the sargeant outranks you!" exclaimed one of the other officers.

"Not in this investigation!" She snapped back. As the arrest of Mr. Almaya was designated her chance to get taken off probation, she liked to interpret the orders as she was given power above her position on matters regarding the arrest of Almaya. Nevertheless, realizing the Captain may not see things that way, she acquiescently turned to look at the ox. "...yes?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 12:35:35 am**

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"I don't have to consent to anything unless you show me a warrant." Soren crossed his arms.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:39:41 am**

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A feline officer stepped forward and handed him a court-signed slip of paper authorizing a full search of his address for evidence of unlawful augment activity. However, the address failed to reflect that the workshop, as a former hotel building, was legally considered a very large Room 1A. The warrant specified no room number.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 12:42:05 am**

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what the hell were you doing threatening that Great Dane with arrest? officer these days a 3 second search of the police database can reveal any and all disciplines, and a cursory search would reveal that you are on probation, one more violation away from termination. i pulled in a lot of favors to keep your last punishment to just probation, many of the other sergeants felt your conduct warranted termination. Broadstreet said coldly. ' your attitude has needed a major adjustment for a long time Echo, a MAJOR adjustment. if you EVER threaten a bystander with arrest or assault in my hearing again , you will be arrested, and facing a long time counting up the bricks in your cell! now go search the premises!

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 12:50:28 am**

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Soren looked over the warrant. "I'm afraid you have the wrong address. My workshop is legally classed as a commercial building -- a hotel if I recall correctly -- due to the fact it was built on the remains of an old hotel. As a result, I do not consent to the search."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 12:58:27 am**

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"What?" She snapped. "Semantics! Get out of my way!" She made to push Almaya aside.

"Echo, it's not semantics," interrupted the feline, stepping forward. "If this is a house warrant, we can't--"

"He'll run if we don't arrest him now!" She snapped, finally losing her cool.

When the feline attempted to step in her way, her face flushed and she drew her katana, pointing it at him for a split second.

"What the hell?" He breathed, but she had already sheathed it, realizing that she had just badly overreacted and the consequences were not going to be good.

(OOC: I dont want her to lose her license in front of Almaya. Can Brownstreet commandeer the investigation and force her to relocate somewhere private?)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 01:03:54 am**

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(sure)

echo come with me! broadstreet said fiercely. ' the rest of you , make sure this place is picked up.. poste haste..

- he took echo by the arm and led her outside he went out to a squad car ' get in ameliya.. now' he said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 01:08:04 am**

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Emilena flushed but got in the squad car. "It was a moment of weakness!" She protested once the others couldn't hear. "I wasn't actually going to do anything to him!"

Back at the house, the feline addressed Soren. "Umm, Mr. Almaya, you're right, we don't have authority to search your building. But we're just going to fix this and come back tomorrow, and if you save us the trouble and give permission now, it'll look really good when affirming your innocence..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 01:13:32 am**

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Soren crossed his arms. "Fine," he growled. "Be my guest if you want to go rooting through still hot debris. Just remember, I'm not at fault if you burn yourselves."

The firefighters had finally extinguished the blaze, leaving behind a charred ruin.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 01:14:27 am**

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save it echo. You drew a sword on a fellow officer' broadstreet said starting the car, and drove down the street. ' this is not the first time you'll 'lost it' either..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 01:28:42 am**

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"I know I'm not supposed to have lethal weaponry, but it's just a sword! It'd be useless against firearms!" She defended herself, ignoring all the times she'd killed gun-wielding assailants with it. "What are you gonna do to me back at the station? I demand to be read my rights!"

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After a few fruitless minutes, the officers gave up quickly.

"We're sorry to bother you, and our condolences for the loss of property," the feline said sincerely. "One final question I'm legally obligated to ask; did you deliberately start the fire to destroy incriminating evidence?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 18, 2013, 01:30:07 am**

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The cloaked figure had moved to a closer vantage point, glancing around at the scene. "Hmm...something about this seems...odd. A fire, and immediately the police have a warrant to search the area? This doesn't seem right..." He muttered...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 01:41:38 am**

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"I was asleep when the fire broke out!" Soren snapped. He rubbed his temples. "Look, I just want to go back to sleep!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 01:42:03 am**

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we're not going to the station, except for you to clean out your desk, and get your belongings' Broadstreet replied, as he turned into a back alley. ' he stopped the car. he went over to a innocent looking stairwell and press down on a step. and the wall split open ' go on ' he said to Emilena' he said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 01:48:03 am**

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The officer jotted down Soren's exact words in his little pad. "Thank you Mr. Soren," he said. "Hope you find some place to sleep for the night."

And with that the officers began leaving.

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Emilena marched into her office and packed what few personal belongings she had. There were extremely few; other than her files, she had never felt a connection to material objects except her sword.

"You're making a mistake," she said simply. "I've brought in more Augments than any other officer. And the orphanage was an accident. Any other officer would be given more than one strike!"

(OOO: She evacuated the orphanage of people when she burnt it down, clearly not an accident.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 01:50:36 am**

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Soren muttered something under his breath as he shut and locked the door. He washed his face, changed back into his pajamas and flopped down on his bed. Tomorrow, he'd go see if there was anything salvagable in the ruined workshop.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 02:04:31 am**

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This is not your first Strike Emilena. There was the Orphanage, then that officer you hacked badly with that sword ' Remember Officer Fuge? I sure do.. and there was the trashing of the census office in a raid six months ago.. this really your 4th or 5th strike.. your temperament is not becoming to an officer. we are supposed to protect and serve the public, to give them security and show them some warmth and compassion every so often. we're not suppose to berate, abuse or threaten them, as you did today. this is ultimately a position of trust and responsibility, of duty. and frankly, this is not the first time you've failed in your duty in a big way. as i said, i pulled in some favor to keep you from being terminated when you were put on probation last time' Brownstreet said.' that probation was supposed to last a year, instead you didn't last 3 months.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 18, 2013, 02:14:56 am**

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From a building opposite, a white rat peered anxiously from behind his curtains, his tail flicking nervously. He knew all too well the attitude some law enforcers took to augmented civilians, having being on the receiving end of several 'searches', often for the crime of looking at a police officer.

As the police drove away, he drew his head back in alarm, scared they'd notice him. Light spilled across his face, revealing a heavy criss cross of scars around two glowing red, cybernetic eyes. He wanted to walk across and see if Soren was okay. But what he was stopped by more cops? Better to wait until morning.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 02:17:23 am**

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Aaron Geasbrecht scowled as he watched some crappy late nite shows on his TV.

He crushed his empty beer can and tossed it into the recycle bin.

"F---ing Gleamers," he growled. "Always causing trouble."

Most of the Augments in his job tended to show off by doing things like benchpressing girders or other feats of strength only possible with the augmented limbs and reinforced skeletons. Even though they were harmless, Aaron felt that they were a subtle message to him: you are an inferior being.

(OOC - Gleamer - derogatory term for an Augment.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 02:30:36 am**

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"None of that is important!" She snapped. "The destruction of every Augment possible is the final goal! Fuge wanted to give his wife a second chance...he should have thought about that before he married an Augment!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 02:41:05 am**

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that was a personal matter between him and his wife' broadstreet. ' you are, to be truthful echo, an anti- augment fanatic. do you know what percentage of this worlds population you'd have to kill to get rid of all of them? 35%, over 3.5 billion people.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 02:44:40 am**

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"Just let me get Mr. Amalay" she pleaded. "I know he's an augment, these legal hoops we have to jump through are idiotic. If I arrest Amalay, they drop my probation. Then you can give me a new one for this sword thing, but you don't have to discharge me!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 18, 2013, 02:49:21 am**

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In another part of the city, a tall figure stood at the mouth of an alleyway, cloaked in shadow. A chill wind blew through the night, and he shivered slightly, pulling the lapels of his trench coat tighter against his neck. Marcus' gaze never left the car parked on the opposite side of the road.

A figure approached. Marcus checked his watch. 2 AM. Right on time. He watched as Dr. Tarver unlocked his door, got in... And was vaporised as the explosion tore the car apart, lifting it several meters in the air and bringing the burning wreckage crashing to the floor. Marcus turned away, a rare smile playing across the Doberman's mouth. *Another disease spreader eliminated.* He vanished into the darkness, and it was as if he was never there.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 03:02:19 am**

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you have 72 hours to prove a air-solid case; Brownstreet finally said. ' you must do this legally, no extra stuff. by the book. if you can finger him, he'll be arrested and your first probation will be dropped and your job will be saved. if he is not in custody by midnight Friday, then you will be terminated with loss of pay and benefits. I'm giving you one final chance Echo, don't blow it. you can put your stuff back if you wish..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 03:05:56 am**

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One of the officers present at Soren's house looked at Echo. "Officer Echo, with all due respect, there is *zero* proof that Mr. Almaya is an Augment. In addition, ó despite your adamant belief otherwise ó being an Augment isn't illegal."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 03:20:28 am**

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(Ooc: Echo and Broadstreet are back at Echo's office.)

She grinned. "I don't need police help. I can get this done alone."

She dropped her suitcase on the ground. "I'll get Mr. Amalay in 72 hours, Broadstreet. Thank you."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 18, 2013, 03:24:46 am**

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As Axel drew back from the curtains, he heard a series of thumps above him. He jumped in shock, his eyes making a slight *whirring* sound as they darted up. He lived on the top floor of the apartment building. Who could be on the roof?

His metallic hands grasped the baseball bat that he always kept in his room. He slowly opened his window and scrambled out onto the fire escape. His trainers rattled the stairs leading up - he willed his legs to stop trembling. Reaching the top of the passage, he gathered his courage and peeked over. In front of him, a hooded figure was staring down in the direction of Soren's house. He squeaked in shock and ducked down, hoping whoever it was didn't notice him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 03:24:55 am**

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clocks ticking echo. get on it..' broadstreet said he turned and went over to his office which was in a side room. he went to his desk and brought out a large clock ' he pressed a couple buttons and 72:00 appeared on the screen then started ticking down. he set the clock on his deskmm and the n sared pulling out some files and examining them..

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 18, 2013, 03:28:37 am**

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The hooded figure glanced back at the source of the noise, eye glinting, then shook its head and vaulted off the roof, landing with a soft thud and glancing at the building that had been on fire...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 03:31:47 am**

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Echo quickly left her office and marched back into the brisk evening air. She knew exactly what to do.

"Captain, this is Echo. I need a 24-hour surveillance team to assist me in watching Soren Am--"

"You've got some nerve calling me after that failed sting!" Snapped the captain. "That was disastrous! You remember the arrangement, Emilena! You failed to bring in Soren!"

"Blame the intern who can't fill out a basic warrant correctly!" She snapped back. "And you can't do anything to me, Sargeant Broadstreet has given me a 72-hour extension."

"Why does he give you so many damn chances?" grumbled the captain. "Dammit, all right, but you're on your own. I will allocate no men to assist you and authorize no police equipment. And in 72 hours I'll take your badge from you myself."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 03:43:18 am**

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Marita meanwhile had stopped at a coffee shop and do some work on her computer. she ordered a hot cocoa and began searching the megaNet for information.. ' bombing other side of city are Augments to blame?

Typical anti-Augment slant' marita shrugged as she drank her cocoa..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 18, 2013, 03:46:17 am**

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When he next looked up, the figure was gone. Sighing with relief, Axel hurried back down, staircase rattling, and threw himself through his window, locking it behind him. Returning to his sofa, he continued tinkering with the new augment modification he'd started on. Maybe Soren would find some use for it.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 18, 2013, 09:38:21 pm**

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Emilena tried recontacting the Captain, but he wouldn't pick up. Muttering under her breath, she reconsidered her options. She could personally scope out Mr. Alamay's apartment, but the police investigation would not take kindly to her presence. She decided to go to her tiny apartment and get a few hours of sleep.

She began walking down the lonely moonlit sidewalk, eyes constantly darting from side-to-side and her hand never moving from the can of pepper spray attached to her belt.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 18, 2013, 09:43:32 pm**

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From nearby, the cloaked figure stepped towards her, nodding to her...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 18, 2013, 10:08:26 pm**

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Aaron sighed as he shut off the TV. "Screw this. I'm going for a walk."

He then dressed and got his keys, cell phone and gun. Technically, it wasn't legal to carry *any* gun without a permit in Lanthae but in truth, there was only one law about firearms in Lanthae: it's legal if you don't get caught.

Failing that: Have some cash or other valuables to bribe a dirty cop...of which there are many.

He exited his apartment and passed by a homeless Dhole begging for money. He looked over the Dhole for any signs of augmentation before he grabbed his wallet. Seeing as there were no visible augmentations, he placed some credits in the Dhole's collection plate.

The German Shepherd then took the elevator to midlevel, where he stepped out onto one of the many elevated walkways that crisscrossed Lanthae's buildings. Hoverbikers, frame-flyers and a few augmented flyers flitted through the smoggy air.

Aaron took a deep breath. The smoggy, biting air smelt like home to him. He then merged into one of the busier thoroughfares and continued his trek to his favorite late night snack joint: Electric Sheep.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 18, 2013, 10:41:16 pm**

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broadstreet continued to work though his files, involveing 5 sets of augmentation, 3 illegal dealers of augments and 17 corrupt officers..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 19, 2013, 01:33:18 am**

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Emilena stifled a sigh when she saw the cloaked figure approach. "Oh, god, you...you always seem to know when I have no other options...I wouldn't be surprised if your mechanical filth lets you read my mind..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 19, 2013, 02:24:38 am**

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Adrian chuckled a little, letting his hood down and smiling bitterly.

"It's nothing so useful as that. Hell, if I had my choice, I'd never have had these...damn things in the first place."

He said, looking down at the cold metal of his left hand, then shaking his head.

"Anyways, it's not that I'm here because of that. I'm here because something seems off about this."

He added, recovering his calm demeanor quickly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 19, 2013, 03:10:01 am**

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Echo raised an eyebrow. "Not out here, follow me..."

She began walking briskly to her small apartment.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 19, 2013, 03:17:59 am**

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marita by this time had finished her work and her cocoa and decided to head home. hers was , in truth a lonely existence.. she had very few friends, due to being moved constantly during high school and later during college.. marita turned down a couple alleyways then headed across the street to an apartment building..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 19, 2013, 04:49:07 am**

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Marcus leaned against a wall, watching people walk by. It seemed to him that everyday, the number of augments was growing. His ears twitched. *I have to step up my work. They're infesting this damn city, like maggots on a rotting corpse.* He rubbed his eyes, a headache beginning to drill into his brain. It was late, and he'd been up for almost four days straight. Maybe it was time to call it a night.

He turned and began making his way back to the apartment he'd been staying for the last week. He passed a window, an orange pole stenciled in front, with a blinking, pink neon sign above the doorway. It said '**All Nude Augments, All Yours!**' An augment strip club. Marcus shivered with revulsion, and moved his hand to the back of his trench coat where he'd hidden his .44 Magnum. He was about to break in the door and put a bullet in every one of them... then his hand relaxed and moved back to his side. It wouldn't do to be caught now. *Always be careful.* He carried on home.

On the way, he came across a Great Dane heading in the same direction. He barely gave her a passing thought as his long strides carried him past her rapidly.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 19, 2013, 07:12:04 pm**

---

Adrian followed behind Echo, sure to keep his augments hidden under his cloak as he did so, eyes glancing around frequently...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 19, 2013, 08:32:37 pm**

---

After a few minutes of brisk walking, Echo opened the lock to her third floor "coffin room;" a digout of wall about the size of a large horizontal locker, fitting a cot, set of two drawers, sanitary spray dispenser (cheap, portable, and practical alternative to showers) and a laptop on the drawers.

"Make yourself comfortable," she offered hollowly; he literally had one place he could sit, the corner of her cot.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 20, 2013, 12:06:43 am**

---

Adrian chuckled, taking a seat on the edge of the cot and glancing around the room, his gaze repeatedly drawn to Echo...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 21, 2013, 01:14:54 am**

---

Echo removed her outer clothes and ran them through a slit in the wall; they would be sent to a steamer, air-cleaned, and returned in minutes. "I plan to either sleep for the next 4 hours, or if anything you've noticed requires immediate attention, investigate whatever requires it. Though I warn you I won't be able to grant the police-immunity I usually can if we hit hot water; my sting on Mr. Alamay was unsuccessful and I'm even closer to losing my job..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 21, 2013, 02:42:03 am**

---

Marita reached her apartment on the fourth floor, opened the door, shut it behind her and tossed the keys on the counter. Inside were all the necessities, a small bed, a futon, a tv, and a small nook for where she ate her meals.. 'this place wasn't the Ritz, but it was better than living on the street.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 21, 2013, 03:16:17 am**

---

Aaron entered Electric Sheep and was immediately treated to a pounding techno track emanating from a beat up boombox on the greasy counter.

He took a seat at an empty table and cracked open a menu. Fish ball udon sounded good right now.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 21, 2013, 06:36:11 am**

---

Marcus walked down the corridor to his apartment, old wooden floorboards creaking, and stopped at his door. He took out a small, square device aimed it at the door, and pressed a button. A UV beam quickly scanned up and down the door. It showed no hand prints, aside from his own. Marcus nodded with satisfaction and let himself in.

He flicked the light on and crossed to the desk in the corner of the room, on which sat a closed laptop. From the distance, pounding club music drummed through the walls. The *Electric Sheep* club. Not his favorite place, but it was usually a good place to find fresh recruits.

Sitting at the chair in front of the laptop, he reached up to the shelf above and took down a half eaten can of baked beans. As he began spooning the contents into his mouth, he flicked on the laptop. A holographic symbol of a red, cracked gear flickered into existence in front of him.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 21, 2013, 08:07:39 pm**

---

Adrian looked away, averting his gaze from Echo as he nodded.

"It's nothing pressing, nothing we can act on right now, but there've been reports that indicate...trouble. Like something's been pulling the strings to incite these incidents. All the incidents have been happening the same way as what went down today. If you'd be willing to, it'd be something worth pursuing. If we find out it leads back to Alamay, then we can go after him. If we find anything else... well, then we'll have to figure out what to do."

He said quietly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 22, 2013, 02:02:12 am**

---

Aaron paid for his meal of fish ball udon. He lifted the cracked plastic spoon to his lips and slurped the rich, salty broth.

He paid for a bottle of beer to accompany his meal.

A 24 hour news channel was talking about an anti-Augment protest in the Silica district. The German Shepherd let out a small smile.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 22, 2013, 02:33:39 am**

---

"We should investigate," she nodded. "Your intuition has been extremely good in the past at picking up what's important," she nodded. "But I need to bring down Alamay regardless of whether he's involved or not in 71 hours."

She had just finished using the antibacterial spray when her clothes rolled back out of the slit with a ding reminiscent of a toaster. She slipped them on with as much dignity as a person with no elbow room could muster. "Shall we set out tonight or in the morning?" She asked. She honestly wasn't that tired but she knew meditations she could undergo to control her state of being, and could make herself tired if need be.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 22, 2013, 09:07:07 am**

---

The cracked gear symbol disappeared after a second, and was replaced with white lettering. A message.

**One of our sources has reported Adrian Kibagami is operating at a location near you. May be investigating our recent actions against Soren Almaya. His elimination should be considered one of your top priorities.**

Marcus' ear twitched as he read the holographic writing. Kibagami had been an irritation to their cause for too long. He still remembered their last encounter, still bore the scars. It would be a pleasure to cut him down once and for all. *He's investigating Soren Almaya...*

It would seem he had some watching to do of his own...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 22, 2013, 10:32:38 am**

---

Adrian grinned, rolling his shoulders a little.

"Well, if we have a deadline like that, then I suppose we should probably get to work.

Though...do you really think Alamay had anything to do with this? The way that things played out, it seems like you may have been set up."

He said softly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 23, 2013, 12:05:59 am**

---

"Regardless of whether he's innocent or not, I need to take him down or I lose my job..." Echo stated softly. "But we can focus on him after some reconnaissance. Did you have a place in mind to inspect?"

-----

In the forest near the city, a lone woman was sprinting through the trees. She heard the beeping of tracking bots somewhere behind her, but they were heading the wrong way.

She tripped and tumbled off the road, stifling a panicked cry. This proved to be quite fortunate when a police car drove down the road past her. She heard a fragment of the driver reporting into a radio.

"All clear, suspect may be heading for Chancellorsville instead..."

She staggered to her feet, mud now staining her soaked gray dress. She saw the edge of the trees up ahead. The lights of a city.

As she staggered through the trees, she noted a set of guards stationed by the road. As she crawled through the grass past them, one checked a feed outputter.

"Apparently the tracers just gave up on the trail from the river. She could be anywhere from the lake down to Chancellorsville."

The other groaned. "Aww, hell, she isn't gonna make it this far down! I want to go home to my wife!"

"If you weren't out here, you'd be busting that inventor with Analena," his companion reminded him, as their quarry dragged herself through the grass past them, hoping to reach the city.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 23, 2013, 12:46:16 am**

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(OOC - um, maybe I should clarify the anthros in this world. Birds of prey, corvids, struthiformes (ostriches and related birds), galliformes (chickens), mammals and reptiles are all anthropomorphic.)

Aaron finished his meal and paid for it. He then exited into a bustling elevated walkway as he headed back home.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 23, 2013, 12:52:42 am**

---

(sorry, sorry.....I'm not really a furry, I constantly forget things like that. Turned the dogs into robots or something.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 23, 2013, 01:26:45 am**

---

Adrian nodded.

"Right, then. I've heard some rumors about a club downtown, actually. Called "The Electric Sheep." Heard it's a major source of...unsavory customers."

He chuckled...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 23, 2013, 04:56:57 am**

---

Axel eyes glowed as he bent over the arm modification. He could see the current's flow, where it should flow, like a living organism. He replaced one section with another and then sighed, leaning back and rubbing his eyes with his black, robotic arms. *These eyes are great, but they sure do hurt after a while...* He switched them to their normal vision.

Axel stood up and bent down to pick up a pack of cigarettes. Crossing the room (softly, he didn't want to make any noise which might annoy his neighbors), he opened the window and

slowly climbed up the stairs. The weird guy with the hood was still gone. *Thank god.*

He took a seat on one of the dusty ventilation units that looked out onto the edge of the woods and lit up. Swirling spotlights from further in the city would occasionally fall across the tree line, penetrating the darkness behind them. Axel stared idly into the trees, taking a deep drag, trying to clear his head.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 23, 2013, 06:52:41 pm**

---

Echo thought. "Isn't that the revolting strip club down the road? What could they possibly have to do with anything?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 23, 2013, 07:29:57 pm**

---

Adrian shrugged.

"Well, it probably's the last place anyone would think to look. I mean, who'd look for an anti-Augment group in an augment strip club."

He chuckled...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 23, 2013, 10:08:53 pm**

---

Echo paused. This was the first time Adrian had mentioned this was an Anti-Augment. "Why should we try to shut down an Anti-Augment group? I hope they engage in as many terrorist acts as they like if it means fewer Augments on the streets."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 23, 2013, 10:49:08 pm**

---

Adrian looked at her for a moment.

"Well, to be honest...there is a reason. As far as these extremists are concerned, you're an augment, too. Between the accelerated growth, and the fact that there are neural implants in you..."

He said coolly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 24, 2013, 12:11:40 am**

---

She stiffened up. Within milliseconds, her katana was in her hand and pressed against his neck. She had moved faster than humanly possible.

"How...*how* do you know that...?" she whispered extremely quietly, suddenly deadly serious. "Who told you about those...? And how many other people know...?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 24, 2013, 12:25:10 am**

---

marita watched tv for a bit after throwing together a quick dinner of chicken. ' nothing much on.. she muttered to herself ' another fine day in this place.. why did i get stuck here.. i had a job lined up in chancellorville..'

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 24, 2013, 01:11:18 am**

---

Adrian calmly brought his hand up to the blade, easing it away from his neck.

"Well, for one...I could sense the EM frequency of the implants. And two, that just confirmed it. Besides, I went back to your old orphanage, and they'd left your file out on a desk. Don't worry, I don't think anyone short of a few of those terrorists would know."

He said reassuringly, hand still on the blade...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 24, 2013, 01:47:46 am**

---

"I burned my old orphanage down to keep that information from getting out...and if you ever tell *anyone*..." she threatened, trailing off. She wasn't actually sure if she could kill him, if the time came. He was the only ally she had left.

After a few seconds, she sheathed her sword. "But you're right. We need to infiltrate this group. If any of them know about me, they need to be killed."

She glanced at her pillow. "I'm not going to sleep tonight. Let's get this investigation started now."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 24, 2013, 01:59:47 am**

---

Soren Almaya got up to go to the bathroom.

As he relieved himself, his mind swirled with questions. Why would a police officer suddenly attack him? More importantly, why were the police so disinterested in what seemed like a patently criminal act?

He washed his hands and went back to sleep. He'd go salvage what he could tomorrow morning.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 24, 2013, 02:00:15 am**

---

Adrian chuckled.

"So you're the one who burned that place down, huh? Glad someone did."

He said lightly, then looked at the ceiling.

"We're gonna need to get in, but I have a feeling they'll be on the lookout for me. And you're a cop and aug, so...We'll need to figure another way in."

He said seriously...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 24, 2013, 02:33:46 am**

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"We could kidnap a stripper when she gets off her shift and force her to let us in from the back," suggested Echo. "Augments will do anything if you threaten to break their cybernetic parts."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 24, 2013, 01:01:08 pm**

---

Adrian chuckled.

"Yeah, but if I had to guess, any of the strippers we'd have a chance with are probably gonna have emergency alert systems installed. We try to threaten them, they'll probably alert the guards. Our best bet to get in is to get in undercover."

He said with a calm grin...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 24, 2013, 04:05:09 pm**

---

"Hmmm..." thought Echo. "You're right. We're going to need disguises."

She climbed over him and opened the door to her closet. "We're going to need a stripper costume and a bouncer costume. I have someone who can help me in that regard. Or at least, is *about to* start helping me..."

-----

Lily reached the city limits and stumbled into the city. She looked around, unsure of what to do. She didn't know who she could trust.

Finally, she decided to crawl into an alleyway and try to sleep there. Unfortunately, the alley was occupied.

"Who the hell are you?" growled a thuggish-looking bum, opening his coat to reveal a shotgun.

She stumbled backwards. "Sorry, I didn't see you--"

"Don't move," he growled. "I ain't seen you on these streets. You an undercover cop?"

"No, I'm not, I was just leaving--" she stammered, but then the guy grabbed her arm.

"You know what? If you're not a cop, or hell, even if you are, I'd rather keep you right here," he grinned wickedly. "You ain't much of a fight at all."

"Let go of--!" Her protests were cut off by a large ham-sized palm pressed against her mouth.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 24, 2013, 04:18:34 pm**

---

Adrian nodded.

"Right. An outfit won't be enough, though. You're gonna need some fake augments where they're gonna be looking. And I just so happen to have something that can help with that." He said cleverly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 24, 2013, 05:08:34 pm**

---

As Axel stubbed out the end of his cigarette, he heard a woman's cry from down below. Standing up, he cautiously peered over the edge of the rooftop. In the alley adjacent to his apartment block, he caught a glimpse of a figure in a dress struggling with a larger man. Then they moved out of sight, and the only sound was the faint scuffing of shoes.

He felt a coil of fear in his stomach. He knew it wasn't just a couple fooling around. *But what if he has a knife, or a gun?* Then his resolve strengthened. What kind of rat would he be if he did nothing?

Axel jumped over the railing and ran down the fire escape as fast as he could. He could still

hear a muffled screaming. *I'm not too late...* he thought, as he reached the tarmac and sprinted for the alley.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 25, 2013, 03:19:06 am**

---

Echo frowned. "This will be the last time you discuss or gain access to my body my body in such a way," she cautioned. "Can you make the changes here, or do you need us to return elsewhere? Also before we go, I'll need to do some online searches...this individual is going to need *motivation* to assist us..."

-----

The bum dragged Lily into the alleyway and roughly groped her. "If you don't scream, I'll kill you *afterward* rather than before..." he growled.

Lily didn't have the body structure or the strength to fight back. She screamed as loud as she could, but it was almost completely muffled by his hand. Still, several window lights clicked on, but as soon as each inhabitant noted the nature of the crime, clicked the light back off and sealed the glass to keep the sound out.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 25, 2013, 03:28:18 am**

---

Adrian nodded.

"Of course. And we can get the things set up here. They'll fool any cybernetic searches. I just have to get them set up. But...listen, if anything goes wrong, then...Just promise me you won't do anything too reckless, alright?

He said, eye softening...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 25, 2013, 04:00:47 am**

---

Axel slowed as he reached the alley and poked his scarred face around the corner. The guy attacking the woman was facing the opposite direction to him, and they were making enough noise to muffle the sound of his footsteps. *Now's my chance...*

He started running up behind the man, eyes searching for any kind of a weapon. No luck - aside from a few odd bits of trash, it looked like the garbage collectors had been especially thorough tonight.

Without missing a step he charged up and leaped on the man's back, who started bucking, trying to shake him off. Yelling, Axel drew a fist back and thumped him on the side of the head. His arms were only a class 1 augmentation, but metal was still stronger than normal flesh, and each punch made a solid *THUMP!*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 25, 2013, 04:10:10 am**

---

"I shall promise you nothing of the sort," Echo affirmed, eyes glinting.

Acquiescently she removed her clothes (she was well aware of the body parts Adrian needed to "enhance," and aside from those there was little modesty remaining clothes would leave) and laid on the bed. "Were I in any better straits, there is no chance I would be trusting you with something of this nature," she felt like pointing out.

-----

The man tried to swing his shotgun and hit his assailant, but Axel was too small. This threw the man off-balance and he tumbled off his feet, squashing Axel with a cry.

"Son of a bitch!" he yelled, hitting his head badly on the pavement. He glanced at Axel through blurred vision. "Who the--?"

He was cut off by a shotgun blast to his abdomen. Lily had retrieved the shotgun and clumsily reduced his lower body to red meat.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 25, 2013, 04:26:41 am**

---

Axel gaped, his ears ringing and his face and T-shirt specked with red. The blast had thrown the bum across the alley, revealing the girl holding the smoking shotgun.

"Uh... y... you killed him. Oh, he's dead..." He pointed out, his mouth still stretched in an O of surprise.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 25, 2013, 04:50:12 am**

---

Adrian barely glanced up from the set of bags he had produced from inside his cloak. "I'm well aware of that. If either of us were in better straits, then we wouldn't be here at all. Now, these are going to tingle quite a bit when they go on, just going to warn you." He said calmly, picking up a few pieces of elaborate-looking metal plate...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 25, 2013, 05:22:56 am**

---

Echo glanced at them, her face betraying the slightest traces of equal parts disgust and apprehension...

-----

Lily kept the shotgun out, and pointed at Axel. "Who the hell are you?" she asked, voice quavering. "What do you want?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 25, 2013, 05:58:04 am**

---

"Whoa! Don't shoot, don't shoot!" Axel scooted backwards on his rear until his back bumped against the brick wall. He threw his arms up in the air.

"I saw that guy attacking you, so I came down to help, I'm not trying to hurt you, my name's Axel, please put the gun down!" He spluttered as he looked endearingly from her face to the shotgun leveled at his head.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 25, 2013, 08:04:33 am**

---

Adrian gave Echo a small, reassuring smile as he placed the first piece onto her shin. "Oh, relax. Not like I'm actually doing an augmentation." He said, as the metal piece sent a tingling all through Echo's lower body...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 25, 2013, 03:45:27 pm**

---

Echo stifled a gasp. Of course, physical sensation was to be expected considering the bodily area, but she still had an extremely negative perception on sexuality of any kind, so the feeling of stimulation, no matter how moderate, was...unpleasant to her. At least, that was the only way she felt comfortable with it.

She felt like saying something dismissive to express her disdain for this feeling, but for once her wit failed her and she remained silent.

-----

Lily swayed, then raised her gun to a non-threatening position and dropped it. Exhausted, she dropped to her knees.

"I'm sorry, I...just can't trust anybody. Ever since I woke up people have trying to kill me...I haven't slept in days...and I can't even remember what my name is..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 25, 2013, 04:36:56 pm**

---

When he saw her sink to her knees, Axel lowered his arms and stood up slowly. "Hey, it's ok... we, ah..." As he walked cautiously over to her, his foot caught on the toe of the dead man, and he almost fell flat on his face.

"Oh christ... Look, we need to get out of here!" Curtains in the windows around them were twitching. Gingerly, Axel approached the girl and tapped her shoulder. "It's not safe to stay here. We can figure out the rest later, ok?"

*She looks like hell...* he thought as he looked down at her. *And what was she saying about people trying to kill her?* Axel reached out his hand.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 25, 2013, 05:47:06 pm**

---

Adrian looked up, glancing up at Echo with a small grin.

"Sorry. I forgot to warn you that that response might happen. I...hope it won't get worse, but we're gonna have to get this done."

He said softly, gently patting her arm...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 25, 2013, 07:16:33 pm**

---

"Stop talking!" She snapped, embarrassed both at feeling the sensation and knowing he knew.

An emotional outburst unbecoming of her, she knew, but she wasn't exactly in her comfort zone at the moment. *Besides, he's an Augment*, she told herself, *it doesn't really matter what he thinks.*

-----

Lily hesitated, but the rustling of a window shade somewhere above them convinced her to take his hand. "Thanks. And I'm so sorry...."

She willed herself to her feet; both felt like lead weights at the moment. "I don't--I want to get off the streets...not that I'm homeless but...I mean I might be homeless, I don't really know..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 25, 2013, 07:32:32 pm**

---

Adrian smirked to himself, reaching down and affixing the plates to Echo's other shin.  
"Sorry. Just trying to make you more comfortable."  
He said gently, slowly moving his hand higher towards her thigh...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 25, 2013, 07:45:46 pm**

---

"I have an apartment on the other side of the street. I know getting far away from... this guy would be better, but I don't have anywhere else we can go and at least we'd be off the streets. And what's another dead homeless guy to the cops?" Axel added bitterly.

He noticed the girl seemed wobbly on her feet, and he tightened his grip slightly to steady her. Normally this kind of interaction would make him extremely nervous, but with his adrenaline pumping he didn't even think about it.

"Are you okay to move?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 25, 2013, 08:14:04 pm**

---

"Well...that...isn't necessary," she forced out, finding it tough to think. She almost asked if this was nearing being over, but she held her tongue rather than appear weak. She wanted to close her eyes but bad images kept popping up when she did that, so she had no choice but to watch her colleague at his work instead.

"Don't get too comfortable," she snapped, as he seemed to be enjoying himself a bit. "This is a one-time event. You augments are your sick fetish for metal parts..."

-----

Lily nodded. "I'm not wounded...I don't think. I've just been on the run for, I think three days now..."

With Axel's help she began staggering to the apartment. "I used to have a fanny pack, with some things like food and a thermos, but I think I lost it sometime during the second day. A bullet broke the strap while I was running..."

She was far too exhausted to limit her words or use any sort of tact; she was ready to tell this person everything just because he was the first person in three days who hadn't tried to kill her.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 25, 2013, 09:10:05 pm**

---

Adrian glanced up momentarily, hand slipping and lightly grazing her crotch.  
"Wh-what? I don't have anything of the sort. I find normal, non-metallic bodies infinitely more attractive, thank you very much."  
He said, eyebrow cocked...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 26, 2013, 02:13:10 am**

---

Aaron passed by a drunken bum on his way home. "Poor guy," he muttered. It was when he saw the gleam of metal that his pity morphed to disgust. "Ugh, get a decent job," he muttered.

He spat his wad of gum into a potted plant on his way home.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 26, 2013, 05:00:27 am**

---

Axel glanced around uneasily. There wasn't anyone else around. "Well, it looks like you're safe for now. If you're hungry I have, uh, hot pockets." He led her around to the building's front door. Luckily, the superintendent wasn't skulking around in the entrance like he usually was.

"So... you can't remember your name, huh?" Axel asked as he started to help her up the old wooden stairs.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 26, 2013, 05:26:59 am**

---

There was a sharp intake of breath. "Then...why did you become an Augment?" Echo groaned, panting slightly. "And how much *longer* will this procedure last?" She gritted her teeth. Her entire body was pale and covered in sweat.

-----

Lily shook her head as Axel helped her up the stairs. "I don't remember anything..." she admitted. "Before I woke up in a field, in the woods, at night...I haven't even changed clothes since then...haven't stopped moving..."

Once they reached his room, she wasted no time in darting to the fridge and tearing into three frozen Hot Pockets. She hardly noticed the muddy footprints her hiking boots made on the floor, or the handprints she left anywhere. Exhausted, she collapsed on the floor in front of his refrigerator.

The chance to lay down, the thought that she was finally safe for a time, and the sudden stomach cramp that came roaring up, all hit her at once and she just began crying. In despair, in confusion, in fright, in relief....probably all of the above. And she couldn't stop.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 26, 2013, 06:33:51 am**

---

"Sorry about the mess," Axel said as he bolted the door and turned around. Then he froze as he saw the girl had collapsed, sobbing, surrounded by muddy footprints and discarded Hot Pocket wrappers. He made his way cautiously over to her.

"Hey, you," he said. Comforting crying women wasn't one of Axel's strong points. When she didn't stop, he took out a cup of instant coffee and gently led her over to the couch. "It's okay, you're safe here," he said, as he pressed a button on the side of the cup, instantly heating up the coffee, and handed it to her.

"You can change if you want. My clothes should fit you. I, uh, I don't have any woman's clothes, though," he told her, as he fiddled with his ear awkwardly.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 26, 2013, 09:05:28 am**

---

Adrian chuckled bitterly, as he attached the other thigh panel.

"I lost my arm and part of my face...Oh, a good few years ago. There was a bomb in someone's apartment, and I saved them. These were to save my life."

He sighed.

"Two more pieces. Roll over please."

He added...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 26, 2013, 09:33:36 pm**

---

Echo rolled over acquiescently, the initial embarrassment having subsided somewhat, and she was starting to get nettled by the fact that he must be enjoying this far more than he should.

"I suspect you're going to have to take these *off* for me as well?" she asked pointedly.

-----

After roughly ten minutes, Lily had cried most of it out of her system and was laying quietly on Axel's couch.

"I'd prefer a shower...if that's okay," she finally answered, wiping one of her puffy red eyes. "If you could wash these, I want to keep wearing them...they're the only clues I have to who I am."

She sat up to sit her coffee, and noticed the couch was now badly soiled with mud. "Oh, I'm so, so sorry about all of this," she sniffed. "I'm sorry about everything..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 26, 2013, 09:40:21 pm**

---

Adrian shrugged.

"Unless you want them to stay on, then yeah."

He said calmly as he placed the next one onto her rear, a much more intense tingle surging due to the proximity to other body parts...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 27, 2013, 05:54:36 am**

---

"That's okay," Axel said, the newspaper crinkling under him where he'd placed it over the mud to sit next to her. "I guess this place needed a clean anyway."

He got up and crossed the room to a door next to the refrigerator. Opening it revealed a tiny bathroom, with a rusty shower attachment and a light that could barely perform its purpose. "Sorry, I know it isn't exactly glamorous. And... watch out for the water, sometimes it can turn ice cold for no reason."

Axel indicated an Auto-Wash machine in the kitchen. "Before you have a shower, you could pass your dress through the door. I made a few adjustments to the Auto-Wash so it'll only take 5 minutes, then I can just pass it back once you're finished. Oh! I, uh, I won't look!" He said, turning red.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 27, 2013, 07:00:10 am**

---

Echo clenched up instinctively and let out a strangled grunt. A moment of realization later and she instantly reverted to her previous state. "That didn't...just happen," she glared over her shoulder. "Just finish already..."

-----

Lily nodded and walked into the bathroom. "Thank you..." After a few seconds the door cracked open and a single hand dropped her stained clothes and hiking boots onto the floor. The door shut and soon the sound came of the water turning on.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 27, 2013, 07:38:13 am**

---

Axel picked up the stained dress and slotted it into the machine. It automatically put in the soap, and after a few seconds started spinning. He splashed some water on his face to wash off the specks of red from his fur, suddenly more acutely aware of the large gash marks across it. As he bent down to pick up her boots and put them on another sheet of newspaper, he noticed the corner of a white sticker poking out from the sole. He peeled it off. *Hmn. Boots must be new.*

When that was done, he picked up the TV remote from the table and flicked it on for the late night news. *Won't hurt us if the police have some big case on right now to take their attention off the guy in the alley,* he thought hopefully.

"...This woman is extremely dangerous, and should be treated as such. If you see her, do not, we repeat *do not* approach her. Call your local police, and allow them to take action." The news reporter was speaking into the camera solemnly. Next to him was a picture of the girl who was showering in the next room.

"Oh, this isn't good," Axel said out loud.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 27, 2013, 08:44:00 am**

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Suddenly there was a shriek from the bathroom, and then a crash.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 27, 2013, 09:00:13 am**

---

Axel jumped up, startled. "I warned you about the cold water!" he called out. There was a thumping on the floor from below. "Sorry about the noise, Mrs Leibetz!" he called down.

When there wasn't a response from the bathroom, Axel started to get worried. He stepped closer to the door. "Hey, what happened? Are you alright?" He said, anxious, tapping on the door.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 27, 2013, 10:35:38 am**

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Adrian chuckled softly.

"You know, it's okay to admit that you enjoy things every now and again."

He said earnestly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 27, 2013, 12:07:57 pm**

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"I don't enjoy this!" Echo gritted her teeth. "Of course my body is going to interpret this as a pleasurable act, but that doesn't change that sexuality is vile and painful, a thing that common

folk use as a recreation to distract themselves from their worthless existences!"

She winced as something mettalic connected electrically to her nervous system. "Let's just continue considering this the necessary evil that it is. Giving into the feelings is the first step to losing your soul to the Augments."

-----

There was no response from Axel's bathroom.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 27, 2013, 12:24:33 pm**

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After knocking several times, there was still no reply. "Alright, look, if you can hear me, I'm coming in!" He twisted the knob and pushed the door open. The shower was still running, and steam from the hot water had filled the room, making it hard to see for a second.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 27, 2013, 02:19:03 pm**

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Adrian smiled.

"Heh. It's not all that bad, from what I've heard. And besides, Augments rarely even have sexual feelings at all. At least, most don't..."

He said with a blush...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 27, 2013, 02:34:28 pm**

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"Considering the nature of the establishment we're about to visit, I have a hard time believing you." Echo flexed her gluteus. The false Augments merged comfortably, allowing complete movement from her hip joints. Good. "Is that all?"

-----

Lily had fallen over in the shower. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry..." she hastily scrambled to her feet, noting that in her shock she had torn the shower curtain down. "I just got startled by..."

Above her left breast was what appeared to be a small tattoo. A crude glyph of an eye, black with a white iris.

(<http://img827.imageshack.us/img827/9162/0oou.png>)

"What is that?" she asked nervously. "I don't even know my own name, but I know I shouldn't have that! I don't like it!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 27, 2013, 03:23:42 pm**

---

Adrian chuckled a little.

"You know that there aren't many augments in there, right? Mostly non-augmenteds with that fetish, actually."

He joked...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 27, 2013, 07:05:37 pm**

---

Axel turned back from twisting the water off. "Woah... that's creepy as hell." He stepped further in, his shoes squelching on the floor, and bent in to get a closer look. "Looks pretty new, too. The skin around it's still kinda raw."

He frowned. "An eye. It's got to mean something... Like, a gang, or a company? I've never seen anything like it before." Axel suddenly blushed as he realized where he was staring. He held out a towel to her from the shelf.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 28, 2013, 01:26:49 am**

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"I choose not to spend time researching sex establishments," Echo answered matter-of-factly. "And you have not answered my question. How soon until we can actually go and begin the infiltration?"

In an attempt to distract herself from the proceedings, she grabbed her laptop and began researching a woman who had foolishly volunteered her name immediately after inconveniencing Echo...

-----

"I don't like it...." Lily repeated.

Lily realized she was flashing her rescuer at about the same time Axel did, and quickly grabbed the towel. "Sorry!" she stammered for the umpteenth time that night.

She shut the shower off. "I think it'd be best if I just went to sleep...I know my clothes aren't done yet, I can just have them in the morning."

She trundled sleepily toward his couch.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **August 28, 2013, 01:55:54 am**

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marita continued flipping through the channels, all 100 of them.. almost nothing was on.. ' why isnt there anything good on..?' She muttered..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 28, 2013, 04:39:35 am**

---

Axel caught her wrist. "Hey, you might as well crash on the bed. Don't worry, it's new, I changed it this morning. I'll take the couch. That way, if anyone busts through looking for you, they'd have to get past me, right?" He puffed out his chest, trying to look tough and not really succeeding.

He lowered his voice. "Look, don't worry. I know something weird is going on, and I'm going to help you figure it out." He thought it was probably for the best not to mention the police had a manhunt on for her just before she slept.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 28, 2013, 09:51:17 am**

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Adrian shrugged and chuckled.

"Neither do I. I just happen to know about that particular one since there've been quite a few problems around that area. That's all. I don't do strip clubs."

He said calmly, then leaned back, eyes drawn to Echo's butt.

"And just as soon as you're ready, we can start going that way. Just gotta get some decoy

parts on."  
He said, blushing faintly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 29, 2013, 04:47:16 am**

---

"Well, don't be too slow," Echo said, eyes not leaving the computer screen. She was already trawling the police archives on a certain Marita Jones. "I'm fairly certain I've found what we'll need to grab our last team member...that was a shockingly simple search."

-----

Lily nodded, wiping strands of wet hair out of her eyes. "I really appreciate what you've done for me." She hugged him, both out of gratitude and because she was about to fall over from exhaustion. "I wish I could repay you somehow..."

Silence fell as she couldn't figure out what else to say. She was already half-asleep.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 29, 2013, 05:47:40 am**

---

Axel froze up, shocked by the hug. Then he slowly hugged her back. "It's no problem." When he looked down, he saw she could barely keep her eyes open.

"Come on, you're about to keel over." He half carried her into the bedroom and helped her in, pulling the bed covers over her. "See you in the morning," he said, smiling shyly, as he moved quietly over to the light switch and flicked it off. He stood for a moment, watching over her, then pulled the door shut lightly.

Axel walked into the main room and thoughtfully picked up the bar code he'd pulled from her boot. After a moment, he absentmindedly put it in his jeans pocket and sat down on the couch, suddenly feeling exhausted, keeping a weary eye on on the front door.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 29, 2013, 09:02:36 am**

---

Adrian smirked, getting up and quickly stripping down as he pulled out several plates of another metal. He glanced back over his shoulder at Emilena, then busied himself with the plates. First came the thigh guards, which he slipped onto his legs, feeling the familiar tingle as they integrated into his nervous system. The next part was always his least favorite. He slung the belt with the manipulator system on, clasping it around his waist as the spineplate swung up, latching to his back before extending the needles that connected it to his spinal column directly.

"You know...ah, that stings... you're really quite pretty Emilena. You should try smiling more. I don't think there'd be anyone in the world who could resist your charms."

He said lightly, as he tugged on the mechanical arm sheath, as well as stepping into the boot-type leg armor. The last pieces to go on were a mechanical lower jaw cover and a mounted visor system, which he kept open for the time being...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 29, 2013, 11:06:51 pm**

---

Electric Sheep was quite crowded at this time of night. Pounding techno issued from the speakers as fog roiled around the dancing crowd lit up by strobes and lasers.

Among one of the dancers was an Indian Cobra named Sanjay Bhat. Despite his outward appearance, he was an Augment. In addition to his natural venom glands, he had two tanks

that allowed him to inject his opponents with synthetic poisons or drugs. In addition, he also had an "infrared eye" implanted between his own eyes, granting him infrared vision like that enjoyed by Pit Vipers. He was originally from Palladis ó a city that totally banned weaponized augmentations for civilians. He had gotten special permission to have his venom tank implants as a security guard, but when he was fired, he fled the city to avoid having the mandatory surgery to remove his implants.

He gulped down a shot of vodka as he reared up and swayed to the music.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 30, 2013, 06:03:44 am**

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Marcus pressed the 'Off' button on the side of the laptop and folded his hands thoughtfully under his chin. Soren Almaya lived about 15 minutes away by car. If Adrian was going to be looking into him, then he'd be staying somewhere close too. *Probably helping the augmented scum out there as well.*

Knowing Soren's address was useful, but it probably wouldn't be much help. He knew that Adrian wouldn't just walk up to the front door. But... people loved to talk, especially about augmented freaks that thought they were the new Batman. And where else would they be more likely to talk than the most well known nightclub in the city?

It seemed the Electric Sheep was his next destination. As he rose from his chair, he muttered darkly to himself, his voice low and rasping. "I'm coming for you, Kibagami."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **August 31, 2013, 04:25:05 pm**

---

Echo got to her feet. "Excellent, let's move."

She got to her feet and quickly dressed. Then she marched smartly out of her room.

-----

The police were scouring the city when they came across the bum's body.

"Check that shotgun for fingerprints. This doesn't look self-inflicted," the chief ordered.

(OOC: We should have a tie skip right here.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **August 31, 2013, 07:49:25 pm**

---

*BOOM BOOM BOOM*

Axel groaned and stretched out. His tail was curled around in his hands and he'd been nibbling it in his sleep, laid out on the couch. "Hmn... No, no more apples..." He muttered, starting to drift back to sleep. There was a click, as his neighbor's door opened. *"Hello sir, sorry to disturb you this morning. We're investigating a murder that occurred nearby..."* The commanding voice penetrated through the thin walls.

Axel's eyes opened drearily. Low, early morning sunlight had begun to leak through the windows, falling on his face and making him blink.

*"Yes, unfortunately we have reason to believe that she's the perpetrator of the crime, and that she's taking refuge in the area. We're conducting a search of the building, so if you'll permit us..."*

Axel shot upright on the couch. "Oh, crap..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **August 31, 2013, 07:59:57 pm**

Adrian stood outside the performer's door to the Electric Sheep, visor now shut, staring at the bouncer.

"Hold it. State your name and reason for presence here."

It droned, scanning Adrian with it's mechanical eyes. Adrian chuckled idly, glancing up at the towering hulk of metal and flesh that was guarding the door.

"Designation: Raiden. Desperado Enforcement, LLC. I'm here to guard the female."

He said calmly, eyes fixed on the machine before him...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **August 31, 2013, 09:22:52 pm**

The bouncer cyborg looked over the duo. It stood still as it racked its mind for the record. "State name of female performer."

The cyborg then blocked the entrance with its considerable bulk. Underneath the dull armor plate of its massive three fingered hands, the emitters of a directed energy weapon could be see in its palm.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 02, 2013, 04:55:43 pm**

Lily continued sleeping, blissfully unaware there were cops marching up to Axel's door.

-----

Echo glanced unflinchingly back at the guard. "StarPuppy Cimarron," she answered, somehow saying such a ridiculous name without breaking character. A heavy trenchcoat covered her inner outfit, which she was not eager to show off, but I guess she has no choice.

(OO: Serris, perhaps their hacking was insufficient and they can't get in because they screwed something up? This would force them to go to Marita and grab her for her hacking skills.)

(Also, I apologize to all of you for my tardiness, I'm currently in Ohio after losing my SanFran apartment and am trying to find a new place to live. So a bit of a tough time for me.)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 02, 2013, 05:01:04 pm**

Adrian stared fixedly at the guard, eye glinting.

"Will you let us in now? If she is late, then there will be trouble."

He said coolly...

((Oh dear. If there's anything I can do to help, shoot me a PM, k?))

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 02, 2013, 05:26:42 pm**

Axel slid off the couch and pulled his sneakers on, hopping from foot to foot. He could hear furniture rumbling, doors opening and closing as the police searched the next door apartment. They were making a thorough job of it. Axel's heart pounded as he realized there was no way he'd be able to hide Lily from them.

Footsteps creaked in the hallway outside, heading straight for his door. "Oooohhh...." Axel's breath whistled as, wide eyed, he scurried silently to Lily's door.

"Hey! Hey, wake up!" He whispered desperately as he eased the door open.

(No need to apologize LBT, I'm sorry you're in such a difficult position - I hope things sort out for you soon. I know we don't know each other that well, but you can send me a PM too if I can help with anything.)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 02, 2013, 06:39:39 pm**

(No problems LB&T, life always has a way of catching us off guard. Hope you get everything straightened out.)

(OOC: Yeah, I'll go with that. Then we can get Nick back into the game.)

The cyborg whirred as it stood in front of the door and crossed its bulky arms. "Error. There is no 'StarPuppy Cimerron' performing here. You are in an unauthorized area, please exit and have a nice day."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 03, 2013, 09:18:25 pm**

Sorry too hear that LBT. hope things get better for you soon.  
OOC how should marita gets grabbed? shes out for a walk, and then gets grabbed?)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 04, 2013, 01:03:08 am**

(OOC: No, Echo's gonna come to her house. She has her ways.)

Echo glared at him. "Fine. It's not like a girl needs to eat or anything," she spat. "Come, Raiden."

But she didn't stop walking once they were out of earshot of the guard.

"We need a hacker. And I've got the dirt to convince one that lives nearby..." she muttered, grinning wickedly.

-----

Lily took some serious convincing; she was plum tuckered out.

"Whu--? What's going...?" she asked sleepily, only a quarter awake.

Both were interrupted by a knocking on the door. *BOOM BOOM BOOM*

Her eyes flew completely open. "*Who is that?*" she whispered, horrified.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 04, 2013, 06:30:01 am**

"It's either the police, or a huge cub scout..." Axel hurried across to the window and looked down. Aside from a few cops walking over to the adjacent buildings, the streets seemed deserted.

He gulped and turned back to the girl. "They must have found the guy who attacked you. Damn, I didn't think they'd be so quick!" Outside, the pounding on the door continued relentlessly. "There's no way I could hide you here...Okay, hurry and get dressed, we need to get out of here. I know a guy who'd take us in, I think."

*"Mr Whent, it's the police! We know you're there, open up!"* A deep voice thundered through into the apartment.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 04, 2013, 09:40:52 am**

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"Raiden" chuckled a little, nodding his head.

"I was going to suggest that we just cut our way in, but your idea works better. We'll go with it."

He said jokingly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 06, 2013, 03:38:27 am**

---

Lily staggered to her feet and stumbled into the kitchen to the washer. Her clothes hadn't been dried, but since it composed of a dress, hiking boots and socks she was able to put it on pretty easily anyway.

She returned to the bedroom on the second floor. She assumed Axel would rather stay with his house than come with her. "I'm not staying here when you open that door," she said. "They'll find me. I'll take my chances on the roofs." She hesitated, wondering if this was the last time they'd see each other. She could never really say thank you for what he'd done for her..

The pounding stopped, though that was more frightening than reassuring. What were the police about to do next?

-----

Lily marched up to Marita Jones' door and knocked loudly. "Police!" She announced. "Open up in the name of the law!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 06, 2013, 05:04:50 am**

---

"Alright, go up to the roof but be careful!" Axel spoke into the silence. "There could be cops up there too. The guy I know lives..." A mechanical whirring from the corridor made him stop. Every second or so there was a thump and the ground trembled beneath their feet. He turned back to the girl. "What the hell is..."

*CRASH!* The door smashed inwards, showering the room with wooden splinters. On the other side, a huge Police-Bot stood hunched in the doorway, lowering its ham sized fist. Two cops stood behind, cradling their automatic rifles. It scanned the room with its glowing orange eyes, stopping when it reached Axel and Lily. "**Fugitive sighted**", the Bot intoned with a mechanical voice.

"Well, I'll be screwed..." One of the cops said. The other turned his head and shouted down the corridor. "We've found her! Apartment 426!"

The huge robot began to push his way through the doorway, an energy weapon building itself up in it's palm.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 06, 2013, 11:50:13 pm**

---

marita opened the door . ' what can i do for you officer?' she asked in as kind and inoffensive a tone as she could muster. she wasnt sure, why Lily was here, but perhaps someone had reported something missing on the floor and was having them search door to door.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 07, 2013, 04:58:04 pm**

---

Lily wasted no time. In a second she had grabbed the bedside lamp and sent it hurtling through the window. She then leapt through the shattered window herself and went running along the roof, not even knowing what direction to go.

-----

Emilena marched into Marita's room without another word and stripped off her outer clothes, revealing a metallic bra and panties with golden tassles.

"What's the matter, Marita Jones?" she asked, smiling sensuously but unable to completely hide her malice. "Like what you see? Want to take it to the bedroom? From what I heard, you make a good submissive..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 07, 2013, 05:35:21 pm**

---

marita recoiled at Emilena. ' what in blazes are you doing? you barge into my apartment, only to pull a striptease?' she staid. she was not turned on by Emilena, while the fox had a nice form, the circumstances were not romantic in the slightest, and the great dane caught the underlying coldness in the look on her face. "what do you want? and who told you i was a submissive?" she demanded.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 07, 2013, 06:19:57 pm**

---

Axel heard glass smash and turned to see Lily disappearing through the window. "Hey, wait..." he began, then felt a rush of heat as the Police-Bot fired the energy weapon. The beam missed him and punched through the door frame, but was close enough to lift Axel off his feet and send him crashing against the wall.

He lay dazed for a moment. There was a loud hum as the weapon in the robot's arm charged up for a second shot. It lumbered closer; at this range it wouldn't miss. Groaning, Axel reached up and grabbed the window sill, pulling himself through and out. As he stumbled up the fire escape to the roof, he could hear the cops in his apartment. "They've escaped to the roofs! Follow them, and get a chopper out here now!"

When Axel reached the top, he started sprinting, looking desperately around him. There was no sign of the girl. "Hey! Where'd you go?!" he shouted. *The only safe place I can think of is Soren's... how's she gonna get there if I don't show her?!*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 07, 2013, 09:57:22 pm**

---

Adrian stepped into the room behind Emilena, hand on his sword's hilt as he stepped up beside her.

"Should I simply tell you, or should I call up the video file?"

He said calmly.

"I apologize for the intrusion, however, my associate said we had need of you, and your skills seem useful."

He added...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 07, 2013, 10:19:21 pm**

---

"A former lover of yours lost her assets when arrested by the police," Emilena chimed in. Pushing a button on her wrist, a projector hidden in her fishnet arm sleeves displayed a silent homemade video of Marita intimately involved with another female Great Dame.

"She didn't even pick this back up once she'd served her time," Emilena taunted. Of course, this was because the police never bother to tell prisoners that this was a possibility, but Marita didn't need to know the details. "She probably went right back to abusing... *this*."

Emilena held out a tiny bag of powdery yellow crystals. "Biproxytol. One of the most dangerous, scarce, and illegal drugs on the planet. Have you heard of it?" Her eyes sparkled knowingly. "Would you like to hold it?"

-----

Lily saw the edge of the roof approaching quickly, and without hesitation vaulted the gap. One thing she had quickly learned about herself was her youthful athleticism.

Unfortunately her landing was not great went tumbling on the other side. Unable to regain control, she went thudding into the opposite balcony, startling a couple who had dozed off in each other's arms.

The male's cursing echoed behind her as she staggered to her feet and began limping away at a reduced speed.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 07, 2013, 10:27:09 pm**

---

Adrian stood silently next to Emilena, however his gaze kept drifting to her, a small blush coloring his cheeks...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 07, 2013, 10:48:04 pm**

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Its extremely addicting, few are lucky enough to break free of its grip' Marita said, gazing at the bag. ' so i'm guessing you know where she is, and if i help you with- well whatever it is you're trying to do- you'll let me see her. Am I in the ball park ' Marita said ' Her name is Rose, in case you are wondering.." she added.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 08, 2013, 05:46:46 am**

---

Axel heard a shout somewhere to his left, and he changed direction, shoes skidding on the rough surface. He soon reached a gap between the two rooftops, and as he approached he slowed down instinctively; heights weren't his strong point.

"They're jumping the roof to complex 3S!" Someone cried out behind him. Axel glanced over

his shoulder and saw the cops were catching up, though their heavy body armor slowed them down. He picked up speed and leaped over the gap, stumbling when he landed on the other side but managing to keep his footing.

In front of him, a man was leaning on his balcony, a woman by his side. "Hey, did you see..." Axel started.

"Woman on the roof?! She went right. Bitch is crazy, you gotta put a leash on her!" The man said, gesticulating wildly. His companion nodded gravely.

Axel turned and started in that direction, catching a glimpse of a grey dress disappearing around one of the ventilation units. "Wait up!" he called out. The distant rumble of an approaching helicopter was getting louder. *We need to find cover, now...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 08, 2013, 06:16:17 am**

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"You're smart," Emilena smiled. "We need someone smart. And yes, you can see Rose again, but only if you get us into The Electric Sheep. Your druggie friend is a....performer there. Let's go with that. And if you're a *really* good girl, we might let you have some biproxytol. It's been...what, ten years for you? Surely you miss the thrill."

The taunting certainly wasn't necessary, but this Great Dane had been involved in Emilena's humiliation at Soren's house, so she didn't feel like pulling any punches.

-----

Lily was panting by the time she reached the edge of the roof. Below her she saw the apartment complex's illuminated pool.

Well, she was already wet...

Jumping feet-first over the side, she became incredibly startled when she hit a glass roof within ten feet and went sprawling. When she tried to get up, her leg seared in protest and didn't respond; it had been dislocated.

"No, no no no...." she muttered, tears stinging her eyes from the pain. She tried to get to her feet, but she'd cut her arm on Axel's window and her hand slipped in her own blood.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 08, 2013, 10:43:46 am**

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Adrian glanced at Emilena, then stepped towards Marita.

"I will expand on that deal. If, and only if, you fulfill the terms of the contract, I will help this woman be treated for her addiction."

He said curtly, eye glinting...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 08, 2013, 11:57:24 am**

---

There was a thump up ahead, and as he rounded the ventilation unit Axel heard a cry of pain over the edge of the roof. He ran up and peered over, starting when he saw Lily lying in a heap on the glass ceiling over the pool. There was a small crack in the glass, but it didn't seem to be getting any bigger.

"Hang on, I'm coming down..." Axel slowly lowered himself over the side, and when he was hanging by his fingertips he let go, landing with a light thump. He made his way over to her, stepping gingerly and trying not to look down. "Are you okay?" Then he saw her leg twisted at

an impossible angle. "Oh jeez..."

Voices rang out above them. "Which way'd they go?!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 08, 2013, 02:13:01 pm**

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My my aren't you a vindictive bitch' Marita said curtly to Emilena. ' as i said before that stuff is extremely addicting, and its extremely difficult to break free from its grip. i dont want any part of that stuff.. i'm guessing this is somehow payback for me reminding you of your responsibilities as an officer... you dug up dirt on me to get even, huh. i'm guessing your superiors are loving you right about now?' she returned the jibe emilena had thrown at her. ' the electric sheep huh ' not exactly a high rent place , even as strip clubs go. they don't make enough to afford the highest level security so hacking in, will be a relative breeze.. what is roses stage name? Marita said as she went to her computer and powered it up..' i'll help you, but not for your sake. Its for Rose that I'm doing this. and you had better come through with that promise of detox.' she said looking at Adrian. " rose deserves better than what shes had to deal with.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 08, 2013, 05:48:52 pm**

---

Adrian nodded.

"I don't go back on my word. Once we're in, I'll get her out. That is a promise."

He said, eyes gleaming confidently...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 08, 2013, 08:17:15 pm**

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Emilena smiled. She'd suffered far greater insults from far more eloquent and dangerous people to care about such emotionally-charged retorts.

"Her stage name is 'Honey Bunny,' which makes no sense to me but I suppose it pays the bills...here's a false bio and work account for my own stripper identity," Emilena handed Marita a flash drive. "I thought we had incorporated the account already, but we must have erred somehow because we were denied access to the club. So just figure out what mistake we made, and get that account activated.

She glanced at Adrian. "Figure out something for you to do while you're at it. Adrian is my bodyguard, in name only." She felt like adding that last part to make it very clear she needed no protecting.

-----

"Help me up!" snapped Lily, who despite the request managed to get to her feet on her own. With a pop and a flash of pain, her dislocated leg relocated itself. She began hobbling toward the side of the roof. She saw trees, and in her mind trees meant safety.

Before she reached it, she looked back at Axel. "If you can...break the glass...they'll think we went that way..." she forced out, and then dropped over the side of the building, aiming for some large bushy hedges flanked by a concrete walkway and a grassy but solid terrace.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 08, 2013, 08:36:47 pm**

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Adrian chuckled.

"I'm already in their system. Long story."

He said calmly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 08, 2013, 08:52:18 pm**

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Marita plugged in the hard drive and began to type away.. ' ah i see you forgot to double encrypt your pass word, and and file 3 years of experience along with references from previous work. they double and triple check new employees but if you have experience, its easier.' she added as she worked on incorporating the false id. ' after about 6 minutes she straightened up. ' Done' she said I'm a model agent who is looking for talent for a stage show she said as she printed out ids ' hers read ' elisa turner. ' heres yours ' she said tossing it to Adrian. and yours' she said to Emilena. ' by the way ' you're scheduled for a performance at 10 pm ' she smirked. ' had to make it convincing after all.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 08, 2013, 11:30:04 pm**

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Adrian grinned as the two halves of the cybernetics that covered the lower half of his face, rolling his neck.  
"Cutting it a little close, aren't you? Heh. Whatever. Once we're in, point out your sweetheart to me, and in the event that things get loud, I'll do what I can to get her out of there."  
He said, voice masked by the overlay.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 10, 2013, 07:07:14 pm**

---

Axel watched Lily drop over the side, then turned back to the glass. The scuffing of feet from the roof above was getting closer, as was the thumping of the police helicopter heading straight for them. She was right, and it was now or never.

He stretched his foot out, and with a grunt stomped it down as hard as he could over the crack that had already formed. The glass panel shattered, the shards scattering over the pool below - luckily, nobody had gone in for a swim.

"Hey! Did you hear that?! It came from this way!" Someone yelled.

Axel quickly scrambled to the edge and fell over the side, landing with an *Oof!* next to Lily in the bushes, praying they hadn't been seen going this way.

(Sorry for not adding to this for a bit, hadn't seen it was updated)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 10, 2013, 10:12:48 pm**

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Emilena started. "What? I wasn't actually going to dance, you dolt! There are more important things to focus on while we're in there!"

She checked the time. Of course, at top speed they would arrive with just enough time to make her...dance.

After a long frustrated guttural noise, Emilena put her trenchcoat back on and stomped out the door. "If any of those disgusting cyberphillic drunkards try anything, they'll be losing more than their tips..."

-----

Lily helped him to his feet. "They're going to call for backup, and backup *a/ways* arrives from the opposite direction of the initial cops!" She whispered frantically. "We can't leave the city! Where do we go?"

It was taking all her effort not to sprint for the forest...she knew they'd catch her. She had to put her faith in Axel once again.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 11, 2013, 04:16:09 am**

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"Ok... Where are we now?" Axel gasped, trying to get his breath back while craning his neck for a street sign. When he saw one, he nodded. "It's a few blocks away. It'll be safer if we cut through the side streets. C'mon, we can get to Soren's quick if we hurry."

Luckily, it looked like all the police had followed them up to the rooftops. He pulled Lily down the road and through the alleyway opposite. Whenever they had to cross the road, he looked anxiously from side to side, but apart from a few cop cars racing past, it was clear. The helicopter soon thundered over them, but kept going.

After 10 minutes, Axel spotted a large house in the distance. "We're here..." He smiled hopefully at Lily. "He'll take us in." Leading her up the driveway, Axel started thumping on the front door. "Soren! You in?! You gotta help us!"

-----

Marcus stalked his way down the Electric Sheep's entrance corridor, his normally heavy footsteps dampened by the pink carpeting and pounding music up ahead. He tucked his fake identity card into his pocket. It was expensive, but worth it; fooling the guard had been easy.

He reached the two main double doors and pushed them open and instantly the music swelled, assaulting his ears. There were less patrons than usual, as would be expected at an earlier time like this. He skulked over to a table in the corner, brushing aside a dancer who tried to stroke his arm, and took a seat, watching the small crowd writhing on the dance floor. *One must know something...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 11, 2013, 01:48:23 pm**

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as i said , i had to make it convincing. ' marita said as she grabbed a few things and followed emilena and adrian out of her apartment.. she headed down the steps to adrians car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 11, 2013, 02:08:25 pm**

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Soren heard the pounding on the reinforced door echoing through his house. Quickly throwing on his shear-thickening fluid impregnated clothing over his pajamas. He donned his head mounted display and grabbed his shotgun. He silently prayed they weren't the bent cops he'd encountered earlier.

His house was illuminated with infrared light, rendering it completely dark except to those who could naturally see in infrared or who had augments or equipment designed to do so. Luckily, his head mounted display allowed him to see in such wavelengths.

The man made his way to the front door and patched his HMD into the house's cameras. As if the door didn't exist, he saw an Augment and a normal Human woman.

He recognized the Augment; it was one of his best customers. He opened the door but kept his

gun ready.

"Axel," Soren said with a yawn. "It's four in the f---ing morning. What's so important that it couldn't wait until the next day?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 11, 2013, 05:47:50 pm**

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"Soren! Hey..." Axel grinned nervously. "I, uh, I know it's early but... we could really use some help." He indicated the girl standing next to him. "This is... well, we actually don't know her name, but..." Axel coughed, knowing what a mess they must look, and how bizarre the situation must be for Soren.

From somewhere in the distance there was the faint wail of police sirens. Axel looked behind them nervously. "Look, I know this looks really weird, and we'll explain everything, but could we come inside? It's not safe for us out here. Please."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 11, 2013, 06:56:16 pm**

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Adrian chuckled and nodded to Emilena.

"If any of them get too close, they'll lose their limbs. That, I can promise you."  
He said softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 12, 2013, 01:28:53 am**

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Lily didn't say anything. This man was clearly armed, and she trusted Axel's ability to persuade him over her own.

She shivered in her damp clothes and couldn't help but glance behind her to see if the police were close enough to get a visual.

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Emilena sat in the front, keeping her face and tone neutral. "Let's just get there and get this moving quickly. How long does a strip dance even go anyway?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 12, 2013, 10:55:28 am**

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well it depends on the dancer really. some only go for a minute or two, others can go for 15 or 20 minutes.. yours..' marita typed in a few libnes.. ' will be for 3 minutes. a short one. so grit your teeth, flash a smile- and your tits- and bear it for 3 minutes..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 14, 2013, 12:49:02 am**

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Soren sighed but quickly ushered the two into the house and bolted the door shut.

The lights immediately lit up, revealing a very sparsely decorated foyer ó just a few potted plants and sculptures made of old cybernetics hardware. He slung his shotgun over his back.

"How about we discuss this over some hot tea?" he said.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 14, 2013, 08:09:11 am**

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"You would know how long strip dances go off the top of your head, wouldn't you..." Emilena muttered, still sore from the prospect. "Make sure to stay ten miles under the speed limit for the rest of the drive, Adrian. Heaven forbid we get there at a reasonable time."

-----

Lily zipped into the house impolitely fast.

"Th--that would be good, Mr. Soren..." She realized her teeth were chattering. She was colder than she thought. "Thank you, and I'm very sorry for the trouble..."

She looked at Axel, intending to follow his lead. She didn't want to risk insulting their host by touching or doing something she shouldn't.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 14, 2013, 05:10:58 pm**

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Axel nodded, relieved to be off the street. "Some tea would be great. Thanks Soren." He smiled what he hoped was a reassuring smile at the shivering girl next to him, and moved closer to her. She looked completely lost.

He inclined his head towards one of the sculptures as they made their way through the foyer. "Hey, one of the old M87-D augmentations," he said, trying to start an idle conversation. "I thought those things were impossible to find now?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 14, 2013, 06:40:59 pm**

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"They are," Soren replied. "They're an old class 2 augmentation made by Scaerin Cybernetics from Palladia. As you know, Palladia bans class 3 augs for civilians ó no exceptions. Even if you're licensed from another city or whatever, they won't honor the license. Consequently, someone decided to exploit a loophole in the law by making augs with built-in tools that could easily be turned into weapons. Arms with laser cutters that had a tight focus and power output equal to that of a standard laser rifle, legs with 'traction spikes' sharp enough to tear apart metal. Stuff like that. They got busted and the company went out of business. Even then, their augs tended to be on the expensive side, so they didn't sell too many."

He pointed to the part that Axel mentioned in the sculpture. "As for the M87-D aug, it came from some guy who mangled it in an industrial accident. All I could do was detach it from the mounting points and sell him a cheap replacement that functioned only as an arm. As for what that arm did, it had a built-in line thrower so someone could fire a line to someone in distress or to help launch guy lines for construction or climbing. Needless to say, it doesn't take a genius to replace the line with a harpoon, a metal slug or even a grenade."

The trio soon arrived at his equally sparse kitchen. Steel countertops had all sorts of spices and cooking equipment scattered all over. Soren dispensed some hot water from his electric kettle into some beat up mugs he grabbed from the dishwasher.

A sprinkling of tea leaves over the hot water and in a few minutes, three cups of steaming tea graced a serving tray made from some old scrap metal and rivets.

The Human took a seat and held his mug of tea. "So, Axel, what brings you here?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 14, 2013, 07:37:51 pm**

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Axel took his own mug. He couldn't feel it's warmth through his hands, but the hot steam wafted up to his face, making him feel slightly more relaxed. He leaned against the counter, curling his tail around his leg nervously.

"Alright... the police are after us. Well, they're *really* after her, and now me indirectly," Axel began, indicating Lily. Then he paused and took a deep breath. "This whole thing's going to sound crazy, but I guess I should start from the beginning. It was... I dunno, a couple of hours ago. I was up on the roof, smoking. I heard a fight, and when I looked down I saw some crazy guy dragging her down an alley. He was gonna *do stuff* to her, Soren... So I ran down to help her, and there was a fight and... the guy ended up dead."

Axel turned his cybernetic eyes to Soren's. "But he was crazy, he was going to kill us!" He looked to Lily for support. "Right?!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 14, 2013, 07:48:02 pm**

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"What you did is not my business," Soren replied tersely. He sipped his own mug of tea.

He then fixed his HMD with its stark blue "guiding laser" on Lily. "I don't know you but since Axel says you're okay, I'll trust him. Now what's your side of the story?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 14, 2013, 10:00:43 pm**

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Adrian chuckled, rolling his eyes.

"Right, right. Besides, if we're on time, we can find always have a creative excuse for our lateness."

He said softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 15, 2013, 03:48:41 am**

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She shrunk away from the blue laser instinctively, having seem similar ones while on the run in the forest.

"Creativity is lost on a mind addled with circuits and chips," Emilena stated. "Their subroutines can barely handle Boolean values, answers become increasingly ignored the further they get from 'true' and 'false.' It's like self-inflicted retardation. Sickening..."

(OOC: I wouldn't trust what Emilena is saying right here. She's just being bitter; I'm sure cybernetics are capable of handling a vast spectrum of human emotions and thought processes. Just wanted to make sure y'all knew I wasn't trying to define Augments in this world.)

-----  
"I don't...have very much to say..." Lily said meekly. "I don't know who I am, or what my name is. Or why they're chasing me..."

She took a sip of tea to calm her nerves and chattering teeth, and started from the beginning. "Four nights ago I woke up in a forest, the same one outside this city. I was wearing these clothes, and had a backpack. I traveled to the plains and saw police officers there, but when I called to them they shot at me so I ran back into the forest. After that they brought

helicopters and trackers into the forest, but I avoided them for three days...I didn't have time to sleep, or eat...at some point I lost my backpack which had my protein bars and water in it. I was starving after that..."

She glanced at Axel, and gave a small smile. "I reached this city and Axel let me into his house. But they tracked us there and...oh...they're probably after you now, too!" she realized. "I'm so sorry! You've been so nice to me, but now they're probably searching your house and telling the trackers about you...oh, I'm causing so much trouble for everyone..." She teared up slightly, but blinked and forced the tears at bay. She didn't want to break down again, not in front of Soren. Having already ruined her first impression with Axel, she didn't want to do so again.

She took a deep breath and another shaky sip of tea. "I wish I just knew who I was, whether I was worth all this. What if I'm a convicted killer or something? I have absolutely no clues to my identity..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 15, 2013, 05:16:24 am**

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"We're going to figure it out. I promised you," Axel said firmly. "Look at her, Soren. Does she look like a mass murderer to you? She's even got some creepy tattoo that she knows she didn't have before. It's like some kind of... conspiracy or something."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 15, 2013, 07:42:47 am**

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Lily nodded and pulled her dress collar down until Soren could see the eye-shaped tattoo above her breast.

(ooc: dont forget about the sticker on her boots.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 15, 2013, 02:10:26 pm**

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that info is available on the website, so dancers know what range they have to dance in ' Marita said. ' I wonder if rose will recognize me..' she said thoughtfully.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 15, 2013, 10:20:14 pm**

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Adrian smirked a little.

"If you two were as close as it sounds like...then I would say yes. The heart is a funny thing. It often remembers things that even the mind forgets."

He said softly, then glanced at Emilena.

"And you know, Emilena, quite a few cybernetics keep their original brain."

He added.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 16, 2013, 10:39:56 pm**

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(OOC: Serris, you're up)

"If it was a brain that desired cybernetics in the first place, I shant think too highly of it," Emilena muttered.

She opened the door before the car had even gotten into the parking space and marched over to the cyberbot guarding the door.

"Hey you ferromagnetic Foukou, here's my damn paperwork, now let me in before I miss my dance. It's in *forty-seven seconds* in case your internal chronometer was over-promised in the sales brochure."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 16, 2013, 10:52:32 pm**

Adrian stepped out of the car, rolling his eyes a little as his visor snapped shut, walking towards the door guard.

"Are you going to let us in now, or am I going to have to contact my supervisors with the request to start removing limbs until you let my client in?"

He said coldly...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 17, 2013, 01:57:17 am**

Marita's hacking had done its job. The droid scanned over Emelina.

"Welcome, Starpuppy Cimerron." The droid moved aside to let "Starpuppy" and her "bodyguard" into the dressing room.

One of the Augment dancers was using a wrench to adjust some wires on her gleaming metallic legs. The dancer was a Golden Retriever but her legs were distinctly equinoid with polished chrome hooves.

-----

Soren looked at the tattoo. His HMD even scanned for matches on the web. Two words blinked in his visual field: No results.

"I've never seen a tat like that before."

He turned to Axel and drained the rest of his tea. "Speaking of conspiracies, something stinks about the police here. I mean, fire breaks out in my workshop, I call the cops, one of them tries beating me up and using a fake warrant to go snooping through my house."

He rubbed his temples, being careful not to knock his HMD off. "Something ain't right and I want to see what the hell'a going on!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 17, 2013, 05:25:20 am**

Axel gulped down some of the tea. "Yeah, I saw the cars. Aw man, there was was a fire in your workshop? Was it an accident? Is it bad?"

(OOO: The sticker's still in Axel's pocket, just thought it would be better to talk to Soren about his problem first)

-----

"Keep talking," Marcus ordered.

"Oh, well I would... but... *hic*... my glass is... uh, empty..." The drunk slurred, the stench of alcohol on his breath strong enough to make Marcus' eyes water. He'd overheard the drunk talking with his similarly inebriated friends about a 'flying man in the city with a sword'.

Gritting his teeth, Marcus had pulled him aside to the bar.

He narrowed his eyes. *A broken arm would get him talking just as easily.* Begrudgingly, he lifted a hand to the barman to signal for another whiskey, then returned his glare to the drunk, his back to the stage.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 17, 2013, 06:36:28 am**

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"You have a workshop? What do you make?" asked Lily. Perhaps she could get on his good side by showing interest in his chosen profession.

-----

Emilena was barely let into the dressing rooms when a man in a tight suit rushed over to her. "Are you StarPuppy?!?" he demanded in a high voice.

"It's 'Miss Cimarron' to you," she retorted, narrowing her eyes.

"We found her, roll tapes!" he yelled into a headset. "If you're ever this late again, you can forget about working here ever!" he shouted at her.

She snarled in response, but held her tongue as he raced away. In the dressing room she unflinchingly borrowed the other dancer's blush.

"Hey--!" the Golden Retriever protested, but quickly submitted when Emilena flashed her eyes and bared her teeth menacingly.

"Quiet! Get out *now* or I'll rip your jugular from your neck!" Emilena hissed, and the stripper wasted no time complying. Emilena turned to her teammates. "Marita, you've done your job, go do whatever you want. Adrian, perhaps these three minutes could be spent locating where the less publicized functions of this establishment occur."

*Ten seconds until show time*, her mental clock counted. With that she strode backstage, and after a reassuring (and unwitnessed) gulp, crossed the curtain.

When she took the stage, there was no announcement, no fanfare, no real recognition. Just a bunch of rowdy drunks, some wolf whistles and cat calls, and the pungent smell of sweat, drugs, alcohol, and oil. After a brief curl of her lip when she noted the greasy state of the stripper pole, she began her best attempt at dancing sensuously, though she couldn't quite keep the frown off her face.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 17, 2013, 10:21:41 am**

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Adrian had made his way from the back of the stage to the floor of the club, keeping his visor shut so as to obscure any visible part of his features. Casting a glance around the room, his visor's systems quickly scanned through each face, comparing each to known members of the Purifiers. Passing over most as small-time members with little to no criminal involvement, he froze when he saw the back of Marcus's head over the crowd. Even with his visor unable to run the face through the database, he knew the Doberman. Instinctively, he took a small step back, memories of the incident that had cost him his arm and eye flashing through his mind.

Unfortunately, that small step bumped his leg into a vacated table, rattling the glasses on it and sending one to the floor with a remarkably loud clattering sound...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 17, 2013, 12:34:58 pm**

---

marita pulled out her computer and access the clubs website. she typed in roses stage name and it brought out her location- in dressing room 5, her next performance was in 12 minutes. ' can i get you something? asked a waitress wearing a skimpy bra and thong, she was carrying a tray of drinks. ' a pepsi please, also i have a package for rose, stage name honey bunny. - ah honey bunny. shes in room 5. interested in a blackout? the waitress smirked. usually thats 100 bucks, but her price is 20.. poor girl.. this place is basically her home.. she got foreclosed on when she got busted with the stuff. its said to see what shes become, that stuff is really powerful. shes a beautiful dancer when shes sober, but those days are fewer and fewer these days.. do you know her?

- yes i do, we were friends before.. she got hooked on the stuff. once it hooks you, theres nothing that can be done for you. therw detox butts its extremely expensive. Marita said.

- you better believe it, its 40 grand for a couple weeks worth of the detox stuff, and it literally squeezes the stuff out of you, in rivelets . its hard to watch and harder to endure. i bet. i'm marie.. " nice to meet you marita said. i'm a talent scout, looking for dancers with talent and moxie.. from what you've told me honey bunny could be a girl with potential.. if we can get her detoxed.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 17, 2013, 01:00:28 pm**

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"I'm a licensed cyberneticist with permits to work on class 1 and class 2 external augs. I also have a license to make and modify class 3 external augs for personal use." Soren got up to refill his his cup with hot water.

"Anyways, Axel," he continued, sprinkling some additional tea leaves in his cup. "The cause of the fire's unknown. But I suspect it was arson. As for how bad it is, it's completely destroyed. I'm going to salvage what I can in the morning. I'm pretty much out of a job. Sure, I've got some cybernetics tools in my basement and house but my workshop had a nanolathe where I could pretty much create a part to order."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 17, 2013, 08:24:52 pm**

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"Oh god, I'm sorry Soren," Axel said sympathetically. "If there's anything we can do to help, just ask. Maybe we'll be able to find something that'll tell us who started it?" He nudged Lily. "Hey, maybe it's all connected! Or.. maybe I've been watching too many detective shows." He took another gulp of tea and blushed.

-----

The drunk burped. "Oh yeah, he's like a... *hic*... a ninja who... protects Virtuatron..."

"Virtuatron?" Marcus narrowed his eyes. "What are you talking about?"

"Wha... wha' you mean?" The drunk giggled. "You haven't seen... *Robo-Ninja VII*?"

Marcus' ears flicked. "A film? You've been wasting my time with a film?" He started to rise angrily, but a clattering behind him turned his head. His eyes flicked over the crowd, noting that a new dancer had come on the stage, and came to rest on the table on the opposite side of the dance floor.

A figure was backing away, wearing a full visor which prevented him from seeing his face. But his size and figure were the same... *Kibagami*? Marcus rose slowly, keeping his glare focused on the figure opposite, his hand reaching down to the Magnum tucked under his trench coat.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 17, 2013, 09:08:58 pm**

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Soren nodded looked outside his window at his ruined workshop. He sighed. "Since I'm awake, I might as well start salvaging what I can."

He finished his tea and headed downstairs into his basement.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 19, 2013, 11:44:25 am**

Lily drank her tea too quickly, and started hiccuping. "Th-thank you for having me, Mr. Soren," she choked, words sounding slightly off because she'd singed her tongue.

She turned to Axel. "What are you going to do now?" She asked softly. "You don't want to live a life on the run, it's horrible. And you know who you are, so you have friends, and a support net...at least, I'm assuming you do. The cops will go after them if they think it'll help catch you."

-----

At first Emilena merely tried to finish her dance. The whole time she hadn't stopped thinking about the vile perverts filling the audience in front of her. *Just stomach their sinful gazes for another two minutes, thirty seconds...* she told herself, gritting her teeth behind her lips. *Then this unwholesome display will finally be...*

Hold on? She started realizing that not many of the audience was actually viewing her. They were talking, drinking beers, doing drugs...nobody was actually staring at the stage. *Why the hell aren't they watching me?*

Despite herself, she began putting more oomph into her performance. A twirl of her hair, a flare of her buttocks, she matched the beat of the song and stretched her body to its limits. Grasping the stripper pole for the first time, she ground her chest against it and with a twirl, seamlessly incorporated an unclipped bra into her performance.

Nobody really cared. They'd seen hundreds of stripping women before.

Emilena's eyes flashed angrily. Using her removed bra like a strap, she swayed and turned and pirouetted, putting all her combat reflexes and sword maneuvers into creating as stunning a display she could muster. Sweat rolled off of her as she focused painstakingly on getting somebody's attention.

Perhaps its for the best nobody was noticing, because what she was doing actually looked nothing like strip dancing.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 19, 2013, 01:53:16 pm**

Adrian swore under his breath as Marcus turned to face him.  
*"Damn it, why did it have to be him, of all people? ... At least I can safely say that the Purifiers are involved somehow. Now I just have to hope that he doesn't realize it's me...Just long enough to get what data I need, for Marita to get Rose out of here...and for Emilena to finish her dance..."*

He thought, before he noticed Marcus's hand reaching for something. Instinctively, he reached back, hand finding the hilt of his sword as he tensed...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 19, 2013, 02:38:50 pm**

Marita got her Perpsi and thanked the waitress before heading back towards the3 dressing rooms./.

- in room 5 rose stared at the mirror. a haggard tired face stared back at her. she had been working at the club for 5 years now, but her dancing had continued to decline in quality thanks to the drug addiction she had.. ' i can't.. keep going.., like this..' she said slowly, as she pulled out a small bag of stuff from her dresser. ' it contained ' sawdust' as Biproxytol was called. she had been hooked on it for years, and it had caused her breakup with marita, who had managed to break free from it. there was a knock on the door. Honey Bunny? came a voice that sounded familiar ' i'm Elisa turner , from Starlight modelling.

- STARLIGHT MODELING?' Rose shot straight up, dropping the bag of Biproxytol on the floor. Starlight was a top-flight talent agency, involving acting, dancing, and voiceover work. as long as you had talent they would overlook it if you stripped in the past. ' do come in ' she said as marita entered the room.

marita gasped involuntarily as she saw rose. she looked terrible, her teeth were stained from biproxytol use and there were bags under her eyes from lack of sleep. ' well honey bunny, today is your lucky day. i've been told you're quite the dancer. so i'm offering you an audition in Mushu city on friday. you will have to leave now if you are going to get there on time..

- excuse me' said a suit who came up behind her. ' shes on in 9 minutes! We'll have to talk after her dance, Miss Turner/

— sir, my instructions from the agency were quite clear. Miss Honey Bunny has an audition at 9 a, Friday morning at Central plaza in Mushu City, if she wants to get there on time, she will have to leave immediately.' Marita replied pulling out a list, which was made from official Starlight itinerary. 'we will compensate you for any losses in revenue from her missing her dances for the next few days. this is a golden opportunity for her sir, and we wouldnt want her to miss it, now would we?

— the suit looked at the list.. ' alright, alright, you' he barked at rose. ' get your things and get out!' rose got up from her seat and rasn back to where she had her meager belongings. in a minutes time she had everything.

- give my regards to Miss Runiyuki" the suit said to Marita " Honey , you dance your ass off for them, understand, or dont bother coming back here!

— Yes mr Means" Rose said quickly. "good. i'll get tamara to pull double duty.. have a good evening Miss Turner" the suit nodded as marita gave him a calling card. and left. rose following right behind her.- they reached the main floor , where emilena was in the last half minute of her performance...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 19, 2013, 08:12:58 pm**

"Um. Well, I've never really had many friends," Axel said, shifting uncomfortably. "I've never really been the outgoing type, you know? The only people I feel comfortable being around are Soren... and you. And my Mom, but she's up at an old folk's home being reminded what her name is, so... yeah," he added quickly, turning red.

Axel looked up. "So I guess I'll hang around. If it's okay with you." He suddenly remembered what he had in his pocket. "Hey, I might even be useful. Here." He took out the barcode sticker and passed it over to her. "I found it on your boots. Maybe it'll help us find out... well, *something* about you."

-----

Marcus' grip tightened on his magnum. He felt it start to slide out from the back of his trousers... Then another stripper stepped out in front of him.

"Hey baby, you look stressed. I can help that," she said, her voice slurred from drugs or alcohol, running a finger up his chest. Marcus glanced down at her, his concentration momentarily broken.

"Not interested," he growled, pushing past her. He looked back at the person opposite, and

saw him moving his hand down behind him. *Right where he always kept his sword...* That was good enough for Marcus. He yanked his gun out, aimed across the room and fired, the blast sending a familiar impact up his arm.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 19, 2013, 08:35:44 pm**

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The gunshot had its effect. The stripclub instantly flew into a panic with patrons, strippers and everyone else pushing and shoving in their haste to make it to the exit.

Sanjay Bhat gulped down his cocktail and slithered into an open liquor cabinet. He silently swore as he tried to calm his racing heart and ignore the shouting.

-----

Soren returned clad in a full-body powered exoskeleton. His face was hidden underneath an armored helmet while his body was concealed inside a bulky armored metallic suit. Worklights attached to the sides of the helmet lit up the dimly lit kitchen with beams of stark white light. He reached an armored hand up to his helmet and flipped up the visor.

"Well," Soren said. "If either of you need me, I'll be outside. Help yourselves to anything in the kitchen."

He opened the backdoor and stepped out into his yard.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 19, 2013, 09:06:46 pm**

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Adrian swore as the gun was drawn, drawing his sword in a flash, using it to deflect the bullet as it flew at him, sending it ricocheting off into a ceiling light. In a flash, Adrian had grabbed a table, flipping it up and using it as a makeshift shield as he started making his way towards Marcus...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 19, 2013, 10:06:03 pm**

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She took it. "Is there are way to track these sorts of things? Maybe find out who bought the boots?" Her eyes lit up. "Could I actually figure out my identity?"

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Emilena has just finished her strip dance, and was about to angrily chastise the audience for not paying better attention when a shot rang out. Very quickly any patrons with firearms/combat-oriented augments of their own got involved. And considering the dangerously high levels of intoxication/drug use, it was guaranteed to get ugly fast.

One thuggish augment with cybernetic parts covering his face, torso and muscular hands leapt the stage. "Hey dancer, you're coming with me," he sneered. "I'll protect you, and you can give me and the men another...*performance* at the barracks." One of his index fingers flipped open to reveal a loaded chamber.

"Well, I'm glad *somebody* liked my performance--hey!" Suddenly she realized what he had meant. "No, get the hell away from me," she snarled.

The thug chuckled and pointed his hand cannon at her. "Yeah? What's your butt-naked ass gonna do to stop me?"

She dodged his meaty fist when it tried to grab her. "You really should have developed a fetish

for skin and fur," she retorted, pulling out a thin slip of metal which retracted into her beloved katana. With a twirl reminiscent of her recent performance, she dismembered his hand cannon. "Get a metal one of *these!*" she spat, stabbing him through the crotch viciously as he staggered backwards.

She saw security coming from behind the stage, so she vaulted into the melee in the seating area. Time to find Adrian and hope he'd made progress locating the hidden recesses of this facility.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 19, 2013, 10:31:38 pm**

marita had gotten rose out of the building before the shooting had started. rose got into adrians car, the backseat to be precise. ' thank yo for giving me the opportunity to perform, miss Turner.' She said. 'how long have you worked there now/ Marita asked . " 5 years, 5 long interminable years. the pays horrible, the guys and girls are often drunk, and its degrading in a way you wont believe.." " not as bad as the the biproxytol you're still hooked on.." marita said. 'what- how did you know?' Rose demanded. ' your teeth are stained yellow, you have bag under your eyes, and your arms are pockmarked.. Marita said ' All telltales signs of biproxytol use..

- yeah, i'm been hooked on it for a long time. to get clean would require like half a million dollars.. which will take me at my current salary about 200 years. i mean if you can give me the gig..'

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 19, 2013, 11:17:14 pm**

The Golden Retriever dancer bolted for the door and with a burst from her equinoid augments, she leapt nearly fifteen feet straight up. The floor cracked as she landed, the augments taking most of the impact. Luckily, no one noticed her run away.

An massive but unaugmented Bison was trading blows with an Augment. The sound of tearing metal was heard as the Bison grabbed his opponent's arm and tried to rip it from its mountings.

The *whump* of compressed air was heard as the Augment fired his built in line thrower at his attacker, nailing him to the bartop.

The arm whirred as it severed the cable and attached a new tip to the line. Glistening metal plates slid back into place as the launcher morphed back into a hand.

He clutched his right arm, now dangling by a few wires and dripping hydraulic fluid and rushed for the exit.

-----

Sanjay gulped as a harpoon ó probably fired from a modified line thrower augment ó slammed into the liquor cabinet. He dared not enter the fracas ó lest he be killed. At the same time, when the police came, he was going to be in deep s---

He had to make a choice.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 20, 2013, 12:52:28 am**

*What was I supposed to be doing again?* thought Emilena, as she parried a drunkard's swung bottle and slashed his stomach open. "Now you've achieved your lifelong dream of having a *disc drive*, you freak!" she taunted.

Someone was making a run for the exit, who appeared to be a peddler of neurocotics, illegal mechanical skin patches that use artificial "cells" to alter desired brain functions, for a drastic, irreparable, and incredibly damaging (but incomparable) high. She thrust and stabbed him through the thigh.

She advanced on the horrified dealer, who was not pleased to see a naked psychotic stripper with a bloodied katana approaching him. "What's the matter?" she smiled widely and narrowed her eyes. "You like sex don't you? I've heard its kinda like this...only it's your turn for a whore to penetrate *you*."

She was raising her sword over the sobbing man when a bullet grazed her arm. She turned and noted that a deer with a small assault rifle was firing on her. Well, she'll deal with him as soon as--

"--*Aughh!*"

Taking advantage of her distraction, the neurocotic dealer had slapped a patch onto her hip. Immediately, Emilena felt woozy, and stumbled. Smashing her knee against a table, she tumbled to the floor as the dealer bolted for the exit.

Feelings...pain...maybe...she couldn't tell. Her head was spinning, but she forced herself to remember the skin patch was rewriting some aspect of her brain.

Groaning, she stumbled to her feet. Another bullet embedded itself in the floor near her. The deer hadn't forgotten about her, and only his severe intoxication had prevented her from being hit already.

Shaking her swimming head, she glanced around at her environment. Her eyes lit upon a Black Mamba hiding behind an upturned table. Is it the skin patch, or is that Sanjay Bhat, escaped Augmented soldier and treason-class felon?

She stumbled over to the panther and rolled awkwardly over his table. "Sanjay Bhat," she said through slurred speech, "Public enemy number 7, wanted for...uh...cases of Augment theft, evasion of arrest, and violation of your sworn...as a national soldier...you are in...*so much deep*... if you don't kill that deer. I'm a cop and...will have them...you in *jail* after they rip the...from your body!"

What was this feeling the patch was pumping through her system? If she could only keep her damn head straight!

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 20, 2013, 01:10:21 am**

so how much will this gig pay/ rose asked eagerly.. : well, rose you need to detox before you are going to dance..' detox? but that would take weeks.. isnt the audition friday..  
 - there is no audition. i merely said that so i could spring you from that awful place..' Marita said. " its been a long time Rose.. and to be frank, you look awful..  
 - Rose stared at her blankly.. then her eyes flew wide as she recognized her at last../ MARITA? how.. wait.. so you're not a talent scout..  
 - no but you are going to get detox, but i have to help a cop bust some Augment dealer shes trying to nab first' marita said. ' you're coming along for the ride. and maybe.. when we get some alone time.. ' roses began to smirk.. ' just like old times huh.. look ii'm sorry i haven't been able to kick the stuff.. you were always the stronger one marita.. how old are you now? 25 and you're 24 right.. ' next week, so 23 for one more week..' rose said.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 20, 2013, 04:34:40 am**

Axel nodded. "Yeah, should be simple. It'll let us know where you got them, and from there we could get into their system and see who bought them using the code as a reference. Unless you were some kind of notorious shoe thief," he teased.

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When Marcus saw his target deflect the bullet, he swore loudly. *It IS him!* He started striding forwards, continuing to fire on the upturned table Adrian was using as a shield. The bullets punched through, not finding their target. "Just die, you slippery bastard..." He snarled under his breath.

All around him, hell had broken loose but he paid no attention to the screaming, the gunfire, the terrified patrons tearing for the exit. Out of the corner of his eye, he noticed one of the club guards, a human, running towards him with a taser. Marcus slid a combat knife free from the sleeve of his trench coat. As the guard reached the taser out, he quickly leaned back to avoid it, then brought his arm upwards in a sweep, cutting the man's arm off at the elbow. As the man stared in disbelief at his stump, Marcus spun his revolver around and put a shot through his chest, sending him flying backwards.

Focusing his attention back on Adrian, Marcus speed-loaded his gun, a well practiced move that took only a few seconds, then leaped over the barrier onto the dance floor. Bulling his way through the screaming civilians, he charged towards Adrian.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 20, 2013, 07:57:53 am**

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Adrian growled as the bullets struck his makeshift shield, one of them grazing his left arm just above where the augment stopped, causing him to wince in pain. The instant he heard the sound of Marcus's gun reloading, however, he sprung into action. Quickly assessing the situation, he saw the deer with the assault rifle, saw Emilena go down when the drug dealer slapped something on her, and noticed a Black Mamba slithering off. Without hesitating for a second, he turned, using the augmented strength in his arm to fling the table at the deer, striking him soundly in the chest and sending him sprawling. However, throwing away his shield was a poorly-planned idea, and as he did so, another human member of the Purifiers fired at him with a high-powered handgun, several shots tearing into the vulnerable skin at the base of his augmentation. Adrian staggered a little, cursing as he tossed his sword up, grabbing a throwing knife from a leg pocket and sending it through the man's throat as Marcus charged him. Flipping himself over another table, he caught his sword as it fell, dashing towards Marcus.

"Damn you, Marcus. This time...I'll pay you back for what you did to me...with interest!" He chuckled coldly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 21, 2013, 07:19:09 pm**

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"I'll finish the job this time, freak..." Marcus snarled as he ran forward. He leaped up onto a table between them and kicked himself higher into the air, firing continuously at Adrian whilst drawing back his combat knife with the other hand. As they came together, he sliced the knife downwards, aiming for Adrian's face.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 21, 2013, 11:32:29 pm**

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Sanjay considered helping the cop but seeing as someone already killed the target she told him to attack ó and that said cop was currently drugged, he simply shrugged his shoulders.

"See ya!" He crouched low to the ground and hugged the wall, avoiding gunshots and other

projectiles.

Seeing as the liquor cabinet was smashed open, he took the opportunity to swipe a bottle of Kozlov brand vodka.

-----  
Soren tossed aside a several hundred pound piece of concrete as he worked under the dim light of dawn. The rubble had cooled enough that it was safe to handle barehanded ó not that his exoskeleton would have been affected. He scowled.

He hauled out a crushed and scorched case and placed it aside. He smashed a large piece of concrete with his fist and threw the pieces aside.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 22, 2013, 04:00:37 am**

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Emilena glared as the cretin dashed away from her. Why the hell did she think somebody would HELP her anyway? That's not how the world works.

In her hatred for the punitive figure vanishing into the darkness, she had her first clear, unbothered thought. *I am going to stab that man without warning if I ever see him again...*

That was what she needed, she realized. Genuine rage. The only thing that can cut through this fog of confusion that damn patch had done to her.

Channeling her years of overreacting into a new focus, she got to her feet. She gripped her katana. "I cannot afford to be incapacitated now..." she hissed through gritted teeth to nobody in particular.

She marched forward, one step at a time. She had to find her own way into the recesses of this facility. She can't rely on anybody else.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 22, 2013, 10:26:56 am**

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Adrian spun his sword gracefully, knocking each bullet fired at him aside before bringing his sword up to meet Marcus's knife, stopping it mere inches from his head.

"Heh. Is that the best you have? After what you did to me last time...I was expecting more from you!"

He taunted, slinging a foot up to meet Marcus's chest...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 22, 2013, 05:26:51 pm**

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Marcus grunted as Adrian's foot connected. He recovered quickly and kept pushing forwards. "You got lucky last time," he growled, baring his teeth, meeting each of Adrian's attacks with his knife. A disorientated patron stumbled towards them, and Marcus kicked him away.

"But your impants can only take you so far!" He roared, as he ducked under Adrian's sword and swung his arm up, smashing the butt of his revolver on the underside of Adrian's visor.

-----  
Axel heard a crunching sound and looked over his shoulder. Through the window, he could see Soren out in the yard, clearing through the burned ruins of his workshop. "Aw man, I feel so bad for him. Who the hell would do this?" He winced as he recognised a expensive augmentation part sticking out of the smoking cinders.

"Do you think we should try and help him out there? You know, before we ask to borrow his computer?" Axel said, looking back at Lily. "That workshop was his life..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 24, 2013, 02:39:34 am**

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Lily wanted no more than to go to sleep, but Axel made a valid point. She nodded sleepily. "If we can help, we should. He's sticking his neck out for us, letting us stay here."

She walked out to the workshop. "Hey Soren, can we help you rescue what we can? Or at the very least clean up..."

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A security guard had his pistol out and was accosting two drunks wielding broken bottles. "This is your final warning! Leave now!"

The drunks looked itching for a fight, but after a glance at something behind the guard immediately complied. Out of his peripheral, the guard noted a lithe female form.

"Can I escort you to safety ma'am--" he started, but before he could blink a blade was pressed against his throat and she had him pinned to the ground.

"I know there's a hidden facility here," she whispered huskily. "Take me there or I slit your neck!"

She seemed to be drugged or something, so he kicked her in the stomach. She staggered, and he pistol-whipped her in the head. As she slid backward screaming along the ground, he aimed his pistol but hesitated; he wasn't one for shooting wounded females. Instead he decided to go warn the higher-ups that the underground facility had been compromised somehow.

Shooting two Hell's Angels out of his path, he reached the offices and punched the entry code into a seemingly unused one. After rotating a potted plant, the desk slid aside to reveal a set of stone stairs leading down.

As he began his descent, he felt a sickening *thud* and fell to the floor, unconscious. Emilena stood behind him, shaking.

"You brought me here as promised...so I'll let you live..." She muttered even though he can't hear her. She stepped forward.

But something made her pause and look at the unconscious man lying below her. Nobody would know what she did here...she could stroke his hair, expose his body...do other things...She felt a surge of blood in her abdomen thinking about it.

*What the hell? Why am I suddenly thinking such horrid thoughts?*

Repulsed, she tore her gaze away from his body and staggered down the stairs, sword at the ready. She had to get to the bottom of this. His body will still be here when she gets back.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 24, 2013, 03:23:48 am**

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Soren hurled aside a large piece of concrete. He turned to face Lily. "Dunno what's left to salvage but I could use a hand."

Sanjay slithered into an alley as two tracking bots flitted over the dirty road. He looked upward and noticed a fire escape. He slithered onto a dumpster and reared up as high as possible. Teetering precariously, he grabbed hold of the rung and wrapped his body around it.

With a grunt of effort, he began slithering up the ladder.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 24, 2013, 04:55:01 am**

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Axel followed behind Lily and stood looking at the wreckage. "Alright... do you want us to clear out some of the stuff that's collapsed inside?" He took out a cigarette from his back pocket and started to light it, then paused as he realised it might not be in the best taste. "Sorry."

He seized a piece of concrete and, after struggling with it for a few moments, managed to push it along the floor with a grunt. He went back to the ruined workshop and leaned inside. His nose twitched. "You know, I think you were right to be suspicious. It stinks of gasoline in here, and not the type you normally use."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 24, 2013, 09:25:52 am**

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Adrian smirked, dodging back as his visor flew off, clattering to the floor a few feet away from him.

"You think this is because of my implants? Heh.....Hahahaha! Then you're sadly mistaken. Think about that one in hell!"

He said, parrying another of Marcus's attacks before slamming the pommel of his sword into the Doberman's shoulder...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 24, 2013, 03:28:20 pm**

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Lily was struggling with a piece of concrete herself. "At least it didn't spread to the rest of--"

Suddenly she dropped the concrete, her eyes went blank, and she reeled.

*She wasn't in the workshop any more. At least, that wasn't what she was seeing. She was on a doorstep, and after a few seconds she recognized Soren's. Her gloved hands were sliding a thin laser through the door creak, and with a hiss the lock physically melted. Her gloved hands checked a HUD on her gleaming silver watch, where the words "SECURITY SYSTEM DEACTIVATED" were blinking in red. She pushed the door open...*

And then she was back in her own body, collapsed on the floor in shock.

"Somebody's here!" She squealed. "Somebody's outside!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 24, 2013, 03:45:06 pm**

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"Are you okay? What are you talking about?" Soren asked. He hauled away an augment that was battered beyond repair.

His HMD suddenly flashed a warning: UNKNOWN BEING HAS BREACHED PERIMETER.

"You two can keep clearing the rubble. I'll see what set off my security system." He headed towards the area where the alert was coming from...the front door of his house!

(OOC - I'm not sure what Lily is seeing but I'll have a looter get too curious.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 24, 2013, 05:18:40 pm**

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(Ooc: It's whatever this world's equivalent of a CIA agent is. As for HOW Lily saw that, it is currently a mystery.)

Emilena found herself in a tightly sealed room. Several computers with cryptic messages and locked file cabinets sat in the corner.

The untrained eye would instantly begin searching these for clues, but Emilena was more interested in the ink pad on the desk. It was actually a police-grade thumb scan. She realized it would be unlikely for the secret group to leave anything important in the first room; everything in here was no doubt a decoy.

Returning to the previous room, she dragged the security guard down the stairs and pressed his thumb against the ink pad. There was a click behing a large file cabinet, and she pushed it aside to find a hallway.

Heart beating faster, she marched deeper into the unknown.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 24, 2013, 05:31:41 pm**

---

Axel watched with alarm as Soren headed back inside his house, then hurried around the rubble piles to Lily's side. "Are you okay?!" He said, helping her to her feet. "What the hell's going on? How do you know someone's outside?!"

-----

Marcus felt a jolt run down his arm as Soren struck it, and his knife fell from his fingers, landing with a *thunk* point down on the floor. He roared with blind rage and seized Adrian's wrist, yanking him up to eye level with him. "Dodge this you freak," he snarled, as he drew back and slammed his forehead as hard as he could into Adrian's face.

He spun around and threw Adrian across the room, sending him crashing against the bar, smashing through alcohol bottles and dropping out of his sight. Marcus looked at the alcohol dripping down where he'd thrown Adrian. "That suit fireproof?" he called out, as he aimed his revolver and fired at the flammable liquid, igniting it.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 24, 2013, 06:18:45 pm**

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Adrian chuckled, kicking out from behind the bar, flames clinging to his coat as he landed. "Actually, yes. After you 'killed' me last time, I made sure to be as fire-resistant as I can possibly be."

He taunted, rolling a bottle of alcohol at Marcus's legs, then striking his sword on the ground to ignite it.

"And after this, once I get out of here, you and your terrorist friends are going down. Hard." He taunted...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 26, 2013, 02:43:26 am**

---

Soren entered his house to grab his shotgun. Thanks to magnets on his gun and suit, it stuck to his back.

A verbal command to his exoskeleton dialed down the power so he didn't need to worry about accidentally mangling someone.

He scowled as he noticed that someone had melted the lock on his door. The hair on the back of his neck stood up as he ordered the house AI to kill all the lights in his house and switched his HMD to show infrared. Another command switched his two worklights on his helmet to infrared.

Something crashing to the ground in his kitchen got his attention. Charging into his kitchen, Soren saw the intruder. A massive Rhino with a mechanical eye and arms was currently going through all his belongings.

The crook peeled back one of the walls, looking for something.

"Hey ass----! Get out of my house or I shoot!" Soren shouted.

"No need to worry citizen, I am just here toó"

Soren scowled. "Get out. If you're really a cop, go get a warrant and come back."

"Not until I find this person." The Rhino handed Soren a picture of Lily.

Soren's hair curled. "She's not here." It was then he realized that was the wrong thing to say.

The Rhino smiled. "I see. Now I have a few questions to ask you."

"No."

"Perhaps I did not make myself clear. That wasn't a request."

Soren crossed his metal clad arms. "Like I said, come back with a legit warrant and I'll talk."

The Rhino sighed. "Very well." In a lightning fast motion, he picked up Soren and tossed him through the back door and into his yard. His gun, remarkably, was not damaged.

"Axel, hold this please." Soren handed his shotgun to the Rat as he set his exoskeleton to the highest setting.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 26, 2013, 03:40:29 am**

---

(OOC: I'd...mentioned before that it was supposed to be a CIA Agent. I was setting something up. I can't really work with this psychotic rhino. Is he going to further the plot somehow?)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 26, 2013, 07:32:46 am**

---

**(OOC: Maybe the Rhino could be the CIA agent, and he was crashing around the house looking for Lily (I'm guessing) and Soren mistook him for a looter? Just an idea to get back to your idea if you were planning something)**

Axel gaped at Soren. He looked at the shotgun and took it hesitantly. "Sure, but what-" His eyes widened when he saw the huge wall of muscle charging through after Soren.

"Who the hell is that?!" Axel cried, instinctively firing the shotgun at the rhino, the bullets pinging off the rhino's tough exterior. The gun's kickback was stronger than Axel had

anticipated, and it sent him flying back to land on his rump in a daze.

-----

Marcus wrenched his knife from the floor and jumped back from the ball of fire that Adrian had sent at him. "You think I haven't heard that before? We won't stop until every one of you... *things* is wiped off the planet," he spat, the heat in the room making him breath heavily.

The years of accumulated spills of alcohol and other liquids had taken their toll on the fire safety of the club. The flames easily spread along the wooden floor, climbing up the walls coated with stained fabric and reaching the ceiling.

A wall of flames burst up between them, separating Marcus from Adrian. The smoke made it difficult to breath, and his eyes stung as he glared across at his enemy, ignoring the screams of patrons who'd found themselves trapped by the fire.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 26, 2013, 09:37:47 am**

---

Adrian coughed a couple of times, then swore.

*"Where's Emilena? Damnit, this isn't good..."*

He thought, eyes flicking through the fire until...there! A door that was hanging ajar, probably the one that Emilena had gone through. He reached into his coat, pulling out a flash grenade and arming it as he looked back towards Marcus.

"Keep telling yourself that. You're the ones who will end up gone."

He taunted, throwing the Grenade down and shielding his eyes as it detonated in a blinding flash, then rushing towards the open door, though not before grabbing as many patrons out of the fire as he could...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 26, 2013, 10:03:42 am**

---

(OOC - Yeah, we can have that. The Rhino's the agent and Soren thinks he's a common street thug.)

The Rhino finished rooting through the house and set his sights in the backyard. His night vision goggles showed three figures ó and one was a Human woman.

He ignored Soren and Axel as he approached Lily. "Lily. I recall you escaping our tracking drones a while back. Quite a feat. But I'm here for business. The Agency wishes to speak with you."

"Agency?" Soren asked. "If you think posing as a goverment spook's gonna fool me. You're wrong!" Soren charged forward, throwing a punch at his opponent's face. His metal fist, driven with artificial muscles powerful enough to shatter concrete, actually knocked the Rhino back a few feet.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 26, 2013, 03:22:22 pm**

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(OOC: My CIA Agent was going to be a suave MIB who lets his words show his authority...the sort of character you'd expect to be a CIA Agent. I guess I can work with a druggie thug, but he's depressingly one-sided.

Also I thought the workshop and the front room were two different places. Why are Lily and Axel present?)

Lily shrieked and ran as far as she could away from the thug. Finding a charred workbench,

she hid underneath it and started shaking uncontrollably.

-----

Her anger having given her focus again, Emilena found herself facing a long empty hallway. A locked door was at the end, but her memory of the strip club layout told her that she'd reached the end of the building. This was no doubt a dead end.

She heard footsteps coming her way, two pair coming down the hallway after her. With no hiding places of note, she decided to collapse and play dead, hiding her sword underneath her.

She heard the pair stop. "Hostile spotted. She appears to have passed out."

A radio cackled. "Tapes show she was hit with a neurocotic thirty minutes ago. Apprehend but use extreme caution."

Emilena waited until the pair was close before twirling her sword and bifurcating the closer one. The other opened fire but Emilena used the deceased as a shield as she unholstered his sidearm and finished off his teammate with a shot through the mouth.

Now armed with a gun and sword, Emilena located a small activator on the guard's person and pressed it. It opened a door further down the hallway.

Closing the door behind herself, she progressed further. She was close to her goal. She could sense it.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 26, 2013, 03:48:30 pm**

---

Meanwhile Rose was telling marita about what had happened to her since the breakup. it had not been a pretty picture by any means. ' she had been busted with possession of biproxytol, before it had been upgraded to a level 1 controlled substance which carried a 25 year minimum prison sentence. she had gotten 6 months, but had gotten out early for good behavior. she didnt get her possessions back, which included the home movie of her and marita having sex. she had lost her apartment, and been forced to live at the strip club. thanks to her spiraling drug habit she was getting less and less customers, and had to drop her prices to attract anyone.

- so there you have it.. she said, before the facade of the club suddenly collapsed. ' ok, time to get out' marita said opening the dopor thgat was on the streetside. rose grabbed her things and climbed out. it was just in time too, as debris from the collapse landed on the car , crushing it. ' well so much for a ride ' rose muttered. ' downb this way' Marita said pointing to the alley.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 26, 2013, 05:20:06 pm**

---

(OOC - Soren found the guy in the kitchen. And ended up getting thrown through the backdoor into his backyard where the workshop is. And if need be, I can rework the whole thing.)

The Rhino shook off the powerful blow and retaliated with one to Soren's chest, which his exoskeleton absorbed. "Stop making this harder than it needs to be. Tell me where Lily went, I'll get her and leave!"

"Why should I?" Soren snapped as he dodged another punch.

"Because if you don't, once I find her, I could have you hauled in for assault on a federal agent and for obstruction of official government proceedings. And trust me, you *do not* want to be convicted of those charges."

"Tell me what should I cooperate after you busted into my house and trashed the place?"

The Rhino sat on a piece of concrete and sighed as he spoke.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 26, 2013, 05:46:06 pm**

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**(OOC: You could say the CIA man sent in the rhino as someone working under him to test out the water, send a message, something like that, and have him appear soon after? Maybe after we've dealt with the rhino problem? He sounds like an interesting character. And Axel / Lily are still out in the yard, Soren got thrown back outside.)**

Axel winced as the two traded blows, then stumbled to his feet, tucking the shotgun under one arm. "Keep him away from her!" he shouted, sprinting across the yard to Lily. He bent down breathlessly. "Come on, he's after you! We need to to hide you somewhere!"

-----

Marcus tried aiming his revolver through the fire, but it was no good - the fire prevented him from getting a clear shot on Adrian. Through the haze, he saw the fleeing figure toss something towards him. At the last second, he recognised it as a flash grenade and threw an arm over his face. Even through the shielding, his vision flashed white.

When he lowered his arm, Adrian had vanished. "Don't run! Get back here!" he roared. A loud groaning drew his attention upwards, and with a crash part of the ceiling collapsed in front of him. Marcus swore loudly.

He had to escape the club, but Adrian hadn't seen the last of him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 27, 2013, 03:32:56 am**

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Before the rhino could speak, his eyes rolled into his head and he fell over. A smoking hole had appeared on his temples, and blood leaked out of his nose.

"So sorry about that," spoke a newcomer, a tall wolf in a crisp black suit. He put a long thin lethal-looking instrument back in his breast pocket. "Mr. Extasis is what we call a 'loose cannon' at the Bureau. We don't appreciate loose cannons. They don't tend to get results. Luckily, it seems Greg was...shall we say?...one day away from retirement," he smirked.

He bent over and snapped something onto the rhino's collar, and the body was promptly vaporized. "I am very sorry for the distraction. You will be reimbursed in full. Would twelve thousand dollars cover the damages to your apartment?"

-----

The next populated room contained two individuals in grey unisuits, who both leapt to their feet when they saw her. She dispatched with both before they could trip a silent alarm.

Emilena was sure she was in the right place this time. The words on the computers were still encrypted, but it was a cypher she recognized from her research on the latest cryptographical advancements. With her rudimentary understanding of the cypher, she accessed their databases.

Without wasting time, she filled a hard drive with everything she could collect. Then, curiosity got the better of her, and she spent far longer than she should have locating the files on her orphanage. With trembling fingers, she began to read about her past.

"Hey. Turn around slowly, and we may ask you who you are before we kill you."

A lithe androgynous figure in a catsuit had two large-barreled revolvers pointed right at her chest. The emotionless expression and use of the royal 'we' identified it as a Strain, a shadowy race of mercenaries who sacrifice everything for cybernetic upgrades, and have dedicated their lives to killing for pay and spending it on improving their cybernetics.

"I would rather die than submit to an abortion of nature like you!" she hissed, and he replied by blasting both of her hands. She cried out and her weapons went spinning onto the floor.

Without further ado he re-cocked his safeties and prepared to fire again.

-----

Lily wasted no time racing away with Axel, leaving Soren alone with the wolf.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 27, 2013, 12:36:41 pm**

---

Soren crossed his arms. "Okay first off, I want some answers. Why did this man break into my house and tear apart my kitchen? And who are you people?"

His HMD warned that his exoskeleton's batteries were running low but he ignored it for now.

-----

Sanjay leapt from the rooftop he was on and onto a repulsorcart. He quickly magnetized the gripping soles on his clothing as the vehicle sped through the skies. Once the vehicle landed, he'd head to the "suburbs", hitch a ride and disappear.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 27, 2013, 04:31:23 pm**

---

Adrian dodged around another another chunk of debris falling from the ceiling, rounding a corner to see the Strain menacing Emilena. In a heartbeat, he darted between them, drawing his sword and facing the mercenary.

"You. You're a Strain... How the hell could you choose to do that to yourself. To sacrifice your humanity for power...you're a monster."

He said coldly, then turned to Emilena.

"Emilena. Listen. This place is coming down around us, and we're gonna have to get our of here."

He said, smiling softly at her.

"Also, that outfit looks good on you."

He chuckled...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 27, 2013, 05:16:03 pm**

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"Hey, there's another guy down there!" Axel said, pulling Lily over to the window, his nose pressed up against the glass. "Looks like some kind of spy or something..."

After running from the rhino, he'd helped her back into Soren's house through an open window, then lead her upstairs to hide in the bathroom. When he heard talking outside, Axel had crept forward to look down cautiously.

He craned his neck. "I don't see the big guy anymore, but he was looking for you." He swallowed. "We really need to find out who you are. And fast."

Marcus coughed raggedly, his lungs filling up with smoke. The cave-in from the roof had blocked his route to the door and he darted his head around, looking for another exit. The windows were small, but Marcus thought his large frame should just be able to squeeze through.

He skirted past a flaming table and made his way over. "Help me.. please..." A small voice said behind him. Marcus turned around and saw the drunk he'd been talking to earlier lying on the floor, a chunk torn from his leg. "I can't move, I think I've been shot..."

Marcus sighed and took a step towards him. Grabbing the man by the scruff of the neck, he started dragging him towards the window, ignoring his cries of pain as his leg bumped against overturned furniture. Stooping to pick up a chair, he threw it as hard as he could against the glass, shattering it. He heaved the drunk through, then followed, squeezing himself out.

He landed in a grungy alley, next to the injured drunk who lay amongst the jagged shards of glass. "You should call an ambulance. You're losing blood," he said, looking down at him.

The drunk writhed in pain on the floor, clutching his leg. "I don't have a phone... please..."

Marcus grunted. "Not my problem," he muttered, as he turned around and made his way down the alley.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 27, 2013, 09:55:01 pm**

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Marita and roase soon came upon the drunk, whose rose recognized as a regular at the strip club. his leg was missing a chunk and blood was pooling out of it. ' Hold still' Marita said as she pulled out some gauze and a bandage. marita usually carried a small first aid kit with her, fortunately fr the drunk, she had brought it woth her. she wrapped the area of the wound tight with the gauze then pulled out a small vial of rubbing alcohol, which would be used to sterilize the wound. the gauze soon was crimson red as it absorbed the blood, but at least the drunk was no longer bleeding out. ' mr gittsun?' Rose asked the Drunk. " we'rre heare to help you. ' just put your arms around mine and mariotas shoulders and we'll help carry you out of there, until we can call an ambulance.' She said.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 28, 2013, 10:17:24 am**

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Not one for small talk, the Strain fired both cylinders, reloaded, and prepared to fire again. He prepared electrically charged bullets so they'd lethally shock if blocked with a sword.

Emilena had a very hard time of it, but managed to get her damaged hands to complete the download, remove the chip, and wipe the database behind her. Dropping to the floor, she used Adrian's distraction to grab her sword.

-----

"This was all a big misunderstanding," the wolf agent assured. "We're on the search for a dangerous fugitive, and Mr. Exstasis got a little carried away. We were only supposed to ask if you knew anything about this individual."

He showed a picture of 'Lily North,' a pristine headshot that looked like it came out of a company personnel bio. "She is a danger to others and herself, and needs psychiatric help. It would be for her own good to come with us. Anyone who helped us locate her would be amply rewarded."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 28, 2013, 12:08:48 pm**

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Adrian twirled his sword, parrying the first two bullets, then darting in for a sliding kick at the Strain's legs.

"Heh. Not much of a talker, are you? Well, that's fine. You'll end up as scrap soon enough." He said, slashing upward, aiming at the Strain's arms...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 28, 2013, 06:11:04 pm**

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Joe Gittsun groaned as the the two women helped him up. Just minutes ago he'd been comfortably buzzed, the drinks making him feel like the king of the world. Now, pain and fear had cleared his head until he felt almost sober again.

He looked at the Great Dane supporting his left arm. "Th... thanks. I don't know what I would've done..." Joe turned to look at the girl on his right and his eyes widened in recognition. "Rose? What're you doing out here? There was shooting..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **September 28, 2013, 11:40:08 pm**

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Soren took the photo and looked at it. "Can't say I've seen her."

He turned to the agent. "I'll let you know if I see her. Now if you'll excuse me, I need to fix my apartment and charge my exoskeleton."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 29, 2013, 12:56:45 am**

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The club's collapsed and everyone is running wherever they can' Rose replied. " as for shootings, well we've had a few of those in the club, especially when two girl dancers refuse to make-out for the guys entertainment, a lot of those guys are drunk and packing heat. thus shootings and generally, lousy aim" She turned to Marita "in the parlance its a twin bill with cherries' she muttered to Marita. i've heard of it. as if showing them your goods wasn't enough.. marita nodded as she tightened her grip on Gittsun's Shoulder

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 29, 2013, 02:40:01 am**

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"Of course," smiled the wolf. He made to leave, but noticed the burnt workshop. "Good Heaven! Whatever happened there? That doesn't look like Mr. Extasis was involved."

He stepped forward and examined. "This was almost certainly caused by arson," he noted. "As I'm sure you've figured out as well. Mr. Almaya, the government takes care of their citizens. I can promise you that I will personally divert manpower to finding out who burnt your warehouse *and* reimbursing you for the damage...as soon as I'm not so preoccupied with finding the missing fugitive..."

He smiled, hoping Soren caught his drift.

-----

Lily nodded. "We should investigate that sticker from my boots first chance we get," she agreed. "Assuming I survive this man's visit..."

-----

Every one of Adrian's strikes rang true, and the Strain found himself a quadruple amputee in seconds.

Staggering forward, Emilena held her sword in both mangled hands and plunged it into the Strain's neck, for a particularly unsatisfying kill.

"Let's...go--" coughed Emilena; the room had filled with smoke. He way back to the strip club was almost certainly unusable. "Why did you *\*cough\** come back for me you *\*ack\** damn fool?" she choked, honestly not understanding it. Nobody she'd ever met before would have bothered to try and rescue her from a burning building.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **September 29, 2013, 03:12:12 am**

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Adrian smiled at her, then reached into his coat and pulled out a small breath mask.  
 "Because. You mean a lot to me, Emilena. I know that the feeling is probably not mutual, but I'm not about to let you die."  
 He said softly, the system over his right eye glowing as he scanned the area...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **September 29, 2013, 06:30:19 am**

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"Don't worry, Soren'll get rid of him," Axel reassured her. He watched as the wolf made to leave and then stopped to gesture at the ruined workshop. "Come on, get out of here!" he muttered.

He flicked his tail impatiently, and accidentally caught a row of bath product bottles, knocking them off the side of the bath with a loud crash.

-----

Gittsun winced as Marita's grip hardened. "That's quite a grip you have there..." He watched as black smoke poured out of the club's cracked windows and flames occasionally flicked outside. "I don't think I'll come here anymore. Maybe it's time for a break for you too, Rose. You never looked...ow... happy here."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **September 29, 2013, 04:06:47 pm**

---

I hated the club anyway' Rose repl;ied. ' so i'm going to find new work, something a little more dignified/

- i"m Marita' marita said " rose is an old Friend of mine. I'm helping her land on her feet. As for you, well no ones going to the black sheep anymore.

- you can say that again, said a voice behind her ' It was the waitress who had served her at the club ' mind if i tag with you folks for awhile.. my car got totaled when the back of the building fell on it.. so i'm rideless for awhile.

—  
 Sure Marita shrugged. ' you can tag along..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **September 30, 2013, 09:56:56 pm**

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"Well, Mr. Almaya?" The wolf waited. "It's not a difficult question. If you know anything about the missing fugitive, there's a 1 million dollar reward for her safe apprehension. We only want to give her the therapy and rehabilitation to live a normal life. And in addition I would be

honored to help you discover who burnt your warehouse, and aid in their apprehension."

The wolf's smile widened as he heard the crash, but he didn't take his eyes off Soren and otherwise made no indication that he had heard it. "If you can't help, I'll just have to continue my investigation into these matters alone..."

-----

Emilena slipped the mask on and breathed pure air. Her eyes still stung and her ash-choked fur reeked of smoke, but she could see the outside of the burning club.

"We must be gone before the other police arrive," she said urgently, for she heard all-too-familiar sirens in the distance. "My apartment is too far away, and I no longer have the key. Do you have a dwelling or elsewhere we could hideout in?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 02, 2013, 12:24:34 am**

---

Adrian nodded, eyepiece flaring as he searched the room for a weak point they could use to escape.

"Yeah. I have a bolthole somewhere not too far away. First though, we need to get out of here."

He said, finally pinpointing a target in the wall...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 02, 2013, 02:35:15 am**

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Soren pondered for a moment. The million bucks was awfully tempting and he knew nothing about Lily. At the same time, he realized Axel had decided to help her ó and betraying his friend was pretty much a dick move.

He made up his mind. "Sorry. I have better things to do than help you deal with a potentially dangerous fugitive."

Soren then turned around and headed into his house through the ruined back door. He groaned as he realized that the sun had begun to peek through the smoggy skies.

-----

Sanjay waited until the repulsorcart's engine shut off and then slithered down the vertical side. Luckily, the men driving the vehicle were too busy in charging the vehicle's batteries and getting something to eat to care about the figure that just slithered behind them.

The Cobra scowled as he realized he was in a nasty truck stop. Empty vials littered the ground and armed drones flitted overhead in the smoggy sky. A large electronic billboard advertised the latest model hoverbike. Two women ó one an Augment ó loitered outside. Both of them had the unnaturally blue eyes that came with the use of carboxzyl ó AKA Bliss ó a drug once developed for memory enhancement but withdrawn once it was found to be incredibly addictive. Prostitutes favored it for its alleged ability to enhance sexual prowess.

Feeling the need to relieve himself ó and decidedly *not* wanting to enter the truck stop, Sanjay ducked behind a scraggly bush next to the building.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 02, 2013, 05:19:41 am**

---

Axel was holding his breath, his face frozen in a grimace. When Soren turned back to head inside the house, he let it out with a *whoosh*. "I think it's alright, that guy must be leaving..."

he told Lily. To be sure, he kept peeking over the edge of the window to see what the wolf would do next.

-----

Gittsun nodded along with Marita, sneaking a quick look at the waitress' chest. "Sure you can come, the more the merrier!" he grinned, apparently pleased with the way things had turned out. "Any of you got any booze? Because... uh, my leg is starting to hurt again."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 02, 2013, 06:44:47 am**

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The wolf shook his head sadly. "A shame. Oh well. Not your fault you don't know anything...But we all must make sacrifices in the name of global protection. You have 24 hours to change your mind in case you *recall* anything you may have forgotten. And I must remind you, every minute we are getting closer to finding her. And we will do *whatever* it takes for her apprehension."

With one glance, he glanced around and noticed Axel. Giving Axel his largest, toothiest grin, the wolf turned and left the building.

-----

"Well? It's not a particularly difficult shot! Fire!" snapped Emilena, losing her patience. "Would it help if I rubbed your--!?"

She broke off. She was about to sarcastically suggest she do something incredibly inappropriate, supposedly to 'motivate' him. She had never made a lewd remark about her own actions before. Concerned about what was happening to her, she merely remained silent and waited for him to take the shot.

-----

Lily was huddled close to Axel. She wasn't brave enough to look herself, but she shivered as she listened to Axel's interpretation of the situation.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 02, 2013, 09:52:08 am**

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Adrian chuckled, smiling at Emilena as he turned and drew a set of knives, flinging them into the wall before dashing at it and kicking it cleanly apart.

"There. We got our way out. And if you're gonna rub anything, it'll have to wait until we get out of here."

He said with a grin, offering her his uninjured arm.

"Shall we?"

He joked...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 03, 2013, 08:57:15 pm**

---

Emilena dove through the hole and went tumbling onto the asphalted ground of an alleyway. She quickly glanced left and right; nobody had arrived yet.

"Lead the way," she said, refusing his arm.

As they ran, she looked troubled. "A drug dealer tagged me with...something in there," she admitted. "I suspect it was a neurocotic, but I don't know...and now I can't figure out..."

She trailed off. Not only can she not figure out how she felt, she couldn't even think of the words to explain how she felt.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 03, 2013, 09:44:42 pm**

---

no, i have no booze' marie the waitress said ' All the booze we had went up in that' she motioned back to the fire. ' booze is the last thing you need right now anyway' Marita said ' those bandages are the only thing keeping you from bleeding out. if you bump into anything, the bleeding will start all over again. so its best to be sober.  
- rose paused as they continued down the alley, flickering red and blue lights showing that the police had arrived to investigate the fire.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 03, 2013, 10:57:10 pm**

---

Adrian looked at it, then blushed slightly as his overlay processed what the drug dealer had stuck Emilena with.  
"Uh...Emilena? I think I know what you were stuck with..."  
He said softly, then stepped around in front of her.  
"We'll look into it when we get to my hideyhole. How about that?"  
He said with a grin.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 04, 2013, 01:38:55 am**

---

Soren headed back into his ravaged apartment and into the basement where he plugged his exoskeleton into the charger. He found his shotgun in the foyer where it had been discarded by Axel in his haste to get Lily away from the agents. After checking to see it was still intact, he kept it in hand as he headed upstairs.

A yawn escaped his mouth as he willed his muscles to keep moving. After trudging upstairs, he flung open his bathroom where he found Axel and Lily.

A scowl was on his face as he kept his shotgun aimed at the ground. "Okay, I want the full story on this." He thrust the poster that the Wolf agent had given him at the two. "I know that y'all are hiding something from me and it cost me thousands of dollars in damage. Now out with it!"

The open blister pack of moziafil -- a powerful drug that allowed one to function perfectly for over a day with minimal to no sleep -- on the countertop tempted him. But he decided against taking it right now because the act of reaching over and grabbing the pack might give the two a distraction that they could use to disarm him. Moziafil had very few side effects and was non-addictive; unfortunately it was extremely expensive. The six pack he had on the counter cost him nearly a month's pay to buy. All this was due to the long and complicated synthesis, expensive feedstocks as well as the very low yield.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 04, 2013, 04:29:12 am**

---

Axel blinked uneasily at the shotgun in Soren's hands. "Soren, wait, we aren't hiding..." He trailed off as he noticed the picture being held out to them. "Hey, that's you!" he exclaimed, looking back at Lily and pointing.

He leaned in to look at the name printed on it. "Lily North. That's a nice name. Ah, I mean it's nice that we finally know what your name is!" He said quickly.

Looking back at Soren, Axel's eyes widened. "What did that guy want? You can't trust him, he's a spook!"

**(OOC: I'm assuming her name is on the picture, if it isn't I'll edit my post.)**

-----

"If you say so," Gittsun groaned. The flashing police lights in the distance made his head hurt, so he looked down at the floor. "Maybe they'll catch the bastards that did this."

-----

Marcus grunted as he hoisted himself onto the rooftop. When he'd heard the police sirens approaching, Marcus had used a dumpster to boost himself up, clambering up the side of the building it faced against.

A sharp pain ran up his right arm, and he glanced down to see a cut running up his coat. Shrugging off the sleeve, he saw a deep laceration running up his arm, the sleeve of his T-Shirt stained red. Blood tricked down his fingers to drip on the gravel floor. One of Adrian's attacks; he hadn't felt it in the heat of the moment. *I'll deal with it later* he thought, as he watched the alleyways below from the darkness.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 04, 2013, 05:18:09 am**

---

"I don't I..." Lily stammered. "I told you already! I don't anything more than I've already told you!"

She scrambled nervously away from the gun. "If you want me to leave, I will! But I don't know if I did any of the crimes listed on that poster!"

-----

Emilena sighed. "Acceptable..." was the only thing she could think to say. The day's event were beginning to take a toll on her stamina. Plus she realized that running naked through back alleys was not the best way to reach a healthy retirement age. She merely kept her eyes peeled for movement as they headed closer and closer to Adrian's hideout.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 04, 2013, 12:58:44 pm**

---

Adrian glanced back, then took off his long jacket, stopping to wrap Emilena in the coat. "Here. You looked cold, plus you were giving everyone a free show. Didn't think you wanted that."

He said gently, giving her a small hug before picking her up and holding her bridal-style.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 04, 2013, 08:50:53 pm**

---

"I honestly have stopped caring..." was the mumbled reply Adrian received. The neurocotic was doing a number on her endocrine and nervous systems, and she was rapidly succumbing to a state of semi-consciousness now that she didn't have to walk.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 04, 2013, 09:46:52 pm**

---

Adrian gently ran a hand over her face as he ran down another street, stopping at what appeared to be a dilapidated building, where he, never even breaking stride, tapped a hidden panel open with a shoulder.

"Hey. Hey we're here, Emilena. We're safe now. C'mon, stay awake..."  
He said worriedly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 04, 2013, 11:14:03 pm**

---

Soren rubbed his temples with his hands as he let his shotgun dangle from his sling. "Look, I'm not going to turn y'all into the feds but I really want answers. Both about who Lily is and what the f--- was that guy doing ripping my house up *and* who the hell burnt down my workshop. I mean, they used gasoline -- something only used by classic car enthusiasts -- to burn down my workshop!"

He took a breath. "Look, sorry about my outburst before. I'm having a rough day. Now if you both could leave me alone for a moment so I can take a shower see if I have clients."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 05, 2013, 03:48:10 am**

---

Lily silently nodded, face pallid.

Once Soren had left she hugged Axel. "I want to know all of that too..." she sighed. "I've got to know what I did. We've still got that sticker, how soon can we analyze it? And should we leave? I don't think Soren wants us here..."

-----

Emilena groaned and shuddered, her eyes remaining closed. The strangest visions were fluttering across her mind's eye, psychedelic visions of harsh colors and imaginary sensations racking her entire body....and that need was just getting worse and worse...building up inside her with no way of release...

*How?* she thought desperately, *how do I make this feeling go away?*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 05, 2013, 05:54:18 am**

---

Axel hugged her back, his fingers lightly brushing against her hair. "I don't think we *can* go anywhere else. Soren's a good guy, he won't throw us out. He just needs time to think."

He looked over her shoulder, down the corridor leading away from the bathroom. "I think he has an office around here somewhere. We can use his computer to go through that sticker." Breaking from the hug gently, he started leading her down the corridor. "Soren!" Axel called over his shoulder, "We need to use your computer for a second. I won't mess around with anything, I promise!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 05, 2013, 10:41:40 am**

---

"The one in the office is not connected to the Internet. That's a record keeping computer. You can use the one in the living room!" Soren called back.

He quickly popped a pill of moziafil and soon felt his tiredness melt away. Stripping off his clothing, he leapt into the shower and began scrubbing himself down.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 05, 2013, 11:05:28 am**

---

Adrian laid Emilena on the bed in the saferoom, placing a hand on hers as he tapped a code frequency into a wall panel. Almost immediately, a screen flashed to life, a balding older male with glasses appearing in the frame.

"Ah, Adrian. What seems to be the trouble? I presume it pertains to the young woman currently on your bed, nein?"

He asked, to which Adrian nodded.

"Yeah. Seems she got stuck with a Neurocotic by some drug dealer, and she doesn't seem to be handling it so well. Talk me through getting her out of it."

He responded, worry evident in his voice. The man in the glasses nodded.

"Ja, ja. I will. Firstly, you need to get that patch off her. Tug it off, und zat should stop the hormones and chemicals. I already synthesized a counter-agent, but you'll need to administer it via mouth-to-mouth contact. It should halt the damage and keep it from spreading any further. Most likely, your fraulein will awaken at that point. However, she will likely need your help to...ah...release some of the tension."

He said, chuckling as a vial of clear liquid slid out from a panel in the wall. Adrian took it, nodding as he removed the patch from Emilena's body before biting the cork holding the vial shut, tipping it into his mouth before leaning in and kissing Emilena, letting the contents of the vial trickle into her mouth...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 05, 2013, 11:54:29 pm**

---

Lily followed to the computer in the living room. "I'll let you handle this," she said, standing crouched over beside his chair. "If I was a computer person, I'm not any more..."

(OOC: From this angle, he can slightly see down her shirt. If he does so, he'll notice the tattoo has changed; the white O has become a 9.)

-----

Emilena's eyes snapped open and registered Adrian's face. At that moment, everything became crystal clear; she realized what she needed, and it repulsed her. But she couldn't stop herself.

Grabbing him by the collar, she pulled him down and kissed him passionately back. Digging her claws into his back, she tore his shirt off of his back in ribbons and wouldn't let him pull away.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 12:01:42 am**

---

Adrian blushed, but, knowing that what he was doing was for Emilena, smiled and relaxed into the kiss, running his tongue along her lips as he kissed her, his hands tracing down her body...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 12:41:46 am**

---

Rolling over so that she was on top, Emilena broke the kiss, panting. "Don't you dare try and stop me!" she hissed as she threw Adrian's overcoat aside and ground her bare body against his. Groaning, she blinked through teary eyes and shuddered as a mix of carnal passion, dominance, and anticipation coursed through her.

Feeling the need to assert her control, she slashed his pectorals with her claws and snapped her jaws a centimeter from his face, but her glare quickly faded as her body spasmed again and her eyes rolled back into her head.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 12:43:41 am**

---

Adrian winced a little at the feeling of her clawing his chest, but he gently pulled her into a tight embrace when she started spasming again, holding her close so that she wouldn't injure herself...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 01:12:53 am**

---

After a long time, Emilena was getting frustrated. Any release was fleeting, the pressure inside her abdomen returning with every pulse of her chafing. A low growl escaped her throat as Adrian's cold belt buckle scraped between her thighs, and she realized he wasn't fully undressed yet.

Unbuckling his pants and flinging them aside disdainfully, she briefly broke her stride and froze blinking when she saw what presented itself underneath. Sure, in her line of work she'd seen nude males before, as well as static images or film, but she'd never even thought about getting this close to one...or even having to.....

Not wanting to give her prey the satisfaction of seeing her brief flounder, she brandished her claws threateningly near his new exposed weak point. "I expect *perfect* cooperation from you!" she threatened, snapping her jaws at it for good measure.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 01:17:07 am**

---

Adrian smiled slightly.

"Of course, Emilena. Why wouldn't I cooperate with you?"

He murred...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 01:26:19 am**

---

"You better!" she snarled, expecting betrayal at any second. She ached for release, and her life had taught her that if she wanted something bad enough, somebody would find a way to stop her from getting it.

Grasping it without any regard for gentleness, she positioned herself above him, shuddering both with trepidation and anticipation of maybe, *finally* feeling release. Taking a deep ragged breath, she plunged downward.

Immediately she cried out, and squinted shut teary eyes as a lance of pain shot through her legs and midsection. She reflexively arched to pull out, but when she did so some of her pressure evaporated...just a sliver. Moaning, she gritted her teeth and plunged through the pain again. And again.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 02:01:36 am**

---

Adrian gingerly reached up, taking Emilena's hand and giving it a gentle squeeze, blushing profusely...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 06, 2013, 02:17:58 am**

---

marita, marie and Rose helped guide Gittsun towards the next alley.' marie shivered.. she had lost nearly everything she possessed in the strip club.. all she had on was her work outfit, which was skimpy.. " the nearest hospital is 6 blocks from here' she panted, as they kept walking..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 02:42:21 am**

---

Emilena panted loudly, cringing with each thrust. But at last she felt her pressure building to a breaking point, one that felt like it would pass through her, like a wave, so long as she kept this up...she moved faster and faster, yearning for that breaking point to come, but not quite understanding *how* exactly that happened...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 02:44:20 am**

---

Adrian moaned softly, his hips bucking up to meet Emilena's every time, a vivid blush coloring his features as he felt his own climax nearing...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 02:50:24 am**

---

The pressure was unbearable! Her eyes flew open and she squealed immodestly. A feeling started welling up inside her, something she'd never felt before. Something powerful.

Her back arched of its own accord, and she let out an unrestrained scream.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 02:55:16 am**

---

Adrian's response was somewhat more restrained, but nearly as loud and passionate as Emilena's as his body convulsed with pleasure, his climax spilling into Emilena's body...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 03:07:02 am**

---

For at least fifteen seconds, every muscle in Emilena's body tightened and the pressure in her abdomen crested through her, setting her hair on end.

In time her scream lessened to a long low moan, and her exhausted muscles completely lost the ability to support her. She flopped on top on her partner, tongue lolling to the side and her heart thudding loudly in her chest.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 06, 2013, 05:40:38 am**

---

Axel nodded. "I've got this," he said, rolling his shoulders. Pressing a switch, the screen flickered to life and demanded a username and password. He blinked and his eyes changed from blue to red, glowing slightly. The screen changed to a wall of text and numbers and after a second Axel found the information he needed, tapping it into the keyboard and hitting enter.

When the desktop loaded up, Axel connected to the internet and pulled out the bar-code sticker. "Alright... so if we just put this in..." he muttered to himself, typing in the numbers without looking away from the screen. After a short pause the jumble of number and letters

returned, and he was able to interpret them: an expensive store called *J. Goldsmith's*.

Axel whistled. "You got them from J. Goldsmith's? Very fancy..." He loaded up the webpage. "Hmn, says here that the closest store is on Boarding Avenue. That's on the other side of the city, right? Next to the hospital?"

He looked back up at Lily, leaning over him. As he did so, his eyes passed over her chest and lingered for a moment, his breath catching. Then he noticed the tattoo and his eyes widened, changing back to their normal vision in his shock. "What the hell?! Uh... Lily... your tattoo's changed..." Axel spluttered.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 11:16:21 am**

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Adrian murred, blushing and wrapping his arms around Emilena's body and holding her close. "Feeling better now, 'Lena?"  
He asked softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 07:31:15 pm**

---

As the carnal instinct wore off, Emilena's natural standards started settling back and she realized what she had just done. The nickname Adrian had chosen didn't help. "Don't call me by that name!" she exclaimed, leaping off the bed and instinctually covering her breasts. She glanced around for clothes, then realized she didn't have any.

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Lily was having a similar reaction to seeing the tattoo. The white O had changed to a 9. "What does that mean? How did it even do that?" She tried to scratch it off with her hands, but succeeded only in inflaming the surrounding skin.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 08:22:51 pm**

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Adrian grinned idly.  
"Right. Sorry. There are some clothes in the closet over there. Don't have any bras or panties, so you'll have to go without. If I were you, I'd pick a thicker shirt. Oh, and the bathroom's through that door, if you feel like... Cleaning up.  
He said softly, pointing to a pair of doors...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 11:04:59 pm**

---

Emilena returned from the bathroom looking slightly nauseous. "I can't believe I just..." she trailed off. She couldn't decide whether to hate the man lying in bed before her, or to admit that she would be immeasurably more unhappy had he not been available. Plus, she was going to need his help again in the future...

She sighed. "I am sorry..." she said for the first time in her life. "Lena was the name of my mother. And I burned an orphanage down so that I'd have no ties to my parents of any kind. I don't...like remembering what I know about them."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 11:10:10 pm**

---

Adrian nodded, then got up and hugged her close.

"Right. Sorry to bring up those memories. I just...anyways. Anyways, apology accepted. I'm sure you had your reasons for hating your parents, and I won't pry."

He said softly, smiling gently...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 06, 2013, 11:35:40 pm**

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Emilena sighed. "The nicest thing they ever did for me was put me in that orphanage so I didn't have to grow up with them..."

She lay back down on the bed. "I didn't know anything about my parentage until after I became a police officer, when I had the authority to demand the orphanage's files. My parents were Augmented soldiers. They freelanced as mercenaries, and in 2030 got rid of me to continue their hedonistic, libido-filled lifestyle..."

She trailed off, wondering whether to omit the worst part. Finally, she added, "...they were brother and sister..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 06, 2013, 11:37:13 pm**

---

Adrian blushed, looking at her as he lay next to her.

"That...heh. Well at least you know about yours. Me? All I've got is their name."

He said softly.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 07, 2013, 12:40:41 am**

---

"Be grateful," she replied bitterly. "I would love to never think about my parents again...idly participating in a violation of nature like that..."

She trailed off. "We need to reconnect with that hacker so we can read the files obtained from the Electric Sheep. Though I used to know that code. I suppose I could do it myself..." She yawned. "...tomorrow morning."

As much as she didn't want to touch him, the bed was small even for one so she had no choice. *After all*, she reflected, pressing against the side of his body, *That feeling is already coming back...I better get used to this...*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 07, 2013, 01:06:15 am**

---

Adrian gently wrapped his arm around Emilena, holding her close, but still loose enough that she wouldn't be uncomfortable.

"Yeah...Sleep well, Emilena. I'll talk to you in the morning."

He whispered softly. As he lay there, he finally allowed himself to think back.

*"Heh...it's a funny thing. All these times we've worked together...and I never realized it before, but...I fell a little in love with her each time...And now..."*

He sighed softly, shutting his eyes and drifting off slowly to sleep...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 07, 2013, 02:27:27 am**

---

Sanjay zipped up his uniform when he was done. He noticed two huge men standing behind him.

"Can't you give a guy some privacy when he's taking a piss!" the Cobra snapped.

In response the two approached him. "The Purifiers would like to have a word with you."

"Yeah, here's my reply, f--- off." He then turned to slither away when he felt a sharp sting and he suddenly started to feel drowsy. Reaching behind him, he removed a dart.

One of the men bent over to pick up the incapacitated snake but Sanjay used the last of his strength to belt the man across the temple with his stolen bottle of vodka. The man grunted and then fell, unmoving, to the ground.

The last thing Sanjay heard was his bottle shattering as his grip loosened thanks to the drugs working on his body.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 07, 2013, 05:19:12 am**

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"Hey, stop that!" Axel said, firmly but gently grabbing Lily's wrists to stop her scratching. "You're just going to hurt yourself. Look, we made a good start here. We know what your name is, even though the rest of the stuff on that poster was crap. And we know where you were a couple of days ago."

He gave her what he hoped was an encouraging smile and held her hand. "I know I haven't known you long, but I can tell how brave you are. Don't let something like this-", he indicated her tattoo, "-scare you. We'll get to the bottom of it. I swear."

Axel stopped. "You look exhausted, maybe you should get some sleep. Tomorrow, we'll head across the city and get some answers."

-----

Marcus ran, panting. The wailing of the police sirens was still there, but much fainter. He was getting away, but it was getting much harder to move; his arm had gone numb, and his legs had started aching. Blood continued to drip from his fingers, spattering on the floor and forming a gruesome trail for the cops to follow. *Goddamn him, it won't stop bleeding...*

He turned left into a narrow passageway and knocked into a pair of dustbins, sending them crashing to the floor and almost falling over.

-----

Gittsun looked at Marita curiously as they walked. "You know, you look awful familiar. Have I seen you before? Maybe on...ow... Maybe on TV?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 07, 2013, 10:20:16 am**

---

Lily didn't resist. "You're right...just, can you promise me we can trust Soren?" Her exhaustion was returning quickly as the adrenaline rush died down. Regardless of Axel's answer, she allowed herself to be led to the guest bedroom and lay down. In a few moments, she would be asleep.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 07, 2013, 11:07:58 am**

Adrian lay awake still, having barely been able to sleep at all. Somehow, something about being close to Emilena like he had been stirring memories. Vague flashes of a past that had been taken from him.

*"Why do I keep seeing these things? It's like...being around Emilena is bringing something back...are these my memories? I see...a family? Is that my family? Did I have a sister? No...not a chance. I was told that I was abandoned at that orphanage alone. But...what if they lied?"*

He wondered to himself, staring at the ceiling in the dark...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 07, 2013, 12:22:31 pm**

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"I promise. I won't let anything happen to you." Axel sat next to Lily, watching her breath slow as she drifted into sleep.

He looked at the alarm clock on the bedside table. 4:00AM. Axel knew it would be more polite to stay up and thank Soren again, but he felt completely wiped out. *Just a few hours...* He lightly brushed aside a lock of Lily's hair from her face, then settled down, between her and the door. Closing his eyes, he fell asleep almost immediately.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 08, 2013, 02:17:45 am**

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I dont think so'Marita said as they continued on down the alleyway. ' i prefer my privacy.. being on tv takes that away..' she olooked round, the temperature around them was dropping.. ' we need to keep going. neither rose nor i have much warm clothing on' marie said ' i'd like to find a store so i can buy a change of attire..

We have to get Gittsun here to the hospital first.. hold on, i've got to put on a fresh round of bandages, hold him still' Marita took out the scissors from the first aid kit and cut away the blackened bandages, re-wrapping the wound with a fresh length of bandage. the bloody bandages dripped blood onto the ground, thats how thoroughly saturated they were.' rose picked them up and threw them into a nearby trash can.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 08, 2013, 03:06:28 am**

---

Soren got out of the shower and dressed.

He headed to the kitchen to cook himself a meal of catfish sausage and hash browns. As he slowly savored his meal, he recalled that bent cop who tried to beat him up for no reason at all.

Sighing, he got up and adjusted the shotgun slung across his back. The faint chemical smell of the air wafted through the door. A quick adjustment and a scrap of metal shoved into the hinges kept the door from falling inwards. The now exposed pipes and wiring in his kitchen could be fixed later.

Sitting back down, he finished his meal and placed the plates in his dishwasher.

Seeing as he was wide awake and he wasn't open for another three hours, he headed to his office and decided to check his records.

As Soren looked over the spreadsheet, he scowled. In the weeks before his workshop was destroyed, there was a spate of people coming in with severely damaged augments but totally incongruous backgrounds. Like an office worker who had somehow had all five fingers on his light class 1 arm completely ripped off. Or a waitress who somehow managed to get every servo-wire in her class 1 hand torn out.

Usually, he saw damage like that to laborers sporting class 2 augments and who had a bad encounter with heavy machinery. Furthermore, now that he examined the pictures, the damage looked almost deliberate.

He scratched his head and continued looking through his records to find any other discrepancies.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 08, 2013, 11:01:42 am**

As Marita and Rose finished changing Gittsun's bandages, the sound of a heavy boot step alerted them to the figure that came striding around the corner a moment later. The tall, muscular Hokkaido wolf glanced at them, hand resting uneasily on the hilt of his sword for a moment before relaxing.

"Well...what do we have here?"

He said, voice soft, and cultured...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 08, 2013, 12:06:19 pm**

Gittsun blinked at the wolf, eyeing his military armour. "A little early for halloween, isn't it buddy? Listen, do you know how far the hospital is? I'm not exactly in dancing shape here," he said, indicating his leg.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 08, 2013, 07:39:59 pm**

we're just taking him to the nearest hospital' marita said ' can you take us there? we dont have a car..

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 08, 2013, 10:08:44 pm**

The figure in the coat nodded.

"I can get you there. Come on. Follow me."

He said calmly...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 09, 2013, 05:58:39 am**

Gittsun stared at the wolf's sword as he lead them down the dark passages. It looked sharp enough to slice through steel.

"So... who are you?" He asked uneasily, holding Marita and Rose a little ahead of him.

-----

Marcus reached the end of the alley he'd been following and leaned out cautiously. He looked out into a main street, but at this early time of morning it was deserted. Movement across the street caught his eye. Through a convenience store window, he could see a young human stacking shelves, preparing for the day ahead.

*Perfect.* He couldn't risk going to a hospital, but it looked like he'd be able to fix himself up DIY-style. He crossed the street, making sure nobody was looking, and pushed open the door

while slowly pulling out his revolver.

The man inside heard him and looked over his shoulder. "Oh, sorry sir. I'm not open to customers yet."

Marcus closed the door and flipped the bolt lock shut. "I'm not a customer."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 09, 2013, 09:51:15 am**

---

The wolf paused for a moment, then looked back over his shoulder.

"My name is Kojuuro, and I'm offering to help you. That's all you need to know at the moment."

He said softly, turning back around, making his way down the street towards the hospital...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 09, 2013, 01:51:02 pm**

---

Soon enough, the huge neon sign announcing the city hospital loomed over the group. It wasn't too soon; the new bandage Marita had wrapped around Gittsun's wound was already beginning to soak through.

"I'm not... ow... gonna complain about the morphine, that's for sure," he announced to the others, wincing.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 09, 2013, 09:53:03 pm**

---

Marie followed Maritas and Rose inside, as they helped Gittsun into the hospital. ' we ned a doctor' Rose said to the clerk ' Hes missing a chenk out of his leg. he'll need a skin graft to repair it i think..

- a couple of doctor, one of which was an anthro eagle and the other a large saint Bernard, came up to them ' wheel him in into Room 107 for surgery' the Saint Bernard sad as he easily picked up Gittsun and laid him on a stretcher..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 10, 2013, 03:34:58 am**

---

Just then, a repulsor-ambulance landed and some EMTs wheeled in a Shetland Pony. The pony in question was an Augment mare ó on her forehead, just below her mane, was a spiraling metal horn. Just like that of the mythical unicorn.

IV tubes ran into her arms and an oxygen mask was placed on her snout. She gave no movement or sound as they hustled the mare into the detox unit.

One of the nurses, a lean Fruit Bat sighed as he adjusted his HMD. "Anne again?"

An Augment orderly shrugged his metallic arms. "Judging from that 'radio horn' implant and her tan coat...yeah."

"What'd she do this time?"

"Looks like she OD but we don't know what."

The nurse sighed. "The doc'll order a full tox screen."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 10, 2013, 04:30:32 am**

---

Gittsun stared at the strange pony as she was wheeled past, then groaned as the Saint Bernard knocked his leg. "Watch it will you?! Thanks girls, if it wasn't for you I probably would've died back there."

"And thanks to you too, uh... Kojuuro. Will you guys be hanging around? Maybe I could treat you all to a drink when I'm fixed up?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 10, 2013, 05:46:34 pm**

---

sorry, sir' the st bernard whose name was roller said. the eagles name was flightwing. DR Flightwing spoke up' you're lucky it was only a chunk taken out. missing a whole leg, or both legs would be even worse.;' yeah, this operation should only take about 3 hours ' DR Roller said.

\_ a drink would be fine Marita said ' solong as its not too alcoholic.;' i could go for a bourbon actually' Marie said.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 11, 2013, 03:08:04 am**

---

"Bourbon? A girl after my own heart," Gittsun chortled. "How about you, furball? You've got 3 hours to spare, don't you?" he called out to Kojuuro as the doctors started to wheel him away.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 11, 2013, 11:27:17 am**

---

Kojuuro chuckled a little.

"Hm. I suppose I can spare the time. After all, I highly doubt that the person I'm looking for will go anywhere in that time."

He said, grinning...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 13, 2013, 10:44:26 am**

---

Gittsun snorted. "You sure do love being mysterious. Guess I'll see you all after they slap a band-aid on this, then." The orderlies wheeled him away, pushing the gurney through a set of double doors. Gittsun banged the back of his head. "Watch it I said! I'm not airline luggage," he complained, his voice growing fainter as he was taken away.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 14, 2013, 02:19:08 am**

---

Soren rubbed his forehead as he shut down his computer. A sip of his now cold tea and the headache from the pill he took melted away.

Heading up to his guest room, he knocked on the door. "Lily, Axel! Do you want breakfast?"

-----

Doctor Gibson injected carbizal, a general purpose antidote to most synthetic depressants into Anne's IV line.

-----  
The Human at the store gulped as he laid eyes on Marcus.

"What do you want? The cash? The cigarettes? The drugs? Just take them!" he blubbered out.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 14, 2013, 11:56:07 pm**

---

All night Lily had one neverending dream; she was floating in green gel. She could vaguely see dark figures walk past her occasionally, in pristine white rooms outside the gel. She reached out and touched smooth glass...and with a jolt realized her hands were grey and clammy, with six long slender fingers on each hand.

When Siren called in, she awoke in a cold sweat, hyperventilating. Anxious not to let Axel see her like this, she took several deep breaths before she woke him up. "Hey," she smiled at him. "Siren wants us for breakfast. How did you sleep?"

(OOC: Last night, both of her eyes had been normal brown. Today one of them has a red iris. Your call if Axel feels like bringing this up.)

-----  
Emilena woke up in a similar state; the pressure in her lower body was giving her a stomachache. After attempting meditation for a few minutes, she gave up and mounted Adrian instead; she can't possibly function today in this state. *Besides*, she thought, panting, *he might not even wake up...*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 15, 2013, 12:31:51 am**

---

The moment Emilena mounted him, Adrian cracked one eye open, blushing. "Mmmph...G'morning to you, too, Emilena." He chuckled softly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 15, 2013, 04:49:03 am**

---

Axel stirred, yawning and stretching an arm out. "Hmn. Breakfast? Wha-" He realised where he was and sat up, blinking. "Oh! Yeah, I slept great. How about you? Are you feeling okay?"

He smiled shyly at Lily - but his smile faltered slightly when he saw her iris. *I can't tell her now... she won't be able to deal with it... But jesus, what the hell's happening to her?!*

-----  
Marcus stepped forwards and leveled his revolver at the human's head. "Not them. I need a stitching kit and alcohol. Move. Call for help and I'll break your neck."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 15, 2013, 07:02:25 am**

---

"Shut up..." groaned Emilena, not interested in explaining herself.

Thirty minutes later she shuddered, gave a large sigh of relief, and rolled off him when she felt he had also finished. Getting off the bed, she walked to his personal computer and, without bothering to sit down, plugged in the flash drive she had stolen.

The computer blithely informed her the file was corrupted. She cursed. She'd removed the flash drive before it was done converting. With the destruction of the Electric Sheep, all of that data was gone forever.

She walked back to Adrian. "We lost all the data. All we've got is what I can remember...and I remember thinking at the time how odd it was that there were so many references to the city hospital."

-----

Lily smiled. "I'm feeling a lot better! I think the sleep really helped, I was running on steam near the end there!"

She hugged him. "I know I've said it already, but thank you so much for your help. I think you're the main reason I'm still going at this point. I actually feel like I have a friend right now...and that feeling is so nice!"

She got to her feet and opened the door, smiling at Soren. "Sorry to keep you waiting! We'll come down soon for breakfast!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 15, 2013, 11:17:56 am**

---

Adrian nodded, still in the process of pulling on a new shirt. Once it was over his head, he looked over towards Emilena, then, without warning, wrapped his arms around her in a warm hug.

"Alright. Well, it looks like that'll be our next destination, won't it?"

He said softly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 16, 2013, 05:57:36 am**

---

As he watched Lily cross the room, Axel felt a surge of affection run through him. *I have to do whatever it takes to protect her.*

When she opened the door to Soren, Axel nodded at him. "Hey. Yeah, breakfast sounds great."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 16, 2013, 07:10:17 am**

---

Before today, Emilena would have stabbed a man who hugged her the way Adrian just did. But as Emilena prepared to suppress her murderous urge, instead she found that it never came. Adrian had more than earned her trust...actually, it was rather alarming how many opportunities he'd had to kill her while she completely defenseless. Somehow, it had become second-nature for her to trust him, which almost felt like something of a nice break from standard operating procedure.

Still, she broke the hug. They had a job to do. "The easiest way to get in would be to pose as patients. Your left arm is injured, as are both of my hands. We'd have to pretend to be interested in getting the wounded areas cybernetically replaced," *Hell, he might legitimately be interested in doing just that*, she realized, "but I will simply refuse the surgery at the last moment. It still gets us through the door and into the back rooms, where we can investigate."

-----

At breakfast, Lily ate ravenously. With her strength back, she quickly put it to good use replenishing the energy she'd lost on her 3 days on the lam.

"So," she said, in between biting into her fifth grapefruit, "We need to get into Mantreads Shoe Suppliers, but I can't be seen in public. I was thinking we disguise ourselves as Sapaar."

The Sapaar were a religious group that had fully integrated into modern society. The men behaved and dressed pretty much like anybody else, but the women dressed head-to-toe in a silver reflective tunic that covered even the head, representing their subservience to the modern world. "I figure we don't have silver cloth floating around, but the poorer ones use white. We could cut up a sheet or something!"

She seemed remarkably chipper, especially considering her subdued behavior the night previous. She was still riding the high from a good night's sleep, and from the reminder that not everyone in the world was indifferent to her plight or wanted her dead.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 16, 2013, 02:27:06 pm**

---

Soren passed a plate containing scrambled eggs, catfish sausage and hash browns to Axel. Some fresh fruit was in a communal dish.

"I may have some heat resistant silver cloth left over from a project of mine," Soren added. "Let me go look."

-----

Anne quickly regained consciousness as the drugs in her system were neutralized "Hey, what the hell's up this time?"

"You're in Stephenson Memorial Hospital," an orderly said as he got a wheelchair ready.

"I know that! What I wanna know is how the f--- I got here!"

The orderly passed her the doctors report. She scanned over it and scowled. "That does it, I'm finding the prick who sold me that bad batch and dumping him off an elevated walkway."

She threw the blankets off the bed and got to her feet, only to suffer a sudden attack of dizziness that forced her to sit down.

A nurse ran into the room as Anne's act of getting up had tripped an alarm. "Ms. Phoe, the drugs have not been fully neutralized yet." He looked at the patient care directions. "Speaking of which, it's time for your carbazil injection."

-----

The Human quickly fetched the alcohol and the sewing kit. "Look just take it and leave me alone! Please!"

(OOC - Sapaar? *Darwin's Soldiers* reference?)

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 16, 2013, 04:33:35 pm**

---

Axel gratefully accepted the plate Soren offered him, and sat down at the table to eat it. He was hungrier than he thought, wolfing the food down in moments. As he swallowed the last bite he looked at the two uneasily.

"It's not just the cops we have to look out for - what about that wolf? I think he knows something's up here."

-----

Marcus indicated the counter with the point of his gun. "Put them there." As the human did so, he noticed a tiny supply closet behind him. Holstering the pistol, he grasped the man by the front of his uniform and effortlessly lifted him up into the air with his good arm.

Marching forwards, he tossed the human into the closet and slammed the door shut after him, jamming a box under the door handle. "Stay in there and shut the f--k up." Marcus turned around to face the sewing kit, shrugging off his coat.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 16, 2013, 04:34:55 pm**

---

Adrian nodded, rolling his neck a little.

"Right, right. Figure it'll be good to get this damn arm replaced if I want to be much help."  
He said softly, smiling at Emilena...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 16, 2013, 09:20:42 pm**

---

Soren returned with a small 2 inch by 2 inch patch of silver cloth. "Sorry, that's all the silver cloth I could find. It's aluminized carbon nanotube fiber. I had some left over when I repaired a foundryman's arm."

He then sipped his tea. "Anyways, I noticed something funny with my client records."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 16, 2013, 10:12:42 pm**

---

(OOO: Haha, someone actually read one of my stories? I figured nobody would catch that. I like the word because it has two a's in a row.)

"Thanks, but we need enough cloth to cover my entire body," Lily told Soren. "We can make do with white cloth."

Lily nodded at Axel's caution. "To be honest, that's why I want to get out of here as soon as possible. No offense to you Soren, but I suspect that wolf knew I was here. He's going to be back, and I don't want to be here when he does..."

-----

"Yeah, you violate your body once with machinery, might as well do it again," she responded flippantly. She then softened when she thought those words over. "I'm sorry, I shouldn't talk like that," she said, returning his hug in a form of apology. "It's not your fault you had to become an Augment. And at least it'll keep you useful."

She left to take a shower. "I'll just have to take of myself while you're under. The hospital requires general anesthesia for all cybernetic surgeries."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 16, 2013, 10:15:33 pm**

---

Adrian chuckled and nodded, then smiled and stripped down before joining Emilena in the shower with a blush.

"I uh...hope you don't mind...we can save a little time this way..."  
He said softly, then smiled at her.

"And it's okay...I don't like the augments any more than you do...but...I had to live..."  
He said, blushing more...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 16, 2013, 10:25:29 pm**

---

Emilena smiled. "I like efficiency."

It was not a two-person shower, but considering she'd used a sanitizing towel her entire life she considered it practically luxurious.

She looked with confusion at the soap, shampoo, and body wash dispensers. "Speaking of efficiency, could you show me how these work? I admit I'm not very experienced with this method of hygiene."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 16, 2013, 10:35:17 pm**

---

Adrian chuckled a little, nodding as his tail curled around Emilena a little.

"Of course. This one is for your hair.."

He said, tapping the shampoo dispenser.

"This one is for your body..."

He said as he moved his finger to the body wash

"And this one is for...well, for your privates and your feet and stuff."

He said, indicating the soap...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 17, 2013, 12:24:46 am**

---

Soren finished his meal. "I don't really trust him either." He used a cloth to clean off some grease from his HMD's lens.

He heard the doorbell ring. "Must be a client," he muttered.

He pushed his chair in, donned the work clothes he had hanging from a rack and headed to the door.

Soren patched his HMD into the house's cameras and the hastily patched door became transparent. He scowled; he didn't recognize this client. But nevertheless, he needed money. He disengaged the locks and opened the door a bit. "Hello, you've reached Almaya's Augmentation Repair and Mod Shop. How may I help you?"

(OOO - The person he meets isn't a client. It's a Purifier. Your call on what the Purifier does, but no kidnapping or killing Soren.)

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 17, 2013, 05:04:50 am**

---

Axel heard the slight shift in Soren's tone as he opened the front door. Tensing up, he gripped his fork a little tighter and shared a puzzled glance with Lily.

-----

Staring back at Soren was a small man dressed in a denim jacket and jeans. Greasy blonde hair hung matted over sleep deprived eyes, and as Soren cracked open the door the stink of sweat and alcohol wafted through the gap.

"What the hell is wrong with you, huh? You know how *easily* we could kill you? What, you can't take a f---n' message?!" As he spoke, his voice scratchy and hard on the ears, he leaned on the door. His weight started to force the door inwards.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 17, 2013, 08:11:55 am**

---

Still slightly puzzled, Emilena leaned over awkwardly, trying to get her head underneath the shampoo dispenser. "Watch out!" she snapped, since he was entirely in her way. A few seconds later she lost her footing and sent both of them spilling onto the shower floor with a crash.

-----

Lily froze with fear, halfway through eating a toasted bagel. This proved to be a bad decision when she choked on it and began coughing uncontrollably.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 17, 2013, 01:00:30 pm**

---

Adrian had attempted to move out of Emilena's way, but when she fell, he ended up on his back, with her on top of him. He smiled and blushed bright red, smiling at her shyly. "Right...forgot to warn you that the floor gets slippery when it's wet..." He said, chuckling softly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 17, 2013, 08:57:03 pm**

---

Soren leaned hard on the door, trying to keep the man outside. "Axel! Lily! Get my gun!" he barked. For someone so small, the man was surprisingly strong.

He turned to the intruder. "What's *my* problem!?" he thundered. "What the f---'s your problem!? Busting into hard working folks' homes to destroy livelihoods for another rush of drugs? Now GTFO!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 18, 2013, 03:31:09 am**

---

Axel leaped up and started to run to Soren's aid, but stopped when he heard Lily spluttering and turned back to see her choking. Torn between the two, he paused. Then he dashed back to Lily's side. "*Crap!* Hang on, Soren!"

Hooking his arms around her stomach from behind, he started heaving, tightening his grip and releasing repeatedly. He had no idea what he was doing, but he'd seen it done in the movies so he was praying it would work.

-----

"Drugs? You're even more stupid than I thought Almaya." He laughed, a harsh barking noise, and released his hold on the door. "You don't need your bitches to help you - this was just a... friendly warning. We're watching you." The man spat at Soren's feet.

He stepped aside, letting Soren see the symbol he'd sprayed on the path leading to the house; a red, cracked gear. "What happened before was just the start. Keep it up and you'll really know who you're f---n' with."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 18, 2013, 05:17:01 am**

---

Lily swallowed a painful gulp of water. "Forget about me!" she spluttered. "Go help Soren!"

-----

Emilena groaned. "I'm not cut out for showers," she decided, and crawled out onto the bathroom floor. "Don't take too long," she said, drying off. "Earliest surgeries are bookable thirty minutes from now, and using public transportation that's about how long it'll take to get there. I want to be looking through hospital files as soon as we can."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 18, 2013, 11:34:34 am**

---

Adrian rolled to his feet, flicking the shower off and chuckling, running a hand through his hair before grabbing a towel and drying off.

"Right, right. And we don't need to take public transportation."

He said with a small smile...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 19, 2013, 03:21:50 am**

---

Soren's HMD scanned the cracked gear emblem. Several news reports and a Wikipedia article on The Purifiers appeared.

"It can't be," he whispered, his jaw dropping in shock. "The Purifiers."

He scowled. The shock was soon replaced by burning rage. "You intolerant f---s are the ones who destroyed my workshop!? Get out before I call the cops or my friend returns with my gun!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 19, 2013, 05:40:48 am**

---

When he saw Lily could breath again, Axel backed out of the room. Soren's shotgun was propped up against the wall, and he snatched it up as he dashed out.

He reached the entrance and joined Soren's side, aiming the barrel down at the man. His nose wrinkled as he caught a smell of him. "I'm here. Who the hell's this?"

-----

The purifier raised his eyebrows when he saw Axel appear, unimpressed. "I'm someone you and everyone like you should be afraid of, ---hole."

He looked back at Soren, his lips curling up into a grin. He raised his arms mockingly and started backing away. "Remember what I said. We have eyes everywhere." His grin vanished as his eyes flicked back to Axel. "I'll make sure they kill you slowly."

Shoving his hands into his jacket pocket, he turned around and sauntered down the path, around the corner and out of sight.

-----

Marcus grunted as the needle poked back out of his flesh. He pulled it and the thread trailing behind tightened, sealing the deep cut. He bit the needle free and tied a small knot in the

thread, then looked down at his handiwork. He was no surgeon, the stitching running crudely up the length of his arm, but it would do. He poured the bottle of alcohol over the wound with a hiss of pain and stood up.

The right side of his T-Shirt had completely soaked through with blood, so he'd stuffed it in the waste disposal. Stalking over to a small stand with cheap white shirts, he selected one which was around his size and buttoned it on, trying to decide his next move.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 19, 2013, 11:49:09 am**

---

Soren scowled. "It's one of those Purifier nutcases. Apparently, they're the ones who burnt down my workshop."

He then sighed as he rubbed his forehead, being careful to avoid knocking his HMD off. "He's serious about the threat too."

"F---, I'm gonna have to basically go nomadic or into hiding."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 19, 2013, 12:49:22 pm**

---

"A Purifier?" Axel lowered the gun once the man had walked away. "I guess that explains why he didn't take a shine to me..." He laughed nervously, but his stomach was turning itself in knots. He knew enough about them to know they weren't a joke.

He put his hand on Soren's shoulder, trying to make him feel better. "That guy was probably full of it, Soren. It'll be okay." He looked around anxiously. "But maybe we should close the door, just to be careful."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 19, 2013, 03:13:36 pm**

---

"I'm not interested in finding out. And I don't want him going after my clients," Soren said. He shut the door and with several heavy clicks, the locks engaged.

"Speaking of which, I have something weird to show you about my client records."

He then headed back to his office.

-----

Aaron fumed as his coworker, an Augment with a laser cutter arm attachment was busy cutting some rebar to size.

Despite his neutral expression, his flattened ears conveyed his displeasure as he carried an armload of rebar to the worker.

"Anything else, *gleamer*?" he spat.

The Augment scowled but said nothing as he continued working.

"Aaron! Cut that s--- out!" a Fruit Bat shouted from five stories up where she was riveting some girders in place. Seeing as she had no more rivets, she leapt from the high perch and spread her arms, letting her membranous wings catch the wind as she glided down.

Aaron said nothing as he went to get more rebar. A crane nearby lifted a group of Avian ironworkers to the top of the building. Avians and Bats were prized as ironworkers owing to

their utter fearlessness about heights and their wings. While their wings were not strong enough to let them fly, they were more than capable of gliding.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 19, 2013, 07:26:17 pm**

---

Emilena looked with disdain at the clothing selection available to her. "The other thing we're doing is going to the clothing store next door. I am most certainly not adopting your fashion preferences."

-----

Lily darted into the kitchen and grabbed the largest butcher knife she could find. Swallowing her fear, she burst into the main room to see Axel and Soren staring at an empty walkway. "Who-who was he? What did he want?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 19, 2013, 08:01:55 pm**

---

"It's alright, they're gone now," Axel said, propping the shotgun up against the wall and giving the knife Lily was holding an amused smile, "You can put that away, Michael Myers. I guess we know who torched Soren's workplace now - those crazy Purifier guys."

He ran a hand through his white hair. "You feeling better? Soren was going to show something weird he'd noticed in his records. Want to come see?" Axel nodded his head in the direction of Soren's office.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 19, 2013, 08:33:01 pm**

---

Soren booted up his computer and sipped from the canteen of tea he had in the office.

He booted up his spreadsheet and scrolled to the area where he found the most discrepancies

He scowled as laid eyes on the letters and numbers on the screen. Soren was now newly certain that the Purifiers were mutilating his clients' augments to send him a warning.

(OOC - Soren's referring to recent spike of Augments coming in with incongruous and/or deliberate damage to their parts (taking their background, augmentations and jobs into account).)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 19, 2013, 11:39:04 pm**

---

Adrian smiled at Emilena.

"Geeze, harsh~. What's so bad about simple, practical stuff?"

He chuckled as he slung an outfit on...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 20, 2013, 04:47:37 am**

---

"It's not the practicality," Emilena wrinkled her nose. "All of it smells like motor oil and chrome."

-----

Lily nodded. "But be careful! I don't want you getting hurt by these Purifiers, or worse..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 20, 2013, 05:24:28 am**

Axel flushed. "Don't worry about me, it'll take more than a Purifier to damage this tough exterior," he said, puffing out his weedy chest.

"Come on, Soren's waiting." He lead her down the corridor to Soren's office and leaned over his shoulder, looking at the spreadsheet. "So, what did you notice?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 20, 2013, 12:49:00 pm**

Soren pointed to the screen. "Axel, Lily, notice how the previous weeks before my workshop was burnt have had a spike of people coming in with augment damage? And I mean *real* serious damage. But here's the thing, they're office workers or other low impact jobs. I'm seeing them with damage that I'd usually see in laborers who gotten involved in industrial accidents. Finally!" Soren bought up a picture of a class 1 augment with all of its fingers removed, probably by a laser cutter. The caption below indicated that it belonged to a lab tech from Pelvanida Cybernetics "ósome of the damage appears deliberate."

He templed his fingers. "I suspect the Purifiers are attacking them and deliberately mutilating their augments to send a message."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 21, 2013, 05:45:51 pm**

Marie , marita and rose were waiting for Gittsun's surgery to finish, before looking for the others. it had been s couple hours.

-  
broadstreets called Emilema's pager. ' echo? this is friendly reminder that you have used up two days of your deadline. you must get your target to me by midnight tonight, or i will be coming for your badge."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 21, 2013, 07:04:31 pm**

"I don't mind the practicality," Emilena wrinkled her nose. "It's that they all have the faint smell of motor oil."

Nevertheless she squeezed into a khaki long-sleeved shirt and trousers, and clipped her retracted katana into a utility belt. "Let's get out of here."

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"I was actually going to go sew that Sapaar suit out of our bedsheet," Lily glanced down the street hoping to get a glimpse of who had intruded shortly before. "But please be careful! I don't want you getting hurt by these thugs..." She hugged him for reassurance. "You're like the one thing I have."

Lily held her tongue when she observed the reports. "Is there any way I can help, Soren? You've helped me so much already."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 22, 2013, 05:21:26 am**

"You're right, something does seem off," Axel said, nodding. "There must be something we can do. Hmn..." He focused on the lab tech who's fingers had been removed.

"Well, we know where this guy works; 'Pelvanida Cybernetics'. I guess the simplest start would be to ask him? Maybe once we've investigated the clothes store for Lily, we could check that place out?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 22, 2013, 12:19:01 pm**

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Adrian chuckled, glancing over Emilena with a smile.  
"Looking sharp. Let's get rolling, shall we?"  
He said with a grin, grabbing a set of keys from off the wall...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 22, 2013, 07:41:32 pm**

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Emilena cocked a single eyebrow at the keys, but followed Adrian nonetheless.

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Lily lay a hand on Soren's shoulder. "You're right. Something's up. I'm not in a position to be giving you suggestions, but I don't think it's safe for you here anymore. Would you like to come with us to the clothing store for a quick look into my purchasing records, and then we can go into hiding together?" she smiled. "I won't lie, it's not an easy life...but it's easier when you're not alone."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 23, 2013, 04:05:48 am**

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Soren templed his fingers. "I won't bow to those Purifier freaks," he growled. "I'll keep my business running, no matter the cost."

He was interrupted by the doorbell ringing.

Bringing up the view from an external camera, he saw who was at the front door. He sighed. "Her again!?"

He scowled and went up to the door, throwing on his work uniform/armor. The bolts unlatched and he opened the door, revealing a rather beautiful Shetland Pony mare with a metallic horn sticking out of her forehead.

"Hey, Soren, I got something for you," she said.

"What is it this time?"

Anne pulled out a neurotester, a device intended to make sure the augments were working correctly and the nerves were properly hooked up to the augment. "How much for this?"

Soren looked it over. It was clearly a well made ó and expensive piece of equipment. And he needed to replace the stuff that he lost in his workshop fire. "Fine. I'll give youó" He noticed a riveted tag that read "Property of Stephenson Memorial Hospital". "Hey! I ain't payin' you s--- for stolen goods!"

Anne scowled. "What the hell!? You were perfectly willing to buy augments from me, even though you damn well knew where I got them from!"

"Stealing medical equipment from a hospital is heavily investigated by the cops. Stealing augs...not so much."

"You know what? Take it then!" Anne left the neurotester at the door and walked away to steal more stuff to hock.

He sighed. "Well, Lily, I'll have to come with you now to go and return some stolen goods." He picked up the neurotester and carefully put it in an unmarked cardboard box.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 23, 2013, 04:53:23 am**

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Axel opened a corner of the cardboard box, and gasped when he looked inside. "Hey, an N18! This is one of the best neurotesters out there! Couldn't we just keep it for a bit..." He trailed off when he saw Soren's face. "Alright, I guess not." He closed the box with a wistful sigh.

"Well, we should probably leave as soon as we can. Let's find some cloth for Lily and get out of here before more weirdos show up." He didn't mention how he and Lily probably counted among the weirdos.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 24, 2013, 01:26:18 am**

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The hospital was a flurry of activity; doctors and orderlies passed patients who were wired into holo-networks, passing the time virtually until their turn came. As this was the section for cybernetic upgrades, there weren't as many wounded as elsewhere in the hospital.

The genders here were separated due to the sensitivity of the surgery's nature. With a single "Take care of yourself," Emilena left Adrian's company and headed back.

"You're just in time for your appointment," smiled a skunk receptionist. Emilena wondered what augments she had; it wasn't visually apparent. "If you could please fill these out and return them, we'll wheel you back!" the receptionist finished, handing over a stack of papers.

Fifteen minutes later Emilena was led to a surgical room, where she was asked to remove her clothing and put on a drafty gown. The nurse also wiped her wrists down, checked her vitals, and said, "The doctor will be here in ten minutes. Make sure you are lying down and ready!"

Emilena had no intention of following through with the surgery; this was her opportunity to sneak into the private recesses of the hospital. Once the nurse had left, Emilena began picking the lock to the surgical room.

Minutes later she was asleep. Had she carefully read the papers before signing them, she'd had noted that this hospital applies the anesthetic through wrist wipes.

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Markus received a call on a private channel, a channel reserved for a certain very powerful individual.

(OOC: Got a suggestion for Markus' superior's name?)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 24, 2013, 01:43:48 am**

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Adrian sat in the waiting room, glancing at the wall before another nurse, this one a male feline, walked in.

"Mr..Kibagami, correct? There was a package delivered for you earlier. With instructions to

install it promptly."

He said, motioning for Adrian to follow him. Adrian looked suspiciously at the feline for a moment, then nodded, following him into the surgical suite where, much like Emilena, he signed the requisite forms and was led to the room where the surgery would take place...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 24, 2013, 02:53:21 am**

(you pick it LBT)

Marie headed towards the vending machines in a nearby section of the waiting aea. she grabbed a soda as well as a bag of potato chips for munching on. marita and rose came up to her, and marie haned them the drinks to hold while she got two more sodas and two moe bags of chips. ' thought we might use a bite to eat ' she said with a smile.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 24, 2013, 03:38:57 am**

Soren carried the box to his garage and placed it in his repulsorcar. He disconnected the charging cable and took his position in the driver's seat.

"Lily, Axel, get in!"

-----

Anne whistled as she rooted through the electronics waste bin at a local computer repair shop. Most of what was in her bag were circuit boards that were worthless ó save the precious metals in them.

She smiled; those masters degrees she had in genetic engineering and industrial design were being put to good use...just not in a way her parents would like.

Rattling was heard as another bum rooted through a trash can.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 24, 2013, 04:26:15 am**

Axel held the car door open for the now covered Lily, and hopped in after her. "C'mon, let's get going."

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When Marcus heard the beeping coming from his pocket, he reached in and pulled out his phone, snapping it open. **UNKNOWN** flashed on the screen. The corners of Marcus' mouth tightened. It was *him*. He tapped answer. "Zeroth."

"Yes." Never using the same number for any extended period of time, the distorted voice on the other end was responsible for the majority of orders issued to members of the Purifiers. Nobody knew his real name, and only a very select few, including Marcus, had ever seen his face. The alias he went by for the time being was 'Zeroth'.

"I found Kibagami, at the 'Electric Sheep' of all places. Engaged him, but he managed to escape."

"We know. There are 15 patrons dead. 15 non-augmented patrons. It's... inconvenient."

"I'm sorry," Marcus said, the words bitter in his mouth.

"It doesn't matter. In fact, it seems you might have another chance. Kibagami's booked

himself into the city hospital to have repairs carried out on his arm. We don't know if he knows about our operations there or not, and there's a chance he's working with someone outside. If this was anyone else, one of our insiders would be sufficient but as this is Kibagami... Go to the hospital, and rendezvous with one of our contacts, he'll be waiting for you. And on no accounts can you kill Kibagami. Not yet." The line went dead as Zeroth hung up.

Marcus replaced the phone in his pocket and snatched his jacket up off the counter. To the left of the cash register was a set of car keys belonging to the human locked in the cupboard. He picked them up and let himself out of the shop.

**(OOO: I figured the person who gives Marcus orders would be all illusive with code names and whatnot, but if someone wants to give him a real name go ahead)**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 24, 2013, 04:41:49 am**

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Lily emerged from the house, completely clad in a form-fitting white unisuit, complete with balaclava. "How does this look?" She smiled, even though only her mismatching eyes were visible. "Does it hide every way of easily identifying me?"

She climbed into the car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 24, 2013, 05:17:32 am**

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Axel looked at the white shape getting in the car. "Yeah, looks pretty good. Except..." A lock of Lily's hair had fallen out from under the balaclava, and he gently pushed it back into place. "There." He grinned reassuringly at her and clipped his seatbelt on.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 25, 2013, 05:58:41 pm**

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The engines started as the garage door opened and the repulsorcwr lifted into the midafternoon sun. Luckily, Soren lived on the outskirts so air pollution wasn't too bad.

He merged into one of the skyways and set the autopilot. The man adjusted his loose fitting dark blue pants and a grey long sleeved shirt. Despite their plain appearance, the clothing was impregnated with shear-thickening fluid as well as shock dampening fibers, allowing him to absorb blows that would otherwise cripple or kill him.

"So Lily, Axel, know how to get that neurotester back without them thinking I stole it?" Soren asked. His HMD was providing real time data about the environment around him. The repulsorcar lurched slightly as Soren dropped in altitude to avoid something thrown by two passing hoverbikers.

"Anyways,

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 25, 2013, 09:28:59 pm**

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Adrian stirred, the anesthetics steadily wearing off as he brought his new arm up to take a look at it. The sleekly-molded black metal was nearly indistinguishable from his own fur. Flexing the fingers of it experimentally, he grinned as the indicators flashed into his overlaid systems, projected into his mind like images in a manual. Noting the new integrated weapon systems, he froze when he noticed the installation of a tracking device that was keyed to an unknown frequency. Glancing around the room, he quickly undid all the external armor plates,

reaching into his arm and tugging the device out, wincing in pain as he did so. He looked at it, chuckling a little.

"Heh. Purifiers. Always selling us Augs short, seems like."

He said to himself as he crushed the device in his hand. Noticing that he wasn't hooked up to any vital monitors or anything of the sort, he immediately rolled out of the bed, standing up and preparing to go find Emilena and his gear, the panels on his arm sliding shut as he did so...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 26, 2013, 09:00:13 am**

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Emilena stirred as well. Her mind immediately went into hyperdrive. *I wasn't supposed to get knocked out? What the hell? Oh god, they didn't...*

Her eyes fluttered open and she moved her hand to her face. She could feel it. Cybernetics merged seamlessly with her fingers, and her palm felt hollow and tinny. She became aware that she was wearing a hospital gown and laying on the surgery table, with some familiar blood stains dotting the sheets.

She tried to get up and saw a rabbit orderly leap away in fright. "Who the hell are you?" She snapped in fright, trying to leap to her feet, but her left leg was cuffed to a railing.

The bunny drew a long syringe and stabbed at her knee, but thanks to her double joints she bent out of the way, then took that opportunity to kick him square in the head with her right foot. As he hit the floor, she spotted her personals on a footstool out of reach. She tried to shake her foot free, but of course that didn't work.

The bunny leapt to his feet, this time with a dart gun. She recognized the make; it contained powerful horse tranquilizers. She slapped him with her intravenous fluid bag and caused his first shot to wildly miss.

As he reloaded, Emilena grasped the foot cuff in her fingers and tug. To her amazement, her new Augmented hands tore through the thin metal, easily freeing her foot from the warped cuff. She hardly had time to reflect on this, as the bunny had reloaded. Leaping forward, she delivered a hard right hook to his chest, sending him staggering but stable. He was tougher than she thought.

Diving through the curtain, she found herself in the inner recesses of the hospital. Her pursuer giving chase, she raced down the hallway, attempting to locate Adrian or an exit, whichever came first.

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Lily shook her head cluelessly. "You could tell them the truth," she suggested. "That someone left it on your doorstep. They may figure no thief just returns stolen goods. You could even gain a reward. Just, make sure I'm not there when you talk to them. Last thing I need is to have the theft pinned on me..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 26, 2013, 11:08:06 am**

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Axel nodded. "That makes sense. You don't look like a thief - and that reward could come in handy if they actually give one."

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Marcus watched Adrian through the CCTV in the security room. His contact, a jackal sat on a chair in front of the monitors, zoomed in on the image as Adrian pulled the tracker free. "He found it," the jackal complained.

Marcus swore under his breath. "I told you it wouldn't be enough. We've tracked him before, he knows what one feels like." He balled his fists, his claws digging into his palm. He couldn't let this opportunity go...

"What the hell..." The jackal muttered as he noticed something in one of the smaller screens. He changed the image on the main screen. It changed to a female fox struggling with one of the orderlies. Her face turned briefly towards the camera, and Marcus frowned. She seemed familiar...

His eyes widened as he recalled that she'd been the dancer at the Electric Sheep, who'd turned up right at the same moment Adrian did. She didn't seem to be much of a dancer... and now they both just happened to turn up at the hospital together? It was too much of a coincidence.

Marcus snatched the tracker up from the table next to the contact and loaded another chip into it. Though a tracking chip would give the best signal if inserted into an augmentation, a chip shot under the skin would still be useful. He slipped out the door, hiding the tracker under his jacket.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 26, 2013, 12:19:07 pm**

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Adrian grinned, quickly hacking into one of the hospital's terminals to gain access to the patient records so that he could figure out where his articles had been stored, as well as where Emilena had been taken. Quickly bypassing the locks on the code, he rapidly located Emilena's room, then the patient storage where his articles had been taken. He cracked his neck, then turned to one of the cameras, flipping it the bird as he turned and ran off...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 26, 2013, 12:51:37 pm**

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A cybernetic surgeon, apparently halfway through an operation, walked out of a room in front of Emilena. He gasped in surprise when a tranq whizzed past the approaching fox's ear and embedded in his neck.

Emilena took the opportunity to dart into the open door. An anaesthetized bear appeared to be halfway through receiving cybernetic arms; the left one was still sitting on the preparation tray. Emilena snatched it up and beamed her assailant in the face when he entered the room. Wailing on him for a good ten minutes, she finally stopped when he looked less intact than the bear behind her.

Fishing the tranq gun out of the bed, she froze when a security guard walked idly past the door, then froze and looked wide-eyed at the scene within.

"Uh, I can explain?" started Emilena, but he quickly drew a pistol and she was forced to shoot him. His shots went wide as she continued her exodus, but he still radioed in as he passed out. "Emergency...rogue patient armed with a gun and dangerous...two, maybe three people dead...send backup to the Upper Extremities wing..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 26, 2013, 01:39:06 pm**

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Adrian looked back at the unconscious guard behind him, hearing the announcement pertaining to an armed patient escaping, chuckling a little to himself.

"Couldn't wait to get out of here, huh, Emilena?"

He muttered to himself, then rolled his eyes as another guard rounded the corner, gathering an

electrical charge in the palm of his new arm before lunging the guard, slamming the crackling palm into the guard's sternum, the electricity coursing through the unfortunate guard and dropping him to the ground as Adrian made his way through the halls to the Upper Extremities Wing...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 26, 2013, 01:48:07 pm**

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In the meantime, Soren parked his car on the street. He shut off the engine and opened the door to the passenger compartment.

"I'll be back in a bit," he said as he picked up the box.

"Hey man, you got some cash?" an intoxicated bum went up to Soren. His right arm, once a top of the line augment was tattered and patched up with wire, scrap metal and who knows what else scavanged from the streets and garbage cans of Lanthae.

"Sorry. I'm busy now."

Anne Foe emerged from an alleyway with a messenger bag full of assorted electronics scrap that she could process and sell for a few creds.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 26, 2013, 07:23:36 pm**

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"Okay. Be careful, Soren." Axel watched through the windscreen as Soren walked away, then turned to Lily. "So, you want to check out that clothing store? There's no way they'll be able to recognise you."

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Marcus' shoes clumped against the hard, polished floor as he made his way briskly down the corridor. He turned left, right and left again, following the signs to the Upper Extremities ward, where the camera had shown the fox making her last stand.

As he neared the ward, he slowed his pace. Things were made more complicated by the fact that he wasn't able to kill either Adrian or his companion - but he had to make sure a tracker stayed on them. When he neared the double doors leading to the ward proper, a group of four security guards rushed past him. Marcus leaned against the wall, looking nondescript. After they pushed through the doors, he waited a few seconds then followed behind them, making sure he wasn't seen.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 26, 2013, 08:18:29 pm**

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Soren made his way to Stephenson Memorial Hospital. When he got there, he noticed it was cordoned off by the hospital's surprisingly well armed and armored security guards.

"Hospital's closed sir," a guard said. Judging from the shape of the guard's helmet, all that could be said was that the guard was canine.

Soren raised an eyebrow. "What happened?"

"There's been a shooting inside. One of the new Augments apparently took violent exception to what she was given."

Soren straighted himself up. "Well, anyways, someone dropped this off at my house." He pulled out the neurotester and showed the label to the guard, who scanned it with a wristed

mounted reader.

"Thank you." The guard handed him a credit chit worth 35,000 credits ó a little over a quarter of the neurotester's value.

Soren sighed and tucked the credit chit into his pocket. As his booted feet splashed in the dirty water that pooled on the sidewalks, he passed by a street vendor selling some noodles.

He shrugged and bought three take out boxes of vegetarian stir fried noodles and three herbal sodas. All in all, the meal came out to 220 creds.

Soren trudged back to his car. Using his pocketknife, he dislodged a drug vial that had gotten stuck in the tread of his boots.

"Lily, Axel, we can't go to the hospital. Some Augment apparently didn't like what they got...so they're taking it out on the staff." He placed the bag containing the three plastic takeout containers and drinks in the backseat. "Anyways, I got a reward for turning the thing in and some lunch."

(OOO - FYI, credits are the currency in this 'verse. They're equivalent to about \$0.10. Why yes, I did base the exchange rate on the HK dollar.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 27, 2013, 03:31:18 am**

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Lily put her hand to her mouth. "Are they calling for backup? Is everything about to be swarming with police officers? Let' s do this quick, Axel!"

She practically dragged him to the clothing store.

The clerk smiled when he saw them. "Can I help you with anything?"

Lily grew silent and held Axel's arm. Sapaar women were supposed to be seen and not heard.

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Emilena traded shots with a pair of guards, who decided to retreat. *These guys weren't prepared for combat at all*, she thought smugly, as she rolled under a gurney and the pursuing guards raced past her. *I can keep this up all day...*

"Analena, get the hell out from under that!"

One of her fellow police officers was down the hall, gun drawn. The bandage on his thumb suggested he happened to be a patient in this wing. "Throw your gun out first!"

Emilena tried to shoot him but he blasted it out of her hand.

"What are you going to do?" She spat, holding her arms up in a martial arts pose. The officer narrowed his eyes. "What the hell is wrong with you, Analena? Brownstreet is here, and he's gonna tear your ass off for this."

"Brownstreet is an idiot!" Emilena shot back. "I've stumbled across something bigger than you could ever understand. What that old mule wants doesn't matter. Now if you're gonna shoot, better do it now."

She turned away and dashed down the hall. The officer sighed and watched her go. Then he grabbed his radio and called Brownstreet at his office downtown.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 27, 2013, 06:01:30 am**

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Axel smiled at the clerk uncomfortably and smoothed down his ruffled T-Shirt. He always felt self-conscious when he talked to people he didn't know.

"Ah, yes. I wondering if you could tell me anything about this purchase..." He handed over the now slightly worn bar code sticker. "It's from a pair of boots that were bought here maybe about a week ago." He paused. "Well, I was actually hoping you could tell me if you remember anything... unusual about the person who bought them," he said, hoping the clerk hadn't seen the news lately.

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As Marcus moved down the evacuated corridor, he heard the fast, slightly lighter footsteps of a female somewhere ahead of him, around the corner. They were coming towards him.

Looking around, he quickly ducked into an empty operating room and pressed himself against the wall as the fox ran past. Marcus waited for a couple of seconds until she sounded sufficiently far way, then lightly opened the door and leaned out, clicking back the tracking gun.

He could see her nearing the end of the corridor, about to turn the corner. He took aim and fired, the tracking gun making a tiny *clack* as it fired the tiny tracking chip. It sank painlessly into the back of her leg. *Now I just need to get out without being recognised by the police.*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 27, 2013, 04:54:06 pm**

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Detain her and bering hrr in for questioning.' Brownstreet ordered. ' i give her an extension, and she goes postal while while receicvng treatment at a hospital.. for well gods only know. you get her down and bring her to me.

-  
marie marita and roswe were told to leave by a security guard ' we are in lockdown outside of this wing.. mr guttsun is being brought out, the surgery was a success. you three better get going, its not safe with a crazed lunatic on the loose.

- will do' Marita said. marie sighed ' just when i thought it was going to be a bi easier, not something else happenes. ' we'll we could head to my place for the rest of the evening ' marita said. ' alright. could we stop at my place first ' its on 32nd and stillwater ' 5 blocks from here' marie said.. ' i.. guess i'm tagging along wth you for awhile ' she sighed. um marita.. ' yeah.. ' thanks for letting me come with you.. i appreciate it. ' lets get gittsun and go, ' marita said. '

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 27, 2013, 11:26:37 pm**

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Soren stuffed the food into the backseat of his repulsorcar and sprinted after Axel and Lily.

He sighed and sat down on a bench. He looked at the wares. Most of the shoes were simple sneakers or boots reminiscent of combat boots worn by the assorted soldiers and security guards.

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Anne unlocked the door to her apartment and entered with her satchel of old electronics. Her "apartment" was filthy, but not with organic detritus. Instead, there were scraps of metal and other electronics waste scattered everywhere underfoot and the entire apartment stank of solvents, grease and heated metal.

Turning on some loud industrial rock to drown out the noise of the shredder, she fed the unusable circuit boards into the device until that that was left were a pile of fingernail sized chips.

The Shetland Pony transferred the material into a large fermentation vat. This vat contained a mix of genetically engineered bacteria (stolen of course) that would break down the bioplastics used in the circuit boards and concentrate the precious metals into large nodules. For safety reasons, the bacteria were engineered to require a purely synthetic amino acid to live and reproduce. She pumped in the nutrient solution and headed back to her couch where she could maybe light up a joint and relax.

Two marijuana plants sat in the corner of the room under some grow lights. Anne smiled as she laid eyes on the plants. Sometimes, it was good to go back to the basics.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 28, 2013, 01:27:07 am**

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"Well, let's see." The clerk entered his database. "Ummm...they were purchased by a Lily North on Monday at 11:38 am. Would that be you?" He asked the wife pleasantly.

Lily shook her head frantically.

"Then I'm afraid that is all I may do for you," the clerk stated, when Lily said in desperation, "It's my daughter! Our Lily has been missing for a week, and this is the last place we knew she was! Please!"

The clerk paused. "Oh dear, I am so sorry..." He continued clicking. "All right. She did not pick them up in the store. She had them custom fit and delivered to an address. Do you live on 125 Tingham Lane?"

"Er, yes. that's where we live..." Lily muttered.

"All right. I wasn't on duty the day, but let me check our security footage," the clerk brought up security feeds and rewind. "Please don't mention to my manager I'm doing this...ah, here we are."

On screen, Lily walked into the store, wearing her gray dress and a hiking belt, rugged backpack, and carrying a walking stick. She was chatting happily on a cell phone, and looked perfectly content.

She spent several hours trying on hiking boots, selected her favorite style, and then checked them out. Then she left, heading to the ice cream parlor next door.

"She's so...normal..." breathed Lily, amazed.

"I'm sorry this wasn't much help..." the clerk sadly shut the feed down. "I truly hope you find your daughter. Please let me know if there is anything I can do."

(Ooc: they should check the brand of shoe in the back of the store.)

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Emilena sent a scalpel spinning into an overhead light, drenching a guard-filled hallway with backness. She used the distraction to kick her way through.

Unfortunately, someone with a taser got a lucky swipe, and she fell to the floor, incapacitated for only a few seconds. But it was long enough for half of the guards to dog pile her.

Unbeknownst to her, she was close to the main hallway, and had almost reached Adrian...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 28, 2013, 11:40:05 am**

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Adrian rounded the corner to the main hallway, and, the instant the lights went out, moved in. As the security forces began to go at Emilena, he darted into the melee, grabbing two guards and tossing them aside, both hitting a wall with a dull thud, blacking out immediately. The remaining guards turned towards him, but he grinned, activating the embedded neural augments he had. In a flash of red fur and movement, he darted into the middle of the group, then lashed his right leg out, smashing a guard across the face with a vicious kick and sending him flat to the floor. The next guard met a swift backhand, another two falling to a rapid spinning kick. Without any hesitation, Adrian grabbed Emilena and slung her across his shoulders, kicking away another guard who got cocky enough to rush him, then took off down the hallway, dodging bullets in the process, before finally spotting a window and leaping through it...

Not too far away, Kojuuro sat on a rooftop, and, hearing the commotion from the hospital, looked over the side of the roof just in time to see Adrian break through the glass of the window and take off running...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 28, 2013, 02:46:01 pm**

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Staggering out of her apartment, Anne headed out into the street to get lunch.

Her head swam from the enhanced marijuana she grew but she felt euphoric.

The mare went up to a street vendor selling some burgers. The Wolf in front of her walked away with his catfish burger. Her upper lip curled in the characteristic flehmen response of equines when she smelled the food.

"One tempeh burger," she said, leaning over the counter.

The Human shrugged and quickly handed a wrapped package to her. She swiped her credit chit and went on her way, not caring that she had planted her steel shod hoof on a discarded soda can.

(OOO - Anne's going to be a constant pain in the ass for Soren, Lily and Axel. She'll eventually redeem herself.)

-----

Soren had been looking over Lily's shoulder. "Hmm, judging from the external feed it looks like she went to the ice cream parlor next door."

He turned to the clerk. "Can you tell us anything else about her? Any records?"

(OOO - not sure how they can check the stuff at the back of the store. Maybe a distraction so Lily can sneak in?)

Soren nodded.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 28, 2013, 03:44:11 pm**

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Axel nodded along with Soren. "Yeah, there must be something else..." He frowned. "Was there anything special about the shoes she bought? She spent a while picking them out." He put a comforting arm around Lily and put on his best 'concerned' face. "We're *very* worried about our little Lily-Flower."

-----

As Marcus looked around for an exit, he heard gunfire coming from the corridor the fox had run down. Cursing, he turned back and sprinted towards it. *I can't let anything happen to her... not while she still has the tracker...* As he neared the corner and peered around, he caught a glimpse of a dark shape kicking aside a guard and leaping through a window, clutching the fox he'd tracked. *Kibagami...*

The guard Adrian had kicked stumbled to his feet and to the window, aiming his pistol. Marcus charged up behind him, seizing his head and twisting. The guard's neck snapped before he could fire a shot. Marcus let his limp body fall to the floor and looked out to see Adrian sprinting away. The corner of his mouth turned down slightly. He never thought he'd be *stopping* anyone from killing Adrian.

One of the guards had a high powered rifle with a scope slung across his back. Marcus bent and yanked it off his body then ran for the stairway, heading up. He'd have an easier time covering their escape from the roof.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 28, 2013, 04:10:50 pm**

(OOC: Never mind about the shoe thing, got an even better way to show it)

"Nothing you don't already know," said the clerk. "5-year Premium member of our VIP Club, which qualified her for some of our finest footwear. The pair she picked was a designer brand, built for comfort over endurance. Nothing unusual for her age and social status."

Lily opened her mouth to speak again when someone unknown said her name.

"Lily, my dear. Please come home..."

On the store television was a pasty-faced human, civilian clothes, very normal. He was tear-stricken. The broadcast appeared to be part of the citywide television network.

"Lily, if you can hear me, this is Danny. Please come home, I'm worried about you. Our kids are worried about you...There are doctors here, they want to help you, you're not well. You can get better...you can be with your family again. If you love us...please come back..." The man broke off, overcome by emotion.

The clerk suddenly looked incredibly suspicious.

-----  
Emilena groaned and her eyes fluttered open. "I can walk...let me down..."

The guards had hit her rather hard, and she was moderately disoriented.

Several police cars roared into focus. They hit the brakes hard, forming a roadblock, and filed behind the crusiers' protection, pistols drawn. "Freeze! Drop the patient and put your hands up!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 29, 2013, 04:35:33 am**

Soren's hair stood on end. "Thanks for your help," he said to the clerk.

Heart racing, he quickly looked around for cops or anyone else who might pose a threat. Luckily, only pedestrians seemed to be outside. The area around Stephenson Memorial Hospital was one of the few areas to be at actual ground level. Once one headed deeper into Lanthae, elevated walkways and stores built on them became more common.

"Lily, Axel, how about we have lunch in my car and we go pay one of my customers a visit?" he asked.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 29, 2013, 05:15:15 am**

Axel's ears drooped, and his mouth opened and closed as he searched for something to say. When Soren thanked the clerk, he cleared his throat. "Yes, your help was very... helpful." He turned and walked stiffly out of the shop behind Soren, his arm still around Lily's shoulders.

"Yeah, I think lunch would be good," he said as they reached the pavement. Axel looked down at the white shape next to him. "You have kids and a husband?! Holy crap!" he whispered.

**(OOC: Is Soren parked just by the shop? If he is then Soren could recognise Emilena as she goes into the shop while they're eating)**

One of the police stood behind the roadblock clutching a megaphone. "There's no way out of here for you, so put her down *now!* Nice and sl-" The back of his head exploded as a shot rang out. One of the cops steadying his aim on the car glanced back and let out a cry. "Oh ----, we have a shooter-" There was another shot, and his head jerked sideways, his pistol skidding across the car bonnet as his body tumbled to the floor.

The rest of the police threw themselves behind their cars with shouts of "Take cover!" and "Sniper!" Far above, on the rooftop, Marcus watched through the scope of his rifle. He knew he could only take so many shots before they figured out where he was. When he saw the cops dive behind cover, he moved the scope briefly over Adrian and the female, resisting the strong urge to pull the trigger. "Come on. Get out of here."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 29, 2013, 08:40:40 am**

Lily left wordlessly, already aware the clerk was rapidly retreating into the recesses of the store to do god knows what. She didn't say a word until they'd reached Soren's car.

"I don't get it..." she muttered, dazed. "A week ago, I lived a perfectly normal life. What the hell happened...?"

She tried to picture Danny, any memories of him or their kids. She came up completely blank.

"I don't remember that man at all...could he really be telling the truth? What if there *are* doctors who could help me...?" She turned to her two friends. "Could it be true?"

Emilena kicked the door to the clothing store open and dragged her incapacitated comrade through, eyes darting both ways nervously. Other than three civilians in a nearby car, nobody seemed to be around.

Adrian had been hit with a lucky EMP pulse, which shut down his cybernetic parts, which meant instant and complete loss of function when cybernetics were as ingrained into the central nervous system as his were. Emilena, luckily, was almost completely organic and managed to drag him almost as far as he'd carried her, to the other side of the hotel. They'd only succeeded because something was preventing the police from leaving the safety of their cars; Emilena didn't have time to pursue the issue.

She stored Adrian behind the counter. "You're all right, it'll wear off in a few

minutes...probably..." she comforted him. "But while we have the chance, I'm getting some regular clothes."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 29, 2013, 07:46:22 pm**

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meanwhile Marie, Marita and Rose were headed towards Marie's flat which was in a brownstone build. ' they headed inside, feeling relieved to feel the warmth from the heaters after being out in the chilly air. ' its on floor 7 , we'll take the elevator' Marie said with a smile.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 30, 2013, 11:07:51 am**

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As Axel climbed into the back of Soren's car, he heard a few *cracks* from somewhere close by, and the cry of raised voices. He assumed someone was letting off some firecrackers, and slid aside to make room for Lily.

"Look, it might be true... but I think we should take some time to plan our next move." He reached into the plastic bag and took out the three boxes of noodles, handing one each to Soren and Lily and opening his own. "They *really* want to find you, and until we find out why I think we should be careful. I just... want to make sure you're safe."

As he spoke, the dim image of someone dashing around the clothes shop caught his eye through the window, but he dismissed it, still deep in thought about what to do next. "Who was this customer you mentioned, Soren?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 31, 2013, 03:03:28 am**

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Soren swallowed his mouthful of lukewarm noodles. "Guy's name was Jacob Allyn. From what he filled out on his form, guy worked as a lab tech. Right now, I think paying him a little visit might yield some info on the Purifiers."

Anne staggered up to the car and leaned into the open driver's side window. "So Soren, are you?"

"Go away." Soren pushed her away and rolled up the window. He rubbed his forehead. "Anyways, got any plans on how to speak to Mr. Allyn?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 31, 2013, 03:42:52 am**

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Emilena crept cautiously into the back of the clothing store, looking for signs of an employee. It struck her as odd the store was unattended.

Her keen hearing picked up movement in the Staff room. Putting her ear to the door, she heard a moment of dial tone, following by the person dialing a three-digit number, where the last two numbers were the same.

Her heart leapt into her throat. She could guess what number that probably was. Without further ado she kicked the door down and stunned the clerk with a judo chop to the windpipe before the call had finished connecting.

"9-11 emergency, how may I help you?" The phone asked.

Emilena disguised her voice as well as she could. "I heard something going on at the hospital, I think police officers should investigate."

"We are well aware of the situation, but thanks for letting us know! Can I help you with anything else?"

Emilena hung up and crept deeper into the inner recesses of the clothing shop. Grabbing the highest quality hiking clothes they offered, she checked them out using the clerk's master card.

"All right," she said to the still-unconscious figure. "Now we have to escape the city. They'll have most methods completely blocked."

She glanced outside and the car with three occupants caught her eye. Firstly, it had a small gray bumper sticker which allows it access to government cybernetic facilities; the owner but be either a worker or a contractor for one. Secondly, it had a huge trunk.

She smiled. "I think I've found our exit plan."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 31, 2013, 04:43:02 am**

"Uh..." Axel watched the mare stumble away then turned back to Soren. "Alytn. Oh, that's the guy who had his hand all messed up?" He flexed his fingers uncomfortably. "He worked at Palvanida Cybernetics, didn't he? That's a pretty big place, I don't think they'd just let us walk in to meet him. Maybe we could scout the place out, see if there's a back way in or something?"

Axel frowned and continued, "But, Jesus, if we get caught breaking into a place like that... Especially you, Lily."

Marcus saw one of the officers pulling a radio out, probably to try and call for more backup. He put a bullet through it, scattering shards of plastic through the air, and snapped his cross-hair onto the officer, pulling the trigger. There was a heavy *CLUNK* and nothing else.

Marcus moved the scope away from his eye and looked down at the gun to inspect it. It had jammed. *Cheap s--t. No wonder the police are losing their war on crime.* He used the scope to quickly scan the streets, and couldn't see either Adrian or the woman.

With no more bullets raining down on them, the cops had started to cautiously emerge from their cover, pointing at his general direction. More of them would soon be here. *I've done all I can, now it's up to them. And then we'll see who they work with...* Marcus dropped the gun and ran across the roof, leaping onto the escape ladder and sliding down.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 31, 2013, 07:55:11 am**

Lily was lost in thought. "Let's do it," she said. "Soren's been nothing but helpful to me; it would be unfair not to return the favor. If I can help solve his problem with the Purifiers, I can."

Emilena slinked up to the trunk, approaching from the far end of the parking lot. She recognized the make and model of the car; she remembered from her early days as a 911 phone operator that there was a rash of calls about breakins with this model because the windows weren't laden with translucent wires, meaning that a broken window doesn't trigger

the car's break-in alarm system.

She grasped a tool purchased from the construction store across the street; a superheating conductor plate, no larger than a button, designed to boil large bodies of liquid quickly by rapidly exciting the molecules. It had a similar effect on glass, which had many of the properties of liquids.

She pressed the tiny button and the window completely liquefied, splashing down into the trunk. Unless they were paying attention to the rearview mirror, the occupants shouldn't have noticed.

Finally, she hurled a jagged rock over the top of the car, waited for it to hit the clothing store window, and flipped her and Adrian into the trunk while the occupants were hopefully observing the distraction.

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"What was that?" Yelled Lily as the rock smashed through the window of the clothing store. She didn't even notice she'd wrapped her arms around Soren in fright and was almost strangling him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **October 31, 2013, 12:42:25 pm**

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Soren carefully disentangled himself from Lily and collected all the trash.

A minute later, he returned. He stuck the key in the ignition and was about to turn it when he recalled the Purifier's words to him earlier. Decidedly, *not* wanting to be a bombing statistic, he got out of the car. "Lily, Axel, I'm going to go give my car a once over to make sure the Purifiers didn't stick a bomb or tracker on it."

He got out of his car and popped the hood. Most of the space was taken up by the repulsorlift and thrusters. So far, he didn't see anything.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **October 31, 2013, 02:09:10 pm**

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marie led marita gittsun and rose to her apartment which was the number 737. marie unlocked the door and let her friends in. ' ok, its not much, but on a waitress' salary what did you expect' she sighed ' as its not as if the electric sheep paid its waitresses well either. i had to borrow money from rose here on more than one occasion to make ends meet. ' ' when i was sober' rose explained. ' well we can just get some things// marita said ' like a meal, and a change of clothes' marita was tired from her long day, they had busted rose out, and had picked up marie in the bargain, who she was starting to like.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **October 31, 2013, 06:12:21 pm**

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In his shock from the window smashing, Axel had accidentally dumped his box of noodles over his lap. Picking them off, he glanced around the car nervously. "A bomb? Hey, check under the car - that's where they always put them in spy films." He checked under the seats himself, half expecting to be met with a timer counting down.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **October 31, 2013, 07:37:12 pm**

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As Emilena tossed the rock through the window, Kojuuro stepped around the corner, raising a silenced handgun raised.

"Hold it right there. I can't let you get away."

He said softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **October 31, 2013, 07:47:28 pm**

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Emilena flipped a large tarp over herself and Adrian, ignoring the newcomer. If he was gonna shoot, he'd have done so already.

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"It drove from the house fine, but okay..." Lily left the car. Then she saw Kojurro and started screaming uncontrollably.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 01, 2013, 04:58:59 am**

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"What?! What is it?!" Axel scrambled out of the car hastily, the last few noodles dropping from his jeans to the curb, then paused when he saw Lily wasn't looking at the car. "What are you..."

He followed her line of sight and froze when he saw the wolf pointing a pistol in their direction. "Woah! Hey, wait, we don't want any trouble!" Axel raised his arms up slightly and stepped in front of Lily.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 01, 2013, 11:36:33 am**

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Kojuuro smirked.

"You're not my targets. Just don't get in my way, and we'll be fine."

He said, walking over to where Emilena and Adrian were hiding, throwing back the tarp...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 02, 2013, 01:33:43 pm**

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Soren's eye twitched as he recognized Emelina as the dirty cop who tired beating him up. He bodily dragged her out from the trunk of his car and roughly dumped her on the filthy street.

"I want to know what the f--- you are doing in my car!" he snapped.

Above him, an electronic billboard played a message from another anti-Augment group. This one warned about them stealing jobs. While it was true that Augments had pretty much replaced Baselines in manual labor, a lot of new jobs relating to augmentation repairs and maintenance cropped up ó and skills mattered more than implants.

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Anne cheerfully whistled as she carefully cut off an Augment's arm, taking care not to cut into his flesh and bone ó not that it would have mattered since he was dead.

"Hey! Put your hands up! Augment theft is a crime!"

Anne slowly dropped her angle grinder and turned around. A cop had his gun pointed at her. She smirked. "Okay you caught me,"

"Hands behind your back!"

Anne did so and retrieved a credit chit from her back pocket. As soon as the cop saw the card, he smiled. "Actually, since this is your first offense, I'll let you off with a warning and a fine." The cop took the credit chit and left the alleyway.

Anne shrugged and continued cutting away at the augment. The cash she just surrendered to the cop was 750,000 credits ó nearly half of what she made last week. It sure beat the hell out of going to jail.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 02, 2013, 02:27:57 pm**

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"Shut your damn mouth Mr. Almaya, I could have arrested you but I needed a lift out of town," she snapped. "This doesn't concern you."

She rounded on the newcomer, who continued to not be shooting her. "Every cop in the goddamn city is looking for us, what the hell is so important for your short-circuiting self to tell us *now* instead of once we're safely out of the city?! I expect an incredibly good answer or else I'll do everything in my power to find a sharp object and murder you with it!" To show her incredible frustration she spat on him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 02, 2013, 08:35:50 pm**

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Axel stared at the angry fox Soren had pulled out of the car, his mouth hanging open in confusion. "Who the hell are you?! Were you always back there?!" At least the wolf who she'd spat on didn't seem to be pointing his pistol at them anymore.

Around them, pedestrians on the sidewalk had started to stop and stare at them. From somewhere in the distance police sirens were wailing. *This isn't good...* He nudged Soren on the shoulder lightly. "I don't know what you've got going on with her... or why she was hiding from the cops in your trunk... but we're getting a lot of attention here. Attention's bad for us right now."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 03, 2013, 12:19:37 am**

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"That's a load of s---!" Soren grabbed Emelina by her uniform and dragged the Fox to her feet. "That was *my* car you were in!"

When he felt Axel's nudge, he scowled and pushed Emelina into the filthy ground. He got into his car and sighed. "She's the cop who tried beating me up when I first called to report my workshop was on fire."

He started the engine and lifted off. "Let's go pay Mr. Altyn a visit."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **November 03, 2013, 01:29:40 am**

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marita had decided to contact emilena, since she hadnt heard from her since they had entered the strip club. ' she pulled out her computer ad started typing. she brought out the police website and soon located emilena's phone number  
she took out her phone and dialed the number. ' she held the phone to her ear and heard it ring.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 03, 2013, 06:20:30 am**

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"Wait, she's a cop? But she's *running* from them?" Axel scratched his nose thoughtfully as Soren started the engine. "You don't look like you're on the best of terms with her, but... she might come in useful if we're trying to keep low. You know, with her connections."

As the car lifted up, Axel heard a faint ringing. It sounded like it was coming from the trunk. "Do you guys hear that?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 03, 2013, 12:40:44 pm**

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Adrian stirred in the trunk, eyes flicking open as he glanced around before his eyes settled on Emilena, his phone ringing in his pocket. He smiled shyly, then leaned in and wrapped an arm around Emilena.

"Emilena...What happened? I blacked out..."

He whispered. Kojuuro grinned a little, flipping onto the car's roof.

"I was going to warn you both that the police are going after Mr. Almaya and Miss Emilena, actually..."

He chuckled...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 03, 2013, 01:29:07 pm**

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"Well, we knew that already, actually..." Emilena muttered through gritted teeth, practically seething, "as a matter of fact, we'd *solved that problem* before your butted your stupid--"

"You're on the run from the police too?" Asked Lily, who hadn't gotten in the car.

Emilena flashed her eyes at her. "I thought Sapaar preferred to be seen and not heard," she shot back.

Lily's gaze softened. In Emilena, she saw a lot of the emotions she'd felt yesterday; panic, fear, uncertainty, and a complete lack of help to turn to.

"Come with us," Lily offered. "We'll give you passage out of the city."

"You'll what--?" gasped Emilena.

Lily gave her friendliest smile. "I know what it's like to be on the run. I know how scary it is. Let's trade stories; maybe we can help each other."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 04, 2013, 03:52:22 am**

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Axel leaned out of the car as it hovered slightly above the ground and leaned over Lily's shoulder. "Er... maybe we shouldn't be sharing much with this lady. She looks a little *crazy*," he whispered into her ear, grinning awkwardly at Emilena.

Movement in the corner of his eye caught Axel's attention, and he turned his head to see Adrian sitting up in the boot. He jumped slightly as he recognised him from his rooftop a few nights ago. "Oh, you're here too." Today had turned out to be such an odd day that he wasn't exactly surprised.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 05, 2013, 01:46:54 am**

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Kojuuro chuckled.

"Ah, so you're finally up. I was starting to worry."

He joked, as Adrian glanced at him before turning his attention back to Emilena, patting her back reassuringly.

"Listen, Emi. Right now we don't have any other choice but to take what we can for help and find out who or what is behind all this. So for now, can you please put your grudge aside?

Otherwise, this is gonna get messy, and not in a good way."

He said, then, finally noticing his phone ringing, fished it out of the pocket of his pants, flipping it open.

"Adrian here. What is it?"

He asked calmly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 05, 2013, 10:02:09 am**

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"I'll put my grudge aside when he starts being helpful," Emilena folded her arms defiantly. "All he's done so far is point a gun at me and ruin what had been a perfectly executed stowaway. The Sapaar woman has been more helpful than anything he's done."

"Oh, I'm not Sapaar," blushed Lily. She took her hood off for a brief moment. "I'm in disguise. You see, I'm also on the run, though I don't know what crime I committed. My name is Lily."

She extended a hand, but Emilena drew back and began whispering with her accomplice. So Lily took the opportunity to have her own whispered side conversation with Axel. "No doubt I seemed crazy when you saved me in that alley. I practically was at that point, the lam will do things to do. I think this woman deserves the same chance you gave me."

Emilena, on the other hand, could barely restrain her excitement as she whispered with Adrian. "A fugitive...Mr. Almaya is working with a fugitive! This might be an excellent opportunity to gain the evidence needed to put him behind bars..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 05, 2013, 11:45:50 am**

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Adrian shook his head.

"Emi...I don't think the cops are going to listen to you after tonight. Pretty sure we're both wanted just as much, if not more than Lily. So, until proven otherwise, we should probably assume the cops aren't on our side..."

He whispered back, as Kojuuro looked over his shoulder, then tensed a little.

"As much as I hate to disrupt this little strategy meeting, I think I'm noticing Police vehicles coming. I'd suggest we get moving, and quickly."

He said, reaching into his jacket for something...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 05, 2013, 02:01:19 pm**

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"Well, sure you seemed crazy, but at least you didn't spit at me. How could I have resisted helping someone as cute as you, anyway? If I remember right, you were pointing a shotgun at me." Axel gave Lily a small smile, then sighed. "Just be careful around them, okay?"

His ears pricked up when he heard Kojuuro speak. Leaning back into the car, Axel called up to the driver's seat. "Soren, the police are on their way. We letting them in?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **November 05, 2013, 06:42:42 pm**

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Marita then switched to adrians cell phone and typed in the number. she heard the phone ring, and waited for a response.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 05, 2013, 08:59:13 pm**

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Soren scowled. "After what she--" he thrust a gloved finger at Emilina "--did to me after I called the cops, I have half a mind to leave her here and let the cops deal with her!"

The sound of sirens grew closer, making him glance over his shoulder. He had enough bad experiences with the cops. He sighed. "Fine, I'll take you to the city limits. But no further!"

He opened the passenger side door for Axel.

-----

Aaron swirled a glass of water as he sat at the local dive bar. Compared to the slightly classier -- and overtly erotic -- setting of Electric Sheep, this bar -- Club De Kard -- had a decor that was best described as industrial. Benches and bar tops made from piles of girders welded together, chairs made from rebar and scrap metal sculptures made of concrete scrap and the like.

The German Shepherd sipped the water and sighed. He had overheard the supervisor considering firing him and hiring an Augment instead.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 06, 2013, 12:53:50 pm**

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Emilena spared a glance at Kojuuro. "Great. Now, if the Spanish Inquisition doesn't mind, Adrian and I will resume our hiding place in the trunk."

She climbed under the tarp without another word to anyone.

"You are of course welcome to come with us to the city limits as well," Lily added to Kojuuro. It would be the height of rudeness to offer a ride to one runaway but not another.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **November 06, 2013, 03:17:51 pm**

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Its Marita. Could you put Emilena on? Marita asked. ' We've been trying to get a hold of you guys for some time, but the police files say she doesn't have a cell phone, so we tried yours.' marita added as she climbed on the guest bed in maries room.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 08, 2013, 01:42:00 am**

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Emilena grabbed the phone from Adrian's phone. "Broadstreet! I've befriended Mr. Almaya, he's accepted me into his circle of acquaintance!" she whispered excitedly. "It'll be child's play to get the dirt we need to arrest him!"

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"We need all the help we can get," Lily said, climbing into the car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **November 08, 2013, 01:46:54 am**

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' alright broadstreet replied, his voice clearly showing impatience. ' my clock here says you have 16 hours 32 minutes and 7 seconds to get him to police headquarters. time running out Emilena. Either you get him to headquarters, or your fired, with loss of rank pay and benefits." broadstreet rang off and another call came through Emilena? this is Marita" Marita replied. " We're holed up at maries for the night, where are you guys?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 08, 2013, 02:43:35 am**

---

Soren looked around. His hands sweated as he looked around. "Axel and the other guy, we might wanna hurry."

He silently prayed that the Purifiers weren't waiting for him when he got home. He had heard about their tactics: destroying Augments' property, harassment, home protests and outright violence.

(OOC - should we wait for Starfall and bushwacked?)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 08, 2013, 03:50:51 am**

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"You don't have to tell me twice," Axel said, hopping up into the car. The police sirens, cutting the air with their piercing screeches, sounded just around the corner. He left the door open behind him for Kojuuro.

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A small man sat at the bar of the Club De Kard, rocking a shot glass of vodka and watching a TV resting in the corner, in which a recently appointed politician was speaking into the camera. An *augmented* politician. The man ran a hand through his greasy hair and cracked his jaw. "World's gone f---n' mad..." he muttered under his breath as he down the vodka and raised his hand for another.

He felt a presence in the room, and when he turned he saw a German Shepard slouching into his seat across the room. The man smiled slightly. He was always good at being able to read others, and this guy...

He got up and strode across the room, holding his shot glass, and stopped on the other side of the bench from the German Shepard. "Mind if I take a seat here?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 08, 2013, 12:50:37 pm**

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Kojuuro nodded, hopping into the car and dropping a few small spheres down as he did. "Alright, let's go. I'd rather not have to deal with police tonight." He said, grinning slightly. In the back, Adrian smiled and wrapped his arm around Emilena. "Hey, listen... Thanks for before. You saved my life..." He said softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 08, 2013, 06:19:10 pm**

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Soren shut the door and sped off into the skyways.

He sighed as he watched the other flyers flit by him. "This day has gone to s---," he said. "What else can go wrong?"

He instantly regretted his words as the words "WARNING! Perimeter breach!" and "WARNING! Fire detected in house!" flashed red in his HMD momentarily.

Swearing under his breath, he immediately banked into a hard left, narrowly missing a passing hoverbiker. Opening the vehicle's throttle to the maximum, he was soon at 190 miles per hour ó nearly double the skyway's speed limit.

"There's a little detour I have to take. Namely my house because it's currently on fire and being looted!"

The Human silently cursed himself for not having a "trunk gun" in his repulsor car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 08, 2013, 06:34:51 pm**

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Axel cried out as Soren swerved sharply, accidentally knocking into Kokjuuro. "Sorry..." He leaned forward over Soren's shoulder. "Wait, how do you know? Maybe you should slow down a little..." Ever since his accident a few years ago, being in speeding cars made him a nervous.

Almost to take his mind off of it, he looked back at the three new passengers. "I'm Axel, by the way," he said, extending his hand.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 08, 2013, 08:51:06 pm**

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Soren slowed down slightly to avoid crashing into a repulsorcart carrying what looked like crates of electronics. He tapped the HMD that was over his left eye. "This HMD I'm wearing. It's linked to the security system and cameras in my house. And it just triggered an alert."

As he looked through the windshield, he gulped, there was a column of smoke -- coming from where he knew his house to be located!

He took a breath. "All right, everyone, s---'s about to hit the fan so get ready!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 09, 2013, 06:22:36 pm**

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Marcus reached the end of the block and slowed his stride, nearing the car he'd appropriated from the shop owner. There were no police chasing him. That was good, though now it was up to Kibagami to ensure he and his companion escaped. *Knowing that slippery bastard, it won't be a problem.*

Pulling out his cell phone and flipping it open, he dialed the last number to call him and eased himself into the driver's seat. It only rang once. "Is it done?" Zeroth's masked voice gave away no indication of worry.

"There were some complications... Kibagami removed the tracker, but I was able to place a new one on a companion he's traveling with. They're also being pursued by our city's *finest*," Marcus said, sarcasm sharpening his voice. "But things should still go to plan."

"I see. I'll get our specialists on their trail now." There was an abrupt dial tone as Zeroth hung up.

Marcus grunted and snapped his phone shut. He shifted the car into gear and pulled out, hoping that when the time came he'd be able to put a bullet into all of them personally.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 10, 2013, 09:06:21 am**

Emilena whacked her head against the trunk top and cursed loudly. "What in gods name is going on up there?" She muttered.

Lily grabbed Axel for stability and what her eyes, she was never a big fan of violence

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 12, 2013, 04:01:34 am**

Axel could see the smoke in the distance now. It looked bad. "Soren, maybe we should be careful about this," he said nervously, holding Lily for support as he remembered what the Purifier had threatened earlier that day. A hoverbike zoomed past within an inch of the windscreen, and Axel flinched.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 13, 2013, 02:42:11 am**

Aaron grunted as he drank his fourth glass of beer. "Have a seat."

His cellphone rang. He scowled as he read that his boss was calling.

"Boss," he said, over the breakbeat that boomed from the speakers. "I'm still on break."

"Aaron, you can stay there."

The man's heart sank and his ears splayed back as he involuntarily bared his teeth. "What happened?"

"I'm sorry but, we're going to lay you off."

"What the f--- do you mean!?" His outburst attracted several stares from the patrons.

"It's just that we have someone who can do your job better. Name's Gustave Nyobe. Demands a high wage but the guy's astoundingly strong ó metal reinforced skeleton and class 2 limbs."

"You hired a f---ing *gleamer* to take my job!?" Several hostile stares ó from both the Augments and Baselines were shot Aaron's way at his casual use of the slur.

"Aaron, if you'll take a few courses in augment maintenence ó at your own expense, though we'll reimburse some of the cost ó we'll hire you as an external augment repair tech."

The German Shepherd's mouth was open in a snarl and his ears were pinned fully against his head. "F--- you! I'm not working with them!" he growled. "I quit!" He snapped the phone shut.

He ordered another beer and turned to the man. "Dumbass decided to fire me and replace me with an Augment. The nerve of that bastard!"

-----

Taking Axel's words into consideration, Soren parked in a side street of his development and shut the engine off.

He opened the trunk. "Okay, get out. I have some...business to attend to with those Purifier

freaks!"

At the same time, he looked around for something he could use as a weapon. A discarded pill vial was by his foot. Scowling, he kicked it into the sewer. There wasn't much he could use, maybe a few discarded bottles, lumps of concrete or rusted rebar.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 16, 2013, 06:18:43 am**

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The Man sat down slowly opposite Aaron, fixing his eyes on him as he answered his cell phone. He saw Aaron's ears splay back, and even over the pounding music he could hear his tone shift belligerently. Then the Man heard Aaron mention gleamers. *Perfect.*

He sighed sympathetically when the German Shepard hung up. "I'm sorry, buddy. I wish I could tell you I was surprised, but..." The Man shrugged. "They think they're so much better. Like all their hard-wiring makes them some kind of god. Sad thing is, it seems most everyone agrees with 'em. In a couple of years, all we're gonna be good for is sitting behind the bars of a zoo, being laughed at."

He clenched his fist, popping the knuckles, then met Aaron's eyes. "Wanna know the sad thing? Few years ago, I was exactly where you are now. Tossed aside like s--t to make more room for *them.*"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 16, 2013, 12:57:14 pm**

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Kojuuro retrieved a pistol from within his coat, offering it to Soren.  
"Here. Just in case."  
He said calmly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 16, 2013, 07:34:13 pm**

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Aaron ordered another beer. "Why are they doing this to us?"

He then scowled as he heard the possible future. "I refuse to be an exhibit!" he snarled. "For the sake of all Baselines, we need to stop this!"

-----

Soren took the pistol. "Thanks."

He took a breath to steady his pounding heart as he stepped forward towards his burning house. The pungent scent of the chemicals he used in his small basement workshop hung in the air.

He saw a Doberman female standing guard by the driveway.

Creeping until he got in range, he leveled the pistol at her and spoke. "Don't move! Call off your thugs and I won't put some rounds in your chest."

"Ah, so pleased to see you, Soren," the woman said as she bared her teeth.

Soren scowled. "Shove it! Get off my property!" His finger tightened around the trigger of his pistol.

The woman snapped her fingers and the bushes flanking his driveway rustled. He spun around and fired a shot into one of the bushes. Before he could take another shot, two huge men

tackled him and roughly snatched the pistol from his grasp.

The shock absorbing clothing took most of the blow and Soren slammed his knee into the nearest thug's groin, causing him to recoil back and allowing him to crawl away.

The second thug blindsided the augment repair tech and pinned him to the ground. "Hey boss! Shall we kill him?" the thug asked.

"Not yet. Tie him up while we loot his house and destroy all his goods. Then we can kill him."

The two thugs roughly grabbed Soren and hustled him to the remains of his workshop.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 17, 2013, 01:51:10 am**

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Lily shifted nervously, still back at the car. "Do you think he's..."

Suddenly she wasn't in her body.

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*She looked around the flaming second floor. Nothing her fireproof suit couldn't handle.*

*She quickly set up her high-powered sniper rifle and scanned the surrounding area. She noticed a parked vehicle.*

*"Hey boss, I got Almaya's vehicle in my crosshairs," she radioed.*

*"High-explosive rounds, aim for the battery pack," a female voice responded.*

*She grinned. She loved explosions. Settling down, she scanned the vehicle for a gas tank latch...*

-----

"Everyone out of the vehicle!" shrieked Lily, practically flattening Axel as she pulled the door open and tumbled onto the ground.

Emilena heard Lily, and wasted no time in obeying her. Using her memory of standard vehicular safety features, she located the incandescent trunk latch and popped it from the inside. Then she pulled Adrian and herself out of the car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 17, 2013, 01:59:11 am**

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(OOC - Soren doesn't have an antique car <in this 'verse, only antique cars use internal combustion engines>. His repulsorcar is electrically powered. But severely damaging the battery pack, with say an explosive bullet, could cause a fire or explosion by exposing the electrolytes to the air.)

Soren was dumped to the ground and roughly tied to a piece of steel rebar with some heavy cable ties.

The two thuggish heavies watched over him to make sure he couldn't cut himself free or grab a weapon.

Soren sighed. *Maybe this was a bad idea*, he thought.

He looked at the contents of his house, scattered all across his backyard. He grimaced as a Purifier was using a plasma torch to try and get into the safe where he stored his creds.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **November 17, 2013, 02:04:11 am**

marie made some popcorn and brought it in for marita and rose to snack on. marie flipped on the news. the night newcast usually has noless than 25 deaths, 150 toxic dumps, and 30 or so bribes. what a city to live in huh ' marie said as she sat btween maritas and rose.. ' pity we cant just find a new city to live. ' unfortunately easier said than done. you need prospects not to mention coin to grease the right palms.. "Marita sighed. ' at least you sprung me and rose marie said. ' we need t get out of the city, the only way to do that is to find emilena.' marita said. After watching for another half an hour the girls headed to bed. the three ecided to share for the night then head to maritas in the morning.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 17, 2013, 06:29:27 am**

"Oof!" Axel said as he tumbled from the car and landed in a heap on the pavement. He scrambled to his feet and hurried away from the car with lily. "What? What's going on? I think Soren's in trouble, did you hear that gunshot..."

Something *THUNKED* against the side of the car. *Who's throwing stones*, Axel thought for a split second, before he noticed the sparks spitting out from a ragged hole where the battery unit was located. A blue flame caught. *Oh crap*. "Watch out!" Axel had time to yell before the car exploded, thrown up off the ground and scattering shards of glass through the air.

-----

The man nodded. "That is exactly the kind of attitude I respect, my friend. Don't take it lyin' down, fight back with everything you've got." He paused. "Let me ask you something. How far would you take it? How far would you be willing to go, to fight for our future?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 17, 2013, 06:37:20 am**

"What the hell?" swore Emilena, staggering to her feet.

"They've got him!" Lily exclaimed. "They captured Mr. Almaya! And they know we're here! What do we do?"

Emilena's heart skipped a beat. If these unknown assailants killed Mr. Almaya, she could never bring him in for arrest and get her job back.

She grabbed a heated pipe out of the wreckage. "We rescue him of course," she grinned, brandishing it like a club. "Who's going and who's hanging back here to be sniper bait?"

(OOC: Starfall, this might be a good time for Kojurro to give Emilena her sword back.)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 17, 2013, 12:28:51 pm**

Kojuuro held a hand out to stop Emilena as Adrian rolled to his feet next to her.

"Hold it. Going in half-cocked will get you killed."

He said calmly, drawing a sword from inside his coat before handing it to Emilena with a small chuckle.

"Here. Thought you might want this back. I had enough time to get it modified as well.

Never thought I'd see that sword again."

He said with a grin. Adrian drew his own sword, smiled at Emilena, and advanced slowly towards the source of the shots...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 17, 2013, 05:17:29 pm**

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Axel picked himself up and rubbed his ringing ears with a wince. "I don't know how you knew that was going to happen, but I'm sure glad you did..." he told Lily, his voice shaking, steering her into cover.

He looked at Emilena. "Yeah, I'm with you. We need to help Soren." He bent down and picked up a small chunk of concrete. It wouldn't make his weedy frame any more imposing, but at least it was something.

"Hey! Uh... you, wait!" He ran after Adrian and grabbed his shoulder, stopping him from rounding the corner. "They have a sniper covering the street. How're we going to get past them?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 17, 2013, 06:42:05 pm**

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(Club De Kard ó Lanthae)

Aaron templed his fingers and frowned. He had a clean criminal record and wasn't interested in tarnishing it with a bunch of felonies.

He looked at the TV advertising the latest augmentation. He scowled, if this man was right, he and the other Baselines would be relegated to the status of the dolphins and bluefin tuna currently residing in the marine park at the city borders. A criminal record wouldn't matter if they'd all end up as zoo exhibits in a few years.

The German Shepherd nodded. He made his choice. "Whatever it takes," he said in a low growl.

-----

(Lanthae Outskirts)

Soren struggled to break the cable ties binding him but they were simply too strong. He sighed as he resigned himself to the fact that his possessions were all but gone.

Hell, he'd be lucky to get away from this *alive*.

-----

(Lanthae Commercial District)

Anne exited her apartment with her messenger bag. The Night Market in the Silica District wasn't open yet and she figured now would be a good time to go salvage more augments.

Passing by a street vendor selling some questionable looking circuit boards, she made her way to a boarded up shop. After making sure no one was looking, she used a set of bolt cutters to cut the lock and enter.

She sniffed the air and her upper lip curled back in the distinctly equine Flehmen response as the odor of solvent and grease hit her nostrils. She smiled as she saw a neurotester on the countertop. The device was an older model, but it would still fetch a few thousand creds.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 17, 2013, 09:31:37 pm**

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Adrian smirked at Axel, twirling his sword laconically.

"Don't worry about that. I've got a few aces up my sleeve. One sniper won't even be a challenge. You guys go get to Soren. I'll take care of the sniper and get back with you."

He said with a smirk.

"Oh, and the name's Adrian. Good to finally talk to you."

He said reassuringly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 18, 2013, 12:09:09 am**

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"Modified?" Emilena drew the sword, then gasped as it vibrated at a nearly-unnoticeable frequency. Pressing it to the heated pipe, it slid through as if the pipe were made of soft butter. "You've added a high-frequency vibrator component!" she gasped.

Lily squinted. "What does it--?"

"It can now cut through basically anything short of another HF sword or heavy armor like a tank." Emilena carved up some more pieces of Soren's old car. "These are incredibly illegal outside of heavily regulated construction services due to their lethality."

She grinned. "I think I can get us an alternate way into Soren's house. Everyone follow me."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 18, 2013, 02:19:08 am**

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Kojuuro nodded.

"Indeed I did. After all these years, that sword of yours is complete again. Make sure to use it well. It's owner would have wanted you to."

He said softly, as Adrian blocked a round from the sniper before ducking back around the corner.

"Oh...right, HF swords. Forgot about that. Then again, mine's been on the fritz, so..."

He chuckled a little, as Kojuuro raised a hand.

"Is that so? Probably because you're using a cheap, new-production sword. And not even how you're used to. Here. These are yours. An old friend of mine would have wanted you to have them."

He said, producing another pair of katana swords from within his coat and handing them to Adrian. Adrian stared at them for a moment, then grinned, slinging his larger sword across his back and placing the two new blades at his hips.

"Right, thanks Kojuuro. Now then, shall we go rescue Soren?"

He said, not even noticing the similarities between his swords and Emilenas...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 18, 2013, 04:41:53 am**

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The Man downed the rest of his drink and didn't say anything for a moment. He followed Aaron's gaze and watched the augmentation advert play out. One aug-ad was much the same as another, and they all made him just as sick. Finally, when it ended, he set his glass back down on the table with a small *clink*. "Yeah. I believe you," he said, dropping a few credits down to pay for the drink. "I can see it in your eyes. You're like us."

Standing abruptly, the Man pulled his denim jacket tighter and buttoned it closed. "It was good meeting you... Aaron Geasbrecht," he said, reading the name off of Aaron's work suit. "You'll be hearing from us real soon. But," he continued with a smirk as he stepped around the table and walked past him, "You might want to lose the name tag. Just a bit of friendly advice."

Shoving his hands in his pockets, the Man walked across the bar and out the door without looking back.

-----

Axel gave Adrian a small smile. "I'm Axel. *Son of a bitch!*" he yelled, falling back as Adrian blocked a round from the sniper.

He joined Emilena and looked at the sword she was now wielding. It made the small rock he was clutching feel fairly useless. At least it looked like she knew what she was doing. "Alright, I'm behind you. We can't let them hurt him." He felt a vibration run through the floor as the sniper fired again at their cover. His stomach churned.

Axel turned to Lily. "Maybe you should stay back here, it'll be safer.."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 19, 2013, 01:21:19 am**

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Lily shook her head. "He can see the entire street from here..." she breathed. "There's nowhere safe anymore."

Emilena led them to the backdoor of Soren's house and effortlessly cut through the metal door. "Step one, we remove the sniper from the attic," she said. "I *hate* snipers, they make things far too complicated."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 19, 2013, 06:58:04 pm**

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Axel pressed himself against the wall next to the open doorway, exhaling nervously. "No kidding. I can't say snipers are high up on my list of favourite people right now, either." He peeked his head through cautiously. The rear hallway was completely trashed, and the thick smell of smoke hung in the air, accompanying the crackling of something burning. But the back of the house seemed clear.

Breathing a sigh of relief, he ducked back out. "We have to be careful. If they know we're trying to help Soren, they might kill him even faster." Axel shook his head. "There's no way that sniper didn't see us coming."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 19, 2013, 09:13:00 pm**

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"Agreed," nodded Emilena, "which is why Jackie Chan is going in the room first." She glanced at Adrian.

Lily was hanging in the back. She was trying to see the future again, but sadly it only seemed to work on its own schedule...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 20, 2013, 03:37:53 am**

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[Club De Kard]

Aaron swiped his credit chit on the bartop mounted reader. The breakbeat had switched to smooth chillout trance.

As he exited into the smoggy streets, he ripped the nametag off his uniform and stuck in his pocket. Passing over a drunk on his way to the lift tubes, he sighed.

-----

[Lanthae Outskirts]

Soren continued trying to break the cable ties by rubbing them against the rebar he had been bound to. After what seemed like an eternity, the cable ties still held fast.

"Come on, hurry up!" he muttered.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 22, 2013, 11:50:41 am**

Adrian smirked, sticking his tongue out at Emilena.

"Geeze, nice to know you're worried about me."

He teased, as he ducked into the room, drawing his sword cautiously. Kojuuro was the next in, pistol held at the ready...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 22, 2013, 08:27:28 pm**

Axel watched Adrian and Kojuuro move into the house. He almost expected them to be cut down by gunfire from an unexpected ambush - but there was nothing. It couldn't be this easy, could it?

He waited for Emilena to move ahead of him, his heart hammering in his chest as he desperately tried to think of a way that he could fashion a weapon from the scrap electronics strewn about. If he could just find a small-sized power core, with some way to direct its energy... Axel was also painfully aware of the dangerous situation Lily was getting herself into. *I'll die before I let anything happen to her.*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 23, 2013, 11:29:00 pm**

Aaron arrived in his apartment and locked the door. Taking the name tag, he held his lighter to it. He smiled as the fabric caught fire, falling into the sink.

"You could have kept me, but no, you had to hire a gleamer. Yeah f--- ou," he muttered as he flushed the burnt remains of the name tag down the sink.

Grabbing some clothing, he tossed his uniform into the hamper and stepped into the shower.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **November 23, 2013, 11:43:21 pm**

marie yawned as she snuggle into bed, along with marita on her right and rose on her left ' night girls she yawned. rose leaned in and kissed her on the lips, then did the same to marita . marita kissed rose back then kissed marie. night girls marita yawned and soon turned to face the wall, sleep quickly taking her.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 24, 2013, 09:08:57 am**

Emilena cautiously glanced into the attic and saw the remains of the sniper. "No need to worry about somebody who can take care of themselves," she grinned. "Now we need a protective

perimeter. This floor is ours. Keep the useless ones in the center."

Lily didn't even take it as an insult. She was walking to the middle when suddenly...

-----  
*She was shaking as she observed the intruders standing around the room. In the corner, the remains of her husband lay splattered against the wall.*

*Fumbling, she grasped and loaded her emergency pistol. The chrome of a nearby toilet gleamed in the moonlight of an otherwise unlit bathroom.*

*"Oh god...oh god, oh god..." she whispered to herself. "I don't wanna die..."*

*She stared at the door. A thin trickle of blood ran under it. Blood from the man that used to keep her warm at night...*

*Once her gun was ready, she gritted her teeth and prepared to kick the door down. "This is for Saul you bastards..." she muttered, masking her fear.*

-----  
Lily grabbed Emilena. "There's someone up here!" she whispered frantically. "With a gun! In a bathroom!"

Emilena whirled her eyes about. "Dammit, anyone know where the bathroom is?"

Then a door masked in shadow flew open, and a woman popped out, blasting dual rounds at everyone. The first shots flew at Kojurro and Axel.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 24, 2013, 11:10:37 am**

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As the figure fired, Kojuro responded near instantly, rolling to the side and snapping of a pair of quick shots into the gun, aiming to disable it or knock it from the assailant's grasp. Adrian, on the other hand, seemed to almost disappear, reappearing in front of Axel and rapidly spinning his new HF sword, using it to deflect the fired round, sending it flying off into a wooden beam with ease...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 24, 2013, 06:38:57 pm**

---

Axel flinched when he saw the figure step out, and at the sudden explosion of gunfire he closed his eyes, waiting for the impact of the bullet that would end it all... but it never came. When he opened them, Axel saw Adrian crouched in front of him, sword poised and a bullet hole smoking in a beam above them.

He let his breath out. "Thanks Adrian," he said shakily, moving to the middle like Emilena had instructed. "What do we do with *her*?" Axel asked, looking at the disarmed assailant, still not quite over the shock of his close death.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 24, 2013, 07:00:02 pm**

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Emilena stepped forward, sword drawn. "Where is Mr. Almaya?" she demanded.

"I don't know--," started the woman, when Emilena slashed her across the thigh.

"Like hell you don't know!" Emilena snapped. "You're part of a small and organized attack group, they don't keep secrets from each other!"

"I've been stuck up here! How would I know what's happened since?" stammered the woman, clutching her thigh. Then she cried out as Emilena slashed her horizontally across the breasts.

"If you have nothing useful to say, then I'm just going to kill you!" Emilena glared, pressing the bloodied katana an inch into the woman's chest.

The woman glared back, still clutching her new wounds. "...Fine, kill me! At least I'll be able to see Saul again!"

Emilena glanced at the bloodied body in the corner. "Really? You'd die just in memory of a man? Pathetic. You're not even worth killing," she spat, smacking her upside the head with the blunt of the blade.

As the body slumped to the floor, Lily stammered, "Wh-was all that really necessary?..."

Emilena glanced at the doors, not bothering to answer. "The others will have heard the gunfire. People with weapons, pick an entrance; I'd prefer to keep the defensive advantage. People without weapons, find somewhere to hide. Psychic woman, you make sure to tell me about any other surprise visitors who feel like showing up."

Lily moved to hide in the bathroom, then hesitated. The possibly dead woman was in her way, and Lily couldn't even bear to look at her...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 24, 2013, 08:29:13 pm**

---

Kojuuro stood near the body, looking at it intently before looking up.

"Everyone, get down! There's a second shooter out there!"

He uttered, moving to get Emilena out of the way of the window as Adrian pushed Axel and Lily out of the way, just in time as a massive crack split the air, a massive chunk of the floor shredding out from the force of the shot fired at them...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 24, 2013, 09:04:25 pm**

---

Axel hit the floor with a grunt, skidding along on his chest and coming to rest by the unconscious woman. She'd dropped her pistol nearby, and Axel snatched it up hastily, hoping it was ready to fire. Raising himself into a crouch, he moved closer to Lily, raising the pistol up to the window where the shot had burst through. As he did so, he could make out raised voices coming from somewhere outside. The workshop?

"I think I know where they've got Soren," he whispered to the group. "Maybe we should split into two groups; one to keep their attention here, and the other to help him? If we don't hurry, they might decide he's not worth it..." As he finished speaking, a second bullet smashed through the window and tore a chunk out of the wall.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **November 25, 2013, 02:27:30 am**

---

"Hey give that back!" Soren shouted as one of the thugs swiped the keys from his pocket. He was rewarded with a crowbar to the chest from the other thug. Even through the protective clothing he wore, the blow was still enough to wind him -- but luckily, not break his ribs.

"Shut up, we hold all the cards here!" the other thug said, kicking him in the groin -- hard with his steel-toed boot.

Soren screamed multiple profanities -- even with the protective clothing, a groin kick of that power from a steel-toe boot was incredibly painful.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **November 28, 2013, 11:44:14 am**

---

Two gunmen had approached the door, but weren't showing themselves. One peeked his head around and got bifurcated by Emilena's katana.

"We've got this under control!" she said to the group. "They can't enter without--"

Suddenly a gunshot punched through the floor inches away from Lily, who shrieked.

Emilena hadn't calculated for that. "Change of plans, we take the fight to them," she corrected grimly. "Kujurro, if you've got a grenade, make Mr. Almaya a new entrance to his first floor..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **November 28, 2013, 03:12:03 pm**

---

Kojuuro smirked, drawing his broadsword from his back.

"Unfortunately, I don't have any grenades. Pretty sure this will suffice, though."

He chuckled, stabbing his blade into the floor beneath himself, spinning quickly to cut a holed around himself, dropping through to neatly bifurcate the gunman who had fired on them.

Adrian was directly behind him, dropping through to cut down another two assailants.

"First floor clear. You can join us now."

He joked...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **November 28, 2013, 06:26:29 pm**

---

Axel knelt down and poked his head cautiously through the hole in the floor when he heard Kojuuro speak. When he saw it really was clear, he dropped down after them, his trainers skidding in the blood pooling around the bodies. Axel shuddered and gripped the pistol tighter, then forced himself to look around at the room. They were standing in the kitchen, which meant that just down the corridor was the door that to the outside... to the workshop and, hopefully, Soren.

"Come on, let's keep moving!" he urged, stepping gingerly back to make room for Lily and Emilena to drop through.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 01, 2013, 10:35:44 am**

---

Emilena dropped down silently, katana drawn. Lily tried to emulate her but fudged the landing and went tumbling into a wardrobe with a crash.

"Wonderful..." Emilena sighed. "Now, we've got to find Mr. Almaya before they kill him. We can do this stealthily, or quickly. I'm open to suggestions. Has anyone ever even been in this house before?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 01, 2013, 01:16:26 pm**

---

Adrian shook his head, looking around the room.

"Never been in here. But I think we need to be stealthy. We make too much noise, and Soren is as good as done for."

He said gently, tail touching Emilena's. Kojuuro chuckled, flicking the blood off of his blade...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 01, 2013, 05:27:02 pm**

---

"Yeah, we were both here this morning," Axel said as he gently helped Lily up to her feet. "I think they're keeping him in the workshop, and that's just outside, around the back. We have to cross the courtyard to get there, though."

He swallowed. "I think we need to go at them quiet but fast. If they see us crossing the yard, they'll kill him."

**(OOC: Is this taking place at night or daytime?)**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 06, 2013, 05:59:05 pm**

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(OOC - I'll say it's taking place at early evening.)

Soren watched as the sun sank beneath the smoggy horizon and the automated streetlights began to come on.

The pain from the groin kick and the distressingly happy expression on the faces of the two thugs reminded him that if Emilena and the others didn't get to him soon, he was dead.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 07, 2013, 01:41:16 am**

---

Emilena nodded. "Right. Then let's make this tactical. Kojuuro, I want you on sniper duty. Sneaker boy and Nostradamus, get that unconscious woman from upstairs, then bring her after us. Adrian, you and me are going ahead. We're doing this like in the Electric Sheep, only this time we can kill people from the beginning."

Sheathing her katana, she began slinking across the courtyard. She was never one to waste too much time.

"Who made her leader?" muttered Lily to Axel, making sure Emilena couldn't hear her.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 07, 2013, 03:05:07 am**

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Adrian smiled back at the pair, ears twitching.

"She's the most experienced at team tactics. Kojuuro and I have a little knowledge of small units, but we're both used to working with full combat squads. So we'll play this her way, since she should be the best at this."

He chuckled, sheathing his blades and running off after Emilena. Kojuuro nodded, unslinging a large rifle from his back and checking the ammunition.

"That's correct. Were you two military or contractors, then perhaps I could be more valuable tactically, but as it stands, she will be the best suited to running this. Plus, she's doing you two a favor, making sure that you guys aren't in combat. Her and her brother, they can handle themselves. Let's go."

He said softly, moving towards the stairs with a terse, focused expression...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 07, 2013, 06:16:35 am**

---

Axel blinked as Kojuuro moved past him, then turned to Lily with a shrug. "I guess that's why. Come on, we don't want to keep Grandpa Rambo waiting," he said with a small smile, starting to make his own way to the stairs.

Once they reached upstairs, Axel tucked the pistol into the back of his jeans and stared down nervously at the crumpled figure in the doorway. "Holy crap, Emilena really messed her up." He glanced at Lily and Kojuuro. "Do we... tie her up?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 07, 2013, 07:07:40 am**

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Lily tried not to look at the body too much. "I don't know if she could put up much of a fight even if she were awake..." she muttered. Regardless she searched around and found some rope. "Lets not keep them waiting...brother and sister, you said?"

-----

A lone thug guarded the back entrance to the workshop. Emilena slinked as close as she could, then dove forward in a combat. In less than a second she leapt to her feet and swung the blade at the man's neck.

All of a sudden she felt powerful volts of electricity course through her body, some sort of defensive mechanism in his skin. She grunted and began involuntarily spasming. Luckily her cybernetic hands weren't so easily incapacitated, and the blade drove into the man's neck, decapitating him.

She hit the ground with a wince. "Dammit, they're gonna have heard that, dammit dammit dammit..." she tried to stagger to her feet but her body was still shaking.

The thugs guarding both other entrances to the workshop came rushing, wielding high-powered rifles. In seconds, they'd see her, and their orders were to shoot intruders on sight.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 07, 2013, 11:35:39 am**

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As one of the guards rounded the corner, a sharp report sounded as Kojuuro fired off a single round into the first guard's throat, silencing him as Adrian stepped in front of Emilena, wrapping an arm around her waist and pulling her to her feet as he grabbed a throwing knife from his coat and throwing it at the other guard.

"C'mon, Emilena. Let's get you up. We can't just lay around here all day. As much as I'd love to lay around with you."

He chuckled, kissing Emilena's cheek lightly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 07, 2013, 03:02:59 pm**

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marita and the other girls had woken up around 5, and were getting ready to go out to search for the others. it was abot 630 now, the girls had showered and dressed, and wee doing one last check to make sure they hadnt forgotten anything.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 07, 2013, 03:17:02 pm**

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Emilena took a few deep breaths to calm herself. "Thanks..." she muttered, not something she said often.

Creeping into the house, she peered through a crack in the door and saw that the two thugs holding Almaya were already aware of their presence.

"Not another move," one growled, holding a knife up to Almaya's throat. "Or he dies."

"I'll offer you the same deal," Emilena replied coolly. "We've killed the rest of your team, bar one. A female, we're bringing her here now. I propose a simple hostage exchange. We can all get out of this alive."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 07, 2013, 05:18:04 pm**

---

Axel dragged the now thoroughly trussed woman down the stairs, huffing as he tried to hold her under the arms. She was much heavier than she looked. As they reached the bottom of the stairway, he looked curiously at Lily. "So how long have you been able to do that... super power thing?" Grinning, he added, "I'm not complaining, you did basically save my life twice today because of it."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 07, 2013, 06:08:50 pm**

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Adrian smirked, hand tensing on his sword.

"You won't let him go. I know that. After all, you bastards hired a sweeper to take down your sniper. Hell, I'd be surprised if your bosses intend to let you leave alive."

He taunted, drawing the two thugs attention as Kojuuro moved to another vantage point with a view on Soren and the thugs...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 07, 2013, 07:16:58 pm**

---

Emilena glanced sideways at Adrian for a split-second, then decided good cop/bad cop was as good a strategy as any. She wasn't used to being the good cop though.

"However, we may be able to help you with that. We have an excellent witness protection program." She flashed her police badge. "If you hand Mr. Almaya over alive, your worst verifiable crime is breaking-and-entering...with my help."

-----  
"I've never been able to do that," Lily shook her head. "I don't understand it. I don't know why it happens..."

She stumbled as they dragged the body across the courtyard, and the body's hand got hooked on her shirt. For a second, her tattoo was revealed to Axel...and it was now a seven.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 07, 2013, 07:29:12 pm**

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Adrian smirked.

"You see, if you drop the knife and walk away, then you'll live. Otherwise, you'll end up getting betrayed by your own so-called allies, left to take the fall for this. They'll have one of their snipers drop you before they leave. They get away scot-free, and you'll end up dead."

He said calmly, tensing up on his sword. Kojuuro had moved to a spot with a clear view of the area, steadying his rifle with a calm smirk...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 07, 2013, 07:58:56 pm**

---

"Well, "Axel grunted as they pulled the limp body along, his ears creasing as he picked up the raised voices from the workshop. "I'm glad it happened when it did." As Lily suddenly stumbled, he quickly tightened his grip so the woman didn't crash to the floor. "Hey, are you alright..." His breath hitched in his chest when her shirt caught and the tattoo was exposed.

Axel stopped in his tracks. "Lily, it's... it changed again." His eyes widened as he tried to understand what was going on.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 08, 2013, 03:35:35 am**

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The thug looked at Emelina and Adrian and then at Soren. He scowled.

"Fine, take him." He threw Soren at Emelina and Adrian. "Just so you know, we're not through with you, Almaya."

Soren grunted as he landed roughly on a piece of rubble.

The other thug spoke up as he glared at Adrian. "This isn't the last of us, Cyhead. We're coming for you and your Gleamer buddies!"

One of the thugs none too gently grabbes the injured woman and with his companion in tow, quickly ran off into the rapidly darkening streets.

(OOC - Cyhead --> "Cyberhead" --> an insulting term for someone who works on augmentations.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 09, 2013, 01:11:44 pm**

---

Lily, who was silently freaking out about the tattoo thing, swallowed deeply and focused on Soren. "Are you all right?" She asked, kneeling over him.

"All things considered, that went comparatively well," muttered Emilena. She glanced at Adrian. "Good thinking on the routine. I think that was what got them. Hopefully they haven't bugged Mr. Almaya. With your permission Soren, I'm trained in full body cavity searches..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 09, 2013, 05:12:12 pm**

---

Axel was still shaken by Lily's changing tattoo, but nonetheless grinned when he saw that Soren appeared unharmed. "I'm glad you're okay Soren," he said, making his way over. He winced when he heard Emilena's offer. "Well? Are you tempted?" he said as he extended a helping hand down to him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 09, 2013, 06:30:31 pm**

---

Soren's eye twitched as he heard Emilena mention "cavity search".

"No," he said. "All those two did to me was simply beat me up or try to. Luckilyó" he gave an experimental punch to his shirt, causing a short wave to ripple across its surface as it hardened "ómy clothing stopped them."

---

He then turned to Axel and Lily. "I'm fine but everything's gone." He sighed. "Well, I'm gonna see if there's anything those punks haven't taken."

He got up and headed towards the ruins of his house.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 09, 2013, 08:43:50 pm**

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Kojuuro lowered his rifle, sighing a little and relaxing.

"Heh. That was some smooth talking, you two. Good job."

He sighed, then slung his rifle across his back, making his way towards the others. In the courtyard, Adrian smirked a little, standing next to Emilena.

"Wasn't a routine, actually. I...know how operations like this work. Any time there's someone hired to dispose of one of them, there's no intention of letting any of them leave."

He said, smiling at her and blushing.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 10, 2013, 02:17:15 am**

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"Crime doesn't pay," agreed Emilena, who could think of at least dozen examples where it paid extremely well.

Lily pulled her shirt down and examined her tattoo. "It's counting down," she whispered. "...Counting down to what?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 10, 2013, 05:48:56 am**

---

Axel looked at Lily. *How the hell does a tattoo change like that?* He put an arm around her. "It's alright. Whatever it is, we'll deal with it. You'll be fine."

The sound of raised voices carried over the now still evening air, causing his ears to prick up. "Sounds like Soren's neighbors heard the gunfire," he said, glancing around at the others. "Maybe we shouldn't hang around too long. If they decide to call the police..."

-----

A ringing stirred Marcus, and he sat up. He'd been lying in the back seat of his car, trying to catch up on some sleep while he had the chance. There was another ring, and he realised it was his cell phone. Reaching into his coat, he pulled it out and snapped it open. "Yes."

Zeroth's voice came through. "We've successfully activated the live tracker. It seems she managed to successfully escape the police - given the amount of police activity in the area, she and Kibagami must have had help. But it's where they are now that has us interested. Soren Almaya's residence."

Marcus frowned. "Soren... he's another of our targets."

"For intimidation, not elimination. But if they're working together the situation may have to change. In any case, we're still in the dark as to what they're working towards - we need to retrieve the female and... ask her what she knows."

"It'd be my pleasure," Marcus grunted.

"Good to hear. But you won't be alone - we don't want to risk failure. You'll be part of a small team. Here are the details..."

-----  
The phone in Aaron's apartment began to ring.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 10, 2013, 11:52:52 am**

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Adrian froze for a moment, eyecover glowing a little as he looked at Emilena.  
"Emi...we have a problem. I think that you got a tracker put in you at that hospital. It just went active, so now the Purifiers have a bead on us..."  
He said nervously as Kojuuro walked over to the rest of the group...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 10, 2013, 01:28:07 pm**

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"Do they...?" Emilena muttered. After a few seconds her eyes lit up. "Don't remove it! This could be turned into an opportunity."

Lily glanced at her. She was beginning to think the fox was slightly crazy.

"Anyone who's interested can follow me to a remote location," Emilena continued.  
"Somewhere they'll think I'm alone. They'll try to capture me, but they won't be expecting my team of allies. We can ambush them, hopefully capture one for information." Her eyes flashed with excitement.

"I don't know if I like this plan..." muttered Lily.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 10, 2013, 03:34:46 pm**

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Aaron finished his meal of catfish filet.

He picked up his cellphone.

"Aaron speaking, what do you want?"

-----  
Soren exited the house with his shotgun and battered exoskeleton with its charger.

"F---ers stole everything except my gun and my exoskeleton."

He then suited up in the exoskeleton, setting its power to low to conserve battery life.

Soren then looked around. "So what's the plan?"

He then heard the distant sound of sirens. "On second thought, let's scam!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 10, 2013, 05:46:48 pm**

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"Hello, Aaron Geasbrecht. It's good to talk to you." Zeroth's garbled voice issued from Aaron's cellphone, calm as always. "My contact told me you seemed promising, and after doing some digging of my own, I have to agree. I think you could be quite valuable to our cause."

"I'm sure that by now you know what I represent," he continued, "So you'll understand if I don't stay for long on a line I don't trust. You'll have a chance to prove yourself to us tonight."

Call it an initiation. I have a small number of my agents working to retrieve a female that we believe could be a threat to us. You have the opportunity to accompany them - it should go smoothly, but she's proven herself to be dangerous and it can't hurt to be sure. My agents will be waiting for you on Richardson street in four hours - they already know what you look like. I'll be very disappointed if you don't show up, Mr. Geasbrecht."

"And I don't need to tell you what happens if you go to the police, do I?" There was a short pause, then a dialing tone as Zeroth hung up.

-----

Axel nodded at Soren. "Yeah, that sounds like a good idea. But where are we going to go? And even if we go along with Emilena's plan, which doesn't sound too smart to me," he said glancing at her, "We still need a car or something."

Axel paused. "If we find an electric car, I could hotwire it pretty easily. I doubt the cops'll care too much if I add grand theft auto to my list of activities today."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 10, 2013, 08:57:41 pm**

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Adrian smirked, rolling his neck with a chuckle as he let his tail brush against Emilena's butt. "Good plan, Emi. Just understand that I won't be too far away from you. I don't want anything to happen to you."  
He said softly, smiling a little as Kojuuro dusted off his jacket...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 10, 2013, 09:32:55 pm**

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"Good idea," nodded Emilena, sheathing her sword. "And until we find an unattended car, we're legging it. I have just the place, I used to use it for stings. Old abandoned robotics factory off the bluffs."

She walked away from the others glancing at Adrian. "Fan of public displays of affection, are we?" she muttered. "Keep it in your pants, will you? You'll get everything you want tonight; I'm going to need your help again..."

Lily's heart panged at the mention of the abandoned factory; she remembered that place...it was near the forest. She'd seen it when on the run from the police, but bypassed it due to the plethora of dead ends.

"We might not need a car," she said quietly. "It's less than...a day's run from here..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 10, 2013, 09:59:16 pm**

---

Adrian smiled and placed a hand on Emilena's arm.  
"Well...sorry...It's just...y'know...I really like you and all..."  
He said shyly, quiet enough that the others couldn't hear. At hearing Lily's suggestion, Kojuuro nodded, tapping his chin.  
"You're right. Plus, there's a chance that any vehicle would contain a GPS locator. That could lead to more trouble than any of us want to deal with."  
He said, smiling at Lily...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 12, 2013, 04:51:40 am**

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Aaron smiled as he finished his meal. Now was the chance to prove himself. Yet at the same time, he had nagging feeling that he wasn't being told everything.

He quickly shook it off as he washed his dishes and put them away. If his hunch was wrong and he didn't show up, then the Augments could take over.

"Well, time to see what's going on." He quickly punched in a code to a hidden safe under the counter. A gentle click and a drawer containing his pistol and two fully loaded magazines ó and some additional ammo ó popped out.

He pocketed one of the magazines and loaded his pistol. He smiled as he heard the *click* of a round being chambered. The German Shepherd donned a shoulder holster and placed his pistol in it.

"Well, let's do this!" He grabbed his jacket from the hook on the door and threw it over the pistol. After checking to see if he had everything, he exited his apartment. And nearly tripped over a bum.

Getting into the elevator ó which always stank of urine for some reason ó he looked at his watch. He'd have plenty of time to make it to Richardson Street.

-----

Soren shook his armored head. "I'd love to go with Emilena and Kojuuro but I have some information I'd like to get from a certain Mr. Altyn and he works in the heart of Lanthae."

He then turned to Axel. "Axel, Lily are you coming with me or Emilena?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 12, 2013, 08:05:43 pm**

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"I'll go with you, Soren," Axel said, shrugging apologetically to Emilena. "I'd probably just get in your way if there's a fight." He considered for a moment, then pulled out the pistol he'd snatched from the woman they'd knocked out and threw it to Adrian. "Here. You can't have too many guns, right?"

He walked over to Soren's side, then turned and looked at Lily. "Come on, you've gotta come with us - it'll be dangerous where they're going..."

-----

Gittsun wandered around Marie's kitchen, pulling open her cupboards at random, looking for whiskey, vodka, something *hard*. So far he'd found nothing. "Hey, Marie, you got any of the good stuff? It's not everyday you're in the middle of an attack on the hospital and live to tell about it!" He didn't think it was necessary to mention that's his ward had actually been nowhere near where the action was.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 12, 2013, 08:09:55 pm**

---

whiskeys on the 3rd shelf to the back ' marie said as she came into the kitchen.  
 - brownsteet lookee at the timer on his desk, it now read 4:30:17, whuiich meant iof emilena didnt get back with soren tonight, she was fired. ' i want emilena arrested on sight' he said into a communicator. ' shes off the force if she doesnt get back here by midnight with the suspect..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 13, 2013, 06:51:39 am**

Emilena blinked. "What? You--" she broke off, turning away from Adrian. "You are interested informing a romantic partnership? When the hell did this happen?"

*I mean, we're having sex...but that was strictly to curb biological urges...right?* She realized wistfully that it should have been rather obvious.

"I...shouldn't have lashed out," she recovered lamely, turning back to Adrian. "I...shall need time to think about this."

Lily meanwhile had been grappling with her own mental dilemma, and at that point gulped and made up her mind.

"I'm going with Emilena and the others," she told Axel.

Emilena cast a glance behind her. "You're what?"

"I need to talk with you," Lily replied. "Sooner rather than later." She looked at Axel. "I'm sorry. We can meet back up afterwards."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 13, 2013, 11:51:03 am**

Adrian smiled a little, looking aside awkwardly.

"Well...to be honest, I've...though about asking for a while now..."  
He said quietly, as he reflexively turned and caught the pistol Axel had tossed to him.

"And it's okay for you to take as much time as you need to think about it."  
He added quietly, walking over to Lily and handing her the pistol.

"Here. You'll need this more than I will. I don't do so well with guns."  
He chuckled softly, as Kojuuro smirked a little from behind the group...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 13, 2013, 05:55:45 pm**

Soren nodded. "Okay." He turned to Emelina. "Axel and I will be heading to Pelvanida Cybernetics."

hHe then swore as he looked around the ruined lot. "As soon as we can steal a car."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 13, 2013, 07:06:46 pm**

Axel blinked at Lily. "You..." He sighed when he saw that she'd made her mind up. "Just be careful, okay?" He turned his head towards Emilena, Adrian and Kojuuro. "Make sure she doesn't get hurt. Please."

He joined Soren's side. "The cops are still on their way - if we're going to split up, we need to do it fast." He glanced back at the others, his eyes lingering on Lily. "Good luck guys. Stay safe. Come on Soren, the faster we find a car the better." Axel started to head down towards the sidewalk.

-----  
Gittsun turned and opened the shelf behind him. Reaching in, he grasped the bottle and pulled

it out. "Ah, thanks Marie. You're a life-saver..." He poured himself a generous helping and gulped it down. He sighed. "That's better. So, what's the plan for you girls now?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 13, 2013, 08:11:28 pm**

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"I'm sorry Axel...but I have to talk to her." Lily smiled sadly. "I'll be safe. I promise."

"No promises from over here," Emilena set off at a brisk pace. "Keep up. We're not taking water breaks."

With one last look at Axel, Lily ran after Emilena.

Emilena sighed. "Try to keep the civilian out of the line of fire," she muttered to Kojurro.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 13, 2013, 09:35:50 pm**

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Adrian nodded as Kojuro smirked.

"I promise, Axel. Lily, I want you to act as my spotter. I need you to cover me."  
He said gently, grinning.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 15, 2013, 04:51:53 pm**

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As Emilena's group approached the looming factory, Lily crept up to their leader cautiously. "So...ma'am..." she said timidly.

Emilena spared her a glance. "Ah, yes, you wanted to talk to me about something."

"You're a police officer...right?" Lily asked. "I saw the badge."

"Let's go with 'yes,' I'm a police officer. Why does it matter?" Emilena narrowed her eyes, expecting further probing questions.

Lily played with her hands nervously, staring at her feet. "Well...I don't know what I'm on the run for. I'm not honestly sure what I did. Until a few days ago, I lived a perfectly normal life. I was wondering, if you're able to...that you could use your police powers to figure out why I'm a criminal."

Emilena thought. "Hmm. If the chance presents itself, I can help you with that. But you'll have to do something for me in return."

"Of course!" Lily brightened up. "Anything! Thank you so much!"

*This female came with Mr. Almaya... thought Emilena. I'll have to gauge her loyalty to him before revealing any of my true intentions. "I'll tell you how you can repay me at a later date. For now, just stay close. None of these deals matter if you die in the coming Purifier ambush."*

Lily nodded hastily. "Don't worry. You and your brother are the only friends I have that can hold their own in a fight. I won't get in your way at all."

"Brother?" Emilena wrinkled her nose in confusion. "You are mistaken. We are lovers who happen to share similar physical characteristics. Don't make assumptions in the future."

"But--I--o-okay..." Lily decided to end the conversation there and just stop bothering the police officer.

They'd reached the abandoned robotics factory. Rusted walls and windows whose glass had long since melted away loomed over the shadowy clearing flanked by groves of dark trees. The lapping of water from the cliffs on the other side of the bluff left a scent of salt in the air.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 15, 2013, 07:55:45 pm**

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The car sat motionless adjacent to the curb, the shadows drenching it in darkness. It faced along Richardson street - street lights further up gave the occupants of the vehicle a good view of anyone who might be hanging around. The clouds gathering in the darkening sky had broken, and a light rain tapped against the roof of the car.

Marcus shifted in his seat and looked at the clock on the dashboard. It was almost time. "Geasbrecht should be here soon," he muttered to his accomplice sitting in the passenger seat next to him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 15, 2013, 08:32:24 pm**

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Anthony "Tony" Stracci sat slumped down in Marcus's passenger seat, one of his footpaws placed irreverently on the car's dashboard. The ferret was picking his claws with a knife in a bored fashion, and nodded at Marcus's words. "Got it." he susurrated, his voice not rising at all.

Tony was the son of Anthony Stracci Sr., head of one of the biggest mob families in the world, along with his brother (Tony's uncle), Mario. They ran a "legitimate" shipping and hauling company whose trucks were also overweight and tore up the roads they traveled on one shipment at a time. Stracci also owned a large construction company which was contracted to repair these damaged roads every so many months, so business was rather lucrative for the family, though Tony had taken a different path from his father.

About a year ago, Tony had up and vanished from the family business, having grown impatient with his father's insistence he only drive delivery trucks until he had "matured" enough to assume more important posts in the family. Growing increasingly alarmed and horrified at all the technological implants going around these days, Tony had enlisted in the Purifiers shortly after vanishing, and had so far kept his head down and had avoided his father's attempts at locating him.

So here the young ferret sat, waiting to trap one of these disgusting cyborgs or whatever they were. The knife dug out some dirt from one of his claws, and he grinned to himself, ready for some action.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 15, 2013, 10:09:21 pm**

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Emilena observed the decrepit buildings. "Perfect..." she smiled. It was just as she remembered it. "I know every nook of this place. Follow me."

She led her team into the middle courtyard, where rusted benches and dead grass soaked in afternoon dew. "From here, we can see anyone approach from any angle. Don't enter any building; they are all extensively booby-trapped."

"Are you sure the booby-traps still work?" asked Lily.

"Yes. Don't let the appearance of this place fool you; it's been renovated with state-of-the-art surveillance technology." Emilena crept up to a statue of a robot shaking hands with a scientist. Pressing several scratches on the side of the plaque, she heard a ding and a thin screen revealed itself behind the plaque. All the traps, surveillance equipment, and defense

systems throughout the complex were at her command.

"None of you can be within eyeshot of me," she said quickly. "Or else we risk blowing our cover. Kujurro, the staircase in that building over there leads to a shielded surveillance catwalk; do not touch any of the walls on your way up there, and turn doorknobs counter-clockwise slowly and firmly. Adrian, underneath that row of ferns you'll find a network of underground tunnels that allow passage throughout the complex. When the Purifiers show their face, your job is to get behind them for the flank. Lily, stay with Kojurro. I'll be communicating through the intercom system which connects to both of your locations." She grinned. "Let's catch us a Purifier."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 16, 2013, 12:55:15 am**

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Adrian nodded, smiling a little as he leaned in and kissed Emilena on the cheek.

"Right. That was for luck."

He said teasingly, as Kojuro grabbed his rifle and nodded, assessing the area for clear lines of sight before making his way up the stairs, as Adrian placed a hand on Emilena's.

"Hey...promise me you'll come back alive from this one, okay?"

He whispered to her...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 16, 2013, 02:16:39 am**

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"I should be telling you that," Emilena grumbled. "I have to stand here and be bait while you get to go engage the enemy. I hate being bait; it's like I'm a cadet again..."

Then she realized that he was giving her a sincere gesture, and attempted to return it with a kiss on his cheek. "I'll be safe," she assured him. "Keep an eye out for yourself while you're down there."

Lily had followed Kojuro towards the catwalk, being voerly careful not to touch the walls or anything. When they reached the top of the stairs, there was no sniper perch or lookout of any sort; just a long dark hallway extending in both directions.

"Err, where do we go?" she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 16, 2013, 01:23:02 pm**

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Adrian smile a little and murred.

"You know I will. After all. I have something to come back to."

He said softly, as he made his way towards the tunnel. Up above, Kojuro flicked a light on the rail of his rifle on.

"Looks like this way. And Lily...thanks."

He said softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 17, 2013, 12:47:54 am**

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Aaron arrived at Richardson Street. The street was in a fairly grungy part of town. Storefronts with heavy steel shutters lined the street and strung out bums loitered around.

The German Shepard tried to ignore the medley of vile scents that wafted through the air.

"Hey man, creds?" a voice rasped out.

Aaron looked down and saw an emaciated Human holding out his hand. The man wore a scraggly looking set of clothes that appeared to have once been a construction worker's uniform.

"Sure, anything toó" Aaron then noticed a metal port on the man's chest. His muzzle was soon adorned with a bitter scowl.

"No."

"What, please!" The bum grabbed hold of his left leg and refused to let go. A *crack* was heard as the German Shepherd swung his right foot, clad in a steel toed boot into the man's face. The bum groaned slightly and slid onto the filthy sidewalk.

Aaron looked at the bloodstained puddle forming under his head. Faint breathing could be heard from the unconscious man. He looked at his booted feet and briefly debated whether he should finish off the unconscious bum with a quick stomp to the head. In the end , he simply shrugged and made his way to the single functioning lamppost in the area where he was told his contacts would pick him up.

-----

Soren finally located a delivery repulsortruck parked in front of someone's house. The engine was still idling but the doors were locked. Undeterred, Soren put his metal clad fist through the side window and unlocked the door.

"Axel, you drive. I'll be in the back." The Human then climbed into the back of the truck and took a seat amidst the crates and packages. He figured that keeping his armored exoskeleton on for now was a better idea than taking it off and risk having it stolen or worse, being recognized.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 17, 2013, 01:13:53 am**

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"Thanks for what...?" asked Lily, puzzled. She continued staying out of his way, slinking nervously down the hallway behind Kojurro.

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Emilena kept an eye on the time. They'd been waiting for a little under an hour. She calculated that she'd start feeling the chill of night in two more hours.

Her teammates were still in position, and the enemy had not showed their head...yet.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 17, 2013, 01:19:51 am**

---

Adrian made his way through the tunnels, finding a vantage point from which he could see Emilena, and had easy access to a way out for when he was needed. As he stood, watching for the coming purifiers, he found his thoughts drifting to Emilena.

*"Did Lily say that I was her brother? That can't be...right? I was alone all my life, according to...Ugh! My head...why's it hurt all of a sudden..."*

---

Kojuuro smiled back at Lily for a moment.

"For being my spotter. I know it may not seem like a lot, but it can be the difference between life and death."

He said softly...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 17, 2013, 07:03:31 am**

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Marcus looked at Tony picking his claws with some distaste when movement further up the street drew his attention. He turned the key and the engine rumbled to life. "He's here." Marcus pulled the car slowly forward until the German Shepard was next to his window, and rolled the glass down. His eyes passed over the beaten body crumpled on the ground, unconcerned, and came to rest on the figure looking at the car.

"Aaron Geasbrecht. You came. Good." He inclined his head towards the back seat. "Get in, we have work to do."

-----

Axel winced as Soren punched out the window, then ran forward to the now open door. He climbed in, brushing aside the glass that covered the seat. He glanced around nervously as Soren climbed into the back.

"Hey! Stop!" A shout from the house startled Axel, and he turned to see the delivery boy charging down the driveway towards them.

"Crap!" Axel quickly shifted the repulsortruck into drive, and the vehicle took off. "Sorry!" he called out the window towards the human who was rapidly disappearing behind them. He turned to look in the review mirror at Soren in the back. "So how far away are we? And how're we going to get in?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 17, 2013, 09:10:50 am**

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"Oh, um, you're welcome..." Lily looked everywhere, trying to figure out what she could spot. She suspected he was just trying to make her feel useful.

Emilena wasn't feeling particularly useful either. Two hours had passed, and right on cue she was starting to feel the drafty chill through her fur. She began to worry nobody would show.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 17, 2013, 09:58:57 pm**

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Adrian sat quietly in his hidden vantage point, his thoughts straying time and time again to Emilena. How he loved everything about her, from her fiery personality to her unflinching determination, to her beautiful body...to...everything.

Up above, Kojuuro smiled back at Lily, scanning the area below with his rifle every now and again.

"So...you lost your memory, huh?"

He finally said...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 18, 2013, 01:54:09 am**

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Aaron got into the backseat of the car.

"All right, so what's on the agenda?"

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Soren called up his HMD which was integrated into his glasses. "It's in the Silica district ó the corporate center of Lanthae. If I can remember correctly, Mr. Altyn should be getting off work

now. Or so he says when he went in for the repair. I distinctly remember him saying he just got off work when he arrived at my house at this time. He drives an antique ó 2008 Tesla Roadster if I recall correctly."

Soren leaned back against the vehicle's hull.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 18, 2013, 06:33:48 am**

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"Our agenda is information," Marcus said as he pulled the car away. "Emilena Echo. A police officer. She's been seen in the company of Adrian Kibagami, someone who's been particularly problematic to our group. Earlier this morning, Echo visited the city hospital along with Kibagami for an operation to be *augmented*." Marcus spat the word out as if it were poison. "When she woke up, she attacked several members of staff, including some of our members, then escaped. She then made her way to Soren Almaya's residence, another one of our priority targets. It seems that Echo knows something of a certain... operation we have going on at the hospital and is working to expose it. But what doesn't make sense is that the police force also seemed to be attacking her..." He grunted. "Well, I guess we'll find our answers tonight."

As they joined the main flow of traffic, Marcus pulled out his phone, pressed a button and tossed it in the back to Aaron. It showed a section of a map, with a red dot glowing in a secluded area far from the main roads. "We were able to place a tracker on her. Two hours ago, she made her way to an abandoned factory and hasn't moved ever since. This could be some form of hideout, or she's leading us into an ambush. Either way, we'll be prepared." Reaching into the back seat, he pulled aside a grey blanket next to Aaron to reveal three assault rifles, a large number of ammo clips and 5 flash-bang grenades. "I don't care what happens to anyone she has with her. If you can, kill them. But we need her alive."

"Since you're on our team, you might as well know who you're working with. I'm Marcus. This is Tony," Marcus introduced, indicating towards the Ferret sitting next to him.

-----

Axel nodded. "Silica district is about ten minutes away. Gonna have to gun it if we want to catch him. Hold on!" He pulled into the fast lane and slammed his foot down. The weak engine of the delivery truck pattered unhealthily, and they moved only a little faster. Axel groaned. "Come on!"

Fifteen minutes later, Axel swung the repulsortruck into the parking lot of Pelvanida. He scanned the cars as he drove along. "Roadster... I don't see a Roadster. Crap, I think we missed... Hey, there! Is that him?" A Tesla Roadster was parked a little ahead of them, and a figure was making his way around the vehicle, preparing to get in.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 18, 2013, 11:59:07 am**

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Tony shook his head as Marcus described their target. Another scum who felt the need to augment herself, apparently. Who were these people? Why did they feel compelled to do such things to their bodies? And she had attacked members of the hospital staff after having the procedure completed? This just further convinced the ferret that what he was doing was right. More than anything he'd ever felt working for his pops, he felt like he was truly doing good in the world; that he was stemming back some furious tide that threatened to swamp them all.

He continued picking his claws with his knife, and flicked a finger up to knock the fedora on his head back a tad as way of greeting the newcomer, Aaron. He also gave a slight wave of his paw (more like a sudden jerk really), but didn't fully turn around. "Pleased to meetcha!" he exclaimed. As Marcus hadn't offered any last names (save for Aaron's), Tony didn't offer his either.

One thing he was grateful for was the weapons' cache in the backseat. He had only brought a sidearm (in addition to the knife), but it was nice to know they were packing substantial heat as well. Would make taking this... freak easier. They needed her alive, which was fine. So long as he got a chance to take out some of her friends, he wouldn't complain.

While he had initial reservations upon hearing she was a cop, he threw them all out the window at the news that the police seemed to be hunting her as well. Good... made things considerably easier in terms of questionable legality, and put his mind at ease.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 18, 2013, 01:43:56 pm**

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Lily nodded. "Though Axel and Soren have helped pin the pieces together...it looks like I was just a regular housewife who liked to go hiking. Three days ago, something happened to me in the forest while on a hike...and hopefully Emilena will be able to help me find out what."

The air was incredibly cold, but she didn't seem to notice. As a matter of fact, her skin seemed slightly greyer than usual. "I'm so grateful for all the help everyone has been giving me...hopefully I'll get the opportunity to pay you all back someday."

-----  
Three hours now...Emilena hit the intercom, ready to give up and return to Soren. Apparently the Purifiers weren't as efficient as she'd been led to believe.

But then, a faint red light blinked on the edge of the radar. A vehicle had pulled up to the perimeter of the factory. She narrowed her eyes.

"Possible visitors on the southeastern perimeter," she warned her allies. "Hold position for now. Let's see what they do..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 18, 2013, 02:17:59 pm**

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Kojuuro smirked, folding his sniper rifle's bipod out and smirking a little.

"Understood. Setting up for the shot."

He chuckled into the radio. In his hiding spot, Adrian nodded, holding his sword and tensing.

"Alright. I'm ready, Emi."

He said softly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 18, 2013, 08:16:56 pm**

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Aaron nodded and shook hands with Tony. "You probably already know my name."

He then smiled as he laid eyes on the weapons cache. "Nice."

He took a deep breath, grabbed a rifle, slapped in a magazine and chambered a round. "All right, ready to rock and roll?" he said with a grin.

-----  
Soren leapt from the back of the moving vehicle, letting his exoskeleton and shock absorbing clothing take the impact. The pavement wasn't so lucky, small cracks showed where his fists and feet landed. He sprinted over to the Tesla Roadster and blocked off the driver's side entrance.

"W...what do you want?" Mr. Altyn said, gazing at the armored Human.

Soren took off his helmet. "Mr. Altyn, I would like a word with you."

Mr. Altyn gasped. "Soren?" He looked around nervously. "Look, I already paid for the repairs!"

Soren sighed. "It's not about the repairs. I want to know what you did to your hand."

Mr. Altyn revealed his right hand, a black carbon fiber prosthesis. The pointer finger had a visible hinge ó indicating that a small compressed air duster was part of the prosthesis. In addition, all the fingers were very narrow and fine, like tweezers, allowing the technician to easily handle small parts. "Uh, nothing."

Soren shook his head. "I'm not interested in playing games. Tell me what happened to your hand."

"What's with this? Maybe I don't want to tell you! Is it that hard to understand!?" He made a move to reach past Soren.

The cyberneticist reacted, blocking the movement. "Don't bother, I'm *much* stronger than you are in this suit." That was partially true. At the lowest setting, he could easily qualify for the Olympics ó the Baseline Games, at least. At the highest setting, he could lift nearly two and a half tons.

Soren then scowled. "This relates to something that cost me my house and records of my business. If I have to flip your car over or hold you down to get info, I will do it."

Mr. Altyn looked around the parking lot, lit up by streetlights. "Well, I said that I had an accident because I was filling in for a guy at the manufacturing plant." He took a breath. "Well, that's not true. I had an encounter with some thugs ó think they called themselves the 'Purifiers' or something. Anyways, they beat me up, stole all my stuff and one guy cut off all the fingers on my artificial hand with an angle grinder or something."

Soren nodded and waved down Axel.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 18, 2013, 09:16:48 pm**

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Marcus looked at Aaron in the mirror. "At least there's nothing wrong with your enthusiasm," he said finally, turning his attention back to the road. Soon, they came to a small turn-off, and after a while the road became increasingly bumpy. The tires kicked up small clouds of dust on either side of the car. "Pass me the phone," Marcus demanded, taking it back from Aaron. He looked at it quickly, then grunted with satisfaction. "Good. She's still in the same position, and we're almost there."

20 minutes later, a dark shape loomed out of the darkness. Marcus quickly dimmed the headlights, and slowed the car to a crawl. He stopped just outside the main entrance and killed the engine. Reaching back, he took the remaining rifles and handed one to Tony, then distributed the rest of the ammo.

"Remember the plan," Marcus said as he loaded a magazine, and clipped a flash-bang to his belt. "The female fox has to be taken alive. Tony, you've seen a plan of this factory. There's a rear entrance on the other side of the building. Go there and flank them. Aaron, you're going in the front with me. It's the most direct route, so expect resistance." He looked at the them and nodded his head. "Alright, let's move." Letting himself out of the car, he started making his way stealthily towards the entrance.

-----

Axel saw Soren signal to him, and he brought the repulsortruck to a stop next to the pair.

"Hey," he said, leaning out of the window. He saw Altyn's hands and gasped. "Woah, nice augments! I always wished I could afford something a little more specialised, these are so clumsy..." he said, flexing his fingers which had been designed to resemble normal digits. Axel realised he was rambling. "Anyway... are we good?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 12:10:25 am**

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Tony nodded at his instructions, and gratefully exited the car, lifting his arms high over his head and standing on tip claw as he splayed his tail out behind him in order to get in a good stretch before moving to the back of the car and retrieving one of the assault rifles.

Smiling as he cradled it, he almost lovingly pulled the slide back, loading a bullet into the chamber. "All right... let's do this. I'll go in the back then, and see you on the other side." The ferret gave a wave, and jogged for the back of the factory now, having committed the general layout to memory on the way over.

Jogging through the night, Tony arrived at the rear entrance, tensing himself now and getting ready for what was to come. Pushing open the door slowly, he made his way inside, creeping forward, weapon at the ready as he began making his way cautiously through the factory. Little did he know, this night would not go as planned...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 02:40:58 am**

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Emilena flicked her hands and zoomed in on the area with the newcomers. "They're in two groups," she reported. "A lone one by the rear entrance, and a pair...a bit off of that position, coming in. Adrian, you deal with the one at the rear entrance. Kojurro, keep your eyes peeled. The duo are coming this way." She squinted. "They've got something jamming their signal, it's hard to tell where they are..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 02:57:38 am**

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Adrian nodded a little, making his way through a tunnel towards where Tony would breach the factory. From his vantage point, Kojuro adjusted his aim, covering the door the two others would be breaching from, pulling the bolt of his rifle to chamber a round.

"I have eyes on the two, Emilena. Be careful. They're packing serious firepower, and one of them is a high-ranking purifier named Marcus. Real piece of work. I'll try to take care of him, you get the other one."

He said coldly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 03:46:29 am**

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"I can't move yet," Emilena said tersely. "They'll realize something is up. But hold your fire for now; if they keep walking in the same direction, they'll set off a static field that short-circuits any neuro or electrical shields. Your sniping will be far more effective after that. Adrian, get yours out of the picture quickly!"

Suddenly, Lily jumped beside Kojurro. "I--I thought I saw something!" she stammered, staring nervously at the blackness of the room. "It was...but now I can't...I'm sure..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 12:23:42 pm**

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Tony emerged from the first building and into one of the inner yards of the plant. His assault rifle was at the ready though slightly lowered, the butt resting against his shoulder as he scanned the open area. He couldn't see anything just yet... but he wasn't at the center of the factory either, if he recalled correctly.

Darting out from the doorway, he made his way over to one of the walls to keep his back to it and move along it to the next building. He kept his eyes on the open ground to his left though, his adrenaline coursing through him as he slid along the wall.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 01:29:12 pm**

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As Tony stepped into the inner yard, Adrian opened the door behind him, stepping out with a small grin.

"Sorry, but I'm going to have to stop you here, whoever you are."

He said coldly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 01:35:46 pm**

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Tony froze, his eyes widened. Dammit! How could he have been so careless? He didn't turn around however, as he hadn't been ordered to, nor did he drop his weapon. He remained stiff, swallowing hard as he tried to think of what he could do. The voice sounded close but he couldn't tell exactly how close. Should he try and whip around and hit this guy in the face with his rifle? But he had to assume he was being covered with a gun, and one false move could result in his death.

"Take it easy." he said now, raising his arms slowly, the rifle in one of them. "I don't... know if you're involved with these... these... freaks but... I don't want... you to think I'm some cold-blooded killer." he said now. "I'm just trying to keep the world level... to stop it from moving too fast... this wasn't anything personal." he said, hoping his pleas would prevent him from getting shot. He closed his eyes, and resigned himself to whatever fate awaited him. Adrian could see the ferret visibly start to tremble now, as if he feared his next breath would be his last.

When it boiled down to it, Tony was just a kid... he wasn't used to the rough life the rest of the Purifiers lived, and it showed in the way he shook. He wasn't a hardened combatant... not really.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 01:58:57 pm**

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Adrian stepped in, quickly relieving Tony of his rifle and tossing it aside after removing the magazine and emptying the chamber.

"Look, I have no intention of killing you, but I can't allow you to help those two you were with. Y'see, the one that they're after is someone very important to me, so you're gonna have to stay here for a while."

He said, procuring a set of light polymer handcuffs and cuffing Tony's hands behind his back...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 02:10:56 pm**

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Tony offered no resistance to the rifle being taken from his paws, almost breaking out in tears as Adrian said he wasn't going to kill him. This guy was a professional, unlike Tony, as the gun's chamber was emptied, the clip was tossed, and the rifle was placed aside. Tony's arms were soon cuffed behind his back, and he continued to shake, though felt relief he wasn't going to be shot.

A sob actually escaped his throat, his previous "tough-guy" veneer having melted like snow under the sun. "Oh god..." he said, jaw shaking. Why had he ever run away from home? What had he gotten himself into? Was this what it was like? Was the dirty side of his father's business like this? Was this what his father had meant when he said he wasn't "mature" enough? He had so far never killed anyone in his life, but cuffed as he was, he realized this was no longer a game.

He tried to stop the tears, but his reality had completely caved in now. He wasn't in some game... what had he been thinking!?! Confused thoughts whirled around his head. He started almost babbling nonsense. "Look... if you just let me go... I'll turn around and never look back. I promise I won't tell the others." he said now, his voice cracking. "I just wanna go home..." he said softly, his shoulders slumping. "I just wanna go home..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 02:21:28 pm**

---

Adrian sighed, placing a hand on the kid's shoulder.

"Look, if you run now...there will be a world of trouble. Purifiers aren't exactly known for letting associates of theirs off the hook. Especially not that dog Marcus. What were you thinking, joining up with those guys in the first place?"

He finally asked, shaking his head a little.

"Look, we'll stay here until the other two are taken care of, and then we'll see what happens from there, okay?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 02:42:32 pm**

---

Tony almost jumped out of his pelt when he felt Adrian's hand on his shoulder. He settled back down, trying to get his nervous tremors under control. *Come on Tony... stop acting like a kid who's never done this before!* he inwardly pleaded with himself. *Your pops would want you to be strong... stiff-lipped. You can't cry like this.*

He opened his eyes, unable to wipe the tears from his cheek fur, but he'd stopped sobbing at least. Blinking his eyes to clear those salty droplets out, he sniffed. "I... just... I just was so tired... tired of my father saying I wasn't ready for 'serious work.' That I wasn't ready to be an adult yet. I'm 24, you know. I'm not a kid anymore..." he said, though he didn't sound too convincing. "I just... I don't like what's happening to this world. All this technology they CLAIM is enhancing our lives but... is it really? Is it REALLY doing us any good?" he asked, leaning his right side against the wall now. "I feel like we're going too fast... like we're changing ourselves in ways that can't ever be undone. I was nervous... I wanted to stop it... I don't even know what I'm doing." he said now, trailing off in a soft tone and adding a heavy sigh at the very end.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 03:18:22 pm**

---

The sound of footsteps reverberated as Marcus and Aaron made their way cautiously down the corridor that snaked around to the main courtyard of the factory. The air smelled of damp, and moonlight leaking through broken sections of ceiling revealed weeds pushing their way through the cracked floor. Marcus held his rifle up at the ready, flicking the sight between patches of shadow where someone could be hiding.

"Keep your eyes peeled for Kibagami," he told Aaron, keeping his voice low. "The fox with the sword. It's easy to underestimate him when you have a gun, but he's quick. If you manage to hit him, keep shooting until you're sure he isn't getting back up." The corridor split to the left and right ahead of them. A sign hanging loosely down read **Courtyard <-**. They had almost

arrived.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 04:53:43 pm**

---

Emilena searched the zoomed-in area for the figures. "They, uh, I guess they didn't hit the field..." she muttered. "Where are they?"

More importantly, why isn't Kojurro standing on the right side of the room? Unless he's sniping through the far window, he's not even facing the right way...

*Something is off...* she realized. She zoomed out to view the full factory and saw a completely different pair of dots moving in on her position. Whoever the two were somewhere near Kojurro, it was a separate group.

-----

Suddenly Lily saw a flicker again. "There's something is the room with us! I saw it again!" she cried.

At that moment a silenced tranquilizer dart shot out of the inky blackness, aimed right for Kojurro.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 05:17:05 pm**

---

Adrian nodded a little, sighing.

"I know what you mean. Right now, people are still trying to adapt to the changes that have come about. But progress is being made. It won't be easy, but I know that there are politicians working on laws that will integrate augments and non-augments into forces equally.

Look at it this way. If a building went down, then having a group of augs able to lift and clear the rubble away would be a lifesaver. Same for police, or emergency responders. In a way, what Augmentation is is just a new tool. And just like any tool through history, it will take some time to be accepted and put to the right use."

He said reassuringly, smiling softly.

---

In a heartbeat, Kojuro dodged to the side, the dart embedding itself in the wall where he had just recently been.

"Damn it, we're being flanked. Adrian! Report in! We've got more company! If you can, you need to go cover Emilena!"

He yelled into the comlink...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 05:41:32 pm**

---

Something invisible and heavy smashed into Lily, who hit the wall with a strangled cry. Both she and her assailant screamed as lethal electrical shocks coursed through their body; Emilena had warned not to touch the walls for a reason.

The shocks disrupted the invisibility field, revealing the Rhino agent that had attacked Soren's house yesterday. Stumbling backwards, he tore haywire electrical devices off his body.

"Exstasis..." sighed the second figure, who remained invisible. "I thought we said this was going to be a *quiet* extraction..."

A smoke grenade rolled out of the shadows and exploded, removing all remaining light from

the room. The rhino ran into a wall and was electrocuted again. Lily, meanwhile, was coughing up what tasted like blood and shaking uncontrollably.

"I don't know who you are," the smooth-voiced agent said to Kojurro, "but I've no quarrel with you. Give us Ms. North and we'll cause you and your fox friends no further trouble."

-----

Emilena drew her sword. The other pair had bypassed all their traps since Emilena wasn't watching them and didn't set any off. Her only hope now was the element of surprise.

Sprinting silently at the door they were soon to come through, she sprung forward, timing her strike so it would occur as they walked in. If possible, she'd kill the one that wasn't Marcus in a single swing, and make this a proper 1-on-1.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 05:47:38 pm**

---

Tony looked down to the side, at the wall he was leaning against. "I KNOW it has its uses but... what about jobs that could vanish because of it? What if we live in a world where everything is automated? Nobody would have to work anymore... and people like my dad would be out of business." he muttered. He didn't mention that his father actually had started using some augs in his business as of late, but the ferret figured it was best left unsaid for now.

He heard Adrian's comlink hum, and he looked up now. "Trouble?" he asked, swiveling his head in Adrian's direction for the first time now.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 06:07:56 pm**

---

A girl's scream echoed down towards Marcus and Aaron, followed by the faint sounds of a scuffle. Marcus inclined his head. "Sounds like they've got problems of their own. Hurry up." He moved forward faster now, not caring about masking his footsteps - whatever was going on in the courtyard should drown out the worst of it. Rounding the corner, he saw a set of wooden doors, rotten, hanging off their hinges. Beyond, open air. The sound of shouting was louder now, clearer.

As they passed the doorway, something shone in the corner of Marcus' vision. He spun sideways even as he continued running forwards, not registering that the glint was moonlight shining off Emilena's sword, not even registering that it was Emilena herself who was wielding it. Acting purely on reflexes, he dodged the razor-sharp metal's path and twisted, slamming the butt of his rifle against the side of the assailant's head. Feeling the impact run up his arm, he hit the floor with a grunt and rolled, turning to face her.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 06:10:41 pm**

---

Emilena went tumbling with a grunt. Her sword skittered out of her hand.

She tried to get to her feet, but she felt concussed. She barely managed to get to her elbows and knees. She registered blood dripping from her head and nostrils.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 06:12:20 pm**

---

Adrian thought for a moment, then shook his head.

"If they do it right, then there won't be any need to lose jobs. Right now, the big issue is

people's greed and desire for the easy way out."  
He said, freezing as he heard Kojuuro over his comlink.  
"How many people were with you in the car?"  
He asked, turning back towards Tony...

---

Upstairs, Kojuuro smirked, reaching behind himself and drawing his sword with a small chuckle.

"I'm afraid I can't let you do that, whoever you are. You see, I made someone a promise that I would protect her. And seeing as that oaf that's with you just hurt her...Well, I'm afraid I'm going to have to take you both out."

He said coldly, eyes gleaming in the low light...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 06:14:06 pm**

---

Aaron's ears pricked up as he heard the sound of fighting coming from one of the rooms. His heart pounded furiously. Sure, he had been in a few scraps before ó his construction company tended to work in some really bad areas but a full-out gun fight? That was new.

Taking a deep breath of the musty air, he got his rifle ready.

He was confronted by a door. He was about to open when a chill ran up his spine. He could smell something behind the door ó and it wasn't friendly.

Raising his rifle, he sent a quick six round burst through the door and gave it a hard kick.

-----

Soren nodded as Mr. Altyn hopped into his car and drove off. "Yeah, the Purifiers got to him. Cut off his fingers."

He opened the back of the repulsortruck and spotted a Shetland Pony "unicorn" digging through the boxes. He facepalmed. "Anne! What the f--- are you doing this time!?"

Anne turned to Soren, her arms clutching several new pieces of electronics she pilfered from the truck's cargo. "Uh, this your truck?"

"No. But we need it!"

Soren shook his head and sighed. "Ugh, just...stay out of the way." He poked his head through the divider into the driver's seat. "Hey, Axel, do you think we should see what Lily and the others are up to now?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 06:15:12 pm**

---

The rhino roared and searched the room through bloodshot eyes. "Where is he???" he demanded angrily.

"If you hadn't destroyed all of your gadgets, you could turn on your infrared sights..." muttered the as-yet-unseen agent. "But there, I've tagged him for you."

An invisible laser point was now trained on Kojurro. A chip in the Rhino's head told him where it was, and the Rhino charged Kojurro, snarling.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 06:16:11 pm**

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As Marcus raised his eyes, he saw the attacker was none other than his target. Snarling, he yelled to Aaron as he burst through the door. "Get the sword!" At the same time, he unclipped the flash-bang on his belt and pulled the pin. Leaping to his feet, he took aim and tossed it directly at her, even as she lay stunned on the floor. *Better safe than sorry.*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 06:18:53 pm**

---

Emilena tried to focus on what he rolled to her. She had just succeeded in identifying the flash grenade when it went off and sparks erupted in her vision. "Auuugh!" she cried, clutching her hands to her eyes.

The sword, meanwhile, had carved a hold through the dirt before the vibro-function deactivated itself. The sword fell through the sword-shaped hole and clattered into the underground passageways.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 06:19:46 pm**

---

"Two..." Tony said now without hesitation, his eyes wide. "Only two." he said, unsure why it had come out of his mouth so quickly. He was certainly not short on selling his comrades out, but he didn't see the point in protecting them now. Whatever was happening was happening... and he wasn't a part of it anymore.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 06:24:58 pm**

---

Adrian swore under his breath.

"Damn it. Alright, I'm giving you two choices here. Either you stay here, and I ensure that you do that, or you come with me. Your friends are going after someone dearly important to me, and I have no intention of letting them hurt her. What'll it be?"

He asked, immediately shifting to a calm, cool focus as he drew one of the two swords on his hip...

---

Kojuuro smirked, stepping nimbly around the Rhino's blind charge and sweeping his legs out from under him in one flowing movement, sending him sprawling into the wall yet again.

"Now, now. I suppose there's no way we can be reasonable about this, is there?"

He chuckled coldly...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 06:25:06 pm**

---

Aaron made to grab the sword but it fell into the underground passages. "It fell below us!" he shouted.

Scanning around the room, he looked for any other threats. The Vixen on the ground seemed neutralized but he was aware that other hostiles may come out of nowhere.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 06:32:21 pm**

---

Tony stared at the drawn sword with saucer shaped eyes, bulging at its deadly and sleek look. He gulped, trying to think on the options. "Would I have to help you against the Purifiers?" he asked, shaking a little. He then pushed through the muck of his brain and got his thoughts in

order. "If I come with you, you'll have to do something for me." he said quickly, gaze shooting to look Adrian directly in his eyes now. He wasn't sure if betraying the Purifiers was a good idea... and the only way out... the ONLY way out... was to seek his father's protection. Even the Purifiers wouldn't mess with Don Anthony Stracci, and Tony knew that. But perhaps... he could just tag along... not openly help his captors either; avoid becoming a marked ferret for as long as he could.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 06:35:51 pm**

---

Emilena tried to get to her feet. Like hell they were getting her without a fight.

She shook her head and squinted, but her vision was still completely filled with supernova. Hearing Aaron's voice was close, she charged him and attempted to grapple, maybe even remove some flesh with her teeth.

-----

The rhino screamed as he hit the electric wall for the third time.

"We can be civilized, but unfortunately my employer does not permit compromise. I'm sure you understand," the voice replied. "Exstasis, the backup plan."

"No, I can do this--!" the rhino's bloodshot eyes went wide, and there was a tinge of fear in his voice. "Don't make me--please--"

Another tranquilizer dart flew out of the smoke, only this time it hit a trigger on the Rhino's suit. Immediately the Rhino vaporized with a scream, sending out a shockwave and stun wave in a large sphere, enveloping the whole room.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 06:37:26 pm**

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Adrian nodded.

"Fine. I have an idea. There's a stairway not too far from here. I need you to get that gun of yours, go up there, and back up a wolf named Kojuuro. If what you said is true, then whoever's up there isn't with the Purifiers, and we can get out of this intact. However, just to be sure..."

He took his blade, nicking a small cut into Tony's arm before placing a small tracker.

"That will make sure you don't run off, and give us a cover story for you."

He said, then turned and ran off into the underground tunnels...

---

As the stun wave hit him, Kojuuro staggered, but remained upright, chuckling a little as he bared his teeth.

"Fine then. I suppose that means that the girl and I will be the only ones leaving this room alive then."

He growled, lunging the voice, smoke barely affecting his perception at all...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 06:38:54 pm**

---

Marcus shook his head. "Forget the sword. As long as she can't use it." Striding to Emilena, who was attempting to rise, he seized her by the back of her clothing and hauled her up one-handed, slamming her heavily against the wall. He threw her across to Aaron. "Get her back to the car! I'll cover you!" He turned around and aimed his rifle across the courtyard. From the sounds carrying across, it sounded like the rest of the target's group was preoccupied. *Is that Tony?* Thoughts of attempting to rescue his teammate crossed his mind for a second, before

he dismissed them. The mission came first.

-----

Axel nodded at Soren's suggestion. "Yeah, I think that would be good. I'm sure everything's fine but... I'd feel better if I was back with her. Uh, them! I mean, the group. You know." Red-faced, he started up the engine, heading back.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 06:48:59 pm**

---

The voice has moved since it last spoke. While Kojurro was in the smoke, Lily felt gloved hands grab her. "Come along now..." it whispered soothingly, which was somehow even more frightening.

Lily was wide-eyed and still shaking uncontrollably. Unclipping the pistol Kojuro had given her, she fired an entire clip at the area where the hands were. She heard a series of grunts as the shots hit their mark and the hands released her. "Kojurro!" she screamed, dropping the empty gun; she had no idea how to reload.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 06:54:48 pm**

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Aaron slung his rifle over his shoulder and drew his pistol. With his free hand, he grabbed Emilena in a chokehold. He pressed the pistol against her back.

"Move," he growled as he half dragged, half walked Emilena down the decrepit stairs.

-----

Soren smiled at Axel's slip up. Axel didn't know that Anne was in the truck but the Human figured out that he'd eventually find out.

He turned to Anne. "Now, don't go doing stupid s--- when we arrive."

Anne nodded.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 06:54:57 pm**

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"Mmph!" Tony grunted as his arm was sliced for the positioning of a tracker. Great... now he had a machine inside him... but his cuffs were off as well, and Adrian was rapidly vanishing. Looking about him, the ferret shakily ran to his rifle, picking it up, and grabbing the clip as well. Trembling paws clumsily shoved the clip into place, slapping it in as he looked around. Staircase... staircase... the Purifiers WEREN'T here then? Well they were but... someone else was here? That made it... easier... somewhat.

Seeing the staircase, Tony charged towards it now, wondering to what extent "backing up" would go. Did that mean... he'd have to shoot someone? Well... he'd come here to kill people initially so... no time like the present, right?

Bounding up the stairs, he suddenly slowed towards the top, listening for sounds of conflict, and sure enough, he could hear gunshots ring out from inside. Pulling the slide back to chamber the first round, Tony once again gulped, and began inching his way towards the room, wondering if he could get the drop on the fight... and hope he'd shoot the right people.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 06:57:39 pm**

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"You're gonna have to kill me you son of a bitch!" Emilena wrestled with all her might, which at the moment wasn't much, considering she was blind, concussed, and disoriented.

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The smoke finally cleared, to reveal blood-stained pawprints to Kojurro and Lily; the wounded agent had retreated out the door.

The bloodied pawprints led right to the door Tony was now entering...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 07:02:14 pm**

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Kojuuro swore, making his way to Lily's side, picking her up easily after sheathing his sword. "C'mon. We gotta move. That agent could still be around here..." He said calmly, as he looked her over for major injury...

---

Adrian had reached the tunnel underneath Emilena's location, and, having grabbed her sword, braced himself as he crouched low and jumped, propelling himself upward enough to shear through the dirt above and burst out of the ground, landing right in front of Aaron. Aiming his sword at him, the augment over his right eye flared an eerie red, as he bared his teeth. "Alright, let go of her, whoever the hell you are..." He growled...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 07:04:54 pm**

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Tony froze the second he saw bloody paw prints appearing in the doorway he was approaching. Wait... that wasn't Purifiers! Purifiers wouldn't use such tech! Steeling himself, he raised his rifle, trying to calm his mind as time seemed to slow down... he remembered the firing range... remembered seeing his father's men shoot... just relax...

Before he could think any further, he had squeezed the trigger, the firing pin striking the first bullet and then *whack, whack, whack* as the pin struck multiple bullets in rapid succession, propelling them out of the chamber and right into the retreating agent. Tony's body was completely tensed, and as if entranced, he kept firing, not letting up as he suddenly cried out. "Aaggggggggh!" he shouted, hammering the target with slugs again and again...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 07:07:14 pm**

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Marcus felt the ground shake beneath, and heard the floor break apart. *Behind?!* Whirling, he brought his assault rifle up and registered it was Adrian - who hadn't noticed him. "Aaron, keep moving!" he yelled as he opened fire.

-----

Axel frowned. "Hey! Why would I do something stupid?" He turned to Soren, and jumped when he saw there was an extra passenger in the back. "Gah!" he cried, jerking the steering wheel in his shock and almost swerving into a signpost. He straightened the truck to get in line behind the rest of the traffic. "Uh... who's she?" he questioned Soren, trying to get over his scare.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 07:10:39 pm**

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Adrian ducked, moments before Marcus's shots tore through the air where he had been, two of them clipping his ear and tearing large, bloody chunks out of it. He swore as he turned, flinging a set of knives to pin Aaron down before firing a blind stun charge where he had seen Aaron, hoping to get him to drop Emilena.

*Damnit damnit damnit...Marcus, again? Okay, whatever is up there. I get it. It's him...or me.*

He thought to himself as he stood up, drawing his second sword...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 07:16:44 pm**

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Soren sighed. "It's Anne Phoe. She's that woman who tried selling me that stolen neurotester."

"Hey! I didn't know it was stolen!" Anne countered.

"Liar."

Anne sighed. "Look, wherever you're going, I'll try to help."

Soren facepalmed. "Axel, can you pull over?"

-----

Aaron laughed. "Of course I'm a 'son of a bitch'! And so's my father and my grandfather. 'Course, that's expected when your parents are canines. But enough talk!" He shoved Emilena into a nearby steel girder as hard as possible.

As soon as she left his grasp, a hiss of pain followed as one of the knives sliced his ear. *That's what I get for not pinning them in a fight*, he thought.

Two other knives lodged in his clothing but since he was still wearing the protective gear from his job, they couldn't penetrate.

A flash of heat made him flinch as a stun bolt narrowly missed him. His heart raced as he got his pistol ready.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 07:17:16 pm**

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Since she couldn't see the girder, Emilena had no way to prepare herself, and so she hit it at full force and slipped into unconsciousness.

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The bullets tore through the invisible agent, sending him falling to the ground. The invisible field finally lifted, to reveal...a dummy.

The real agent suddenly pressed his knife against Tony's throat. "Not another twitch from any of you," he warned his hostage, Kojurro, and Lily who were at the top of the stairs, "Or your friend dies."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 07:25:09 pm**

---

Aaron picked up the unconscious Emilena in a firefighter's carry and moved as fast as possible towards the stairwell. As he did so, he fired a few shots from his pistol to discourage pursuers.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 07:29:30 pm**

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Adrian saw Emilena hit the girder, and, as she fell unconscious, something inside him seemed to...snap. He growled, plates along his augmented arm sliding apart, revealing a glowing energy core inside it, as his eyecover flared entirely blood-crimson. In a heartbeat, he had closed the distance between himself and Aaron, grabbing him and flinging him towards Marcus with a demonic-sounding roaring growl...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 07:36:33 pm**

---

Marcus jammed in another clip, then squeezed the trigger, emptying it at Adrian. He just had to keep him occupied long enough for Aaron to get to the car... He swore as he saw Adrian catch up to Aaron and throw him back towards him. He swerved out of the way, throwing out an arm to catch the German Shepard. While Aaron hit the ground with a *thump* next to him, he squeezed the trigger again, and the gun clicked. Swearing, Marcus threw the rifle aside and sprinted at Adrian.

Just as they were going to collide, he dropped to the ground and slid along, jerking out a leg to deal a savage kick. He'd been aiming for Adrian's knee, aiming to break it and disable the fox, but Adrian moved at the last second and he caught his shin instead, bringing him down on top of him.

-----  
"Uh... sure." Axel pulled the truck over to the side of the road. "What's going on? Is she coming with us?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 07:37:01 pm**

---

Tony remained tensed, even as the knife slid under his throat. He was no longer trembling though, and even his paws remained steady as he stared up at the top of the stairs. It was a damned dummy! But certainly not Purifier!

"Right..." Tony said in a hoarse voice. "But you kill me... you kill the son of one of the most powerful dons in the world. You really want to risk his wrath?" he asked, looking to either side of him. "Believe me... he will hunt you down... he won't stop... he won't care who you are... I'll play along... but think twice before you drag that blade across my throat." he said in a gravelly whisper.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 07:39:41 pm**

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"I'll make you a deal," the wolf agent whispered back. "You come with me to the perimeter of this factory, and I won't hurt you. Hell, that'll give you a chance to run too," he added, glancing at his Purifier outfit. "I'm mainly trying to escape myself, and I'm a man of my word."

He began inching backwards, trusting that Tony would follow along.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 07:46:45 pm**

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Tony only considered this for a second, and reminded himself not to nod. "Fine!" he said. "But not a scratch on me... and he won't hear about any of this." he responded. Maybe he could use this to get away as well... maybe rejoin the Purifiers... he wasn't sure. He felt like running straight home... throwing himself at his father's mercy and protection. Either way, his threat had worked. It was all he had, but it had worked. Being son to a powerful don did have its benefits, even though this was one of the first times Tony had actually used them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 07:48:42 pm**

---

Adrian swore as he felt Marcus's tackle hit his shins, sending him end over end, landing in a controlled roll to his feet.

"Sorry, mutt. But I don't have time to play."

He taunted, vaulting over Marcus and sprinting after Aaron...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 07:50:31 pm**

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Aaron grunted. Even with the construction worker's uniform ó designed to absorb and disperse high impact, it still hurt.

He saw the look on Marcus's face and nodded. He scooped up his quarry and continued running down the stairwell.

Luckily, there was some light filtering in from the busted roof, so he could still see. What he didn't count on was a rusted out step giving way, causing him to lose his footing.

He swore profusely as his body pinballed around the metal stairwell. Emilena wasn't faring any better ó not that he cared. Even with his arms protecting his head, he was still going to be in a *lot* of pain later on.

-----

"She's nothing but trouble," Soren replied. He turned to Anne and pointed down the neon soaked streets. A street vendor selling catfish burgers was near them.

"Get out," he said to Anne.

Anne's ears splayed to the side. "No, wait! I can help you!"

Soren scowled. "How so?"

The mare smiled. "Any of you need something broken into, I'm your mare."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 07:50:39 pm**

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(OOC: Aaron is holding Emilena, Adrian cant really grab her)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 08:01:02 pm**

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The moment the stair under Aaron gave way, Adrian was in action, vaulting over a railing and landing on the next flight down, where Aaron and Emilena were rolling towards...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 08:08:40 pm**

---

Marcus jerked to his feet and tore down the stairs after the others, the rusted metal screeching in protest. With anger, he saw Adrian was catching up again. Without registering that Aaron had started falling down the staircase, he launched himself down and grabbed a hold of Adrian. The pair careered sideways, hitting the weak railing and tearing through. As they fell through the air, Marcus reached out a hand and snatched the edge of the stairs, twisting his arm but preventing himself from falling.

Adrian, on the other hand, had nothing to hold onto. He fell down into the darkness of the factory's basement. Unfortunately, his body armour would prevent any damage from the fall, but at least he was off their back... for now.

Marcus hauled himself up and reached Aaron. Helping him up, he pointed at the limp body of Emilena. "Get her up, and let's get out of here..."

-----

Axel glanced down the gloomy street that Soren was pointing down. "Is she going to be safe on her own here? And if she really can be useful to us..." As grubby as Anne looked, he still felt guilty about leaving a female on her own in this part of the city late at night.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 19, 2013, 08:16:45 pm**

---

Aaron groaned as his body protested at the exertion and abuse it went through today. He hauled Emilena into a firefighter's carry and followed Marcus.

-----

Soren pondered. The way things were going, they were going to need to break into a building eventually. Better to have someone who can do that with them now and not later.

"All right, Anne. You're coming with us. Just don't make me regret letting you aboard."

He gestured for Axel to take off and head into the sky.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 08:20:44 pm**

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Once he and Tony reached the perimeter, the wolf honored his word and removed the knife. "You were a good sport," the wolf smiled, handing Tony a business card. "And the government likes to reward people who are cooperative. If you're ever in a bind, ask for Agent Lupis." Without another word the agent scurried into the darkness.

His business card appeared to be completely blank.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 19, 2013, 08:35:02 pm**

---

Soon, Marcus felt fresh air blowing against his fur. "We're almost out." Turning the corner, the exit opened up in front of them, pale moonlight illuminating the overgrown path that lead to their car. Marcus lead the way, pushing aside the shrubs that obstructed them to provide a

clear path for Aaron. Crickets chirped as he opened the trunk and turned to the German Shepard, taking hold of Emilena and lowering her into it. "You did well," he grunted as he tied Emilena's hands behind her back with plastic strapping. "Especially for a first job. With more members like you, the augmented won't last long."

Marcus slammed the trunk shut, and walked across the the driver's door. "We don't have time to find Tony - we have to get away. But if he's hurt, or he's been captured, we'll find him. The Purifiers don't leave their own."

-----

Axel nodded, and rejoined the traffic. "Uh... good to meet you. I'm Axel," he called back to Anne as the truck picked up speed, following the signs to the old factory Lily had mentioned.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 08:35:57 pm**

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Adrian fell, attempting to grab onto a railing as he passed. His hand made contact, but he found no safety from it. Instead, there was a sickening crack as his organic arm tore loose of it's sockets, each joint dislocating from the attempt. All that he had accomplished by doing so was to put his fall at an angle, causing him to land on the already-mangled arm, then roll onto his back. When he had landed, he had impacted not only the ground, but a set of rusted, broken barrels, which had, in turn, nearly severed his one remaining arm. Looking up, he saw the broken railings from his fall, ends towards him. There was a sickening crunch, and then blackness...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 19, 2013, 08:55:10 pm**

---

Tony glanced down at the business card. It was blank... but maybe there was a trick to it. Absent mindedly pocketing it, he looked around. OK... what next? He still had his assault rifle (he hadn't dropped it even with the knife to his throat), and he quickly moved that under his overcoat. He had to get this damn tracker out of him!

But... did he really want to leave? He stopped to think and catch his breath. Probably... but where would he go? Back to his father's? Probably again. But first things first. He needed to find a hospital and get this tracker removed.

He started walking the perimeter, looking from left to right and hoping a car would pass by, so he could flag it down and have it take him to the nearest hospital. But cars didn't really seem to drive out to this place... the streets were black and deserted, and while the neon lights of the city burned as a backdrop, the ferret realized he was alone for the moment.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 08:58:42 pm**

---

Lily stumbled out into the courtyard. "Where are the others?" she asked Kojurro.

The air was silent, though signs of a violent skirmish were everywhere. Lily put her hands to her mouth in horror. "We've got to search...got to find them..."

She staggered, then dropped to her knees. She realized she hadn't fully recovered from her assault in the sniper room.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 19, 2013, 09:03:44 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 19, 2013, 09:37:28 pm**

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"Kojurro, I..." she trailed off. "I took a lethal dose of electricity in that room. That's what Emilena said. Why aren't I dead...?"

She didn't like to admit it to herself, but she had to be honest. She couldn't afford to lie to herself.

-----

The battered and bruised body of Emilena Echo lay crumpled in the trunk of Marcus' car. She was still out cold.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 20, 2013, 01:18:59 am**

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Tony sighed as he noted the specific lack of traffic on the streets surrounding the factory. He certainly didn't want to go walking around this neighborhood, even with his assault rifle. He wondered how the others were fairing inside... it seemed really quiet now...

Plus... he HAD made a bargain with his captor, and planned to hold him to it. He just hoped ONE of these guys had a cell phone on them. He doubted any phones in the factory would be working.

Heading back inside, he began searching for the others, wondering if anyone was still alive... he knew the two he'd found in that room with Agent Lupis were still alive. But as for his captor, he had no idea on. Walking about, he began making his way back to that room, hoping he'd run into someone somewhere along the way.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 20, 2013, 03:34:22 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 20, 2013, 07:15:29 am**

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Marcus only switched the headlights back on once they'd reached the main road. He took a left, heading back towards the city. "Stash your gun under the seat," he told Aaron. "It'd be stupid to be stopped by the police now." They sped past a delivery truck heading the opposite way, but Marcus didn't pay it any attention.

-----

"Woah, they're in a hurry," Axel said as the car sped past them, fast enough to shake the truck. Turning his attention away, he scanned the road left and right. "I wish the signs for it didn't stop a couple of miles back... I don't think we missed the turn off though." He caught sight of an old beaten track leading off to the right. "Hey, I think this is it!" He brought the truck further up and saw a huge dark shape in the distance. "Yeah, we're here," Axel confirmed to his two passengers.

He continued over the trees, and after a while came to a clear patch of ground surrounding the factory. Heading down, Axel brought the truck to a stop on the overgrown grass, facing the dilapidated building. "Well... cheery place isn't it?"

Suddenly, Kojuuro's shout echoed through the silent night air: "ADRIAN!"

Axel frowned. "He doesn't sound too happy... HELLO?" he shouted back.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 20, 2013, 01:12:00 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 20, 2013, 06:49:57 pm**

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Lily perked up when she heard Axel's voice. "Axel!" she cried back, staggering to her feet and limping towards him.

Once they'd reached each other she threw herself in his arms. "It was horrible!" she cried, getting blood all over his shirt, "Those agents, they came back and everything went wrong...Kojurro and I can't find the others...I got electrified..."

Other than her injuries, both of her irises were now red, and there was a gray tinge to her skin that wasn't present last time she and Axel had seen each other.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 20, 2013, 07:42:23 pm**

---

Axel hugged Lily tightly, pressing her against him. "It's okay... it's over, you're safe now..." he murmured, trying to calm her down. His stomach was tying itself in knots. *What the hell happened here? Where's everyone else?* Emilena and the others had been so confident!

Axel's eyes narrowed. *That wolf in the suit... he came back. That son of a bitch.* "You got electrocuted? How, how badly are you hurt?" As he looked down at her, Axel noticed for the first time how ashen her skin looked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 20, 2013, 08:38:49 pm**

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"That's one of the things..." Lily broke off. Part of her wanted to lie about it, or not bring it up for fear that Axel may stop wanting to help her, but she had to tell someone. "I was pushed into a booby trap. Emilena said the trap used lethal amounts of electricity, enough to kill an unprotected human. I have bad burns and I'm coughing up blood but... I should be dead..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 20, 2013, 08:53:05 pm**

---

Soren dashed into the building with his shotgun at the ready.

He rased his gun but stopped when he saw it was Kojurro. "What's going on?" he asked.

-----

Anne sat in the truck and sighed. All this time, she was wondering what the hell was going on with so much noise and excitement.

Oh well, time foróHer hand-rolled marijuana cigarette was gone! She swore as she frantically crawled about the rear compartment, looking for the precious spliff.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 20, 2013, 09:02:38 pm**

---

Axel felt sick on hearing her condition. He looked down at her face, and was shocked when he saw how nervous she looked. "Hey, come on," he said, looking into her eyes (which, he noted with some alarm, had both changed to red). "Remember when I said I was with you until the end? I meant it. You don't have to be afraid of telling me anything."

He looked around. "Right then, let's find the others and get the hell out of here. This place gives me the creeps." Holding Lily to support her, he headed in the direction Soren had gone.

"Kojuro!" Axel said when they'd caught up to the pair. "Lily said something went wrong... Where's Adrian? Emilena?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 20, 2013, 09:15:43 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 20, 2013, 09:47:21 pm**

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Lily hugged Axel tighter. "Thank you..." she whispered. "Thank you for everything...I could never tell you how much it means to me..."

When they headed to the bottom of the stairwell, Lily gasped at the sight of Adrian. "Oh my god...is he...?"

She looked around and noticed a cell phone, presumably dropped by Adrian. She scanned the names, and noticed Marita's. *Emilena mentioned her being at the hospital...*

Taking a chance, she dialed the number. Adrian needed all the help he could get.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 20, 2013, 10:19:08 pm**

---

Soren slung his shotgun over his back. "I'll go retrieve his body."

He shook his head. "F---, if only Axel and I had gotten here sooner!"

He clicked on his exoskeleton's worklights and headed down the stairs, the light soon getting swallowed by the darkness.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 20, 2013, 11:03:05 pm**

---

Tony stumbled across the newcomers and the pair he was familiar with, but he still didn't see his captor. He noticed a big exoskeleton, descending towards a hole. Looking from one person to another, he noticed the cellphone being used. He'd need to make use of that at some point. "Um... is there anything I can do to help?" he asked, partly out of concern (it was clear to him someone was injured, and he feared the worst on that now), and partly because he wanted to use that phone.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 21, 2013, 12:51:54 am**

---

marita answered the phone' Hello?' she replied ' who is this?' she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 21, 2013, 01:04:08 am**

---

"You don't know who I am but you have to trust I'm a friend of Adrian's," Lily stammered. "He needs your help!" she read off the address of the robot factory. "Bring whatever medical supplies you've got!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 21, 2013, 01:08:06 am**

---

we'll get there as soon as we can ' Marita replied" what happened?" she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 21, 2013, 01:17:59 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 21, 2013, 02:32:51 am**

---

Lily started to tell the story, then stopped. "Oh, what's the use?" she hung the phone up in frustration. "Look at him. He's already dead!"

She dropped to her knees and let the phone clatter back to the floor. "What are we doing out here...?" she asked nobody in particular, burying her head in her hands and squeezing her eyes shut. "We're all going to die, just like Adrian and Emilena. If they can't survive, how are we supposed to?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 21, 2013, 02:37:59 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 21, 2013, 02:50:32 am**

---

Adrian was indeed alive but trapped under a rather large piece of rubble.

Soren turned to Kojuro. "Kojuro, I need you to carefully pull Adrian away from the rubble once I lift it."

He turned the his exoskeleton to the highest setting and bent into a squat. He placed his hands under the piece of rubble and began lifting it. The suit's artificial muscles strained as it slowly began to budge the nearly three ton piece of rubble. "Now!" Soren shouted.

-----

Anne turned to Axel. A lit marijuana joint dangled from her mouth. "So, how do you know Soren?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 21, 2013, 03:54:29 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 21, 2013, 05:52:23 am**

---

Axel looked at Anne, shifting uneasily. "We live in the same neighbourhood. Sometimes I'd help him fix augments, stuff like that..." A puff of the spliff's smoke flew towards his face and he coughed, suddenly feeling a little light headed.

He heard Adrian being dragged out, and recoiled when he saw how bad he looked. "We... we can't just wait for the person on the phone to arrive - we at least need to stop the bleeding, he's losing too much."

Axel glanced at the ferret who was hanging around. "Do you have anything we could use to hold against his wounds?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 21, 2013, 12:46:25 pm**

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Tony suddenly sprang to life at the addressing of his name. "Uh... sure!" he said now, fumbling in his pockets. "I have a pawkerchief, and well... my jacket..." the ferret suggested as he yanked the pawkerchief out and also began to undo his heavy overcoat. "I don't mind... I can just get another one... I'm gonna have to borrow somebody's phone at some point too." he stated, holding his coat out with the cloth. "But let's focus on getting this Adrian stabilized first." he concluded.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 21, 2013, 05:25:38 pm**

---

Adrian's phone was still sitting on the ground where Lily had dropped it.

"I can go check and see if this factory had an infirmary or something..." started Lily, but swayed and fell back to her knees when she stood up too quickly. "On second thought...maybe I should get something to drink first..." she concluded weakly, lying down on the ground.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 21, 2013, 06:53:55 pm**

---

"Alright," Axel nodded, "It's not ideal, but the coat should be thick enough to do some good." He took it off the ferret, deciding that introductions could wait for later, and bent down next to Adrian. He scrunched the coat and pressed it as hard as he could against the gaping wound - it started turning red as the blood soaked in. "Ah..." he muttered through gritted teeth.

He looked at Lily. "An infirmary... it's worth a try. Uh... Anne? Could you go see if there's anything to drink in the back of the truck and bring it back for Lily? It might do some good for Adrian as well if he wakes up. I mean, when he wakes up!" Axel said quickly as he saw Kojuuro's expression.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 21, 2013, 09:12:27 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 22, 2013, 01:35:25 am**

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Noting the phone was lying there, tempting him to pick it up, Tony did so, apologetically glancing at Lily. "Sorry... I'll give this back... I just need to make a phone call." he said, beginning to dial the direct line to his father's residence. He still remembered it after all this time, and felt his heart start to race as he pushed the call button. What was he doing? Was he crazy? How would his father react? He shut his eyes, almost yanking the phone down from his ear and hanging up, but then the line on the other end was answered, and he swallowed hard.

"Stracci residence." came the smooth voice on the other end. It wasn't his father... his father NEVER answered the phone if it was an unknown number. Instead, Tony immediately recognized it as Max Fontana, his father's consigliere. That was what he'd been expecting. Fontana typically answered the phone if it was an unknown number for legal reasons, as he had extensive legal training and could parry any attempts by the law to probe the residence via phone.

"Max... it's... it's... Tony." the ferret said slowly, his voice thick.

"Tony? Good god, boy! Where have you been?" Fontana asked, sounding incredulous.

"It's a long story... is my pops there?" he asked hesitantly.

"Sure! Let me put him on!" There was the customary pause as the call was directed to either his father's room or his office (depending on if he was in bed at this hour or not), and then, the warm yet aged voice of his father came on.

"Tony?" was the question posed.

"Hey... pops." Tony said, turning away from the group. Then... nothing. His father wasn't speaking, and Tony waited a few anxious moments as he wondered what his father was doing. He knew his father had this weird sort of squinting expression to his face, and might even puffing on those thick cigars he loved.

"What do you have to say for yourself?" came his father's voice after what seemed like ages.

"I... I'm sorry pops." Tony said, face falling.

"Don't you 'pops', me." Gruffness now.

"Yes, sir." Tony said, more respectfully now. His father typically wouldn't insist on his son calling him "sir", but when he was in trouble... then it came out. "Dad... I'm sorry..." he whispered, blinking back a few tears. "I'm sorry. I think I'm ready to come home..." he said softly.

"You'd better be... I had half the city looking for you. I've also heard the most disturbing rumors... rumors about what you've been doing with yourself recently." No surprise there. His pops was always well informed.

"Dad... I want to see you soon. But there's something I have to take care of first. Some people need my help..." Tony began explaining.

"What people? Not family, are they?"

"No, sir. Not family."

"You're helping outsiders before family?"

"Dad... hold on. You said I needed to learn responsibility for my actions. Because of my actions... some people got hurt tonight. I want to help. We might be going to a hospital." Tony

continued.

"Which hospital? I'll send Max out to meet you. Take you home." Sending "Max" out meant Max and his squad, as the consigliere never traveled without protection.

"Dad... I can manage. I'll let you know when I know which hospital.... or wherever I'm going next." The ferret held his forehead with his paw now, rubbing it in a massage as he closed his eyes.

"Can I reach you at this number?"

"I don't know... probably not. It's someone else's phone. I'll call you... I promise. I'm not gonna disappear again. I..." Tony sniffled here, opening his eyes again. "I love you dad." he said, his voice cracking. "I just wanted you to know that, OK? I want to see you soon... I want to come back. Just... give me some time. I will be there... I promise."

A pause again... and like before, hefty in length. "I'll let you know where I'll be as soon as I know, dad. Please... just let me do this. Then you can send whoever you want."

Finally, after another interminable pause, "All right. But I'm holding you to that. Your mother's worried sick after all."

Tony sighed. "I know... I'll call you as soon as I can, I promise. I have to give the phone back now... but I'm sorry again. I'll talk to you soon." Tony brought it down, and hung up. No "I love you too, son" or "I'm glad you're safe." But he'd been expecting that. His father was a hardened don after all... but Tony knew his father loved him. The fact he hadn't hung up on him or exploded in anger indicated that.

He promptly erased the number from the phone's call history with a flick of his claw, and began walking back over to Lily. Tony placed a paw on her shoulder comfortingly, noticing how shaken up she seemed, and held the phone in front of her. "Thank you... I needed to do that." he said in soft tones.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 22, 2013, 02:17:02 am**

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Soren let the piece of rubble fall back with a loud crash. He looked around the ravaged factory.

"What went on here?" he asked.

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Anne nodded and ripped open one of the boxes. A few bottles of water rolled out. She picked up a bottle and headed over to Lily.

"Axel told me to give this to you," she tossed the bottle to Lily. "Anyways, I'm going to go look for an infirmary here."

Granted, she wanted to go see if there was an infirmary for two reasons: steal whatever electronics were left; steal whatever drugs were left.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 22, 2013, 02:32:23 am**

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Lily took the phone back and spared a short smile for him. "We can't take him to a hospital..." she said. "Remember what happened last time? A hospital is the reason we're in this mess. How can we trust any organization, they could all be working with the Purifiers...or the police."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 22, 2013, 06:08:44 am**

---

"It's true," Axel agreed, getting up from the floor now that Adrian seemed stable enough. *For now. I hope whoever's on their way gets here quickly.* "We met these three when they were escaping from the hospital, and Lily... well, her and the police aren't exactly buddies right now."

He wiped his bloody robotic hands on his T-Shirt with a grimace and offered a hand to the ferret. "I'm Axel." *Where did this guy come from?* "So what did happen here? If me and Soren knew things were going this badly..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 22, 2013, 12:31:15 pm**

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Tony nodded reluctantly, glancing at Adrian's heavily injured body. Damn... he really looked like he could use medical attention though. If only there was some way... but Tony knew there was. He just wasn't sure if he should pursue this avenue.

Tony stared conspicuously at the metallic hands Axel was sporting. They were so... unnatural. But he shook his thoughts off, and forced a smile, taking the hand and shaking it. "Tony." he offered, not giving his last name for the moment. "As for what happened..." here he became more hesitant. "I uh... I... was part of a group that was supposed to capture one of your own." he admitted slowly. "Emelina her name was. I didn't... really get very far though before he captured me." he pointed in Adrian's direction.

"We soon realized though that it was more than my group... the government was attacking as well. I made a split second decision to help out, because I saw no problem in attacking government agents that heavily utilized technology. I wasn't able to help much though... but we did get rid of the agents. My group... I can only assume, got Emelina however, and apparently abandoned me as well." he explained. He didn't state Purifiers... but he didn't see the need. This Axel could probably connect the dots. He also neglected to mention Agent Lupis's card in his pocket, but figured he'd keep that under wraps for now until he could determine who exactly Lupis worked for. Besides, the card was blank. He'd need to learn its secret first.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 22, 2013, 02:27:05 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 22, 2013, 03:04:43 pm**

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"Don't kill him!" Lily burst out quickly. "Please, no more bloodshed tonight. He said he's sorry, and I believe him. We all make mistakes...even if some of us can't remember what they were."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 22, 2013, 03:04:48 pm**

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(Ooc: still getting the hang of this new phone, sorry)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 22, 2013, 04:40:12 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 22, 2013, 05:21:50 pm**

---

Tony froze at the sight of the gun aimed directly at him, and he raised his paws. "Please..." he said, but relaxed upon Kojuuro lowering his weapon. Lily pleaded with him not to kill Tony, and Tony was with her on that.

"I'm not JUST a Purifier." Tony said calmly as he dropped his paws. "I have a family... I'm not married but I come from a prominent family... and I love them. I want to see them again. I won't do anything to betray your trust. I just... want to make up for what happened." he said now, lowering his gaze. "I don't mean any harm." His assault rifle was on the ground; he'd ditched it when he'd surrendered his coat.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 22, 2013, 05:40:14 pm**

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Axel followed his gaze and saw the assault rifle on the floor. He quickly bent down to pick it up. "The last Purifier I met told me he was going to make sure I died slowly," Axel said as he tossed the gun over to Soren, "So you'll understand if I don't take you at your word." He stepped slightly between Lily and Tony.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 22, 2013, 06:08:05 pm**

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"I understand." Tony nodded, making no move to stop the confiscation of his weapon. "If you don't want me around, I'll leave as soon as we get back to the city proper. I just need a method of contacting my family when we get there, and I'll be out of your hair." he stated.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 23, 2013, 04:38:48 am**

---

Soren considered breaking the rifle in half ó an easy feat considering his exoskeleton's great strength, but decided against it, opting to sling the weapon across his back where magnetic plates secured it.

His armored helmet masked his expression as he glared at Tony. The Human was still sore at the Purifiers burning down his livelihood and home. "Look, I don't give a flying f--- who you are or what your connections are but as long as you stay out of our way, we'll leave you alone. Got it?"

Soren then looked around. "Maybe Anne knows some back-alley docs or something."

-----

A loud crash was heard as Anne kicked down the door to the infirmary. She scowled. The room was in as equally bad shape as the rest of the place. Anything electronic had been stolen ó right to monitors and other wall-mounted displays being ripped straight from the walls.

She opened the cabinet where the drugs were usually kept. Nothing. Looks like the looters before her took the best things.

Cursing, she kicked the cabinet, leaving an imprint of her steel-shod hoof against the thin sheet met.

"Well, might as well help Soren out." She grabbed the only thing not stolen, an industrial first

aid kit and made her way back to the front of the factory where everyone was located.

(OOC - is Aaron still with Marcus or did he get dropped off at home?)

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 23, 2013, 06:43:58 am**

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Marcus and Aaron reached the designated Purifier dropoff point. Men took Emilena's unconscious body away.

-----

Lily finished her bottled water. Feeling a lot better, she decided to get to her feet and make herself useful.

"I should wait near the entrance and flag down Marita when she arrives," she said, "since Marita spoke with me on the phone. I'll need to apologize for hanging up on her..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 23, 2013, 06:28:30 pm**

---

Axel joined Lily. "I'll wait with you, if you want," he offered. "If that wolf's still hanging around, it probably isn't too safe for you to be hanging around by yourself." He looked around at the darkness surrounding the factory nervously. "I hope she won't be too long..."

-----

The Purifier compound resembled a large bunker; plain, grey and surrounded by a chainlink fence. As Emilena was taken further in, Marcus climbed out of the car, his shoes kicking small clouds of dust into the cold night air. "You might as well get some rest," he told Aaron. "It'll be a while before we start the questions."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 23, 2013, 07:29:32 pm**

---

Lily smiled. "I'd like that," she said back.

When she and Axel were alone, staring out at the forest and the lonely road, she took his hand. "How are you doing?" she asked. "You've been checking on everyone else, but nobody's really been checking on you."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 23, 2013, 08:26:09 pm**

---

Axel blushed when she took his hand, his ears turning pink. "Uh, I guess I'm doing alright. Though maybe I could do with a shower and a change of clothes - no matter what people say about us, rats don't like to get this dirty," he joked, looking down at his blood and grime stained clothes.

"None of us exactly look our best right now, do we? Um, I don't mean you look bad though! I meant..." Axel coughed awkwardly. "I'm just glad you're okay. I was really worried."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 23, 2013, 09:02:31 pm**

---

Lily smiled. "You're not dirty at all, you're fine." She hugged him. "You've got give yourself more credit."

She looked him in the eyes. "That guy who claimed to be my husband on the television. Maybe he is. Maybe we were happily married. I don't know. But up in that room tonight, when two people were trying to kill me, I was being electrocuted, and I thought I was going to die, I didn't think of Danny. I thought of you. And how I would never see you again..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 23, 2013, 09:40:00 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 24, 2013, 03:58:04 am**

---

Aaron nodded and headed through. He passed by two mean looking Rottweilers clad in a ballistic vest and helmet and carrying military-grade magnetic accelerator rifles.

"What are you looking at?" the leftmost guard growled as he saw the German Shepherd staring a little too intently at a skull and crossbones freeze brand on the guard's arm.

Aaron's ears pinned back and his tail tucked between his legs. "N...nothing!" He quickly followed Marcus into the compound.

-----

Soren turned around and saw Anne with the first aid kit in hand. "Took ya long enough."

Anne rolled her eyes. "Just tell me who to bring this to."

Soren got up and headed into the building. "Adrian! Kojuuro! Anne's got a first aid kit!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 24, 2013, 07:20:33 am**

---

"Really?" Axel stared back at her, his heart hammering in his chest. "I thought that when you found out you might have a husband..." He sidled closer to Lily. *Ah, screw it.* "I really like you, Lily. Ever since the first moment we met, all I can think about is you. I know it's only been a few days, but it's true."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 24, 2013, 08:57:19 am**

---

Lily's eyes lit up when she heard that, and she began blushing. She drew her face closer, closer, half not believing what she was doing...but then who knows how much time they have left?

And she kissed him. Lightly and politely at first, keeping nervously distant, then slowly as she became more bold she wrapped her arms around Axel and graduated to heavier and more personal contact. The pain, the exhaustion, the love, the fear...she channelled every emotion she had into her kiss.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 24, 2013, 09:56:07 am**

---

Tony nodded at Soren's words, but pointed out something further. "I'd love to leave you guys alone, but your Adrian friend implanted a tracker in my arm, and rather than try and dig it out with my knife and risk injuring myself further, I'd like to try and get this removed." he said, indicating the cut on his arm with a claw now. He had no knowledge about surgically removing a tracker, and was afraid he'd just lose massive amounts of blood making the attempt... or worse, cut a major artery. "He did it so I wouldn't run but... battle's over now, right?" he asked. He looked at his coat, but he really didn't need it back... he *did* want to stabilize Adrian after all.

"Unless of course, you guys aren't going to follow me. Though of course... I was hoping I could at least catch a ride with you guys back into town seeing as how... not many people tend to drive out this way, and I don't have a phone on me." He'd noticed Lily had walked off with Axel, so it was either hitch a ride with these guys or borrow their phone again.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 24, 2013, 03:38:43 pm**

---

Axel's eyes widened when Lily started kissing him, but after a few moments he closed them as he eased into it. His arms wrapped around her, holding her tightly as he ran his hands up her back, through her hair, feeling her warmth as she pressed up against his body. While it lasted, he forgot about the fear he'd been feeling, the danger, the fact that he could die at any time. There was only the now.

After what felt like a lifetime, he let her lips fall away, resting his forehead on hers. "To hell with these guys and the Purifiers," he said after a while, a dumb grin plastered on his face. "Want to catch a movie? Go for an expensive meal, stay at a high class hotel?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 24, 2013, 04:31:50 pm**

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"Actually..." smiled Lily. "There is somewhere I'd like to show you...once Marita gets here and we can point her in the right direction."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 24, 2013, 04:50:46 pm**

---

Marita had traced the call she had got using maries computer and redialed the number and waited for an answer.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 24, 2013, 04:52:52 pm**

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"How close are you?" Lily asked immediately upon picking up, since she'd given the address last time they spoke.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 24, 2013, 05:01:45 pm**

---

we're driving in maries car' marita said. 'and headed your way. we should be there in 15 minutes.. so just hang on until we get there'  
marie was driving as fast as she dared.. the posted speed limit was 75.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 24, 2013, 05:39:22 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 24, 2013, 05:58:19 pm**

---

Anne nodded and headed off.

-----

Soren nodded. "Fine. Just no funny business."

He then got up and headed to the delivery truck where Lily and Axel were kissing.

"I see you got a girlfriend," Soren said, leaning on the truck. "Anyways, we *really* need to get out of here."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 24, 2013, 06:26:31 pm**

---

When Lily hung up, Axel smiled at her. "Oh yeah? I can't wait to see where it is."

He jumped at Soren's voice. "Um... hey Soren," he said as his face reddened, his arms still around Lily. "I, er, think that person's on her way. The one we spoke to on the phone." He blinked awkwardly.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 24, 2013, 07:11:11 pm**

---

"Can we even move Adrian?" asked Lily. "Perhaps when Marita gets here we can transfer him to a vehicle and relocate. And if that's the case, then I have somewhere I need to show Axel right now."

She took Axel's hand and led him into the forest. "We'll be back before it's time to leave, don't worry!" she called over her shoulder, tossing the cell phone to Soren.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 24, 2013, 07:37:57 pm**

---

marie turned off the exit and headed out towards the site as they drove past, the decay of the area was glaringly obvious..

- marita called again ' ok once we get there be ready to put adrian into the back of the car.. the n you'll have squeeze in somehow..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 24, 2013, 08:22:48 pm**

---

Axel shrugged at Soren and let Lilly lead him further into the forest. Soon, they were past the treeline; thick, heavy branches overhead blocked the moonlight and cast them into darkness. The smell of pine and wet leaves intensified, and somewhere in the distance an owl hooted.

"Watch where you walk, the ground's pretty uneven," Axel warned, then swore lightly under his breath as he caught his foot on a rogue, unseen tree-root.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 24, 2013, 08:35:03 pm**

---

"I know," said Lily. "I came through here while I was on the run a few days ago. This exact same time, in fact."

After about 5 minutes of walking, she stopped at a patch of trees that seemed like any other. "It was the first night. I'd been running for countless hours when I reached here. I was exhausted, sore, and covered in mud. When I heard police probes coming from both directions. You see how the trees are so sparse here? There was nowhere to run without being seen. So I had to climb."

To demonstrate she leaped up, grabbed a low-hanging branch and swung herself into the tree. Then he held her hand down to him, smiling. "Come on."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 24, 2013, 11:18:10 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 25, 2013, 03:53:20 am**

---

Axel grinned. "Well, hello Tarzan..." Jumping up, he took her hand with one arm and grabbed the branch with the other, heaving himself up into the tree. He then rose to an unsteady standing position on the tree limb they'd climbed onto, holding a branch just overhead for support as he reached down to help her to her feet.

"You had to run through these woods by yourself?" He looked around and swallowed. "I can't imagine how scared you were."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 25, 2013, 07:07:07 am**

---

Lily smiled and helped him onto a nearby branch, so they were overlooking the nearby city. She then continued her story.

"While I was up in this tree, the police came the closest they ever got to catching me. I could see them; they had flashlights, and were checking the trees. I knew I was pinned, and that my dress would give me away in the light, so I hid it in this hollow..."

To demonstrate, she slid her dress off over her head and pushed into a deep knot that had formed in the tree trunk.

"At least three beams passed right through me as they walked through, but I guess my dark skin blended in with the bark," Lily retold. "Still, I was cramped, exposed, and cold, after that long night. I was about ready to turn myself in or just die right there. When I noticed that, even though they'd left, the area was still lit up..."

Suddenly, before Lily and Axel, the sun peeked its first rays over the horizon of the city. The skyscrapers became silhouetted in a brilliant bloodred wash, highlighting the forest canopy and Lily's red eyes. Her skin glimmered a light gray, oddly reflective and petrous. She definitely looked far different from when they'd first met, though she hadn't yet seemed to notice.

"The morning always comes," Lily whispered softly, stroking Axel's cheek. "That's what I realized then, and what kept me going. The night is long and the darkness everywhere, but you've got to press on until things get better..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 25, 2013, 12:08:54 pm**

---

Axel held his breath as Lily slipped her dress off, his eyes roaming over her body. As the light of the new day spilled through the trees, washing them in it's glow, he could make out the odd discolouration to her skin - but right now he didn't care. She was beautiful, she was perfect... and she was here.

Moving forwards, he pushed her gently back against the thick trunk and pressed himself against her, kissing the side of her neck. "Are things better now?" he murmured.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 26, 2013, 04:55:15 am**

---

Lily kissed him back. "Yes..." she smiled, wrapping her arms around him. "Everything's fine."

She ran her hand through his hair and relaxed her body under Axel, surrendering herself to his wishes, whatever they be. She had nothing else to say, just an aching to know that somebody wanted her, when even her own body seemed to want to reject her.

-----

Loud thuds echoed in her mind. There were flashes of light in her eyes, but she suspected those were just concussive phosphenes. Her body felt like it was floating.

Emilena kept her eyes closed and breathed through a tube in her mouth that her unconscious mind had already learned was an air supply. Not interested in anything other than getting her bearings, Emilena chose to give no outward signs she was awake.

She could tell she was naked, floating in some sort of gel. She could see only the blood within her eyelids; there was a light source in her face. She was held in place by loose straps around her waist and the air tube, both of which she was capable of removing if she wanted. Her wounds were completely healed.

She knew where she was; she'd been in one before. This was a growth acceleration pod. As it rapidly ages the subject, it also speeds up the body's natural healing process to the same rate. She had probably aged a few months in a nighttime...or however long she had been unconscious. *Well, no point in losing any more of my glory years...*

Slowly Emilena removed the straps and felt around the pod for the latch; there was always one. When she found it and flicked it, there was a click and the gel drained from the pod before the door opened. Blinking, Emilena stepped out of the pod and into a laboratory.

Immediately the lights shut off, discombobulating her and preventing her from seeing the facility. "Don't move!" a voice shouted. Strong hands from several directions grabbed her and she didn't have the reflexes to resist.

She was carried down several dark hallways, making only token attempts at resisting. She knew she was at the Purifier's mercy by now. No escape will be possible.

She was thrown into an empty padded shower, just big enough to stand in, and drenched in antibacterial suds to remove the gel in her fur. As she spluttered from the jet of water hitting her in the face, she had just enough time to gasp to her captors, "What do you want?"

She didn't receive an answer.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 26, 2013, 06:55:17 am**

---

Balancing precariously, Axel reached down and unzipped the front of his jeans urgently. Pressing forwards again, he moaned softly as he entered her, holding onto the sides of the tree trunk to keep them balanced. After several minutes of thrusting, his breaths got quicker, deeper. Finally, he shuddered as he climaxed, groaning, his hands digging into the wood.

-----

Marcus sat on the bed and stared down at the creased, heavily worn photo in his hands, his expression hardened. The room he'd been designated was small, cold and sparse - just four stone walls and a bed that felt as hard as concrete. A bare bulb hanging from the ceiling cast a white, sterile glare to the room.

There was a knock on the heavy metal door, and a heavily muscled guard opened it. Marcus quickly slipped the photo into his jacket pocket, but not before the guard caught a glimpse of a smiling woman and child. "Echo's awake."

Marcus nodded and stood up, his back cracking as he straightened. "Good. I'll be there soon." He followed the guard out and made his way down the long corridor outside, footsteps echoing against the thick walls. There were several doors on either side of him as he walked along. He stopped at one and rapped his fist against it. *Aaron's quarters.*

"She's up," he called through.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 26, 2013, 02:01:46 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 26, 2013, 04:12:10 pm**

---

Lily panted heavily as Axel penetrated her, squinting her eyes shut. She kept her arms tightly pressed around him, fingers dug into his back.

And then suddenly, she was Axel.

*She could feel herself, her own flesh, the sensations of sex. More frighteningly, she got a glimpse of her own body; the red eyes, the stone grey skin, the unnatural thinness. The creature in front of her horrified her and she wanted only to get away, but she couldn't.*

*Go back into my body, she pleaded with herself, Please! I don't want to have to see this! But it felt like having sleep paralysis; no matter how hard she tried she couldn't wake up and she couldn't look away... Finally Axel groaned and closed his eyes during climax, gratefully letting Lily stop seeing what she had become.*

And then she felt herself back on the branch, the roughness of the bark on her backside as Axel lay on top of her. Her breath slowly returned to normal but she continued digging her fingers into Axel's sides.

"Promise you won't leave me," she said desperately, looking straight into his eyes. "Even if I keep changing? I can feel it; something's happening to me. Every time my mind leaves my body, it takes a little longer to come back..."

-----

Abruptly Emilena was torn gasping from the shower and dragged down another hallway. She was carried into a room with an empty desk and a number of closed cupboards and file cabinets; what was inside them she could only guess.

Her holders ran a rope over a pulley in the ceiling, tied her hands over her heads (skillfully enough, she noted with distaste, that she could not use any of her learned methods for escaping bondage), and pulled the rope until she could barely stand on her feet. Without another glance at her, they left and shut the door behind them, leaving her shivering in the inky blackness.

"The prisoner is ready for you," one of the holders radioed Marcus.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 26, 2013, 04:29:55 pm**

---

marie pulled up to the group and marita got out, followed by rose who had a first aid kit in her hands. ' where is he?' Marita asked.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 26, 2013, 06:26:24 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 26, 2013, 06:40:19 pm**

---

well we're not going to give up without a fight ' marita replied as she and rose headed into the factory. adrian lay there dried blood on his face.. and marota grew somber as she saw him...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 26, 2013, 07:34:36 pm**

---

Axel met Lily's gaze, panting as he recovered his breath. "I won't. You know that I won't. Ever." He leaned over, brushed some hair out of her face and kissed her forehead, feeling his breath reflect off her skin. "I promise." He bowed his head slightly and pulled her into a hug, his breath gradually returning to normal.

After a while, Axel gently released her and raised himself up, zipping his jeans closed. "We should probably get back before the others think something's happened to us," he said, giving her a small, hopeful smile.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 26, 2013, 08:29:36 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 26, 2013, 11:12:04 pm**

---

Lily nodded, smiling, then yelped when an unknown voice shouted up to them. Sitting up abruptly, she slid and accidentally fell out of the tree. Luckily the unknown figure had good reflexes and caught her.

"I don't--I--" Lily blushed and scrambled to her feet, trying to cover herself. "Axel! Grab my dress! Quickly, please!"

-----

Emilena had barely been there five minutes and her arms were growing tired. She tried to stand on her tiptoes to put some of her weight off of her wrists and succeeded only in slipping in the puddle she'd formed from the shower.

*This is a discouragement tactic, she recognized grimly, Sensory deprivation, loneliness, chronic fatigue to the extremities, and an inability to lay down persuades captives to cooperate when the chance at comfort is offered...at a price. Well, they aren't getting me that easily!*

Fifteen minutes later, she found her silent rebellious attitude had weakened somewhat.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 26, 2013, 11:19:14 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 26, 2013, 11:44:20 pm**

---

(Purifier complex)

Aaron bolted out of bed and quickly tossed on his Purifier issued black jumpsuit.

"I'm coming!" he yelled through the door.

With a heavy *thunk*, he unlocked the door and found Marcus standing there.

He cracked his knuckles. "So what's on the agenda now?"

-----

(Abandoned Robotics Factory)

Soren noticed his exoskeleton was running low on power. "I have a bit of a problem, my suit's running low on power and I'd like some help locating a power plug."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 27, 2013, 12:59:08 am**

---

Lily was hiding behind the tree trunk and did not find the Doctor's assurance to be adequate reason to stop doing so. "Um, hello Doctor.." she replied, still blushing with embarrassment. "I, er...guess we can help you. What do you need? And sorry about that...people aren't normally walking through these woods at night."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 27, 2013, 01:10:11 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 27, 2013, 01:15:54 am**

---

Lily immediately stopped talking. The last time people came looking for Adrian, Lily had been thrown into an electric wall and the rest of her allies had fared little better. She decided to defer to Axel in regards to trusting this newcomer, when he came down from the tree.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 27, 2013, 08:12:05 am**

---

Axel jerked in shock when he heard the mechanical voice and he wheeled his arms, feeling his balance slip. He managed to correct himself, but looked up and saw Lily fall from the branch. "Lily!" he cried out, peering down to see if she was okay... and breathing a sigh of relief when he saw her land in the robot's arms. She looked unharmed.

"Hang on, I'm coming down!" Snatching Lily's dress, he quickly clambered down the tree and jumped the last branch, landing with a crackle amongst the dead leaves. Axel handed the dress to Lily and stepped between them so she could dress in modesty, looking up at the robot that loomed above them. "Uh... thanks for catching her," he said cautiously. He frowned, sharing Lily's distrust in what this thing wanted with Adrian. "Who are you?" *If this thing wanted to harm us, it could have snapped us like twigs by now.* "Why are you looking for Adrian?"

-----

Marcus stepped aside so Aaron could leave his room. "Now we get her to talk. Find out what she knows."

A voice crackled in the radio strapped to Marcus' belt. *"The prisoner is ready for you."*

"On our way." He motioned to Aaron to follow and lead the way down to the end of the corridor, making his way through another series of doors. The place was like a maze. Soon, they came to another hallway with a single door at the end. As they made their way towards it, Marcus looked sideways at Aaron. "We want her to talk, but we can't do lasting damage. Well, not long-lasting damage. Our orders are to keep her functional by the time we're finished with our questions."

They arrived at the door. "She's in here. Are you ready?" After a short pause Marcus opened it, the hinges creaking in protest.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 27, 2013, 06:04:11 pm**

---

"We don't mean to insult you," Lily added hastily, slipping her dress on and sheepishly coming out from behind the tree. "We just...haven't had great luck with surprise visitors in the past."

She came up beside Axel. "If you had any sort of proof or something that Adrian knows you and would want to meet with you..."

-----

Emilena regarded her captors, fighting to keep the strain of exhaustion from her face. It was the pair that had captured her the night of the ambush. She kept silent and merely stared at them; anything she said could just give them further information. They clearly want her alive in her current state; the less she says and does, the longer she can keep it that way.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 27, 2013, 06:57:38 pm**

---

marita grabbed wipes to clean the blood off of adrians face, she lifted his eyelid and saw his eyes were very red, most likely from having red blood vessels leak in the eye. 'he suffered a major head injury' she said..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 27, 2013, 07:42:45 pm**

---

Aaron bared his teeth as he looked at the bound Vixen. He sniffed the air and gave a low growl. "I see or should I say, smell your fear."

He sat on a bland metal chair and put his feet on a table that had been bolted to the floor. "But enough of that, I'm a decent person and I'd be willing to trade, say information?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 27, 2013, 08:23:17 pm**

---

Marcus stepped next to Aaron, his heavy shoes scraping against the concrete floor. The air in the room felt thick, the sound produced by their voices flat and lifeless. He eyed Emilena flatly, as if he were looking at a slab of meat in a slaughterhouse. "He's right. We just want to know what you know. If you tell us, this will be much easier for you."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 27, 2013, 08:40:29 pm**

---

Police training was very clear on this part; answer no questions when a hostage. But Emilena wanted badly to snap back at the small one's comment about her fear.

Her level face turned into a glare, but she gritted her teeth and remained uncharacteristically silent.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 27, 2013, 08:46:55 pm**

---

marita lifted up aidrians head noting the blood pooled on the ground beneath him.. ' hes in reakl bad shape..'

- will he survive/' rose asked as she wound banadages around aidrians head . ' he'll need a low level transplant, or time in a pod' marita said.. ' and it would have to happen quickly..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 28, 2013, 02:03:20 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 28, 2013, 04:41:47 am**

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"If you'll give us a minute..." Lily politely asked, then took Axel behind the tree.

"If he's telling the truth, he might be able to save Adrian," she noted in a whisper, "but if he means harm we're leading him right to our friends. I'm not sure if Adrian can survive without him either way. What should we do?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 28, 2013, 04:54:16 am**

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"I dunno, maybe we *can* trust him," Axel whispered. "It. I mean, it knows about Adrian's condition, and if it wanted him to die all it would need to do is leave him. The way he was looking, I don't think he has much longer left in him... I think this is a risk we need to take.

Plus," he raised a finger knowingly, "He's a German using a robot. That's, like, mad scientist or something - not crazy killer."

-----

Marcus waited for a few moments, but it looked like she wasn't going to say anything. Turning, he made his way across the room to the cupboard. Fixed to the doors were a series of knives, hammers and other implements. He reached past them into the main body of the cupboard and pulled out a car battery.

He walked back and placed it on the metal desk with a heavy *CLUNK*, then went back for the cables. Marcus tossed them over to Aaron. "Fix these to her," he grunted. Then he looked over to Emilena. "This is going to hurt."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 28, 2013, 05:25:27 am**

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Despite herself, Lily smiled wryly. "All right," she said, "we'll trust him...only beause he's a mad scientist."

She stepped back out. "If you follow us, we'll lead you to him. You're right; he's not doing very well at all. My name is Lily, and this is Axel," she introduced, already starting back at a brisk jog; they didn't have time to lose.

-----

Emilena's heart rate quickened and her mouth went dry, but she maintained her posture. (Not like her current state of bondage permitted her to do anything else.) She was scrambling to come up with a reply, either witty or delaying, but she couldn't think straight since she was still shivering with cold. Like a good soldier, she defaulted to her training and remained silent.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 28, 2013, 03:08:48 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 28, 2013, 06:11:36 pm**

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Once the cables were attached and the chances of imminent electrocution became higher, Emilena found herself unable to suffer in silence. "Cutting straight to the torture are we?" she spat. "Not even going to bother trying to coax me, bribe me, or threaten my loved ones first? I know I've got living parents, I'd be heartbroken if you found them and killed them."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 28, 2013, 07:54:26 pm**

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Axel ran up alongside the mechanical figure with Lily. "We found this guy in the woods while... erm..." he started to explain, then coughed. "Anyway, he seems to know Adrian so we brought him here." As he looked between Soren, Anne and Kojuuro, he noticed there were two new women in the group.

"Oh. Hey," he said, scratching the back of his head and raising a hand in a wave.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 29, 2013, 05:41:37 am**

(Factory)

Anne slid the medkit over to the figure but said nothing.

Soren cut the power to the exoskeleton he wore to the absolute minimum. At this level, they just drew enough power to allow him to move. "Okay, once everyone's healed up, how are we going to get out of here? We can't squeeze everyone in the truck I stole? And what about Tony? I don't need another organized crime group on my ass."

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron yawned. "We have our own ways of doing things." Without warning, he snapped an electrical cord against Emilena's tail.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 01:45:31 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 29, 2013, 02:17:41 pm**

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Tony shook his head here. "They won't come after you provided I at least maintain some form of contact with them. All I really need is transportation back to the city, and then I can have them pick me up when I get there." he explained. "As said, I'm sure you want me out of your hair as much as I want to avoid any trouble with your group, so just leave me at some busy street corner and I'll get in touch with my family." he offered.

He briefly considered getting his family to assist in fixing up Adrian, as his father could easily pull strings so that the law would look the other way while Adrian was worked on, but he wasn't really certain if his father would be too keen on helping a non-family member out. He remained silent on that for now, glancing down at Adrian once more, and then turning away as the... machine prepared to start his procedure on him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 07:16:28 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 07:27:13 pm**

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Lily noticed that Kojurro was alone, and turned to Axel. "I have to talk to Kojurro about something," she whispered. "For his privacy I need to be alone, sorry. Be back soon..."

She quietly left the room and walked up to Kojurro. "Before you make that call, can we talk?" whispered Lily softly.

-----

Emilena yelped, then immediately sealed her mouth. Such displays of weakness were not acceptable.

"Look, I know you guys probably get off on doing this to people, but maybe your interrogation would go better if you, I don't know, *told me* what it was you wanted to know?" She shot back, smiling despite herself. She enjoyed opportunities to be snappy at people who supposedly held all the power.

It was then that she felt it; the beginnings of that pressure building up in her abdomen. *Oh, for god's sake, not now...*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 07:29:14 pm**

-REDACTED-

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 07:43:02 pm**

"I need you to do something for me..." Lily took a deep breath. "You're not going to want to. But it's important. I need you to promise me that you'll do it before I can tell you what it is."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 07:47:50 pm**

-REDACTED-

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 07:54:41 pm**

"All right, thanks..." Lily glanced behind her to make sure nobody else had followed them outside. "At some point, our group's all going to go to sleep, me included. When that happens...when I am completely asleep...I need you to sneak into my room quietly...and kill me."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 29, 2013, 08:09:53 pm**

Axel nodded to Lily as she left, then turned to Soren. "I know with all this going on with Adrian..." he started, glancing back to where Adrian was lying on the floor. He saw the blade start slicing into his flesh, and blanched, turning back quickly.

"With all this going on, we shouldn't forget that we have nowhere else to go now," he tried again, his tail curling around his leg nervously. "Even if we somehow managed to get everyone out of here, we need somewhere safe. And quiet. Especially with all the attention we're getting." Axel looked at Tony. "I guess being taken in by the mob is off the cards, right?" he said, only half-joking.

-----

Marcus stared at Emilena. "You're not stupid. You know what we want to know. What were you doing with Kibigami? What were you doing at the city hospital?" When Aaron connected the second cable to her, Marcus grunted.

"Not really interested in answers now." The other end of the cable was already connected to the cathode on the battery. Marcus picked up the second cable. "This is just the warm up." He clipped the cable to the anode, and electricity surged through Emilena.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 08:15:43 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 08:36:32 pm**

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"Look me in the eyes," Lily said firmly. A single tear was falling down her face, but her gaze was unflinching. "Tell me you'll do it. I'd prefer by sword."

-----

Emilena arched her back and cried out as hundreds of volts of electricity coursed through her body. Every hair on her body stood on end as her skin crackled with sparks.

The pain was everywhere, it was unbearable...or at least it should of been. What started as a cry of pain quickly turned into suspiciously long drawn out moans. Moans that didn't sound like the electricity was having its intended effect.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 08:39:29 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 08:41:11 pm**

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"I want to hear it," Lily repeated, when he trailed off. Her eyes regarded him pleadingly. "I need to hear you say you'll do it. Please."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 08:43:11 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 29, 2013, 08:44:31 pm**

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Tony suddenly brightened up at Axel's words, an idea forming in his mind. "Hey! Actually..." he said now, raising a claw. "That just MIGHT... be possible! I think I thought of a way to get myself home... and perhaps get you some protection too!" he exclaimed, suddenly growing excited.

"So what if you guys take me to my father's place... but claim that you guys rescued me from... something... maybe the Purifiers, and well... I know for a fact that my father rewards loyalty very well. He'd owe you a favor for safely returning me... so whatever you guys want, just ask!" Tony rattled off the details now, starting to smile.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 08:44:35 pm**

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"Like what?" Lily asked. There was one more caveat to her request, but she waited to hear what Kojurro wanted.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 08:45:59 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 08:50:41 pm**

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Lily paused. "I...don't really know what you want. But I'll think about it."

She put her hand on his shoulder. "This means a lot to me that you're willing to do this. I couldn't have asked anyone else."

She turned to leave, and said over her shoulder. "You're only off the hook if I tell you to stop. Otherwise...I'll see you tonight."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 08:58:16 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 09:01:53 pm**

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"Unless you give me more specifics on what you'd like that request to be..." Lily glanced down, wondering what had brushed her leg, "I'm going to talk to someone. It may be a posthumous request."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 09:11:52 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 09:18:21 pm**

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Lily paused as she digested this, and then her mouth dropped open. "Seriously?" she exclaimed. "*That's* what you--?" She broke off, her face had turned a beet red but she swallowed and put her hand over her mouth. "I...have to think about this. I just can't believe..."

She broke off. She was silent for a few seconds. Finally she just turned and left to be on her own.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 09:20:48 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 29, 2013, 09:47:57 pm**

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron looked rather nauseated at Emilena's arousal at the electric torture. "Ugh! Turn it off!" He disconnected the power cable. "I don't need to see some deviant getting off on this!"

He then smiled as he realized he had some leverage over her. "You know what? Emilena, I have a question to ask. What were you doing at Soren Almaya's house? Answer right and we'll let you have some fun." He caressed the battery cable.

He then snapped the piece of broken electrical wire against the floor. "Or would you prefer a flogging instead?"

-----

(Robotics Factory)

Soren nodded. "Okay, I'll do it." He turned to Anne. "What do you say?"

Anne said nothing but lit up another marijauna spliff. The sight of the blade cutting into flesh didn't bother her because she had previously cut off external augments off of dead people to sell.

He turned to Axel. "Well, I guess it's settled. We'll bring Tony back and maybe find a place we can lay low...at least until I can get all my s--- together and then I can go f--- up those Purifier freaks once and for all!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 09:52:04 pm**

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Emilena panted, head spinning. *What the hell had just...?* For her first time getting tortured, she thought it would be more...torturous.

She couldn't speak at first; her nerves were still firing off at random and she was hyperventilating something fierce.

"I...had been...trying to...arrest him..." she finally panted, tongue lolling out of her mouth. "He's an augment.....I know it...I just had to prove it...flogging, please."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 09:57:18 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 29, 2013, 09:58:50 pm**

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Aaron smiled. "Good." He connected the wire back to the battery.

After a thirty second "ride" he disconnected the wire. "Keep going."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 29, 2013, 09:58:54 pm**

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Axel nodded. "Alright. That sounds like a plan. Except maybe for the part where you go and, ah, 'f\*\*k up' the Purifiers. The last time you met them, they kicked your ass." He gave Tony a nervous grin. "Not your fault though, I'm sure. Hey, we aren't going to owe your family any favours, are we? I mean, I've seen 'The Godfather'."

-----

Marcus frowned, glancing down at Aaron. This wasn't going how he'd expected. He took Aaron's seat and leaned back, watching the exchange between the two with something bordering on disgust. *At least it's getting results.*

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 29, 2013, 10:06:22 pm**

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"Ohhhh!!!" Emilena moaned again as the cables went live again, sending her straining at the ropes binding her. She couldn't describe it; the pain was setting her alight in a way she'd never experienced or thought she could. It was holding the pressure in her abdomen at bay and sending her brain scrambling to even comprehend all of it. She was well aware that something was very wrong with this picture, but all she could think about was: *That bitch! I said I wanted flogging!*

And then the electricity stopped.

"This next one better be a flogging or I'm not telling you jack," growled Emilena.

She looked quite strange, with every strand of hair sticking straight out and short sparks crackling down her sides. The parts of her connected to cables were badly singed. "The arrest failed because some idiot typoed on the warrant. Then I lost my badge because I had been on probation. I've been trying to find alone time with him since, so I can knock him out and drag him to the nearest police station."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 29, 2013, 10:11:05 pm**

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Tony shook his head rapidly. "Oh no! Not if you explain it like I told you! If anything, he'd owe you!" the ferret exclaimed. "That is, if you sell the story the right way. You performed a service to him, so he'd owe you one. I mean my pops owns a shipping business too, so that might be a convenient way of getting around. He's also wealthy, and has lots of safe houses, so whatever you want, really!" Tony seemed to be getting more comfortable with this idea with each passing minute, and in addition was starting to more visibly relax as well.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 29, 2013, 11:30:05 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 30, 2013, 12:04:19 am**

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron facepalmed. "Great, and we were doing so well too."

A *crack* echoed through the room as he whipped the floor with his electrical cord. "I'm done with this." He then shuddered. "Ugh, I need a cold shower and a stiff drink after this."

He put away the electrical cord and removed all the electrodes from Emilena.

-----

(Robotics Factory)

Soren nodded. "Deal." He wrapped his metal clad hand around Tony's own hand and shook it to seal the deal.

He then turned to Axel. "All right, everyone ready?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 30, 2013, 12:22:40 am**

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Tony shook Soren's hand firmly, and nodded. "Sure... I'm ready." he said. He'd have to provide directions, but it'd be easy enough. He knew where his father's house was... even after a year or so, he could still get there. He'd just need some more... prominent landmarks that weren't an abandoned factory.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 30, 2013, 12:37:33 am**

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Emilena gasped as the torturing got a bit more personal. Spasming and shaking, she began whimpering and crying with emotion. At that moment, she felt two completely separate parts of her mind connect; *this* is what lovemaking with Adrian was missing.

As it went on, something was building up inside her, peaking like a wave. She remembered it from nights with Adrian, except far more intense... "Oh! Oh god! Unnggghhh..."

Abruptly Aaron disconnected everything, and with a pang she felt the feeling die down, leaving her feeling incredibly bloated and tight. *Goddamit, I was so close...*

Still, the torturing could have gone far worse. Reminding herself that she'd gotten off easy, she regarded Marcus, smiling lazily through heavy ragged breaths. "Is that all you got?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 30, 2013, 12:59:20 am**

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Rose and Marita assisted with treating Adrian, as best they could, while marie taried to make conversation with the others..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 30, 2013, 09:03:14 am**

---

"Yeah," Axel agreed, "You bet I'm ready." He looked down and raised his foot as one of the little robots hurried past him to the German's side. "It looks like Adrian's getting treated pretty well, so he should be okay to move soon. Lily went out to speak with Kojuuro, but I think they'll be ready too. They've been gone a while though..."

Glancing out, Axel was about to make his way to where Lily had headed to see if everything was alright when he noticed Marie making her way over. He gave her a grateful smile. "Hey. Thanks for coming to help, I didn't really think he was going to make it for a second there. I'm Axel." He offered her a hand. "This is Soren, and that's Tony. Or *Don* Tony if you don't want to get whacked."

-----

Marcus glared at Emilena. Rising slowly from the chair, he stalked over to her. "Whoever you pray to, thank him that you won't get to see everything we've got." Pulling his knife from the back of his belt, he pressed the blade against her face, just enough to draw a thin line of blood. "Yet," he growled, as he raised the knife and cut the rope connecting her to the pulley, his mouth twisted in a snarl as he watched her collapse to the floor.

Sheathing the knife, he yanked one of her arms up behind her back and grabbed a fistful of her hair, pulling Emilena up. "We're getting her to the cells," he said lowly to Aaron. "The sooner we're done with her, the sooner I can make her really scream."

Marcus dragged her out of the room, and down the maze of corridors leading to the cells. He stopped outside the one marked C3. Motioning for Aaron to open it, he leaned down to Emilena's ear. "We'll see you later," he growled as he tossed her in and slammed the door behind her. He looked sideways at the German Shepard. "That was a first. But at least you got her to start talking."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **December 30, 2013, 11:50:33 am**

Tony chuckled now as he was introduced to Marie. "I'm not a don... not even close." he said, shaking his head and smiling. "You don't have to worry about that. Heck, I'm not even an underboss, though my dad wants me to be someday... after I've grown up a bit, I guess." he stated sheepishly, shrugging here. "So yeah, don't worry... I'm not going to be 'whacking' anyone." he chortled.

Tony had noticed this group didn't seem to be too bad. After their guard was lowered, and they started relaxing, there wasn't much difference between them and others with no augments whatsoever. The ferret still had his reservations about the whole thing, but it seemed this bunch was nice overall, and not a threat to society as he'd initially believed. Were they really OK? Could he trust them? He had precious little choices at this point, so for now, he'd observe them, see what they were all about, and maybe try and learn more about their perspective to see if his own would change any.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 30, 2013, 12:59:02 pm**

-REDACTED-

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **December 30, 2013, 01:01:44 pm**

rose and Marits helped lift adrian from the ground and carry him to maries car which was waiting outside ' where to now? Marita asked

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 30, 2013, 02:08:19 pm**

Lily silently returned from her walk, putting on a smile for the others.

-----

Emilena reflected on the experience as she was dragged to her cell, not really listening to Marcus. Despite her body being charred, bruised, and cut she felt more alive than she ever had before. If she ever escaped, she'd need to talk to Adrian about this.

She grunted as she was thrown onto the stone floor of a jail cell. Sitting up slowly, she glanced around her new abode. Aside from the dirt-streaked stone walls and titanium bars, notable things in the room consisted of a rusted sink, a cracked metal toilet, and a familiar Indian Cobra...

She leapt to her feet. "Sanjay Bhat, you insipid worm!" She cast her eyes around for anything

sharp she could use as a shank; she remembered her promise last time they briefly met. Sadly the cell didn't have anything up to that task.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **December 30, 2013, 04:55:51 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 30, 2013, 07:57:38 pm**

---

Axel looked back at Kojuuro and grinned. "Awesome. It looks like things are actually working out for a change - these guys just fixed Adrian up, and Tony's going to be able to help us out." He looked at Lily. "Nice to get some good news for once, right?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 30, 2013, 11:23:59 pm**

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Once Lily was filled in on the details, she asked, "So, we're 100% sure we can trust these transporters? Whoever they are?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 31, 2013, 12:50:40 am**

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(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay bared his metallic fangs as he reared up and spread his hood. Thanks to the fact that he had killed a Purifier, his artificial venom tanks were still intact. They debated surgically removing them but in the end, they simply settled for eventually killing him to send a message.

"You! You're the one who tried blackmailing me!" Beads of his natural venom began to appear on the tips of his metal fangs.

-----

Aaron shrugged as he sat on a metal chair. "Yeah, I got her to talk but seeing her practically cum when I tortured her...ugh. Now if you'll excuse me, I need a cold shower and a stiff drink." He opened the door to the cell block and headed back to the livin quarters.

-----

(Robotics Factory)

Soren got into the rear compartment of the stolen truck. "Okay, Axel, you drive."

He then rubbed an armored hand across his helmeted head. "Now I have to decide where we can go. Right now, I want to find Emilena so I can extract info from her. But first, I need some extra firepower."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 31, 2013, 01:36:56 am**

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"I asked for your help in escaping a combat zone while drugged!" Emilena shot back. "Hardly blackmail. Though considering you stole Class 3 Augments from the government yet didn't flee

the country, I shouldn't have been surprised at your selfishness or that you were stupid enough to get captured and locked up in here!"

Due to her lack of weapon she simply assumed an unarmed combat stance with her fists. If he felt like attacking her, she knew a form of disarming judo designed to work against opponents who fight with their mouth. His fangs gave him the defensive advantage, so she couldn't initiate the fight, though she wanted to.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 31, 2013, 01:46:16 am**

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"Where do you think I was planning to go!?" Sanjay snapped. He swayed as he watched Emilena assume a combat ready stance.

His limited training and on the job learning gave him plenty of hand-to-hand combat pointers. He was aware that if someone either threw a punch or a kick, his favored tactic was to weave around it, exploiting his narrow and slender body and then either trap the offending limb with his arms or wrap his body around it and then use his fangs.

Knowing this, he decided to goad Emilena into throwing the first strike. "So I heard some moaning coming from the torture chamber. It sounded like you. My, you are a kinky one, getting off on things like that!" He flicked his tongue at her. "And I can taste it; you're getting wet at the thought of being dangled from a pole and then flogged. Am I right?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 31, 2013, 02:00:53 am**

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Emilena growled. "I bet I managed better than you would have! I can only imagine the sorry state your ass would be in if it were ridden as hard as mine just was by three interrogators at once!"

Were she not covered in red fur, her face would be practically ruby. Both of her fists twitched, and her memory of the defensive-oriented combat stance was being overridden by her desire to punch Sanjay in the face as hard as she could.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **December 31, 2013, 02:53:40 am**

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Sanjay smirked. "My, someone likes it rough! I'll bet you're just begging for them to come back so you can lift up your tail and have some fun with them?"

He flicked his tongue at her. "Am I right, you filthy Vixen?"

Sanjay took careful note of Emilena's twitching. He was getting to her!

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **December 31, 2013, 02:58:22 am**

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Emilena was not interested in hearing smack from a loathsome individual like Sanjay. Darting forward with inhuman reflexes, she aimed for a full-body tackle centered around the chest. A snake's primary weakness was where the head connected to the body; if she could get an elbow, fist or her fangs in there, that would shut his mouth up right.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **December 31, 2013, 08:06:41 am**

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Axel hopped into the driver's seat, leaving the door open. He leaned out. "I guess we can think of a plan while we wait for Kojuuro's transport. Hey, Anne probably knows some back-alley dealers we can get some extra guns from!" His ears perked up as he had the idea. "Not to say there's anything wrong with being a back-alley kind of person..." Axel added hastily. Anne's horn looked horribly sharp.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 01, 2014, 04:08:43 am**

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(Robotics Factory)

Anne pinched off the burnt end of her spliff and ate the marijauna inside. "Name something and I can probably get it."

"Tony!" Soren called from the back of the truck. "Coming with us or Kojurro's 'transporters'?"

-----

(Purifier Compound)

Unfortunately for Emilena, Sanjay was *extremely* limber. He seemed to bend around her as she tried to tackle him. Dropping lower to the ground, he made a number of sexual gestures with his hands.

He smiled. "I see someone likes it rough."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 01, 2014, 04:43:54 am**

---

"You can't dodge forever in a cell the size of a closet!" Emilena snarled, lashing out with her foot at his side. When he dodged that too, she abandoned all pretense of defense and just attempted a sliding bullrush, attempting to pin him between herself and the cell bars. By staying low to the ground, she could manipulate the fact that he can't jump. "Let's see how clever you are when I rip your hemipenes out of your body!"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 01, 2014, 12:30:27 pm**

---

"With you guys, I guess!" the ferret responded, jogging over to the back of the truck and hopping in now. He'd stay with the familiar faces... and while technically everyone was familiar, he'd been interacting the most (and rather well too, much to his relief) with a few of the ones in the truck, so the truck it was. He knew none of them trusted him, and that was fine. He didn't completely trust them either. He could work on that though by getting them into his father's good graces... and hope they reciprocated. Though at the same time, he was still extremely uneasy about teaming up with others who used augments.

Not too long ago he'd been opposed to this very group he was riding with after all, but they didn't seem vicious, or evil. They were just trying to survive with what they had. That wasn't so bad... was it? He just wished Adrian was up and talking, as he'd seemed very reasonable after capturing the ferret. He'd pointed out an alternate view on things that Tony hadn't considered before. Either way, Tony was now determined to help Adrian as much as possible, until he recovered. He felt obligated since Adrian had spared his life, and it was a debt the ferret was looking to repay.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 01, 2014, 01:20:24 pm**

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(Purifier Complex)

Sanjay grunted as he was smashed between the cell and Emilena. He coughed a bit as he wriggled upwards. "Bad move."

He opened his mouth and plunged his fangs into her shoulder and shot a dose of his highly neurotoxic venom into her. Her clothing offered no resistance to his metallic fangs.

-----

(Robotics Factory)

"Sup," Anne replied. She leaned against the truck's stolen cargo. Her eyes were slightly glazed over and she reeked of marijauna.

Soren nodded as Tony climbed in.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 01, 2014, 02:43:48 pm**

---

"Uh... hey." Tony gave Anne a slight wave, noting the heavy stench of weed about her. It made his head swim, and he briefly considered holding his nose, but decided against it, the fear of being rude outweighing his fear of getting high by the end of this trip.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 01, 2014, 03:13:00 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 01, 2014, 04:46:11 pm**

---

Axel grinned and leaned back towards Tony. "It's okay. The smell kind of grows on you after a while," he said lightly, then looked out at Lily. "You getting in? There's room for one more up front." The heavy duty SUVs rolling in set him somewhat at ease. *At least there's less chance of us being attacked. Pretty conspicuous though.*

"I guess we should go ahead so Tony can lead the way for the rest of you," he called out to Kojuuro.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 01, 2014, 06:57:19 pm**

---

Lily didn't hear Axel, she was taking the opportunity to ask the doctor something, since finally Adrian was stabilized and he had a free moment. "Doctor...can I ask you something?" She showed him her head, skin, and the tattoo on her breast. "Have you heard of anything that causes this? Do you know what's...what's happening to me?"

-----

Emilena cried out as her body was flooded with poisonous toxins. She had her arms in a stranglehold around Sanjay's neck, and even as she grew paralyzed she could feel him short for breath. She couldn't remove her hands if she wanted. *At least I'm taking the bastard with me...*

"Well, it looks like you two are having fun," a third voice suddenly said from outside the cell. The wolf agent appeared, carrying a syringe and a pistol. "But playtime is over. "

With a swift kick through the bars he sent Emilena skidding off of Sanjay. Keeping the pistol trained right between Sanjay's eyes, the wolf grabbed Emilena's leg, dragged her up against the bars, and stabbed the syringe through her heart with surgical precision.

As Emilena gasped and curled up in the fetal position, unable to control her muscles when they all relaxed simultaneously, the wolf observed Sanjay. "No more of that, I need her alive. I'd also prefer to keep you alive as well, so if you could kindly work to prevent further such instances, that'd be optimal. I'm the only one preventing the Purifiers from killing you both."

Whoever this man was, he wasn't any Purifier either of them had ever seen.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 02, 2014, 02:21:49 am**

(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay made a face of disgust as he slithered away from the growing puddle of bodily fluids forming around Emilena. He clutched a hand to his side; Emilena's tackle had broken at least sixteen of his ribs. "Who the f--- are you?" he said between coughs.

-----

(Robotics Factory)

Even in her stoned condition, Anne's ears pricked up and began swiveling around. "Hey, anyone know why so many new cars are arriving?"

Soren shrugged. "Dunno but I hope those are Kojuuro's Transporters. If they're not, well, we're f---ed."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 02, 2014, 01:16:27 pm**

-REDACTED-

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 02, 2014, 04:43:17 pm**

"I don't remember," Lily replied softly. "About four days ago, I woke up in the middle of the forest with no memory. Since then..." She wondered whether she could trust him with the details. *Well, he is assisting a wounded criminal...* "Since then I've been on the run from the police. I haven't managed to find anyone that can explain what I did."

She glanced at the tattoo, relieved to see it hadn't dropped since last time. "I don't think I had that tattoo before either."

-----

"My name is Agent Lupis," the wolf introduced himself. "And I work for the government. We have...a bit of a situation, and our Vulpine friend has already encountered it."

Emilena managed to sit up, coughing violently. Her ears pricked. *Is he talking about that Sapaar woman?*

Her suspicions were confirmed when Lupis held out a headshot. "Lily North has become something of a topic of interest to the government. As such topics tend to do, she has gone missing and my assignment is to retrieve her. Somehow she has allied herself with a proficient

team of survivors, most of whom have been hiding from authority for most of their lives. This has made it difficult to approach her."

"Well, that's your problem," Emilena snapped. She tried to stand up, wobbled, and fell over.

"It can be your problem if you like," Lupis added dryly. "I offer both of you complete immunity from your past crimes, and licenses to keep any Augments or other equipment you currently possess." The wolf was glancing at Sanjay when he said this. "In return, you assist me in catching Ms. North."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 02, 2014, 06:28:31 pm**

Axel rested his elbow on the truck's window sill. "Well, sure, your transport might be bulletproof, but we've got all the groceries we could want back here," he said, gesturing towards the boxes piled around Soren, Tony and Anne. "So I guess it's even." He glanced around at the others talking outside, then turned back to Kojuuro. "So, are we about ready to go? Hanging around here for too long probably isn't a good idea."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 03, 2014, 02:45:04 am**

(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay flicked his tongue in and out. The idea of being allowed to keep his augments greatly appealed to him. "Hmm, I like this. But there has to be some more strings attached."

-----

(Robotics Factory)

"I'd like to go for stealth," Soren replied to Kojuuro. He then noticed that his suit suddenly became noticeably heavier. "Great, my suit's batteries are dead."

Anne got to her feet. "Maybe we can plug you into the vehicle's electrical system." She dragged Soren out of the truck and onto the concrete parking lot.

She popped open the recharging port and eyed it along with the portable charger clipped to his suit. The hexagonal port on the truck wasn't compatible with the t-shaped plug on his charger.

"Oh, this might need a little work."

Soren struggled to his feet and climbed back into the truck with a bit of difficulty thanks to the weight of his now unpowered exoskeleton. "Deal with that later! Right now, we're hauling ass out of here!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 03, 2014, 03:54:11 am**

"There really aren't," the wolf replied sincerely. "No offense, Mr. Bhat, but you are an extremely small fish compared to this woman. Ms. North contains one of the most dangerous secrets our government has ever held, and they'd be willing to empty death row if it would guarantee her retrieval. But I think the two of you have the skillset needed for this job."

"Wait, you want me to work with *him*?" interrupted Emilena, suddenly finding more than enough strength to leap up indignantly. "I refuse! I can capture this female alone; I already know where she is!"

"Not an option," Agent Lupis responded without hesitation. "You're too much of a loose cannon. Mr. Bhat has the analytic mind and long-term planning philosophy that a capture of this nature needs to succeed. I expect you to follow his orders if and when he makes them. On the other hand, Mr. Bhat, you are to--"

--Why the hell should I agree to any of this?" snapped Emilena again, causing the wolf to sigh irritably. "I don't have any illegal augments, and I'm following my own plan to get my job back--"

"Broadstreet has already scratched your name from the records," the wolf said through a tired facepalm. "And your badge has been reassigned to a new recruit. You really thought he'd ever consider reenlisting an officer with your number of black marks? I never offered your old job back, Ms. Echo, because the possibility of that occurring is slim to none."

Emilena opened her mouth again but Lupis cut her off. "*Instead*, I'm offering you a new job. As a government agent, like myself. Access to the highest quality technology, dealing with threats of national importance. A sphere of influence greater than anything you've done before."

That shut Emilena up.

"No more questions, no more explanations," the wolf continued, shooting Emilena sideways glance. "You each get one sentence before I walk away. I'm asking you both to work together to retrieve Lily North and bring her to me *alive*. Upon that happening, your records are cleared, past debts are erased and the government pretends your old selves don't exist any more. Will you accept my terms?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 03, 2014, 07:15:00 pm**

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(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay smiled. "Deal," he said, shaking Agent Lupis's hand.

He then turned to Emilena. "I don't like you anymore than you like me, but the reward is too good to pass up. So don't f--- this up!"

-----

(Robotics Factory)

Soren propped himself up against the truck's shelves. "Axel, we're ready to go."

He then turned to Tony. "Tony, mind giving Axel a hand with navigation?"

The armored Human then turned to Kojuuro. "We need to drop someone off first, you mind setting a rendezvous point later?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 03, 2014, 10:25:23 pm**

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The wolf nodded respectfully. "I figured you would know a good deal when you heard it." He glanced at Emilena. "You on the other hand..."

Emilena folded her arms. She realized that the alternative was dying in a Purifier cell. "...fine."

"Fine what?" pressed Lupis.

"Fine I'll work with the snake to catch the woman!" Emilena snapped. "But it's not my fault if he gets himself killed or ruins the assignment!"

"Yes it is." The wolf pressed a button and a transparent aluminum wall started rising from the floor, flush with the bars. "Your job is to follow his orders and keep him alive. Fail to do either and you won't be an agent in my department any time soon. Now, share some quality time together, and this time keep your hands to yourself. The purifiers will be releasing you once I've finished negotiations."

With that the glassy wall sealed the cell off from outside noise, and the wolf disappeared into the shadows. Then two ceiling sprinklers began lightly spraying the room and its occupants with the healing gel that filled cloning pods, a cheap way of fixing up the occupants' minor wounds.

"Eergh..." Emilena flashed her eyes at Sanjay, like it was his fault. "I *just* showered this gunk off me..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 03, 2014, 10:34:37 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 03, 2014, 10:50:35 pm**

---

Marie drove rose, marita and gittsun after the others, trying to keep pasce with the delivery truck in front of them. ' where they were going, they werent quite sure..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 03, 2014, 10:50:38 pm**

---

The ferret nodded, and moved towards the front, sliding so that he could speak to Axel. "OK, well you know the Garden Parkway?" Tony asked, leaning into the driver's compartment. "My father's compound is a large place called the Heights near the western edge of the city. It's well guarded so... you should probably let me do the talking when we get close." Tony said, giving Axel a smile. "We'll be fine so long as you don't drive up to the gate too fast. Just slow down when I say, and we'll be good." he reassured the driver.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 03, 2014, 11:02:37 pm**

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"Counting down..." murmured Lily, lost in thought.

"Hey, all aboard!" whooped one of Kojurro's companions. "Ship's away in five!"

Lily noticed that Tony had taken the spot next to Axel. So she waved Kojurro over and led him into his companion's transports.

"Is there a...private place on these?" she asked.

"Uh, I guess we can keep everyone else out of this SUV," the driver replied, focusing on the pre-departure preparations. He pressed a button and a tinted screen rose up between the driver's area and the passenger bay.

Now alone with Kojurro, Lily began pulling her dress over her head. "Here's your half of the favor," she said softly. "Take as long as you want...we have the whole car ride..."

Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 03, 2014, 11:10:43 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 03, 2014, 11:18:34 pm**

---

"Okay, sounds like a plan. I guess I'll have to test whether this windscreen's bulletproof or not on another day," Axel said, laughing nervously, painfully aware that with the red blood smears on his grey t-shirt, he was essentially a moving bullseye. He turned the key in the ignition and the engine sputtered to life unhealthily. Slipping it into first, he started moving the truck towards the exit, beeping the horn to alert the SUVs that they'd started moving.

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 03, 2014, 11:27:28 pm**

---

"That's not how favors work," Lily said in a low voice. She shuddered. "This is for you. Then you'll have to fulfill your half...when we all go to sleep..."

She embraced him, looking nervous. She had to get Kojurro to follow through on what she needed later...gently she stroked him through his pants. "Come on..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 03, 2014, 11:30:53 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 03, 2014, 11:37:45 pm**

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"I will, I will," Lily responded hastily. "Don't worry about that. I'll enjoy myself, I promise. Go go..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 03, 2014, 11:47:01 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 03, 2014, 11:57:11 pm**

---

Lily took a deep breath and smiled. She allowed herself to be lowered to the floor. "I'm sorry, I'll be more relaxed." She closed her eyes and blanked her mind. "I'm always so tightly wound, aren't I...?" She took a few more deep breaths. "...okay...relaxed..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **Nick22** on **January 03, 2014, 11:58:49 pm**

---

marita browsed through her putrse looking for a fake id id she could use to bluf her way though any secure location, well almost any..

Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 12:00:16 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 12:09:25 am**

---

Lily smiled and relaxed her muscles. She ran her hands down Kojurro's sides, slipping his coat off.

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 12:16:21 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 12:22:13 am**

---

Lily blushed. "I'm glad you think so..."

She traced his face with her hand, wincing only slightly at the sight of her long spindly grey fingers. "I think you're handsome too..."

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 12:39:22 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 01:24:54 am**

---

Lily winced as Kujurro's lips brushed the tattoo. She half expected something horrible to happen, but to her relief the tattoo merely behaved like a tattoo.

"I'm glad to hear that..." she sighed. Her hand clenched his tightly.

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 01:35:16 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 01:38:25 am**

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Lily shuddered and moaned loudly. Her breath got haggard as he traveled lower.

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Title: **Into the Black**  
Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 01:39:46 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 01:46:36 am**

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Lily winced as his touch; she wasn't very familiar with foreplay, she suspected that she wasn't a very sexual person. But it still felt good, if weird, and she moaned again.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 01:49:15 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 05:45:10 am**

---

Lily winced again and arched her back, still unfamiliar with such treatment and feeling slightly overwhelmed. Part of her worried that she may have 'changed' down there, but the other part of her was too self-conscious to ask.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 01:23:57 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 04:42:54 pm**

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"I'm...fine," she panted. "I've never...done this before..."

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 04, 2014, 05:31:42 pm**

---

marie and wiped her brow as she continued following the others.. ' rose was catching a quick nap in the back seat while Marita gazed at a atlas..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 06:10:49 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 04, 2014, 06:22:53 pm**

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(Lanthae Skyways)

The repulsortruck flew through the smoggy skyways of Lanthae.

"So Tony," Soren said from the back of the truck. "Once, we're at your place, is there anything else we need to know about?"

A loud bang issued from the outside as a hoverbiking hooligan threw a bottle at the stolen delivery truck.

Anne was surrounded by opened boxes and ripped packing material as she began open all the

packages in search of something she could hock or get high off of.

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(Purifier Complex)

Sanjay groaned as the thick slime covered him. Miraculously, he could feel his broken ribs starting to mend.

"Great, I'm going to need a change of clothes ó and a shower," he muttered as he scraped globs of the healing goop off of his face.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 07:04:52 pm**

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"I apologize," Lily said hastily. "I'm not very good at this, are I?"

She stroked the top of his head. "You're doing fine, it feels great," she smiled back at him. "I love it."

-----

"Quit your whining, at least you *have* clothes!" Emilena shot back. "They better give me at least a pair of pants before dropping me on the streets."

She wiped her face clean as the sprinklers shut off. "So, Sun Tzu, what's your brilliant strategy the wolf wouldn't shut up about?"

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 04, 2014, 07:22:58 pm**

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Axel jumped as the bottle bounced off the window. "Hey!" he shouted through the glass, then recoiled as the thug started drifting towards them. Luckily, he was cut off from them by a flow of traffic heading in the opposite direction. Axel flew the truck through a dark cloud of exhaust smoke, and turned to see what the rustling in the back was. "Any food back there, Anne? I could kill for a bag of 'Funyuns'."

He nodded at Soren's question and glanced at Tony. "Yeah, are there any, like, secret hand signals to show we're cool and they don't need to.. you know, shoot us?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 07:41:43 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 04, 2014, 09:04:15 pm**

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"Anything you do is fine," Lily smiled again, then lying back. "Keep going as long as you like..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 04, 2014, 09:15:15 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 05, 2014, 02:20:09 am**

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Lily squinted her eyes tightly shut as he continued, and exhaled sharply. She focused on keeping her mind very very blank, so that she didn't disrupt him again. She couldn't stop wondering when the sex was going to start, but then she had said he could take his time...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 05, 2014, 02:25:45 am**

---

"Ummmm." Tony scratched his head with a claw now, pushing his hat back. "Remember to show respect to the capos if they're around; they're kind of like the... lead enforcers I guess, and oh, do the same for my father's consigliere, and most importantly, my father, if you speak to him. He likes polite people." Tony commented now. "Don't piss the underboss off, or my dad for that matter, and well did I mention respect?" he asked again, knowing he had.

"No secret hand signals... at least there weren't when I left. Basically just drive slowly up to the gate, and let me do the talking." he reiterated, cracking a smile at the secret hand signals. "Too fast will get this truck shot up like Swiss cheese, and we don't want that. My father will extend you his hospitality for helping me, so just try and reciprocate by showing him you're grateful. You shouldn't owe him anything, since he'll be repaying you with his hospitality for helping me out, and maybe even extend you a few other favors."the ferret explained now.

"The big rule not to break is DON'T insult the family. So long as you're courteous and respectful, you'll get the same back." he concluded.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 05, 2014, 04:38:14 am**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 05, 2014, 07:46:50 am**

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Lily smiled and kissed him back. "Mmmm..." she smiled warmly, as it seemed the right thing to do in the moment.

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 06, 2014, 10:31:11 am**

---

"Alright, so keep the jokes to myself. Got it." Axel gave Tony a wan grin. "Pity, I had a couple of good ones." Through the dusty windscreen, he saw a sign indicating **Garden Parkway**. "We'll be there in a few miles guys," Axel announced.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 07, 2014, 05:52:41 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 07, 2014, 05:58:39 pm**

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Lily sighed. "I'm sorry, Kojurro...I just don't think I'm a very sexual person. You can keep going, but you should just focus on pleasuring yourself. You were doing a fine job, it's just

me."

She shivered in the puddle of cold sweat that had formed in the lengthy amount of time since they had started.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 07, 2014, 06:23:17 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 07, 2014, 06:29:03 pm**

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Lily smiled weakly. "Oh-okay...if you're sure..."

She lay back and focused on the roof of the car.

-----

"Hello?" Emilena flung a handful of green goop at Sanjay. "Earth to Sanjay? You're supposed to be giving orders, apparently you're really good at that?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 07, 2014, 06:30:58 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 07, 2014, 06:44:16 pm**

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"ETA five minutes," the driver said over the intercom.

Lily jumped. "Come on, you're almost out of time!" Tiredly she slipped his coat off and scabbled at his belt buckle. "Quickly, let's go!"

If she didn't seal the deal, he'd be under no obligation to seal his...

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 07, 2014, 07:12:37 pm**

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(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay flung the goop out of his eyes as he looked around. The bars were too narrow for him to slip between and the area appeared to be deserted.

He noticed a security camera in the corner and flung a handful of the healing slime at it.

"All right," he whispered. "That should attract attention. Once the guards come, we can subdue them, grab their weapons and flee."

-----

The repulsortruck turned down the aforementioned street. The area was surprisingly nice and clean with none of the garbage and bums lying about.

"Tony," Soren asked. "That complex up ahead, is that where we're going?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 07, 2014, 07:13:04 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 07, 2014, 07:20:47 pm**

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"No, no..." Lily forced his belt off desperately and tried to pull his pants down, "That's not good enough! Come on, we had a deal!"

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Emilena grinned. She suspected there were some serious flaws in that plan, but that's never stopped her before. "I figured we can't trust that bastard either. You've been here a while, got any shivs or improvised weapons you've made around here?"

She clutched the only weapon she'd been left with; the syringe that had saved her from the poison.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 07, 2014, 07:29:17 pm**

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Tony nodded at Soren's query. "Yep... that's the Heights." It was aptly named, being on a high bluff that overlooked the city, with the only access being a road that wound up to it from the outer wall. An inner wall ringed the massive compound as well, hiding it from view from the street below. "OK... start slowing down, Axel." the ferret instructed. "You'll be flagged down by some guys at the front gate. They may look harmless, but make no mistake... they're all armed. Also, they'll have other guns trained on you from hidden positions too so... I'll identify myself immediately once we get within range. They won't shoot unless you try and break through, so just take it easy." he cautioned.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 07, 2014, 07:30:59 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 07, 2014, 07:44:51 pm**

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The Heights loomed over the truck imposingly as they started making their way up the hill that snaked around to the front gate. Axel gulped and eased his foot off the accelerator, dropping the truck's speed considerably. The SUV behind beeped its horn, and he jolted in shock. *Holy crap, this place is a fortress...*

Driving up slowly, the gates soon began to emerge in the distance, creeping closer. "Okay... here we are..." Axel said nervously, while trying to adopt a relaxed, innocent expression on his face and failing miserably. "Maybe you could start, like, waving your arms or giving the secret signal or something, Tony? Please?" The sentries at the gate had begun to stir, staring at the battered truck heading their way.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 07, 2014, 08:03:04 pm**

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A guard in a dark blue trench coat held up his hand for the truck to stop, and Tony could make out the assault rifle just barely visible under the guard's coat. "Stop." Tony whispered under his breath, and hopped out of the truck now as it rolled to a halt. "Guys! It's me! Tony!" he called over to them, removing his hat.

"Check fire!" came a yell from inside the gate.

"Tony?" the first guard asked, blinking as he looked the ferret over. "Holy shit! It IS you! Where ya been?"

"That's for my father to know." Tony responded. "These guys kind of rescued me." he said motioning behind him to the truck.

The guard regarded all the SUVs suspiciously. "All of them?" he asked in disbelief, and Tony nodded. "What's the password?"

Tony swore under his breath. His father used two passwords, one for duress, the other for non-duress. But he changed it every year... and it had been a year. He went with the old one for non-duress, hoping it'd work. "Priority mail." he said.

"That's the old one." the guard responded. "But all right... you been gone a year." Tony sighed visibly, relaxing as the guard spoke a few words into his radio. Waiting for a response, a few awkward moments passed, and then the guard approached Axel on the driver's side of the truck. "All right, you, drive up to the front of the house. Here." he held out a map for Axel to follow. "Do NOT deviate from that route. The SUVs are gonna have to park it in our lot. You'll be subjected to thorough screenings at the main entrance, so be prepared." the guard warned, then waved a hand, and the front gate began to retract sideways into the wall. A secondary concrete barrier also visible behind the gate lowered into the ground, and a gravity trap along the ground deactivated as well.

"My father takes security seriously, as you can see." Tony said with a shrug as he climbed back in beside Axel. "One of his capos will probably be meeting us at the front entrance. Whatever you do, don't set him off... both of them are trained killers. Just know you'll have to be screened if you intend to enter the main house." the ferret advised.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 07, 2014, 10:09:10 pm**

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(Purifier complex)

Sanjay opened his mouth, revealing his metallic fangs. "Metal fangs and highly neurotoxic venom. I can punch through thin sheet metal with them."

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(Mob Compound)

Anne was sleeping off her high in the back of the truck.

Soren was sitting in the back of the truck, his exoskeleton was now little more than a passive piece of armor.

His two guns had detached from his now powered down suit and were lying in the truck's compartment.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 08, 2014, 03:44:10 am**

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Lily pushed Kojurro away angrily. "Why can't you make this simple?" she snapped, tears running down her eyes. She curled up in a ball and faced away from him, overcome by emotion. "Here I am letting you...letting you..." she couldn't even say it. "And I don't even know what the point is, I know you won't hold up your end!"

She couldn't take it any more. Getting up and grabbing her dress, she put it on and threw the car door open. Jumping out of the SUV, she hit the ground rolling.

"Hey! What the hell is she doing?" one of the guards snapped. Instantly a dozen assault rifles were trained on the convoy. "Stop! Stop the cars *now!*"

-----

Several guards stepped into the hallway of the jail area. Each one carried a high-powered rifle. "What the hell do you think you're doing?" one of them snapped, pointing his rifle at Sanjay.

"We've been told not to kill you, but our orders were significantly less clear on the subject of *kneecaps*," the other snapped at Emilena, cocking and aiming at her leg.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 08, 2014, 05:10:51 am**

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Axel looked at Tony grimly. "Yeah, I can see your dad likes his privacy... Alright, where did that guy say to go..." He started pulling the truck towards the gate as it slid open. At the sudden shout from the guards, he slammed his foot down on the brake and glanced at Tony, panicked. "What? What'd we do? I don't..." Movement in the rear-view mirror caught his attention, and he looked over his shoulder to see a shape in a dress rolling on the road alongside one of the SUVs. His eyes widened. "Oh, f\*ck..."

Without thinking about the guns trained on him, Axel scrambled out of the truck and started waving his arms, moving closer to her. "Wait! Don't shoot her!" he shouted at the guards. He looked back at the truck desperately. "Tony, say something!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 08, 2014, 11:22:17 am**

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A burst of gunfire cracked out, kicking up dirt at Axel's feet. "Stay where you are!" one guard shouted.

"Wait!" Tony cried, moving to get out of the truck. He had to slide over to the driver's side though, not wanting to exit on the passenger side for fear he might be too late. "Wait!" he threw up his paws in the air. "It's all right! I don't know... what happened. But just... hold fire!" he pleaded. The guards didn't riddle the convoy thankfully, but didn't lower their guns either.

"Get her up!" one of his father's soldiers ordered.

"Yes... yes! Right away!" Tony exclaimed, and moved rapidly over to Lily, who thankfully wasn't too many SUVs back.

"I don't like this." the ferret could hear the guards murmuring. "They're awfully suspicious if you ask me."

"Hey..." Tony said softly, approaching Lily now. "Are you all right? Just... don't make any sudden moves." he advised her as he stood over her now before kneeling down. "They want

you to stand up. But do it slowly... OK?" He tried to sound reassuring so that she wouldn't panic and set security off.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 08, 2014, 12:11:21 pm**

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Lily's face burned red with embarrassment. She tried to comply but the wind had been completely knocked out of her, she couldn't even speak. *The car didn't look to be traveling that fast...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 08, 2014, 12:17:04 pm**

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Tony noticed Lily wasn't doing a very good job of rising. She appeared dazed, and perhaps the fall out of the SUV had winded her more badly than the ferret had initially thought. He could hear his father's soldiers muttering all about him, their weapons still trained on Axel and the prone Lily.

"All right..." Tony said, knowing he had to do something. He reached out, and firmly grasped hold of Lily. He didn't yank her to her feet though, but instead gently started helping her rise. "Just take it slow." he told her softly. "It's all right! It was an accident!" he called over to the guards, who gradually showed signs of relaxing, though their wariness still remained and their rifles didn't lower much.

"Are you all right?" the ferret asked her now. "I'm going to have to get you to a vehicle. We'll go at your pace though if you were injured." he politely informed her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 08, 2014, 01:43:48 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 08, 2014, 05:13:25 pm**

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Lily staggered to her feet. Not meeting anyone's eye, she allowed Tony to lead her back to the first SUV. She didn't say anything.

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Emilena kept the syringe hidden behind her back and glanced at Sanjay, looking for a cue. She wasn't sure how they were supposed to deal with two armed guards when they weren't even freed. Maybe they should have waited for the wolf to free them after all.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 08, 2014, 05:22:13 pm**

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Tony noticed Lily's quiet disposition, so he too remained silent as he moved her back to the first SUV and Kojuuro. The guards had trained their rifles on him when he'd stepped out, and finally, the lead guard stepped forward again. "Just make sure it doesn't happen again." he said with some annoyance. "Get back in your vehicles and move along."

Tony helped Lily into the SUV, and gave her a pat on the back. "Don't worry. You'll be fine." he said, and stepped away now, moving back over to Axel. "I think we're all good. I don't know what happened, but we can figure it out at the house." he said now. "We can't stay here

blocking the gate. We gotta get moving."

Already he could see lights flaring up inside the main house, and the ferret wondered who would be waiting for them at the front doors. Certainly not his father, but he knew he'd be seeing him before the night was out. The front porch lights snapped on as well, indicating they were getting ready to receive the newcomers.

Sliding back into the passenger seat of the truck, Tony waited for Axel to get them rolling again as he turned around to speak to Soren. "You said you needed... something to make your suit work again? We might be able to get you what you need at the house." he stated.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 08, 2014, 05:43:31 pm**

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"Yeah, okay..." Axel turned back to the truck slowly when Tony let him know everything was fine, his pulse rocketing from the shock of the situation. *What the hell was she doing? Maybe she got scared of the guards...* The sentries still looked agitated - Tony was right, they could figure out what happened later. He hurried back to the driver's door and climbed in, starting up the engine quickly and rolling through the entrance. "Jesus, they were actually going to shoot, weren't they?" he muttered, shaken. "Thanks for stopping them..."

After a few moments, the truck reached the front of the huge mansion. There was a figure standing at the top of the porch, but with the lights behind them Axel couldn't make out who they were. He let the truck stop in front and glanced at Tony, unsure of what to do now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 08, 2014, 07:05:57 pm**

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There were several figures in fact, most of them soldiers of the estate, though two looked different. One was a lean but powerful looking crocodile whose rows of razor sharp teeth glinted in the porchlights. The other was an immaculately dressed green iguana who immediately stepped forward. "Tony! It is you!" the iguana said, the spines running down his back flecked with tinges of red which seemed to wave a bit in the light.

"Max!" Tony exclaimed, beaming as he exited the truck. The crocodile meanwhile stepped down from the stairs and motioned for the SUVs to park in a lot off to the side of the house. "Axel, this is Ignatius Fontana, but we call him Max here. He's my father's consigliere." Tony introduced Axel to the iguana now. "The big croc is Oscar Gambino, one of my father's capos." he explained.

"Pleased to meet you." Max responded. "On behalf of Don Anthony Stracci, welcome to the Heights. If you would please proceed to follow me inside, you'll be screened, and then we'll get you set up with some rooms if required. Tony, your father wishes to see you at the earliest convenience." Max informed the ferret as he led the way toward the front entrance.

"Yeah... well he's going to have to see some of my companions, too. They helped me out... brought me here. Is dad... angry?" Tony asked, flinching.

"Hard to say. He rarely shows his emotions, you know. Now then, if you would all step into the side room here, you'll be screened, and then we can get down to business." Max instructed the others. The room to the side was really a giant screening device, able to detect even concealed weapons inside bodies. Tony stepped with Max into the main foyer, bypassing the security checkpoint for now. The house was still as lavish as Tony remembered it, his father's taste in Renaissance Revival still strong it seemed.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 08, 2014, 08:26:25 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 09, 2014, 12:13:37 am**

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"Right, come on through." Max waved forth the Doktor and Adrian's limp form. "Does he need medical attention?" the iguana asked as he looked Adrian over. Kojuuro was scanned and cleared, and Tony beckoned him into the grand foyer.

"Sorry." he apologized. "It's procedure. You won't be attacked here though. My father's very honorable, and doesn't shoot first unless provoked." he reassured Kojuuro.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 09, 2014, 12:21:42 am**

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Lily stepped up next. She looked worried. Between her little stunt outside and her unusual appearance, she feared that she would be stopped by security for whatever reason.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 09, 2014, 12:22:30 am**

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She was cleared easily though, and Max waved her on through. "Welcome to the Heights." he told her as she passed by.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 09, 2014, 02:18:23 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 09, 2014, 03:45:45 am**

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Axel passed through the room. No alarm sounded so he figured he must be okay. He walked across to where Max stood. "I'm not..." he started to crack nervously, then stopped at the look in the Iguana's eye. "Ah... never mind."

Passing through, Axel joined the others who had already been through. "Nice place," he managed, before turning to Lily. "You okay?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 09, 2014, 04:46:06 am**

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Lily nodded silently. "It was...a bad car ride," she said quietly. "But it's over now."

She looked at the expansive mansion around them. "This house is massive...I wonder how nice the bathrooms are."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 09, 2014, 11:43:38 am**

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"You've been here before?" Tony asked Kojuuro in some amazement. He hadn't actually been expecting that. Did Kojuuro know his father?

The ferret caught Lily's comment and couldn't help but crack a smile. "The bathrooms are rather palatial in size." he informed her. "I don't think we have a small one in this house. I have to admit, kind of an odd category of room to muse over, but there you are." he stated.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 09, 2014, 02:46:43 pm**

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(The Heights)

Soren stayed behind and outside the mansion itself because his exoskeleton was pretty much deadweight. Four guards watched him ó both to ensure he wouldn't attack them and to ensure that his stuff wasn't stolen.

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Anne emerged from the screening room and met up with the others.

She whistled as she laid eyes on the lavishly decorated interior. She had a vague suspicion that behind some of those elegant carvings lay sensors or even hidden weapons.

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(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay thought a moment. "That was the only way to get your attention. Now I'd to point out that my cellmate hid contraband in the toilet."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 09, 2014, 02:58:10 pm**

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Tony remembered Soren couldn't move, and snapped his claws as he thought of something. "Oh! Hold on a moment!" he said, racing off down the hall on the right hand side to what looked like a closet. "Hopefully it's still in here." he murmured, rummaging around until he found what he was seeking.

Running back out, he was snaking a long extension cord behind him as he darted past Max, the iguana giving him a confused look. Hopping down the stairs and to the truck, the ferret held out the power plug to Soren now. "Here you are, Soren. You can use this since it's connected directly to one of the house's generators. We sometimes use it to charge vehicles parked out front, but I don't see why you can't use it." the ferret shrugged here, offering him a smile. "I'll just chalk it up to what my father owes you guys for 'rescuing' me." he said in a lower tone now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 09, 2014, 03:04:06 pm**

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Soren groaned as his stiff fingers and joints struggled to plug the extension cord into his suit.

"Thanks!" he said. His helmet lay next to him but he still wore his HMD glasses. "I'll be a minute, Tony. I can't take this off unless there's a little power."

He then nodded his head. "Lovely place."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 09, 2014, 03:09:30 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 09, 2014, 03:43:22 pm**

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"Well, I could really use a shower," Lily replied softly. She wasn't yet sure whether a cold one or a hot one.

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The guards raised their eyebrows. "Back against the wall," he ordered. "Both of you!"

Cautiously he opened the cell, wrinkling his nose at the smell of panacea; though most of the gel had drained through filters in the floor, a thin residue still coated everything. Creeping over to the toilet, he glanced inside.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 09, 2014, 04:59:38 pm**

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"Yeah, I could do with borrowing a new top or something," Axel said, indicating his grubby T-Shirt. Smears of blood and grime, it made him look pretty rough. "Maybe after we've seen your dad?" He gave a small grin. "If it means using up my favour, I'll pass though."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 09, 2014, 05:04:17 pm**

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Tony gave Soren a nod, glad he could finally help out. "Yeah... it certainly is." he agreed, looking back up at the house. "Well... I'll see you inside then." he said, giving him a wave, and heading back to the foyer while Soren's suit charged.

He arrived in time to catch Kojuuro's remarks, and rocked his head back at this. "Oh... well uh... I guess that's OK." he said now, caught off guard by Kojuuro's apology. "I had no idea you were connected to my father."

"He is indeed, and things *are* running smoothly, thanks." Max responded, giving Kojuuro a smile of recognition. "I wasn't sure if it was you or not before, but I can see now it is. Business is going very well for the Straccis as of late." he informed the merc.

"Now then... if the lady requires a shower, we can provide that." The iguana waved at a human guard who was kind of hovering around the door. "Bruno, take the lady to one of our guest bathrooms. You may shower or draw a bath if you wish." the consigliere informed Lily. "Just follow Bruno, he'll show you the way."

"Max... is dad... dining alone tonight?" Tony asked, approaching the iguana now.

"Hmmm, I don't know. I'm sure your mother is eager to see you, though. With so many guests, Don Stracci may organize a group dinner, for those interested. Right now he's conducting some business with a supplier, but he should be available shortly." He caught Axel's comment, and shook his head. "I think we could arrange some more... suitable clothing for you to wear." he commented.

Tony nodded at this, and looked behind him at the group. "Anyone up for a dinner with my pops?" he asked, fiddling with his claws.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 09, 2014, 05:36:18 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 09, 2014, 05:45:37 pm**

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(Purifier Compound)

While the guard was hunched over the toilet and the guards were interrogating Emilena, Sanjay slithered up to the guard and plunged his fangs into his neck.

He the snatched the guard's pistol, slithered behind the stainless steel toilet and took a shot at one of Emilena's guards.

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(The Heights)

Anne nodded. "I could use a good meal. I was going to get one until the fucking cops stole my cash." She turned to Max and Tony. "Thank you for your hospitality."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 09, 2014, 05:49:54 pm**

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Marita Marie and Rose passed through the screening rooms and were handed back their belongings. this place sure puts my apartment to shame" Marie whistled at the ornate surroundings.. ' you sure live in the lap of luxury tony she said to him. ' i'm marie. i'm sorry if I didnt properly introduce myself until now. I'm Marie, This is Rose and Marita. we're with the larger group here..' she explaining.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 09, 2014, 06:00:40 pm**

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"Thanks, I'd really appreciate it." Axel said, looking up at the large iguana. "I kind of feel like I'm ruining the atmosphere of such a..." He tried to think of a complement that didn't sound cheesy. "...Such a snazzy house." *Snazzy. Nice going.* He winced when he heard Anne swear.

"Dinner sounds great!" he nodded, turning gratefully to Tony. "I'm starving... Erm, your dad won't mind having to suddenly feed all of us?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 09, 2014, 09:18:05 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 09, 2014, 10:10:56 pm**

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"Oh it's no problem." Tony said now. At least... he hoped it wouldn't be. He shrugged at Marie's compliment. "I guess I'm just used to it, but thanks." he said humbly. "Oh... that's quite all right by the way; it's nice to meet you all." he nodded at the three of them.

A beep on Max's cellphone caused him to glance down at it. "Aha! Dinner will be served at 8 o'clock." he announced. "That gives you an hour. Tony, your father would like to see you. And... you needed a shirt, yes?" Max asked Axel. "What's your size?" he inquired.

"Uh... I hate to ask this but... I was hoping at least one of you could see my father too before dinner... to... you know... regale him with tales of how you 'rescued' me." Tony stated, trying

not to sound too obvious. "Because now we owe you quite a lot for that so yeah... just a confirmation would be nice." he suggested.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 09, 2014, 10:20:41 pm**

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Lily gratefully followed the iguana to the nearest bathroom. Smiling shyly, she shut the door and gasped when she turned around and saw what amounted to a small pool covered head to toe with water jets, adjustable currents, and peculiar colored nozzles.

Curiously she hit one and fragranted fluid dispensed into her hand.

*These are shampoos and body washes, she thought with amazement. He's got spigots for different flavors of shampoo and body wash!*

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Sanjay's attack distracted the other guard for split second, long enough for Emilena to leap forward and stab him through the forehead with the syringe. This did not do good things for him.

*Heh, because they're purifiers you don't need to worry about subdermal armor, she thought wistfully as the guard began screaming and jolting uncontrollably. Reliving him of his rifle, she mercy-killed both of them and double-timed down the hallway. "I'll lead, you navigate."*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 09, 2014, 10:24:59 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 10, 2014, 01:34:01 am**

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Tony nodded at Kojuuro. "Very well. I can find my own way up there, thanks Max." Tony said, waving off the consigliere. The ferret led the way up to his father's study, climbing a set of stairs and moving down several hallways until he was standing outside the heavy paneled door. "Well... let's do this." he said, trying to gather himself up before he inhaled deeply, then strode into his father's office.

Cigar smoke curled around an older ferret who sat at the desk at the far end. He was puffing away on a long stogie, and was squinting across the room in his typical fashion. "Come in." Don Stracci said quietly, motioning with his paw for his son to step forward.

Tony hadn't breathed yet, and began moving forward. "Hello... pops." Tony finally said, letting his breath out in too loud a fashion.

Blowing out a wreath of blue smoke, his father narrowed his eyes, the cigar hovering around his mouth before the don tapped it into an ashtray. "If you EVER... leave me again..." Don Stracci said, fixing one eye on his son as he narrowed the other one to practically closed.

"Pops I'm..."

"Shut up!" the don snapped, rising to standing behind his desk now. He wasn't a tall ferret, but he was taller and more well-built than his son, who was much thinner by comparison. "Don't you EVER leave the family again, you hear me? Your mother was worried half to death... how could you do that to her?" he demanded.

"I'm sorry..." Tony said, hanging his head and closing his eyes. "I messed up dad... I know... I

haven't done a lot of things right lately... but I came back... I came back because I love you... I love mom... I'm sorry dad... forgive me... please."

His father remained stone-faced, still squinting at him. "You better explain yourself."

"I will..." Tony nodded. "I... was stupid... I was immature... I wanted more... I was impatient... I fell in with a bad crew... dad I just... look, some guys helped me out. They got me out of there... brought me back... I'm sorry OK? Please... I just want to be your son again. I'll do anything... please." Tony clasped his paws together.

His father eyed him darkly, then looked at Kojuuro. "This boy telling the truth?" he asked, nodding at Tony. "That how it was? You got him out?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 10, 2014, 03:17:10 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 10, 2014, 04:51:17 am**

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As Tony and Kojuuro walked off, Axel looked at Max. "I'm a medium... Thanks a lot, I really appreciate it." He was led down another corridor to a large dressing room containing a huge variety of clothing. There was a row of shirts hung up on coat hangers along one side of the wall, and he made his way over, shifting his way through gently until he found a light blue shirt with *medium* on the tag. "I won't get too many food stains on it, I promise."

When Axel peeled off his T-Shirt, he winced at the sight of the ugly bruises and scrapes dotted around his body. In all the excitement, it was easy to forget he'd been thrown around a fair bit in the past few days. Unhooking the shirt, he slipped it on and buttoned it up. Clearly, even though it was a medium, it was fitted for someone more heavysset than him - it was a little ill-fitting and hung slightly loose on his lankier frame. *At least I don't look like I've been dragged through mud anymore.*

He rolled up the sleeves then swiveled back to Max. "I feel like one of the Family! Sorry. Erm..." Holding his balled up T-Shirt in his hand, he looked around for somewhere to put it. Finally, he stuffed it down one of his jeans' pockets, the top of it poking out and flapping down. "Alright, I'm good. Thanks again." Max took him back to the lobby where the others were waiting.

"Kojuuro's still talking to Tony's dad?" he asked Marie. "Better him than me..." He looked at Anne. "This place is huge! The changing room's bigger than my whole apartment!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 10, 2014, 02:14:56 pm**

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Don Stracci narrowed his eyes now at this, and took a long series of puffs from his cigar before he blew out a great pall of smoke and sighed. "Hm... yes... good to see you again. You've done us a service... I'll repay in kind." he said, nodding at Kojuuro. "Very well..." he started moving from his desk now and towards Tony.

The younger ferret gulped, but didn't move, trembling a little as his father reached out, but instead of smacking him sharply across his face, Stracci Sr. placed a paw on his shoulder. It was firm, but not painful. "It's good to have you back." were the words now, and Tony stopped cringing, relaxing a bit as a small smile played over his features. "Say hello to your mother before you eat."

"Yes... thanks pops!" Tony said, brightening up considerably now. He then proceed to hug his

dad, which caused the older ferret to straighten up and initially do nothing, caught off guard by his son's display of affection. Though Tony couldn't see it, the slightest wisp of a smile passed over his father's face before he clapped him once on the back.

"Yeah... now go. She's waiting." his father ordered.

"Right." Tony nodded, and looked at Kojuuro. "Thanks for the assistance. I'll be down in a bit after I see my mother." he informed him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 10, 2014, 09:20:56 pm**

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Gittsun blearily opened his eyes. He groaned and raised himself up into a sitting position, taking in his surroundings. He was sat in the back of a car... how did he get here? *Oh right... The girls went to help their friend...* His foot clunked against something and he looked down. It was a whiskey bottle. *Right...* On the way to... wherever they were meeting Marita's friend, he been taking some generous gulps of it, and after a while he'd felt like taking a nap in the back. But... where was he now?

Looking through the car windows, he could see he was in some kind of lot. A little way away, in the distance, there was a large mansion. Since the girls weren't here, he could only assume they were over there - though thinking right now was a little hard... Rubbing his temples and letting out another groan, he opened the car door and dragged himself out. Letting it close behind him, he leaned against the body of the car and looked around him.

There wasn't anyone around... *No, there's someone!* A few meters away, a man in a suit leaned against a fence, facing the opposite direction. He was listening to some kind of MP3 players, his head bobbing up and down slightly - Gittsun could make out a pair of earphones sticking out of his ears. *Maybe he knows if the girls are at the house... or if there's anything else to drink, heh.*

"Hey mister!" he called out. There was no response. Apparently the man's music was too loud. "A little help here?" Still nothing. *Damn it.* Still limping on his leg, Gittsun stumbled over, his shoes kicking up little clouds of dirt from the floor. He reached the man leaning on the fence. "Hello?" Gittsun clapped a hand on his shoulder.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 10, 2014, 09:36:09 pm**

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((Done with permission of Bushwacked))

The guard whirled around, his heart almost jumping out of his chest as his silenced pistol whipped out, and fired off three rounds. They connected with Gittsun's chest, throat, and head, splaying blood about onto the fence and causing the human to stagger back and to the side. Unfortunately, he was staggering right towards the cliff face, and though the horrified guard tried to reach out and grab him, he only grasped thin air as Gittsun tumbled over the side and plummeted hundreds of feet into the black void of the rocky canyons below...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 11, 2014, 05:59:09 am**

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(The Heights)

Anne whistled. "Yeah, I could use a meal but let's wait until everyone's present first."

She sat down in an opulent seal-skin chair. "Wow, sealskin. That must cost quite a few creds."

She rubbed a finger along her horn implant. There was a small gouge at the base where some punks had tried to cut off her horn. Unfortunately for them, the horn also made a rather effective stabbing weapon and the Shetland's metal shod hooves did a major number on the thieves' bodies.

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Soren's suit had charged up and he had stripped it off. The guards had told him ó in no uncertain terms ó that his weapons, HMD and exoskeleton could not be bought into the Stracci Compoun. On the flipside, they assured that his equipment would be left untouched

He was escorted to the screening room. A few minutes later, he was in the lobby with Max, Axel and Anne.

The Human looked around the elegant room with its white and black marble floors, crystal chandelier and subdued yet tasteful Italian Renaissance decor.

He took a seat in another sealskin upholstered chair as he waited for whatever business

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(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay had his pistol out as he navigated through the dimly lit stainless steel and concrete hallways of the complex. Luckily, his cybernetic third eye could see quite well with the low light available.

Unfortunately for the Indian Cobra, his hearing wasn't as good as that of a Vulpine ó or for that matter, a Human.

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Aaron slammed back a bottle of beer. The breakroom was a rowdy environment with guards of all species drinking, cursing and generally having a good time.

"You see that cunt in Cell 43-B?" one of the guards ó a big Clydesdale stallion with a skull and crossbones freeze brand on his right bicep.

Aaron pounded back the rest of his beer. "You mean the Vulpine?"

Another guard, a scarred up Human, nodded. "The one who practically came all over you and Marcus during the torture session!"

Aaron's eye twitched as he clenched his beer bottle. "Anyways," he said, his flattened ears betraying his true emotional state. "What do we do next!"

"Get the Fox and Sanjay some more butt-buddies!" a Collie exclaimed. Like the other's she was either scarred up or had a freeze brand. In her case, it was half of her right year ó it had been bitten off by a Macaw in a street fight.

(OOC - Going to assume it's late at night ó ~12 AM)

(OOC - sea animals and songbirds are non-anthro and non-sapient)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 11, 2014, 07:25:27 am**

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Marcus sat hunched over in the corner of the breakroom, his hands balled into fists and laying on the surface of the table he occupied. Though the room was full, the others tended to avoid Marcus, which was fine by him - he had no interest in joining in with their inane, drunken

conversations.

A scowl creased his face as he wondered why Echo and Bhat were still alive. Normally, a prisoner's reward for reaching the end of their interrogation was a bullet to the back of the head. What was so special about these two? Leaving loose ends made Marcus uncomfortable.

All he'd been told was to ensure that Emilena wasn't injured too badly in the course of her questioning. Marcus clenched his fists. He'd seen that Wolf walking around the compound... though they'd had dealings with him in the past, Marcus knew he couldn't be trusted. *He's involved in this somehow...*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 11, 2014, 02:19:53 pm**

-REDACTED-

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 11, 2014, 02:53:40 pm**

Tony rejoined the group a few moments later, having been warmly greeted by his doting mother. The family matriarch had been overjoyed at seeing him, and had practically drowned him in worrying affection. The ferret had finally managed to excuse himself under the pretense of needing to get ready for dinner, and after about 15 minutes, was back with the main group.

He noticed Soren had joined the group, and greeted the human as he sat down. "Glad you could join us, Soren! We'll be eating together in about half an hour, so I hope you're hungry." the ferret said. He noted that everyone now seemed to be present, and he didn't notice Gittsun's absence, namely because he hadn't met Gittsun before, so wasn't even aware he was missing. He noted Lily was still away as well, but that wasn't surprising if she had wanted to freshen up.

"I see you changed." Tony nodded at Axel. "Bloody shirt not *snazzy* enough for dinner?" he inquired, comically using Axel's previous term here.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 11, 2014, 06:22:23 pm**

Axel groaned. "I was *really* hoping nobody heard that. Yeah, I figured my dinner conversation's going to be enough to make people lose their appetite, don't need to add my T-Shirt into the mix." He grinned and took a spare seat next to Soren. "I can't remember the last time I ate something that wasn't from the microwave."

He looked between Tony and Kojuuro. "So, Koj said the meeting went well?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 11, 2014, 09:35:54 pm**

Lily was completely ensconced in the bath. The jets were playing water across every curve of her exhausted body, and the mingling of every available shampoo and bubble bath had formed an aromatic perfume around her little haven. Even stretching her body out as far as she could, she couldn't even brush the porcelain edges of the jacuzzi tub.

It was the single most relaxing thing she had experienced since waking up in the forest. Drifting off into a deep content sleep, she didn't even notice that she was completely submerged and breathing underwater.

Emilena ushered Sanjay into a closet as several unknown individuals walked through their hallway. "We aren't going to get this lucky forever," she muttered. "Someone's gonna see us or sound an alarm eventually..."

She creaked the door open a peek, and the uncoiled hinge gave a protesting shriek. One of the Purifiers, who had silently stopped to check a text, jumped and looked around. Emilena snapped forward and smashed the pistol into his skull. This only resulted in him screaming uncontrollably. Cursing, Emilena finished him off with a series of shots to the face and chest.

"Goddamit, why can't some people die quietly?" she swore. Casting her eyes around the room, she doubled her pace.

Once she was gone, the mutilated young man crawled slowly down the hallway, leaving a thick trail of blood. Reaching an emergency phone, he dialed security but passed out before it finished ringing.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 11, 2014, 10:57:09 pm**

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A series of faint, muted pops from down the corridor drew Marcus' attention. His ears flattened as he turned his head slowly towards the open doorway next to him. *Gunshots?* Possibly... but the gun range was in the opposite direction - and from the dull, echoing quality to the noise, it sounded like it was being carried a long way down the maze-like corridors. Marcus' stomach knotted. *The cells are in that direction...*

Nobody else in the breakroom had made any sort of reaction, deaf to all but the laughs and shouts of their conversations. He rose and made his way out through the doorway, proceeding cautiously down the hallway. The *clump* of his footsteps soon replaced the echo of voices as he turned and followed the branch-off that led to the cells.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 12, 2014, 01:02:27 am**

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(The Heights)

"I am indeed, Tony," Soren said as he took a seat. He then involuntarily shuddered as he recalled the fight with the Purifiers. What if they had managed to stick a tracer on his stolen truck or on one of them?

Anne then turned to Soren. "Hey, Soren. Mind looking at my horn? I'm having trouble transmitting signals."

Soren nodded as he looked at the Shetland's horn implant. He noticed a rather deep nickóone that could be caused by an angle grinder or some other cutting instrument. "I don't have the right tools and equipment but it looks like someone tried cutting off your horn."

"No shit," Anne growled.

Soren looked at the nick closer. After a few minutes, he nodded his head. "It looks like the transmitting cable got severed. I can fix it so you can send signals but without the right tools and materials, the signals will be kind of staticky."

"Whatever, just fix it and get rid of that nick!"

Soren nodded. "Axel, Anne's horn implant needs a bit of repair. Mind giving me a hand?"

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron's ears suddenly shot upright as a distinct odor wafted past his nose. Blood. Coupled with the gunshots he had heard opposite the shooting range and the screaming that meant only one thing: prison break.

He gave a loud and deep bark that silenced everyone in the room. "We have a prisoner loose."

That did it! All the guards practically stumbled over each other as they made their way to the armory.

"Marcus," he radioed. "I'm coming with the rest of the guards!"

He then tucked the radio into his belt as he followed the others to the armory.

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Sanjay's heart thudded in his chest as he looked around the closet. "We need to create a distraction that should occupy the Purifiers or cause panic. Once we do that, we can hopefully get to an exit and swipe a vehicle."

He then noticed the air intake above him. "Speaking of which, I have an idea! Got one of those autocigs?"

(OOC - an autocig <slang terms: burner, hot stick, poke 'n smokes, pull-starts> is a self-lighting cigarette. Cheap ones ignite via an incendiary chemical reaction. More expensive ones ignite via an electrically heated wire.)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 12, 2014, 01:26:20 am**

Tony nodded at Axel. "It did indeed go well! Well... as well as can be expected with my pops. He rarely gets positively emotional. Negatively... oh yeah... but hey... he is my father." the ferret said here now. He took some interest in what Soren and Axel might be doing with Anne's horn. They had some time before dinner after all, and Tony took interest in this. He wasn't really technically inclined, but things like "shop" always intrigued him, so he kind of hovered around, hoping to maybe learn a few things.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 12, 2014, 03:55:41 am**

"No, but someone around here does," Emilena kicked the door open to a nearby lounge room and brandished her pistol threateningly at the two surprised occupants, who were playing on a game console. "Nobody move and I don't shoot!" she yelled, firing twice and hitting both in the back. "Wait, crap. Oops."

She rifled through the drawers and their pockets and came away with a number of useful items, such as a lighter, batteries, writing supplies, steel wool, and a pack of autocigs. "Work your magic," she smiled, passing him all of the items; she had a distressing lack of pockets at the moment.

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At the armory, a young wolf Purifier came puffing into view. He had a bloodied wound on the side of his head. "The Vulpine!" he gasped to Aaron. "She and the snake...they're heading below! I think they're trying to escape through the sewers!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 12, 2014, 07:32:07 am**

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"That's good," Axel smiled at Tony. "I'm glad." He turned to look at Anne and Soren. "Sure, no problem. Soren's right though, with what we've got it might be a pretty patchy job," he said as he rose and approached the pony, "But hey, you seem like a patchy kind of girl." He bent closer to the damaged augment. "Mind if I just..." Axel carefully held the horn as he switched vision. He could see a faint electrical signal getting past the cut.

"It's not a clean cut all the way through," he said as he straightened up and glanced at Soren, his eyes flicking back to blue. "If we had something thin enough, I think it *should* fairly simple to connect the wires up again. Then we could try soldering the cut closed?" He looked down at Anne and chewed his lip. "You should be back to your... uh, charming self in no time."

-----

Marcus rounded a corner and stopped dead when he saw the body of the Purifier sprawled on the ground, a phone buzzing in his outstretched hand. "*Son of a bitch...*" he snarled as he looked up the hallway. They had to have gone that way, it was a straight path back the way he'd come...

He heard the voice of the young Purifier crackling through faintly on his radio. "Aaron!" he barked into it, "Go down into the sewers and get everyone to split into four teams, one for each exit - follow the others, they know their way through! I'm heading up to cover the ground from the roof..."

The mutilated Purifier on the ground gurgled, still clinging to life that was rapidly fading. Marcus stepped over him and started sprinting towards his quarters where he kept his sniper rifle.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 12, 2014, 05:03:00 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 14, 2014, 06:52:21 pm**

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As Aaron and his men raced to the sewers, the young Wolf purifier watched them go with a calculating look, all fear and pain vanishing suspiciously quickly. Then he darted in the other direction.

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A guard stood at the entrance to the back alleyways. He was startled when a burning ball suddenly ignited to his left.

Immediately he cocked his rifle and assumed a combat stance. "Identify yourself!"

Then Emilena shot him from behind. The ball had been a battery wrapped in steel wool, which ignited shortly after Emilena threw it.

Emilena kicked the door open. "That had to sound an alarm, but we're almost out of here."

As they darted into the alleyways, she glanced up at the looming headquarters. She noted a sniper tower overlooking them and shuddered. Luckily, it appears nobody was stationed in it at the moment...

"Come on!" she hissed, waving at Sanjay. "We gotta move!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 14, 2014, 07:33:17 pm**

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Marcus barreled through the door to his quarters, grinding his teeth hard enough to make his jaw crack. Crouching down, he grabbed a heavy metal box and dragged it out from under the bed. Unclipping the latches, he threw it open to reveal a dissembled sniper rifle. Still crouching down, Marcus snatched up the pieces and rapidly put it together. He didn't care why the two prisoners had been allowed to live this long... but they'd escaped, and they'd killed one of the Purifier's soldiers. They had to die.

Sliding the stock home and locking it into place, he grabbed a handful of bullets and loaded them in with the bolt as he darted out of the room and down the hallway. Soon, he turned off and came to a narrow metal staircase rising sharply up, the faint sound of wind echoing down. A small sign drilled into the wall leading to it was marked **Watchtower**. Slinging the rifle over his shoulder, Marcus charged up the stairs three at a time.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 15, 2014, 12:40:45 am**

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron stopped by the armory to get a shotgun. He muttered some curses as he started loading his weapon. The men with him grabbed their own weapons.

"All right into the sewers!"

The group quickly headed outside and lifted up a manhole cover. Slinging their weapons across their backs, they quickly descended the ladder. Spots of light could be seen as the men turned their weapon lights on.

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Sanjay nodded and crouched so his entire body touched the ground. He then slithered surprisingly quickly after Emilena.

He looked around, scanning with his infrared third eye implant. He smiled as he noticed a large transformer was nearby. Unfortunately, it was surrounded by a fence too narrow for him to squeeze through.

The Indian Cobra looked at his pistol and then Emilena's rifle. His pistol wasn't powerful enough to pierce the plating of the transformer but her rifle was. "If I can set that transformer on fire, the power outage and flames should cause enough panic that we can scam before they know what's going on.

He took out a handful of autocigs – all chemically ignited ones – and carefully ripped away the tobacco, revealing a small waxed paper pouch the size of a pea. Squeezing the cigarette in the proper place would break the pouch, causing the two chemicals to mix and ignite, lighting the cigarette.

Sanjay then carefully wrapped the incendiary pouches in a sheet of writing paper.

"Okay, once you shoot a hole in the transformer and oil leaks out, I'll use the lighter to set the paper on fire and then throw it into the oil. The paper won't burn hot enough to light the oil but it'll burn away the paper on the autocig lighters, which will give a very hot but short lived flame. That should set the oil on fire."

He then held the crude incendiary grenade with one hand and a lighter in the other. "On your shot."

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(The Heights)

"Whatever works," Anne said with a shrug.

Soren looked at the cut. "Some aluminium foil should do the trick." He then turned to Tony. "Mind showing me to the kitchen?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 15, 2014, 01:30:44 am**

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"Oh yeah, sure!" Tony nodded. "This way!" he exclaimed, waving his paw as he led the way towards his family's massive kitchen. Massive was a bit of an understatement though. The kitchen in here was more like a hotel's kitchen, with a lot of large mixers and ovens and stoves. Tony felt a little embarrassed showing Soren this, but quickly moved to one of the numerous cabinets and tossed over a box of aluminum foil. "Here you are! If you need more, just let me know." he said simply.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 15, 2014, 02:05:39 am**

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Soren grunted as he caught the box of foil. "Thanks! That's way more than enough."

He then carried the box to the living room where Anne was sitting in a sealskin chair.

Anne looked at the foil. "Well fuck me, I'm getting fixed up with kitchen goods!"

Soren sighed as he carefully tore up a piece of the foil. "Okay, Axel, Tony, I need some more things: a radio, a set of pointed tweezers, some non-conductive glue, solder and soldering iron."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Rocky** on **January 15, 2014, 02:19:29 am**

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Meanwhile, Patrick Anderson, a wealthy Liger was returning home after a charity event. The wealthy Anthro was exhausted and ready to go to sleep.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 15, 2014, 05:11:29 am**

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"Hey, we told you it wouldn't be pretty," Axel told Anne, then nodded at Soren. "Alright. But she'll probably need to get it looked at more... uh, professionally soon - this stuff's only gonna keep her horn going for so long."

He turned to Tony. "Lead the way, I'll give you a hand. Unless your family hasn't gotten around to buying a radio..."

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Marcus reached the top of the watchtower, the metal flooring rattling underfoot. It was a plain setup, a square perch with a roof shielding it, surrounded by a metal balcony that ran all the way around. He stepped out onto the balcony and looked down, the wind snapping his coat to the side. This watchtower gave him almost total visibility across the northern side of the

compound - the side that faced towards Lanthae city. If they were going to be escaping on the surface, this would be where they'd go.

He rested the rifle on the balcony railing and switched the scope to night-vision, scanning the dark alleyways below.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 15, 2014, 02:36:15 pm**

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"Uh... OK, sure." Tony nodded now, trying to think of where he could obtain these things. "Well my father has a radio... but we're not... using that one." he said hesitantly. "I'm sure there's others around the house in the guest rooms... the tweezers would be in a bathroom, and the glue, solder, and soldering iron can all be found on the workbench in the garage... or... should I say... the shop, in the garage." Tony said, trying to sound modest.

He led the way to the stairs now, heading up to the halls on the second floor of the house. Walking down the carpeted floor, his shoes made only muted echoes as he looked from left to right. He bypassed his siblings' rooms, and made for the guest rooms around the corner.

Knocking on one and not hearing anything on the other side, the ferret entered and looked around. "See if there's a radio in one of the nightstands. I'll check the bathroom." Tony wandered past the polished and heavily paneled veneer of the guest room (including the poster bed) and entered the bathroom. Most guest rooms in his father's house had en-suite bathrooms, and this one was no exception. "OK... OK... let's see." he murmured, rummaging around in the medicine cabinet, and pulling out some tweezers. "Got some tweezers in here!" he called to Axel. "How'd you fare on the radio?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 15, 2014, 03:19:50 pm**

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"Still looking!" Axel called back, crouching down next to the nightstand. The drawers were full of odds and ends. He pulled open the final drawer and pushed aside a leather bound copy of *'Great Expectations'*, reaching further in. "Oh hey, I... I think I found something..." he announced as his fingers closed around a heavy object.

He pulled it out to see it was indeed a radio. It looked like a pretty expensive make too, but it looked like it hadn't been used in a while. "Yep, got it!" he said, standing up and tucking it under his arm. *Damn, something like this would take me ages to save up for it. These guys are really loaded.* "Workshop next?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Rocky** on **January 15, 2014, 04:55:40 pm**

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Patrick Arrived Home went straight to bed, drifting off to sleep.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 15, 2014, 05:33:15 pm**

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Tony caught sight of the copy of *Great Expectations* in the drawer as Axel pulled out the radio. "Oh hey, that's my favorite book! I wonder what it's doing in there..." the ferret wondered, pulling on his chin fur. "Anyway yeah... let's go to the shop." He nodded, and led the way back out into the hall, threading his way around the corridors and back down the stairs, then towards the side of the house where the garage was located. "OK... try not to have a heart attack." the ferret warned the rat as he opened the door.

The garage extended into the darkness for quite some ways before the lights automatically kicked on, their glow glinting off the polished chrome and rich colors of cars from all eras (though mostly classic) arrayed in two rows that ran down the length of the place. There was a

Marmon, Isotta Fraschinis, Auburns, a Cord, Delahayes, Aston Martins, Bugattis, a 1953 Allard, an Avions Voisin, a Stutz, Packards, Pierce Arrows, and numerous other vehicles even further down the rows, making his garage more a museum. "Uh... my dad likes cars." was all Tony said, and moved to his right into what was like an auto repair shop.

"I think we can divide up what to carry so we're not overwhelmed." he suggested, looking around for the supplies.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 15, 2014, 06:27:27 pm**

Axel grinned as he hung back a second, taking in the rows and rows of expensive, classical cars. "Your dad likes cars? Bit of an understatement," he laughed, shaking his head. Tony's voice to his right drew his attention, and he followed him through to the repair shop.

"Alright, sounds fair enough," he agreed, coming up beside Tony. He sifted through some of the tools piled on the workbench with his free hand, then made a contented noise. Leaning forwards, Axel picked up a worn tube of non-conductive glue. "Well, I guess I've found what I'm carrying," he joked as he slipped it into his pocket, freeing up his hand for another item.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 15, 2014, 06:36:58 pm**

Emilena nodded and blasted it with a single shot. As if on cue, oil began leaking out.

She looked nervously at the sniper tower; if anyone was in there, they'd have heard the shot. "How long is this gonna take?" She asked.

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A mansion cleaning lady, noticing that the bathroom had been silent for hours, knocked politely. "Hello?" She asked. "Is someone in there...?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 15, 2014, 07:05:15 pm**

"Yeah... I guess it is." Tony chuckled, shaking his head as he picked up the solder and soldering iron. "I think I can manage these. You got the biggest thing with the radio, after all." Tony nodded at the radio in Axel's paws.

As they stepped out of the shop now, Tony glanced at a 1939 Delahaye 165 Cabriolet. "That is a sleek car." the ferret said appreciatively of it. "It's one of my favorites that my dad owns. That and well... the 1932 Auburn Speedster V-12. I mean can you imagine it? A V-12?" Tony grinned, shaking his head as they exited the garage. "You a car person, I mean, you know, with your name and all?" Tony joked.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 16, 2014, 04:07:07 pm**

"Oh yeah, in my spare time I'm an illegal street racer. But don't tell anyone..." Axel mock whispered. "Nah. I mean, I'm not, like, an expert on cars or anything. But holy crap, you'd have to be dead not to like those babies!"

As they made their way back around to the house to where the others were waiting, Axel glanced at the ferret, his ears perked up with interest. "So, any other collections around the house? Mona Lisa in the bathroom?"

-----

The crack of the rifle shot carried up to Marcus on the howling wind. He snapped the sniper's sight down to where he'd heard it, and caught movement down in the alleyways below. Two figures were huddled below. Marcus zoomed his scope in, and hissed. A dumpster between them and him obscured his vision of the pair - he could only get brief glimpses of them as they moved around. Marcus didn't want to take any chances - one shot, one kill for each of them.

Keeping his scope on their cover, he reached down with one hand and unhooked his radio. "Aaron, they're not in the sewers. They're on the surface heading for the north exit." There was no response. "Aaron? Aaron?! Fuck!" he snarled, throwing the radio into the tower behind him. *Was something jamming it?* Marcus returned both hands to the sniper and steadied his aim, finger hovering above the trigger. The moment one of them poked their head out, he'd put them down.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 16, 2014, 07:59:45 pm**

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"I know! Right?" Tony asked as they walked back, chuckling at Axel's mention of being a street racer. "I just HAVE to convince my dad to let me roll on outta here in one of his cars when you guys leave!" he exclaimed. "That'd be so cool!"

As he listened to Axel's next question, Tony couldn't suppress a grin. "Well, my father DID buy the Mona Lisa, but the French government refused him an export permit." he explained, not elaborating on whether he was being truthful or not, only giving the rat an amused look.

As they rejoined the main group, Tony waved the tweezers. "Hey, Soren! We got your stuff!" he called.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 16, 2014, 10:44:55 pm**

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With a light whiff, a microscopic dart embedded itself into Markus' neck, fired from somewhere behind him. It had an almost instantaneous tranquilizer effect, designed to put every muscle in the body into instant paralyzation. A beast thrice Markus' size wouldn't have the chance to even close his eyes.

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The cleaning lady knocked again, and, hearing no response, took out her set of keys and unlocked the door. "I'm coming in..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 17, 2014, 05:37:12 am**

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(Purifier Compound)

Sanjay lit his crude incendiary bomb with the lighter and quickly tossed it over the fence and into the pool of oil. The oil sputtered a bit but the paper continued to burn.

"Let's move! Those incendiary packets could burn through any moment!" He began slithering towards the exit as fast as he could.

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Aaron's ear twitched at the gunshot echoing from one of the drainage pipes.

He frowned. "Fucking hell, they're above us!"

The German Shepherd slung his shotgun across his back and began climbing one of the ladders that led to the surface.

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(The Heights)

"Thanks!" Soren said.

He used the tweezers to carefully push the tiny piece of foil into the cut in Anne's horn. Turning on the soldering iron and letting it heat up, he pushed the foil back a little bit more so there was a little indentation.

A small dab of the white nonconductive glue completely concealed the nick in Anne's horn. By the time the glue hardened, the soldering iron was now hot enough.

Soren tinned the soldering iron and carefully applied solder, covering the glue and making sure that the molten solder made an electrical connection between the two parts of her horn.

The Human turned off the soldering iron and turned on the radio until he got static. "Okay, Anne, transmit!"

Anne rubbed her horn to make sure everything was good. She took a deep breath and her ears splayed in contentment. They then shot up. Her voice – albeit marred with static – soon emanated from the radio.

*"It ain't perfect...but hey, it's better than nothing!"*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 18, 2014, 12:06:40 am**

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"That's... impressive!" Tony nodded as he heard Anne's voice come through the radio. Must've been a signal relay of some kind... but Max interrupted the group at that point.

"Ahem... dinner is served." he informed them, and led the way towards the dining hall.

"Right! I'm starved!" Tony said, rubbing his paws as he moved off to follow after the iguana. The dining room was large, like everything in the house, and a long mahogany table stretched off down the length of it. There was more than enough room for everyone, and a crystal chandelier hung from the center of the room, it's bright light playing over the walls and darker table.

Already seated at the table were four ferrets, Tony's siblings who turned to look at him as he entered. There were two males, and two females. The first male, the oldest, was brawny and looked like he could take on a mutant alligator. He was dressed casually, his arm draped across the back of the chair. The other male was more formally attired, but was slighter of build than both the older one and Tony. He had a very friendly disposition.

The older of the two females was... ravishing, to say the least. She had an ample chest, tight waist, and curvy figure. She regarded the group with some interest with deep eyes, though brightened upon seeing her favorite brother enter the room.

The younger female darkened upon seeing the group. She was the youngest in the family, probably mid-teens from the looks of it, and she looked anything but cheery, regarding the newcomers with suspicion and wariness.

"Yo, bro." The oldest brother said with a simple wave.

"Tony!" Both the older sister and the younger brother cried almost at once. The younger brother, Elio, actually jumped out of his chair and ran over to Tony to squeeze him affectionately, causing Tony to exhale.

"Ooof!" Tony breathed.

"It's been... a year! We were so worried! Well... I was at least." Elio said warmly, letting his brother breathe now. "It's so good to see you again!"

"Yeah... it's good to see you too, Elio." Tony grinned. "Everyone... I'd like you to meet Victor, Elio, Paula, and Caroline. My pops will probably enter once everyone's seated, knowing him." the ferret introduced the group to the rest of his family.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 18, 2014, 05:32:30 am**

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Axel smiled and awkwardly scratched his arm. "Erm... hey. I'm Axel," he said, raising his hand in a wave. His smile faltered a little when he saw the dark look Tony's younger sister was giving them, but at least the rest of the family seemed friendly enough. "You guys have an awesome place," he tried lamely. *Lily's been gone a while...* he thought absently.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 18, 2014, 12:38:17 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Rocky** on **January 18, 2014, 04:35:09 pm**

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Patrick was snoring as he slept.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 19, 2014, 01:40:33 am**

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"Yeah... it's 'awesome' all right." Elio grinned at the use of Axel's term.

"Kids?" Caroline asked with some hint of revulsion at the term. Paula however elbowed her sister. "Oww! Watch it!" Caroline growled.

"We have guests." Paula shushed her younger sister. "Yes... we're... the don's children, as you put it. It's very nice to meet you as well." she told him, giving Kojuuro a winning smile.

"Uh right... let's uh... get ready to eat. I'm sure my father will be down soon." Tony said a bit nervously. He took a seat next to Elio, wanting to be near his younger brother for this.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 19, 2014, 03:17:24 am**

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(The Heights)

Soren and Anne arrived and sat at the table.

Anne nodded as she saw Don Stracci's children.

"Hello," Soren said as he sat down and looked at the lavishly decorated room.

Anne looked around. "Hey, where's Lily and Marita?"

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(Patrick's Neighborhood)

Outside a very posh looking gated community, a Ford 2031 Econoline van with the livery of a plumbing company drove up to the guard house. The guard at the front waved them through.

Inside the van were four men – a Purifier strike team. They were clad in dark blue and had pistols tucked into hip holsters.

Their mission wasn't to assassinate Patrick or destroy his property. They were going to give him a little scare.

The electric van's motor spooled down as the driver stopped. "All right, y'all know what to do!"

The men inside pulled down their balaclavas and donned gloves. They muscled out a large box with a laser carved metal note at the top – and the broken gear emblem.

They made their way to the front door of the house. One of the men, a equine of undetermined breed, got a cylindrical tube ready. Another one of the men used a small magnetic accelerator to shoot large ball bearings through every window.

"Go! Go!" the equine hissed as soon as he yanked the pull-ring and tossed the tube through one of the broken windows. The tube in question was a stolen military training grenade, designed to replicate the flash and thunder of an actual grenade but without the risk of starting fires or throwing shrapnel around.

The men scrambled into the van and drove off.

"Well, let's hope that silicon slut gets the message," one of the Purifiers said, pulling off her balaclava to reveal a surprisingly attractive Golden Retriever bitch. She ran a gloves hand through her golden headfur.

"He's probably too busy gettin' freaky with one of those chipheads!" another Purifier cracked.

The van was filled with raucous laughter as they drove off into the darkened elevated highway that led to this exclusive development. A distant *bang* was heard as the training grenade went off.

When Patrick would wake up, he would find a file box containing forty pounds of metal scrap, a plastic bag with small bit of C-4 and a blasting cap and this laser-cut metal note:

Quote

To Patrick Anderson,

You have sold your fellow Baselines out to the technological abominations known as "Augments". The explosion you heard was the grenade simulant we tossed through your window.

As you can see, the box in front of you is filled with forty pounds of metal scrap. This your first and only warning:

Cease prostituting yourself to these hybrid abominations or else the next delivery you recieve from us will be C-4.

[cracked gear emblem]

(OOC - silicon slut = term for someone who supports Augments, manufactures augmentations or works with augmentations. It is a *highly* insulting term and using it is likely to result in violence.)

(OOC - chiphead = term for Augment. It's not as offensive as Gleamer but it's still not a socially acceptable way to refer to an Augment.)

(OOOC - [] in quotes is a picture description.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 19, 2014, 06:06:22 am**

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"I think Lily was taking a bath," Axel said as he took a seat next to Anne. "I... guess she's just taking her time to relax for once." He glanced down at the cutlery and tableware - it all looked good quality. The sight of the empty plate waiting for food made his stomach rumble. "I'm sure she won't mind if we, ah, just eat a little without her..."

He leaned his elbows on the tabletop, then quickly took them back off in case it offended the hosts, folding his arms nervously across his lap. "Your dad sounds like an interesting guy... I really, ah, like the collection he has in the garage."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 19, 2014, 07:47:03 am**

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Emilena darted out from behind the dumpster and kept her rifle aimed at anywhere that Purifiers might think to show themselves.

They reached a chainlink fence at the end of the alleyway and Emilena emptied her clip at it. "Bulletproof!" she cursed. Apparently somebody had installed basic security precautions in this area. "Either we climb, or find a way around!" She turned to Sanjay, looking for direction.

The purifiers could only be getting closer to their location....

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The cleaning lady pushed the door open and coughed as she saw the room was filled with steam. The bath had been running nonstop for what must have been hours. "Hello?" she choked. The air was thick with a phlegmatic taste.

Stumbling to the jets, she turned off the bath and hit the fans. Once the room was clearer, she could see inside the bathtub and cried out. There was an unmoving body floating limply, and the bathtub water was saturated in thick blood.

Staggering backwards, she sprinted into the hallway and reached the first intercom she could. She immediately dialed the security guard on duty in this wing.

"There's been a murder in the east wing bathroom!" she exclaimed.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 19, 2014, 04:41:47 pm**

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"I'm glad you like my collection... and that you think I'm an... 'interesting guy.'" The voice that responded to Axel's comments was low and accented, and standing at the entrance of the dining room was an older ferret. He wasn't particularly tall, but he wasn't overly short either. He was dressed in a blue pin stripe jacket, white shirt poking out from underneath and blue pants. A thick cigar was clamped between two of his claws, and he seemed to regard the party with a squint. At his side stood a female ferret wearing a red dress with black fur around the neckline, and a pearl necklace. "Auto enthusiasm is a hobby I've always shared with my son." The don nodded in Tony's direction as he took a puff from the cigar.

Tony nodded back once. "Sir." he replied.

"Which one of you..." the don looked at the assemblage. "Is the leader of your group? Which one of you decided to bring my son here?"

=====

Security was all abuzz in the hall where Lily lay in the tub. The family doctor was summoned, and he entered the bathroom now accompanied by security. "All right..." he murmured, stretching gloves over his hands as he approached the figure in the bathtub. "OK... let's see what we've got here..." he whispered to himself as he knelt down to begin inspecting the body.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 19, 2014, 07:07:13 pm**

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It soon became apparent that the body was not dead; she appeared to have passed out from blood loss. Small open wounds had appeared on the sides of both of her hands, and nubs of bone were sticking out, bones that didn't correspond to any naturally-occurring bones in the human skeletal system. A much larger opening had formed in her tailbone area, which was where most of her blood loss had occurred. She had roughly 80% of the minimum required blood supply still in her system, which was putting incredible strain on her heart and keeping her in a state of unconsciousness.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Rocky** on **January 19, 2014, 07:21:15 pm**

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Patrick, by this time was awake and was being brought up to speed of what happened. "I'm glad mom and dad aren't here to see this." Patrick said. His human Parents were vacationing in Switzerland and were accompanied by the finest Privately owned security force money could buy.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 19, 2014, 11:11:24 pm**

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marita marie and riose looked at the food on thier dishes' they had been observing their surroundings as they followed Tony around his fathers house. marita knew it was good manners to never refuse something when a host offers it to you, especially when the host is someone of the Don;sd persuasuion. saying no might very well get you kiled..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 20, 2014, 05:36:06 pm**

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Axel started slightly and turned in his seat to face Tony's father. He gulped. The ferret looked like he'd stepped straight out of the set of 'The Sopranos', radiating an air of total control. *Probably not someone you want to piss off...* Axel thought, noticing Tony's sudden sobriety.

He blinked at the Don's question. "Erm... we're, like, a team. Ah, sir... your, er... Don-ness..." Axel grimaced, trying to stop his mouth running. "I mean, we work together, and we all thought this was the best thing to do. Right guys?" he said, glancing around quickly at the others, before returning his gaze uneasily back to the Don.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Rocky** on **January 20, 2014, 05:55:19 pm**

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Soon enough the Police were at Anderson estate interviewing Patrick. The Victim was being transported by an ambulance to the nearest hospital.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 20, 2014, 06:56:49 pm**

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Don Stracci pulled the cigar out of his mouth and exhaled a wreath of blue smoke about his head, looking at the others. "A group?" he asked now, beginning to walk to the head of the table. "So... I have to give out a group reward?" he asked.

"I don't think you have to do anything, pops, if Tony hadn't left in the first..." Victor began, but a steely look from his father shut him up immediately.

"Quiet, boy. No, I believe in doing something... I reward loyalty, after all." the don said as he snuffed out his cigar in a crystal ashtray. Looking down at the meal prepared for him, he smiled. Spaghetti carbonara... his family favorite. There were also selections of veal, steak, salads, and chicken which waiters moved about the table with, offering them to each of the guests. If they didn't see what they liked, the waiters were more than happy to place a custom order.

"So... as a token of my... appreciation..." Don Stracci continued as he began twirling the pasta around his fork. Tony had the same dish as his father, his father remembering his son's shared tastes. "What can I do for you for bringing my son back?" he asked, shooting his narrow gaze around the table.

Tony shoveled a forkful of spaghetti in his mouth. He didn't want to speak out of turn, and if he recalled, there were some who had more solid ideas on what they wanted. Weapons would be good though, for as the ferret recalled, they would need some more firepower... and perhaps an all access pass to a hospital under the guise of a family member for Adrian. But of course... it was up to them what they wanted... Tony had his own ideas, namely a fast classic car for his personal use, but... later.

=====

"She's still alive!" The doctor announced. "But she's lost quite a lot of blood! Let's get her down to the infirmary!" He noted the... changes that seemed to be causing this blood loss all over her body. It was as if she was metamorphosing into something... completely not human.

A few minutes later, Lily was set up on a bed down in the family infirmary. The doctor was busy cleaning and dressing her injuries to prevent further blood loss so that her heart could start replenishing the lost quantities. He was debating on whether or not he should hook her up to an IV, but didn't wish to start a blood transfusion until he knew her type, which he would get to after her wounds were probably dressed. He noted the bone protrusions through her skin, and did his best to work around them. As remarkable as it seemed, her entire structure seemed to be reworking itself.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 20, 2014, 08:35:59 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 21, 2014, 02:16:01 am**

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(The Heights)

Soren swallowed his mouthful of spaghetti carbonera. "Don Stracci," he said. "I only desire two things: repair of my workshop and house and exacting revenge on the Purifiers who destroyed my life."

Anne was eating the salad with gusto. Apparently, her high had worn off and she was having a

serious case of the munchies.

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(Purifier Compound)

The transformer fire had now gotten the attention of those in the compound.

Aaron climbed out of the sewers as soon as the alarm went off. The transformer that Sanjay had set aflame controlled the pumps – without them, the sewers would flood. He radioed Marcus. "Marcus! The fuckers burned one of the transformers!"

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Sanjay looked at the fence. The holes were just wide enough for him to fit through. He squeezed through the gap and disappeared for a moment. He then returned with a knotted rope which he tied to a dumpster. "Climb that!" He tossed the rope over the fence.

(OOC - Again, I ran into the issue of meat in an anthro world...See the discussion topic. Pterano, can I assume the meat is lab grown meat?)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 21, 2014, 02:55:03 am**

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Emilena had tried and failed to scale the fence; her bulky rifle slung behind her back kept throwing her off balance. Grasping the rope and gritting her teeth, she felt Sanjay pulling her over as the first of the Purifiers located their position.

Suddenly one of the bullets severed the rope and sent her plunging. Grasping the top of the fence with a wild cast of her arm, she panted loudly and was forced to abandon the rifle. Hoisting herself over, she went tumbling into the grime on the other side as the first salvo of bullets pinged against the fence.

She got to her feet staggering. "Go, go go!" she panted, racing down the alleyway as fast as she could.

It wasn't until they'd reached relative safety in an alleyway on the outskirts of the city that she realized she was limping and bleeding. "Sanjay, I think..." she staggered and collapsed. She'd been hit twice; once bullet had passed through the space below her left rib, the other was embedded in her right buttock.

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Lupis stepped out of the shadows behind the paralyzed Marcus. Politely sliding the Doberman to the side, he equipped the rifle and sniped the first three Purifiers who attempted to follow Mr. Bhat and Officer Echo over the fence. Pressing a button on his watch, he lifted the radio jammer so that Marcus could hear the survivors radioing him in confusion and fright, trying to figure out what was going on.

With a shimmer, the Agent dissipated from sight.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 21, 2014, 12:15:10 pm**

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Don Stracci considered Soren's request, and slowly nodded. "These Purifiers... it's become a rather dirty business as of late. While I can neither confirm nor deny if I deal in augments, the Purifiers have never been able to prove anything with me, and they know better than to randomly raid my trucks. I own a construction company... mostly road repair, but..." he paused here, his eyes not leaving Soren. "I would be willing to extend you this favor, and get

your workshop and house rebuilt. However... the Purifiers are not my concern, even if they did invade the sanctity of your home. But... with that said..." he glanced over at Tony now.

"You did save my son and bring him home. For this kindness, I would be willing to lend you more... indirect assistance, shall we say, against these Purifiers. I don't like them personally." Don Stracci continued. "But I also have no war with them at present. However, there's an old saying... the enemy of my friends... is my enemy." the don stated, cracking a slight smile here.

"Sir, we were talking about maybe some guns. Firepower." Tony spoke up now respectfully.

"Guns?" his father smiled again. "I don't provide guns. I do however, provide hardware." It was clear what the euphemism meant, and also why the don was choosing to use it. "Hardware I can provide in abundance. All untraceable; the cops will never know where you got it, if it comes to that. And if you *do* get in trouble..." the don pointed at Soren now, still smiling, but in a much smaller way. "I can recommend some very good lawyers... or even a judge or two who sees things my way, provided you keep tight-lipped about where you obtained your hardware." The smile grew a tad here. Tony noted Max was present at the table... most likely for legal reasons. This conversation would be refuted by all of his siblings if it ever leaked, and Max would of course provide the clincher. Tony also knew that anyone who ratted his father out had extremely low expectations of actually making it to court to testify... it was amazing how many friends in unexpected places his dad actually had.

"If you could please provide Mr. Fontana the address of your workshop and home, I will ensure that one of my crews are sent out there. I can't guarantee work will start immediately... it's dependent on what current contracts I have, but we'll get the job done at some point." he promised Soren. "I never forget a favor requested of me." he said with finality.

"Oh... should we also ask for Adrian to be checked into a hospital under the protection of my family?" Tony asked Axel in a low voice now.

The family doctor backed away from the mechanical contraption now who was insisting it be allowed to attend to Lily. He merely gave it a nod. "Suit yourself." he said, moving off to at least get a chart started on Lily on his data pad.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 21, 2014, 04:56:00 pm**

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Axel nodded across the table to Tony. "Ah, Don Stracci? One of the people who... Oh, thanks..." he paused as one of the waiters placed a salad in front of him. "One of the people who brought Tony back, Adrian, was injured pretty... ah, pretty badly. We took a look at him, and I think he's been taken upstairs, but there's only so much that can be done for him outside of a proper hospital. If it's possible... could you arrange to have him taken there and kept under some kind of... I don't know, protection or something? If he was here with us I'm pretty sure that's what he'd want."

He forked a bunch of the salad leaves into his mouth. The fresh food was a shock to his system after the microwaved, processed junk he'd been living on all this time, and he hungrily stuffed down another few mouthfuls. After a moment, he put the fork down and looked up hesitantly at the Don. "I, erm... I don't have a request for me personally. But the girl in our group, the one who went up to take a bath, Lily... she's in some trouble and we still don't really know why. The cops are all over my place so she couldn't stay there but... I'm asking if this could be a place where she'd be cool to, like, hide out and be protected, if she ever needed it. I want her to have at least one place she can feel safe at." He met the Don's eyes. "That's the favour I'm asking. If... if it's okay."

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Marcus' head swam. He could hear gunshots, thumping as if they were a thousand miles away, and voices, tinny and distant, crackled from somewhere nearby. He tried to focus his mind. Faintly, he knew he'd been drugged somehow. *Lupis... that motherfucker...*

He picked up on Aaron's voice coming from somewhere. "*Fuckers burned... transformers...*" Marcus focused all his attention into trying to get his body moving again.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 22, 2014, 01:23:59 am**

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Don Stracci nodded. "Of course... I can place him under protection at a hospital of my choosing. He'll have security and the best doctors I can afford." the don graciously offered. He went back to his spaghetti as he listened to Axel's favor request.

"Hmmm... if she can stay here?" A thin smile spread across the don's lips now. "I would say yes but... you should never speak for a lady." he said, waving his fork at Axel in an admonishing fashion, the smile still there. "It's something I learned." he glanced at his wife now, smiling affectionately at her. "Provided your Lily agrees, it's done. But she needs to say yes herself." Don Stracci stated.

That was certainly fair enough, Tony thought.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 22, 2014, 02:20:39 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 22, 2014, 03:29:43 am**

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(The Heights)

"You have my word, Don Stracci," Soren said as he wrote down the address of his home on a napkin and slid it to the Iguana. "Thank you for your help."

Anne finished off her third bowl of salad.

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(Alleyway)

"Shit!" Sanjay muttered. He quickly looked Emilena over. It didn't look like her spine was involved.

He then looked around the grimy alleyway. He could easily abandon her and the cops would think that she was a bum who pissed off some street thugs. Them again, Agent Lupis was probably watching – and he really wanted that reward.

Looping both arms under Emilena's armpits, he began dragging her to the street.

He flagged down a passing motorist, a Fruit Bat who appeared to be a construction worker.

"Forget it! I ain't helping no bum!" she snapped upon seeing Emilena's bruised and filthy state. She was about to close the door and drive off when Sanjay shoved his pistol in her face.

"That wasn't a request. Now help me get her in the car and get to Stephenson Memorial before I blow your fucking brains all over the road!"

The Fruit Bat backed away and carefully hoisted Emilena into her car's backseat. Sanjay slithered into the backseat and placed his pistol against the seat's lower back where it would be out of sight to the casual observer.

"Drive!"

The construction worker gulped and headed out of the dark alley way and into the LED light main highway.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 22, 2014, 06:21:47 am**

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"Alright, I understand," Axel said, nodding appreciatively at Don Stracci. "I'm sure she'll agree and... I just wanted the possibility to be there. Thanks."

When Kojuuro reported that Adrian was doing better, Axel looked sideways at him and smiled encouragingly... then did a double take when Lily was mentioned, the smile wrenched from his face. "What?! What happened, is..." He dropped his fork and pushed his chair out from the table, started to rise. "Where's the infirmary?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 22, 2014, 11:32:27 am**

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"My pleasure." Don Stracci said to Soren. Max took the napkin, nodded once, and slipped it away somewhere inside his voluminous coat.

"I'll look through our current workload and let you know when construction can commence." Max told him.

Tony sat upright upon hearing Adrian was awake. Well... that was some recovery if he was trying to walk around! This was great news! He immediately wanted to go see him, but had his dinner to finish first. But that wasn't the end of the news, or so it seemed. Axel now desired to get to the infirmary, and Max opened his mouth to inform him where it was located, but Tony cut him off.

"You know what? I'll take you there." he offered. "I wanted to speak to Adrian anyway." he said. "I'll finish dinner when I get back." he promised his father, leading the rat out of the dining room now and towards a set of stairs that went down into the basement.

Moving down the flight of steps, Axel could see the basement was its own separate floor, with corridors that stretched away into a labyrinth of passages. Tony threaded his way through them, and fortunately, it wasn't a very long walk. The infirmary was brightly lit, all sterile and colored an off-shade of light green. There were a few beds down here, much more comfortable than you'd find in a typical hospital. "Here you are." Tony said, holding his paw out towards the open door.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 22, 2014, 12:44:30 pm**

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Axel stepped past Tony through the doorway, and stopped dead when he saw Lily lying in one of the beds. The robotic Doctor who'd helped Adrian earlier was standing over her, performing some kind of test, and Adrian himself was up. Axel barely acknowledged them as he hastened across the room to where Lily lay, stopping on the opposite side of the bed to where the Doctor stood.

From here, he could see the dressings on her hands - it looked like she had deep cuts along the side of them. The pale green light spilling over the room made it seem like he was staring down at a body. "Lily?" Axel whispered, his voice trembling. He bent down and touched her

shoulder lightly. There wasn't a response. Looking up, Axel's eyes were lost. "What the hell's happened to her? She was fine just a while ago..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 22, 2014, 03:57:03 pm**

Emilena gritted her teeth and squinted her eyes as she bled all over the back of the construction worker's car.

"Why the hell are you...?" she coughed, thankfully no blood came out. That implies the abdomen bullet missed most vital organs. "Why aren't you just letting me die...?"

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Lily moaned loudly. Her eyes suddenly flew open and her face contorted in pain. "Oh, it hurts!" She tried to roll onto her back, but the bloodied mass that had formed around her tailbone prevented this, so she remained curled in the fetal position. Something cracked and she cried out and arched her back, tearing the splint the doctor had set on her backside.

The bloodied mass was growing longer and fatter by the second. On her hands, two bony digits were pushing their way through her skin. She looked at them in horror when she tried to cover her face. "Oh god..." Her tear-stricken eyes locked with Axel's. "Help me..." she pleaded weakly.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 22, 2014, 05:19:05 pm**

Marita, upon learning that adrian was up ' If you would excuse me Don Stracci, but i'd like to go check on him, i helped stabilize t\him before he arrived her' She said, in a very respective tone. " and dinner was delicious. my compliments to the che, or chefs' she added. marie and Rose were still eating, Rose was on her second dish, as was Marie, this was far better food than what she had at home..

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 22, 2014, 06:30:55 pm**

Axel recoiled back at the sudden burst of movement from Lily. His leg bumped into the small metal table adjacent to the bed, tipping it over with a crash and scattering the medical instruments on the floor. He saw the extent of what was happening to her, saw the digits coming through the skin, saw the growth on her tailbone, and he felt his mind go numb. *What the fuck...*

He met her terrified eyes, and felt himself slowly pulled back into the moment. "It's okay... it's alright, I'm here..." Axel tried to say soothingly, rushing forward. He attempted to put his arms around her - with her thrashing, it was almost impossible to see if his touch was hurting her. "Look at me! Everything's going to be okay!"

Axel held her tightly and looked up at the Doktor. "Can't you give her something?! For fuck's sake, she's in pain!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 22, 2014, 07:20:43 pm**

(Highway 225 – En route to Stephenson Memorial)

"Because I want to keep my augments!" Sanjay snapped. "And besides, you really think Lupis

isn't watching?"

"Who?" the construction worker asked.

"Shut up and drive!" Sanjay pressed the pistol further into the seat back.

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(The Heights)

"Thank you for the dinner, Don Stracci. Your chefs are quite talented," Soren said as he finished off the fruit desert. "Now if you'll excuse me, I'd like to see how Lily is doing."

He carefully pushed the chair in and stood up. He then waited until Marita moved as he decided to follow her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 22, 2014, 07:49:59 pm**

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Don Stracci nodded at Soren. "I understand. Thank you for the compliments." he said, nodding at the human.

=====

Tony noted how much pain Lily was in, flinching when he heard her cry out for help. "Jeez..." he walked slowly into the infirmary now, not wanting to disturb her too much. "Hey... Adrian." the ferret said softly, smiling at him. "Glad to see you're up and about. You're at my place now... I wanted to help you since you spared me back at the factory." he said. "How are you feeling?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 22, 2014, 08:02:05 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 22, 2014, 09:23:22 pm**

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"Well, how exactly am I supposed to protect you when I'm crippled anyway?" snapped Emilena back. She sat up and the action made her cough again. There was blood this time...

"Drive faster!" she spat, irritated. "Can't we just shoot her and take the car ourselves?"

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Lily coughed and threw up. There was another crack from somewhere in her body.

She threw up three more times and couldn't stop choking and crying. The anesthetic didn't appear to be helping at all. And the tattoo on her breast had dropped to 4.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 22, 2014, 10:22:27 pm**

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"If you noticed, I don't fucking have legs!" Sanjay snapped. "Cars have to be modified for Snakes to drive them!"

He then turned to the driver. "Go faster!"

"I'móOkay." Sanjay shoved his pistol into her neck. The driver complied and pushed the accelerator to the floor, causing the car to go over 100 miles per hour.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 23, 2014, 01:39:44 am**

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"Aw, it's OK." Tony waved his paw dismissively here. "If not for you... I wouldn't be alive either. I wanted to help you as much as I could... so I'm glad you made it." he smiled now sincerely, but was interrupted by Lily's rather loud vocalizations and her becoming violently ill.

"Jesus!" Tony exclaimed, noting Lily retch three times. "Damn! Can't we do something?" he asked.

"That mechanical guy just pumped her full of painkillers and who knows what else!" Tony's doctor responded, pointing. "If that didn't help... I don't know what else will unless... we induce a coma chemically to try and stabilize her!" he said.

"I don't know..." Tony trailed off, watching the display with wide eyes and feeling completely powerless as the horrified Lily could only further change against her will.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 23, 2014, 05:17:55 am**

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Axel didn't register the sick spilling over his hands as he tried to hold Lily still, stopping her from struggling right off the bed. The cracking noise he'd heard kept replaying itself in his head. *It came from inside her... oh jesus...*

He heard her choking. "Come on, keep breathing! This'll... this'll be over soon!" Axel babbled helplessly. His head jerked up when Tony's doctor suggested inducing a coma. "What?! Are you kidding?!" He looked desperately between the two doctors in the room. "There's got to be something else you can do!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 23, 2014, 05:15:07 pm**

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Lily coughed again. "Please...can you all just leave...I don't want you to see..." she threw up again. "...just go..."

She cast an arm out and grabbed the doctor's arm. "Don't...let Kojurro...in here," she said weakly but with conviction, meeting his eyes unblinkingly.

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Emi's eyes went wide when she saw their destination. "We can't go there!" she gasped. "They've got my records! I killed somebody there! Why would we go to a government building anyway, we're *criminals*?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 23, 2014, 05:30:42 pm**

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Sanjay shook his head. "Doctors aren't supposed to pass judgement. Besides, you got any better ideas?"

The car then pulled up in front of the hospital and carefully helped Emilena out. He then aimed his pistol at the construction worker. "Drive off as fast as you can. If you turn your head, I will shoot you!"

The Fruit Bat nodded and the vehicle sped along a short road and then up an onramp to an elevated highway.

Sanjay then carefully helped Emilena into the ER.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 23, 2014, 05:47:24 pm**

Marita soon reached the floor where adrian was being watched over, the door was ajar so she she herself iniside.. ' hi adrian" she said kindly.. ' how are you feeling?" she asked..  
 \_ marie and rose finished thier seconds courses, and asked to be excused' Excuse me is there a a couple free rooms where rose and i can change and get freshed up?' Marie asked the Don.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 23, 2014, 06:33:48 pm**

"Um... maybe we should go... but I want her comfortable as you can at least make her, OK?" Tony asked his doctor, who nodded.

"I'll do what I can. I only suggested the chemical coma to ease her suffering... it looks as if she's mutating in a rather painful fashion." he pointed out to Axel. "You don't know what's wrong with her, do you? Like her medical history? Why this is happening?" he asked the rat.

Tony turned to Adrian now, offering him a small smile. "Is there... anything I can get you before bed? I'll try and provide it, though I think I'm gonna turn in soon, once I finish up my dinner." the ferret informed him.

=====

The don nodded. "Yes... our valets will show you to your rooms." Don Stracci said, standing up now as he ordered one of the waiters to take Tony's dish to the kitchen to keep it warm. "The guest rooms are up the stairs and to the right, down the hall. I've provided for each of you to have your own rooms, so no worries on that." the don said.

"If you'll follow me, please." One of the valets at the door bowed to Marie and Rose, and began showing them to their rooms.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 23, 2014, 07:16:42 pm**

Axel shook his head. "No, I don't, I... I've only known her for a few days and she... she can't remember..." He paused and closed his eyes, taking a deep breath and letting it out shakily. *Panicking won't help her!* He opened them and met the doctor's eyes. "No, I don't know Lily's medical history, or what's happening to her. But she's been getting worse." He bit his lip. "But that wolf... the wolf knows..." Axel muttered lowly.

He looked down at Lily. Picking up a cloth that had been knocked to the floor, he wiped the sick from her mouth gently. "Look, I'll be close by, okay? If you want me, just... just call out for me..." His ears flattened weakly as he left her side and crossed the room to where Tony and Adrian stood, wiping his hands with the towel as if in a daze. Thoughts of the wolf agent, and what he'd done to her kept rushing through his thoughts. He was too pre-occupied to wonder what Lily had meant when she'd pleaded for Kojuuro to be kept out.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 23, 2014, 10:26:39 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 23, 2014, 11:01:29 pm**

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Don Stracci smiled at Kojuuro. "The pleasure was all mine! It was good to see you again. What are you up to these days, anyway? Still taking contracts?" he inquired, a smile creasing his face now.

=====

"Well... OK." Tony nodded now, smiling. "Just let me know if you do." he told Adrian. He then turned to Axel. "Wait... what wolf?" he asked, an idea suddenly forming in his mind. It couldn't be... *that* wolf, right?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 24, 2014, 12:12:47 am**

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Marie and Rose followed the valet of the stairs finding the guest room prepared and ready for them. warm, made up beds looked inviting, with a basket of fruit, candy and other snacks sat on the bedstand. ' this place is wonderful! Marie exclaimed, as she went into bathroom in her room to take a nice long bath.

- how are you holding up marita asked Adrian. " felling better bnow huh? it was a close call with you, you know. a VERY close call."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 24, 2014, 02:07:13 am**

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"Doctors can pass judgment when the patient file reads 'Killed the last doctor who operated on her and a security guard,'" Emilena shot back. "I thought he said you were smart, this is the most moronic decision *anyone* I've met has ever made!"

But Lupis had been quite clear; follow all of Sanjay's orders to the letter. Grumbling and light-headed, Emilena allowed herself to be led to the place she'd fought police, guards, and Purifiers to escape last time.

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Lily coughed and threw up again. She had refused to let go of the doctor's arm. "I meant it!" she pleaded, "I want...security tonight! Please!"

There was another cracking noise; her spine was realigning. Letting out a low moan of pain, she dug her nails into the cot as a shuddering pulse ran through the tumor on her backside.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 24, 2014, 02:28:31 am**

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Sure enough, when Sanjay bought Emilena in, the doctors, nurses and orderlies were scrambling to get her onto gurney and into the OR to stabilize her. The few that recognized her, didn't care about her previous "escapades". They just cared about her wounds.

"What happened?" a Golden Eagle asked.

"Got shot during a robbery." Sanjay took a seat in the waiting room.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 24, 2014, 04:09:49 am**

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As he joined Adrian, Tony and Marita, Axel glanced up at the fox. "Hey, I'm... I'm glad you're okay." He slowly looked at Tony, still chewing his lip. "When we were hiding out at Soren's house, a wolf came looking for her. He was dressed like some kind of... I don't know, a government spook or something... He told Soren he'd pay him if he turned her in. Then back at the factory, there he was again. He knows what's happening to her, if... if there's a way to stop it or reverse it or something..." His hands were balled into fists at his side.

Axel paused, staring at Tony. "Why? Have you seen him?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 24, 2014, 12:15:07 pm**

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Tony hesitated now, thinking on things. He looked down, then nodded. "Yeah... I shot him from behind as he was retreating from Kojuuro and Lily at the abandoned factory. It was just a decoy though... he took me hostage, and agreed not to harm me if I let him escape. He took me to the edge of the factory, dropped me off there, and left."

The ferret paused here, wondering if he should mention the card. He glanced at Lily again, then over to Axel. "There may... be a way to get in contact with him." he said slowly. "If you could... well I mean, if such a thing were possible... what would you do?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 24, 2014, 12:57:29 pm**

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Axel swallowed. "Whatever it takes to get him to talk..." The words sounded alien coming out of his mouth. He stepped closer to the ferret. "Look at her, Tony! He knows exactly what's going on, and he has to know how to help her! He *has* to!" Axel repeated, as if to reassure himself.

His tail flicked urgently. "We can't just sit here and wait for... whatever's happening to her to happen. If you have a way to get to him, you have to say. *Please*, Tony."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 24, 2014, 01:36:21 pm**

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A few hours later, a doctor and nurse came in to address the cotridden Emilena. "All right, Miss Echo, you should be all set," the doctor said, reviewing a clipboard. "The bullet was removed safely and the wounds have been bandaged and fully cleaned. Just try to take it easy for the next few days." The nurse smiled and held out a copy of the diagnosis and a small cup of gelatin.

Emilena climbed out of the cot. "If you insist, doctor."

"Now there's one final thing," the doctor added, as Emilena closed the door so the three of them wouldn't be disturbed, "You don't have any payment information on file...how would you like to balance your bill?"

Emilena stepped up and put her hands on his shoulders, smiling seductively. "Check."

In a blur she grasped his head in between her palms and twisted his neck 270 degrees with an audible snap. The nurse stumbled backwards as his body hit the floor and opened her mouth to scream, but Emilena kicked her in the solar plexus, knocking the wind out of her. Dragging her hyperventilating body to the sink, Emilena smacked her head against the porcelain and then grabbed a scalpel and stabbed her repeatedly in the temple.

A few minutes later, she returned to the waiting room dressed in the nurse's clean skirt and blouse. "Mr. Bhat?" she said pleasantly, "They're ready for you in the ambulance parking lot. If you could please come with me?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 24, 2014, 01:58:35 pm**

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Now it was Tony's turn to bite his lip, and he finally nodded. "Well..." He walked out of the infirmary now, motioning for Axel to follow him, so he was out of earshot of Adrian and Marita for the moment. "He left a card with me... there's nothing on it, but I think it's his business card." Tony said slowly, in low tones. "Maybe... maybe we can trap him... capture him even; get him to talk. Or... I could call him, pretend I need his help, and ask him if he knows why Lily is the way she is." he suggested. "Unfortunately, I DO kind of owe him for sparing my life so... I kind of would prefer the latter option first." he admitted.

"If I call him... you're gonna have to promise to keep calm. No yelling... no indicating you're even near me, OK? I'm gonna talk to him like it's a private conversation. We'd need to come up with a *really* good plan if you want to trap him though." Tony warned. "He's smart... he used a decoy, and a cloaking device. Plus he'll most likely have backup at any meeting I arrange so... we can't go into this half-cocked. Do you understand?" he asked the rat. "So first things first... let me try and talk to him... see if I can at least find out why Lily is suffering and changing. Then... if that proves to be a dead end... we'll go from there. And don't worry... I won't let myself get talked into anything. I've already kind of thought about what I'm going to say." he reassured Axel as he thrust his paws into his pockets.

"So... you have a lighter or a match or anything I can use to get this ink to appear?" he asked now. "If not, we can always head to the kitchen." He didn't pull his paws out of his pockets just yet, however.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 24, 2014, 07:04:22 pm**

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"You don't get it, he'll keep coming after her if we don't deal with him..." Axel muttered. Then he sighed and rubbed a hand through his hair, brushing aside a lock that had fallen over his eyes. "But... fine. We'll see if we can do it your way and get what we need without violence. The most important thing right now's to make sure Lily's okay." A small part of him was relieved - even in these circumstances, he didn't know if he'd have it in him to hurt someone. *But if it comes down to it...*

Axel nodded when Tony mentioned a lighter, patting his pockets and pulling a cheap, plastic one out of his jeans. "Good thing I didn't quit smoking," he said dryly as he handed it over. "And... look, thanks for telling me about the card."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 24, 2014, 07:55:20 pm**

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"Hey... no problem." Tony replied, pulling out the card now as Axel handed him the lighter. "Look... if it comes to that... then we'll just have to get him first, OK?" the ferret asked, giving him a nod. "I promise... I'll do everything I can to lure him out into the open. But just give me this chance first... I want to obtain information, see what I can find out, and go from there."

He lit the lighter, and held it under the card, being careful not to set the card alight too. "OK... let's see..." he murmured, and just like that, ink began to appear.

*Lupis Wing II*  
Central Intelligence Agency  
1-500-111-1111

*This card will evaporate in 30 seconds*

"Oh! Crap!" Tony said, quickly digging in his pocket for his phone now as he handed the lighter back to Axel. He fumbled around with it, quickly pressing the buttons and dialing. He could at least save the number... and it was a very easy one to remember too.

Typing it in, he dropped the card now, letting it dissolve into nothing as he held the phone up to his ear, and listened to the ring...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 26, 2014, 03:47:22 pm**

(Stephenson Memorial Hospital)

Sanjay put down the newspaper he was reading and slithered out to the ambulance bay.

A few of the people in the waiting room gave odd looks at the "nurse" but no one paid too much attention.

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(The Heights)

Soren made his way to the infirmary. He gasped as he saw the multitude of medical personnel around.

"What's going on?" he asked.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 26, 2014, 08:09:28 pm**

The security guard in the ambulance bay nodded once to them as they passed.

Emilena stopped. "You're not going to ask why I'm this section? Or check my identification?"

The guard shrugged. "Don't care."

Emilena gave him something to care about when she walked up behind him and snapped his neck. Grabbing his rifle, she marched to the nearest ambulance, where two paramedics were wheeling out a recently-rescued heart attack victim.

"What the hell are you doing?" gasped one when he saw a nurse coming at him with a rifle. Emilena shot both of them, then opened the driver's seat door and cracked the driver's skull open with the butt of the rifle. "Get in," she told Sanjay, backing the ambulance out of the garage and crushing the legs of the man going into cardiac arrest on the pavement.

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The phone picked up on the seventh ring. "Faux Manchu Chinese Cuisine, now offering takeout from 9am to 6pm, this is Mike how can I assist you today?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 26, 2014, 08:25:10 pm**

Tony motioned with his paw to Axel to speak to Soren as the human approached them now. He turned away, and took a few steps down the hall. "Yeah, yeah, very funny, Lupis." Tony said. "I'd like some lo mein, with a side of information, if you don't mind. It's Tony... the ferret you ran into earlier tonight." he stated, waiting to see if the act would be dropped.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 26, 2014, 08:39:45 pm**

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Sanjay nodded as he slithered into the passenger's seat.

Making his way to the back of the ambulance, he soon found the medicine cabinet. Seeing as he had no lock, he simply smashed the glass front with the butt of his pistol and started rooting around for anything he could use to fill his venom tanks with.

But first, the washout procedure. He injected some saline into the metal port and moved his head around, sloshing the fluid around. Finding an empty basin, he clamped his metal fangs against it and sprayed out the water he had used to wash his venom tanks. A few more times and he was ready to go.

Sanjay grabbed the vial of etorphine – an immensely powerful narcotic painkiller intended for use in either heavy anthros like Rhino, Elephants or Bears or in Augments with either enhanced liver and kidneys or extreme resistance to morphine based narcotics. In anyone else, a standard dosage was assured to kill. Carefully taking a syringe and drawing up the potent chemical, he looked in a nearby mirror to find the small metal port just near the side of his "neck".

He carefully guided the needle into the port and gently slid it through the self-healing silicone septum. Depressing the plunger sent the entire contents into his empty tanks.

He tossed both syringes into the nearby sharps bin and rejoined Emilena. "All right, no we need to decide where we might find our target."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 26, 2014, 09:33:15 pm**

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Axel gave an exhausted shrug as Soren approached. "That's something I'd like to know." He waited for Tony to move a little further away, then continued in a lower tone. "It's Lily, she's... Something's happening to her. She's got new fingers, and... and something's growing on her... just..." Axel's voice trembled slightly. He swallowed and gritted his teeth.

He glanced down the corridor at Tony, still on his phone. "But we think we know how to help her. You remember the wolf who came to your house, looking for her?" Axel turned back to Soren. "Tony's got a way to reach him. If we can just get *something* from him, anything that can tell us how to fix it..." he said, ears poised determinedly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 26, 2014, 09:41:55 pm**

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"Tony! Is that your name, then." The voice-alterer was turned off and the wolf's familiar voice shone through. "You wouldn't perchance be Tony Stracci? I ask based on where you're calling from. This isn't the usual line calling me from the Stracci mansion..."

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"I've got an idea for that," Emilena replied, as she drove for the cul-de-sac where the clothing store had been. "I've got two leads. The first involves a clothing store that I saw them visit. We should investigate to see if the employees could let us know anything. Unfortunately, I don't think I can enter the store; I doubt they'll be as accommodating as the hospital was."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 26, 2014, 10:01:29 pm**

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"I am, yes!" Tony confirmed. "I can see you're well connected. Have you done business with my family before?" he asked. He could hear the familiar voice of the lupine agent come through after the voice box was turned off, and knew he had gotten through to the right person.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 26, 2014, 10:13:40 pm**

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"Your father is a great man, very reliable," Lupis replied. "I cannot confirm or deny having worked with him. But I'm certainly pleased to have established friendly relations with the future don of the Stracci Syndicate. Tony, you need to be more careful with yourself, you're a very valuable person. If you like (and your father approves), I'd be willing to work with you and teach you how to gain the connections to stay safely off the front lines yourself."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 26, 2014, 10:22:06 pm**

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This was unexpected. Tony hadn't realized his father actually knew Agent Lupis... or at least, most likely knew Agent Lupis. And that suggestion... an idea suddenly formed in his mind. "Really? You wouldn't mind doing that?" he asked. "Wow that would be... something else!" he exclaimed, sounding excited. "I-I would of course have to ask my father, but yes, I'd love to do that! But hey... I called because those freaks I was trying to take out tonight... one of them you seemed to be after. I was wondering..." Tony turned a bit in the hall now, twirling some of his neck fur around his claw. "Is she valuable? And if so... if I could track her down for you and deliver her... would that be let's say... something worth my while?" he asked now, sounding hopeful. "Of course... I don't want to get the family directly involved in any government ops but... I was just... wondering... seeing as how you seemed to be after her and all... and I DO feel like I owe you for sparing me." he outlined.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 26, 2014, 10:58:53 pm**

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There was a pause. "...tell me about her," was the only reply.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 26, 2014, 11:08:16 pm**

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"Well... from what I could see, she looked human but... different. Stony skin... red eyes... hunchback... seemed to be in pain when I last saw her. She mean anything to you? Or the government?" he asked now. "Seems she was your target after all when I... nailed you in the back... or your decoy. Sorry... by the way, about that." he apologized.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 27, 2014, 07:01:15 am**

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"Never mind that," Lupis replied hastily. "Young Stracci, it's time for your first lesson in connections. That woman is incredibly dangerous, and I urge you to stay far away from her; your life is worth too much. At the moment, I have two far-less-valuable allies of my own on the way to collect her; I would be in your debt if you would offer them free room and board for a night. They can take care of her from that point. If your father has any objections, I am available at any time to speak with him. We've trusted each others judgment in the past."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 27, 2014, 11:42:37 am**

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Tony paused here at the mention of the words "incredibly dangerous." He narrowed his eyes, trying to gauge things for himself. Lupis now mentioned two of his more expendable people required room and board at his father's mansion. He closed his eyes, thinking fast. "Well... as you know, my father has ultimate say over who gets to stay here. I'm sure he'll say yes but... I'm gonna have to call you back regarding that, if that's OK?" he asked.

He dropped his voice now, speaking in very low tones. "Agent Lupis... before I go... when you said dangerous... how incredibly dangerous? Like... city-wide destruction apocalyptic movie dangerous? Or... what I'm trying to say is... does she pose a threat to those not even in her vicinity? I'm worried about my family, after all. And well... practically everyone else in this city." he murmured, rubbing his forehead.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 27, 2014, 04:07:31 pm**

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"If I could answer that question, she'd only be 'very dangerous,'" Lupis replied. "The reason she qualifies for 'incredibly dangerous' is that we truly don't know what she's capable of. But currently, her damage seems to extend to those only in the general vicinity, and mostly involve mental trauma. But my information comes from a time when she looked nothing like the creature you just described. For the good and yours and your family's mental health, it'd be best for you to be rid of her as soon as possible."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 27, 2014, 04:31:17 pm**

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Tony listened to Lupis's information, finally looking down the hall at Axel and Soren. "All right... well, I'll let my father know about your expendables, and see what he says. I'll call you back as soon as I can. Thanks for the info, and I'll be in touch." he said, pushing the hang up button now.

Sighing, he dropped his phone into his pocket, and strode back down the hall to where the rat and human were located. "How much do you really know about Lily? I mean... *really* know about her?" the ferret asked Axel now. "According to Lupis, she's 'incredibly dangerous.' That's mostly because he doesn't know what she's capable of, according to him, but that she causes mental trauma to those around her. Now... I'm going to bet she doesn't do this willingly but... do we really know if she's safe or not?" he asked, looking between the two of them.

"Oh and also... he's sending two of his 'expendables' here." Tony sighed. "I need to get dad's permission for that one though, and he indicated as such on the phone. Don't worry... I don't think he knows Lily is actually here but... this warrants a plan, all the same. Do we get Lily out of here... do we ambush these two somewhere on the road leading up to the Heights? Do we get my dad to just say no, they can't stay here? How do you guys want to play this?" he asked, placing his paws on his hips and looking back and forth from Soren to Axel.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 27, 2014, 06:52:07 pm**

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Axel gaped at Tony. "*Dangerous?! Are you kidding me? Does she look dangerous to you?!*" he spluttered. "I mean, no, I... I don't know that much about her, but..." Axel shook his head firmly. "No. It's bullshit. He's lying to you Tony, you can't listen to him!"

He frowned as Tony told them about the two Lupis was sending over. "They're coming to take Lily?" Axel slumped back against the wall as he tried to think. He let his breath out unsteadily. "Alright... at least we know... Gives us time to prepare..." He rubbed his eyes then looked up at the two standing with him. "I don't think we should move Lily. There's nowhere else that's safer than here, or at least not close by. And if we can't get Lupis to talk, there's a good chance the people he's sending know something about her..." Axel grimaced. "I... I think we should do what he says. Let them come here, but then when they arrive we can grab them

and... get what we need. If we ambush them on the road here, there's a chance they could get away, then they'd know for sure she's here."

He looked between Tony and Soren. "But... jesus, I don't know. What do you guys think?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 27, 2014, 07:07:10 pm**

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"Now hold on, calm down, Axel!" Tony said, raising his paws before him now. "They aren't coming to take Lily... he gave no indication he even thinks she's here. He said they needed room and board tonight. That's all. I don't know why the hell he thought my place would make a good stop to do that, but whatever. I guess because my father and him are connected... which also makes me uneasy. But then again... he could be lying about that too. My father has connections... but they're mostly with judges and politicians. People he can lean on... government agents... don't hold much interest to him, and contacts with them can be dangerous." the ferret pointed out now.

"OK so you're saying... let them in, then take them?" Tony asked. "He made them sound like they were... expendable to him, so I doubt they'd know anything about her." he shook his head here. "They're probably just boneheads taking orders." he sighed. "Look... if we take them here... and Lupis finds out they failed... you don't think he'd hold me or my family responsible, do you?" he asked now. "That was kind of... why I was hoping we could move her, and lure them into a trap. Kill them or something to send a message, but keep her and my family out of each others' business. My father WOULD kill me if I got him involved in dirty government ops... and no offense to Lily, but she stinks. She reeks of black ops bullshit. Why ELSE would Lupis have attacked her earlier tonight?" Tony pressed.

He rubbed his forehead again. "OK look... let's start over, right? We have to do this in a way that doesn't spark a war between the government and my family, keeps Lily safe, and gets us information about what's happening to her. How do we do this?" he asked, looking around now. "I'm not too worried about my father's end... if things get bad, he can easily handle himself, but I want to play this safe. Is there a way we can meet and satisfy all three objectives?" he inquired.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 27, 2014, 08:22:25 pm**

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Kojuuro dropped down from the ceiling, smirking a little as he landed next to the others. "You could use me."  
He said simply...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 27, 2014, 08:57:06 pm**

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Tony was a little startled by this, but then folded his arms across his chest and nodded. "Go ahead... I'm listening." he told Kojuuro.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 27, 2014, 10:03:25 pm**

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Axel flinched as Kojuuro landed amongst them. "*Holy crap*, you could at least warn us if you're gonna do that, Koj..." He nodded along with Tony, waiting for his pulse to return to normal. "Yeah, I'm up to any ideas, this... this isn't exactly the kind of stuff I'm used to planning."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 28, 2014, 12:22:20 am**

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Kojuuro smirked and crossed his arms.

"Simple. Have me safeguard Lily once those thugs of his show up. IF things go down, then you have an easy scapegoat. After all, both times he's seen me, then you can simply say that she hired me to protect her. If I live, then he won't find out, or if he does, again, I'm just Lily's guard. And if I fail, then, at the least, I will take them out with me."

He said coldly...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 28, 2014, 03:05:40 am**

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(The Heights)

Anne emerged from the bathroom and pulled up a chair next to Axel, Soren and Tony.

Soren looked around. He shuddered as he recalled what Agent Lupis said. "I hate to say this but we need to ditch Lily – at least until his two flunkies are gone...or we make them 'gone'."

"Easier said than done," Anne replied as she sipped some wine. She then smiled as she looked at the bottle of wine on the end table. "Because of my high drug tolerance and large size, you can feed them – and myself a dish laced with what would normally be a fatal dose of a narcotic."

"First off, what if they're Augments with enhanced drug resistance? And secondly, that was the most fucking transparent plan ever to get high!"

Anne rubbed her horn and blushed a bit. "Yeah, you caught me."

Soren rubbed his forehead. "Maybe we can let them stay for the night and simply kill them while they sleep?"

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(Elevated Highway)

"You said that this 'Soren Almaya' is a licensed cyberneticist, right? Maybe a few cybernetics suppliers might have some info on him?" Sanjay offered as he watched the vehicles passing them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 28, 2014, 03:38:27 am**

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Emilena nodded. "After we check the clothing store, we should check Pelvanida next. They might have some dirt."

She pulled into the parking lot and looked around. "Can you grab me an outfit that isn't a nurse's uniform while you're in there?"

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The tumor on Lily's backside was straightening out. Growing longer and tapering. Simultaneously the bony protrusions on the side of each hand were covering over in scar tissue, stopping the unending bleeding. As Lily stared in horror at her own hands, she flexed her left digits and the new protrusion followed suit. It was a finger.

This was going to be a long night...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 28, 2014, 05:22:23 am**

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Axel shook his head at Soren's suggestion of killing them. "No... Tony's right, this *is* still the Government we're talking about. If we're going to... kill them, it can't be here, and it can't be straight away. At least, not until we know a little more about what we're dealing with." He chewed his lip. "Could... could we catch them and maybe force them to contact Lupis and tell him that Lily's not here, that's they're going to go investigate somewhere else?" He glanced between all of them. "I mean, Lanthae isn't exactly a safe place. If we made sure there wasn't any... evidence of them left... maybe we could say they left, and that was the last we saw of them?" *Jesus, a couple of days ago the toughest choice I had to make was what I was gonna eat for dinner...*

He glanced at Kojuuro. "Maybe that's..." Axel trailed off as what Lily had said to the doctor came back to him. *Don't let Kojuuro in here...* His eyes narrowed in suspicion. "Erm... hey, why don't you help us with, ah, whatever we decide to do with Lupis' men? We can always get some guards to stay down here and protect her..." Axel looked meaningfully at Tony. "Right?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 28, 2014, 12:12:27 pm**

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Tony listened to everything presented to him, and nodded, taking it all in, his mind whirring away and piecing everything together. "I think I've got it!" he said, snapping his claws. "Why don't we combine some ideas?" he asked. "I think I was over thinking things before." he admitted.

"Look... my dad is exceptional... scary even, at making people disappear. He's so good at it, there's never been a single disappearance successfully linked to him. Now let's do this..." he waved his paws outward a bit from his chest to emphasize. "I can put Lily in a place that only my family knows about. It's got state of the art security, and it's so secret, no one outside our immediate family knows where it is. Trust me when I say, she won't be far though. We hide her there for the night, and invite Lupis's goons in. They of course won't be permitted to poke around here without my father's permission, and good luck to them even if they somehow manage it, because it's quite literally impossible to access the place without certain conditions being met, none of which they'll have. Inviting them in to stay the night will get me into Lupis's good graces, as he mentioned he'd owe me one for doing this."

Tony paused here to clear his throat. "We either kill them as they leave, and my father disposes of the bodies, or simply just let them leave in the morning. Then, using our new hardware, we can track Lupis down, and try and find out what's happening to Lily. Oh and... on the off chance Lupis himself shows up and recognizes all of you, we say we ditched Lily in the district where the factory was, because her mutation was making it so we couldn't possibly safely move her, and we were worried about law enforcement showing up with all the gunfire and explosions that were going off. How's that sound?" the ferret asked, looking around at them. "Anyone want to add or amend anything?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 28, 2014, 05:10:46 pm**

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Quote from: bestariana1girl,Jan 28 2014 on 02:41 PM

[;)

(OOO - Hey, just so you know, if you want to join, please see this thread (<http://www.gangoffive.net/index.php?topic=12309>) and follow the sign up form.)

(The Heights)

Soren smiled as he listened to Tony's plan. "Tony, is it customary for Don Stracci to give gifts to important people? If so, we can hide a tracer inside said gift and follow them. Granted, I still

want them dead because I think they're those Purifier goons I met from before but this time, I think they might be more valuable to us alive."

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(Purifier Compound)

"Marcus! Please respond!" Aaron shouted into his mask mounted radio. He and his crew were desperately trying to put out the burning transformer. He helped a large Clydesdale position a foam sprayer and aimed it at the base of the fire. White fire retardant foam covered the entire area but there were still some puddles of oil that were still burning.

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(Lanthae Fashions)

As Sanjay slithered through the shop, the clerk, a gangly black teen looked at him. "Welcome to Lanthaeó"

"Official police business," Sanjay said, cutting off the clerk's spiel. He flashed his Palladia Cybernetics security badge, which looked much like an official Lanthae Police Department badge.

"Uh, what's going on?"

"I need your security footage. We've had a murder in Stephenson Memorial and we have reason to believe that the suspect was in your shop. Failure to turn the tapes over can result in your prosecution for obstructing justice."

The clerk gulped and ejected two large flash drives from underneath the counter. It was then Sanjay was aware of his clothing, sticky with the dried healing gel. He then grabbed some clothing and paid for them with his credit chit.

"A little compensation," he said with a wink.

The Indian Cobra tossed the clothes into the passenger seat as he hauled himself up. "I managed to finagle the security cam footage out of the clerk."

He then grabbed his clothes and slithered into the back to change.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 28, 2014, 06:07:54 pm**

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Tony thought a moment and nodded at Soren. "Yes!" he exclaimed. "My father will usually lavish a gift or two upon guests. This could be a good opportunity to find out where they report to and yes... I agree. Even though... they might be my old comrades... I won't stand in the way of your vengeance, Soren." he told the human sincerely. "Do you have a convenient tracking device we can use? If not... I'm sure my dad does." he chuckled.

"So... does that plan work then? If so, I can transfer Lily now, tell my dad the plan, and get him to confirm with Lupis that his goons can spend the night." Tony stated.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 28, 2014, 06:36:53 pm**

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Soren put his glass of water aside and templed his hands. "I would prefer using a commercially made tracer but if need be, Axel and I maybe able to whip one up. It'll be shitty but it should do the trick."

Anne was now on her fourth glass of wine. Despite that, she seemed perfectly sober. "One thing," she said. "As someone who's been traced many times – cops, drug dealers, ordinary crooks, etc – we have to assume that Lupis's goons are savvy about tracers. They might do things like 'lose' the gifts, rip them apart looking for bugs when they have a moment or other such things."

Soren nodded. "So tell us about the times you were bugged?"

Anne sighed. "Well, a dealer who became an informant hid tracers inside drug capsules. Turns out, I swallowed it. Fucking cops got to me before I could shit the damn thing out. Now I just cut open every pill I get."

Soren shook his head. "Too obvious. We can't just give them pills."

"The other time was when I picked up a dropped 4000 cred chit...surprise! It was bugged but I couldn't tell because, well let's face it. I'd have to cut the thing open and waste four grand."

Soren smiled. "That might work. Unfortunately, bugs that small and thin are hard to get. On the other hand, Don Stracci could probably procure one for us. But giving money might arouse suspicion."

Anne poured herself another glass of wine. "Tuck the bug behind a frame of a painting and paint over it. They'll never know."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 28, 2014, 06:43:55 pm**

"Did you grab me anything like I asked, or do I have to walk around looking like Nurse Ratched?" Emilena muttered, noting the lack of clothing for herself. *Adrian is a much better partner, he actually thinks of me every once in a while...* she found herself thinking bitterly.

She pulled out of the cul-de-sac and headed for Pelvanida. "How do you plan on getting into the cybernetics facility anyway? I sure as hell don't have clearance."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 28, 2014, 06:55:25 pm**

"Look in the bag," Sanjay replied.

He then looked at the streetlights that were currently illuminating the elevated highway. "As for the cybernetics facility, we don't get in. We wait until someone gets out..."

Sanjay then coiled up on the seat. "Of course, we could break in."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 28, 2014, 07:01:33 pm**

"Well... we might not need to give them pills to get them to swallow a tracer," Axel said hesitantly. "Tony, couldn't your dad get another dinner ready for them, and then we slip the tracer into their food?" He looked around, unsure. "I mean, it's not like they'd be looking through every dish that gets brought to them, right?"

-----

Marcus groaned, willing his body to move. Little by little, he began to get some feeling back in his limbs. After a few more minutes, he was able to clumsily pull himself upright, gripping tightly to the railing. There was a flash of pain, and he brought his attention down to his hand. He'd landed on his thumb as he fell, dislocating it. With a grunt, he snapped it back into place,

then turned his attention back to Aaron's voice, which was crackling from the radio he'd thrown away.

Staggering inside the watchtower, he snatched up the radio. "Aaron, what's the situation?! Did they get away?!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 28, 2014, 07:01:40 pm**

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"You're the plan guy, you figure it out," Emilena shot back. "Since you and Lupis both think I'm an idiot or something and can't come up with my own plans!"

But she had come up with her own plan. She just wasn't ready to tell it to Sanjay yet.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 28, 2014, 07:09:56 pm**

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marita dragged out a computer from a nearby desk and was typing away. ' the latest bugs are thin and look like the stick tac you find on kids posters in schools. we;'ll have to pass it off as something to hang the painting on the wall with. problem is that kind of stuff isnt cheap. 500 dollars an once, believe it or not.' she saidto the others.. ' how much do you think we'll need.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 28, 2014, 07:25:50 pm**

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Tony nodded now. "OK... well I think the food could work... and it'd have to be of the type that it wouldn't be.. voided easily." he said here, grimacing. "My dad's got some pretty small ones I think, about what Marita described. I think I saw a movie once where someone basically forced a bug down an unconscious guy's throat without him knowing and he wasn't able to get rid of it initially. Anyway, I'm gonna go and move Lily now. You guys think of a good way to bug our quarry, and I'll be back." he said, moving back into the infirmary now.

He cleared his throat as he stood over her now, and looked at her with concern. "Um... Lily? It's Tony. We're gonna... well I'm gonna move you to somewhere secure for tonight, OK?" he corrected himself. "The others agreed. We're trying to trap Lupis, or at least learn more about your condition. Are you OK enough for me to move your bed?" he asked, noting that fortunately, it was on wheels, like all the beds in his infirmary.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 28, 2014, 07:59:27 pm**

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Lily was drenched in sweat, the blood-stained sheets were clinging to her skin like a straitjacket.

She nodded weakly, not making eye contact or uncurling from the fetal position she had assumed. Her new tail dangled off the side of the bed, in the way of one of the wheels.

-----

Emilena parked the Ambulance just out of sight of Pelvanida. "There's the place," she said. "They close to the public in thirty minutes. Someone will be leaving the faculties at that time I wager."

Done driving, she changed into the outfit Sanjay had picked out; appropriate rugged hiking clothes. Probably the best outfit she could ask for given the circumstances.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 28, 2014, 08:41:01 pm**

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Tony felt terrible for Lily, looking at how much pain she was in, and how she barely registered his presence. "I'm gonna have to move your tail first..." he said, noting it hadn't been there before. He gingerly picked it up, and laid it down behind her on the bed. "Try to keep it there... OK?" he asked, beginning to wheel her bed forward now. "Dok, you'll come with me to this location to monitor her, OK?" he informed the Doktor.

Wheeling her bed out into the hallway, he began pushing it towards a particular hall. The ferret only wished there was something further he could do, as she looked absolutely in shock over what was occurring, not to mention in pain. He reached down, beginning to rub her shoulder now. "It's all right... we'll find out what's happening to you... I promise." he said softly. "We're not giving up on you.. we're not." he reassured her. He'd need to call his dad once they reached the particular hallway he was thinking of. "I'm taking you to a place my family uses... it's soundproofed and hidden rather well, so... you should be safe for the night. Nobody can access it but us."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 28, 2014, 11:18:48 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 29, 2014, 12:50:01 am**

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(The Heights)

"Yeah but if they bite down wrong and find electronics...We're fucked," Anne said.

Soren listened to Marita's response. "Perfect! Those flexible circuit bugs. Expensive – 5,000 creds for one – and short lived but almost impossible to detect."

Anne's eyes lit up. "I heard about them. They come with everything inside a small stick of putty. If we can find a gift, we can simply wedge it into into an appropriate hollow and paint over it. Failing that, we can carefully smash it flat and paint over it."

"Good thinking," Soren said to Marita.

Anne looked at Kojuuro. "We can't use anything that might entail drilling or cutting into a gift. And if we implant tracers on them, we run the risk of them noticing – or worse, catching us in the act."

-----

(Purifier Compound)

"They got away. We nearly drowned after the fuckers set fire to a transformer and the tunnels flooded. We're currently trying to put out said transformer," Aaron said.

He then put the hose down. "Luckily, the fire's almost out – but the power's gonna be down for a bit. They got the main transformer."

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(Pelvanida Cybernetics)

Sanjay got out of the vehicle and slithered towards the main entrance to the building. An armed guard stopped him. "Sorry, sir but Pelvanida's closing in half an hour."

Sanjay flashed his badge. "I'm with the Lanthae PD and I need toó"

He was interrupted by a Human exiting the building. He slithered after the man.

"Excuse me sir!" he exclaimed.

The man turned around. "Yes?"

"Lanthae PD," he said flashing his badge. "I need to ask you some questions."

"Look Officer, I have to get home to my kids. Am I free to go?"

"Not until you answer my questions."

The man sighed. "Fine."

"Name?"

"James Altyn."

"Occupation?"

"Cybernetics researcher at Pelvanida Cybernetics. Specializing in replacement organs."

Sanjay tapped a hand against his chin. "Now, do you know anyone named Soren Almaya?"

James nodded. "Yeah, he works on my hands." He showed Sanjay his hands, including the extremely fine fingertips.

Sanjay nodded. "Now, Mr. Altyn, did Mr. Almaya mention anything about the Purifiers?"

James nodded. "Yeah, he wanted to know if they're the ones who destroyed my hands. I told him the truth – they were."

"When did you meet him?"

"A day or so ago in the parking lot. Anyways, am I free to leave?"

"Yes you are." Sanjay slithered back to the ambulance and into the passenger's seat. James took off running to his Tesla Roadster and sped off.

"Well, it looks like one of the workers, a certain James Altyn, did in fact meet Almaya yesterday. Says the Purifiers mutilated his prosthetic hands," Sanjay said. "Now all we gotta do is find him."

(OOC - one credit = \$0.10)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 29, 2014, 01:25:25 am**

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Emilena, however, was no longer in the vehicle.

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Lily could barely concentrate on what Tony was saying. One of the wheels on the cart was a sliver unbalanced with the others, not even to the extent a normal human could even register. But it was enough to send jolts up her spinal cord with its every revolution.

All she could tell was that he was taking her somewhere hidden, where the others wouldn't know where she was. She didn't have the strength to protest or agree, but all she could think was, *Will anyone know if I die there...?*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 29, 2014, 02:35:40 am**

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"OK... here we are." Tony said softly, and pushed one of the wooden panels in the wall that basically looked like every other panel on the wall. A security panel then opened up. Tony bent down for a retinal scan of his right eye while he took his phone out of his pocket and dialed his father. He then placed his paw on the paw reader, which read his data and confirmed who he was. He then entered in the nine digit security code in the keypad. "Dad." Tony said as his father picked up. "I need you to activate the safe room from your floor. I'm moving one of our guests down there now... before you panic... just... listen..." he said, outlining exactly what was going on over the phone as he waited for his father to activate the safe room access point from one of the other hidden security panels in the manor.

His father heard him out, then sighed. "I don't like this. Lupis is a good contact... are you really sure you know what you're doing, son?"

"Dad... I don't really have any other choice. Lupis would attack this place regardless of what we did if he found out Lily was with us." Tony said as the wall suddenly slid back and then down to reveal a large elevator. Their safe room was designed to only be accessible if two family members activated it at roughly the same time. He wheeled Lily's bed in and hit the down button. The elevator would take her to a room deep under the cliff. No one outside of Tony's immediate family even knew this room existed. The guards, consiglieri, capos, all were in the dark about it, making interrogating them a pointless task.

"Well all the same... if he did that... he wouldn't do that. He's not stupid." his father pointed out. "He knows how easily I could retaliate. Anyway, you want me to call him and invite his... thugs over?" Don Stracci asked now.

"Sure... do it. Nothing will link back to you... I promise." Tony said.

"Nothing will... don't you worry about that." the don said.

The elevator arrived now, and Tony pushed the bed into a rather sumptuous room. This one was slightly more Turkish in its furnishings, and was large as well, comprising a kitchen, a bathroom, several bedrooms, and a living room. "OK... here you are." he patted her shoulder again. "Listen... you need anything..." Tony fidgeted with a remote control type thing in his paws now that had originally been on a table down here. "You push this red button, OK?" he asked, holding the remote directly in front of her face for her to see. "It'll notify my phone that you need help. I'm gonna leave this with you." he said, placing the device on the bed next to her. "Hey... you watch her, OK?" Tony asked the Doktor now.

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Don Stracci dialed Lupis's number after he got off the phone with his son.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 29, 2014, 02:41:42 am**

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Sanjay's hood involuntarily flared out, a sign that he was afraid. He unholstered his pistol and closed his eyes, allowing his cybernetic "third eye" to take over. All he saw were the lights beginning to cool down as they were shut down and the hot glow of the factory's exhaust pipes.

"Emilena, I got the info!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 29, 2014, 04:12:46 am**

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This time, Lupis picked up immediately. "Now there's the number I'm used to seeing from this address. I figure you're calling about your son?"

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Emilena was sprinting through the woods outside Pelvanida, as she had been since Sanjay left the ambulance.

*Those cock-sure strategists, both of them... she thought bitterly, thinking they can boss me around and that I can't tell they both secretly look down on me...I am not a jarhead to be ferried around gunning for others! I'll capture Lily myself!*

She had done some research when left alone. While Sanjay was in the clothing store, she had gone to the phone company across the street and obtained the call history of the only number she knew from her old team; Adrian's. A quick search on the police database showed that the last number dialed directed to Stracci manor, the crime lord's. She could regain the trail from there, if they'd even left.

Suddenly she and her thoughts went reeling as something in the shadows tripped her. Picking herself out of the dirt, she discovered a weathered backpack containing bottled water and protein bars. Helping herself (she'd forgotten when she last ate), she quickly continued on her exodus.

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Lily whimpered. The pain was lessening (not saying much, considering what it had been), and her mind was wrapping it's head around the feeling from when Tony had picked up her tail. Her brain was having a hard time comprehending the feeling of nerves from a body part that hadn't existed yesterday. And even something as simple as grasping the bloodstained sheets for comfort had become awkward with the extra finger.

"Am I...am I a monster?" she tried to ask the empty chamber, but all that her vocal cords could create was a hoarse growl. She'd lost the ability to speak.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 29, 2014, 05:39:43 am**

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"So we bug the gifts?" Axel nodded. "Alright, I can get on board with that... I mean, as long as we're careful and hide them properly." He thought about it some more then nodded eagerly, glad they now had a plan could work. "Yeah, let's go with that!"

He looked to the side as Tony approached. "Is... is she okay? She's safe?" Axel asked restlessly, standing up straight.

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Marcus swore. He put a hand to his neck and pulled out the small dart, dropping it to the floor and swinging around to scan the watchtower. But, of course, Lupis was nowhere to be seen. *Son of a bitch...* Marcus crushed the dark underfoot with disgust.

He raised the radio and growled into it. "I'm on my way."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 29, 2014, 12:27:46 pm**

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Tony couldn't even understand what was being asked of him... it just sounded like a growl. A growl that sounded nothing like Lily. He closed his eyes on the ride up, exiting the elevator after a bit, and walking back to where he'd left everyone. Axel was the first to ask how she was doing.

"She's safe but... she's not OK." Tony said heavily, his face fallen. "She's changed a lot... she doesn't... even look human anymore. And I don't... even know if she can talk. She let out this growl in response to me that... sounded more animal than English." he stated sadly. "I don't... honestly know if she's going to be OK. But I left her with a way to contact me if anything changes. The Doktor is watching her and well... she's safe at least." He informed the rat, knowing it probably wasn't what Axel wanted to hear.

"Yes, I am." Don Stracci replied. "He told me about some of your people needing a place to stay. Let me be clear Lupis... I'm in the middle of some very important business, and my fellow associates might not like seeing government pukes walking around my house. Might make them uneasy... catch my drift?" he asked. "They don't stay longer than a night, and they confine themselves to the area I confine them to, no protests. Any violation of this agreement and well... make sure they understand the consequences of failing to abide by my rules before coming here. And also as usual, they'll have to check any weapons they have with them." he informed the wolf.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 29, 2014, 02:06:09 pm**

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"Believe me, it was not my intention for you or your family to get involved," Lupis replied quickly. "I'm honestly not sure how Tony became immersed with this group. But I have reason to believe they are harboring an individual who jeopardizes our national security. A woman named Lily North has proven to be an incredible danger to both herself and those around her, and I've been trying to apprehend her for over a week now." Lupis paused. "The rewards would be substantial to anyone who played a part in her recapture. I'm not even talking money at this point." Lupis trusted that the don would understand the political benefits of assisting the government in a capture of this nature. "You know I'm a man of my word, Don. With your cooperation, my men wouldn't have to stay longer than five minutes."

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Emilena continued her sprint. She was near the edge of the forest, halfway to the manor. Every police officer knew the manor's address by heart, considering it was the hub of organized crime in the city...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 29, 2014, 02:21:40 pm**

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Don Stracci paused here, his eyes shifting from left to right as they remained narrowed in that squint he so often wore. "Are you implying..." He began, "that I should somehow assist in your search for this fugitive? Agent Lupis... you should know me better than that. I never mix my family business with government affairs... it's too messy!" he said, waving an unlit cigar in his paw now as he paced through his office. It wasn't anything new though... Lupis was always trying to pressure him to do something or other for the government. "While I provide indirect support... I can't in any good conscience lend my family's extensive resources to something like this. I mean if I were ever linked to you... think of the implications of that." he said, tsking now as he shook his head. "That just won't do! You have my house for one night for your... people. After that, they're on their own. Of course... if I do find anything on this... what did you say her name was? Lily North? I'll be sure to send it your way." he said now.

"Of course..." he paused here, deciding to play the card. "I *might* be induced to more effectively cooperate if I knew exactly why you're hunting this woman. You know as well as I

do your targets aren't always... legit, shall we say? If you could provide me with some details... then maybe I could be persuaded." Bribes were below him. He knew the government's promises weren't worth shit half the time anyway. Lupis didn't have direct authority to give him anything substantial he'd really want, after all, and thus, the don considered his hints of further assistance as empty for the moment. Sure he *might* be able to deliver on some things, but Don Anthony Stracci didn't trust the government any further than they trusted him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 29, 2014, 02:48:19 pm**

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There was a pause. "There are only three people other than myself who know the full story behind Ms. Lily North," Lupis said slowly. "I cannot in good faith tell you much. But for your own safety, I can warn you why she is dangerous."

He chose his words very carefully. "Ms. North is unknowingly developing psionic abilities. Until this occurred about a week ago, she was a completely normal housewife, so she has no training and no idea what is happening to her. We've witnessed her possess the minds of others and get them to do her bidding. As we speak, one of your housemaids might be unlocking the back door to your kitchen to let her in, without even realizing they are doing it. She can also predict danger before it occurs; she receives a flash of insight that informs her of her future killer's whereabouts and thoughts, letting her react accordingly. Every time she uses this ability, she gains a little more psionic power and a little less of her sentience. She might have developed new abilities since we were able to study her, I can't say."

He paused. "Anthony...speaking as a friend. Even if you don't help me...keep an eye on Tony. He's trying to get himself involved in all of this, and I don't want to see him get hurt. He's a good kid and he's got a great future ahead of him. But when I found him, he was in an abandoned factory having a shootout with some Purifiers in a biological cleansing hit. I got him away safely, but that isn't where a boy of his stature should be hanging out."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 29, 2014, 03:06:00 pm**

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Don Stracci listened to the information relayed to him, committing to his memory all the important details. "I know full well what my son's been doing." he said, looking from left to right again. "I agree fully with you. I intend to keep him close from now on. I thought a little life lesson couldn't hurt... but he's back now."

He smiled to himself, taking a pen from his shirt pocket and clicking it as he wandered over to his desk. "Well Agent Lupis... I do believe we're making progress, as they call it. However... I'd have to say, with all due respect... Ms. North sounds like something your government 'friends' have no business possessing. No one should possess her in fact... that sounds like it would give whoever does... an... unfair advantage, should we say? And you know I'm all about maintaining our status quo." he said kindly.

"However, with that said, you've piqued my interest. Something stood out to me that you mentioned. You said something about her being a housewife... if I'm going to start my own inquiries, I'd like to start with the husband. What can you tell me about him?" Don Stracci asked, his pen hovering over a notepad he had on his desk now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 29, 2014, 05:06:42 pm**

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"Mine not to reason why," Lupis replied dryly. "I'm just following orders. And I'm sure you have the resources to find Denny North on your own." Lupis knew that, at least as far as he could tell, Denny was a dead end, so he didn't mind revealing this information. "Thank you for

agreeing to house them for one night. They'll be on their best behavior and will keep to themselves. You shouldn't have any trouble at all."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 29, 2014, 05:45:03 pm**

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Don Stracci scribbled the name down, interested, but noting that Lupis didn't exactly say he agreed with him, even for "old time's sake." Well that was precisely why Don Stracci was a family based ferret... and not government based. He couldn't rely on these assholes... and Lupis had just proven it, which was the don's real motivation for talking to him anyway. A true friend of the family would've agreed about Lily's condition being too dangerous to merely hand over to the government... oh well. On top of that... he'd gotten his son "out of there?" Bullshit! If that were so, why was it these strangers delivering his son... and not Lupis?

"I'm sure." Don Stracci murmured to Lupis's last bit, and inhaled. "Right... well, I think that about wraps up the initials. Good speaking to you Lupis." the charm was back in his tone. "I'll be in touch. And if you ever get bored pushing pencils... my offer to you still stands!" As he hung up, he gazed at his phone for a moment, then dialed Max. "Mr. Fontana, get me everything you have on a Denny North... spelled like it sounds on both names. No, he's not someone I wish to ice... just get me info on him." He then hung up, and looked up at the ceiling.

Finally... he'd been wanting to fuck with that stiff-assed agent for years. It was a game they'd always play... feigning concern for each other... but Don Stracci's family always came first. *Always*. Maybe now he could seriously screw with the government... and perhaps even unlock the secrets to Lily's ability himself, in time. But first things first. He'd need to inform his son of the developments, and also let him in on his intentions. Oh this would be good... Lupis's goons wouldn't even realize she was right under their noses! It would be rich when he could finally rub that wolf's nose in that little detail! Right... to business then!

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 29, 2014, 06:33:15 pm**

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"Always good to talk to you, best wishes," Lupis hung up the phone and rubbed his temples. "Why did the damn Straccis have to get involved in this?" He muttered bitterly.

"Sir?" Agent Extasis had entered the room and was waiting politely for the call to end.

"It better be good news!" snapped the wolf.

"The tracers indicate our marks have split up. From analysis it appears Echo has abandoned Bhat."

"Hmmm. Honestly, she stuck with him longer than I expected. Where are they both headed?"

Extasis handed him a printout of their movements starting with the moment of departure in the Pelvanida parking lot.

"You'll need to fill in for Echo, go find Mr. Bhat," Lupis ordered. "Then head to Stracci manor. I suspect they know more than they're letting on."

"Me?" Extasis looked uncomfortable. "But that means I'll get--"

"It wasn't a request! I don't have time for this!" Lupis tuned his fellow agent out and concentrated on the printout, trying to gauge where Officer Echo was most likely headed.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **January 29, 2014, 09:17:49 pm**

'well its a good thing I get to contribute to this little adventure' Marita said , waving off the prause. whatever was going on, she was too involved in it now to back out, same went for Marie And Rose. " same what item are you going to 'give' to them?" she asked.the others.. - thids sounds like something out of a movel' Marie said ' nah in moveels theres always a dues ex machina to get folks off.. here not so much" marita replied.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 29, 2014, 11:38:07 pm**

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Don Stracci showed up a few moments later, Tony noticing his father approach. "Oh... sir." he said, bowing his head a little.

"Got off the phone with Lupis." the don informed them.

"And?" Tony asked hopefully.

"I still don't trust him. But never did to begin with. He told me some things about that woman you're trying to protect though. Things which may or may not be true." He regarded the group now as if he were sizing them up for... something. "First off... she's apparently a latent psionic with the power to control others' minds. This alone sounds incredibly dangerous... and NOT something I'm keen on the government getting their hands on. She can also detect danger to herself before it happens, and can take measures to prevent her own death, but loses more of her sentience every time she does this."

Tony thought a moment about these things. "So... that kind of matches up with what I heard with her. I mean... she was more growling when I last left her... she didn't say anything." Tony shook his head here. "So what did you tell Lupis?"

"I ain't revealing nothing to him. Family first, son." he cracked a slight smile at Tony here. "But I wonder... is this... Lily North even worth protecting? Or even worth keeping alive, for that matter? Control others' minds? That doesn't sound very... safe... though of course, he didn't really comment on her personality. If she's an OK individual... the ability to control others' minds isn't so dangerous... is it?" he asked now, spreading his arms. "But if she can't control it all... then... who's to say what could happen? Provided of course his story's true. It's hard to separate the bullshit from reality a lot of the time." he grumbled.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 30, 2014, 04:59:52 am**

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When Tony told them what condition Lily was in, Axel sagged back, feeling like someone had just punched him in the stomach. "She's that bad..." he whispered, mouth suddenly dry as sand. *Then this plan has to work... there's no time left...*

Axel's head raised when he heard footsteps approaching, and his tail curled nervously when he saw it was Don Stracci. As the Don talked, his stomach tightened. *He couldn't care less if she's okay or not, he realised sickly, but at least it sounds like he won't just hand her over...*

"Don Stracci," Axel said, trying to fight the panic in his voice, "You said it yourself, you can't trust this Lupis guy... If you'd spoken to Lily just yesterday you'd know she's a good person! I mean... yeah, she can tell when something bad's going to happen, but I've never seen her control anyone's mind, and... and even *if* her body's changing," he glanced at Tony, "She's still in there, Lily wouldn't just lose control! We just need to find how to... reverse it somehow!" Axel looked pleadingly at the Don. "Please, just don't... do anything to her. If anything happens I'll take full responsibility for it and... and if there's anything I can do to repay you for protecting her, I'll do it!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 30, 2014, 12:29:41 pm**

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The don regarded Axel with a steely gaze, not flinching as the rat plead his case before him. He remained stone like, frowning slightly as the rat outlined his thoughts. He didn't say anything at first, merely standing with a contemplative look on his face.

Tony at least gave Axel a sympathetic look the few times the rodent glanced in his direction. He knew what Axel was thinking... they wouldn't get another chance at this thing. Lily's condition wouldn't allow it.

His father finally spoke, reanimating himself after a moment's thought. "You care for this woman... don't you?" he asked. "It doesn't take a genius to see that. You're willing to do whatever it takes... aren't you? If anything DOES happen... you'll take full responsibility... I like that. You aren't afraid of owning up and doing whatever it takes. I'm afraid if my family is threatened... I'll take whatever steps necessary to protect them, though." he said, glancing at Tony. "You just make sure it doesn't come to that. Do you have an idea on how you can reverse this process? What do you need?" he inquired, raising his brow.

"Sir... we were thinking of getting those answers from Lupis. But..." Tony glanced at Axel now. "Do we even know he knows what's going on with her, or is he just seeking her for her abilities? He might not know, after all." the ferret pointed out.

"Then you're going to have arrange a meeting with him... either willingly or unwillingly on his part. What's your plan?" Don Stracci queried.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 30, 2014, 01:31:32 pm**

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Emilena came puffing up to the manor. She raised her hands in the air as she approached the guard station. "I'm a friend of some visitors you may have had recently!" She announced, trying to look nonthreatening; she'd hidden her gun somewhere in the forest. "Adrian...I don't know his last name, Soren Almaya, and Lily North? I need to find them!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 30, 2014, 06:16:33 pm**

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"Hold it!" One security guard shouted as several rifles leveled at Emelina. "Check her out!" Another guard stepped forward and began scanning her while the first one watched her. "What's your name, miss?" the first one asked, ready to radio the name through.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 30, 2014, 06:20:18 pm**

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"I... I don't know," Axel admitted. "I don't have a plan. Well, we thought if maybe we could somehow bug one of his guys, we could find out where he is when they go back to him. But even if we managed to pull that off, Lupis isn't... I mean, I doubt he'll just come out to us in the open, not if it isn't to his advantage. So either we need to lure him in somehow, or give him a reason for coming to meet us that he can't refuse..."

He shook his head in frustration. "I didn't even know this guy existed until a couple of days ago, I've got no idea how he thinks... From what Tony said, it's pretty clear he doesn't care about the two he's sending here, so they can't be used as bait. The only thing I can think of is... What if we forced one of his people to say that they'd found her, somewhere secluded, and that for some reason she couldn't be moved? Might... is there a chance he'd come out himself?" Even as the words left his mouth, Axel knew how feeble it sounded - this wasn't

exactly a situation he was used to being in. His ears twitched. *Dammit, there has to be something...*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 30, 2014, 06:31:38 pm**

"Emilena Echo," she replied unflinchingly. "They know who I am." At the moment, she had only her clothes and the water canteen in the backpack, so she didn't fear trouble with the scans. "I don't need to come in if you can direct me to where my allies have headed."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 30, 2014, 07:52:59 pm**

-REDACTED-

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 31, 2014, 01:33:12 am**

"All right, you get that? Emelina Echo, here for Adrian.. Soren Almaya... and..." the guard paused as he couldn't remember the third name. "Lily North!" he finally said. "Wait here, miss. We'll get confirmation in a few seconds." he reassured her. "What's your business with them?"

"That's not going to work." Don Stracci shook his head now. "You need to move fast... best tag those agents immediately, then send them on their way. I'll refuse them access here tonight... apologize and tell them I'm far too busy for them tonight. Then follow them to wherever they go... you can't waste time with..." He paused here suddenly, as he received some information via a small earpiece he wore. He looked at them now. "There's an Emelina Echo at the gates asking for Soren Almaya, Lily North, and an Adrian. She... someone you know?" he inquired of the group. She certainly knew their names at least.

It didn't immediately click with Tony. He hadn't met Emelina, and hadn't really remembered all the details at the factory of who had been abducted. "That name sounds really familiar..." Tony said, trailing off.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **January 31, 2014, 05:06:59 am**

(Pelvanida Parking Lot)

Sanjay cursed as Emilena was nowhere to be found. He slithered into the ambulance...and cursed as he realized that it had not been modified for use by Snakes.

"Emilena, you motherfucker," he muttered.

He was stranded in a factory parking lot and in the middle of the night. He was going to be in deep shit come morning.

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(The Heights)

"So we agreed to go with bugging the gifts, right?" Soren asked.

Anne scratched the base of her horn. "I suggest we don't bug the gifts until they leave. Once they're ready to go, I could pose as domestic help and bug their gifts while their eating

breakfast."

Soren smiled as he looked at the "putty tracers" that Marita had procured. He handed them off to Anne.

He then turned to Axel. "Truth be told, I'm not sure what's up with Lily but if everything I'm hearing about her is true..." He trailed off, not wanting to finish the statement.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **January 31, 2014, 11:27:26 am**

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"Then what?" Axel said, rounding on Soren. "What, you want to just... kill her? And what if they're wrong and she can be helped?! Come on Soren, how long have we known each other? You've got to have my back on this..."

He paused and turned halfway towards Don Stracci. "Hang on, Emilena's here?" Axel looked back at the group. "I thought some guys... took her back at the factory? She got away?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **January 31, 2014, 12:50:08 pm**

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Emilena didn't bother to answer; she had no interest in trading pleasantries with the hired hands. Instead she rifled around in the backpack, trying to find something to entertain her while she waited to get cleared.

She paused and her eyes went wide as she noted something in the smallest pouch.

*Oh. Oh my. I can work with this...*

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Elsewhere in the parking lot, a flare lit up. "Sanjay!" a voice called out. "Sanjay Bhat! I have a message from Lupis Wing!"

A hulking rhino was doing a fantastic job of being noticeable to anyone in the surrounding acre.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 31, 2014, 12:50:38 pm**

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Tony closed his eyes, feeling both sides were right. Axel was clearly deeply invested in Lily's well-being but... Soren had a point too. What if what Lupis said *was* true?

"She's outside right now." Don Stracci said. "Waiting."

Tony looked at the others. "I don't know if I like this guys... OK... why don't I go up there to meet her? One of you goes with me... just so sees a familiar face, and... we don't let anything on right away, but first determine what she wants." Tony suggested. "Sound good?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **January 31, 2014, 04:43:57 pm**

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-REDACTED-

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **January 31, 2014, 05:56:25 pm**

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"Are you really sure you're up for that?" Tony asked, looking him over, before it clicked in his mind. "Wait... she was the one... wasn't she? The one you said you wanted to protect? Well... provided you feel up for it..." Tony said, tailing off. "I'll assist you. Oh!" A sudden thought clicked in the ferret's mind now. "Hey! Dad! Um... can we maybe pick her up in the..." his voice shrank here considerably. "Daimler?" he almost squeaked. "Please? It would look really cool!" Tony said, giving his father a nervous smile. "And... it would just be down the driveway... you know? Oh and Adrian can't walk that far! Not in his condition!" the ferret pointed out.

His father thought a moment, but Tony's pleading look with those big, round eyes and that enthusiasm that was just ready to burst at a single good word from his father was too much. Don Stracci relented, giving off a warm smile that he quickly suppressed after a few seconds. "All right... but be very, very careful!" the don said warily.

Tony almost exploded with excitement that he actually jumped a tad in place. "Sure thing, dad!" He turned to look at Adrian now, a wide grin on his face. "So uh yeah... you good to move?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 01, 2014, 06:33:40 am**

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(The Heights)

Soren raised his hands defensively. "Hey, I didn't say we had to kill her! But in the event that she does become dangerous, what else can we do? Leave her somewhere in Lanthae?"

The Human's eye twitched as he heard the name Emilena. He said nothing but his tense muscles betrayed the anger and hatred he felt for the Vulpine.

Anne was reclining in a sealskin sofa and sipping some water.

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(Pelvanida Parking lot)

Sanjay hastily slithered towards the flare-illuminated Rhino.

"What does Agent Lupis want?" he demanded.

He shot one last infrared glance at the forests surrounding the factory – nothing.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 01, 2014, 08:17:47 am**

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Lily, meanwhile, had slipped into a fitful and twitchy sleep.

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"Agent Exstasis," the Rhino introduced himself. "We've received evidence that the Stracci crime family might either possess Lily North or know something about her current whereabouts. Under the guise of government agents who need a place to stay for the night, you and Officer Echo are to visit Anthony Stracci's manor and attempt to secure as much information as you can. Can you do this?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 01, 2014, 11:46:07 am**

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Tony assisted Adrian up to the garage, ensuring they took the public elevator directly into that location to avoid Adrian having to wrestle with using his crutches on the stairs. Walking down the row of glinting cars, Tony stopped at a particularly large silver and maroon convertible. Measuring almost 22 feet from bumper to bumper, the 1951 Daimler DE36 boasted a straight eight engine, and was the epitome of luxury for Britain in the early 50s.

Letting Adrian take one of the back seats in the limousine (he wasn't letting someone he didn't trust into the back seat after all), Tony slid behind the right side driver's wheel, and turned the ignition, letting the big car grumble into life and feeling a sense of glee as he listened to the big motor turn. Carefully pulling out into the center lane and accelerating slowly towards the garage's exit, he waited for the door to lift up before he drove the car out onto the driveway, snapping on the headlights as he rolled down the somewhat snaking drive to the main gate.

Emelina would've seen this (<http://www.barthworks.com/cars/cussler/photos/1951daimlerde36c.jpg>) heading towards her in the night. By now she had been ushered through the foot gate and was standing behind the main barrier, and Tony turned the big car around in the driveway and braked so the passenger side door was adjacent to Emelina. Reaching over, Tony opened the left-hand door, and motioned for her to enter. "Ms. Emelina Echo... I'm Anthony Stracci Jr. I believe you already know Adrian. Welcome to the Heights. Might I ask your business here?" he inquired, starting to drive back up to the house.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 01, 2014, 01:00:49 pm**

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Adrian smiled slightly, looking at Emilena from the window.  
"Hey Emi..."  
He said gently...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 01, 2014, 06:57:23 pm**

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Once Adrian and Tony had left, Axel breathed out slowly and leaned back on the wall. He crossed his arms over his chest, taking the lull in conversation to try and clear his mind. After a while, he sighed and swung his gaze to the others. Soren didn't look pleased at the news they'd just received. *I guess him and Emilena aren't exactly the best of friends...*

"So, uh... you said you wanted to act like a maid? They won't tip you with weed, you know..."  
Axel gave Anne a small grin, trying to lighten the mood.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 01, 2014, 06:58:27 pm**

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Even Emilena was impressed when the vintage model rolled up. Certainly not the reception she was expecting, she gingerly opened the side door and smiled at Adrian, though her expression turned serene when she saw his appearance. "What on Earth have you been doing while I was gone?" she exclaimed, noting his crutches and wounds. "I've been tortured by Purifiers and I look better than you do!"

She turned to Tony. "These are my allies. I was captured recently, but I've managed to escape. And I have very, very important information about someone traveling with us. She'll want to hear it as soon as possible."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 01, 2014, 07:35:09 pm**

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Adrian smirked a little, then paled a little.

"You were...they tortured you?!"

He said, suddenly concerned as he pulled her into the car..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 01, 2014, 09:57:45 pm**

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(Pelvanida Parking Lot)

Sanjay bobbed his head. "Unfortunately, I do not actually live here, nor am I law enforcement, so I know nothing about the crime families in this area."

He then flicked his tongue. "But...as long as it helps me keep my augments, I'll do it."

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(The Heights)

Anne shrugged. "Alcohol will do for now until I can get some of the good stuff later on."

Soren drained his glass of mineral water. "Excuse me," he said coldly. "But I do not want to be near that cunt."

He got up and left the living room.

(OOC - Soren knows Emilena's name from when he caught her hiding in his car and recognized her as the cop who beat him up at his house.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 01, 2014, 10:43:27 pm**

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Tony completed the turn after Emeline got in, and began driving back up to the house. He listened to what she had to say, and glanced occasionally at her in profile, nodding. "Well... I can say that we've been hearing... interesting information as well." he said cryptically. "First off, I'm glad you escaped. Second, I was present at the factory earlier tonight, and well... Adrian and his friends helped me out... got me back here from a bad situation I'd found myself in. The one you're referring to..." Tony paused here. He could take an educated guess about whom Emelina meant.

"She might not be in any condition to hear anything at the moment... what's the information?" he asked, figuring it couldn't be so important that she couldn't tell it in front of Adrian. He purposely avoided any direct talk as to Lily or her present whereabouts, but once he determined Emelina's trustworthiness, he might be a little more forthcoming with details.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 01, 2014, 11:59:07 pm**

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Emilena pulled her sleeves up, revealing the charred flesh around her wrists. "They were pretty extensive, but I proved to have a high pain tolerance. I'd like to talk to you personally about that tonight..." she winked suggestively at Adrian.

She turned to Tony. "I'll save the details for when the rest of my friends are present, but the gist is...while in the Purifier camp, I learned what's causing Lily's mutations. I also know how we can make her normal again."

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Exstasis nodded. "You really have no other choice in the matter. Where is Officer Echo? Can you ensure she will agree to follow this plan? We don't want her making a bad impression on the Straccis; our relationship with them is rather...political."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 02, 2014, 07:24:27 am**

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Tony couldn't help but smirk a little at Emelina's suggestion to Adrian, but he shifted back into deadpan as she turned to look at him to deliver her news. He pursed his lips at this announcement, but kept his eyes on the road as they approached the house. "Fascinating. Well, if you want to save the details, that's fine. I myself don't know too much about the situation but I saw a few things... and I just hope there's still time." he said grimly as he pulled the Daimler into the garage now.

He drove slowly down the row of cars, the fancy and classic models passing on the left and right as he moved to the Daimler's spot, going past it a little bit before braking. "OK... here we go." he muttered, turning around in his seat now to try and back the big boat up. Shifting into reverse, he carefully began backing into the spot, turning the wheel in order to shift the large car parallel with the two flanking it. "Come on... come on..." he whispered, easing the Daimler back further and further and finally getting it right. "Whew!" he exclaimed aloud. "Glad that went well!"

Killing the engine, Tony remained behind the wheel just a second or two more, feeling rather proud of himself over what he'd been able to accomplish. He hadn't driven the Daimler before except to move it around the garage, so this was a step he was rather pleased with. He'd ridden in it plenty of times of course growing up, but had never driven it that distance.

Opening his door now, he exited the car. "On behalf of Don Anthony Stracci, welcome." he told Emelina, smiling slightly now. "This way." he led the way out of the garage, depositing the Daimler's keys in the workshop and ensuring Adrian had some assistance before taking them down the elevator to the basement where Axel and well... only Anne and his father now it seemed were still present. Soren had since slipped away.

"Look what the ferret dragged in!" Tony declared as he headed down the hall towards the group now.

"Not a scratch on that car?" his father asked, narrowing his eyes.

"Not one, sir!" Tony replied back with a grin. "Oh yes! This is my father, Don Stracci." he introduced Emelina to the head of the family.

"How do you do?" the don asked, giving her a brief nod.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 02, 2014, 06:01:12 pm**

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"Uh... hey. I'm glad you're alright..." Axel said hesitantly, raising his hand in a wave. Though he barely knew Emelina, he was happy to see that that she'd escaped from whoever had taken her. *And it looks like they put her through hell...* he thought, noting Emelina's disheveled appearance.

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Marcus stomped his way outside, approaching the group of Purifiers who were attending to the ruined transformer. He spotted Aaron. "How many casualties-" he started to demand... then spotted the three bodies sprawled around. All dead from single bullet wounds. Sniped.

"*Fuck!*" he snarled, his head pounding as the drug wore off. "I *knew* we shouldn't trust Lupis!" Marcus whirled around, teeth bared with rage as he started to storm back inside the compound.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 02, 2014, 09:25:32 pm**

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Emilena treated Don Stracci with more respect than any person since this whole ordeal had started; she knew just how many shallow graves were incapable of being traced back to this man. Also, as a child she'd first established connections with the police department by working as the bait in pedophile stings, so she knew how to make a good impression on older men. "It is an honor to accept your hospitality," she curtsied. "Apologies for my appearance; I was making the acquaintance of a couple Purifier interrogators earlier this evening." She intentionally had not returned her sleeves to their normal position, allowing the others to see her charred wrists and other wounds.

She plastered a smile on her face when she saw Axel; the only other member of the party who appeared to be present except the loathsome pony. "It's so great to see you all again!" She hugged him for added camaraderie. "Where is Lily? I need to speak with her."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 02, 2014, 09:45:28 pm**

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(Pelvanida Parking Lot)

"I can try but I'm not sure where Emilena is. She just ditched me while I was interrogating a Mr. Altyn." Sanjay sighed as he yawned, exposing his metallic fangs.

He then looked at the ambulance. "Also, I have no means of transportation but if you were to get me to the Straccis' I may be able to help you there."

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(The Heights)

Soren was in a small study off from the living room. He was reading a newspaper but also listening into Emilena's conversation.

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Anne sipped some mineral water as she watched Emilena. Out of habit, she gently ran a few fingers over her horn.

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron put down the firehose and followed Marcus into the dingy building. "Should we retrieve our captives or engage in some 'operations'?"

At the same time, he had to wonder – was the government onto him?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 02, 2014, 09:45:43 pm**

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Don Stracci had to admit, he was surprised by the... good mannered woman standing in front of him. He blinked a few times. "Well... er... I'm glad you... managed to extricate yourself from

that situation." the don replied, noticing the burned flesh on her arms. It certainly seemed like she'd been through more than just the wringer.

Tony noted the affection Emelina seemed to show for Axel. He'd have to get the rat's perspective on that.

Tony stepped forward now, his face heavy. "Lily... has taken a turn for the worse, I'm afraid." he said softly, bowing his head a bit here. "For her own safety... we had to move her to an undisclosed, secure location. What have you to tell her? I have to admit, I was intrigued when you said you knew what was causing her mutation, and how to stop it. Is there anything we..." he motioned to the others around him. "can do to help her?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 02, 2014, 10:07:36 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 02, 2014, 10:53:25 pm**

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"Sorry Adrian, this needs to happen sooner rather than later," Emilena replied. She turned to the group at large. "While escaping the Purifier camp, I heard them discussing Lily. They want her. What's more, they seemed to understand what's caused her mutation."

She looked at her feet. "I'm sorry, but I'm not comfortable telling all of you what I've learned. I don't know who truly has Lily's best interest at heart." She looked at Axel. "I've noticed that you and Lily share a bond. I think she'd trust you. I'm leaving it up to you to decide who can hear what I've found out."

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"We've been unable to contact her as well," mused Exstasis. "I fear we must consider her away without leave until she provides reason for us to assume otherwise. I will be accompanying you to Stracci manor."

He began the walk back to his transport. "I'm not...the best with words. Lupis doesn't trust me to do the talking. That'll be your job."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 02, 2014, 11:13:51 pm**

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Tony could hardly believe that with government agents on the verge of showing up on their doorstep, and Lily practically turning into a monster of some sort, that *that* was what Adrian had on his mind now? He was glad at least that this Emelina was more practical. That was a point for her in Tony trusting her but...

The ferret folded his arms across his chest, and gave Emelina a more serious look now. "Sorry but... I could say the same of you. You show up out of the blue asking to see someone who's been going downhill ever since the factory and... expect us to trust you? But sure!" he said, throwing his arms up now and motioning to Axel. "Let Axel decide. He can do it." Tony nodded at the rat. "He's seen enough, I think. He knows what little time we have."

Tony was tempted to walk out of the room to clear his head, and maybe find where Soren had gone too, but he figured that was pointless. Axel would decide in their favor of course, and they'd get this information one way or the other. Of course... he hoped his father wouldn't resort to the more brutal methods of extracting that information but... Tony doubted it would come to that. Axel would be reasonable, after all.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 03, 2014, 12:25:28 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 03, 2014, 06:09:37 am**

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Axel's eyes widened in surprise when Emilena hugged him. From what he'd seen of her, she seemed like she'd rather kick a kitten than hug anyone... but maybe that wasn't fair. She was one of the reasons why he'd survived the attack on Soren's house, after all.

He gave her a nervous smile as they broke apart, which turned into a full fledged beam when she mentioned she knew more about Lily's mutation. "Hey, that's great! *Awesome!* There's still time if we..." He trailed off as Emilena added that it was up to him to decide who'd learn about it. "What... what do you mean? I trust..."

Axel stopped, remembering Kojuuro. Lily'd seemed terrified of him back in the infirmary... and thinking back on it, she'd been with him in the SUV when she tried to run away... *What the hell's going on between them?* Biting his lip, he looked up just as Adrian was rounding on Tony. "Adrian, just... stop. Tony's alright."

He looked at Emilena. "Look, I... I trust everyone here." *Maybe not the Don, but saying so seems like a good way to earn a bullet in the back of the head.* "If there's something you know, they should all hear it. But... I think Kojuuro should be kept out of it..." Axel glanced anxiously at Adrian. "I'm sorry..."

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Marcus strode though the halls, barely giving time for Aaron to keep pace with him. "We can't just let them get away," he growled over his shoulder. "They've seen too much. If they talked..." He shook his head furiously. "I need to find out what our next orders are - we need to act fast."

Winding their way down the corridors, they eventually reached a plain metal door, identical to all the others in the compound with the exception of a small wooden sign hanging down. '*B. Rhaegson*' was scrawled across it in black marker pen. It looked faintly ridiculous. Marcus banged a fist against the door, causing the sign to jiggle on the rope it was hanging from. "Rhaegson! I need to talk to you!" he barked.

"Yeah? Come in then, don't need to break the fuckin' door down," a voice echoed through.

Marcus twisted the handle and pushed it open to reveal a room identical to his quarters, with the exception of a large desk that was pushed up against the wall, on which sat a computer and a bunch of paper files. Seated behind it, with his feet propped up on the desk's surface, was the small man who'd come to Soren's door. A cigarette stuck out from between his teeth, and he brushed aside a strand of his greasy blonde hair as he eyed Marcus and Aaron curiously. "My computer won't work," he said. "Fuckin' perfect."

"The main transformer's out... and it got taken out when Lupis helped Echo and Bhat escape!" Marcus rumbled.

"It did?" Rhaegson sighed. "So much for doing things quietly..." He looked at Aaron and smirked. "Hey, buddy. Enjoying your first day?"

"I always told you we couldn't trust Lupis!" Marcus snarled. "So what are we going to do now? Echo and Bhat need to be eliminated, and Lupis..."

"No." Rhaegson said evenly.

"What?!"

"I said no. We're going to let Echo and Bhat go, and *you* aren't going to do anything about Lupis. We're still working with him."

Marcus stared at him for a moment, his eye twitching. "We're still working with him?" he growled finally. "Are you insane? He just gunned down three of our own..."

"Yeah, and that's... unfortunate. But trust me when I say that in the grand scheme of things..." Rhaegson spread his hands, "It was needed." Taking a final drag, he stubbed his cigarette out on the wall beside him and stared back at Marcus. "Look. What I said about working with Lupis? That's an order. Straight down from the top. Don't follow it, and I'll make sure you don't live past the week. And I'd hate to do that, you've been a fine fuckin' soldier up until now. We clear?"

Marcus growled, balling his fists so tightly the knuckles cracked, and turned, leaving the room without another word.

Rhaegson grunted, then turned his attention to Aaron. "If you got a problem, then please, let me know. If not, fuck off. And get the transformer working again, I'm a busy man here." He lit another smoke. *If the questions start, we're gonna have problems...*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 03, 2014, 06:59:17 am**

Emilena's thoughts had followed a similar thought path to Tony's; Axel would have to be mad to deny anyone present a chance to listen in. Or incredibly naïve, which unfortunately would fit his character quite well.

"All right. Now mind you, I didn't get to ask any questions, but the basics seemed obvious enough. Lily herself isn't what's special; it's *where* in the forest it happened."

She met their eyes one by one. "Somewhere in the forest, while on her day hike, Lily stumbled across...something. It sounded like it wasn't a tangible thing, so she may not have even noticed it. But it's where her powers came from. The Purifiers are trying desperately to find that spot, so they can learn more about it. But only I know where it is."

She held up the backpack. "I found this while on my way here. Lying in the forest." She opened up the smallest pouch.

Inside was a driver's license and Mantreads Hiking Goods membership card, both for Lily North.

"The spot has already chosen Lily once," Emilena continued. "If we return her there, maybe she'll learn what she needs to control her mutations and her abilities. She might be able to turn herself back to normal."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 03, 2014, 11:50:54 am**

Ferret junior and ferret senior paid attention to what Emelina had to say, and it suddenly all started making sense to Tony now. When she was finished, Don Stracci motioned to Tony. "Get out. I got something I wanna say first."

"But sir!" Tony protested, but was cut off by his father raising a paw.

"Get... out."

"Sir..." Tony bowed his head, and walked out of the room. The don's gaze suddenly became fierce, much fiercer than he seemed capable of looking as he turned his eyes on Adrian. For all the world he suddenly looked like he could walk up and throttle the life out of the wolf effortlessly, but he remained in place.

"I've taken you in... offered you full medical assistance... my son took you for a nice ride in one of my cars... I'll provide you with hardware later... and you question his word in front of me? Don't test my patience, son. A Stracci's promise of assistance is better than any promise you'll ever get in your lifetime... my son was just trying to get you to stop thinking like a horny little slut and get your mind focused on more... I dunno, important things? Plus rightly questioning the lady's loyalty. Now I think she's proven herself, but she had to do that first instead of having you try and act all macho and defend her, which proved nothing." The don raised his brows here. "But it did tell me what you value and I'm *this* close..." he held up his claws to show there was a mere centimeter between them, "to feeding you what you seem to value most and seeing how strong your libido feels when you're done eating. Do *not* ever do that again. I mean come on, you're on crutches... acting like a tough guy at the expense of my son is the absolute last thing you should be doing just to impress your little girlfriend cause I'm telling you now... I'm not impressed, and I don't think she is, either." He shook his head here. "So start acting like you appreciate my kindness and hospitality, or you'll be finding out that my breakfast menu can be a little... different, shall we say, from other places you're used to staying, to say nothing of the fact that you'll hardly be a male when you walk out of here. Do I make myself clear?" he asked, eyes still on Adrian, the don's calm demeanor having been replaced by steely resolution and an inner fire now that showed he was deadly serious.

Tony sighed and flopped into a chair near Soren. He picked up a cars' magazine his dad liked to read, and began skimming through it. "Well... things could be going... a little better." he mumbled, looking over at the human. "Reading anything good?" he asked, noting Soren was reading a newspaper.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 03, 2014, 01:41:41 pm**

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(The Heights)

Soren folded up his newspaper. "Nothing much, just some cops raiding a back alley clinic – and another Purifier attack. This one on the CEO of one of the cybernetics corporations."

He then looked around to make sure Emilena wasn't in earshot. "I don't trust that vixen at all. She's up to something and I know it."

Anne shrugged. "So Tony, any news?"

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron gulped as his tail tucked in between his legs. "N...No sir. I'll get right on that transformer!"

He backed out of the office.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 03, 2014, 02:00:48 pm**

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Tony nodded, his face falling a bit at the mention of the Purifiers. "Oh... well... yeah... that's not... the way to handle things." he said with a sigh. He lowered his voice then and leaned in to reply to Soren.

"I'm with you on that too. I mean she *did* tell us what's wrong with Lily but... I dunno... something about this just seems... off. Only way to know if what she said is true or not is if we confirm her story... and I'm not willing to do that with the entire group, just in case." He whispered.

He then straightened up in his chair and looked over at Anne. "Oh you know... not much... we think we know what might be wrong with Lily... provided we can trust this newcomer... and well, my dad's threatening to feed Adrian his genitals... the usual, right?" he half-joked here, chuckling as a wan smile spread across his features. He felt sorry for the wolf, but that was something you learned here rather fast... nobody crossed the don. His father was the type who'd do just the thing he threatened and then still end up helping you because he'd promised to do so.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 03, 2014, 02:10:51 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 03, 2014, 03:14:59 pm**

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Soren nodded. "She used a doctored warrant to go snooping through my burnt workshop and before that, she tried beating me up. I strongly urfe you to use caution in dealing with her."

Anne nodded. "Let me follow her. If anything goes wrong, I can use my radio horn implant to let you guys know."

"One problem, Emilena *hates* Augments."

Anne deflated. "Back to square one." Her ears suddenly pricked up. "Tony, Don Stracci has drones, right? Why don't we spy on them with drones?"

Soren tapped his fingers against the fine mahagony table. "That'll work but what if she's up to something? All we can do is watch."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 03, 2014, 03:17:24 pm**

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Axel held his breath in the few moments after Stracci and Adrian had traded words, the tension between the two of them being thick enough to cut with a knife. The Don's threat - which Axel fully believed he would go through with if pushed - had reminded him that they were in the home, and at the mercy, of a powerful criminal mastermind. It left him feeling distinctly rattled.

"I'm... I'm sure Adrian meant nothing by it, sir," he said hesitantly. "We've been through a lot and it's... hard not to be cautious. We *are* grateful for everything you've done... More than you could imagine."

Swallowing, Axel turned his eyes to Emilena. "You... you actually heard this?" A hopeful smile pulled at the corner of his mouth. "If you're right, then it sounds like a decent plan! Or, a plan, at least, which is more than we've had before. Yeah, I... I say we go for it! We've got nothing to lose, right?!" He looked between the others, his smile faltering and his eyes dropping to the ground when he glanced at the Don and remembered the threats he'd been making just moments earlier.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 03, 2014, 03:36:25 pm**

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The don's countenance melted back into its more indifferent self upon Adrian responding. He even gave a slight smile, though it definitely had the air of confidence behind it of someone who could back up his words. "There... see? That's all I wanted." he said, spreading his arms now. He remained silent to let the others continue from this point on, until he caught Axel looking at him. "I'm sure." he responded simply to Axel's attempted reassurance, though gave no hint if he really believed it or not.

When Axel once again met his gaze, the don gave a slight thoughtful frown. "Well one thing I should say... is that I'll deal with the government pukes who are coming here for the night. I'll ensure they're so tied up with my hospitality that they won't be able to do much of anything else. They're playing into my paws after all by willingly coming here... knowing they have to surrender all their weapons and gadgets. So I'll keep them busy while you do whatever you want to do regarding this." he offered.

"What? She did that?" Tony whispered back, his brow furrowing in confusion. "Then what the hell is she doing hanging around with you guys?" he asked, uncertain on this. "And she hates augments? Sounds like she picked the wrong group... not to mention boyfriend... to pal around with." he murmured.

He listened to the plan about the drones, and nodded. "No... better to send some of my father's soldiers along if you're worried about her turning turncoat. I mean I don't know anything about her, but she suddenly shows up here offering to take us... and Lily for that matter, into some strange spot in the woods that we don't even know about? Doesn't sound like the safest of plans to me." the ferret commented. "Plus, you could just insist that Anne has to come along... it's a group effort, or no deal. I think we've already made it clear we don't trust her... say she needs to earn that trust by bringing whoever you want along." he said in hushed tones, pushing his claws onto the tabletop now.

"In fact... why don't some of us check out this 'spot' first? See if what she said about it is true? If it is... then we send Lily along in the hopes that she can be cured, like Emelina said. IF Lily can even move that is..." he said now, glancing to the side and sighing.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 03, 2014, 04:53:00 pm**

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Emilena hardly spared a glance at Adrian. It was after all an incredibly stupid decision on his part, and she'd never been particularly impressed by bravado anyway. Nor had she ever asked for a white knight to defend her.

She was far more interested in the don. She knew him as a ruthless and determined businessman who single-handedly made his family the leading crime syndicate. Somehow, she'd made a good first impression, and she hoped to keep it. "I agree with Axel's reservations about Kojurro. I suspect he may have...slightly off-color reasons for following Lily. Motivations Adrian would endorse."

She looked at the group. "It might be a dangerous hike. After all, we'd be heading somewhere that the Purifiers are also looking for. And I don't know anything about how this spot works...and you've all seen what exposure did to Lily. There's a risk of that happening to you. Hell, it might have already infected me; who knows."

She met the eyes of each person in the room. "I just want to make sure you each understand that whoever goes won't be in a comfy mansion with a gracious host anymore. We've all had some horrible nights recently, some of us could do with some downtime. But I think this trip should embark as soon as possible, before Lily's condition gets any worse."

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Exstasis pulled out of the parking lot in a jet black Van, Sanjay in the passenger set.

"What do you know about the Straccis?" Exstasis asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 04, 2014, 06:43:01 am**

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Axel blinked at Emilena's comment on Kojuuro's 'motivations'. He opened his mouth to ask what she meant... then closed it again slowly when she continued speaking, deciding to bring it up later when they weren't discussing more important things. *Even if that was true, it doesn't explain why she'd seem so scared of him... there's more to this going on...*

His face set firmly. "I don't care about the risks. If it could help her, then I'm going. And hey, comfy mansions are overrated, right? Ah..." He coughed nervously, hoping Stracci hadn't caught that last comment. "I'll... I'll understand if not everyone wants to go. It's just something I have to do."

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Marcus was standing motionless in the hallway. "We do what he says," he said lowly when Aaron backed out of the office. When the door closed behind him, Marcus added, "For now. As soon as we don't need Lupis anymore, I'll deal with him." Marcus snarled. "Personally."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 05, 2014, 03:36:10 am**

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(Pelvanida Parking Lot)

Sanjay adjusted his stolen and holstered pistol. "Aside from the fact that they and the *Bak Long* Triads are the two largest organized crime syndicatea in Lanthae? Not much."

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(The Heights)

Soren nodded. "But how do we know what to look for?" He then carefully peered through the small crack in the door as Axel, Emilena and the others argued

He then got up from the chair. "Anyways, I'll have a word with Emilena."

Soren then stepped out from the small study and crossed his arms as he fixed his gaze on the Vulpine. "All right, Emilena, I'll let you take Emilena to this location. But on two conditions: I and whoever I chose will accompany you with Lily. And you show us where this place is – before we allow you to bring Lily."

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(The Purifier Compound)

Aaron nodded. His natural canine night vision helped him navigate the dimly lit hallways. A few points of light showed where the less visually endowed were using flashlights.

"Marcus, I'll be overseeing work on the transformer if you need me. Speaking of which, I heard the name 'Patrick Anderson' mentioned in a newspaper story. Turns out one one of ours got to him. Shall we...finish the job?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 04:21:52 am**

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"I literally just invited *everybody* who wanted to go," Emilena reminded Soren, as if she were talking to a fifth-grader. "You don't get to choose anything; they can volunteer themselves."

She turned to Axel. "Thank you for agreeing to come without trying to tell everyone else what to do. Now, regarding whether Lily comes with us; obviously I think she should, since from what I heard her status is deteriorating at an alarming rate. But the two here who really have the right to make that judgment are Axel and Lord Stracci. Axel since he's the only one in the room that's really proven his loyalty to Lily, and Lord Stracci because Lily is currently recuperating under his medical care."

She glanced at Soren again. "That's just my opinion of course; since Mr. Almaya wants to make decisions for the entire group, he might not agree."

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"That should be enough," growled Exstasis. "Now, our goal is to learn what we can, so try to use your charms to get us as far as you can into the mansion. I've got trackers and bugs I can plant after that. I've also got a psionic reader in my eyepiece; I'm hoping to pick up evidence as to whether they've held Ms. North at any time."

He stopped at a red light. "But you better be damn careful, or they're just gonna shoot both of us. You understand?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 05, 2014, 05:47:13 am**

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Axel looked quickly between Emilena and Soren, feeling the tension rising. He held his hands up. "Guys, come on, we can't argue! That won't help anyone." He faced the human. "Look, I... I don't think we have time to scout it out before we bring Lily. She was looking bad and Tony said it was just getting worse.... I don't think we have a choice. Taking her out there is the only thing we can do."

He glanced over his shoulder at Emilena. "I can't think of why she'd double cross us... Besides, I think we can trust her. Why else would she say we can take whoever we want?"

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Marcus scowled as they walked. "Patrick Anderson? He didn't listen to our last warning?" He grunted. "Too bad for him. He dies."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 12:10:18 pm**

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Tony shook his head. "I have no idea..." he said softly, then got up to follow Soren. It seemed as though Emelina didn't exactly dig Soren's orders. Well... so much for that idea.

"Don... Don Stracci." Don Stracci corrected Emelina with a smile. "I ain't descended from no goddamn European royalty after all." he pointed out, looking around and chuckling a little bit. "Don Stracci is fine. I ain't no lord."

A small smile spread across Tony's features as well at this. He then decided to speak up of his own accord, lifting a claw in the air. "Uh... one problem. Lily might not exactly be capable of moving." he said now. "Is there a road that runs by those woods? Cause short of carrying her ourselves... which would really slow us down, I don't see how else we're gonna get her out there. But I am going to go check on her condition and see if she's capable of moving." he

threw in now at the end.

"If you're going out there... you aren't going alone." Don Stracci muttered. "I'll assign you a detail... and you'll be taking Mr. Stryker with you." Tony's eyes went wide at this. Mr. Stryker of course wasn't his real name... no one but his father knew his real name... but he was certainly one of the more feared enforcers and hitmen in his father's organization. The don pushed his earpiece now. "Mr. Fontana... arrange for Mr. Stryker to meet me near the infirmary." he ordered.

"You got it, sir. Don Stracci... that information on Denny North is in." the iguana informed his boss.

"I'll take it in my office. Come on... let's go ensure you can visit Ms. North." Don Stracci said to his son now, nodding with his head. "Please... excuse us a few moments."

The two ferrets left the group now, heading through a series of hallways that dead ended at the hidden elevator. Both went through the steps to activate the thing, the wall sliding back to reveal the large elevator behind. "Go on... I'll go back to the others." the don stated.

Tony nodded, and stepped in, riding down deep into the cliff and finally arriving at the secret safe rooms. The ferret noted the Doktor seemed to be off. Approaching Lily's bed now, Tony glanced down at her. "Lily... it's Tony... can you hear me?" he asked, gently shaking her.

Upstairs, the don arrived back with the group. "All right... my son's checking on her. How are you planning on moving her if she can't move on her own?" he inquired, looking at Emelina.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 03:45:31 pm**

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"Is she really that bad...?" Emelina put a troubled look on her face. "Hmmm. Perhaps a gurney, if we have high-quality ones that don't make any sound. Or a wheelchair. It has to be able to navigate in the forest. I'm sorry, I haven't seen her, so I don't know the nuances of her condition."

She looked around. "Where is Kojurro anyway? And has he ever explained to anybody why he's been following us since he randomly appeared in the hospital parking lot? He doesn't appear to have a connection to anyone."

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Lily stirred. Her extremities had basically stopped growing at this point; all three of her appendages were covered in crusted blood but they appear to have become functional parts. Her tail was swaying slightly, recalibrating her balance as she shifted positions to get a look at Toby. She didn't say anything, but Toby had her strangely rapt attention.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 03:53:52 pm**

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"She was in a medical bed the last I knew." Don Stracci answered Emelina. "I don't know if we have anything mobile like a gurney but... how far did you say this location was?" he asked.

Down below, Tony suddenly froze as he was staring into what seemed to be a very coherent Lily's eyes. And a very changed Lily for that matter. But how... was... she better? "Um... Lily?" Tony asked again. "Can you get up and walk? We have to take you someplace... can you stand?" he asked, enunciating his words just in case she couldn't understand him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 04:39:23 pm**

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Lily continued staring at Tony. She seemed to be examining him. She let her gaze run along his flank, lingered on his neck, and finally meet his gaze unblinkingly with her bright red eyes. The pupils had become smaller than ever.

She squinted and shook her head, dizzily. Assuming a crouching position, Lily got onto her knees and shakily climbed off the bed. Her stoney skin seemed slightly lustrous, a side effect of its natural ability to reflect light away from it.

She stood shakily, but her tail twitched to help keep her balance. It was actually rather sleek and stretched to the ground.

All in all, the figure standing before Axel was quite a sight, but not necessarily a pleasant or comforting one.

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"It's a little out of the way, but not too bad," Emilena replied evasively. She didn't want to reveal any more of the location than she had to.

She regarded their host with grace, but on the inside her thoughts were spinning. *He's just going to relinquish control of a psionic monster, let us walk away with it? That's not the mafia don I've heard of...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 04:52:09 pm**

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"Oh my god..." Tony whispered, in awe at the sight before him. He noted how she seemed to be looking him over... as if he was new to her, or something. But... would she be OK to touch? Gulping, he reached out now, slowly... slowly... very slowly. He gently grasped her hand, hoping nothing would happen to him...

The don caught the evasive answer and narrowed his eyes again. "Out of the way, you say?" He had his own plans... but first things first. "Mmm." he said, nodding now, a thin smile spreading across his features. "I see... of course it is. Such evasive answers, Ms. Echo. If I didn't know better... I'd say you didn't want me to find this place." he said now, his smile growing.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 05:06:43 pm**

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"If you wanted to come with us, sir, the offer of course extends to you, as it does everyone," Emilena amended hastily. "We couldn't guarantee your safety, I'm sure you know, but seeing as Mr. Stryker had over two thousand credited kills in the Scorched Earth War of 2030, he'd no doubt be more than adequate to the task of protecting you."

The Stracci's personal butler was something of a legend among the city police folk.

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Lily flexed her six fingers curiously once Tony reminded her of them. Her skin was rough and stoney. The sixth fingers were next to and slightly smaller than her pinkies, and her grasp felt weaker and uncoordinated.

She stumbled slightly as she took a step forward, and growled softly. She was hungry and thirsty. For a few seconds, she forgot to relinquish Tony's hand despite having focused on something else; the door.

She tried to say something, but all that came out was a guttural bark.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 05:25:35 pm**

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"I'm not sure I can be bothered long enough to step away from my business." he said, waving his paw dismissively here. "Besides... someone has to deal with those government hacks." Don Stracci knew the agents were probably going to be stupid and try and bug his place... no one had ever successfully done that before, but he wouldn't put it past these guys. "However... I suppose it depends on how important this truly is..." he trailed off now as Tony suddenly appeared around the corner, walking with Lily... or what Lily now was.

Tony still had his hand in hers to steady her and get her used to walking. "Well... here she is." he said grimly.

His father looked at the monster intently, studiously roving his gaze about her form and her eyes. What was she capable of? "Mr. Fontana..." he signaled his consigliere now. "Do we have any instruments capable of measuring psionics?"

"We might... I can check for you." Max replied back through the headset.

"Good..." Don Stracci said quietly now. He didn't like this... he didn't like this at all.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 05:33:46 pm**

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"My god..." whispered Emilena when she got a glimpse of what Lily had become. *This* was the gentle Sapaar girl who'd offered her a ride just two days ago?

Lily wasn't walking so much as slinking. Something had changed in her spinal structure and she couldn't walk fully upright. She was shielding her eyes from the bright lights on the main floor, and in a moment of primal panic tore her hand away from Tony and darted into the most shadowy part of the room: the space between the corner and the door to the kitchen.

As she crouched in the corner, nude and with hands bared in a feeble display of self-defense, she hardly even looked like a sentient being.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 05:43:05 pm**

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"Hey!" Tony said, running after her now. "Hey! It's... it's OK... we aren't... we aren't going to hurt you." He said softly. "Axel! Come on!" the ferret motioned to the rat now.

Don Stracci watched the display, and was disgusted by it. This wasn't right... he couldn't use this woman for his own gain... in fact... ANYONE using her would have an unfair advantage... she was a human under there... a person... and she was suffering. "Ms. Echo." he turned to look at her now. "Are you POSITIVE about what you're doing?" he asked firmly. "This woman needs help... serious help... you aren't leading her into some sort of trap... because if you are... I'll ensure you eternally suffer for it." he growled. "I wasn't sure if I could trust you before, but I'm making myself clear now... she's getting the help she needs, all right? This thing... it's not natural." He hissed. "I don't know what the government is after her for... but it ends now. It goes no further than this!" he pointed behind him at the creature in the corner.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 05:58:43 pm**

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"You're free to try whatever you please before we take her out there," Emilena stood her ground. "I'm only telling you what I know and what I think."

She still didn't trust the don's sincerity; nobody in a position of power got there by being compassionate and understanding. But it'll depend on the opinions of the rest of the occupants; she wasn't trying to set herself up in opposition with the Straccis.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 05, 2014, 06:01:07 pm**

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Axel's eyes widened as he saw the figure Tony lead through. "*Oh fuck... Lily?*" His voice was a strangled whisper. He stood, frozen in shock as she stumbled away from the light and backed into the shadows. For several moments he stood completely motionless, trying to process the sight in front of him.

As if from another room, Tony's voice reached Axel. He blinked, an act that seemed more like a twitch, and took an unsteady step towards the corner she was hiding in. "Li... Lily?" He crouched down and approached slowly, his arms outstretched in an attempt to show he meant no harm. "It's me... Axel..." He tried to stop the trembling in his voice, to sound more confident. "It's alright... nobody's going to hurt you..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 06:07:39 pm**

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"Hmph... very well..." the don murmured, noting the iguana, Max Fontana, come around the corner now with a device.

"Found this, boss! It measures psionic levels and brain wave patterns... I don't know if it can actually read abilities though. Don't think we ever used it." the iguana shrugged here.

"Doubt it." Don Stracci murmured. He could never remember what he'd bought and not bought. "Scan her." he ordered.

The consigliere approached Lily now and began waving the reader up and down her body, though stood a respectful distance away, as you actually didn't need to be very close as the range on the thing was good. Tony stood up now that Axel was there. "Hey... Emelina was it?" he asked. "Can we drive to this place if it's far away and park somewhere near the woods?" he asked. "We can't waste a lot of time. Or is it in walking distance? I'm just trying to save time here." he said, his voice strained.

"Yes?" Don Stracci spoke softly now, hearing Stryker's voice in his headset. "Right... OK..." he began speaking in very soft tones, turning away from the group now as everyone was mostly preoccupied.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 05, 2014, 06:20:43 pm**

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"We can't drive there, it's off the trails," Emilena muttered back, noting that the don appeared to be distracted. "It's actually closer to Pelvanida, the cybernetics factory, than here. I'm just worried that a car will attract attention. Ideally, I'd like to reach the spot without anyone else seeing us. We could lead the purifiers right to the place they're looking for..."

Lily, meanwhile, seemed to get a hold out herself. Shakily getting to her feet, she crept forward back into the light. Glancing at the people surrounding her, the first spark of

recognition on her face showed when her gaze passed across Axel. Slinking cautiously up to him, she rubbed her hands along his shoulders as if verifying his identity, and then silently embraced him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 05, 2014, 06:48:06 pm**

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Axel carefully put his arms around her, trying to be sure he wasn't hurting her in some way. "It's alright... Emilena has a way to help you," he said gently, trying to keep up a soothing tone. Even through his shirt, Axel could feel the roughness of her skin. *There's gotta be a way to fix this... there has to be...*

Still holding her, he turned his head to look at the others. "It... it looks like she can walk at least, that's gotta save us some time, right?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 05, 2014, 07:00:46 pm**

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Tony sighed, holding his forehead and shaking it as Max continued to scan Lily. "I feel like going without transportation is stupid... especially if we need to get out of there *fast*." he said, looking down. "I'm less concerned about the Purifiers finding us out than I am about getting her in and out as quickly as possible." He said, slapping a fist against his paw pads. "If we go with enough protection..." Tony trailed off here, noting his father was talking to someone over his headset. "Um... if we go with enough protection" he continued now, "we shouldn't have any problems. I mean I don't know!" he said, throwing his right arm out to the side now. He began running things through in his mind. OK... what to do... what was the fastest car he could think of? No... the Cobra couldn't carry enough passengers... he needed room for at least six...

Well his dad's Duesenbergs and Pierce-Arrow Berline were fast... and could certainly fit six minimum... plus his dad had upgraded them so... they could hold their own speed-wise.

"If we head there on foot... *if*" Tony began again. "I'm not going without a means of getting out of there quickly. I can call something in to Pelvanida, have it waiting for us... whatever. But I'm not going out there with no means of escape in case... things turn sour." he said now, finally placing his paws on his hips as he looked at the group. "It just seems foolish otherwise to be stuck in the woods with just our feet... after walking all that way, I might add." he pointed out.

Pelvanida? That was some distance away... but manageable. "Right... Pelvanida by the way." Don Stracci said softly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 05, 2014, 09:24:54 pm**

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Soren nodded. "My exoskeleton and weapons should be in the delivery truck. By the way, Anne's coming too."

Beads of sweat formed on his forehead as he laid eyes on what *was* Lily.

He then overheard Emilena. "Pelvanida? What could they have to do with Lily's transformation?"

He then used the back of his shirt to wipe his forehead and took a breath. "All right, I need some time to plan."

Anne shivered as she looked at Lily. "Maybe we can screw with the Purifiers? Have one group

lead the astray while the other deals with Lily?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 06, 2014, 01:29:05 am**

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"If you insist we take a car, I'm not attempting to unequivocally shoot that down," Emilena reminded. "Unlike Soren, I'm not trying to make myself the leader and delegator of this group. We should make decisions together."

Lily meanwhile was hugging Axel tighter and tighter. Because she was starting to sense something.

It was the feeling she always got when her conscience left her body; the feeling of taking up senses already occupied by another. But she was still seeing through her own eyes. She hadn't gone anywhere...

She slowly realized she wasn't the visitor this time. She was the host.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 06, 2014, 02:15:18 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 06, 2014, 05:16:11 am**

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"But is that a good idea?" Axel asked Anne. "I mean... if there's any Purifier's out there, they don't know where we'll be so... maybe we should just leave them?" He glanced around to see what the others thought. "I mean, it seems like we'd be, like, kicking the hornet's nest..."

He felt Lily's grip tighten. "Lily... Loosen up a little..." He glanced down and paused when he saw the expression on her face. "Hey, what's wrong?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 06, 2014, 12:33:16 pm**

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"Good." Tony nodded now. "Because going out there without transport is stupid... in fact..." He said now, his eyes darkening a bit. "This whole thing sounds... fishy. I still don't know if I fully trust you." he said plainly, shaking his head.

At that moment, a sungazer lizard rounded the corner, dressed to the nines. He carried nothing visible on him, but he was armed to the teeth. "Ah, Mr. Stryker! You're just in time!" Don Stracci greeted his enforcer. The spiny lizard said nothing in response, but merely gave his don a single nod. His eyes were steely, like cold metal. Death was written on his expression, and it wouldn't take an expert observer to tell this guy was dangerous.

"Ms. Echo was just about to tell us the location she intends to lead you to." the don said here, turning back to Emelina, his own expression having become deadpan. Stryker shifted his cold eyes onto her as well. "If you think... I'm sending valuable people out to some unknown location... on foot... guess again." he said now. "Sorry, Ms. Echo... the location... if you please." he said, more determined now. "I can have soldiers there in a matter of minutes, since they're all over the city at various locations. They check it out first... and not approach it of course... but confirm that your story is true. And if it is... you're free to go." he said simply, raising a paw before letting it fall to his side again. "My word is good after all. I promised my new guests support... and they shall have it... but not until I determine your own word is... trustworthy."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 06, 2014, 05:03:22 pm**

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"For Pete's sake, look what they did to me!" Emilena took her shirt off, revealing blackened electrical burns and whip marks all down her body. "It only gets worse south of the border! And I've already told you, I have *no idea* what's happening out at that spot. Anything special could be completely impossible for a normal person to detect."

She narrowed her eyes. "I admit I can't 100% trust you either. I don't mean to be rude or ungrateful for the hospitality you've given my allies, but you are businessmen. You know how valuable Lily could be from a political standpoint. I'm trying to get Lily out there to help her. Why do you want to go without even bringing her?"

Lily just hugged Axel tighter. She could tell what everyone was talking about, but she was more focused on her own inner struggle. The foreign conscience within her didn't currently seem powerful enough to control her, but it was trying. How could she prevent it from getting stronger?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 06, 2014, 05:18:16 pm**

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((Just a note, LB&T and I discussed this, so we're currently working this next part out.))

"You're gonna have to trust me I'm afraid... because you seem to misunderstand, Ms. Echo." Don Stracci said, noting her tortured body. "Heh... that's admirable... you've clearly been put through the wash by something... but just what is hard to say. You're not in a position to negotiate... I'm NOT sending anyone out there until I know we're only getting involved in what you claim." He gave her a slight smile now. "The location... why are you being so recalcitrant with such simple information?" he asked now. "Seems rather suspicious to me. Mr. Stryker." he said simply.

The reptile quickly produced a high-caliber pistol from his jacket and pointed it right at Emelina's right knee. He didn't even blink as he did so. The gun had a high enough velocity that it could shred most standard body armors.

"This is not a negotiation, Ms. Echo. It's an ultimatum." the don said icily now. "The location..." he said once more.

"Dad?" Tony asked, suddenly getting worried.

"Relax, Tony." his father held up a paw here. "I'm not threatening you, or any of your guests... I'm still in their debt after all and I'm TRYING to look out for them... but her... I owe nothing to. She will produce the location... or she'll suffer. If you don't want to watch... please leave the room." he instructed to all those around him now.

Tony gulped, standing in place, eyes wide. He knew from experience his father's words to his friends were good... he'd help them all the same. So... was this just part of his... making sure they'd be safe out there? It did seem slightly suspicious that Emelina didn't want to part with the details of where they'd be going, and that they'd be heading there on foot. But then again, it was probably hard for her to trust his father, and he figured her story about being tortured was at least, most likely true.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 06, 2014, 05:40:27 pm**

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After looking down at her for several moments with no response, Axel sighed and turned his attention to the others, trying to suck in air as Lily's grip tightened. He spluttered when he saw Stryker's gun pointed at Emilena. "Hey, hey, wait! Is... Do you really need to do that?"

His eyes found the Don's. "What if she doesn't know?! She already said she didn't! Jesus christ, she's one of us!" Axel could feel the blood pounding in his head. The thought of someone he knew being tortured made him sick. *And Emilena's the only one who knows what to do... if something happens to her...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 06, 2014, 05:45:28 pm**

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"Doesn't know what?" the don shot back at Axel. "The location she promised to take you to? How could she possibly not know that?" he said, pointing out the rather odd nature of Axel's question. "One of you? She didn't show up with you guys... what if the Purifiers turned her, huh?" he asked now. "You ever think of that? What if this is all just a big trap?"

This part... rang more true for Tony. According to Soren, Emelina hated augments... it'd make sense she'd support the Purifiers. His dad had a point, there.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 06, 2014, 06:01:19 pm**

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Axel's mouth opened... then closed again. As desperate as he was to avoid any bloodshed, he had to admit the Don had a point - Emilena should know the location, but still... Was threatening a woman with violence necessary? And *could* she be part of the Purifiers? "I..."

He glanced down at Lily. *If it's to protect her... Even if there's a chance it's a trap...* He raised his gaze to the others, feeling light-headed. "Just... answer their questions, Emilena..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 06, 2014, 06:30:43 pm**

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Suddenly, Anne shot up right in the chair she was reclining in. Inside her head was a faint and staticky voice along with a distinct staticky chime. The words were garbled and indistinct but she knew that sound ó someone in their group had been bugged.

She gulped. "Soren," she said. "Someone's been bugged."

Soren scowled. "Don Stracci."

Anne shook her head. "There's lots of listening devices around here and I can hear their radio transmissions. This is a different frequency and it sounds like the one from the bugs that Kojuuro showed us."

Soren's eye twitched. "When I get my exoskeleton, remind me to shove his head through a concrete wall."

"Easy. Let's have the Straccis' deal with this." Anne got up and made her way to Don Stracci's office. She knocked on the door amd waited for a response.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 06, 2014, 06:54:22 pm**

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"Can I help you?" asked a soldier who was casually standing around in the hallway. He was behind Anne, leaning against the wall. "The don's out at the moment... something you need?" he approached her now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 06, 2014, 07:25:30 pm**

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Anne spooked in place but she regained her composure. "Someone has bugged our group and I have a feeling I know who it is."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 06, 2014, 08:21:35 pm**

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THIS was the Don Stracci she'd heard so much about. Emilena folded her arms. "You clearly don't know just how many times I've already been shot in the last 48 hours," she challenged. "Torture doesn't have a great success rate on me."

She glanced at Axel. "But if even Axel's putting his faith in you, fine. It's a completely moronic decision, and I'm not sure why I'm the only one in the room who doesn't want to trust a mafia don, but if you bring me a map of the forest I'll show you where the spot is. Then you can go excavate it, run sensors through it, and try to control its power for yourself after you've shot all of us through the head for knowing too much."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 12:20:30 am**

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The don smirked at this, happy she'd seen things his way. Stryker wouldn't have killed her with the first shot... nor the second, or the third, or the fourth. It would've taken her awhile to die, if she died at all... of course... he could take her even further downstairs to the "special" room, and introduce her to all of Stryker's "toys."

"Well... that's not going to happen. I gave my word I would help these nice folks for helping my son... and I intend to stick to that." he stated now. "I won't be putting a bullet in any of their heads, nor will any of my associates. I mean come on... I would've done so already. Anyway... Mr. Fontana..." he snapped his claws at his consigliere. The iguana approached Emelina now and held out a data pad.

"Just press the location on the map... we'll investigate it and confirm your story." he informed her.

"Now my guests, I do owe... and a don's word is always good when it comes to assistance to those he owes favors too... but you? I need to make sure of first." Don Stracci was glad for the support, even from Axel. It seemed paranoia always won out over friendship... but that was true in really any situation in which friends weren't real "friends." "At least you're reasonable about it... I'd hate to introduce you to what Mr. Stryker likes to call his 'toys.'" The don's smile was thin here, and not at all kind.

"I can say my dad wouldn't do that either... from what I know at least." Tony came to his father's support now. "if he promises you something... you get it, trust me." he said now, nodding at Axel. "She's just trying to make us afraid of the alternative... there's nothing to be afraid of." Tony said softly.

"Oh... a bug?" the soldier asked, reaching into his coat and pulling out a remote. "That ain't no thing." he said nonchalantly, and pressed a red button on the remote. This activated the house's ultra high-frequency emitter, totally above the range of almost any humans or animals to detect, and promptly overloaded any external bugs with ruthless efficiency. Kojuuro's bugs were soon nothing more than a memory as they crackled out of existence, the extremely high-pitched whine overwhelming their circuitry. "Problem solved." he said in a bored fashion. The house's bugs were all protected by shielding devices built in that would switch them off temporarily while the frequency was emitted. "Who dared bug us, then?" he asked. "It wasn't

by any chance the guy who tripped our wall alarm when he left the premises a short while ago, was it? See we don't really care if someone is *leaving* the Heights and triggers the alarm, but if someone's entering... that's another story." he said now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 07, 2014, 12:54:19 am**

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The brief burst of radio waves made itself known in Anne's head as a whine but the microprocessor associated with her implant quickly filtered it out.

The chiming and faded static in Anne's head was soon replaced by the hum of Don Stracci's own bugs. A mental command shut down her horn.

Anne scratched her horn as she tried to place the noise. "The chime I heard sounded similar to that of when this Wolf, Kojuuro I think his name was, showed me the bugs. Anyways, thanks."

She walked off and returned to the study. "Kojuuro's bugs have been destroyed."

Soren sipped his glass of water and smiled. "Now to turn the tables on him..."

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The van arrived at the edge of The Heights. "All right, let's roll."

Aware that weapons would be easily detected, he opted to leave his pistol in the truck. He climbed out of the vehicle and waited for Agent Extasis to follow.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 07, 2014, 01:13:35 am**

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Exstasis led the way to the guardposts. "We're here for our free room and board!" he announced, then immediately shut up.

"I forgot, you're supposed to do the talking..." he muttered to Sanjay. "Errr, you take it from here."

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Emi circled a tiny portion of the map after zipping around it for a while. "That's as good as you're gonna get; it was the middle of the night and I *still* haven't slept since traversing the entire forest floor."

She handed the data pad back to the iguana. "So what constitutes 'checking my story out'? Considering I have no idea what you're hoping to find there, and neither do you. Are you gonna kill me unless there's a newspaper stand full of the latest editions of *Psionics Monthly* and a glowing green aura straight from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 07, 2014, 01:22:41 am**

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Sanjay slithered up to the intercom. "Please parden my partner's rudeness. I am Agent Bhat with Agent Extasis and we are here to meet with Officer Echo."

He looked around as he waited for a response.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 02:26:21 am**

((Done with full permission))

The intercom buzzed back, Oscar Gambino's voice coming through. "You're here to see who?" he asked, then a pause. "Oh yes!" he declared, tone changing to friendly. "Yes, of course! One moment please." he said, and pressed the button allowing them access to the manor. The big crocodile capo stood before them as the doors swung open, and he was hulking even by Exstasis's standards. "Please... this way." he said, dripping charm as he showed them towards the scanner.

Down below them, Don Stracci smirked. "No... but we need to find something substantial... that corroborates your story... ah!" he said now, grinning. "It seems the government hacks have arrived!" He declared, hearing Gambino's report in his ear. "One moment, Ms. Echo." he said politely enough. "Mr. Fontana, check that out." he ordered the iguana, who nodded and headed off with the data pad.

Remarkably, thanks to a slip of the tongue, the don was immediately informed of some incredibly useful information by Gambino. He didn't show it immediately, but then, after a moment, an actual grin spread across his features. He had them now! He even let out a short laugh. "Hahah! Well now... *this* is fortuitous!" he exclaimed. "It seems your idiot friends have just accidentally given you away, Ms. Echo! You're nothing but one of Lupis's twit hacks! Mr. Stryker!" he ordered quickly, and the lizard's left hand (the one not holding the pistol) suddenly produced a taser, proving the sungazer was ambidextrous as he didn't miss a beat.

The taser's wire was special, as it was high-tensile for hauling in its victims. The darts shot out and struck Emelina's chest, then proceeded to deliver 75,000 volts through her body, enough to knock any human out cold, to say nothing of the fox standing before the lizard now. She was quickly reeled in by the wire, to where she would fall right at Stryker's feet as the electricity ended.

"Take her below, Mr. Stryker... find out what you can... and then... we're gonna go after Lupis." the don ordered coldly. The powerful lizard nodded once and picked up her prone form before he began coolly walking off. "See?" the don asked, looking at them. "Seems I was right... one of those idiot government agents visiting from your good friend Lupis said he was here to see... and I quote... 'Officer Echo.' That enough proof for you?" he asked, looking around the room.

Tony gasped. "What? She was just one of Lupis's... really?" he asked.

"It came from one of my capos... Mr. Gambino, Tony... no mistake." the don said in a steely voice. "She's just another one of Lupis's lapdogs! I *knew* he was behind this! Trying to screw with me! Well I'll screw with him first!" the don shouted now, his temper actually rising before he seemed to catch himself, and calmed down, a smile spreading over his features again. "What are you willing to bet that location she gave us is nothing but a bunch of horseshit?" he asked now, smirking.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 07, 2014, 02:38:43 am**

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The look on Emelina's face was indescribable when Don Stracci revealed that the government agents had blown her cover.

"You've *got* to be fucking kidding me--" was as far as she got before the full brunt of 75,000 volts sent her reeling to the floor with a strangled cry. In seconds she had been knocked completely unconscious.

Lily shrieked when she saw a sudden display of violence around her. In seconds, her claws were bared and the taser flew out of Stryker's hand of its own accord. A second later, she

squealed and started shaking uncontrollably, hyperventilating. Sprinting on all fours, Lily ran for an exit and punched through the closest one, leading upstairs. In seconds, she was gone, leaving a trail of splinters behind what used to be a fine oaken postern.

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Exstasis nodded as he was led into the interior of the mansion.

"How did you know Officer Echo was here?" he asked Sanjay curiously, keeping his voice to a low mutter so the flanking guards wouldn't hear.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 02:56:01 am**

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"Shit!" Tony exclaimed as Lily bolted. "Come on!" he said to Axel. "We can't have her running around the house with government agents about!" he waved his paw, and took off after her.

"I'll activate some of the house's less lethal traps!" his father called after him, pulling out a remote to do just that.

Stryker meanwhile had quickly caught the flying taser with his tail, and shoved it back into his coat as if nothing had happened (though inwardly, he'd been surprised). Right... time to get to work then... he entered a secret door and headed for the basement's "fun house" as it was called with Emilena in tow, locking the door electronically behind him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 07, 2014, 03:33:58 am**

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(OOC - As for why Sanjay said Officer Echo. Out of universe, I screwed up. In universe, Sanjay hates her. He wants to get her on the bad side of the Stracci Family. As for why he knew about Emilena being there, he assumed that Emilena wanted to get "buddy-buddy" with the local crime lords. He's aware that Lanthae cops are *very* corrupt, even by this universe's standards.)

Sanjay didn't hear Agent Extasis. He slithered after the Rhino, keeping a eye on the flanking guards.

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Soren jumped as he heard something breaking from underneath him. "Fuck this! I'm out of here!"

He bolted from the room and made his way to the exit. In his panic, he went down the wrong stairwell and ended up going into the basement where everyone was.

Anne, who was slightly drunk, followed him. And prepared to drag him to safety if need be.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 07, 2014, 04:00:45 am**

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Axel gaped in shock as Lily tore out of the room, then sprinted after her, hot on Tony's heels. Taking the stairs two at a time, he could make out deep gauges in the stairs where Lily's claws had torn through in her attempt to escape. As Axel and Tony reached the top, the sound of something rocketing down the corridor to their left told them which direction she'd gone. A side table had been knocked down, the vase of flowers on its surface smashed on the floor and water pooling around it.

"Come on!" he urged the ferret, taking off after her. "Can't you warn your guards or something?! They're gonna shoot her!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 10:05:57 am**

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"Uh, yeah!" Tony replied, fumbling with his phone and trying to remember what the number was as they raced up the stairs. "Come on...!" he said to himself, wishing he had the radio system that kept his family connected (which he hadn't received yet since coming back). He dialed what he hoped was the number (it was saved but it was kind of hard to run, look where you were going and dial all at the same time) and yelled "Don't shoot the... creature running around!" He hoped his father would've taken care of that too...

Downstairs, the don almost ran into Soren and Anne as he was starting to head upstairs. "Ah! Soren, was it?" he asked. "I'm not sure if you fully distrusted Ms. Echo or not, but it seems you were right to do so. Turns out she was just another one of Agent Lupis's stooges. We're dealing with that though, don't worry." he reassured him.

Upstairs, it was very fortunate that Lily was towards the rear of the substantial house, as Sanjay and Exstasis were still at the front. Gambino was leading them towards the dining room. "It seems Officer Echo is freshening up at the moment." he informed them. "The don will however be with you shortly. Can I interest you in your... 'free room and board?'" he used Exstasis's words now. "Particularly the latter? I can radio in your food so that it will be ready faster." he informed them. He was ever alert however in case Lily decided to come this way.

In the "fun house" deep within the manor, Stryker was busy chaining Emelina to a contraption that hung from the ceiling. The device was a series of chains and manacles which would keep her hovering at a 45-degree angle off the floor, as they were all connected to a hook. She wouldn't be able to move her limbs, as the chains were taut with no give to them. The hands would be brought to a bit off her sides, and her legs would be spread slightly apart.

As Stryker activated the device and began winching her up, he smacked her head. "Time to wake up..." he said, his voice low, somewhat raspy, and very menacing. There was a slight hint of a Germanic accent in there as well, but unless the observer was trained, it would be hard to pick out from which country it originated. She wouldn't be able to see much in here, as it was very dark, and only a dim, low-powered light shined almost directly in her face from across the room. Another thing she'd notice would be the heat... it was like a sweat box in this room, though it didn't seem to be bothering Stryker. In fact, prisoners could be slowly killed down here simply by letting them sweat to death by losing enough fluids, though that of course wasn't what the lizard had in mind.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 07, 2014, 11:44:51 am**

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(OOO: Eh, don' worry 'bout it. Any excuse to get Emi tortured is a good one in my book!)

Lily tore down a hallway, sending a maid (the same one that had found her in the bathroom) flying screaming into a large walk-in closet. A pair of guards saw her coming, but having received the warning not to shoot her, had little choice but attempt a physical barricade, which Lily effortlessly smashed through.

The next room appeared to be a sort of office, with the only window steel-barricaded. When she opened the door, a turret rose from the corner audibly and flashily. *<PASSWORD NOT IDENTIFIED>* it informed her pleasantly and then began firing blanks; it was designed to frighten, not actually harm.

In a panic, Lily tried to escape back out the door she'd just entered, only to hit a large stun field that had sprouted up over the entrance. As she fell to the ground, a trapdoor opened up to deliver her to a titanium-reinforced net of electrically-woven fabrics, designed to

incapacitate the victim through random electrical stimulation of nerves across their body. She would twitch and spasm uncontrollably until somebody came to rescue her, and until then everyone in the vicinity could listen to her screaming.

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Emilena groaned when something smacked her upside the head. Slowly coming to her senses, she took in her situation with only mild surprise.

"Well, that went downhill fast..." she muttered, testing her bonds and finding them unsurprisingly solid. "At least I get to keep my pants this time."

She then noticed Stryker hovering over her. "You don't get to make any demoralizing quips about me being stupid," she warned him, "because this *totally* isn't my fault."

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"That would be excellent!" beamed Exstasis. "I'm starving!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 07, 2014, 02:20:18 pm**

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Axel sprinted after her, overtaking Tony as he slowed to dial his phone, dashing past the walk-in closet from which the maid's panicked cries were emanating. He rounded the corner and jumped over the two dazed guards who were getting to their feet, trying to process in his mind that it was *Lily* who was causing this mayhem... or whatever she was becoming, at least.

The sudden sound of her screams reached him, and he picked up speed, hurtling towards the open door at the end. "Lily, stop-" he started to shout... then gasped as he made out the light blue tinge of the stun field blocking the door, his trainers squeaking on the polished wooden floor as he skidded to a halt, stopping inches from it. The energy radiation from it was enough to make his fur tingle. Her screams continued to cut through the air, churning Axel's stomach - he was close enough now to see she'd fallen through a hole in the floor, though he couldn't make out what was causing her to shout.

Axel heard Tony catching up, and he turned desperately. "How the hell do you turn this off?! *Come on*, she's in pain!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 02:53:56 pm**

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Tony slid to a halt beside Axel, noting the chaos Lily had caused in her passing. "Uh! Hold on!" Tony said, going for his phone now and trying to remember the numbers to press to deactivate the traps. "Uhh... one moment..." He said, holding his forehead. "Right!" he quickly keyed in the three digit code, and the pit trap deactivated. "Come on!" he said now, reaching down to grab hold of one of Lily's arms while he waited for Axel to do the same. They started to haul her up now and back onto the floor.

When she was safely deposited on solid ground once again, Tony wiped his brow and exhaled in relief. "I think she's OK... the field wasn't designed to seriously hurt anyone." he explained. "Don't worry Axel... she's going to be fine." he said reassuringly, trying to get the rat to look at him for a moment.

Gambino smiled at how... easily led Exstasis was. Turning the corner into the expansive dining

room, the crocodile capo showed the rhino to a particular seat along the table. "Please, Mr. Exstasis, right here." he said, waving his hand to the particular chair. "Your food will be out shortly. Do you like pasta?" he asked.

"And you, Mr. Bhat, sit wherever you like." Gambino offered. Sanjay would be spared what was coming next, though Exstasis had his seat specially prepared ahead of time. Nothing out of the ordinary could be seen on it though; it appeared like just a normal seat. It was in fact the seat Soren had sat in earlier tonight, and he'd been just fine.

Stryker laughed in a whispering fashion, smiling at her words. "Yes... I would agree with you on that." he said softly, his words echoing in the enclosed room. "In this instance... you have your idiot friends to thank for your current predicament." he stood up now, going for the hanging control panel. "Your pants? Sounds like your last torture session ended well for someone." he commented, pushing another button on the yellow box, which was suspended in mid-air thanks to anti-gravity technology. "Let's make you a bit more comfortable... shall we?" he asked, smiling as a giant steel weight fell from the ceiling and landed none too softly on her backside. It would stretch her spine as her body would be pushed forward, and would gradually get heavier every ten minutes, increasing its mass through nanotechnology. As her body had literally nowhere to go, she'd been feeling the full brunt of the weight as it continually grew.

Stryker avoided his "toys" for the moment, but he did reach into his coat pocket and produce something that looked like a mechanical bug. He studied it for a minute, but did noting further with it at present. "Comfortable?" he asked, looking over at Emilena. "It seems your little friends... weren't as smart or as loyal as you were probably hoping... but even I admit... I didn't expect Agent Lupis to be this stupid. So first things first... what's really out there? In those woods?" He asked, rolling the little "bug" around in his fingers. "And what were your plans when we got out there?" He then began rubbing his hands together slowly, rolling the bot around between them. "You know... the Spanish were geniuses when it came to the art of inflicting pain... mutilating their targets, and forcing even the strongest 'heretics' to confess. I'm a particular fan of some of their more brutal methods... and you'll soon find out some of these for yourself if you don't cooperate." he said now, sitting down in a chair to watch her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 07, 2014, 03:34:13 pm**

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"Do you have a direct line to Lupis?" Emilena asked, gritting her teeth and panting; the position also made it difficult to breathe. "Lets call him and we can all tell him what an idiot he is. I took this gig for one reason: to get out of Purifier prison. With that snake Sanjay Bhat. Do you know what my job was? 'Just keep your mouth shut and keep Bhat alive, he's a master strategist and he can do all the talking.' Well that turned to work really damn well!"

She grimaced as the weights were pressed on her. "Errrgghh...I didn't have any plans for the forest. That was just me trying to get Lily out of here because I trust the mafia about as much as I should have trusted Lupis. That spot story is totally legit though, you should go wiretap it. Bring divining rods."

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Lily's body was still twitching uncontrollably; it would take some time before she'd be able to regain control of her motor functions.

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Ex stasis sat down excitedly. "I love pasta!" He said excitedly. "The saucier the better!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 07, 2014, 03:51:01 pm**

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Sanjay looked at his uniform. "Excuse me, but I have just slithered through some rather unclean environments and I don't think it's polite for me to sit on such an expensive chair." Inwardly, he had his suspicions about this place."

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Soren's eye twitched. "She used a fake warrant to try and arrest me and deatroy my business and before that, she beat me up! Why wouldn't I distrust her!?"

He then took a breath. "Look, I kinda don't care about Lily right now. I just want to make sure Officer Echo and her stooges don't try to fuck me over."

Anne tapped Tony's shoulder. "You may want to speak to Kojuuro. It seems he snuck bugs onto us. Luckily, it seems the house's defense systems have disabled them."

Soren facepalmed. "Him too!?! Ugh! What's next?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 04:00:34 pm**

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Tony looked at Anne. "Bugs? Really?" he asked, but knew his father's home defenses could handle those. "Where is he now?"

Don Stracci clapped Soren on the shoulder. "Don't worry, son. Ms. Echo is being... dealt with... rather efficiently." he said reassuringly, giving the human a smile and a nod. "As are our two guests. As for Mr. Kojuuro... don't concern yourself with him... he slipped away earlier over the wall." Don Stracci said in a bored fashion. "Left his weapons behind too, apparently. I doubt he heard anything useful."

Stryker smiled at her words, grinning a little bit as he shook his head, his body convulsing as another whispering laugh overtook him. He got out of his chair now. "Is that really *all* there is to it? Get out of Purifier prison? Keep your mouth shut? Help out Sanjay Bhat, whom by the way, is the one who blew your cover." he said now, wagging a claw at her as he disappeared into the darkness to retrieve some of his "toys."

He reappeared a few moments later, carrying what seemed to be two large two-pronged forks tied together with a leather collar, and a pear shaped device, about double the size of a human fist. "These are two of my favorites!" he exclaimed, giving her a winning smile as he strode over to her. "Having trouble breathing?" he asked, noticing what the weight was doing to her. "You'll have even more trouble in a few seconds. While what you say about the forest we'll confirm in a matter of time, I don't think I like your attitude about it very much. So I'll ask again..." He said now, as he took the forks in his hands. "This is called a heretic's fork..." He roughly grabbed her ears, and yanked her head back so that it was craned against her body as far as it would go. "It was designed..." He continued, strapping the fork underneath her neck and fastening the leather buckle tight, so that her head was basically forced to stay in its full back position. "To make breathing very difficult... and to cause the neck extreme discomfort with extended use... imagine having this on you... for hours." He whispered in her ear. She would now barely get enough oxygen to speak, but Stryker was an expert and knew just now much pressure to apply with the fork, in order to keep his victims getting the bare minimum oxygen they needed.

He held the pear up in front of her eyes now. "This... they call a pear of anguish... or... a choke pear, depending on where it was used." he said, waving it in front of her. "It opens up... like so." He twisted a screw at the bottom of the pear, demonstrating for her as the pear split into

four leaves which separated gradually away from the center before he twisted them back down. "Now... there are..." he pretended to think a moment. "Three orifices on your body where this can safely go." he bopped her nose lightly with it. "Care to guess which one I'm going to insert it into?" he smiled cruelly again, his eyes boring into hers. "I'll ask again... what's out there, in the woods? Does it pose a danger to our men... and how much does Lupis know about it?" he inquired.

Sanjay didn't go for the trap, but it didn't matter. The proverbial tablecloth was swiftly yanked out from under them.

As Exstasis sat down, he suddenly found himself in free fall, his chair dropping out from under him and dumping his body onto a metal slide which had been greased to create minimal friction. The slide ended in a giant vat of bubbling green acid a hundred feet or so below him. It would've taken less than five seconds since his drop for him to reach the vat, whose contents were strong enough to dissolve even bones...

Sanjay suddenly found a gun pointed directly at the back of his head from Gambino, and other rifles leveled at him from two other soldiers. "Now, Mr. Bhat. I'm afraid dinner plans have been irrevocably changed, for the evening." Gambino said calmly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 07, 2014, 04:27:55 pm**

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As Lily's body twitched on the floor, Axel sat down on his haunches next to her, leaning against the wall. He nodded at Tony's reassurance, but kept staring dully at the wall. The raised voices of the guards echoed dully from further up the corridor. After a long moment, Axel looked up slowly at the ferret.

"She was lying..." he croaked. "Emilena was going to lead us into a trap... and I was just going to let us walk right into it. Right into whatever she was planning for Lily." Axel bent forwards and cupped his head in his hands. "I'm such an *idiot*..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 04:37:47 pm**

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Tony's face melted when he saw Axel break down in front of him. "No... no, no!" Tony said now, sliding on his knees over to the rat's side. "Hey... hey..." he said softly, holding the rat's augmented arms. "Hey... that's what you have friends for, right?" he asked, smiling. "Come on... we can't do anything on our own... that's why... I mean I don't know why we exist but... sometimes... I like to think it's to help each other out..." he said comfortingly. "You didn't know... but that's why people like Soren and myself are here, right? I mean come on... I haven't known you all that long... but I can tell you're a good person... even despite... the augments." he said here, looking down at the rat's limbs. "And I can tell you love Lily... a lot. You would do anything for her... and that's why you made that mistake." he spoke in softer tones. "You wanted to help her so bad that's why you were willing to just go out and do whatever it takes... even without thinking."

He paused here, his paws still on the rat's arms. "But... we *will* get her help... and we'll do that... together. So that we won't make mistakes like the one we almost just made. Just think... if we all have each others' backs... what's to stop us, huh?" he smiled again, hoping he at least got through to his new rodent friend.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 07, 2014, 04:48:56 pm**

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Emilena tried to answer, but she was too busy choking on her blocked windpipe. It was making her vision fuzzy in a way that was oddly appealing...

"I recommend...my ass..." she gasped slowly. "It's all...loosened up...from last time..."

She had to work to keep interest from showing in her voice; last time had taught her that sounding excited about torture just made them less willing to do it.

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 Ex stasis let out a long bellowing scream that was almost immediately snuffed out by searing acid, that stripped his bones in seconds. His various subdermal augments floated to the surface, cleaned and probably good for resale.

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 Lily finally regained enough self-control to curl up in a ball and assume the fetal position. Squinting her eyes shut, she took a deep breath and tried to control herself.

She wasn't acting like herself. She didn't let loud noises shock her in that way. The other conscience was much more...animal. It was fueling her with flight-or-flight reactions. She had to work to get it under control!

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 07, 2014, 06:12:06 pm**

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"Alright." Axel sucked in a breath and raised his head to the ferret sat next to him. "You're right, I... I'm sorry. You could have been in danger too, and that was my fault. But if we work together..." He paused and smiled weakly at Tony, his ears perking up slightly. "Thank you. I know how easy it would have been for you and your dad to just throw us out on our asses. You don't know how much it means... And... I've got your back if you ever need it." He gave a small, choking laugh. "That probably doesn't mean much. But it's true."

Lily finally stopped twitching and curled up into a ball. Axel looked down and gently laid a hand on her shoulder. *But now we're back to square one...* And then, a thought that shocked him even as it entered his head; *I hope Emilena suffers...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 07, 2014, 07:39:35 pm**

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((Exstasis :lol))

"Hey... it means a lot." Tony smiled, patting Axel's shoulder now. "You're here for Lily, and we're all here for you, OK?" he asked. "Hey... we could've thrown you out... but I think it's apparent to you by now that my dad's word is good... he promised to help... you're still here." He sat back against the wall now and looked down at Lily.

"We're gonna help her, Axel, OK? I'm serious..." He looked over at the rat now. "And we're gonna go with your plan... track down Lupis, and go after him. I mean come on! We've basically nullified all the agents he's sent here, so we've got the upper paw now, I think." He said, nodding with a smirk. "It's the only thing we have to go on, right? We got no other leads. I think he's our best bet of getting to the bottom of this."

Don Stracci suddenly chimed in. "OK... my guys swept the woods around where Emilena said to go... they found nothing of any significance." the don reported.

"Damn!" Tony breathed. "I was... really hoping that *maybe* it wasn't bullshit but... I guess... it was too much to hope for." he said here, hanging his head a bit. "Sorry Axel... guess that was a bust." he muttered. "Also... if you're worried about moving Lily around in public... my dad's

got a Pierce-Arrow Berline that can tow a Pierce-Arrow Travelodge trailer." he smiled here. "She could hide out in there, and I doubt anyone would know." he suggested.

Stryker smiled at her suggestion. "That's what I was thinking..." he wiped his brow, and stood up now. The heat in here was fine for him, being he was cold-blooded (but had augments to keep him from going into shock in cold temperatures). "Though I feel I'm going to need to step up the pain after this." he said, moving to behind her now and violently tearing her pants down. He didn't care how far down, he just needed to get access, stopping when they were around her thighs... after all, a Spanish boot could be in order.

Placing the pear between her cheeks, he then drove his foot downward onto the pear, kicking it fairly deep into her rectum. He then started turning the screw a few times to the right. "I wonder how long it'll take before your rectum bursts." he said, leaving it at its current position right now. "I'll come back and do more of that in a bit." he said, walking around to her front now. "Maybe we should try the skull splitter next? It's not half as deadly as it sounds... but it'll hurt... I promise you it'll hurt. Or the knee splitter... or even a St. Elmo's belt." he commented thoughtfully. He then lashed out with his spiked tail, and struck the side of her head with great force. "There is of course... my own body as well... my spines are capable of flaying flesh." he said, smirking down at her now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 07, 2014, 08:19:27 pm**

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Emilena let out a low ragged moan, but quickly shifted it into a cry of pain for appearances' sake. "This...choke pear...ain't that useful...for questioning...is it?" She choked out. "Let's...try the belt..." She couldn't resist wondering why St. Elmo was into BDSM.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 07, 2014, 09:36:05 pm**

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Marita Rose and Marie starred at tony ' you alright?' Marita asked kindly ' the knowledge that Emiklena had tried to deceive them, wasnt all that surprising, the whole reason she had become involved in this adventure was because emilena had busted into her house and forced her into helping her.' i hope emilena gets what is coming to her' she muttered.

-  
gawds only know what the don is doing to her' Marie nodded. ' corrupt cops' she shook her head. ' be careful what you say in here ' rose said ' the don is not a person you want to annoy , or test the patience of. In truth, she wanted to get back on the road, and she was fighting to stay still, biproxytol was something that stayed in your body for a week, after that if you didnt use it you went into horrible wiithdrawals. rose was dreading when the withdrawal would start to kick in, the last time, she had vomited heavily and made a huge mess of the dressing room, it had taken 3 cleanings- all taken out of her takings that week- to clean it up.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 07, 2014, 09:46:58 pm**

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Soren shivered. "If we followed her...we could all have been killed."

"Good riddance," Anne said. She had a *very* low opinion of the cops in Lanthae. Granted, the only reason she wasn't in jail was because almost half of what she made from stealing augments and selling them went to bribing the cops.

"Don Stracci, maybe what we're looking for isn't the forest? Maybe it's Pelvanida?"

Anne rubbed the base of her horn as she poured herself a glass of water. "Maybe we can dig through Emilena's belongings and maybe their vehicles? Maybe they'll lead us to something

useful."

Soren rubbed his face. "That's probably as close as we'll get for solid clues."

-----

Sanjay swayed as the guards trained their weapons on him. "Okay, you caught me...So what are you going to do? Feed me to the catfish and crabs?"

(OOC - Catfish and crabs are raised on farms for food. They are voracious eaters and criminals often feed their victims to them - alive.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 08, 2014, 12:36:09 am**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 08, 2014, 12:47:32 am**

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What should we do with Agent lupis?' Marita asked ' He was the one who sent Emilea here right/ i think he has a lot to answer for' Marita said ' iwith all due respect to your father tony- and he has been a gracious host with the nice beds, great meals and lots of art to look at- i think we need to get back on the road and go after Lupis. what do you say guys../ she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 08, 2014, 01:13:08 am**

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Soren nodded. "I don't care about Lupis. But I want Emilena's head on a platter!"

Anne shrugged "I dunno about you, but I could use some weed right about now."

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Sanjay bobbed and weaved as he watched the guards. He waited for an opportunity to inject them with the narcotic he filled his venom tanks with.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 08, 2014, 03:08:57 am**

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((Sanjay executed with full permission!))

"I agree." Tony nodded at Marita. "I think that should be our new goal. We find out where he is... and we go for it." He stood up now, and held a paw down for Axel to take. "What do you say we take the Pierce-Arrow Berline and the Travelodge trailer and roll on out of here?" he asked, smirking.

"I'm getting Stryker to extract Lupis's location from Emilena now." the don informed them. "When I know... you'll know. Did I hear you're taking my precious Berline out?" he narrowed his eyes at his son now.

"Dad... we're gonna need a method of moving Lily around surreptitiously and... the Berline's got a V-12. It can out horsepower most cars on the road! Please?" he asked, smiling. "You modded it... it'll be safe." he let a grin spread over his features.

Sighing, the don shook his head. "I'm suddenly worried I'm not carrying enough insurance but... fine. You break it, you bought it."

"That won't happen dad! Or... maybe it will." Tony grinned now, thinking he could own a really awesome car if he broke it. "Anyway, you're the best!" he exclaimed.

"Yeah, yeah... I know." Don Stracci waved his paw dismissively.

Stryker gave her a grin. "The belt? See... when the prisoners start asking for certain treatments... no... that's when I go another direction." he said, striking her face again with his spiny tail. "I'll use the skull splitter." He disappeared once more, noting her disdain for the pear... oh he'd rupture that rectum of hers all right!

Returning with what was essentially a circlet with spikes on its interior, he placed it on her head. "This will split your skull... but only if I apply lethal pressure. In the meantime... I'll just do this." he said, tightening the screws so that the spikes started to drive through her skin and tightened against her skull. "I'll give you another chance." he said, looking down at her now. "You answer the question... and maybe I won't start drilling into your brain. Maybe." he said, smacking her cheek with his hand. "Where's Lupis when you last left him? Huh?"

Gambino didn't like how Sanjay was swaying and bobbing and twisting... it was too snake-like and too threatening. "That's an excellent idea, Mr. Bhat!" the crocodile stated, and fired a round directly into the back of Sanjay's skull, execution style. As the snake slumped forward, Gambino looked at the guards. "Go and feed him to the catfish and crabs. It was his idea!" the croc shrugged, and ordered a cleaning crew to get into the dining room now. "Oh and salvage those augments from the rhino... we could use them."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 08, 2014, 03:32:41 am**

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The guards quickly grabbed the dead Cobra and dragged him off.

They entered a passage way deep into the Heights. There, inside one of the many rooms, lay a large tank with several large catfish swimming lazily and crabs scuttling along the bottom.

One of the guards produced a switchblade and swiftly sliced off Sanjay's clothes. He noticed the augments on Sanjay, but the creatures would eat around them.

"Dig in!" The guards heaved the body into the tank and the voracious predators soon began attacking it, turning the water blood-red.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 08, 2014, 04:11:16 am**

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"Eeergh!" Emilena gritted her teeth as the device dug into her cranium. It was giving her an awful headache. "Fine...*don't*...do the belt then..."

The skull splitter was making it incredibly hard to think. Lupis, where had she seen Lupis? At the place...the place where she had been...*Goddammit, this isn't a hard question...*

She decided to stall for time. "I'll tell you...if you do...the belt..." she grinned lazily; the lack of oxygen to her brain was giving her an incredible high, and it was starting to take its toll.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 08, 2014, 05:36:56 am**

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Axel took Tony's paw and let himself be pulled to his feet. "I say that sounds like a plan," he said, returning Tony's grin. They might be stuck back at square one, but he felt better knowing they had something to aim for. *Once we get the information from Emilena...*

Once Tony had guilt tripped his father into letting him take the vehicles, Axel nodded gratefully. "Thanks, sir. I'll try to make sure the Berline doesn't get too scratched up." He half turned to Tony and whispered, "There's no way you're going to return it in one piece, is there?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 08, 2014, 12:55:41 pm**

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Tony shook his head, and grinned. "I don't think so... but my dad's modded it too so... it's pretty resistant." he chuckled, and looked at the group. "Well... I'm gonna grab some breakfast before we hit the road. The Pierce-Arrow can hold six, plus the trailer can hold basically a family so... I think we'll be good in terms of transport, though we may want to take Axel's truck as well, just for Soren's exoskeleton, unless you have a better way of transporting it." he pointed out here.

"Breakfast? You want the kitchen staff to..." Don Stracci began.

"Oh I got it, pops, don't worry!" Tony said, waving as he went towards the kitchen. "Just gonna whip up something quick. Eggs take a matter of minutes after all." he added. Good, quick breakfast, then they'd all be on the road.

Entering the kitchen, the ferret broke out two skillets, moved over to the expansive stoves, turned on the heat, and let the pans start to heat. He went over to one of their five fridges, retrieved some butter, eggs, bacon, mushrooms, and sausages, and began carrying them over to the stove.

The don looked at the others. "I'll provide you with hardware when you leave... also, your weapons will be returned. You understand, I can't lend you direct support... can't implicate myself after all and risk sparking a war, but indirect... I'll provide whatever you need." Don Stracci stated, taking a data pad from Max now and handing it first to Soren. "Just select from the list what you want and I'll provide it." he offered. "Pass it around, make sure everyone gets it, and the stuff'll be waiting for you when you drive out."

Stryker glared at her. "You don't get to make requests, I'm afraid... as my boss said, this isn't a negotiation." he stood up again, went around to her backside, and twisted the pear open a few more notches. "Once again... where's Lupis?" he reached behind him, into a box, and retrieved what looked like a cross between a fire poker and cattle prod. Activating it, the tip immediately began to heat up. "This'll hurt you more than me." he grinned, and applied the burning tip to her neck, holding it there and letting the tool begin to sear away her flesh. "Where's Lupis?" he demanded more angrily.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 08, 2014, 01:27:55 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 08, 2014, 02:00:57 pm**

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Of course sir' marita nodded ' tony i call back seat in the car.'  
i could use some biproxytol rose said feebily.. look i need to go to detox, but i really dont have the money for it..' she said.' look rose, once we take care of Lupis we'll have more than

enough money to get you detoxed' Marita replied. 'maries going to help us,...' marie smiledd at rose.. ' come on girl.. just hang in there.. i'll be happy to have a gun, for defense purposes

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 08, 2014, 02:17:46 pm**

Emilena couldn't help it; she gave out a long, low shuddering moan, arching her back and sticking her tail straight out.

He's....in....heh...the Purifiers....camp..." she giggled; the lack of oxygen to her brain was giving her a similar reaction as that to laughing gas. "You...could...have...bloody...guessed that! Ohhhhhh...."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 08, 2014, 08:46:54 pm**

"Oh, it's not my truck... actually, I suppose it kind of is now," Axel said thoughtfully, suddenly feeling bad for the delivery boy they'd stolen it from. He checked that Lily was still alright... or at least, not spasming again, then sidled up behind Soren and peered over his shoulder at the datapad.

He tapped Soren, his guilt over believing Emilena temporarily disappearing when he saw a .44 Magnum was listed among the items they could take. "Hey, get that! The most powerful handgun in the world!" He reflected that firing the gun would probably take his arm off. "Or... maybe just get me a smaller gun. I'd feel better if I wasn't walking into anything empty handed."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 08, 2014, 09:36:25 pm**

(The Heights)

Soren looked over the list. He noticed that there was a conspicuous absence of mind altering substances. Nevertheless, he just checked off ammunition for his shotgun as well as a generator. "Well, that'll do." He passed the tablet to Axel.

"Any drugs?" Anne asked.

"Nope."

The mare sighed. "Fuck it, I'll go steal some later. Not from here, of course."

Soren yawned. His supply of moziafil was gone and he fogured it might be useful. But he had little money left. He looked around. He was associating with organized crime and preparing for a vigilante mission. He shrugged; "helping himself" to some moziafil was peanuts.

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(Patrick Anderson's Manor)

The Liger watched as his armed guards patrolled his house. The interior had several expensive imported marble furnishings and other high-end products.

He adjusted his tailored suit and looked in the mirror. Staring back was a Feline with the imposing mane of a Lion mixed with the stripes of a Tiger. His black business suit was set off by a dark blue tie. Two golden cufflinks made in the shape of his company logo (a microchip with a cursive P.A. carved on it) adorned his sleeve.

"Sir, are you sure this is a good idea?" a dark-skinned Human said as he watched his boss combing his mane.

"If I do not show up at my workplace, then these terrorists have won." The Liger spritzed some cologne on his suit. "In addition, this suit is my new bulletproof carbon nanotube suit. It's 200,000 creds well spent. In addition my podium has bulletproof corundum shields to protect me."

The guard sighed. "If you insist, Sir."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 09, 2014, 01:00:52 am**

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"Got it!" Tony called from the kitchen to Marita as he cracked some eggs over the first skillet and began whisking them around. He threw in the mushrooms, bacon, and sausage into the second skillet, and let those cook. Soon, as the eggs began to form, he dumped the ingredients in and let them all simmer together. He then went over to the fridge, retrieved some cheese, and sprinkled it into the fast cooking omelette. He moved it around slightly with a spatula to let the rest of the eggs cook and form up before folding it over onto itself and dumping it out onto a plate. He then turned down the heat (but kept it on just in case), and strode over to one of kitchen's many counters, and sat himself down upon the stool.

"Anyone want any eggs?" the ferret called out to the others.

"I don't deal in drugs, sorry." Don Stracci replied to Rose. "It's something I won't touch. I'm sure you could find some easily enough in Lanthae though." he stated. "Aha!" he said now, hearing Stryker report in. "Agent Lupis is at the Purifier compound, ironically enough. I'll be extracting details of its layout very soon." he informed the group.

Down below, Stryker could tell Emelina was getting a kick out of this. He withdrew the searing rod, and smirked. "Hmph... so... you get off on all this, huh?" he proceeded to tighten the skull splitter, hearing the distinct crack of bone as her cranium began to splinter under the spikes. "Just a little bit..." he muttered, noting the weight on her back was close to 300 pounds now.

He moved back to the pear, and twisted it again, causing near rupture of her rectum. "That was just sheer sadism... this next bit... I'm gonna need you to tell me the layout of the Purifier compound, and any relevant details an attacking force would need." he stated, switching on a recorder.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 09, 2014, 01:31:39 am**

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i'll take some scrambled ' marita said. 'scrambled for me as well. 'overeasy please' rose said. marita went over tho the fridge and grabbed a gallon of milk. marie went over to an open cabinet full of glases and pulld out 4 of them, one for her, rose and marita and one for tonu..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 09, 2014, 02:00:17 am**

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Emilena felt it coursing up, the heaviness in her abdomen. Peaking, like it almost had back at the Purifier base. "Oh, oh, mmmmm!" her moans turned quickly into a haggard scream as she felt that wave crest. What little oxygen she could get was expelled immediately as her muscles contracted throughout her body. In one uplifting moment, she squealed shamelessly and bloodied tears poured down her face as she ejaculated loudly and was left shuddering, creaking in the chafing contraption.

"Heh...heh..." she panted heavily. "Oh man...okay.....okay..."

Now that her sexual needs were sated, she realized just what a situation she was in. She also quickly learned the downside to continued stimulation after orgasm.

Suddenly she screamed, not a pleased scream; a real, honest scream of unfiltered pain. "Oh god! Stop! Please!"

She felt it all; the screws dug into her skull, every inch of lacerated skin and shredded flesh. Her flayed burns and torn orifices. How crippled she was. "Oh, god please..." she begged, crying uncontrollably. "Just kill me already!"

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Suddenly Lily arched her back and started crying. She was hit by it all at once; someone in this house was in genuine pain. She could feel all of it. And it hurt her.

*Make it stop!* screamed three consciences at once; hers, her parasite's, and the one assuaging her with uncontrollable fear and anguish.

She shook her head violently, trying to clear it. Her bitter tears stung her eyes. She didn't want to hear this! It was deafening!

*Stop!* she screamed at the other voice. *I'm sorry! But I can't take it! STOP!*

And then it stopped.

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Where Emilena once hung, now lay dangling, empty manacles. The pear clattered to the floor. A pair of blood-soaked pants lay in an ever-spreading puddle of bodily fluids.

Stryker was alone in the room.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 09, 2014, 02:30:27 am**

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Stryker smirked as he realized he'd finally broke her. She'd had her fun... but it was over. They always broke... and too bad too! He didn't even get a chance to mutilate her seriously yet! But then, as she started screaming and yelling for him to kill her (and he was considering doing other things, after smelling her ejaculation), she vanished. Stryker blinked. "What the... fuck?" he asked, looking around now. Where had she gone? The pear simply fell to the floor, as did her pants, the fork, and the skull splitter.

"Son of a bitch!" he shouted, moving forward now and looking rapidly from left to right.

"What? Gone?" Don Stracci asked into his headset. "What the hell do you mean gone? Well find her!" he yelled. "And alert security! Lock this place down!" he ordered. He then turned his gaze on the others. "It seems Ms. Echo... has vanished." he said, looking at Lily now, the monster clearly in some state of distress. "I'll doubt we'll find her." he clamped his teeth together and looked up at the ceiling. "Great..."

Tony smiled as a glass of milk was procured for him by Marie. "Thanks..." he said, accepting it as he dug into his omelette. "All right... I'll make your eggs soon, just want to finish my breakfast." he smiled again, chugging some milk. "Two scrambled and one over easy order... got it!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 09, 2014, 02:58:51 am**

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Soren felt a shiver run up his spine. "Emilena vanished...without a trace?"

"I'm vegetarian," Anne said.

Soren pushed the thoughts out of his head and got to work making his own omlette with vegetables and catfish pieces. Some catfish sausages and a glass of orange juice rounded off the breakfast.

The Human sat down to eat when he noticed the TV in the room. "Might as well. Activate."

The flatscreen came to life and the scene showed a Liger businessman standing in front of a well-dressed crowd. His name, Patrick Anderson and "CEO of Anderson Augmentations" appeared at the bottom of the screen.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 09, 2014, 05:52:41 am**

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Axel flicked through the list of items, but half of the things on there was stuff that he'd probably be safer staying away from. Eventually he settled on a small snubnosed revolver, and the ammo to go along with it. *Should be easy enough to use...* He almost dropped the datapad in surprise when Lily started crying, but before he could do anything she suddenly seemed to calm down. Almost simultaneously, he heard the Don speaking into his headset.

"She's *gone*?" Axel glanced down at the figure on the floor. *Did she do something?* Suddenly feeling like it'd be safer in a group if there was a potentially enraged Emilena roaming around, he bent to gently lift Lily to her feet, and started to head towards the kitchen, handing the datapad back to Stracci as they passed him. "Did... did they at least find out where Lupis is?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 09, 2014, 01:35:56 pm**

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 09, 2014, 02:23:29 pm**

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"Yes... we found out he's at the Purifier compound." Don Stracci said here. "Your old buddies it seems are harboring him... or he's employing them. Either way, you get to kill two birds with one stone." It was convenient for him, as well, because this way, he could have others do his work for him. He had nothing personal against the Purifiers however, even if he considered them a dirty business. This way at least, he could avoid directly involving his family in something that had nothing to do with them.

Don Stracci regarded Lily again. "I have a feeling your girlfriend was responsible for Ms. Echo's vanishing. She certainly seems to have powerful abilities... but I wonder if she has any control?" he mused aloud.

Tony finished up his omelette now, and proceeded to start cooking the eggs for Marita, Marie, and Rose. He noticed Soren watching the TV, and narrowed his eyes to see the liger on screen. "Hey... I think I've heard of that guy." he said, beating the eggs in a bowl as he watched the speech commence. "Wonder what this is about." he murmured, pouring the whisked eggs into the pan now and beginning to move them around with the spatula. He then cracked two more eggs for the over easy batch.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 09, 2014, 03:19:15 pm**

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(Anderson Augmentations)

Patrick looked at his papers. In front of him hovered several camera drones. The corundum shields that surrounded him and the armored business suit he wore along with the two armed guards flanking him should have kept him safe but a twinge of nervousness ran through him.

He took a sip of his water and cleared his throat. "As you all may have heard, I was the victim of a cowardly attack." Murmors ran through the crowd.

The Liger held up his hand for silence.

"However, I will not bow to these Luddites. My company pledges to make augmentations more affordable and more advanced. It is for the world, that I make them, to surpass our own limits! To those who would attack me over creating augments and the Augmented themselves, I dare you, tell the mother whose paralyzed child recieved a spinal cord stimulator and can now take their first step! I dare you, tell the blind man who can now see infrared when all he saw black he's a degenerate!"

The crowd watched in awe as Patrick continued to speak. "I have saved hundreds if not thousands of lives with my company's augmentations and implants!" His voice dropped to a near whisper and he glared into the camera, his amber slit-pupilled eyes daring them to challenge him. "How many lives have you terrorists destroyed? How many fathers who have to tell their children 'Mommy's never coming home'? How many police officers have to tell widowed husbands and wives that their spouse was kidnapped and later found dead? All because of your Luddite beliefs."

The crowd applauded as Patrick finished his speech. Their applause was cut short when a sonic boom echoed through the air and the sound of one of the corundum barriers breaking was heard.

The two armed guards quickly hustled their boss to safety as soon as the sound was heard. Screaming broke out as the crowd began to disperse.

One of the guards radioed for assistance while the other checked on their boss.

Patrick only gurgled as he stared glassy-eyed into the smoggy sky. The heavy steel dart, fired from a camera drone that had been gutted and had a railgun stuffed into it, had smashed through the corundum barrier and retained enough energy to competely rip through the Liger's neck, tearing apart his trachea and other vital structures before it exited through the back of his neck, nearly taking his head off in the process, and buried itself into the concrete sidewalk.

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(The Heights)

The Liger's deep resonant voice echoed out from the TV screen as he made his speech. Everything had been broadcast, including the shooting.

Soren stared wide eyed at the scene. His half-eaten omlette lay in front of him. The spray of blood and tissue that issued forth when the dart ripped through the unfortunate man's neck killed his appetite.

"Did...Did I just see what I thought I saw?" Anne asked as she continued eating her pancakes.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 09, 2014, 03:29:05 pm**

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Marita had only been half-heartedly paying attention, but after the shooting, her eyes were fixed on the screen. ' my gawd, that guy just got shot on live tv!" she started. " my gawd, someone was just killed..' Marie said, her meal forgotten.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 09, 2014, 03:42:18 pm**

Lily was cradling her head. The lingering aftereffects of the mental trauma she'd just heeded witness to wasn't a thing to shrug off.

It was that police officer. She'd gotten a glimpse of who it was when they'd briefly connected minds. The don had obviously had her tortured, and probably planned for worse...

It left her feeling nauseous. She felt no ill will towards anyone, including Emilena. She hoped the officer hadn't been tortured on Lily's behalf. She worried about how she had stopped the pain; if she'd killed Emilena, she was hardly better than the don.

She looked nervously at the people surrounding her. These were dangerous people, quick to hate and ready to kill. Even her former friends. Even Axel...she could sense it. Something had changed in his thought patterns. To protect her, he was willing to hurt others, or look away as they were hurt. He'd lost part of the kind soul she'd seen when they first met.

*What am I doing to these people? Lily wondered. And how far will they go?...*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 09, 2014, 04:55:48 pm**

Tony had to admit... the speech was pretty good. He could kind of see where the augment side of the argument was coming from... kind of. He still wasn't fully into augments, but... he could sort of see... *holy crap!*

The barrier breaking and the liger being shot on live television caused Tony to freeze. "What... the...?" was all he could say at first. "Oh my god! Oh... my... god!" he exclaimed, his paw going up to his mouth now, aghast at what just occurred. Anne finally broke the silence, followed by Marita and Marie.

"I just... I can't..." Tony shook his head, at a loss for words. "Unbelievable..." was all he could whisper. The smell of the cooking food however, brought him back to reality. "Crap!" he said, dumping the scrambled eggs onto two plates now before they started to burn. He flipped the two other eggs over gently, and waited for them to cook a tad more before he slid them onto another plate.

"OK... hopefully you girls haven't lost your appetite..." Tony said softly, shaking his head. "I uh... I think I'll get the car ready." he said in a low voice, and exited the kitchen now as he dropped off the girls' eggs "Hope you enjoy."

He headed over to his father and Axel. "Hey Axel..." the ferret tapped the rat on his arm now. "You about ready to get going? I think I'm gonna fire up the Pierce-Arrow. Want to take Lily to the garage and get her inside the trailer?" he suggested, looking down at the psionic creature now.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 09, 2014, 05:46:36 pm**

Axel shook his head at the Don's question. "I... I don't know..." He had no idea what to think, but considering how panicked she'd been, any form of control was hard to imagine. *We need to get to Lupis fast...*

He turned at Tony's greeting. "Yeah, the sooner we get on the road the better. I guess the others'll meet us down there after they've eaten?" He put an arm around Lily's shoulders and spoke in a soft tone. "Hey... you ready to go? We're taking you to the garage, you can lie down in the trailer if you want."

Raising his head, Axel gave the Don a grateful smile. "Thanks for everything you've done... We would have been totally screwed. And, ah, I'll keep my mouth shut about, you know... everything I've seen here..." He trailed off as he realised that shutting up was probably a good idea. Turning to Tony, he gave a nod and started to lead Lily in his direction. "Lead the way."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 09, 2014, 06:10:40 pm**

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Marita and marie pushed their plates towards Rose who quickly started eating. "I'm not hungry" Marita said. "me neither" marie nodded. "It only took Rose a couple minutes to wolf down the eggs." "come on girls we're getting in Ton's car" Marita said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 09, 2014, 06:27:12 pm**

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"You will... if you know what's good for you." Don Stracci replied, then let a smile crease over his features now. "It was a pleasure hosting you. I hope you drop by again... any friend of the family, as they say." the older ferret said, taking Axel's hand now and shaking it firmly.

Tony approached his father afterward, smiling shyly. "Well dad... it's good to be back... truly, it is. Sorry we couldn't stay the night..."

"Hey... don't fall asleep at the wheel, OK?" his dad answered, pulling his arm now and dragging him in for a hug. Tony's eyes widened... it wasn't every day his father just hugged him, after all. He reached up, and tentatively hugged his father back. "Hey... whatever happens out there... you're my son and... I'd hate to see anything happen to you... anything." he stated.

"Yeah... I know dad... I won't... do what I did again. I'll come back... I promise."

"When you do... you'll be my underboss... I mean that." his father said.

"Really? Your... underboss? You mean that?" Tony asked, pulling back a bit.

"Hey, only if you do a good job." his father winked. "Now go... do your thing." he nodded in the direction Axel was going.

"Sure dad... take care of yourself, OK? And... I love ya, pops."

"Mm-hm." Don Stracci nodded, smiling. "Love ya too. Get going." he said again, releasing his son now.

Tony backed away, taking a good look at his father before he turned and led Axel and Lily to the garage. Flipping on the lights, he watched as they bathed the polished auto bodies in their glow. "OK... let's see..." Tony retrieved the Berline's keys, and headed for the right car (<http://www.supercars.net/gallery/119513/2482/950837.jpg>). It was a big dark blue 1936 Pierce-Arrow Berline with a Pierce-Arrow Travelodge trailer hooked up to the back. It sported a powerful V-12 engine that was the best in its day, and still stood the test of time even in 2037, though of course, his father had modded the drive shaft to produce more speed, and gave it a few more combat resistant features as well...

"OK..." he opened up the door of the trailer, which was very spacious and luxurious ([http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2461/3536933772\\_74dc1d10b4.jpg](http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2461/3536933772_74dc1d10b4.jpg)) inside (<http://oldtrailer.com/Images/1937-pierce-arrow-travelodge-904.jpg>). "Here it is. Pierce-Arrow

came up with the idea to design this trailer as something to try and boost sales during the Depression... anyway... she can stay in here rather comfortably without anyone knowing. You... gonna ride back here with her, or up front?" he asked, holding the door open for Lily. "I figure we'll swing by the front of the house, pick up the guns and the others, and get going."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 09, 2014, 09:15:58 pm**

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Lily allowed herself to be led to the garage. She looked nervously at the cars; they looked clean, but she smelled age and blood on all of them.

She was still preoccupied with the second conscience in her mind. She was probing it carefully, trying to figure out what it was. Since the pain outburst, it was lying dormant, recovering.

*What are you?* she asked cautiously. *Are you okay?...Can we work together?*

It ignored her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **StarfallRaptor** on **February 10, 2014, 01:18:51 am**

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Inside the Stracci manor, Adrian's broken body convulsed as it finally succumbed to the injuries it had sustained over the past few hours. As he flatlined, he managed the strength to grab one of the doctors trying to save him and pull the man close to him.

"T-tell...Emilena...tell her I...love her..."

He choked out, then, as his hand went limp, he managed the ghost of a smile as a single tear rolled down his face. He would later be buried in an unmarked grave, without ceremony or mourners, just another casualty of the city that he had fought for.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 10, 2014, 02:29:30 am**

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(The Heights)

Soren finished up washing the dishes. "All right, ready to roll?"

Anne wiped down the dining room table and then wiped her muzzle with the same rag. "Let's do this!"

Soren and Anne made their way to the front of the house. Along the way, they stopped by Don Stracci's office. "Don Stracci," Soren said. "I must thank you for your hospitality and help."

"I thank you for your hospitality, Don Stracci," Anne said. "Now if you'll excuse us, the Purifiers have got a date with pain."

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron finished off his catfish hash and black coffee. He looked at Marcus. "Looks like one silicon slut's out of the picture."

He tossed a newspaper to the Doberman. The headline read "Patrick Anderson, Cybernetics Magnate Shot!"

"Anyways, what about our latest assignment? We were supposed to steal some shit from an electronics factory or something."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 10, 2014, 05:01:13 am**

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Nairda nodded, clenching his fist.

"The Purifiers will have to pay for what they've done~" He mused wryly, steely-eyed and resolute in his resolve. He followed the rest of the team, chuckling softly to himself...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 10, 2014, 05:32:40 am**

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"I'll stay back here with her," Axel said, helping Lily up the step that lead to the inside of the trailer. "I don't suppose there's any radios on this thing, are there? Might not be a bad idea to have a way of communicating if we're going to come up with a plan, or if... you know, something happens." Lowering his voice, he inclined his head towards Lily. Stepping up, he joined her inside the Pierce-Arrow.

Looking around, he had to admit it was pretty comfortable. There was even a microwave hooked up on the counter with some packets of instant snacks they could use with it. To the left was a small table flanked on both sides by comfy looking seats. He walked with her over to one and helped ease her down into it, noting that she still looked like she was in some discomfort.

"Hey, you haven't eaten for a while. You hungry?" Axel asked, giving her a smile and turning to the microwave. He rifled through the cupboards above it and pulled out some of the packets. "There's macaroni cheese or..." He shifted through them and hummed. "More macaroni cheese."

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Marcus shot a hand out and caught the newspaper, still hunched over the bench at his usual spot in the corner of the breakroom. He held it up and read the headline, then grunted, nodding, though his face didn't display any pleasure. "It was a long time coming."

He raised his eyes to Aaron. "Right. Four 18-G12VX Amplifiers. The closest factory's Pelvanida, so I say that's our target. The amplifiers aren't exactly precious, so they shouldn't be too hard to acquire. Rhaegson wants this job to be quick, in and out, so a small team's better. If you and me go, we can be there and back in an hour."

-----

Rhaegson leaned back in his chair, the phone balanced on his stomach as he dialed. Halfway through, the computer screen flickered and the image came back on, displaying the files he'd been sifting through when the power had been cut. "About fuckin' time! Thank you!" Rhaegson shouted through his door, hearing his voice echo, his sarcasm traveling the halls.

On the other end of the line, there was the sound of the phone being picked up. "Hey, Lupis! Big Bad!" he exclaimed, his voice dripping with insincere amiability. "I have my guys heading down to pick up the last few... ingredients. They won't be long." Blowing out a puff of smoke, Rhaegson's voice suddenly dropped lower, hardening. "How are things going on your end?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 10, 2014, 11:46:57 am**

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"Oh yeah, let me explain a few things." Tony said, stepping into the trailer now with Axel. "First off..." He went around closing all the blinds over the windows. "Just in case, right? Don't want anyone taking a peek inside and glimpsing a psionic creature after all. Now then... this is what the rich in the 30s would've called a 'land yacht.' Towing a trailer around was a big thing

then, and you've got some pretty nice amenities in here. Only 450 of these were produced, but they're equipped with hydraulic brakes, a dining area, ice box, two stoves..." he held up two claws here. "One for cooking, the other for heating the trailer, a water tank for the sinks, and fold-out beds." He pointed everything out, motioned to the comfortable couches to indicate they could fold out into beds. "You also have a radio..." He tapped above his head onto the finely polished wood ceiling of the trailer to indicate a black speaker and radio knobs below it. "The bathroom is through the door with the mirror on it." he gestured to said door now.

"And yes, my dad installed a communicator that links you directly to the Berline." He pressed the call button on a wall-mounted speaker to demonstrate. "Just buzz me and we can talk back and forth. So yeah! This is your new luxury land yacht." he chuckled, letting the rat take it all in. "Pierce-Arrow really spared no expense at making sure their customers got their money's worth. This trailer in fact cost about the same as a nice car back in the 30s. So enjoy it! It'll be a good way to move Lily around the city, and can really help fit our entire group too if we run out of room in the Berline."

He stepped out now, closed the door, and headed around to the front of the car. Getting in, he started up the big V-12, listening to it roar to life and echo around the garage. He revved it a few times for the sheer hell of it, and then threw it into gear, pulling carefully out of the row and into the center lane. The Pierce-Arrow Berline was a rakish looking beauty with four sets of headlights curving out of the front fenders in typical Pierce-Arrow fashion.

Driving slowly down the middle lane until he reached the heavy steel door, he waited for it to open before driving out and pulling onto the main driveway. Rolling around to the front of the house, Tony honked the horn for the others to join him. "Your limousine is here!" He shouted out the rolled down window, grinning at them.

Inside the house, Don Stracci warmly shook Soren's hand. "My pleasure, all right? We'll get on reconstructing your workshop at some point. I promise." he said. He then accompanied them out onto the the front portico of his house. Max was there, with metal crates containing their old weapons, and the new ones they had selected.

"Just do me a favor and put the weapons in the trunk and the trailer!" Tony called, popping the Berline's trunk for them. "Carry what you want, and stow the rest! Also, I'm gonna need someone up front with me to direct me to the compound!" He gave his dad a small wave, and his father nodded, smiled slightly, and waved back.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 10, 2014, 01:54:12 pm**

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"I can direct you..." Nairda suggested darkly, striding up to the luxury vehicle and riding shotgun. "I've had...an unfortunate history with the Purifiers..." The look on his face betrayed his repressed sorrows from prior encounters with Marcus, his sworn arch-nemesis.

Lily smiled back at Axel and nodded her head. She'd quickly grown to like the cramped space and the darkness of the car interior; as an environment it was far easier to watch all exits and to know just how defensible it was from attack. She couldn't stop her new hyper-cautious prey senses that channeled through her, but she could assuage them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 11, 2014, 01:02:57 am**

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Marita, Mair and Rose climbed into the back seat all three holding onto thier possessions. ': i'll be working on finding a floor plan for the compound Lupis is in " Marita said, pulling out her computer. '; since this kind of stuff isnt easy to get it, it will likely involve some hacking..and coming up with plausible stores and covers should we try to enter the compound..delivering a shipment of army cellphones wont cut it.. 'she said to Tony.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 11, 2014, 01:33:52 am**

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"No troubles whatsoever," Lupis said grimly, not even bothering to sound truthful. He hadn't left his office, and was sitting in the exact same position Exstasis has left him. "I'm trying something...unorthodox in order to obtain our last missing ingredient."

He sat back. "Jesus, when's the last time either of us slept?" He and Rhaegson were both aware that they secretly bugged each others office; it was an odd sort of mutual trust that both followed. At this point, they could even joke about it openly. "Even if it doesn't work, it's got a good chance of teaching me *something* new. At the very least, according to Exstasis' report, they're reached the last known location without getting immediately killed. So we'll just have to wait and see."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 11, 2014, 05:26:22 am**

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"Alright. Thanks Tony," Axel grinned at the ferret as he stepped out, then turned back to the microwave. "Okay then, one healthy and nutritional breakfast coming up..." Emptying the packet into one of the bowls next to the machine, he tossed it in and closed the door, feeling the trailer shift beneath him as Tony pulled out of the garage. It was one of the expensive new makes that could cook food extra fast; after just a few rotations there was a *beep* and the door snapped open. Axel took it out and started fishing through the drawers, looking for a fork. Finding one, he walked over and set it on the table in front of Lily. "Here you go. Be careful, it's hot."

He took a seat opposite her and tried to give a reassuring smile. "Not bad, huh? I could get used to this..." Outside, he could hear shouting as they prepared to leave. After a few moments of silence, Axel met Lily's eyes. "What happened with Emilena... when she disappeared... That was you, wasn't it?" He swallowed. "Do you... think there's any way you can control it?"

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"That we will, my friend. That we will," Rhaegson drawled. "You know, I never got why you keep using Exstasis. That moron couldn't find his own ass with a map and a GPS tracker. Still, I'll leave it in your capable mitts."

He bent forwards to tap off the end of his cigarette, then took another drag and let loose a series of hacking coughs. "Jesus, these things are gonna kill me." He sighed. "We are *so close*. We can't screw up now."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 11, 2014, 11:46:32 am**

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Lupis nodded sagely. "He used to be one of our best. He was the top dog in our partnership; the brass would give him any assignment, no matter how impossible, with his track record. Guess that sort of thing catches up with you."

He was in a pensive mood now. Clearing his throat, he shook his head to wake up and got to his feet. "I'm taking a 2-hour nap. If I don't wake up, beep whatever that infrared scanner is you installed in my Shakespeare bust."

He paused. "Glad your projects are wrapping up Rhaegson. Productivity will kick back up once I can stop focusing single-handedly on this one thorn. And we're otherwise ahead of schedule. I was thinking we should bump your public appearance forward to, say, tomorrow, to take advantage of the recent press from the Andersen murder. If you've already written the script and everything. What do you think?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 11, 2014, 03:46:24 pm**

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Rhaegon scowled, his dark eyes narrowing. "What, I'm your fuckin' alarm clock now?" he grumbled. "Whatever. Not like I have anything better to do, right?"

When Lupis mentioned Anderson's murder, he grinned broadly. "I thought taking him out would get attention. Fine, tomorrow sounds good. I always did want to be on TV." Brushing the hair out of his eyes, he leaned forwards and put the main dialing body of the phone back on the desk. "Well, I won't keep you any longer. You're gonna need your beauty sleep for what comes next, right? Oh, and try to keep the snoring down - you can't even imagine how much noise the *other* bug picks up."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 11, 2014, 05:28:31 pm**

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Lily smiled softly at Axel, then daintily took the silverware in her slender hands and brought forkfuls of pasta to her mouth. She noted that her taste buds seemed relatively unaffected, which was a relief considering she'd missed the luxurious dinner.

Once she had replenished her strength, she'd try and connect with her parasite again.

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"Don't worry," Lupis rubbed his eyelids. "I highly doubt two hours of uninterrupted time will pass before something urgent requires my attention."

He made to end the call. "You stay healthy Rhaegson. You've fulfilled your end of the bargain perfectly. I swear I'll finish mine, once I get a single goddamn break."

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Nairda filed into the vehicle. "We'll be taking a left once we leave the forest~,," he informed Tony brightly. "Hey...you know you're really cute...right?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 11, 2014, 06:48:57 pm**

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Tony waited for the hardware to be loaded up, both in the trunk and some in the trailer, then he also waited for either Soren or Anne to get into the Berline (the other one would have to ride in the trailer as there was only room for six in the limousine), and he looked in the rear view mirror at Marita. "Oh there's no way I'm driving this car into the compound. We'll park nearby and figure out a plan from there." the ferret commented.

As Nairda gave him a compliment, Tony's brow furrowed, and he frowned. "Thanks, but I'm not interested, nor do I swing that way." he murmured, throwing the car into gear now and taking it down the driveway as he waved to his father one last time, his dad standing on the portico and watching them go. "I would also assume I would have to get onto the Garden Parkway once we leave the road to the Heights." he commented, honking as he pulled up to the exterior gate and was allowed egress.

Shifting into a higher gear as they approached the highway, Tony let the powerful V-12 do the talking and merged into traffic, accelerating up to 80 miles per hour, which the Pierce-Arrow could drive at very comfortably without shaking or feeling like it was on the verge of losing control. It gave an incredibly smooth ride. They were heading east, back toward Lanthae proper, now. The Berline certainly succeeded in turning more than a few heads as the ferret picked a lane and stuck to it, glad he was getting some envious looks.

He pushed the button on the dash linking the comm to the trailer. "Hey Axel... this is Tony, doing a radio check. You read me? We're on the Garden Parkway now, and on our way!" he exclaimed.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 12, 2014, 02:32:50 am**

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"The Purifier base is up ahead..." reported Nairda grimly. "What's the plan? If you had bothered trusting Emilena, she could have helped a lot right now..." He shook his head grimly, thinking of his love and what could have happened to her.

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The transition from black to white was jarring. Almost as soon as she found herself blinded by a flash of light, it was gone and she was lying in the soggy leaves of a forest stained with afternoon dew.

Emilena didn't move for over five minutes. Nothing made sense. Her current situation didn't make sense. She couldn't be here. She couldn't even have died; it was too sudden and Stryker was a professional torturer. Torture doesn't end suddenly.

She rolled onto her back. Leaves clung to her fur, fresh dirt stained her countless wounds. Her various sources of pain had blended together and now her whole body just ached in unison.

The wind whistled through the trees above her. It played daintily across her skin. She couldn't focus on anything else.

She *couldn't* be here. And until she had sufficient time to process that fact, she wouldn't be thinking or doing anything.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 12, 2014, 04:49:06 am**

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(En Route to Purifier Complex)

Soren sat at the trailer's table, nursing a cup of steaming hot green tea. He had his HMD on and his exoskeleton was plugged into the wall outlet.

He turned to Nairda. "Trust Emilena!?" he snapped. "Are you out of your fucking mind!? She beat me up and tried to get me thrown in jail!"

He then rubbed his temples. "Admittedly, my plan for this is 'kill every Purifier I see'."

Soren then yawned as he trudged over to the sofa, replaced his HMD in its case and lay down on the sofa. "Wake me when we get to the compound." He soon fell asleep, lulled by the engine and road noise.

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Anne reclined in the comfortable sealskin seat of the Pierce-Arrow. "So Tony," she said as she opened a cooler and retrieved a small can of beer. "What's our plan when we get there?"

She then visibly shivered as she saw a street sign flash by that read "Holmia - 2 miles". "Mind making a stop in Holmia? I gotta get my fix," the mare said. Holmia was a rather nice commercial district that was also home to a large open air market that sold everything from drugs to weapons to illegal augments.

(Purifier Compound)

"Might as well," Aaron said. He then cracked his knuckles. "How should we do this? We can't break into Pelvanida in broad daylight!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 12, 2014, 06:23:51 am**

Axel watched the human walk over to the sofa. "Alright Soren, no problem." Tony's voice issued from the speaker, and he craned his neck, reaching over and pressing the button next to it. "Axel here, I'm reading you loud and clear! Hey, this thing's pretty nice - you might have to pry me out of here with a crowbar..."

His voice grew more serious as he looked around at some of the crates that had been loaded into the trailer. "Are we, ah... are we working on getting a map of this place? Just walking in probably isn't a good idea... even for a super soldier like me." He paused. "Uh... Over?"

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Marcus eyed the german shepherd. "No, we can't just break in alone. But there *is* someone who can help us. We've had... dealings with someone who works there. Mr. Altyn's shift starts soon. I'm sure he can be persuaded to let us in."

-----

Rhaegson laughed, a harsh, unpleasant sound. "I could almost believe you're starting to care about me, Lupis. *Almost*." He rolled his eyes. "And make sure you do your part. I'm all excited now, and you know I hate being disappointed." Rhaegson unceremoniously dropped the phone onto the cradle.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 12, 2014, 11:54:35 am**

"She was leading us to an empty spot in the woods where there was nothing located. Back where I come from, that's what we call a trap. She had clearly been proven to be one of Agent Lupis's stooges." Tony shook his head here. "Trusting her just wasn't an option."

He noted Anne requested they make a stop at Holmia, that rather bustling and upscale commercial district which also boasted the open-air market. She needed her fix. Err... right. "Uh... I guess so, provided we don't stop too long." Tony stated. He radioed back to Axel now. "Well yeah... I think Marita is working on getting us a map of that place. It shouldn't be impossible, given a digital copy has to exist somewhere I would imagine, and I highly doubt they've taken all the precautions to protect their place that my dad has, nor would they have the know-how or financial capability to do so." he cracked, smiling to himself. "Sure it'll be like walking into a military base... but a base we've got foreknowledge about ahead of time. Hey... you think I should try calling them?" he asked now. "I used to know them, after all... could be a cover we could use."

He took the exit for Holmia, driving down the off-ramp and pulling onto a wide street with brightly lit buildings on either side. He roughly knew the way to the open-air market, and took a right onto another thoroughfare, heading in the direction of the bazaar. He located an extra wide parking spot on the street about a block away from the market, and eased the car to a stop. Fortunately, thanks to the trailer having its own brakes, the ride would be smooth for them in the back as well. Killing the headlights, the ferret turned to Anne, now. "OK... just hurry back. I know this is a relatively safer part of town, but I think we still have to keep moving, all the same." he stated.

He rested his head against his paw (his elbow in turn resting on the Pierce-Arrow's driver's

side window), and radioed back to Axel. "We're stopping at Holmia for a bit... Anne needs... her 'fix.'" he informed them. "We'll be rolling again shortly."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 12, 2014, 01:19:48 pm**

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Axel's voice crackled over Tony's radio. "What? What do you mean..." The was a pause. "Oh. Is now a good time? Can't she, like, wait or something?"

In the trailer, Axel was looking around nervously at the blinded windows. He leaned closer to the speaker. "Well... fine, but maybe make sure she hurries it up? It's just, you know... we're not exactly inconspicuous here, and we don't want anyone trying to get a look in." Anxiously, he tightened the blinds of the window next to him and sat back down at the table. The light sound of Soren's snoring drifted across from the sofa on the other side of the trailer.

"Looks like we'll be waiting here for a second while Anne, ah... looks for something," he told Lily. His eyes grew concerned. "How are you feeling? Any... any better?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 12, 2014, 05:48:00 pm**

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Lily smiled softly and put her hand on his shoulder. It was really remarkable that she'd found someone who could possibly care about her despite her condition.

But she had something she had to do. *Hello?* she thought tentatively, directing the thought at the conscience within. *Are you okay?...Can you respond?*

It stirred. Curiously poked back. It didn't seem that dangerous. *Hi....* Lily continued. *Can you talk...err...think back to me? Who are you?*

It was very sudden. In a millisecond Lily felt the conscience strike out, leaping out of dormancy and making a play for control of her body. The arm on Axel's cheek spasmed as a foreign body attempted to strike out at the rat invading its personal space.

Lily gasped and refocused with panicked energy. Clenching her fist, she locked her joints and gritted her teeth, forcing the parasite back into dormancy. In less than a second it was over. But she remained spooked for several minutes.

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"You just don't understand her~" Nairda shook his head sadly. "I wish I could understand her, but the female mind is a feisty and burlesque thing...But she knows more about what's going on than anyone else here. And how do you know there was nothing out there? We cannot comprehend the spirit realm. This curse on Lily is clearly something above the likes of man..."

He gritted his teeth when he saw Homia. "I have many enemies in Holmia. A life like mine tends to attract undesired attention...I will assist you in your reconnaissance, for your own protection, madam~" he offered charmingly. "I confess to being something of an aficionado for the cloudy analgesics myself. If you're ever interested, we could indulge together..."

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Lupis was not one to waste time. Upon the phone call ending, he immediately set the room's security system to a state of high alert and retired to a Spartan cot with a single simple cloth blanket. Using a rigid form of mental training, he could immediately lapse into a dreamless deep semi-consciousness that refreshes the mind at a rate double that of regular sleep.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 12, 2014, 07:11:43 pm**

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Anne scowled. "I don't know you very well. I personally prefer nootropics and the classic marijuana."

She got out of the car and drank in the heady scent of Holmia Square. Surprisingly upscale bars, stores and restaurants lined the area.

The mare immediately made a beeline for the florist named Corso Flowers.

"*Hola, senorita!*" the shopkeeper called as Anne entered. His voice carried a distinct of Canary Islands accent. The shopkeeper in question was a huge and muscular Presa Canario wearing an apron with several pruning shears and other florist's tools in the pockets.

"*Hola!*" Anne replied. Her lips peeled back in the distinct Flehmen response of Equines when the faint scent of marijuana hit her. She chewed her lip as she pondered what to buy.

The big canine chuckled. "No rush." He got to work preparing a floral arrangement that someone had called in for a funeral.

"Mr. Garc'a Mart'nez," Anne said. "I'd like theó"

"Certainly, Ms. Phoe."

Anne shuddered. "Only cops call me that."

The Presa Canario laughed. "Then don't call 'Mr.'. I'm not old enough for that."

Anne facepalmed. "All right, Joaqu'n. You got two 'Get Better' wreaths?"

Joaqu'n reached under the counter and flipped a sequence of switches. Two plastic bottles of 'plant food' emerged from the small dumbwaiter under the counter. He passed them over to the mare who handed him a credit chit (the one she had gotten a while back by hocking some stolen goods).

She placed the drugs into her pocket and exited. "*Buenas dias!*"

Joaqu'n smiled and returned the goodbye. He sniffed the air and sighed. He needed to clean out the water pool for his hydroponic flowers.

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Anne returned to the car with her bag of drugs. She smiled as she found that Joaqu'n threw in a complementary pack of rolling papers, a lighter and two tablets of moziafil (illegally diverted from a factory and thus the government hadn't had a chance to levy its 25% drug tax yet). Enough marijuana to last her for a few weeks, all for 900 creds.

"Anyone mind if I roll a joint and light up?" she asked as she grabbed one of the 'plant food' bottles.

(OOO - A Presa Canario is a large dog from the Canary Islands.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 13, 2014, 01:38:48 am**

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"It's all right... we won't be too long... plus, this district is fairly safe." Tony replied to Axel's concerns. "You just relax back there... this car does NOT stick out... trust me." he chuckled, looking around at all the contemporary limos and hot rods hovering and cruising down the street around them. "My dad sometimes shops down here in fact."

Sure enough, it wasn't long before Anne returned, and Tony threw the car back into gear again. Too bad they didn't have time to shop... Tony actually liked Holmia. "All right! Let's get moving!" he said, cruising up to the traffic light and popping a U-turn to get back onto the highway. "Ahhhh no! Sorry!" Tony quickly replied to Anne. "My dad would kill me if he smelled smoke in here! He's got that whole you know... anti-drug thing going. Best wait till we stop." he suggested, taking the left down the main street that led back onto the highway.

"Yeah well... I think we understood her just fine!" Tony mumbled back, accelerating once he reached the on-ramp and merging back into traffic. He brought the Pierce-Arrow up to speed again, and shook his head. "Anyway... we're heading east so... is it off this highway, or do I take another one?" he inquired.

He buzzed Axel again. "So Axel... you want me to ring Marcus? I think I have his number. Maybe I could I dunno... use that to try and get you guys inside?" he asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 13, 2014, 02:56:08 pm**

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Axel flinched slightly as Lily's fist clenched and a panicked expression flashed across her face. The movement scraped her claws across his cheek, though not deeply enough to draw blood. After a moment of shocked silence, he spoke up nervously, seeing how worried she looked. "Hey, it's... it's okay. We'll... just be careful about touching each other. I'll..." He was about to say more, but the sound of the car door slamming shut, as loud as a gunshot in the silence of the trailer, interrupted him. Axel felt the weight of the trailer shift as Tony pulled away. Slowly and cautiously, he reached over and touched her hand lightly. "We're going to get you back to normal. Don't worry."

Soon after, the sound of Tony's voice addressing him turned his head. "Marcus? Who's that? One of your Purifier... friends?" He considered. "Uh... I guess that could work. It's not like we can just go in guns blazing... And we don't want to risk Lupis running if he find out a group broke in looking for him. What if... you said we were your prisoners? Would that get us in?" Axel asked, not knowing how well organised the base would be.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 13, 2014, 04:17:53 pm**

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Aaron nodded. "Don't know him but whatever helps."

He then pulled the car off into the visitor parking lot. Pelvanida had an exhibit hall that was open to the public and consequently, it was a bit of a tourist attraction.

At the same time, Mr. Altyn's 2008 Tesla Roadster cut through the visitor parking lot on its way into the employee parking lot.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 13, 2014, 06:14:35 pm**

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Fifteen minutes later, the chill draft was what finally convinced Emilena to stop spinning over and over everything in her head to understand what had just happened. Slowly and painfully, she got onto her hands and knees, and finally staggered to a standing position, leaning against a nearby tree.

She coughed up blood. She'd never sustained *nearly* this many injuries at one time; no doctor

would ever advise walking in her current state. But nobody would be arriving to assist her this time; she just knew it. She'd played all her cards, and that wound her up in the mafia's snuff room.

Now that she'd achieved standing up, she wanted only to lie back down. Her skull was pounding. Blood trickled down her arms, neck, and legs. She wasn't looking forward to the next time she had to hit the head. But the pain only served to remind her that she was miraculously alive.

*My life wasn't saved so that I would die out here in the forest,* she thought with determination. She tried to walk, and had to wrap her arms around the tree to stop from face-planting back into the fallen leaves. Her head swam with vertigo and she quickly vomited whatever remained in her stomach.

She compromised with gravity and assumed a kneeling position. She suspected she'd be crying if she wasn't lethally dehydrated. Everything was unbearable.

*Where would I even go?* she wondered to herself. She had nowhere. She can't even return to her apartment, Broadstreet will be watching it 24/7. She could find somewhere abandoned, maybe hide out alone in the slums...

*...I can't be alone right now,* she finally confessed to herself. In her state and her confusion, for once she needed someone to talk to, to help her recover and plan her next move. And with a sinking heart, she realized there *was* one place left for her; one couple she'd never turned to. A single household with an obligation to her that they'd never fulfilled, that she'd never visited despite learning their address within seconds of being granted access to the police databases.

The possibility of a destination was enough to get her back on her feet. One step at a time, she began the long hike to the house of Emile and Lena Kibagami.

-----  
Lily smiled reassuringly at him. She was doing a lot of that recently, but she hadn't really any other way of communicating; she hated the sounds her mouth made when she tried to talk.

She'd grown incredibly introspective recently. Having another conscience attempting to take her over at the slightest provocation will do that. If she'd been more focused on the outside world, she might have paid enough attention to realize that the others were driving towards an assault on the Purifier camp, probably the last place Lily would want to go. But for the time being she was content to trust their judgment and follow them wherever they deemed the proper next step on the road to recovery.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 13, 2014, 06:55:32 pm**

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Marcus inclined his head towards the Tesla as it crossed the parking lot in front of them. "There. That's him. Follow, but don't draw attention." The public would make things harder... but as long as the cyberneticist didn't try anything, getting through to the private section wouldn't be impossible.

A few minutes later, as the man was locking his car door, a shadow fell over him. "Altyn," Marcus rumbled as he turned around. "It's been a while. How's the hand?" He stepped closer, forcing Altyn to press himself against his car. A quick glance around told him nobody was looking. Turning his gaze back to the human, he bared his teeth. "Me and my associate here need a few things... and you're our way in." He loomed over Altyn. "Don't get any ideas, or it won't just be your fingers we cut off."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 13, 2014, 07:05:36 pm**

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marita had broken into the Purifiers website and running through some data.. ' ok.. i'm starting to download a schematic of the base.. theres schematics of several Purifiers bases on here but Pelvanida is the one we want' She said.. 'it should be about 3 minutes before everything is downloaded."

is there any place we can stop to get some lunch/' Marie asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 13, 2014, 08:13:55 pm**

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Tony nodded at the rear view mirror as Marita explained a few things. "Oh wait! We aren't going to Pelvanida anymore, remember?" he asked. "Just the Purifier compound. No need to head to Pelvanida." he explained.

"Lunch? Well..." he glanced at the dashboard clock. "It's currently five in the morning... we just had breakfast." he joked, chortling. "I can get you something if you're *really* hungry though." he stated, the sun having not risen over the horizon yet. "Oh right... you might not have eaten your breakfast..." he trailed off, remembering Patrick Anderson.

"Anyway..." he responded to Axel now. "Yeah... I'm gonna try that. It's worth a shot, right?"

Tony began fiddling with a bluetooth console on the dash that his father had installed, and which was definitely not vintage. Fortunately, it was only attached to the dash, and not grafted in. Pushing a few buttons, he opened up a digital HUD that had his contacts, and began paging through them, swiping his claw upwards until Marcus Hayton appeared. Taking a deep breath, the ferret pushed the name, and then inserted a headset into his ear as he let the phone ring.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 14, 2014, 03:05:59 am**

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After god-knows-how-long of walking, Emilena managed to relate her location in the forest to a known landmark. The abandoned robotics factory loomed through the trees, the place where she was originally kidnapped after the disastrous attempt to get ahold of a Purifier. Looking back, that was probably where things started going downhill for her.

Every step was a bit harder than the last, but she took a detour to the site because she'd lost something very important there.

It took over an hour but finally she found it in the underground passages; her heirloom katana, gleaming in the moonlight from the katana-shaped hole above it. Feeling it buzz to life in her hand stirred something in her heart; finally, there was something in her life she could count on.

She continued her journey.

-----

At Tony's words, Nairda cockily wiped his long strands of thin hair out of his eyes and grinned at the notion of finally getting his long-overdo vengeance on Marcus. "That contemptuous charlatan will finally breathe his last on this day...I look forward to the opportunity to watch the life drain from his eyes while I stand triumphantly over his still corpse...this'll be a piece of cake~" he chuckled...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 14, 2014, 09:18:35 am**

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only 5 in the morning? geez i've really lost track of time' Marie said shaking her head.' perhaps you and Rose should get some sleep. i'll wake you if Tony stiops somewhere for breakfast' Marita said. ' she had stopped downloading pelvanida i' she said to tony as he put on his heasddphones. ' so we'll need id to get in..nformation and moved to downloading purifier information. ' the bases track who goes in and out.' she said. ' for security purposes. id is required.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 14, 2014, 02:03:47 pm**

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A beeping in his jacket pocket interrupted Marcus. Seizing Altyn's shirt, he shoved him in away from his car in the direction of Pelvanida's staff entrance. "Get us into the storage area. We need 18-G12VX amplifiers. If someone tries to stop us, I'm sure you can think of something. *Move.*" He turned and gestured to Aaron. "Stay close to him."

Lagging behind, Marcus pulled his cell phone out of his pocket and flicked it open. His brow furrowed at the name blinking on the screen. *He's still alive?* He hit the answer button. "Tony? Where the hell are you? Are you hurt?"

-----

Axel drummed his fingers on the tabletop, trying not to think about the knife edge the group was balancing on. Though he was trying to keep optimistic, the fact that they were dealing with some very dangerous people kept twisting his stomach in knots. *If we screw this up...* Axel shook his head to try to rid himself of the doubts. *We won't. We can't.*

After a while, he looked across at Soren, who was still snoring, and smiled at Lily. "Sounds like a broken lawnmower." Then he snapped his fingers and jumped up. "Hey, I just had an idea! I know talking isn't that... easy for you right now, but..." He started opening the cupboards and drawers, rifling through their contents. Eventually, he whooped triumphantly and pulled a slightly worn notepad out from one of the drawers, with a pencil hooked through the wire binding. Turning back to Lily, he passed them across and sat back down. "Here. Should make your life a little easier. Not that there's anything wrong with your miming..." he grinned.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 14, 2014, 04:08:55 pm**

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Tony actually felt his heart stop for a moment when Marcus answered. He was there! OK... focus... calm... do this. He steeled himself, gripping the wheel of the Pierce-Arrow tightly for strength. He gritted his teeth, then responded.

"Hey! Marcus! How ya been?" Tony asked, grinning. *Smiles can be heard.* "No, I'm fine! In fact, I got some presents for ya! Where are you now? Back at base? I can meet you there if you aren't there already." the ferret offered, letting the optimism drip from his voice. "It's just great to hear you, ya know? Thought I was a goner several times, but I pulled through."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 14, 2014, 07:23:15 pm**

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"No, I'm not at base," Marcus muttered, frowning. "We'll be back soon. What are you talking about?" He picked up his pace, catching up to Aaron and Altyn and looking around to make sure they still hadn't attracted any attention. Still in the clear.

He turned his attention back to the call. "What do you have? The last time I saw you, we were under heavy fire..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 15, 2014, 02:38:51 am**

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Mr. Altyn gulped as the two burly canines approached him.

Aaron glared at Altyn. "Move," he growled.

"Give me a moment!" he snapped as he got his keys and work materials.

Aaron raised a fist to punch him, but he thought better of it. He looked around and noticed that the parking lot was pretty quiet.

The Human locked his car and looked at the two. "Okay, I can pass you off as guests or even new employees. But don't make a scene or else your asses will be on the line."

-----

Kojuuro sighed as he drank another bottle of sake at Club Tyrell. His girlfriend from a one-night stand from a while back, was on the barstool next to the Wolf and busy flirting with him. The images from his previous military service had surfaced with a vengeance and he turned back into his preferred drug – hard liquor.

"Man," the Gypsy Vanner stallion said as he wiped down the bartop. "It's five in the fucking morning and this is like your third bottle. Isn't that enough?"

"Gimme my fucking liquor!" Kojuuro snapped. His ears splayed back as the Pomeranian bitch licked him on the cheek. He turned to the woman. "Sorry about that."

"S cool. 'S cool," he said. "Here you go." The stallion passed another bottle of sake to him."

A hulking Brown Bear wearing a lab coat walked in. On his lab coat, a badge reading "Bytis Industrial Electronics – Piotr Kozlov" could be seen.

"Ah, Kozlov, how was work?" the bartender asked.

Kozlov sighed. "I had argument with coworker. I need drink! Get me cosmopolitan!" he ordered in his thick Russian accent.

The bartender mixed the cocktail and passed it to the Brown Bear. He sighed as he looked around the bar. Mostly empty and frankly put, kinda gross with thin layer of grease covering the floors and furnishings. A TV playing footage of some low grav hockey game blared from the corner.

As he looked around the bar, he accidentally laid eyes on the Pomeranian bitch. Kojuuro immediately turned to the Brown Bear. "Hey asshole! Why are you looking at my girl!?"

Kozlov's eye twitched. "I was not looking at woman. I was looking at TV. She was in way."

Kojuuro got up from his seat and went over to Kozlov and shoved him. Thanks to his enhanced strength, the shove knocked the hulking Bear over.

"Sweetie, Ió" the Pomeranian began.

"Don't worry, I got this." Kojuuro assumed a fighting stance.

"You make big mistake!" Kozlov boomed.

"Why? You're just a nerd! I on the other hand, amó"

Kojuuro was unable to finish his sentence as Kozlov belted him across the face with the

barstool he had ripped out of the floor. Kojuuro grunted as he slammed into a wall containing some of the bar's decorations. "So that's how it's gonna be..." He cracked his neck and howled to psyche himself up.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 15, 2014, 02:43:45 am**

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"Yeah, we were..." Tony agreed, smiling to himself. "I've got them, Marcus. The ones giving us so much trouble at the factory... the ones putting us under heavy fire. I don't have... all of them." he said now. "But I've got a few. Unfortunately I don't have the one you were after. But... maybe her friends will suffice? If she hears we have them... you never know what could happen." Tony said suggestively.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 15, 2014, 03:32:19 am**

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Lily smiled and wrote *Thanks*. She paused and kept writing.

*Thanks for doing all this for me. Standing up for me even now.*

She was never a very eloquent writer. She couldn't think of what else to say at the moment. Pushing the macaroni bowl away, she hugged Axel and tried to let him understand just how much his support meant to her.

Nearby, Nairda saw them and suddenly put the pieces together. "Huh. I always thought Kojurro would be a better fit for her..." he muttered to himself, watching them with barely-hidden voyeuristic pleasure.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 15, 2014, 06:35:55 am**

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Axel suddenly felt a slight chill creep up his spine, as though they were being spied on... but that was probably just the nerves of the situation.

He hugged her back and kissed her lightly on the cheek, feeling the roughness of her skin under his lips. When they broke apart, he gave her a dumb grin. "Well, I guess I did promise..." Axel held her hand. "Someday, we'll be looking back on this and... well, probably having nightmares. But it'll be over, and we'll be looking back on it. That's what matters."

-----

"You have them?" Something in the ferret's upbeat tone set him ill at ease... but the kid had always been cocky. *And he is one of us. Maybe he's actually done something to back up his words this time...* "Alright. We'll talk about how you managed it later." *Especially if Naidra was one of his prisoners...* "Bring them. We'll be back soon."

He snapped the cell phone shut and moved to join Aaron and Altyn. "Move it," Marcus grunted, shoving the human forwards. "I want this done quickly." He had a bad feeling... but he couldn't think of a reason why Tony would betray them. He knew what happened to traitors.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 15, 2014, 05:56:46 pm**

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"Will do! I'll see ya soon!" Tony responded right before Marcus hung up. Pulling the ear bud out of his ear, he grinned. "Well, that went well!" He turned the Pierce-Arrow onto another highway

that led to the Purifiers' base. He remembered it from here, and no longer needed directions.

Pushing the button to the trailer's comm, he began speaking to Axel. "Hey Axel! I think they bought it! We're about 20 minutes away I'd say, in current traffic. So I figure we'll leave the car and trailer a ways away from the base, and I bring you in on foot. Maybe a block or two away? This way, we can keep Lily out of it, and make it seem like you're more my prisoners than my guests. Now they've got some security measures in place, but I think we could still manage to smuggle some guns in all the same, or better yet, take what they have at the base. Maybe Marita could even take a few of their defense systems offline too in a timed fashion before we get there?" he suggested.

"At any rate, I might have to place binders on your wrists to make this look legit." he warned him. "When we get there, I'm gonna try and find out where Lupis is, and we'll make our way to him after I either conveniently forget to lead you to your cells, or we simply overpower the guys taking you to your cells. Sound good?" he asked.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 15, 2014, 06:46:03 pm**

Don;t worry Tony I'll take care of the defenses. but be warned, even if i do, they have backup controls which go online in a matter of minutes after they go down . so our window for action is very small' Marita warned.

' you will have to do this very quickly, if we want a real shot at him.. figure 2-3 minutes at most' She added.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 15, 2014, 07:12:55 pm**

Nairda stirred at Tony's words. "We're leaving Lily behind?" He looked at Axel, wide-eyed. "Are you to leave the sight of your true love?"

He grabbed Axel's arm with pleading vigor. "I sure wish I'd never let my true love alone...for my folly i have been punished by *never* seeing her again..."

His eyes bored into Axel's soul. "Do not make the same mistake that keeps me up in slumberless nights..."

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Many miles away, a young fox was tending to his bioluminescent algae fields outside a respectable, if remote, adobe farmhouse. His particular crop was used as a garnish for specialty dinners, and one of the few nocturnal bloomers. As such it required nighttime tending.

Because of the night, and the general lack of visitors to such a distant place from the city, he didn't see the figure staggering towards him until it was less than fifteen feet away.

In a split second he'd pulled a Kriss Vector SMG off his back and had it readied at the intruder. "Don't move!" he yelled, voice commanding authority. "Identify yourself!"

The figure collapsed. Inching forward cautiously, the fox kept his safety cocked and his muscles tense, ready for an ambush. You could never be too careful...

The light flicked on in his farmhouse and a young female dashed outside, throwing on a bathrobe. She was the same age as him, and looked strikingly similar in appearance. "Emile?" she gasped, worry tinging her voice. "Who is--?"

"Stay back!" he warned her. "I'm not sure!"

Clicking a thin light on the barrel of his SMG, Emile saw an incredibly battered and bleeding

woman passed out among his crops. "I...uh...don't recognize her," he reported to Lena, who had ignored his command and was rushing forward to see. "No clothing or possessions...might be a victim of sexual assault, if I had to--"

Lena suddenly gasped; her vision had always been better than Emile's. "Honey..." she knelt down and picked up the katana. "This is..."

Emile's eyes went wide. "Let's get her inside. Quickly."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 15, 2014, 08:35:55 pm**

Axel recoiled slightly as Nairda grasped his arm, gasping in surprise. *Where did he come from?!* Looking across at Lily, he felt his mouth go dry. He desperately wanted to go with the others... as much as the thought scared him, Axel felt he *had* to help them - if he didn't, he wouldn't be able to shake the feeling that he was abandoning them. But, in his flowery, confusing way of talking, Nairda had hit the nail on the head. Leaving Lily alone, unprotected, for however long it took them to do what they had to do...

He grimaced and turned back to the speaker. "Yeah, Tony, that... that sounds like a good plan. Look, I was thinking..." He pressed closer and lowered his voice. "I... I don't know if leaving Lily alone is such a good idea. I mean, you saw what she did back when Emilena.... well, you know. If she got scared again, this trailer couldn't hold her, and if she got out into the open..." Axel swallowed. "But if I was here to keep her calm... I'm sorry Tony, I don't want you or the others to think I'm backing out, but..." he trailed off, fearing what the ferret's reply would be.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 16, 2014, 01:09:29 am**

(En route to Purifier Base)

"Okay, so what do I do?" Anne asked as she leaned back. "By the way, if it helps, I can shoot a gun. I'm not a super shooter or anything but I know enough to defend myself."

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(Pelvanida)

Mr. Altyn grunted as Marcus shoved him. "Easy!"

He then led the two to the main entrance. By now, other employees had arrived and were busy scanning their work IDs to be let in. "Ah, Mr. Altyn," the Augment Iguana said as he saw the Human.

Mr. Altyn gulped as he looked at the two thugs next to him. "Um, these two are visitors and I am taking them to my office for an introduction to cybernetics manufacturing for uh, a TV program."

The Iguana narrowed his cybernetic eyes. "Mr. Altyn, I need to have a word with you."

The two Canines didn't know it but the Iguana had implants that allowed him to discern subtle physiological changes that signaled fear.

Mr. Alytn nodded and followed the guard.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 16, 2014, 01:50:04 pm**

Tony listened to Axel's voice, and could detect the rat's feelings even without being able to see him. "Hey... that's fine." he said now. "We'll adapt. Don't worry. Just... be careful, OK? I'll try to park far enough away from the base that you won't be in danger but... if Lily really did do something to Emelina... yeah, it's probably a good idea to keep her calmed." the ferret admitted.

He accelerated a little bit once the lane in front of him opened up somewhat. The Pierce-Arrow was certainly providing one of the smoothest rides he could remember. "Anne... shooting is fine." Tony said, looking over at her. "OK... I think we should go with this. When I stop, I'll bring a certain number of you over to the base. I'm not sure if Soren should go or remain behind in his exoskeleton as backup for when our assault starts. We can decide that when we get there. We get shown in, and if we time things right, we can hit them when they're at their weakest in terms of having the most manpower spread out. I memorized the movements of some of their guards, and know that in the cell block, they have a gun gallery up above the cells that's caged. A guard usually patrols that but has to move between the two cell blocks. He typically spends about fifteen minutes in each one. Once we get to the cell blocks, there will be another guard on duty at the entrance. He'll frisk me, even though I'm one of them. That'll be our cue to strike. I'm gonna time it so that we show up when the second guard in the gallery is in the other cell block and can't see what's going on. As I'm being frisked, one of you will attack him from behind. and we'll overpower him."

Tony kept the speaker to the trailer on so the others could hear his plan as well. "Then, either myself or someone else will climb up to the gallery... I'm pretty thin, so maybe I should do this. Before we get there, we should fashion together a makeshift bar spreader, which is easy enough to cobble together with just a nut and some pipes. We'll use this to spread the bars, and squeeze through. Since I'm thin... I should probably be the one to do this." he reiterated. "I'll then wait for the other guard to start coming back, kick the door back on him as he opens it, and subdue him. Once subdued, I have access to all the guns kept up in the gallery and can start handing them out. With weapons secured, we'll be good to go. We have Marita disable the defense systems, make straight for Lupis, and try and capture him as quickly as possible. How's that sound?" he concluded, looking at everyone present in the car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 16, 2014, 06:02:01 pm**

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Marcus' expression hardened, his eyes narrowing. *Dammit, he could ruin everything...* Gesturing for Aaron to follow, he stalked after Altyn and the Iguana as they walked away, his long strides rapidly catching up to them.

"Is there a problem?" he rasped as he drew even. "I was told we'd be let straight through - we're already running behind schedule." The employees who'd arrived were a problem... but if the Iguana led them to a slightly more secluded area...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 16, 2014, 09:50:56 pm**

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(Pelvanida)

"Yes there is." The Iguana pointed to Mr. Altyn. "I detected that he is carrying a recording device. I will need to strip search him in private."

Mr. Altyn's mouth gaped. "What!? This is an outrage!"

"Look, I know those two coerced you into doing something. Roll with it!" he whispered, as he pulled Altyn away from the two Canines. He prayed that the TVs in the lobby and footsteps masked the whispering.

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(En route to Purifier Complex)

Soren swore as he rolled off the couch. "We there already?"

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(Club Tyrell)

By now, the rather dirty bar had attracted a fair number of local toughs – including members of a local hoverbike gang – who were watching and placing bets on the two brawlers.

"Told ya. The Augment always wins!" a female Golden Eagle said as she watched Kojuuro quite literally punt Kozlov through the men's bathroom door.

A Ferret biker twisted out of the way as a sink went flying through the air seconds later and impacted against a booth. Kozlov, labcoat torn and covered in debris, staggered out of the bathroom. He pointed at Kojuuro with a large pipe. "You dead meat!" he roared.

"Really? Who got thrown through the bathroom door?" Kojuuro smirked.

Kozlov roared and charged at the Wolf with his pipe. "Amateur." Kojuuro adroitly dodged the swing and knocked the massive Brown Bear off his feet with a swift leg sweep.

"Now where were we? Ah yes." Kojuuro put one foot on Kozlov's chest. He reached for the katana on his belt. Unfortunately for him, Kozlov threw a vicious uppercut to the Wolf's groin. Even though his claws tore through the outer layer of his pants, they didn't pierce the tough metallic bullet-resistant layer. Nevertheless, the impact was immensely painful. Kojuuro gasped slightly and flinched. That was enough for Kozlov to throw him into the soda fountain.

Kojuuro looked around for something to use as a weapon. Finding a vodka bottle, he threw it at Kozlov when he charged with his pipe in hand. The bottle broke upon impact, stunning the Bear as the liquor ran down his eyes.

Kojuuro smirked and drew his katana. The crowd cheered, knowing the stakes had been raised.

Through stinging eyes, Kozlov could see the Wolf with blade raised. His heart pounded as he realized Kojuuro was intent on *killing* him. He silently cursed for leaving his pistol at home. He groped around and found a wooden bench.

With a grunt, he ripped the bench free and hurled it at Kojuuro, who adroitly dodged it. Kozlov rubbed his eyes in an attempt to clear his vision and saw that the Wolf was getting closer.

Lacking no other recourse, he charged towards Kojuuro at a speed that belied his massive bulk. Kojuuro swung his sword, leaving a deep cut on his left arm. Before he could swing again, he was slammed into the bar top so hard that he cracked it. And his katana went flying.

Groaning in pain, Kojuuro smiled. "That all you got?"

"I give lot more." Kozlov raised both arms overhead and slammed them down on the countertop. Kojuuro rolled out of the way just as the Bear's massive fists reduced the three inch concrete surface to a pile of rubble.

(OOC - Can someone play Kojuuro for the fight against Kozlov?)

(i;ll take him)

Kojurro panted as he got to his feet, his privates still stinging from being punded here. he gazed around the room, looking for his katana, which had gone flying when he had been thrown into the tabletop, his eyes scanned the area quickly, he tried t keep away from Kozlov, who looked like he was perfectly willing to kill him. surviving the fight would require him finding his kantana before Kozlow could smash a solid bench over his head. the other bar customers were taking bets on who would win the fight and calling out " i got 25 bucks on the bear! I got 50 on the Augment! Kick his ass Kozlov!" and the like. 'This is bloodsort to these folks' Kojurro thought as he tried kkeeing away from Kozlov.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 17, 2014, 12:56:25 am**

Kozlov ripped out the minifridge that held beer and threw it at Kojuuro. He then ripped out a metal drain pipe to use as a club.

He was about to run after Kojuuro when one of the toughs broke a beer bottle over his head. That proved to be a huge mistake as Kozlov backhanded the man, fracturing every bone in his face and snapping his neck with the sheer power of the impact.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 17, 2014, 06:09:58 am**

As the Iguana pulled Altyn away, Marcus bared his teeth in frustration. This was already taking longer than it should... It didn't take a genius to work out the guard was planning something. His eyes flicking around the room, Marcus noticed a door set into the side of the lobby - a public toilet. As he looked at it, Marcus heard a flush. There was a click as the door was unlocked and an employee stepped out, wiping his hands on his trousers before wandering away. The path the Iguana was taking would lead them right past it..

*Secluded enough.* Marcus subtly moved a hand along his side, underneath his coat. "Is there anything I can do? This must be a misunderstanding," the doberman said, walking close behind the guard.

Axel turned his head at the thump as Soren landed on the floor. He grinned. "No, not yet. Tony figured we were about 20 minutes away." He glanced at the Exoskeleton that was still plugged into the wall. "That charged yet? Something tells me you'll probably need it..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 17, 2014, 06:33:06 pm**

Tony exited the highway in a less protected part of town and began driving towards the large Purifier base, which was easily visible from the main road. He pulled onto a side street and parked the Pierce-Arrow in a public spot next to the sidewalk. Bright smaller buildings flanked them, housing seedy vendors and shops. "OK... we're gonna hoof it from here on out!" Tony said, shutting the big V-12 off and taking the keys.

Stepping out onto the street, the ferret walked to the trailer and opened the door, slapping the side twice. "Hey guys! We're here!" he explained his plan to Soren now, and ran him through all the details. "So yeah... you want to stay here with your exoskeleton, or act like one of my prisoners?" he asked. "I think I'll take Nairda, Anne, and the trio, and Axel's staying here with Lily, just in case. Oh yeah! Also..." he stepped into the trailer now, and rummaged through one of the cabinets, pulling out a pipe, a nut, a wrench, and a small steel grooved rod. Shoving the rod into the pipe, he spun the nut around until it was roughly at the junction where the two met. "And voila! Ghetto bar spreader!" he exclaimed, smiling as he held it up. "I just twist the nut with this wrench, and it'll spread the two ends of this doohickey out, exerting enough

pressure to bend the bars of the gun gallery." he explained.

He also retrieved some wrist binders, as part of the upcoming charade.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 17, 2014, 06:55:27 pm**

*Emilena was in the waiting room of the don's mansion. A flash of light, and she felt a bullet plow through her brain.*

*Then she was falling, abruptly in a darkened space. Her fall ended with a splash, where the liquid ate the flesh off of her bones slowly.*

*Before she could even scream, she was falling again, her broken limbs and bullet-ridden body smashing into a splintery staircase waiting for her in the dark.*

*A second later, light stung her retinas as an electric field enveloped her. Stumbling away and attempting to clear her head, she had only a moment before a dart embedded in her forehead and she felt herself vaporizing from the inside out...*

With a jolt, Emilena sat up, inhaling sharply. As her haggard breathing returned to normal, she realized it had just been a particularly vivid nightmare. Exhaling, exhausted, she collapsed back onto her pillow.

She was halfway back asleep when she realized she had no idea where she was. Sitting up, she took note of her surroundings. She was in a simple bedroom, a warm patchwork quilt and hand-sewn cotton sheet enveloped her in a plush four-poster bed. Pictures of a happy vulpine couple dotted the warm walls, and a plate of cookies and milk sat on a self-heating tray on the bedside table.

In seconds she'd scarfed down the whole batch. Shaking to clear her head, she became aware of voices in the next room. Climbing out of bed (and only then noticing she was clad in deer-print purple pajamas) she crept to the doorway and spotted Emile and Lena Kibagami discussing in hushed tones next to a crackling fireplace.

"Do you think she knows who we are?" Lena whispered. "Should we tell her?"

"What choice do we have? You want to kick her out?" Emile responded. "She needs medical attention and rest, and she won't find that anywhere--"

Suddenly Lena spotted Emilena as she walked into the room. Both grew silent as their daughter regarded them for the first time.

Emilena spotted her sword on a drawing table. Picking it up, she held it in a defensive position.

"You don't know how long I've wanted to kill both of you..."

-----

Nairda gripped his fist, overcome with temporary passion. "It will be hard to leash my untamed fervor for the Purifiers' coming destruction...but I will maintain my poker face...for the good of the coming revolution~" he chuckled softly to himself...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 18, 2014, 05:00:52 pm**

kojurro used the unexpected assist and leap to a nearby table and sweep of the steak knives lying on it, in process sending the plates covered with steak crashing to the floor ' Hety! thats my steak dinner ' one of thigs called out ' buy yourself another one' kojurro shot back as he

held the steak knives in his hands, waiting to throw them at Kozlov. he couldn't afford to miss ' Kojurro thought to himself.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 18, 2014, 06:09:35 pm**

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Axel looked at the wrist binders that Tony pulled out with something bordering on alarm. "I, ah, won't ask what *those* are doing in here." He stood up and approached the others. "Good luck guys. Be careful... stay safe. *All* of you." He nudged Tony on the shoulder, giving a nervous smile. "You've gotta make it back so you can show off more of your dad's cars to me, right?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 21, 2014, 01:26:27 pm**

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Nairda kissed Lily's hand like a true gentleman. "Fear not, dear lady~" he comforted her. "We shall go and slay this proverbial beast, and you needn't worry a hair on your..." He ran his hand down her hair and a sizable chunk of it fell out at his touch. "...errr, a scale on your...forehead..."

He took this opportunity to leap out of the car. "I shall be back posthumously!" he called.

Lily blinked, puzzled. *Did he mean posthaste?* she wrote for Axel.

-----

Emilena shuddered weakly, looking left to right at her parents. Her father, a scrawny yet muscled man, didn't seem nervous in the slightest. His farmer's tan highlighted the grime he hadn't taken the time to wash off yet. Her mother, a lithe vulpine, looked alarmed but didn't even bother to wrap her open bathrobe around her nude form. Even while talking about Emilena, they'd appeared to have been engaged in less-than-innocent behavior.

Turning away in disgust, Emilena tossed the sword aside. "Goddammit," she seethed. "You two literally aren't worth killing! You aren't worth anything! You are two most pathetic beings I've ever met!"

She whirled around. "I don't know why I even bothered to come here! You couldn't take care of a child, you couldn't keep your genitals off each other long enough to pay for a good orphanage with your military pensions, and you couldn't find anyone but your *biological sibling* who'd even sleep with you!"

Her parents said nothing as she ranted and raved and used every insult she could think of to criticize them. Somehow, the topic slowly shifted to all the crap she'd been through in the last few days, and she told them everything. By the end, she was so weak she was on her knees, and finally when she couldn't think of anything else to say, her mother got up to help her to bed.

"Stay away from me!" Emilena snapped. "At least cinch your bathrobe first!"

Doing neither, her mother unflinchingly picked her up and carried her back to bed. She was stronger than she looked.

After that both of her parents brought her medicine and re-banded a few wounds that were opening up from her stomping around.

"Look..." Emile took a deep breath. "We're sorry. You're right. We weren't very good parents."

"As you've guessed, you were an accident," Lena couldn't meet her eye. "We were in mourning from a good friend's death, we weren't thinking clearly--"

"--But we actually did get you the best orphanage we could afford," Emile added. "And we also paid all of your fees from the Age Acceleration program and the Police Academy. We knew we weren't the kind of people who could care for a kid, so we tried to set things up so you'd be with those who could..."

"...But we recognize that wasn't what you'd expect of us, as parents," Lena chimed in.

"Could you stop finishing each other's sentences please?" Emilena cut in. "That's really unsettling."

(OOO: I got work, I'll continue this convo in my next post. For now, everyone starting posting again PLZ)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 21, 2014, 08:57:58 pm**

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Kojurro thre the first of he three knives aiming for Kolovs stomach, a smirk played across his face as the first knife hit home, and he looked around for a window or some other means of escape- stairs would be nice... still from where he was there was no windows or stairs to be found, just a few tables laid out for patrons who hadnt arrived yet..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 22, 2014, 01:07:41 am**

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(Club Tyrell)

Kozlov grunted and gasped as he saw the knife bury itself into his stomach. Luckily, his ample gut caused by his penchant for rich, fatty seal steaks and beer as well as vigorous exercise kept the knife from reaching any vitals.

The crowd roared in approval as Kojuro landed the hit.

Kozlov roared, causing everyone to back away. "Wolf!" he roared. "When I through with you! They need plastic bag to bury you!"

He ripped out one of the heavy steel tables, held it in front of him and charged at Kojuro, intending to crush him into the wall."

-----

(Purifier Compound)

Heavy footsteps signaled Soren's arrival. He stepped out of the trailer with his helmet tucked under his metal clad arm. He smiled as he flexed his exoskeleton's powerful fingers. His HMD with its blue tracking laser shone over Axel and Tony. His shotgun and the rifle were attached to his back via magnetic plates. "Let's go rip up some Purifiers!"

Anne came out of the Pierce-Arrow with an automatic rifle in hand. "So now what?"

-----

(Pelvanida)

The Iguana turned to Marcus. "This is a company affair," he said. "Now I suggest you let me do my job or I'll revoke your access to film the documentary on company property."

He then ushered Mr. Altyn into a closed, soundproof room that was indeed used for strip searches.

"Okay, Altyn. What are you hiding with those two?" he demanded.

Altyn looked around and wiped some sweat from his brow. "Those two Canines, they accosted me in the parking lot. They wanted me to go get something for them."

The Iguana nodded. "Go on."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 22, 2014, 07:36:15 am**

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Marcus stopped outside the door Altyn and the Iguana had disappeared through. From the glimpse he'd caught before the door swung shut, it looked like some form of interrogation room. *Good chance it'll be soundproofed...* He looked up and down the corridor. It was clear.

He reached back and wrapped his fingers around the grip of his revolver, keeping it under his jacket in case there were any hidden cameras in the corridor. Turning to Aaron, Marcus jerked his head towards the door. "Open it. I'll follow and take him out. We're running out of time."

-----

Axel looked at the note Lily scribbled out and snorted. "You know, I don't think even *he* knows what he's going on about... You might want to clean that hand, too."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 22, 2014, 04:08:55 pm**

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"Hey... count on it." Tony said, bringing up his paw to lightly slap Axel's arm. "We'll come back in hopefully a half hour." the ferret stated, then proceeded to slap the binders on Nairda and Anne, followed by Marita, Marie, and Rose. He took Anne's gun, grinning nervously. "Uh might want to put a clamp on that. We're sneaking our way in for the moment. I'll provide the guns once we're inside, don't worry." he held the rifle in his paws now and got them moving. "Soren... if you're gonna wear that, hang back and wait for our attack to commence. Also, wear this." he said, holding out an ear bud for him now. "I'll call that piece once I'm ready to start. All right... let's go!" he said.

His paws shook as he walked around the corner and started heading for the compound. He drew out a cigarette and jammed it in his mouth, lighting it up as they approached the base's gates. Up ahead, he could see Purifiers already starting to call out that he was returning, and with some prisoners to boot. "Hey guys!" he called, waving as they drew up towards the front gate. "I'm back!"

"Where ya been?" calmly asked a Gila monster that Tony knew as Cavanaugh. He stared suspiciously at the group, regarding each one darkly.

"Ugh... around. But I got these guys... including... Nairda!" he shoved the fox forward now, grinning. "I bet Marcus will be pleased! Where is he, anyway?"

"On an errand. Ever since that government guy's shown up, we've all been... angrier." Cavanaugh replied. "But what exactly happened to you?"

"I'll give my report to Rhaegson in person." Tony deflected the question and raised a brow. "Government? The hell do they want?"

"Who knows? Sooner he's out of here, the better." the Gila monster shrugged.

"Yeah... I actually ran into one last night... crazy fool even gave me his business card." Tony joked. "He was attacking the factory too. Agent Lupis he said his name was." Tony stated

casually.

"Lupis? Yeah that's him!" Cavanaugh exclaimed.

Tony pulled the cigarette out of his mouth and exhaled, blowing out a long puff of smoke as Cavanaugh turned around. "Fascinating. I'd like to talk to him actually... in private. Know where I can find him?" the ferret inquired.

"Yup... hold on... I gotta clear you through." Cavanaugh said, and moved to open communications with Rhaegson. "Hey... Rhaegson! Tony's back. Here with a bunch of prisoners... including Nairda. Want them brought to the cell block?" he asked.

As the Gila monster was distracted, Tony muttered to Anne in a low voice. "When we get to the cell block, I'm going to be frisked. I obviously have stuff on me that'll raise a red flag... you got arguably the heaviest hands of all of us. You think you can be the one to attack the guard from behind while he's frisking me?" he asked softly.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 22, 2014, 04:11:06 pm**

kojurro's smirked as he saw Kozlow rip out a table and charge, he crouched waiting for his moment to pounce. over the charging Kozlow and use his second knife- by plunging it into his back. in a couple seconds the moment came, and kojurrro managed to leap over the table and Kozlow and stuck his second kinfe deep into the middle of Kozlov's back. letting go of the blade, kojurro ran forward , skidding to a stop across the room from kozlov. he now had one knife left. ' Kozlov! He called out. ' this last one is going in your throat! He shouted.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 22, 2014, 04:32:38 pm**

Nairda held his hands behind him, leashed in the cruel bounds of captivity. Tears bitterly stung his cheek as he glared, defeated, at his captors. "Like all good vigilantes, I am now to die nobly for my cause..." he spoke with resonance, eyes facing the heavens. "I only hope that my death serves as motivation to others...to continue fighting..."

He was so good for a minute he convinced even himself.

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Emile broke out in a smile. "You've grown up to be such a strong young woman. We're so proud of you."

Emilena rolled her eyes.

"You did have a big influence on our lives," Lena admitted. "After Karl's death and your birth, we realized just how fragile life is. We retired from the mercenary work and lived as simple farmers on our retirement stipends."

"We were ecstatically happy," grinned Emile. "We may have had another 'accident'..."

Emilena looked incredulous. "You had a *second* child?!"

"Oh, he was feisty," Lena chuckled. "Much louder than you ever were. I used to have to blow him to get him to stop crying."

"He ended up being too much to handle, so we had to let him go too," Emile reminisced, not noticing the scandalized expression on Emilena's face from what her mother had just said. "But we'd learned from a couple of mistakes we'd made with you; he went right back into the military, trained by a Scorched Earth veteran we both knew."

Emilena put her head in her hands. "Are you incapable of taking care of your own problems?..." she murmured, depressed. "You are the worst people I've ever met..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 22, 2014, 05:59:37 pm**

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Rhaegson rubbed his eyes and leaned back in his chair, balancing it on two legs. "Tony... Tony... Who the hell's Tony again?" he muttered. After a second, he let his hand fall away. "That's the skinny ferret, right? The kid? I thought he was missing? How the hell did he manage to bring back prisoners? Especially Nairda, that fruity bastard..."

He sighed, his cigarette trembling out of the corner of his mouth. Killing them all straight away *would* be easier... but Nairda had earned a slower death, and if he was handing out torture, he didn't want to deny the others their turn. Still, something didn't sit right. "Alright, let them through. But make sure his prisoners are actually tied up. Do that where you are, out front, where everyone else can see." Rhaegson cleared his throat and rubbed a hand over his jaw. "Then get another one of your little friends and go with Tony to the cells. If Tony tries anything, blow his fuckin' brains out, then kill the others. You got it?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 23, 2014, 03:12:47 am**

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"Got it." Cavanaugh nodded, and approached Tony now. Checking the bindings, he nodded once more. "Right... well I'm accompanying you down to the cells."

*Of course you are...* Tony thought to himself. Riiiiight. "OK... that's fine." he said, taking another drag on his cigarette.

Cavanaugh motioned for another guard, and the two began leading the group towards the cell blocks. Tony waited until they were substantially advanced, and about halfway through the complex. Glancing at his watch, he smiled. Perfect. The guards making their rounds wouldn't be in this particular hallway for another 15 minutes.

Tony shifted himself so he was next to the one guard. Cavanaugh walked slightly ahead with the prisoners. Suddenly slamming his body against the guard, Tony shoved him against the wall and then jammed the butt of his rifle hard against the guard's face, knocking him to the floor. As Cavanaugh turned around, he met the business end of the rifle right in his jaw. "Change of plans, old friend." Tony said seriously, reaching down and collecting Cavanaugh's side arm.

"You son of a bitch! Tony! What the hell!" he shouted.

"Shut up!" Tony snapped back. "Keep your voice down, or I'm knocking your teeth out! Free the others!"

"I can't do that..." Cavanaugh said.

"Then you die and they go free anyway." Tony replied simply. "It's your call."

Regarding the ferret darkly, Cavanaugh turned around, and reluctantly began to undo the bindings around their wrists. "Leave him be." Tony ordered the others. "I need him to report in to Rhaegson that everything is OK. We knock him out, he's useless. OK..." he tossed Nairda Cavanaugh's sidearm. "Anne, bind that unconscious guard with the binders. I'm gonna take you all to the armory, we'll help ourselves, Marita disables the security, and we head right to Lupis. Rhaegson just bought himself a ticket to hell for interfering with my plan, as far as I'm concerned." Tony stated angrily. "If he's with Lupis, we take them both out." He was really pissed his elaborate scheme had come undone... but oh well. He'd get Rhaegson for it.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 23, 2014, 04:52:39 pm**

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(Club Tyrell)

Kozlov gasped as the second knife ended up in his back.

He roared again and rushed Kojuuro, backhanding him and sending the knife flying. The enraged Grizzly Bear picked him up with one hand and slammed him into the concrete bartop, cracking it some more. He then picked up a large piece of concrete broken loose from the fight and dropped it on Kojuuro.

The crowd roared its approval and several of the spectators were grumbling about losing their creds. He panted as the adrenaline rush wore off. Luckily, the nearest hospital wasn't too far. He staggered out of the bar to thunderous applause.

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(Pelvanida)

Aaron looked around in case anyone was passing by. He tried the doorknob. "It's locked. No matter." He then lifted his leg and kicked the door as hard as possible. Not surprisingly, the reinforced door didn't budge.

The German Shepherd pondered his options. He then realized that when he was a construction worker, he was given nearly free reign of a building. "Fuck this. We don't need him."

He then turned around and made his way to the exit. "We'll disguise ourselves as construction workers."

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(Purifier Compound)

Soren waited just outside the gates for the signal to attack. Even after thirty minutes, it never came.

"Fuck this!" he muttered. He set his exoskeleton to the highest power and casually strode to the front door of the compound. The steel door provided no resistance as he ripped it from its hinges and tossed it away like an empty beer can.

"Hey, halt!" a Purifier shouted at the armored humanoid striding into the base.

Soren ignored him. A bullet bounced off his chest plate to no effect. The frightened guard continued shooting – to no effect. Soren reached the guard, picked him up with one hand and crushed his neck with no effort. He dropped the dead guard and continued on his way.

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Anne had rather large fingers but the pistol fit her well enough. Being caught in binders multiple times, she was familiar enough to use them. A press of the button activated small electromagnets that rendered the binders even more difficult to break.

"Now what?" she asked. She looked around to make sure there were no other guards or cameras.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 23, 2014, 05:06:45 pm**

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kojurro gasped, spitting out blood as he slowly crawled from where Kozlov had dropped him. his head throbbing, most likely from a severe concussion. blood dripped from cuts on his face, and side, dripping onto the floor. kojurro moaned, as he reached a nearby table and staggered to his feet. 'guys.. stronger than he looks' kojuro said.. 'call an ambulance.. would you' he said to the spectators 'i dont think i can get to a hospital on my own in this condition

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Marita followed tony, the bonds had left slight bruises on her paws, but nothing major. 'once we get to the armory i'll undo the security defenses and give you guys a small window. figure 5-10 minutes at the most..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 23, 2014, 05:15:01 pm**

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An alarm rang out as Soren's rampage continued on the lower floors.

"Shit! We've been discovered!" Anne exclaimed as her ears suddenly laid themselves flat on her head. She looked around for potential hiding places. She found a small pipe closet and got in. It was times like this she was thankful for being a Shetland Pony instead of a Clydesdale.

-----

Soren didn't seem to have much of a goal as he walked through the lower floor. Behind him was a trail of broken bodies and other debris from his metal fists.

A piece of rebar ripped from the wall flew through the air like a javelin as the enraged cyberneticist hurled it at one of the Rottweiler guards who had rushed to meet the disturbance.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 23, 2014, 05:22:29 pm**

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"We head to the armory! As Marita just said, she'll drop the security when we get there, and we head straight for Lupis! You're gonna take us there, Cavanaugh... fast, or the last thing you'll be experiencing will be what it's like to get shot in the head... got it?" Tony said, pushing the barrel of his rifle against the back of the lizard's skull.

"You'll burn for this Tony! I thought you were one of us! How could you just betray us! You don't know how you're dealing with!" Cavanaugh protested as Tony shoved Cavanaugh out in front and none too gently prodded him every time he slowed down.

"Shut up and move!" Tony ordered, taking the group down a side corridor that bypassed the patrols (it was mostly used for maintenance). As they emerged from this corridor, Tony took them around a bend and stepped out from behind Cavanaugh. "Hands and paws in the air, gentlemen!" Tony called, leveling his rifle at the two guards on duty outside the armory.

"What the...?" one asked, seeing the situation. Tony shoved Cavanaugh forward towards them now.

"I said raise 'em high! Move up against the wall!" the ferret reiterated, pointing with a claw where he wanted them to stand. When one was particularly slow to move, Tony fired a single shot at his feet, causing him to scamper out of the way. "All right..." He glanced at his watch. "We've got five minutes till security discovers that guard we left bound behind us. Marita, if you would kindly take security down so that we can access the armory. You'll find a terminal over there on the left wall." He pointed to said terminal. "Pass code to access it is 'Shining Bright.' I say again, 'Shining Bright.' You should be able to do your magic from there. The rest

of you... take what you want, grab me a sidearm and a non-projectile rifle if you would, and I'll cover our friends here! Hey! Don't think I didn't see you move!" Tony added, pointing at one of the guards.

As Tony covered them, Cavanaugh looked at him. "It's not too late, Tony. You can still rejoin us... kill your friends, and we'll forget this whole thing ever..."

"Not interested." Tony cut him off. "In less than five minutes you're gonna be showing us up to Lupis's quarters. If you don't move fast enough, there's gonna be pain, I guarantee you. Marie! Bind the two other guards' wrists on your way out!" he called into the armory and with his free paw tossed the binders her way. He then pushed the button on his headset to dial Soren. "Soren, do you read? It's Tony. Hit the place now! We're about on our way to Lupis!" he requested, unaware the human was already on his way inside.

It was then the alarm sounded...

"What... the hell?" Tony asked. "Marita, shut that thing off!" He shouted, getting a bit nervous now as he occasionally let his eyes dart down the other side of the corridor. Intruders in the base, huh? Did Soren actually jump the gun and almost get them all killed? Well... at least he hadn't... otherwise, Tony would have some serious issues with that, even if he was dead. But if it was Soren jumping the gun... this could work in their favor. It meant security would be swarming all over whatever was setting off the alarm... meaning the rest of the base would be undermanned, and they could move about relatively safely.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 23, 2014, 05:49:43 pm**

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Marie went to work tying up the guard, while rose looked. On it " Marita typed in the password, which was accepted, and began working on ways to shut down the security. her caws were a blur over the keys, and in less than a minute the armory doors opened. ' there you go Tony' Marita said and began working on shutting off the alarms. this was easier than opening the armory. and in a few seconds the alarms stopped screaming ' ok. they're off. lets move everyone.!' "

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 23, 2014, 06:01:45 pm**

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Outside the Purifier base, Lily was growing restless. She sensed heightened alertness around her; whatever her allies were doing, it was attracting attention. The parasite within her was stirring; it knew it was in danger and wanted to flee.

She took some deep breaths. *Calm down...* she told herself and the parasite. *We're safe in the van...we're not part of this...*

Then she and the parasite realized something at the same time; there were Purifiers running towards the car. Pumped on adrenaline and prepared for a fight.

In her moment of shock, the parasite struck out. Lily felt herself get mentally assaulted in another grasp for power, and this time it won. Independent of her own desires, her body blew the door to the car open and sprinted out on all fours towards the back alleys of the Purifier base.

The guards, who were actually running to reinforce the ones that reported the breakin, didn't notice and continued to head for the base entrance, to surround the Exoskeleton-wearing intruder that was reported.

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Nairda grinned as his shackles were removed. "Let us sound the bugles of war!" he crowed.

Darting out a door and down a hallway, he leaped onto the ceiling and hid as guards ran underneath him. Chuckling softly to himself, he dropped down and combat-rolled into the nearest room, which turned out to be a broom closet.

He turned to leave when the guards from before kicked the door down. "I told you I heard something chuckle!" one told the other.

Five minutes later, Nairda left the broom closet with an incredibly bloodied broom handle and the equipment from both of the guards.

"I've got two p90s, two Glocks and pair of combat knives~" he reported gleefully. "First come first serve!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 23, 2014, 06:54:24 pm**

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Rhaegson stared up at the blinking light on the ceiling as the screeching alarm suddenly stopped, his ears ringing in its aftermath. The small light kept flashing, intermittently bathing the room in a soft red glow. After a few seconds, that stopped too. Rhaegson exhaled and pursed his lips. "Godammit, what now..."

From somewhere in the distance, he could hear faint rumbles. Standing up, he cocked his head to listen more closely. Sounded like it was coming from the northern side of the compound... Leaning over his computer, Rhaegson switched to CCTV, and flicked through the cameras in the north section. His finger froze over the keyboard when a hulking figure in a suit appeared on the screen, broken bodies and destruction behind it. "The fuck is *this*?" *Was someone stupid enough to openly attack the compound like that?* Rhaegson slammed his palm down on the button linked to the speakers. "Intruder in section B2. All members of security not with their thumbs currently up their ass, get over there and take him out! He's in an exo-skeleton, so engage from a distance!" Rhaegson paused. This attack, just when the ferret brat arrived with his prisoners... "Any security near the cells, search the area. If you see any one who *isn't* one of us, take them out."

-----

Axel flinched when he heard the gunfire in the distance. He pulled the blinds aside slightly, peering through the window, but from this distance he couldn't see what was happening. "Ah, crap! Lily, you should..." He was interrupted by a loud crash, and he spun around to catch a glimpse of Lily tearing through the door and vanishing outside. "No! Nonono..." he spluttered, snatching up the snub-nose he'd picked from the Stracci mansion and dashing out after her.

Stepping outside, his eyes widened when he saw a couple of heavily armed men running past... but their attention seemed focused on the Purifier base and they didn't pay him any attention. A grey blur in the corner of his eye caught his attention, and his heart sank when he saw it was Lily heading straight for the base. "Oh *jesus*... Lily! Wait! STOP!" Clutching the pistol, he sprinted after her, trying desperately to catch up.

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"Construction workers?!" Marcus snarled. He turned his head to look at the locked door, and reluctantly slipped his revolver back behind his jacket, grinding his teeth. *I'll be seeing you later, Allyn.*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 23, 2014, 10:24:22 pm**

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"I said NON-projectile!" Tony said, sighing at Nairda's choice. "But fine, whatever, give me a Glock and one of the P90s." he ordered, slinging the P90 around his shoulder and holding it out in front of him while he stuck the Glock into his waistband. "All right, Cavanaugh! Let's go!

Take us to Lupis! Good job on disabling the security." he complimented Marita as he once more pushed Cavanaugh out in front of him. That annoying alarm was now off, so good riddance.

It wasn't too long however before they ran into one of Rhaegson's patrols. The patrol rounded the corner ahead of them, and Cavanaugh immediately dove in front of them, hitting the deck. "Heads up!" he shouted.

Tony ground his teeth together, and raised the P90. Time once more seemed to slow as he fired off a burst from the personal defense weapon. One of the goons immediately dropped with several bullets in his chest, his arms splaying up in the air as he cried out and fell hard upon the floor behind him in a disheveled state. Tony suddenly froze gawking at what he'd just done. He'd never... *never* killed anyone before... and for a few seconds, all the ferret could do was stare at the prone body on the floor in front of him. The guy was dead... dead by his paw, his limbs twisted and arrayed in a strange fashion as he lay like a broken pile of jacks in front of the ferret.

Staring aghast at the corpse, the ferret was snapped out of his reverie by the return fire of the small squad. Bullets whizzed by his head, buzzing the fur on his left cheek, and he was yanked out of his trance and back into reality. Squeezing off another burst, he shot another one ahead of them. "Let's take these guys out!" he commanded, throwing himself against the wall and trying to present as narrow a profile as he could as he recommenced firing on the patrol.

What the hell had happened to him? Why had he frozen up like that? *Come on, Tony! It's kill or be killed! You know that!*

Up ahead and in the crossfire, Cavanaugh kept close to the ground and began crawling forward slightly towards his compatriots, knowing this was most likely futile, as he risked taking a bullet more than reaching his friends, as there was a greater chance they'd be dead in a matter of seconds anyway.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 23, 2014, 11:53:50 pm**

Marita had in the meantime grabbed a few weapons for herself, Marie and Rose. Marie took a MP7, while Rose and Marita had p90s. Marie's weapons had 40 rounds of ammo, Marita's and Rose's 50, so they would cover her if she ran out. The three of them hurried after Tony, and provided cover fire after he shot one of the guards. None of the girls were particularly well-trained in firearms, but their accuracy was good enough to hold the guards from advancing on them.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 25, 2014, 12:12:53 am**

(Purifier Compound)

Anne's heart hammered in her chest. Swallowing, she opened the door – and caught one of the Purifiers with the door. Taking advantage of the shock, she crushed the man's skull with a piece of pipe that a repairman had left behind.

Grabbing the dropped Skorpion SMG, she joined Tony and the other two in returning fire.

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Soren's suit was nearly bulletproof but with his fingers too large to operate the triggers on his two firearms and the guards exploiting their greater agility, he had no choice but to try and flee the group of guards. As he ran, he trampled one of them underfoot and his arm smashed another against a wall.

"Tony," he said into the headset as he ran. "Yeah, about my suit. I can't use any of my guns.

Can you get me something like a gatling gun or something heavy that you could mount to my suit?"

He lowered his shoulder and crashed through a bathroom door, startling two Purifiers who were on the toilet. They reached for their sidearms but the cyberneticist simply picked them up and smashed them against the toilets, killing them.

"Fuck. Now what?" He then noticed a large water pipe linking all the sinks' taps.

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(Pelvanida)

Aaron nodded. "Well first off, we need some props. Toolboxes, uniforms and all that shit. Once that's done, we pretty much have free reign of the complex."

"Luckily, there's a construction site nearby." He pointed to a crane erecting a new section of an elevated highway just a few blocks from Pelvanida.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 25, 2014, 01:13:09 am**

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Tony heard Soren in his ear as he downed the last Purifier. It was only now he noticed his paws shaking horrendously. The adrenaline high he was currently on was not helping his current disposition. "Get up!" he ordered unsteadily to Cavanaugh. "NOW!" He yelled, causing the Gila monster to rise slowly to his feet.

"Soren... I can't get you a gatling gun myself because there's no way I could carry it, our-their units are so huge, but... the heavy ordinance is stored in unit 319 across the compound. If you could break in there, you'll have all the heavy vehicular weaponry you could dream of, and then some!" the ferret informed him. "Unit 319!"

Running forward, he tried to avoid stumbling, and probably looked incredibly clumsy as he pushed Cavanaugh out in front of him. "Let's go! We're going to Lupis! We got some minutes before their security system recycles, so let's go! And keep in mind... I know this place... if I even sense you aren't leading us remotely in the direction of the guest quarters or the administration block, you die!" Tony said, feeling like he could collapse from the rush. He hated these adrenaline highs; they did nothing but hype him up and make him ridiculously nervous and ready to fight or flee, and right now, he either needed to shoot something or hide himself until this passed... and he knew it wasn't really a choice at all.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 25, 2014, 08:02:29 am**

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Marcus looked at the construction site in the distance and scowled. "This was meant to be fast..." Playing dress up didn't appeal to him either. Still, if it meant they could find what they needed and get out quick, it was worth a try.

He nodded brusquely at Aaron. "Let's get this over with," he muttered.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 25, 2014, 03:25:32 pm**

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Nairda flipped over the hail of gunfire, having been left only a single combat knife from the arsenal he'd returned. Dodging fluidly through the gunfire, he sliced one assailant's throat and

dodged a bayonet thrust by another. "You'll have to do better than that~" he smirked, sending the knife spinning into the assailant's eye. "I'm the devil of five floors deep..."

-----

Lily was at a breakneck sprint, racing on all fours through the back alleys of the Purifier base. *Run faster* her body screamed at her, *they're gonna catch us! Run!*

*They're not chasing us!* she thought back frantically, *Stop! We're heading deeper into the Purifier base!*

But her direction and her actions were out of her hands. Vaulting over a chainlink fence, she rolled out the shock and came to a snarling bear on a group of Augments who were startled to see her.

"What the hell is that?" gasped one, before Lily sent a psionic pulse echoing out of her body like a sonic boom, sending all of them flying backwards. Some of them had started shooting before their heart stopped working, and suddenly host and parasite were in agreement as they ran through the open door into the Purifier backrooms.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **February 25, 2014, 06:24:33 pm**

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Axel slowed his pace as he entered the alleyways, completely aware of the fact that if he stumbled into a group of Purifiers, chances of him surviving were slim to none. Though from the rumbles and gunfire in the distance, it sounded like the Purifiers had their hands full. *What happened to doing this stealthy...*

Jogging lightly down the twisting passageways, Axel's ears were pointed out, trying to catch the sound of footsteps, voices, anything that could tell him where Lily was. Nothing. The hand holding the pistol trembled, and he tightened his grip, using his other hand to steady the weapon. All of a sudden, there was a dull *boom* from somewhere up ahead, accompanied by shrieks and the sound of gunfire. He jolted in shock then quickened his steps, trying to fight the panic from rising. Nearing the corner where the noise had come from, he hesitated, then stepped out, raising the gun... and gasping at the group of bodies sprawled in front of him. "What the hell..." *Did she do this?* From the expressions on their faces, it looked like their deaths hadn't been pleasant.

Axel looked up, past the corpses, and felt a wave of fear wash over him when he saw the open door leading into the main building itself. He glanced around, but knew he was trying to fool himself. *She's gone inside...* Trying and failing to control his panicked breathing, Axel nervously followed her into the compound.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 26, 2014, 11:12:59 pm**

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Nairda spun and beheaded the last guard. "Let's move~!" he warned the others.

Leading the way down the hall, he noticed Lupis' office. Smirking, he jammed the knife into the lock and picked it with the skill of a professional.

After hearing a light click, he kicked the door down and combat-rolled into the room. "Hands up government spook!" he announced bravely, knife held out menacingly.

But Lupis wasn't in his office. A few seconds later Nairda was hit by over a dozen incredibly painful traps involving electricity, acid, fire ants, razor blades, razor blades that are on fire, and lemon juice.

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Lily darted down hallways, miraculously alone. Most of the personnel had apparently headed to reinforce more active sections of the base.

*where are we going?* she begged of the conscience controlling her body at the moment. *Why aren't we running AWAY from here?* But the parasite had no reason to bother speaking with her.

After a few minutes, she approached a heavily barricaded titanium-reinforced steel blast door. A mere glance would reveal that there was no possible way inside. Pressing her body up against it, she tried and failed to pry the doors open; even her psionic abilities wouldn't work here. She could sense it.

She could feel the parasite's mind reeling. It desperately needed to get inside...

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Lena smiled and brought Emilena another plate of cookies. "Enough about us. We haven't seen you in over seven years. We want to hear about you."

"You heard about me," Emilena grumbled. "I've burnt all my bridges. My allies don't trust me. The police are after me. It took a literal act of god to save my corpse from rotting in the torture dungeon of a mafia interrogator."

"Is that where all the wounds came from?" wondered Emile. "Some of those were remarkably unlikely, especially the sphinter being--"

"I have a habit of murdering men who tell me medical diagnoses," Emilena cautioned. "Don't add yourself to the list."

Lena mopped Emilena's forehead with gauze. "Well, none of your past matters. You're safe with us now. We'll protect you, we have more than enough to eat and survive out here. And its very remote, nobody will find you."

Emilena tried to force herself out of bed. "Oh no. Oh no no no no. I'm not staying here. You two will probably sell me to some slavers when you realize what awful caretakers you're destined to always be."

"At least stay the night," pleaded Emile. "Where have you to go? It'll let your body rest."

Emilena looked at him suspiciously. She literally could not think of anything they wouldn't conceivably do to her in her sleep. But she conceded to herself that she had little choice "...on second thought, I spoke too soon. I should stay here indefinitely." If they believed it, they wouldn't try to impose the decision on her through their own devices. She hoped... "I've never let anyone take care of me. Perhaps that's been my main mistake my whole life."

Her parents beamed. "That's wonderful to hear!" Lena hugged her, causing Emilena to stiffen up and grumble in protest. "We'll make up for all the years we abandoned you," she whispered softly. "We promise."

Emile nodded. "We'll tell you everything you missed out on. Make up for the huge gap in your life. I'll grab the picture books; we've got video evidence of any 'firsts' that happened in two months before we gave you away, including crawling, temper tantrum, and bowel movement."

*I've got to get out of here....* Emilena thought to herself in equal parts horror and despair.

Axel crept his way along the tight corridors, uncomfortably aware of how his trainers scuffed slightly on the floor, the sound bouncing off the thick walls. Occasionally he'd come across a metal door leading off from the main path, but since they were all closed, he ignored them.

Eventually, he came to a crossroads in the corridor, the hallway branching off in three different directions. Axel stood indecisively in the middle, clutching his pistol with both hands. Chewing his lip hard enough to break the skin, he glanced up and down the possible routes, then tried calling out softly. "*Lily, where are you?! Li-*" He was interrupted by the sound of raised voices and heavy footsteps coming from the corridor to the left, heading directly towards him. A small moan escaped him, his legs suddenly feeling as though they were made of rubber. Stumbling forwards, he impulsively chose the path that led straight on. Reaching a right hand turn, he rounded the corner and pressed his back to the wall, holding his breath as he listened intently to where the group of Purifiers was heading.

"... enough bullets, that son of a bitch'll go down eventually!"

"Are you kidding? Have you seen how much shit we've thrown at him?!" The voices grew louder as the group moved past where Axel had been standing seconds before.

"Yeah, well, you know what they say. Bigger they are, the... uh... The..."

"Harder they fall, moron."

"Whatever, I didn't ask for your shit, Xander..." The noise of the argument began fading as the Purifiers drew further away from him, the clumping of their feet growing quieter.

Axel released his breath in a shudder. *Thank you... thank you...* After taking a second to wrestle his nerves into submission, he looked slowly to the side and continued on.

-----  
Rhaegson paced his office, dragging on his cigarettes like a drowning man sucking for air. Whoever the hell these people were, they were proving a bigger problem than he'd first thought. He paused mid step. *This douchebag in the suit... Nairda...* There was a good chance more of them were using electronics too...

He sat back down and snatched up his phone, dialing to a separate part of the compound. After a few seconds, a nervous sounding voice answered. "Yes sir?"

"Get it heated up. We're going to give these sons of bitches something to think about."

The voice on the other end paused. "Um, well, it's not exactly ready... we're still waiting for the amplifiers and..."

"Well, shit, you think I don't know that?!" Rhaegson snapped. "Just shut up and..." His voice trailed off when he glanced up at the monitor. He grinned to himself. "Holy... Just get it ready. Don't set it off before I tell you."

Hanging up, Rhaegson dialed Lupis, still staring at the screen. "Hey, big bad... Guess what I have my beautiful blues set on? I'll give you a clue - it's ugly as shit, and you've been chasing it for who the hell knows how long. And, this is the best bit. It's waiting right outside the labs..." He slouched back in his chair, his grin broadening. "I guess good things come to those who wait, huh?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **February 28, 2014, 03:04:39 am**

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(Elevated highway construction site)

The construction site was an utter cacophony of noises as workers continued their arduous

task of constructing the elevated highway. Flying frame equipped laborers flitted about with high powered welding lasers or rivet guns as they secured the steel beams in place.

Aaron led Marcus into the portable dressing room and opened the door. He curled his lips at the odor of unwashed manual workers that permeated the grungy room. Dirty laundry was tossed haphazardly on the floor. For obvious reasons, those clothes were *not* an option.

"Fuckin' nasty. My supervisor would rip us a new asshole if we shit up the locker room like this," he muttered.

He opened a locker and grabbed two blue jumpsuits emblazoned with the company's name (Syberis Road Works) and tossed one to Marcus.

The German Shepherd quickly donned the suit. "Okay, let's get out of here and back to Pelvanida!"

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(Purifier Base)

Soren heard Tony's transmission. Smirking, he backed up and charged straight through the thin wall of the bathroom. Only to stumble upon a group of armed Purifiers.

"There's the fucker! Get him!" A hail of gunfire went his way.

Soren felt his sphincter tighten as he heard the bullets ping off his armored suit. A sharp sting in his arm made him swear. They were using mag-guns, which fired a solid metal dart at velocities high enough to pierce armor. This one was just a glancing hit but a perfect shot could kill. He sprinted back into the base with the irate Purifiers charging after him.

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"Tony! Where are we going!?" Anne asked as she rounded a corner and found a surprised Purifier. Thinking quickly, she exploited her short height and shoved her horn into the Percheron's throat, causing him to clutch the wound and fall to the floor with a series of wet gurgles. A short burst from her SMG silenced him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **February 28, 2014, 03:22:47 pm**

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Lena was doubled over on the carpet laughing, Emile was clutching the support of the couch and tears were running down his face. Both were busting a gut watching a shaky-cam of a diapered baby Emilena trying desperately to climb down from a very tall tree.

"So we had, like, *no* clue how you got up there!" Lena wheezed, "And you're like, halfway to the top--"

"Oh, here's the best part!" Choked Emile on his own saliva, struggling for breath. "You knock down this nest of eggs, that's what that was, and here a fucking hawk shows up and starts--!"

Emilena clicked the TV off. "That was hilarious, really it was. I always wanted to know where my fear of heights and birds came from. But I really must be going to sleep."

Lena wiped a tear from her eye, grinning. "We understand, sweetheart..." she chuckled. "We're so glad to have you back."

"I'm glad I came back," Emilena answered honestly. "I learned a lot I hadn't realized."

"Well, you'll learn more tomorrow," smiled Emile. "We've got at least a hundred hours more of footage to show you. And then we have stories we didn't capture on tape--"

"--certainly something to do tomorrow..." Emilena plastered a smile on her face. "Let me go to sleep now..."

She had indeed learned something very important. If this was the life she could expect by running away, then she had to return. She didn't want to face her comrades after being outed as a spy in front of them, but if the alternative was a life with the two least-likeable people she'd ever encountered, she could swallow her pride.

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Lily shivered as she glanced at the retinal recognition scanner. Hardly understanding why she was even trying it, or whether she hoped it would even work, she placed her eye on the scanner. It beeped and the door opened.

In the next room, she walked into a whitewashed room. She immediately recognized it as the site of her dream from when she was in Soren's house. Large chambers housed green liquid, computers were running, and a single chamber at the end housed a lifeless being looking remarkably similar to her. It was missing its hair, was more hunched over and muscular, and had lost all remaining human features, but its slumped-over polydactyl form was a familiar face she'd never even considered could exist.

-----

"Hey! You!"

A voice cut through the gunfire around Soren, and a hulking rhino agent lumbered out of the ranks. He had triple-reinforced armor and carried a huge circular saw with a cannon strapped to it.

"What the hell do you think you're doing in here?" He growled angrily, revving the saw to life. "You shut that suit down and I MIGHT let your sorry ass live!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **February 28, 2014, 07:46:33 pm**

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Tony slapped his paw hard on the wall as he noticed Lupis wasn't in his office. "Dammit! We were supposed to nab him!" He shouted, realizing the plan was rapidly falling apart. Without Lupis, this whole attack was meaningless! "Soren! Lupis ain't here! We're gonna get overwhelmed if we stay here any longer... suggest we withdraw and regroup... hey!" Tony shouted, noticing Cavanaugh dart quickly into Lupis's office now, the ferret having taken his eyes from him for too long a period of time.

Chasing after him, Tony was met with a flash of steel in front of him as the Gila monster had retrieved a sword that had been mounted on the wall of the office. More specifically, it was a katana. Tony felt his shoulder erupt in pain as his paw immediately shot up to it, clenching down as blood droplets sprayed onto the floor. "Dammit!" Tony uttered, backing away as the air whistled in front of him as Cavanaugh sliced towards the mustelid's neck, which Tony just barely avoided.

"You really shouldn't have betrayed us, Tony! Now you'll pay!"

Tony lifted the P90, but it was batted down by another swipe of the sword, yanking Tony's arm in an unpleasant fashion as he continued backing up down the hallway. "Oh no you don't! I'm not giving you that chance!" Cavanaugh exclaimed as he continued to advance on the ferret and violently swung the katana mere inches from his flesh.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **February 28, 2014, 10:56:30 pm**

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A shot rang out from behind tony, and marita stepped forward her paw holding the gun she had fired at cavanaugh.. ' while wasnt a crack shot, it didnt take a great shot in order to do serious damage with a gun. her shot struck cavenuagh hard in the left should and ripped through his shoulderblade before exiting out and hitting the far wall. ' run Tony" She called to the ferret.' i'll cover you' she said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 01, 2014, 12:38:42 am**

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Nairda staggered to his feet, resolution fueling the fire between his eyes. Sending his combat knife spinning through the air, he struck cavenuagh hard in the left shoulder, ripping into his shoulderblade and then bisecting Marita's walled bullet. "Run Tony~!" he called out, "Marita will cover you!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 01, 2014, 01:20:33 am**

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Anne charged into the office. She snatched the katana from the floor and a pointed both her SMG and the katana at Cavanaugh. "Where's Lupis!?" She didn't seem to notice or care that there was dried blood visible on her metal horn.

She then noticed Nairda and Marita. "Someone watch Tony and this fuckwad"óshe pointed at Cavanaughó"I'll go get a first aid kit."

The mare looked around the room. Bland minimalistic style with lots of stainless steel. The one incongruous thing was the "wall hanger" katana that just now proved itself to be no mere decoration.

She opened a drawer in the desk and found a pack of moziafil. Anne smiled as she pocketed the drugs. Papers, pens and even keepsakes were tossed on the group as she searched for a first aid kit.

-----  
"A little busy!" Soren said as he ran away from the Rhino. His suit was tough but testing it against someone armed with a a diamond coated saw and large caliber cannon was not something he fancied.

Thinking quickly, he ripped a set of lockers off the wall and threw them in the path of the pursuing Purifiers.

"Shit! I'm fucked now!" He considered sacrificing his suit to throw them off his trail but if they caught him without the suit, the hail of bullets would have most certainly killed him by now. A hole suddenly appeared in the concrete wall by his head as a Purifier with a mag-rifle took a shot at him. The pursuers either shot at him from behind the barrier or they vaulted and climbed over in an attempt to catch him

Soren got up and continued running away. He was thankful for the mag-rifle's slow rate of fire due to its need to charge its capacitors.

"Damn it, I can't keep running forever!" he muttered. He stopped for a moment to catch his breath.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 01, 2014, 08:56:01 am**

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A tinny beeping from further up the corridor caused Axel's ears to twitch, and he picked up his pace. Rounding the corner, he was met with large blast door. It was already open. Apart from the door, the corridor was a dead end.

Axel stopped at the threshold, his heart pounding in his chest. It looked like the entrance to a tomb, and everything inside him told the rat that going inside was a bad idea. Suddenly, there was a metallic creak, and Axel realised with a jolt that the door was closing again. "Aw, crap..." Swearing under his breath, he quickly ducked through... and found himself in a bright white room with Lily.

"Lily! Come on, we've got to..." Axel's voice trailed off when he noticed what the room contained. Gazing around, his mouth gaped open in confusion. When he saw the lone chamber at the end, his face twitched and the hand holding the gun tightened involuntarily. "What... what the hell is this..."

-----

Marcus' face was even grimmer than usual as he pulled on the jumpsuit. "My one isn't washed," he grumbled. Bending down to pick up a toolbox that had been left behind, he nodded at Aaron. "Let's go."

Arriving back at Pelvanida, Marcus led them to the public entrance this time. A human guard at the end of the room stirred at the sight of them, and approached. "Hold it! What's the problem?"

Marcus cleared his throat. "Repairs."

"Repairs?" The guard looked at the company name on their jumpsuits. "Then how come that says road works? There's no roads in here."

"Syberis is branching out. We now provide more services so as to further assist the community, and our esteemed customers."

The guard blinked. "Oh. Alright then." He stepped aside.

As they walked past, Marcus spoke lowly to Aaron. "We should use these suits more often."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 01, 2014, 03:41:58 pm**

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Tony could only back away slightly as Cavanaugh's left shoulder was hit by Marita's shot, causing the Gila monster to bellow in pain, and even more so when the knife struck it. The ferret was breathing heavy now, knowing he was losing blood. Cavanaugh soon had a gun and the katana pointed at him, though Anne quickly moved into the office herself, leaving Tony to raise his P90 once more to cover the lizard.

"What are you gonna do?" the reptile challenged. "Kill me? And I don't know where Lupis is! This is where he was last I saw him!" he shouted back.

Tony's paw trembled a little, and he narrowed his eyes. He couldn't shoot someone in cold blood like this... it just wasn't in him, despite how much he wanted to. His stomach was doing flips and turns, churning violently as his mind battled with his heart over the proper course to take.

"We-we need to get out of here!" he stammered breathlessly. "This isn't going to work! Soren's in trouble, Lupis isn't here, I'm wounded... we gotta go! We'll regroup, get some supplies, and... rethink this!" he said, started to back down the corridor now, but keeping his gun trained on Cavanaugh as he waited for Anne to rejoin them. The easy way out would be the service tunnels under the compound. He knew the code to access them, and it would take

them straight out and onto the street. Once outside, they could pick up the car and trailer, and get the hell out of here!

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 01, 2014, 03:54:05 pm**

Lets go then' marita said ' as she started moving towards the exit., while keeping her gun trained as best she could on Cavanaugh. marie and rose ran up to her as she exited the door.' come on tony! Rose said, as alarms began to blare.."The security is back online' marita said to Tony' We need to get out of here.. now! there will be guards in this area in 5-10 minutes tops.. and they'll be of the shoot first, ask questions later type/./.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 01, 2014, 06:36:35 pm**

"Ugly as hell, isn't it?" asked Lupis softly, as the blast door whirred shut behind them. "Is it a Pelvanida experiment gone wrong, from their bio-augmenting in the 2010s? Is it a horrible mutated being? The government thinks its an extraterrestrial life form. Me, I don't waste breath guessing."

Lily bared her teeth in a feeble display of fright at the sight of Lupis. Even though she didn't recognize him, the parasite did and was hyperventilating with fear. Before she could run or do anything else, Lupis flicked a switch on the wall and an ultrasonic frequency rang through the room. To Axel (and most others) it would only be a faint buzz; to Lily it sent random pulses shooting throughout her nervous system, and she collapsed in a heap, twitching and struggling to collect her thoughts.

"I wouldn't go near her if I were you," Lupis warned Axel. He didn't appear to be armed, but he showed no fear of Axel's firearm. "I don't know who you are, but I can add 2 and 2; you must care about Ms. North to possibly follow her this far. I think you've earned the right to know the truth."

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On Rhaegson's security monitor, Lupis entered the subterranean laboratory and sealed the blast door behind him. He (and anyone inside the laboratory) would be immune to the pulse. While Lupis could not inform him directly, it was all-but assured Lupis wouldn't mind if Rhaegson fired when ready.

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Her parents having finally left her alone, Emilena debated going to sleep. She half expected to wake up chained up in the basement, or worse, if they didn't want to risk her leaving. *Wouldn't be unusual behavior for someone to do to me at this point...*

But her exhaustion finally won out and soon she'd settled back into a fitful sleep.

*Immediately, she found herself balanced precariously in a tree. For a second, she thought that the family video was coming back to haunt her, until she registered Axel on top of her. Seconds later, she realized what they were up to, and in disgust and confusion could only look him in the eyes until he ejaculated inside her.*

*Then she was outside Soren's house, with a German Shepherd guard tensely watching the road. Then she saw a Vulpine police officer, a very familiar one, jump at her companion with drawn blade. Before she could call a warning the Vulpine had decapitated her ally. Seconds later a high-caliber bullet embedded in the back of her skull. The deaths continued...*

The Rhino set his chainsaw whirring and plowed effortlessly through a wall. "You aren't getting away that easily!" he roared, pursuing the exoskeletoned man. "You can't run forever!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 02, 2014, 06:39:28 am**

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Axel whirled at the voice behind him, and when he saw the wolf standing there his eyes narrowed with hatred. "You..." He could hear Lily struggling on the floor, and he moved in front to block her from Lupis. "The truth?! I think I've got a pretty good picture," he spat. "You did this to her, you son of a bitch..." He brought the gun up to level it at the wolf. The barrel shook, but this time it wasn't from fear. "And you're going to turn her back. *Now.*"

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Rhaegson watched as Lupis followed the skinny rodent into the lab, rolling his eyes as the door swung shut. *You always were melodramatic... At least that's one problem dealt with.* He tapped the keyboard, switched the view between the group retreating from Lupis' office, and the lone man in the exoskeleton. The way things were going, the pulse probably wasn't necessary... but they were going to have to test it sooner or later. *And it never hurt to have a little fun.*

He leaned into the speaker. "Everyone trying to take these clowns out, your job's about to get a lot easier. Lucky you." Rhaegson snapped his phone open. "Hit it."

A few moments later, a low hum started to reverberate around the compound. It built up, getting louder and louder, enough to set teeth on edge... and then, abruptly, it stopped. From the center of the base, a light blue haze spread out, spilling into the corridors. Within moments, it had washed through most of the building, rushing towards the intruders even as it started to lose its intensity.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 02, 2014, 04:09:37 pm**

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"Can't exactly follow while I'm bleeding out!" Tony exclaimed through gritted teeth. "And what are you leading for? Do you even know the way out of here?" he chided Rose. "Ugh... never mind... we gotta get moving." he said, breathing heavy as the alarms went off. He was hoping for some more time, but he kept his gun trained on Cavanaugh as he backed up towards a door in the hall. "There's an easy exit out but you're gonna have to..." He broke off, hearing a noise that jarred him a bit, leaving him just a tad shaken as it died down.

He paused now, seeing a blue mist driving right towards them. Blinking the ferret shook his head. Was he hallucinating from blood loss? No... he wasn't *that* weak just yet... the mist flooded down the hall like an incoming tide, and was soon enveloping them and then moving beyond, like a brief blanket that didn't have to time to stay. "What the... hell?" Tony asked, noticing he felt... no different. "What was that?" he asked, looking as it moved on down the hall. Cavanaugh was just as surprised to see it as Tony, getting a little nervous as it moved about his scaled body, but neither really showed any ill effects.

Down below, his eyes opened. Blinking a few times, he could tell he was in some sort of fluid... but not water. A noise had awoken him... a humming, which had rattled his brain and forced him into alertness. His long sleep was finally over. He could hear voices now.

The orange eyes gazed out of the film that was around them and studied the three in the room. One was a stony like creature, more a living rock than an organic being, but organic it was. The second was a white-furred rat with odd metal limbs. Injury of some sort? He was

rather angry... he was threatening the third, a wolf, who appeared calm and confident. Hmmm... what was this about?

He slowly felt his strength returning to him, but decided to listen in for the moment until it fully returned. He was in one of the numerous tanks in the room, and while most of them were empty, his was not. Damn white light... at least it made him blend in well, given his body's coloring. Strangely, he now noticed he was capable of breathing in this aqueous environment. Curiouser and curiouser...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 02, 2014, 08:34:07 pm**

"We did nothing of the sort." Lupis narrowed his eyes. "To be honest, I can only guess at how Ms. North became wrapped up in all this. Here in the psionically sealed labs, my top scientists had been studying that creature in that tank, hoping to learn more about its psionic powers. We underestimated its abilities, and in a moment of weakness it possessed one of my agents and used him to break the laboratory seal. Its conscience then escaped our labs, and we've been trying to get it back here ever since. Your girlfriend was just the unlucky person it happened across first, I'd wager."

He stepped forward. "I harbor no ill will towards Ms. North, and I'd like just as much as you to free her from her bondage. It's as simple as forcing the rogue conscience from her mind. And we'll never have a chance like right here, right now in this sealed laboratory. If you would be willing to work with me...we could save her."

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"We can't retreat now~!" Nairda let out a rallying cry. "We've got to persevere! The eve of the Purifiers is upon us! The sunshine patriot and the summer soldier may shy from hardship and inhospitality, but it is the *true hero* that--"

At that the pulse hit him and shut off all his augments, including the ones in his brain. Luckily, his body was still capable of keeping alive, but he blacked out and crumbled in a heap.

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The pulse rippled through the Purifiers, who all cheered; being Purifiers, they had no internal augments and so could quickly resume the chase of Soren Almaya.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 02, 2014, 08:36:32 pm**

marita tried to use her computer then sighed ' that was a emppulse. knocked out anything electronic.. so my computer doesnt work, neither will any of our phones..' Marita said. Shee turned to tony and saw a splosh of red on his shoulder. ' we'll neee to stop the bleeding before you pass out from blood loss.. 'i'll teartear a strip off the right part of your shirt.' Hold on she said walking over to him and ripping off the bloodied part of his shirt revealing the shoulder wound. yuck' she inhaled. ' he got a good nick in Tny ' she said to him. ' she threw the bloodied cloth to the ground. ' she then moved to his right should and ripped off the sleeve with a clean tug. tonys shirt was basiccally sleeveless now, but the more important point and binding the injury then commenting on fashion sense. marita turned the sleeve into and bandage and wrapped it tightly around tonys injured shoulder. " ok, just grit your teeth until we can get out of here.. ' she said as applying the tourniquet." theres a door staircase three doors down. it leads to the ground floor and to our exit point. we need to move now if we are going to avoid capture. All we have to do is go the opposite way of the way we came in, backtrack if you will..Move it guys' She said to Rose and Marie who were still armed.' the three girls headed towards the staircase.' marie opeed the door and held it open for tony.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 02, 2014, 09:48:18 pm**

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Axel hurriedly took a step back as Lupis approached, a side of his mouth bared. He glanced quickly down at Lily, at the figure in the chamber behind her, then swung his eyes back up. He didn't lower the gun. "That *thing's* consciousness? You actually expect me to..." Suddenly, what Lily had said before came back to him - *Every time my mind leaves my body, it takes a little longer to come back...* Axel's ears flattened, his breath hissing between his teeth as he tried to think clearly. He didn't trust Lupis for one second, and part of him was screaming not to listen... but Axel knew he had no idea how to help Lily, and if there was a chance the wolf was telling the truth... *Fuck, what do I do?*

He started to lower the pistol, though not relaxing his arm completely. "How... how the hell am I supposed to trust you? You could just be making it worse!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 02, 2014, 09:59:50 pm**

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(Purifer Base)

Soren fell face first as his suit's electronics were scrambled by the pulse. His HMD shut down as well.

He struggled to free himself from his now useless suit. Luckily, a quick release feature allowed the suit to easily fall away from him in pieces.

Footsteps and shouting got louder as the enraged Purifiers closed in on him. Grabbing his shotgun, he took aim and shot out a large pipe that carried live steam for the steam washers (hinting at the base's former life as a heavy equipment factory).

He followed an emergency exit sign as the hallway began to fill with scalding steam.

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"Great, what else could goó" Anne never finished her sentence as the EMP hit. Her eyes rolled into the back of her head and she collapsed, her horn sparking with induced electrical currents.

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(Pelvanida)

The duo finally entered the warehouse. Two armed guards stopped them.

"You must be the repair crew the front desk told us about. Anyways, credentials please."

Aaron fished out an ID from the pocket of his uniform. The ID was one of a Belgian Malenois but to the average person, they looked close enough to German Shepherds that they could pass.

"I see, well, you may pass," the guard said, nodding as she looked at the ID and Aaron.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 03, 2014, 12:19:22 am**

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"We need to get the conscience to leave Lily's body," explained Lupis. "The best way to do that is to make it think the current host is about to die. But it can read minds, so when you shoot at Lily, you'll have to convince it that you're aiming for a lethal shot. Once it flees Ms. North, it'll be looking for a new body to possess. If it picks its old body, it'll be trapped again inside

the pod."

He stepped forward. "Of course, first its going to try to possess your mind. Or mine. I have years of training, I'll be able to fight it off. Will you? You could wind up just like her. If you don't think you can handle it, give me the gun and get out. I have no motivation to kill Ms. North; its in my best interest to keep her alive and that creature back in its own mind."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 03, 2014, 02:42:58 am**

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"We can't go back the way we came in." Tony shook his head here. "That's out the front gate, and they would've locked it down by now. We have to... dammit!" Tony said, noticing Anne collapse, as well as Nairda. "What the hell is this?" he asked, shocked as he looked around at the pulse's effects. "What did it... the augments!" he exclaimed now, his mind making the connection. "Crap! We gotta get them out of here!" Tony said, biting down as the tourniquet was applied. "Agh! I'll take Anne... try to take Anne... you three help Nairda!" Tony ordered. "And thanks for the patch up!" he grunted as he took Anne's armpits and tried to hoist her up. Pony weighed some...

"Anne! You gotta get up!" he groaned as pain shot through his arm, the strain not good on his shoulder wound. "Ugh! Dammit! Come on Anne!" He said, slapping her face lightly to try and bring her around as they made for the stairs. "We have to get down to the service tunnels!" he ordered the girls as he pulled Anne into the stairwell now and began making his painful way down the steps, trying not to drop Anne and hoping she'd come around soon. It would take a long time to exit like this...

He felt at this point he'd heard enough. It was clear the rat didn't trust the wolf, and why should he? The wolf was not trustworthy, no matter how you sliced it. This he knew... inherently. He wasn't sure how... but it was there. This exchange wouldn't end well for the rat... perhaps it was time to do something.

Concentrating on the barrier in front of him, he began focusing... focusing what he wasn't sure, but focusing all the same. The tube he was in suddenly started shaking violently, and without much further warning, shattered in a cacophony of exploding glass and cascading fluid as it blew outward. The creature tumbled out onto the floor, and rolled up to standing.

A creature he was, for he was very unusual. Pure white skinned, he was mostly gecko in appearance, but his eyes were wide, and brightly orange in color. Two rows of white feathers stuck out the back of his head, forming parallel rows that swept back and then curled up slightly at the end, almost like a headdress of sorts. He was short... only about four feet in height, but he was possessed of a very serious countenance.

"Surrendering your sidearm would not be wise." he spoke, his voice deep and resonant. If a cave could perhaps speak, this would be it. "You are correct... you can't trust him." Of course, his explosive exit and speaking probably provided just the right amount of distraction needed that Lupis had been looking for...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 03, 2014, 05:30:27 am**

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"Don't come any closer!" Axel warned, stepping to the side so he could see both Lupis and Lily. "There's no way I'm leaving you alone with her, and I'm sure as hell not gonna give you the gun." He looked to the left at Lily. What Lupis said made a horrible amount of sense... Every time she'd been in danger, Lily had been able to see things she shouldn't... He bit his lip, and was about to say something when the glass of one of the tanks across the room exploded outwards.

Axel recoiled in shock. He started to swivel the pistol in the small creature's direction, barely registering that it had just spoken, when his trainers skidded in the green fluid that was pooling across the floor. He lost his balance, falling back and landing painfully, the small of his back slamming against the lower metal rim of the tank behind him. The pistol fell out of his grip and skittered across the floor.

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The guards turned to look at Marcus. "And your credentials, please?"

"Of course." Marcus reached into the pocket of his jumpsuit, grabbed the ID card nestled in there and pulled it out. His mouth tightened as he saw the face on the picture. It was a poodle.

"Well? Come on," one of the guards urged, reaching out a hand and snatching it from Marcus' fingers. He cocked his head as he looked at it. "Uh... this isn't going to..."

The toolbox swung in the air and slammed down solidly on the top of the guard's head, dropping him to the floor. Startled, his companion started to raise his gun, but Marcus heaved the heavy metal box to the side. It connected with a dull *clunk* across his face, sending him spinning to join the other on the floor. Bending down and grabbing the front of their uniforms, Marcus heaved them to the side and packed them on one of the shelves storing various cybernetic equipment. He pulled a large crate in front of them so they were more hidden, then tossed the guns they'd dropped up to a higher shelf. Straightening, he looked at Aaron. "Come on. We need to move it."

Crossing the warehouse, Marcus looked up and down the aisles, finally turning right and stopping in front of a crate with 18-G12VX printed on it. He pried open the top to reveal a number of rod like objects stored inside, each about 12 cm long. Emptying the contents of the toolbox, Marcus reached in, took several of the amplifiers and put them inside the metal container. He turned back to Aaron. "Let's get out of here."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 03, 2014, 12:13:31 pm**

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Marita picked up Nairda, like she would a sack of Potatoes. Rose and marie ran back to help carry the unconscious Anne. Rose was grateful she was a large dog and had a good amount of strength.' Quickly' Marie said as she lifted up Anne's Hind flank. ' Lets move it Tony! We've got her. you need to rest that shoulder. Whats the quickest way out of here?' marita headed down the steps as quickly as she could. Her quick mind think of a solution. " tony! any other way out of this place?' she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 03, 2014, 01:48:46 pm**

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Well, it wasn't the opportunity Lupis was expecting, but he'll take what he can get.

Darting forward, Lupis grabbed the pistol and whipped it across Axel's face. He aimed for the eye; partially-blind opponents are half as threatening as they used to be. He'd kicked his shoe off at the same time, and now his lower left paw was slashing across Axel's stomach, deep enough to draw blood if not openly expose internal organs.

He levied the pistol at the newcomer. "Get back in your pod, or get out of here," he narrowed his eyes. "You never worked out anyway, though I can thank you for how patient and cooperative you were. You earned one chance to walk away."

At the same time Lupis tried to kick Axel to the side and approach Lily, who had curled into a shivering ball and was pressed against the wall furthest away from the trio.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 03, 2014, 02:29:22 pm**

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Tony gladly let Rose and Marie carry the unconscious Anne for him, as his shoulder wasn't doing him any favors right now. "Thank you!" he gratefully told the girls. "OK... we're going out via the service tunnels! They'll take us right out to the street, and we'll head back to the car!" he explained. He led them down the stairs, and out into another corridor. Poking his head around the corner, he looked both ways to see the area clear, and then darted down the hallway, motioning for them to follow while he covered them with his P90.

"It's out here!" he said, inputting the code to override the lock on the door, and let it slide open while he waved them on. The door led to a concrete staircase, which in turn led downward into a concrete tunnel. It led under the base, and had been used by maintenance back when this place was a factory to quickly transit from one side of the base to the other. Tony knew about it because it was one of the Purifiers' escape routes, as well as sneakier methods of attack. "All right... we're almost out of here! Just straight down this tunnel, and we're out on the streets and home free!" he exclaimed. "I don't think that pulse fried the car... it's all analog after all, and no real circuitry, so I think we're good, plus I parked it a block or two away, and I'm glad I did!"

The creature was surprised at the result of his intrusion. The rat was swiftly attacked and downed by the wolf, who then proceeded to call him a... failure? Brief flashes of something played through his mind, and he narrowed his eyes now. Failure? That couldn't be so... last he remembered... but he couldn't remember anything before this. There were a few memories... bu they weren't connected to this place at all.

Without saying another word, the creature concentrated on the gun the wolf held at him. "I've got a third option." he replied, and suddenly, Lupis would've found it insanely difficult to move his arm, much less squeeze his trigger finger. His whole arm began to shake in fact, and the lupine agent would soon find himself lifted clean off the floor and up into the air, hovering and completely immobile as the strange reptile held him bound with seemingly just his mind. "How's this for not working out?" he asked as Lupis was flung hard against the far wall, smacking into it with enough force to do some pretty serious damage. He had been thrown as easily as if he were a doll, but the creature had no idea how he'd accomplished that. He felt a tad weaker, but not to the point where he couldn't do that again if needs be.

Breaking his concentration, he moved over to Axel now. "I don't think we should remain here." he said. "I didn't want to hurt him, but I didn't see much other choice." He held his hand out for the rat to take now. "Are you hurt? I'm afraid I can't do anything about that if you are, but perhaps I can assist you in getting out of here."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 03, 2014, 02:53:29 pm**

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Marita rushed along Carrying Nairda with one paw, her other holding her gun, Rose and Marie were moving as fast as they could, both were struggling a bit with Anne, as she was quite heavy.. " so far luck was with them as they hurried down the tunnel. a light ahead showed them the exit, and Marita reached it and opened it. she turned her head one way then the other. ' all clear lets move' she said holding it open so Marie Rose and their passenger could get out first then closed it after Tony got out. the sextet managed to reach Tonys car without problem, now it was a matter of Stashing Anne and Nairda in the back, squeezing in, and getting the heck out..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 03, 2014, 03:21:12 pm**

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Axel propped himself up on his side, dazed from the pistol-whip, and tried to look at the short white creature standing over him. The gun had struck him directly over the eye, and the skin above was torn open and bleeding, making it virtually impossible to see out of his right side. He managed to focus on the hand the creature was holding out and hesitantly reached up to take it. *At least it's not me he's throwing around...* "I'm doing great," Axel wheezed as he was pulled up, hissing in pain as he straightened. His stomach felt like it was on fire, blood seeping through the ragged strips of his shirt. "Jesus..." He sucked in a breath and looked down at the reptile-type animal that he now towered over. He thought about asking who... what he was, but that could wait for later.

Nodding, Axel limped across the floor to where Lupis had dropped the gun, his trainers splashing in the liquid. "I'd appreciate the help. This whole thing's gone to shit..." Wincing, he bent to pick the weapon up then called over to Lily. "Come on, we're getting out of here, Lily." He looked at where Lupis had been thrown. "You're coming with us," Axel snarled.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 03, 2014, 11:26:39 pm**

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(Pelvanida)

Aaron looked around to make sure there were no cameras. He swallowed. The noise that Marcus's assault had made was masked by the sound of laborers stacking crates and other goods.

"A bit more violent than I would have preferred but hey, it works. Now let's scam before someone sees us!"

As the duo made their way to the parking lot, they were unaware that the assault and theft had been caught on camera and some guards were already en route.

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(Purifier Base)

Soren took a deep breath of the grimy Lanthae air as he burst through an emergency exit with his shotgun in hand.

Seeing as he had a little bit of time, he shoved a small piece of metal into the doorjamb. He smiled at his handiwork but the shouting and curses of the enraged Purifiers reminded him that he needed to keep running. A bullet ripping through the door narrowly missed him as he ran towards the front gate.

After a full-out sprint, he met the others in a deserted roadway. Bits of industrial detritus lay along the disused factory road. He bent over, hands on knees as he tried to catch his breath.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 04, 2014, 03:20:25 am**

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Lupis hit the wall with a *crack* and the sound of breaking bone rang out sharply in the air. He hit the ground in a pool of his own blood. He wasn't moving.

Lily darted to her feet in fear. The orange gecko had demonstrated extreme power but little loyalty, and for once parasite and host were in agreement that they wanted nothing to do with this creature. Hissing and baring their teeth in a show of force completely ruined by uncontrollable shivering and unmistakable panic, Lily skittered backwards into the furthest corner of the room to get as far away from the surprise guest as possible, retracted claws feebly bared in front of her face.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 04, 2014, 04:14:04 pm**

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As they exited the tunnels, Tony could see much to his relief that the security detail usually posted outside wasn't present, most likely because they had been recalled to deal with the threats at the base. He moved out onto the street, and headed for his parked car and trailer. Reaching the Pierce-Arrow shortly after, Tony threw open the door to the trailer. "Axel!" he called to within. "Axel?" Looking around, the ferret could see the Travelodge trailer was completely empty. "What?" he asked, looking around. "Where are they? Why would they leave? Have... have we been betrayed?" he asked, glancing around the small space.

"Dammit! They aren't here! Neither of them!" he said, stepping out of the trailer now and slapping the side of it hard. "Dammit!" Leaning his back against the Travelodge, he closed his eyes, feeling tears welling up within them. Where were they? Anguish crossed his features as his arms pulled in close against his chest, the torment evident as the ferret tried to hold himself together. "Get Anne and Nairda into the trailer..." he ordered the others sadly. "Dammit..." he breathed again, attempting to get a grip on the situation. "Where the hell could they have gone to?"

The white gecko could tell the creature was irrationally afraid of him, but most non-sentient creatures probably would be, after seeing a display like that. After all, irrationality was why it was here in the first place, but of course the mutant gecko had no idea about that. Giving Lily a sad look now, he didn't approach her, but instead took a knee, bowed his head, and closed his eyes, making himself vulnerable to her.

"Apologies for the force I had to exert." he said softly. "I didn't kill him... and I'm still trying to figure out what I am... and why I'm here. I don't... understand this situation. I don't even know how I did what I did. I can only hope to learn as time passes. Forgive me. I let my emotions run away with me there, and it shouldn't have happened." he said, his tone even and calm, though there was sorrow in it as well. "You two should probably go." he said, not directly addressing Axel or Lily. "The wolf is in no condition to move. I can open the door for you if you want, but security will be swarming this place soon anyway, so I would make up my mind quickly if I were you." he stated.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 04, 2014, 04:34:19 pm**

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Marita pushed Nairda inside the trailer then helped marie and rose get anne in as well. ' calm yourself tony" marita said coming up to him. "Axel would do anything to protect lily, you know that, i know that. the guys in love with her. i dont think he betrayed us, in fact i think he'd rather die than do that.. just a girls hunch' she said to him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 04, 2014, 05:55:58 pm**

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Marcus walked briskly back through the corridors leading away from the warehouse. Before they reached the main lobby, he saw a green sign above a door to their left - a fire exit. He gestured to Aaron and led them through it.

The pair stepped out into an alleyway, stretching along the side of Pelvanida. Marcus started to head off to the right, the direction that would bring them back to the parking lot. "Wish I could say that went easier than I expected, but..." Marcus' grumbling was interrupted by the sound of the fire exit door slamming open behind them, and footsteps sprinting up. "Hold it!" someone shouted.

Marcus stopped, a scowl plastered across his face, and turned slowly. Three security guards

stood in the alley behind them, aiming taser pistols. "Put the toolbox on the floor, then kneel down and put your hands behind your head!" The one in the middle, a fox, commanded.

Marcus sighed then nodded at Aaron to do so. Kneeling down, he dropped the box on the floor then positioned his hands as instructed. The two guards on the left and right moved forwards, the one in the middle remaining where he was, training his taser on the two Purifiers. Marcus waited for the guard heading for him to get closer... then shot out a hand and grabbed his wrist. The guard squeezed the trigger, but Marcus forced his hand up and the electric dart sailed off somewhere above. In a fluid motion, he twisted the guard's wrist, feeling the *snap* as he broke it, then stood up and slammed an elbow into the nose of the man apprehending Aaron.

Turning his attention back to his guard, he grabbed him around the neck as a human shield and seized his taser pistol, bringing it up to aim at his hostage's eye. "Drop it!" Marcus shouted out to the fox. After a pause, the fox did as he was told, letting his pistol fall to the floor with bared teeth. Marcus shot him in the face with the taser, then snapped the neck of his hostage.

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Axel stared down at Lupis for a few more moments, but the gecko was right - it didn't look like he was in any condition to move, and dragging him out was impossible. *We could have used him as the new host for whatever's in Lily...* "Goddamn it!" he spat, then turned around, leaving him to bleed. He crossed slowly to the door and ran his fingers along its edge. There was no way he'd be able to force it open. Axel turned to face the gecko uncertainly, blinking as blood ran from the gash on his head into his eye. "Alright, if... if you think you can get this open, do it," he said, wiping a hand across his face.

Passing the gecko, he headed over to the corner of the room where Lily was cowering, then knelt down to her level, grunting in pain. "Look, Lily... and.... and whatever else is in there," he started, feeling sick as he said it, "If we stay here, we *will* die. He's the only way we can get out of this room before they find us, so we're going to have to trust him. Okay?" He held out a bloodied hand to her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 04, 2014, 11:17:44 pm**

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Lily was not convinced; for one, she had no reason to trust this creature, and the only two things she knew about it were it's powers and its hair-trigger temper. To be honest, he reminded her of Kojurro, and she couldn't bear to travel with somebody that reminded her of him. The parasite wasn't helping; having followed it homing instinct back to this room, it held an irrational sense of security having reached it, and was not keen to leave or relinquish control of Lily's body.

At that moment, the door blew off its hinges, and Exstasis roared into the room. "Lupis!" He gasped in horror. "I'm sorry, I got distracted!"

"That's...quite all right John..." Lupis got to his hands and knees wincing. Miraculously, his back appeared to be only sprained now, and in real time the crack in his skull was slowly sealing shut, the flowing blood stopping of its own accord. "Make up for your tardiness by teaching Mr. Speicher what happens when he passes up a free chance to walk away."

Exstasis revved his saw to life. "You!" He roared. "Don't you dare think of harming Lupis! You'll pay for this!" Firing the cannon strapped onto the front of the saw, he bounded forward and swung the spinning blade in a wide arc at his foe.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 05, 2014, 12:37:23 am**

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(Purifier Compound)

Soren looked around the industrial road. "Hey, where's Lily and Axel?"

He then noticed Anne passed out on the trailer's floor. "Is she...dead?"

A groan and some faint movement from the unconscious mare indicated she was still alive.

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(Pelvanida)

The elbow merely stunned the man apprehending him. But that was all it took for Aaron to throw a vicious uppercut that knocked the man unconscious.

The German Shepherd shook his head. "Well, let's get out of here!"

He kicked the remaining guard in the head to silence him and then bolted for where they had parked the truck.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 05, 2014, 12:43:44 am**

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"And what if I don't believe you?" Tony asked, glaring at her now. "What if this was all just a big trap? They could be coming for us next!" he pushed off from the trailer now, the pain he was experiencing worse than any he'd felt in a long time. "This was a mistake coming here... I never should've gotten involved in this!" He walked around the front of the car and opened the driver side door. "I'll drop you all off at a safer part of the city, and after that..." He was trying hard not to completely break down here. "I'm going back to my family. I never should've left them!" he insisted, sliding behind the wheel and turning the key in the ignition, bringing the big V-12 to life. Good! It hadn't been fried! Revving up, he snapped the Pierce-Arrow's headlights on. "Well? Are you coming?" he asked Marita.

Tony noticed Soren approaching, and shook his head. "I don't know! I was hoping maybe you had run into them at some point, but I guess not. I'm all for getting out of here right now! I don't know where they are, or if Axel was even trustworthy to begin with!" the ferret added, fighting back the tears. "Anne's alive... that pulse did something to her though... her augmentation." he sighed.

The gecko was snapped back into awareness by the bursting of the door behind him. His eyes widened as Lupis began to get back up. Impossible! But he didn't have time to contemplate it. The rhino attacked him immediately, and it was all the gecko could do to avoid it, making use of agility as he flipped to the side, turning in the air and landing back on his feet. "I have no quarrel with you!" he insisted. "I reacted to save lives! I have no intention of taking any today!" he ground his teeth. He was defenseless, with no weapons. A quick scan of the room indicated there was nothing he could use to remedy that. The cables from the ceiling would only stretch so far after all... and there was nothing on the floor that was of any use.

Pursing his mouth shut, the gecko thought fast as he dodged another attack by spinning away. He could only keep this up for so long before he'd start to tire out... he could escape, but that would mean leaving these two, and for some reason... something in him told him not to do that... but not like he really had a choice. He was trapped in this room for the moment anyway, and his life was now being measured in seconds as opposed to years, and there was barely any time to think on his feet as opposed to just reacting now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 05, 2014, 01:08:07 am**

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its a little too late to back out now Tony' Marita said coolly. ' its too late for any of us to back out now.we're all involved in this, for better or worse.. if both of them are dead in there, thats one thing. we mourn their loss and get out to fight another day. but if they are alive, thats another thing entirely. reverse the roles for a moment. suppose it was you in there and me behind the wheel of that car. do you really think i'd drive off and leave you to your fate? what kind of a friend does that?' she asked.

- we should go marita' Marie spoke up.' we barely got out of that place1" Yeah I dont want to spend any more time here' Rose agreed.'ni'd prefer a much safer pklace. one where folks arent try to take my head off..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 05, 2014, 11:50:46 am**

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Marcus snatched up the toolbox then followed close behind Aaron as they tore down the alleyway and into the parking lot. As they wound their way through the maze of cars, he looked back at the building and couldn't see anyone else following.

Aaron had the keys - when they reached the truck Marcus swung into the passenger seat and waited for him to start the engine, tossing the toolbox into the back.

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Axel scrambled back as Exstasis barreled into the lab, the door flying across the room to slam into the wall. His eyes widened. *He's the one who broke into Soren's home... how is he still alive?!* A familiar voice from the side drew his attention back, and he gaped in horror as Lupis picked himself back up, the wolf's injuries healing before him. "What... what the hell..."

The mechanical scream as Exstasis started the saw snapped him out of his shock. The rhino seemed fixed on the gecko, so Axel scrambled to his feet and fired a shot at Lupis - but with his vision compromised, the bullet went wide and smashed into one of the empty tanks. The glass exploded, showering the lab with more green liquid.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 05, 2014, 04:40:29 pm**

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Exstasis fired the cannon again, narrowly missing the geckos head. With no regard for tact he stomped forward, using offense as his preferred defense. With every step he swung the giant saw again.

The green liquid from the broken chambers stained the floor. The shot from the plasma cannon flew right at Lily. She screamed and tried to get out of the way, but slipped on the fluid...

And suddenly she was free. The plasma charge singed her upper body yet only collided with the wall above her. But it had fooled the parasite, who fled her body in horror.

Blinking and coming to her senses for the first time since Stracci manor, she staggered to her feet and stumbled towards Axel. She tried to call his name but a twisted squeak was all she could manage. *I have to get Axel to safety...*

The parasite, meanwhile, assaulted Lupis' mind, who reacted quickly and expelled it with his training. Shooting across the room, it attempted to implant and take over what it thought was the most powerful creature in the room...the orange gecko.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 06, 2014, 12:50:39 am**

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(Pelvanida Outskirts)

Aaron started the engine and drove off. He seamlessly merged with the dozens of other cars that milled about this ground level industrial zone.

"Well, let's hope everything goes better from now on." He noticed his pistol sitting in the center console. He chuckled. It was a miracle that his truck hadn't been broken into or a cop waiting by the vehicle to bust him.

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(Purifier Base)

"Axel's my best friend. He would never do anything like that." Soren picked up his shotgun. "I'm going back in there and getting him out."

He then turned around and marched back into the base.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 06, 2014, 03:18:28 pm**

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Tony looked down as Marita spoke to him, and he sighed. "But we don't know... anything." he said now, shaking his head. "I don't even... but yeah... you're right. He really did care about her. And... he is my friend..."

It was then Soren decided to grab a shotgun and head back for the base. But why? How did he even know Axel and Lily were in there? "Uh... what the hell are you doing?" Tony asked, stepping out of the car now and calling over its roof. "You don't even know if they're in there! Last we saw them they were in this trailer! What if they're somewhere on the streets?" but Soren was already heading down the road to the base it seemed. "What the hell is he doing? He's going to get himself killed!" Tony said, shaking his head and sitting back down in the driver's seat. "For all we know, Axel and Lily could be on their way to Timbuktu!"

Shaking his head, he thought about what they could do, but what *could* they do? Going back into that base was suicide at this point. It was on high alert, and the Purifiers would be swarming anyone who would come back in. He sat behind the wheel of his car, then got an idea. "I'm gonna start circling the blocks!" the ferret suggested. "Maybe Axel and Lily are outside, and in trouble. If they are, I'm gonna look for them. I advise you get in if you want the ride!" Tony said before throwing the car into gear.

The Pierce-Arrow moved forward, and Tony turned onto the street that went around the perimeter of the base, hoping to find some trace of his friends...

Cavanaugh was patching his shattered shoulder up. He was gonna need extensive care, but for right now, he was all about killing these intruders. He was supposed to be the gatekeeper after all, and Tony had completely humiliated him! Hearing a report over his radio, he grasped it with his good hand and brought it up to his mouth. "What?" he demanded.

"Sir, it looks like that human who was in the exoskeleton is coming back!"

Growling, the Gila monster picked up an MP7. "Urrgggh I'm so sick of these assholes! All right boys! Let's go kill ourselves some trespassers! Head him off!" he shouted, heading for Soren's reported entry point.

Deep down below in the bowels of the facility, the gecko narrowly dodged another shot aimed at his head, starting to pant as he tried to think of something. Suddenly, something entered his mind... foreign and invasive, and definitely not indigenous. "What?" he asked, but there was another presence in his mind as well... the parasite would quickly find that Vergil's (the

gecko's) mind, despite being mostly empty, was in fact a very crowded place. There were things that simply didn't belong in there, and how they'd ended up there was a mystery.

Vergil had to focus though, and suddenly, an idea struck him. He had no idea where this inspiration came from, but time seemed to slow as he noticed Exstasis sloshing through the fluids on the floor. That was it! Leaping up onto the tube he'd broken out of, he yanked off one of the wires that led into its base. A single thought later, and Axel and Lily would've found themselves thrown off their feet and out of the puddle of fluids as they slid across the floor. It wasn't a hard landing, nor a particularly hard push, but it would save their lives.

Once the two were out of harm's way, the gecko tossed the now live-wire down into the fluids, and electric bolts were soon shooting all across Exstasis's body, frying every internal augment he had, and thoroughly cooking him as his flesh seared and even caught on fire in several places, his thick hide being no match for the amps coursing through it. As the rhino screamed and collapsed into a burning heap on the ground, Vergil gave him a sad look. "Forgive me... I'm so sorry..." He said softly, looking with regret down at the charred rhino. If only he'd listened to him... and where had he gotten that idea from, anyway?

Looking over to Axel and Lily now, Vergil nodded. "Are you two all right? I'm sorry I had to do that, but it was the only thing I could think of in that time." He halted his speech to see if that foreign presence was still there in his mind... it didn't feel like it... so perhaps it had fled?

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 06, 2014, 03:32:48 pm**

marita Rose and Marie had jumped in the car before Tony had started it. all three of them were in the back seat. marie took a few moments to rest against the soft cushioning of the seat. ' is this car armored? Marita asked how about the windows? are they bulletproof?' ' i'd imagine the don put in some defenses for his cars, i mean hes not stupid' Rose said, wrapping her arms around herself as she lay back against the seat. marita tried to get her computer working again, but no luck.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 06, 2014, 04:06:16 pm**

"Where else would they be!?" Soren snapped as he paused mid stride. "This area's a deserted industrial zone!"

He then decided to route around the perimeter, hoping that the loading docks were unsecured and still open.

At this time, sirens rang out across the base as the Purifiers armed themselves and got ready for action.

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Anne regained consciousness and rolled out of the couch she had been placed on. "Ugh, what happened? And why the fuck are my pants wet!?"

She pulled herself to her feet and noticed a strong metallic taste in her mouth. Pouring herself a cup of water to rinse her mouth out, she examined her horn. No damage.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 06, 2014, 04:14:45 pm**

Axel groaned as he sat up, leaning on one arm to support his weight. He stared across at Exstasis' smoking corpse, then nodded at the gecko. "Don't... don't be sorry," he panted. "He had it coming. Thanks for not... letting us get fried."

He quickly looked over at Lily. "Are you..." Axel paused when he looked into her eyes and saw that they seemed different, clearer than at the Stracci mansion - more like the eyes of the girl he'd met only a few days ago. "Lily? Are you alright?" He got to his knees and clasped her shoulders, hardly daring to believe it. "Is it you? Just you?!"

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Rhaegson's monitor flickered back to life, and he cracked his knuckles. He flicked the button for the announcer. "And we're back, ladies and gentlemen! I hope you all got some killing done..." One of the cameras situated on the outside picked up Soren as he wandered around the perimeter of the compound.

Exhaling, Rhaegson rested his chin on his hand as he realised it was the same man who'd sported the exoskeleton. *Least he's man enough to stop using his little toy...* "Looks like one of our friends is going on an easter egg hunt around the eastern side of our grounds. He's not in his suit anymore, so all of you take your balls outta your purses and kill him already." His voice echoed around the compound. As an afterthought, he added, "Why isn't he dead already?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 06, 2014, 05:17:59 pm**

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Lily panted as she got to her knees. The sudden knockback was unexpected...but she couldn't help but smile when she saw Axel standing before her. If only she could reply and tell him how happy she was...

Then she saw the wolf sneaking up behind Axel and her eyes went wide with horror. Before she could even cry a warning Lupis struck, raking his claws across the left side of Axel's head, aiming for the ear. At the same time, his knee dug into the rat's back; had his own back not been partially sprained it could have snapped his spine. His remaining fist buried itself in Axel's neck.

At that moment, Lily jumped to help, but she suddenly felt the all-too-familiar sensation of sharing a body; the parasite, unable to find a conquerable opponent elsewhere in the room, had returned to whence it came. Gagging for a moment as it remembered how to breathe, Lily could only watch as Lupis kicked Axel to the ground a second time and bum-rushed her.

Grimly Lupis turned to Lily, socking her in the face and grabbing her by the leg as he dragged himself towards the door. With his other hand, he held the long-abandoned pistol and fired a salvo at the gecko, though his aim was hampered by his many injuries. As he staggered out of the room, he shot out the security camera in order to trigger the silent alarm that would alert all guards in the area to check the laboratory. "I've had quite enough of this..." he muttered, though only Lily could hear him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 06, 2014, 06:34:38 pm**

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Tony nodded as he turned down a side street, keeping well enough away from the base's walls but close enough to see if anyone was moving about. "Yeah, of course All dad's cars are modified for great protection and resistance against attacks. We're relatively safe inside the Berline as is." he explained as he turned again, moving around the back of the Purifiers' base.

"With pleasure, boss!" Cavanaugh responded, and reached the loading docks, where Soren was heading. "Open up on him! Kill him!" Cavanaugh yelled, and soon, his team's fire was barking out, bullets whizzing in Soren's direction as the Gila monster lift his MP7 and painfully fired at the approaching human. His shoulder was protesting, but he quickly injected himself with a shot of an adrenaline booster, and felt the power pumping through his veins. "Yes..."

yes... YES! DIE HAHAAAAHA!" he laughed maniacally, his pain subsiding as the drug coursed through him and sent him into overdrive.

His team were mostly covered behind large metal containers and crates, showing themselves sparingly as they popped out to fire bursts in Soren's direction.

Vergil was going to react, but suddenly, memories came flooding into his brain, threatening to overwhelm it as his mind was brought back... back...

*He was standing on what looked like the bridge of a naval vessel. Big glass windows looked out onto the sea, and control stations with sickly green and orange lights abounded everywhere. In front of him, two creatures violently fought. One resembled him, but was different... this gecko had fiery red skin, and golden eyes, as well as feathers running completely down his backside. He was considerably bulkier than Vergil as well. Battling him was a lithe green female frilled lizard, and both appeared capable of the very talents Vergil possessed. Various bodies lay strewn around them. Some looked like the bridge crew, and others looked different entirely, wearing strange garb the gecko wasn't familiar with.*

*As the fight continued, explosions suddenly erupted all around him as the bridge began taking external fire from large caliber guns. The explosions began engulfing everything as the red gecko appeared to become very angry about something, screaming as the bridge became awash in flames. The hull of the ship shook as torpedoes slammed into her side, her innards groaning in protest as they were torn apart... and as the explosions moved to envelop him, Vergil's mind went black...*

Blinking, Vergil came out of his reverie to see that Lupis was making off with Lily now. A shot was fired at him, but missed pretty badly. The gecko started concentrating, suddenly seeing something up above them as the silent alarm was triggered. Flipping off the platform he'd been standing on, he raced over to Axel now. "I don't know how I know this, but there's a car circling around the back of this base. It will pass a side entrance in approximately ten minutes. Your friends are in this car. If we hurry, we can make it! I know the way out... once again, I have no idea how, but if we don't hurry, security will be here soon! Can you walk?" he asked, helping the rat up as best he could.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 06, 2014, 07:12:50 pm**

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Axel coughed, choking as he tried to suck in a breath. Under the fur where Lupis had punched his neck, an ugly purple bruise was forming. The left side of his face was in agony, and as the small gecko helped him up he caught a glimpse of his reflection in the glass of one of the tanks. Lupis' claws had sliced deeply into the side of his head, blood pouring from the wounds. His left ear had been cut apart, leaving behind a torn, ragged mess.

He brought his attention dully back to the gecko, his eyes glazed with shock... then let a whistling gasp out as he realised Lily wasn't there. "No! Lily... where..." he managed, pulling away and trying to rush towards the lab entrance. Axel's back screamed in protest and he stumbled, falling back to his knees. From somewhere further up, there came the faint sound of shouting, boots rushing towards their direction.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 06, 2014, 07:57:48 pm**

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"You're in no condition to go after her. I'm sorry. We're getting out of here!" Vergil replied, steadying Axel as he gazed at the wall. "Hmmm..." he could hear security heading their way, so narrowed his eyes, and soon, the wall in front of them was being crushed, and crumpled inward. On the other side of it, there was a service tube that led straight up to the street, and a convenient staircase nestled inside the tube. "It's the fastest way out: if we go out the main

door, we'll run into security. Come on! I'll help you!" the gecko moved at Axel's pace, starting up the staircase to the street. He could hear the Purifiers behind them, shouting things like "they went this way! Hurry!"

Huffing, the gecko was surprisingly strong for his size, and while not able to outright carry Axel, he was at least able to support him and kind of drag him along every so many feet. Shots rang out behind them, but Vergil quickly moved them up to a landing where they were covered before ascending the next flight. "Come on! We're almost there!" he urged Axel, steadying him and holding him up as they began the final ascent. The guards were pretty much firing blindly at this point, and their shots hit the concrete of the stairwell on the landing below them, doing no harm.

Vergil focused intently on the service exit ahead at the top of the stairs, and the door flew off its hinges, its lock snapped like a piece of bread. Panting, the gecko hauled Axel out onto the street, and just in time, too. Headlights played over the both of them, and the sound of an analog engine could be heard rapidly approaching.

Tony saw the rat and some strange gecko like creature in his headlights, and he honked and excitedly exclaimed "It's Axel! He's alive! Yes!" Breaking the car to a halt with a slight squeak, Tony reach over and opened the passenger side door. "Get him in!" he ordered. "Where's Lily?"

"We don't have time." Vergil calmly informed him, pushing Axel into the middle seat as he slid onto the passenger side. "She's been taken, security is right behind us... I suggest you go and go fast."

'Uh... wait... who are you?" Tony asked, confused as Vergil shut the door.

"Vergil... Vergil Speicher... I'd press that accelerator if I were you." he said, still calm as Purifiers began pouring out the service entrance.

"There! In the car!" one yelled, and raised his weapon to begin firing.

"Oh, shit! Hold on!" Tony yelled, and slammed his footpaw down, the massive V-12 of the Pierce-Arrow roaring to life with a throaty rev that echoed off the abandoned buildings all around them like an exploding firework as the car rapidly took off. A few bullets hit the side, but they did no more than bounce off the beautiful exterior as the Pierce-Arrow accelerated like a drag-racer and zoomed down the street, the ferret quickly able to push the car up to over 100 mph, even with the trailer. It rocketed past the buildings at blurring speed, the Pierce-Arrow quite literally having the best V-12 out of any in existence from its competitors at Packard, Lincoln, and Cadillac. They left their pursuers behind in the literal dust, and while Tony slowed the car down to take the corners, he didn't lift much from the accelerator at all. He was in pure fight or flight mode now... and flight had taken over.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 06, 2014, 08:18:05 pm**

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marita he;ld Axel as the car raced away from the camp. she pulled a kany from the pocket in her dress and held it against the side of axels face. ' his ear was going to have to be stitched back together, but nothing a competent surgeon couldnt tackle in 15 minutes. the hankerchief soon became stained with axel's blood..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 06, 2014, 08:18:07 pm**

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Soren cursed as a bullet nicked his head. There were just too many Purifiers for him to fight. He cursed himself for being so rash.

The metal dumpster he was using for cover wouldn't hold forever. In desperation, he shot a large tank over the loading dock, praying it was filled with something flammable or toxic. Or at

the least, it was part of the factory's steam system.

He was in luck, it was the steam drum for the factory's plumbing. As hot steam roared out of the hole, he quickly bolted for the road, hoping that the huge white cloud covered his escape. Nevertheless, several of the guards fired through the cloud. Most of the shots went wide, but one grazed his ear.

Hopefully, Tony and the others had not left him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 06, 2014, 08:39:22 pm**

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Lupis dragged Lily down the corridor, repeatedly kicking her in the face to prevent her from coming to her senses in time to use her powers or even get a grip what was happening.

"Sir!" yelled one of a pair of guards rushing his way.

"Get to the lab!" Lupis snapped, "Figure out what scientists are on the clock and get them over here! Tell them its an 808, they'll know what to do!"

"Sir, don't you need help with-?"

"Now, goddammit! I don't have time to explain!" Lupis knew that in an unshielded section like this hallway, the alien conscience needed only a split second to catch its senses and make another escape. With the puncturing of the shielded laboratory, he was the only thing stopping them from losing the beast they'd fought so hard to capture.

Lily meanwhile, who was unable to even shield her face as it skidded along the floor, was sobbing openly as Lupis kicked her broken nose over and over. Various debris littering the ground was lacerating her side as she slid on top of it, leaving a trail of her own blood staining the laminated tiles.

As the guards double-timed it, Lupis flung open the door to a regular laboratory and threw Lily onto the table. Flicking all the lights off and slamming the door shut in order to startle her yet again, it had the side effect of hiding the disgust on his face from what he was about to do. But while studying the creature in its natural body, its brain waves seemed to associate a particular human emotion with mortal danger, and the best way to keep it contained was to trap it in his own mind until the scientists could come with the sedation...

Strapping her onto the experimenting table, Lupis jammed two fingers between her legs. Lily howled in pain and thrashed wildly. He rammed her most sensitive orifice again, and again. As he suspected would happen, he soon felt the parasite probing his mind, attempting to warn its host of what was happening to her. He allowed it. For as long as he kept this up, it wouldn't think to flee the premises entirely.

*But it might be best to kill her after this...* he thought grimly. *It would be more merciful than letting her live...*

Below him, Lily was thinking same thing.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 07, 2014, 04:51:58 am**

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Axel jerked as Marita held the handkerchief against his head, breath hissing between his teeth. The pain wrenched his attention back to the situation. He looked around at the others in the car desperately. "Lupis, he... he jumped us... he's got her, he's got Lily! Oh *god...*" Axel moaned, his voice breaking. He suddenly punched the dashboard. "*Goddammit!*"

In his distressed state, he didn't notice that Soren wasn't with them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 07, 2014, 10:29:12 am**

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we'll get her back Axel' Marita said. ' the attack.. er didnt work.. at all. so we'll have to regroup lick our wounds and try a different approach.. you need to hold still so i can stop the bleeding. you;re going to have dozens of stitches just on this ear alone, and thats not including the gash above your eye..figure close to 100 in all..as a conservative estimate. marie was tryinmg to help hol;d Axel down.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 07, 2014, 11:30:20 am**

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Cavanaugh cursed as the steam enveloped much of his team. Pretty lucky shot to pull off with just a shotgun! "Boss! That human's beating a retreat! Want us to pursue? I think he's on foot!" the Gila monster radioed in.

Another report reached Cavanaugh that on the opposite side of the base, two intruders had escaped in some kind of vintage car, but the car had roared on out of there at high speed, and security hadn't had time to scramble out their own vehicles in pursuit. "Well whatever! They're gone is the important thing!" Cavanaugh radioed to the team on the other side of the compound. They were at least dispatching some patrol vehicles to scour the surrounding area for the car, so that would take care of that.

Tony didn't slow the Pierce-Arrow yet, just in case they were being pursued. It didn't look like it, but he wasn't taking any chances; he was ensuring the car lived up to its name. The moment he slowed the car down, he knew he risked being overtaken by potential pursuers. The Purifiers weren't stupid... they'd be sending out vehicles after all; it was standard protocol. They needed to put some distance between themselves and the base before they could relax.

It was thus that Tony brought the Pierce-Arrow onto the highway, and eased off the gas just a tad, bringing the car back down to its more comfortable cruising speed of 80 mph. "OK... we'll get to the city... find a safer part of town, and regroup." he said, sighing with a modicum of relief. He knew they weren't out of the woods yet, and every second he expected to glance out the side-view mirrors and see Purifier vehicles behind him. His heart was still racing, and he turned to look at Axel as he squirmed, then punched the dashboard. "Hey!" the ferret exclaimed. "Watch it! The interior isn't armored, after all! But... I'm glad you're alive." the ferret concluded gratefully. "I'm sorry that they got Lily... what happened, anyway? Why didn't you stay in the trailer? Look we just need to calm down, OK? And yes, stop moving; let them look you over." Tony advised. "We have a med kit in the trailer, but I can't stop right now. You're gonna have to wait till we get back to Lanthae proper. I figure we could head to Soho or something, it's much safer. Anyway... what happened? Who's... that guy?" he asked, looking at Vergil briefly.

"I can't fully answer your question, I'm afraid. But I'll let the rat explain first. His story's longer, after all." Vergil replied, looking out the window at the bright city lights as they approached the city center.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 07, 2014, 05:26:12 pm**

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we'll just have to use hankerchiefs for now' marita said , continuing to hold the blood-soaked hanky against Axel's head.' marie! got any hankys or tissues/' marie dug into her purse, and fully pulled out a small box of tissues ' these are usually for blowing my nose.. but its better than nothing..' she admitted. marita took a handful of tissues and put them uin place of her hanky which was thoroughly saturated with blood. at least the bleeding was slowing down..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 07, 2014, 06:13:01 pm**

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Rhaegson grimaced. "No, I want you to throw him a party. I'm thinking cake and balloons," he said, his voice pure sarcasm. "Of course I want you to kill the son of a bitch! Make it quick, we don't want to draw any more attention that we have already." He sighed and rubbed his jaw. "But if he gets to the main road, forget about him. I don't want a shootout on the highway."

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Axel fought to control his breathing. "It... we were doing what we said we'd do, just waiting in the trailer when all this shooting started. Lily got scared and ran out... right into the Purifier's place. I tried to catch up with her but I was too slow, I... I screwed up..." He looked at the others in the car helplessly. "Why was there shooting? I thought we were meant to do this *quietly*?!" As Tony overtook a car in front, the vehicle jolted slightly and Marita's hand pressed painfully against his ear. Axel cried out, and his elbow knocked into Marie.

He straightened back up in the seat. "Sorry... I'm sorry," he apologised to Marie, then carried on. "I managed to follow her in and found her in some kind of... a lab, or something. At the end there was... Jesus, I don't what the hell it was. A monster in a glass tank. Lupis found us there. He told me that monster's mind had managed to get inside Lily - that's why she's... she's changing." He sucked in a breath. "Lupis attacked us. This..." Axel looked down at the Gecko. "...Vergil was in one of the other tanks. He broke out and helped us but Lupis managed to get away with Lily. I only got away because of Vergil."

Axel's hands tightened into fists, a faint *whirring* coming from them. He gritted his teeth and nodded at Marita. "I'm going to get her back. I don't know what the hell they're going to do with her, but they need her alive, at least for the moment. Gotta just... just think of a new plan..." Axel grimaced. "I know this all went to shit, so if I'm on my own I'll... I'll understand."

As he slowly looked around the car, he noticed Soren wasn't there. "Where's Soren? He in the trailer?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 07, 2014, 06:25:39 pm**

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first things first, you need to get patched up' Marita said kindly. 'you're not saving anyone with your ear in pieces and a huge gash over one eye.. we'll help you get lily back, but we need to be much smarter about it.' marie gave Axel a few tissues to wipe his eyes and hold against the gash over his left eye 'no need to apologize Axel. we know you mean well' she said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 07, 2014, 10:38:20 pm**

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"Well the plan fell apart the moment Soren jumped the gun and busted in through the front door. I thought we could use it as a distraction, but it didn't work out that way, because noisy *never* works out that way." Tony said with some disgust. He listened to Axel's explanation, and groaned. "Ugh... so that's what happened? Damn... I'm sorry... and hey! No! You aren't on your own in this! Hell no!" the ferret shook his head. "We're in this together, remember? You aren't fighting this fight alone! We'll get her back! We will!" Tony said with determination, glad he finally understood the mystery behind Lily North. Turns out Lupis had been all bullshit after all.

He heard about Soren being mentioned, and Tony suddenly realized they'd left without him. "Oh... shit! You're right! I wasn't really thinking if we had everyone back when they were shooting at us! Well... then again he *did* blow me off and try and run back into the base with nothing but a shotgun to save you." Tony couldn't help but laugh here, but realized it was

probably a serious situation, so he quickly stifled it. "I knew such a plan was suicide, but... like I said, he wouldn't listen to me. And my phone's fried so... I can't exactly call him." Tony pointed out. "Chances are he's dead but... if he's alive... ugh! Why did he go off like that?" Tony snapped in frustration, slapping his paw against the steering wheel.

"So what's your story, anyway?" he asked Vergil now, trying to work things out in his head.

"Not much to tell, as said. I don't know how I ended up in that tank, who I am aside from my name, or how I acquired these... powers." Vergil stated, not demonstrating right now. "I must've been a naval officer at some point though... I have a distinct memory of witnessing a fight aboard the bridge of some ship. Wish I knew more than that." he sighed.

"So you basically have no memories at all?" Tony asked, incredulous.

"Barely, yes." Vergil confirmed with a murmur.

Tony let out a long exhale as he exited into the Soho district of Lanthae, and bright lights once again flooded the car's interior as there was neon everywhere. "So we're missing two of our own... our mission failed... Lupis alive... and we've gained an amnesiac... what are you, anyway?" he asked Vergil.

"A mutant, apparently. I've apparently seen another one of my kind in the past, but other than that, I can't tell you just what I am, or whether they did this to me to make me look this way." he shrugged.

Tony pulled over into a parking spot on the street, and was thankful they were away from all that mess. This was a much safer area of town, where the rich played day and night. "OK... let's get that med kit out of the trailer and get you at least patched up." Tony said softly, shutting the engine down and exiting the Pierce-Arrow to head for the trailer. Opening the door, he noticed Anne was up and moving about. "Oh, hey Anne! Glad to see you're awake! We had to get you out of there really quick, but we did it!" Foraging around in one of the cabinets, the ferret retrieved the med kit, and hopped out of the trailer, holding it out for Marita to take. "You seemed like you knew what you were doing, so knock yourself out!" he suggested, resting his back against the side of the Berline and folding his arms across his chest, looking out both ways at the traffic on the street. "We gotta regroup..." he said now. "See if Soren's still alive... and get Lily back." he commented softly to no one in particular as he studied the lively city.

He had parked in front of one of his favorite malls, knowing it was a safe place to lie low until they could figure out where to go from here.

"Yeah, yeah!" Cavanaugh muttered back, a bit pissed his boss was such an ingrate, but oh well. Time to get this show on the road! "Bring out the APC!" he ordered, and within a minute or two, the armored vehicle was rolling towards the loading dock's gate. "You better run little man!" Cavanaugh shouted after Soren, and climbed aboard as the APC rumbled off and onto the street Soren was retreating down. Cavanaugh was mindful of his orders... only pursue as far as the highway... yeah, yeah. Plenty of road until then.

"Open fire! Let's shred this guy!" Cavanaugh ordered, and the big .50 cal on top of the APC opened up now, spraying bullets in Soren's direction, though the human had gotten a head start, so he was a bit of a ways ahead of them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 07, 2014, 11:19:49 pm**

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once we patch up axel here we head back to pick up soren.. yes its dangerous, but heyy, we dont leave anyone behind.. use my phone and call him' marita said handuing it to Tony.. then pulling out the gauze and padding in the first aid kit. this wasnt an ordinary first aid kit ether,

it was a mini surgery kit. there was stitches and thread and sterile utensils ' Remind me to thank your dad' marita said to tony as she got out the stitches and thread. ' now grit your teeth Axel because we dont have much sedative, and i'm going to be sewing your ear back together. it will have to do until we can get you to a hospital' she said. marita began the slow bloody process of repairing axel's ear.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 07, 2014, 11:25:57 pm**

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"I think you forgot." Tony said, pushing Marita's phone away. "You were right next to me when that pulse went off. Your phone's just as fried as mine is." the ferret stated. "I'm gonna have to buy a burner one for now I guess." he said, looking up at the mall. "I bet I could find one in there." he pointed.

He listened to her comment, but shook his head. "I'm not going back on a hunch. We need to know he's alive. Right now that base is on high alert. Going back... we all die. I'll think of something." he sighed. "As said, might go inside the mall... see about getting a phone. Give my dad a call... have him send me one... I dunno. Let's get Axel taken care of first." he said. "We aren't going anywhere if he risks reopening his wounds."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 07, 2014, 11:36:13 pm**

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good point' marita said. i'm going to buy new phones for rose and marie as well' no, you dont have to do that' marie protested 'i insist' marita said as she sewed the lower strip of axels ear together and started sewing the upper part back in place. ' besides we need to get some thing while we're out anyway..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 08, 2014, 12:01:27 am**

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Axel ground his teeth as the needle pulled the ragged strips of his ear together. "I don't have time to go to a hospital. *Lily* doesn't have time. We need to come up with a plan, get ready, and act."

He stared down at the floor. "If we're going to go back, we need firepower. Guns. I didn't see as much of the fighting as you guys, but I could tell they were stocked up. They already have the numbers on us, the least we can do is start to level the playing field in that area." Axel paused and moved his head slightly, glancing at Tony. "Unless we can make up for the numbers too... Tony, I know your dad said he didn't want to get his people involved in a fight with the Purifiers, but what about if he knew how much danger you'd be in?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 08, 2014, 12:10:27 am**

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'I'm not a doctor Axel' Marita said firmly. ' i'm doing the best I can, but you need to let your wounds heal. going off half-cocked will only get us killed. right now you are no shape to be going after Lily. we have to be smart about this..." he said as she stitched his upper ear back to the rest of his ear, all things considered, his ear didnt look THAT bad, but the only way to guarantee his ear was truly fixed was at a hospital.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 08, 2014, 12:51:57 am**

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Soren flicked some blood out of his eyes as he made his way to an access road.

He then felt the ground rumble. "Fuck me, what now!?" It was then he heard the distant chatter of .50 caliber machine guns - and they were coming closer.

He looked around for a car. It was then he noticed a 2026 Fisker Karma parked on the side of the road next to an abandoned electronics factory. The fact that it was rocking gave a pretty good hint as to what the occupants were up to.

He dashed for the car and noticed that a Ferret and a Wolverine were having sex in the passenger's side.

He tried the door. It was locked and the couple were oblivious to him. Heart pounding, he smashed the driver's window with the butt of his shotgun.

"Get the fuck out now!" he ordered, leveling his shotgun at the two.

The couple disentagled themselves and raised their arms up as they tumbled out the passenger's side.

"Give me the keys! Now!" The Ferret tossed him the keys, which he pocketed.

He pointed to the direction which he had previously run. "Run that way! If you look back, I'll fucking kill you!"

The couple obeyed and ran. The Human stashed the shotgun on the passenger's side as he reached over and closed the door. He started the motor and sped down the access road, hoping that he was heading towards a highway.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 08, 2014, 01:23:10 am**

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Tony couldn't help but smile at Axel now. "Heheh... I don't think my dad works that way, Axel. He's testing me... he wants to see if I can do this on my own. But sure... it wouldn't hurt to ask... but I'm 90% certain I know what his answer's going to be." He pushed off from the car now, and looked up at the large shopping mall. "Anyway... I'm gonna go shopping for a phone, and grab a bit to eat. I'm starving. Anyone up to joining me?" he asked. "We all need new phones after all."

Vergil slid out of the car, narrowing his eyes at the shopping center. "I guess... it couldn't hurt to see what this world is like." he said hesitantly.

"Don't worry... you won't stick out that much... even with your current disposition." Tony smirked.

Soren outran his pursuers, who halted once he started getting close to a highway. Screeching to a halt, the APC withdrew to the base without further incident.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 08, 2014, 01:29:42 am**

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marita finished stitching up Axels Ear and cut over his left eye. then wrapped the ear in gauze and covered the cut above the eye with a large bandage. ' ok. just let the ear heal and dont put your paws anywhere near your face for awhile' marita said, wiping her paws with a number of tissues from maries tissue box. rose gathered up the bloody hankerchief and bloodies tissues, got out of the car and threw them away in a nearby garbage." we';re all coming with you' Rose said to Tony, as she stretched for a few seconds. a row of stairs led down into a food

court a kiosk that listed all the stores and locations- along with a ' You are HeRe" marker. was to their right. ' so where to first?' marie asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 08, 2014, 01:51:15 am**

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(Lanthae Highways)

Soren sighed as he wiped his forehead. He had just committed a crime. His heart pounded as he merged onto an elevated highway and continued driving with the flow of traffic.

He silently prayed that the cops were too busy dealing with other things as he had nowhere enough creds to bribe a cop and a failed bribe was worse than no bribe at all.

He then browsed through the car's stored memory. On a whim, he pressed Lanthae Heights Mall. He leaned back as the car's autopilot took over.

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(Lanthae Heights Mall)

Anne nodded as she followed the group. She was uncharacteristically wearing a rather sensual looking orange cocktail dress. Granted, it was something that she had found in the trailer but was better than the stained pants she previously had on. She sent a mental command to her horn to see if she could eavesdrop on any interesting radio waves.

She gasped as nothing happened. "Great, I need to go see a internal cyberneticist. My implant's fried!"

Her stomach growled. "On second thought, let's eat first." She looked at the map. "Anyone for takeout noodles?" The mare pointed to a small takeout place on the map labeled "Mizuho Noodles".

All around her, various well-to-do people milled about, flaunting jewelry or the latest in personal electronics and cybernetics.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 08, 2014, 02:14:30 am**

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I could do for a pizza' Rose said pointing to a a "Mega Pizza' which was on this level. ' pepperoni sounds good ' marie said ' hopefully i have enough credits for it.. ' i got it girls marita said..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 08, 2014, 07:10:20 am**

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Axel paused, then nudged Tony on the shoulder. "I'll catch up with you." Limping back to the trailer, he climbed up and made his way over to the notepad that lay on the table. He swallowed as he looked down at the message Lily had written for him before, then gently tore it out and picked up the pencil. He scribbled out a new message, then tore that page out too.

*Soren - in shopping center. Looking for new phones. Find us.*

Stepping out of the trailer and closing the door, he slipped the paper under the windshield wiper of the car. It was a long shot, but if Soren was still alive and had managed to escape, the vehicle was distinctive enough to be easily spotted across the car park. He exhaled, praying that his friend was okay but suspecting that he'd never see him again, then made to catch up with the rest of the group. Getting something to eat was the last thing on his mind,

but he knew they needed to clear their heads and refocus.

Axel approached Tony and Vergil and looked down at the gecko. *With all the damage he can do, we're going to need him with us...* "So you... you were just kept in that lab?" He looked at Tony. "You never knew anything about him?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 08, 2014, 12:21:40 pm**

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Tony saw Anne exit the trailer, and had to admit... with that dress on, she didn't look half-bad. He never really thought he'd go for equines, but she was looking pretty good in that dress. Damn...

Smiling, he turned and led the way into the mall, looking at the directory and nodding at their suggestions. "Yeah... I'm gonna get some Indian myself... chicken makhani's one of my faves, after all." the ferret said, licking his lips as he thought about it.

Vergil nodded at Axel's question. "Yes... I was in that tube... I don't know for how long, or where I came from before that... but the resonance of that pulse woke me up. I think they may be responsible for why I look the way I do." he stated, shaking his head. "I'm too bizarre to be natural."

"Nope." Tony shook his head. "That room was for the higher-ups and science guys only... constantly sealed, and not for the likes of a newbie like me." he commented in regards to Axel's question. "I never knew they had... live subjects in there." Tony said. "If I had... I guess solving Lily's mystery would've been easier."

They had descended into the food court now via a moving walkway, and were surrounded by food stands everywhere for those customers who couldn't be bothered to sit down for a two-hour meal. "Oh... right." Tony said now, remembering something. He dug around in his pocket for his wallet, and pulled out some credits. "You uh... probably don't have a lot of creds on you right now... so here." he offered a few to Anne, and gave a few to Vergil as well. "You don't have to worry about paying me back." he said sincerely. "It's the least I can do."

Looking at the Indian place, Tony went over, placed his order, and found a table that was big enough for the others. He poured the chicken makhani over his rice, and let it cool off for a only a few seconds before eagerly digging in.

Vergil was a bit slower, wandering around and looking at all the choices. He didn't even know what he liked in terms of food, so finally settled on some Vietnamese pho, a rice noodle soup. One dish sounded as exotic as the next to him, so he figured why not? Sitting down quietly, the white gecko began sampling the dish, finding it spicy but rather delicious at the same time.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 08, 2014, 12:59:38 pm**

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marita marie and rose ordered a large cheese and a small pepperoni pizza from mega pizza. the total cost was 170 credits, including sodas and sauces but even the small size was big. ythe girls brought the food over to tony table and sat down together. rose gratefully wolfed down a slice of the pepperoni while marie and marita tackled a slice of the cheese pizza. ' want some? marita offered tony and the other, each slice is like a foot long and there's 24 slices."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 08, 2014, 07:05:53 pm**

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Axel started to walk over to the others, then stopped when he saw the looks he was getting. He glanced down at his torn shirt and grimaced. Axel could see there was a cheap clothing

store just outside the food court. Signalling to the others that he'd be back, the rat made his way over, looking for something to hide his bedraggled appearance. Grabbing the cheapest thing he could see, a plain grey hoodie, he handed over the credits and noticed the alarmed look the cashier was giving him. "I, ah... fell off my bike," he explained weakly. The cashier cocked an eyebrow.

Leaving the shop, he pulled it on and zipped up the front to hide the bloodied shirt, then headed back to the group. Sliding into a seat at their table, Axel hunched over the surface and drummed his fingers, trying to think what their next move should be.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 08, 2014, 08:07:09 pm**

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Rose grabbed a plate and picked up a slice of peppwroni pizza and slid it to Axel " eat that. you must be starving' she said kindly.. ' theres plenty more pizza.' ;' there certainly werent lying when they called the place 'MegaPizza' marie said finishing her slice and taking another.' once you guys are done eating. we'll box up the leftover pizzas and go get our new phones..' marita said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 08, 2014, 08:09:26 pm**

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"Oh thanks." Tony said, smiling at Marita's offer. "I think I'm good at the moment though... but let's save that for the ice box in the trailer. Can always heat it up and have it later, heheh." he suggested. Noticing Axel wasn't eating and instead seemed to be lost in thought, the ferret looked over at him.

"Aren't you gonna have anything?" he inquired. "I can treat you if you don't have any credits." the mustelid offered. "We don't know when we'll eat again, so maybe you should get this out of the way while we're stopped."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 08, 2014, 09:29:39 pm**

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Axel blinked and looked up from the table. The ferret had a point... he didn't know the next time he'd get a chance to eat, and if he was going to be in any state to help Lily, he had to keep his strength up. He gave Tony a small smile. "Yeah, you're right," he said, accepting the plate from Marita. "Thanks."

Axel took a bite, not really tasting it. He looked around at the others. "What happened to all your phones?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 08, 2014, 09:49:49 pm**

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that pulse was a electromagnetic pulse. knocked out anything like phones and computers. fortunately i always backup my computers' maritas said ' but phones.. they're shot..' she said ' so we'll have to buy new ones' marita saiod pulling out the memory card from her phone..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 09, 2014, 05:22:07 pm**

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"The pulse *a/so* fried all augments." Tony stated, waving his fork a bit. "Meaning Nairda's out cold, and Anne must've only just recently woken up." Thinking back on what Axel had said, Tony gulped down some more chicken.

"One thing you mentioned Lupis having said has got me thinking." Tony added thoughtfully. "All we have to do to save Lily is try to kill her, and that'll force the consciousness out of her, right? But it'll flee to another host so... who's going to be the host?" he asked now, looking around. "We can exactly force this into someone innocent, after all. I don't remember if you said this, but is there a way to force it back into its own body without it moving into anyone around it? I was a bit more focused on the road at the time when we were driving to the mall." Standing up as he finished his meal, the ferret stretched out, pulling his arms up above his head and uncurling his tail behind him. "I guess we'll buy some phones and talk on the way to doing so."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 09, 2014, 05:45:07 pm**

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marita finished her slice and packed away the leftover pepperoni and cheese pizzas. 'alright everyone lets go get those phones' she said as she carried the pizza boxes. 'i dont think its as simple as trying to kill her tony, we'd need a host ready to replace Lily. easier said than done imo.'

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 09, 2014, 10:05:08 pm**

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Axel took a last bite of his pizza slice and let it drop back on the plate, then stood up, glad to be moving. "I don't know," he said, keeping pace with Tony. "From what I could tell, this thing inside her is like some kind of wild animal backed into a corner. You can't tell what it's going to do." He shook his head. "Lupis said something about him being able to resist it and... I think he was probably telling the truth. If it wasn't for that, we could have forced *him* to do it and hope it went into that bastard, but..." Axel sighed. "We could try and force it back into its own body but whoever did that would be in danger of the thing just going into them. Forcing Lupis to do *that* somehow would be the best case scenario, but I don't know how we could get him to do it... or even if getting close to him again is a good idea," he said, indicating his face. "We'll just... We'll deal with that when the time comes," Axel exhaled quietly, already knowing what he'd do if it came to it.

The group took the walkway up out of the food court, and in the distance a shop sign poked out above the heads of the shoppers milling around, screaming the name **Cyber Cell** in bright neon blue. As they started to make their way over, a huge, round man eating a hotdog barged his way through them. "Watch it, morons!" the behemoth yelled over his shoulder.

Axel looked down at Vergil. "Here's where your weird superhero powers could come in useful," he said lightly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 09, 2014, 11:21:38 pm**

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*Emilena breathed under her breath, feasting her eyes on the scared young woman whose hand was trapped by her meaty fist.*

*"If you don't scream, I'll kill you afterward rather than before..." she whispered throatily into her prey's ear. She could already feel herself getting hard in anticipation.*

*As Lily's cries were muffled in Emilena's ham-sized palm, they were interrupted by someone leaping onto Emilena's back and whacking her in both temples simultaneously.*

*Sparks erupting in her vision, she threw the intruder over her back and stumbled. Before she could even get a good look at the scrawny white rat, pain erupted through her abdomen as Lily blasted her at point blank with her own shotgun.*

*Emilena was abruptly in a white-walled laboratory, standing at attention by the door. A heavy shotgun, much more advanced and high-tech than the last one, rested on her shoulder and in the butt of her hand.*

*"This'll only be a minute, John," her partner Lupis said apologetically.*

*"Don't worry about it," she smiled. "Always happy to help you out."*

*"If only these blasted scientists held a similar attitude..." Lupis muttered acidly. Without further ado he marched over to a group of whitecoats staring at clipboards in front of an unsettling creature in a tank.*

*Emilena didn't like to look at it; it looked like it was asleep or dead, but even from here she could tell its muscles were primed. It seemed to be masking incredible agitation.*

*Emilena shuddered and looked away. At least she was safely over here, not being involved. Lupis always handled the unknown better than she did.*

*But something in her mind wouldn't stop thinking about that creature. She tried to focus on Lupis, who was aggressively demanding information on the security features of the room. She liked to look at Lupis when he worked, it calmed her. But right now her thoughts of him kept getting pushed aside.*

*Maybe I can convince him to relax tonight with some beer, she thought, idly swiping her security card to open the laboratory door. He needs some stress relief, he hasn't spent a night in our bed for over a week...*

*Abruptly Lupis snapped his gaze over to her with a speed that made her jump. "John. What are you doing?"*

*Emilena looked with surprise at the security card in her hand. "I--? I don't know? I was just..."*

*"Close the door. Now!" Lupis snapped.*

*Emilena made to shut the door, but hesitated. The thought of the creature made her pause. Why couldn't she stop picturing it?*

*Lupis was by her side in the blink of an eye. Faster than the human eye could track, he made a swipe for her security card, but she flipped it into her sleeve. He drew his own, but she moved to block him.*

*"Get that door shut!" Lupis yelled at the scientists, but they were frozen with fear.*

*"Lupis...what's happening?" Emilena asked, worry crossing her face. She couldn't control her body.*

*"It's in your head!" Lupis said urgently. "You've got to fight it! Don't let it control you!"*

*"Oh, god..." Emilena cocked her shotgun and fired it at the tank housing the creature. As the scientists ran for cover, the body tumbled to the floor. "Lupis! Make it stop!"*

*Emilena tried to run, but Lupis tripped her and slid her into a wall. Swiping his security card, he closed the laboratory door. "Activate the hazard frequency!" he snapped at the scientists. Only one found the courage to move, but he soon lost it when Emilena fired clumsily at him. Her head was spinning. Where was another way out?*

*She and Lupis spotted her ticket to salvation at the same time; the computer terminal. Leading through that wall were the wires connecting the computer to the network. Integrity will be weakest there.*

*Lupis blocked her. "Fight it John!" he snapped again. "You're a government agent you fucking*

*idiot!"*

*She smacked Lupis upside the head with a ham-sized left hook. "I--I'm not you Lupis!" she cried. "You were always--"*

*A gunshot cracked out; Lupis had assumed a crouching stance and shot her in the thigh. The gun quavered slightly and aimed at her other thigh, a crippling blow. But the hesitation gave her the chance she needed. Not even understanding how, she sent Lupis flying away from her, hitting the wall with a sickening thud.*

*As the scientists cowered in the corner, she ripped the computer from the wall and found the origin of the cord. Outside, she heard guards attempting to batter down the door.*

*"Stop!" Lupis shouted into his radio, staggering to his feet and stumbling forward. "Don't break down the door! That's an order!"*

*He shot her again. And again. She staggered, but the intruder in her mind gave her the strength to keep standing. Raising her fist, she punched the wall repeatedly until her bloodied and broken fist had cracked it.*

*She felt hot fangs sink into her neck; Lupis was attempting to sever her spine. He knew where the weakest and most sensitive part of her neck was...*

*Emilena collapsed to the ground obligingly. Her breathing didn't come easily. But it was gone, she could tell. It had abandoned her. "Lupey..." she whispered weakly.*

*Lupis surveyed the extensive damage to her body with intense alarm. "You worthless fucks get me a medical kit or I swear to god I'll kill you where you're cowering!" he shouted at the scientists, who collectively found the sudden motivation to follow orders.*

*Emilena could feel it; this was the fight she couldn't win. "You were always better than me, Lupey..." she saw blackness cloud over her vision. "...better...at hiding your thoughts..."*

*"Don't talk," he commanded sternly. But her last sight was his worried face. He was crying. He never cried...*

*She tried to raise her arms, to touch him, but it was too late. At least she tried...*

*Abruptly Emilena woke up in a cold sweat. Breathing heavily, she staggered out of bed, mind reeling. In the bathroom she splashed cold water on her face, but no amount of shock could wipe the dozens of deaths she'd just experienced from her memory.*

*She smelled the unmistakable aroma of bacon and eggs coming from the kitchen, but she locked her bedroom door instead and sat silently on the edge of the bed. She needed to think about everything she'd just seen, digest it. She needed it all to make sense...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 10, 2014, 01:10:39 am**

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Vergil merely looked up at Axel now as he suggested he do something as mundane as trip up the large man using his... powers. He frowned here. "To use my powers for something so petty and self-centered... no... it wouldn't be right." he shook his head here. "Ugh... I don't even know why I feel that way... I just do." he sighed, shrugging. "Where did this honor come from? I-I remember... I remember..." He closed his eyes, stopping in his tracks as he tried to focus, the bustle and din of the shoppers around him making it difficult. "Being a soldier... of some sort. I don't think it was too long ago." he said, reopening his eyes and moving to catch up with the group. "For some reason, I feel I've been told by someone that my powers make me no better or worse than anyone else... and they're not something to use lightly like that."

"Odd.. you think it was your military training?" Tony asked. "I can't imagine they'd teach

something like that after all, given how the previous wars have gone." he shook his head here, entering the shop. Walking up to one of the many kiosks, the ferret selected the model he wanted, scanned his card, then headed to the front desk to pick it up. The system was very efficient, and Tony was even able to choose his old number to be transferred to this new phone, along with all of his previous data. Picking up his new phone from the guy at the front desk a few moments later, the ferret took it out of the box and inspected it after he turned it on.

"OK... well looks good. Good thing my previous phone was still under warranty; I only had to pay a replacement fee. That's all sorted. Guess I'll call my dad to give him an update, and we can get out of here. Any thoughts on where to go? I highly doubt you want to just approach the Purifier Base again without a more solid plan." Tony commented.

Vergil marveled at this rather speedy technology at how one could order a phone. He didn't pick one up for himself because he didn't see the need, nor have the funds. He thought about what Tony had said... about how previous wars wouldn't have fostered such a mentality as he suggested. They must have been rather brutal conflicts, in that case. Closing his eyes again, he tried to focus. Flashes entered his mind now, some glimpses of childhood... parents... enlisting in a military... joining the 'good' fight... yes... it was all coming back now. He had been in training... but how had he ended up in that tube? But then... there was war... a war they weren't winning...

Suddenly, his thoughts were jarred by flashes of that red gecko again, the wicked looking one with the golden eyes. He was standing before this creature, who was addressing a body of troops... but his eyes were different. They weren't quite so wicked looking. They were arrogant perhaps, but confident as well. *"I don't care how controversial it is! We have to resort to merciless tactics because our enemy is just as merciless! You've all seen it! We won't win this war unless we play by their rules! We're losing this war because we're being too predictable and too honorable! I say the hell with honor! We fight to end this war now! There's nothing wrong with 'moral shortcuts' if it means we'll bring an end to this damn conflict! I'm fed up with the tactics of the past! If you follow me, I promise you... victory will be swift and decisive. They will remember us as the greatest warriors of all time, and we will avoid extinction! Follow me, and your samples of victory will turn into permanent tastes, I promise you this!"*

"Mmmm..." Vergil opened his eyes now, his brow furrowed. This red gecko was clearly key to his past... but who was he? And more importantly... was he still alive?

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 10, 2014, 01:29:20 am**

marita picked out phones in pink , red and yellow for herself rose and marie. she swiped her card at the counter and transferred her old info to the new phone. rose and marie did the same, and soon all three were activated.' thanks. i like yellow as a color' marie said as she looked at her phone, before putting it in her pocket.' so now that we have our phones, whats the plan? marita asked tony..as she continued carrying the pizza boxes.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 10, 2014, 05:35:27 am**

Axel was chewing his lip thoughtfully. "Well, for a start, Tony, you could tell us everything you know about the base. All the ways in, how well guarded they are, any secret ways into that building that they think we don't know about." He looked at the ferret. "We've got to use the knowledge you have of that place as much as we can, and come up with a strategy that way. If they're holed up there, it's not like we can just charge in, we'll be cut to pieces... Even if we have one of the X-Men with us," Axel said, glancing down at Vergil.

"We'd also need to find a way to get some better weapons. From what I saw, the Purifiers were packing some heavy duty guns - We need to try and match them there as best as we can. But I, ah... I don't actually know where we could get those." He turned his attention to

Anne. "I... don't suppose you'd know someone who'd supply us? I mean, you're, uh..." Axel picked his words carefully. "...Streetwise, right? Or I guess we could see if your dad would help us out there, Tony, but from what you've told me that'd probably be a dead end."

"Finding more people to help us is probably a good idea too, like I said. Even if we have the best guns in the world and solid plan, there's still only a few of us and a whole army of them." Axel shook his head, frustrated. "But I have no idea how we'd deal with that, either."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 10, 2014, 11:38:00 am**

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"The guns are already covered, remember?" Tony asked. "We're packing serious firepower in the trunk of my car and my trailer, since my dad already provided us with kind of the 'standard package' in addition to everyone's personal requests. So we're good on that front. Now then... in terms of the base itself... there are some entry and access points that are typically not well guarded... but now that we just attacked them, security's going to be tight everywhere. The best modes of entry are the service tunnels and hatches, since that place used to be a factory and is chock full of them. They're always kept open as evacuation routes should anything happen to the base." the ferret explained.

"In terms of more numbers... my father wouldn't commit to something like this unless he was certain of victory. Sparking a drawn-out war with a group that has nothing to do with his family is both unwise and not financially sound. He would want it to be over swiftly because otherwise, it'd just turn into a drain on manpower, finances, and resources. The Purifiers haven't exactly crossed him either, so he has no reason to wage war on them; my father is a very retaliatory kind of guy. You leave him alone, he leaves you alone." Tony outlined.

"So if we're gonna do this... we're gonna have to make sure we take out the Purifiers as a whole, including Rhaegson, if possible. A good way of destroying the entire base is restarting those old reactors that powered the whole place. The Purifiers use a different power source now, but if you overload those things, they have the potential of leveling the whole location."

"You're talking about wholesale slaughter?" Vergil piped up here.

"Well... yeah, probably." Tony nodded. "They're terrorists who kill innocents all the time. Only real way to get rid of them is to kind of wipe them out." He shrugged here.

Vergil had to admit, these tactics sounded like the ones the red gecko would use, and he wasn't entirely comfortable with it, but he saw no clear alternative at the moment either.

"So yeah, our weapons are covered, I can take you to some entrances which will probably be less heavily guarded if guarded at all, and the numbers issue well... I doubt I'm gonna get my dad to agree to any support, so we'll probably have to look for alternatives on that front, but I suppose I could pitch it when I speak to him." Tony concluded.

"I'm not sure we'll need the numbers." Vergil spoke up now. "The careful application of superior tactics can ensure victory against any foe. One must only look for openings, opportunities, and weak points, and capitalize on them." He noticed the others looking at him now, and he looked down shyly and shuffled his feet. "Yes, well it was... just a thought. But I feel with a carefully planned approach, victory is not impossible. One thought that occurred to me was that this place is large, and a former factory. That means their manpower is stretched, and they won't be watching places that are no longer in use. You mentioned the reactors... I doubt these are guarded, yes?" Vergil inquired, and Tony shook his head to indicate they weren't. "Well this factory must be full of such places. It's like any base that's not tailor-made as a base, really. You man only the posts that are worth manning, and ignore the ones that aren't." the white gecko pointed out. "Right there you have your first weakness."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 10, 2014, 02:33:42 pm**

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Axel nodded. "Alright. The reactors sound like the best... or, so far, the *only* way to get rid of that place for good." He glanced down at Vergil. "Trust me... these guys have it coming. But we'd only start it when we know we can get Lily out of there. Not before." Scratching his bandage, Axel looked back at Tony. "Are you sure they wouldn't be guarded though?" he asked. "If they're really that powerful, there's a good chance they know it too. And if we manage to turn them on, I'm guessing they wouldn't exactly be quiet... which is where some extra man power could come in useful, keep them from swarming us..."

Axel shrugged and shook his head. "But, I don't know... I mean, I'm not exactly a tactician. You two have more experience with this kind of thing, so I'll trust you." He paused. "We should probably think about whatever it was that got Anne and Nairda and messed up your tech. What did you call it? A... a pulse? Whatever it was, we don't want them to throw that at us again."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 10, 2014, 03:06:59 pm**

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guys, this sounds .. well nuts' marie said ' we have to be practical about this. we would have to get lilly out then blow up the reactors, which would well likely result in a chain or explosions destroying the compound and most likely everyone in it.. we would need to be well away from there by the time they blow up..how exactly ae wwe going to pull this all off.. ' i could try and hack into thier defenses and turn them against them' Marita said," that would buy us some time..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 10, 2014, 07:10:33 pm**

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"That's easy." Tony responded to Marie. "As I already said... we overload them. That requires them building up to their critical point first... which takes time. Once we turn them on, it's not like they just explode as soon as that happens. We set them to past their critical point, and have plenty of time while they build up to that. Of course, we should do that probably around the same time we plan to free Lily. To answer your questions, Axel..."

Tony looked at Vergil. "I think he's on to something here. No, it's not very heavily guarded, because no one ever goes in there, and it's in a relatively deserted part of their base. If we destroy all the controls for it, it'll prevent them from shutting it down, meaning we don't even have to be in that room anymore to watch the reactors. We can be off doing our own thing and rescuing Lily."

Vergil's eyes widened at this. "And on top of that, what are they going to be doing when they discover the reactors are on and building up? To add even further to what you said, Axel, they'll be running for their lives. Evacuating... creating the perfect cover for us to get uh... Lily" he said, remembering her name "out of there. It'll also mean minimal opposition, for every guard that tries to waste time stopping us will be thinking in the back of their minds... 'if I don't leave soon, I'm dead.' The power of self-preservation trumps menial guard duties every time." He chortled here, folding his arms across his chest.

Tony smiled, snapping his claws. "Exactly! It's perfect! We sow panic throughout the base, giving us the cover to withdraw without interference, and we're out of there, no problems! Only problem I see..." Tony began. "Is getting past the more heavily guarded parts to the more lightly guarded deserted areas. Also avoiding that pulse again and locating Lily... those are the only real challenges we face, in my opinion. We have to find a way in without tipping them off... which I can sort of do, find a way to negate or outright stop that pulse from going off, and then ensure we can find Lily as well."

"I... might be able to help with the latter. I found I was able to glimpse a few minutes into the future... while I still don't fully understand how I can do this or if it's controllable or not... I'm just saying might." Vergil put in.

"Yeah kind of a long shot if you don't fully understand it yet, but hey, it's something to keep on the back-burner, for sure." Tony nodded here. "Anyway, how's that sound so far to you, Axel?" the ferret asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 10, 2014, 09:08:51 pm**

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"I think it sounds crazy," Axel said, shaking his head. "If a couple of days ago you'd told me I'd be having these kinds of conversations, I'd have called you insane." He looked up at them and, for the first time in a long while, grinned. "But then again, a few days ago all I did was sit on my ass and fix computers."

Axel stood up a little straighter. "It's a plan and... I think it could work. I mean, as long as those reactors give us enough time to get the hell out of there before they blow us into next week." He already felt better knowing they were starting to come up with a plan of action... and a way of getting to Lily. Axel knew he'd either find her, or die trying.

"Getting access to where Lily's being kept could be a problem too," he considered. "The lab they were keeping her in before was pretty... heavy duty." He looked at Vergil. "You can back me up on that. They'll have moved her, and I doubt it'll be to a place we can get into easily. If worst came to worst Vergil could probably take a few walls down, but... I mean, that would bring us all kinds of attention."

Axel crossed his arms thoughtfully. "Maybe we could get our hands on a guard while we're there... find out if he knows anything." He looked at the others. "But we'll cross that bridge when we get to it. Nothing we can do for the moment." He looked down at Vergil. "It's a long shot, but you can't remember anything about... I don't know, any other labs in there?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 10, 2014, 11:54:14 pm**

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(Lanthae Heights Mall)

Anne was walking along with Tony and Axel. She said nothing, the silence inside her head from her disabled implant was making her profoundly uncomfortable.

"Why not lure them somewhere with a fake tip or something? I used it a few times to fuck with the cops," she piped up as she noticed a Lanthae Police Department repulsorcar landing in the parking lot. At the same time, she moved a bit faster to get out of the window so the cops didn't see her.

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Soren parked his car and carefully hid his shotgun in the compartment under the rear seat. He looked around for the distinctive Pierce Arrow and the trailer. He soon found it near the front of the mall and approached the vehicle. He knocked on the door.

"Hey guys?"

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(Purifier Base)

Aaron's truck pulled up to the completely mangled front gates of the base. Bullet holes and spent casings littered the ground.

"The fuck did we miss?" Aaron asked as he got out of the truck.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 11, 2014, 02:20:12 am**

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Nairda, unconscious in the back of the truck, lolled his head against Soren's window, jostled from Soren's knocking.

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The scientists finally arrived, over fifteen minutes after Lupis had called them.

"What in god's name took you all so long?" he snarled angrily. He looked on the verge of pouncing them.

"We were in the reinforced bomb shelter for our own safety!" one of them explained hastily. The scientists quickly sedated Lily, who relaxed unnaturally into a fitful sleep.

The scientist grew silent as Lupis withdrew his bloodied fingers from Lily's crotch.

"Let's get her in a tank..." Lupis muttered, making eye contact with nobody.

A few minutes later, the two guards from before leaped to attention as Lupis and his scientists entered the room. "Sir, we reset the blast doors in place, but their mechanisms and locks were completely demolished," one started. "It can fully seal shut though."

"--That's not structurally sound enough," one scientist said. "We need a full construction team immediately to fix them to flawless perfection!" added another.

"Belay that," Lupis cut them off. He was looking elsewhere; at the mangled body of Exstasis in the center of the room. "I'll need a few minutes to debrief my science team. Please assemble the construction team, but do not return until I order you."

After the guards left, Lupis walked over to the sealed blast doors and made sure they couldn't be opened. "At a brisk run, it takes five minutes to reach this lab from the bomb shelter..." he muttered.

No reply.

Lupis shed his bloodied outer coat. "It takes *five minutes!* Four minutes-and thirty seconds less than the time it takes to activate the hazard frequency, I might add..."

"We were...scared!" one of the scientists blurted out. "We heard shooting! We passed bodies!"

The scientists were beginning to get nervous. Lupis walked to the security system monitoring the room and turned it off. Then he removed his pants and shoes, revealing sharpened claws retracting from the pads of his feet.

Then he struck. The scientists' screamed and most got the chance to run, but the room was only so big. Savagely, Lupis tore into exposed flesh and quickly-exposed bone, systematically murdering them one-by-one, herding them like sheep away from the intercom or security system monitor. In minutes, the bloodbath was over, and the panting, feral wolf was the only man standing.

Panting, Lupis slowly returned his breath to normal. Straightening up, he replaced his outer clothing and walked to the intercom. "Bring in the construction team," he sent to the guards, and then contacted Rhaegson. "We've got her. I'm sorry to report she relapsed after we got her into the laboratory, and murdered the science team. But I'm more than capable of doing the tests myself. The hardest part is finally over."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 11, 2014, 11:29:39 am**

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"Oh there's also a bomb shelter." Tony stated, remembering now. "But it was meant to protect against a nuclear strike somewhere else in the city. A direct explosion right on top of it from the reactors and it'd be gone, cause those things would leave a crater probably a mile wide. As for our time window... I'd say it'd take about 30-40 minutes to reach the critical point, so that gives us time."

They were starting to wander back to the car now, but Tony didn't feel like leaving the mall just yet. He noticed Anne shying away from a window, and saw the cop car outside. "Hmm..." He moved more towards the shops now, pretending to browse so as to stay away from the windows.

"I... do know there are other labs in the facility." Vergil said slowly. "I got some brief flashes of them when I sensed your friends driving around the perimeter in their car. Must be what they call 'remote viewing.'" Vergil added.

"Pretty impressive, but yes, there are standard laboratories that I know about." Tony commented. "They're relatively easy to find, so she's either going to be in one of those, and that's convenient cause they're all clustered together, or that secret one you escaped from, if she's not in the cell block. Worst case is they moved her out of the base but... let's hope that hasn't happened." He listened to Anne's idea here. "Well it's worth a shot. Could give them an anonymous tip and see how they react. Might lure some away at least." Shoving his paws in his pockets, he acted like a casual shopper as they made their slow way back to the street the car was on.

"I might be able to detect if they've moved her. She was a psionic, like myself, and I was able to get a good read on her. I should be able to detect her again if I'm in proximity. Not sure how close, but it's there on the table now." Vergil put in.

"Then that's that problem solved." Tony replied in a relaxed fashion.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 11, 2014, 11:42:20 am**

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kojuuro stirred. one of the men who had watched him fight kozlov had taken pity on him and driven him to a nearby hospital. ' how are we feeling? a doctor said coming in and seeing him ' how bad was it? kojuuro muttered ' your injuries?. ' lets see, 5 broken ribs, level 3 concussion, contusions to head and neck area, some internal bleeding.. in short you really got messed up. you're lucky you didnt have a severing of your spinal column, or worse..' the doctor said reading from a chart. kojuuro looked down and saw his mid section wrapped in bandages. ' how long before i can be discharged' discharged, mr kojuuro, you need to heal. your injuries required surgery. at least a couple of days would be preferred. is there any one we can contact.. ' no.. i dont have anyone ' kojuuro replied lying back on the pillow.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 11, 2014, 06:36:05 pm**

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Marcus looked around as he climbed out of the truck, eyes narrowing as he focused on the spent casings lying on the ground. A engine rumbled behind him, and he turned to see Cavanaugh driving up in a truck loaded with a 50 Cal. gun. "What the hell happened here?" he shouted across to him.

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Rhaegson frowned. "She wiped out the science crew? There's no survivors? Damn, that's..." He stopped as Lupis confirmed that he could finish their work. "Yeah? Well, that's alright, no harm

done. You had me worried there for a second," he said, relaxing visibly. "Make sure our little mutant freakshow doesn't try anything else. I've already lost a few men just earlier, I don't want to lose any more. 'S bad for business."

He glanced down at his watch. "Well, well, would you look at the time," he said, stretching his arms above his head, the movement causing his joints to pop. "I'd say it's about time for me to show my lovely face. Just get on with your part. I want that bitch prepped as soon as you can."

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"You... you can sense that kind of stuff?" Axel asked Vergil. "Alright... *Alright!* I think this could actually work!" he grinned, starting to feel hopeful again. *We're coming Lily...* Above the group, a huge screen was suspended from the ceiling, hanging over the bustling crowd. On the screen, a cheerful animated squirrel was advertising a new brand of hazelnut cookies. "If we just..."

He trailed off when he noticed the image on the screen start to flicker, static playing across, the sound of the advert cutting out. At first, through the grey fuzz of the interference, Axel could just about make out a shape moving around. Then, all of a sudden, the static vanished.

In place of the advert, a small, unkempt man was standing in a grey room, the image grainy. Hanging on the wall behind him, a black piece of cloth was hung up, with a red cracked gear symbol printed on it. Axel's heart skipped a beat. *The Purifiers...* The man's hands were shoved casually into the pockets of his denim jacket, and beneath dirty blonde hair that hung over his face, his eyes glinted savagely. Axel's own eyes widened in confusion. A few shoppers had noticed the change as well, and, like him, were pausing to look up. Axel heard a raised voice, and he glanced across the mall to a television shop on the other end. The same image was on the screen of all the TV sets he could see. His tail curling nervously, the rat returned his gaze to the big screen above them.

The man grinned. "Hello, Lanthae," he said, his voice booming through the mall. "I hope you're all having a pleasant day. You don't know me, but I know all about you... I know that the city is full to the brim of so called 'citizens' who've decided to pollute their bodies with machinery, with bits of metal, circuits..." The man's smile vanished, his expression twisting. "Turning yourselves into freaks of nature..." He paused, and after a second his jovial expression returned. "Well, let's not get ahead of ourselves."

By now, most of the shoppers were looking up at the huge screen, or the smaller monitors dotted around the mall. A few feet away from Axel, the obese man who'd barged through them was staring up, a half eaten burger now hanging from his hands. "Who's this guy? What's he playing at?" he demanded.

"If you don't know who... or, what I represent by now," the Purifier continued, indicating the cloth behind him, "Then... well, you're a fuckin' moron."

The fat man looked down dejectedly at the ground.

"The reason I'm here now is to offer a heads up to some, and a warning to others. There's going to be a few changes coming up. Some... most of you probably won't like them. Unfortunately, that doesn't really mean a damn. The Purifiers have spent the last few years cooking something up. A weapon. Most of you will have heard of something called an EMP, or an electromagnetic pulse. Fries all computer circuits, electronics... you get the idea." The Purifier paused, his predatory smile spreading even further across his face. "You all probably get where I'm going with this."

"In exactly 24 hours, we'll be launching an EMP bomb with an... extra ingredient to give it a little more oomph. Believe me when I say it's radius'll be... impressive. Any augmented who are watching this, don't bother trying to run. You won't be able to escape. Any augmentations you have will be destroyed, and *you'll* be left significantly worse for wear. We have agents planted everywhere, waiting for the countdown to reach zero. And once it does, they have

orders to execute every single augmented they come across." He chuckled. "And therein lies the warning. You're all fucked. But nobody can accuse me of not playing fair. Now, then, for the rest of you. As long as you stay out of our way, you won't be harmed. As long as you don't fuck with us, *we* won't fuck with *you*. Hell, go ahead and take out a few augmented yourselves. We'd sure appreciate it."

The man lowered his voice. "And you're going to want to earn some brownie point with us. Because while some of our forces are dealing with that, more of us are going after Lanthae's government. The government which just so happens to place so much importance on augmentations for their defense." He cackled. "Bad move, boys. And once we've accomplished that, any who've tried to get in our way will be dealt with. Just a little something for all you normal, *pure* folks to think about."

He leaned closer to the camera, brushing aside the hair from his eyes. "Well, that about concludes our time together. For now. Take care! And remember, it's open season on those freaks!" The expression on his face darkened suddenly, and the pitch of his voice lowered. "Have yourselves a ball," he growled. The image on the screen suddenly flickered off, and was replaced by the tail end of the cookie advert. "They're the nuttiest!" the squirrel exclaimed.

The crowd gathered around started looking amongst each other, suddenly speaking again, a cacophony of confusion and fear. Axel looked at the group, suddenly aware of his augments. "Was... he couldn't be serious?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 11, 2014, 09:47:14 pm**

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Cavanaugh sighed. "It's a long story... we were attacked by a bunch of augment freaks, and Tony was helping them! They were after... well who knows? Lupis I guess. But we beat them back and well... couldn't get any of 'em, except that monster freak that wolf has been after, so I guess that's pretty big." Cavanaugh grumbled. "The hell you been doin'?" he asked now.

Tony looked up, his face contorted into a frown as he watched the broadcast of Rhaegson, his old boss. "Ugh... can't believe I used to work for this jackass..." Tony muttered, his eyes going wide as the announcement was made about the EMP being used to fry the entire city... and about the hunt that would begin afterward. "Of course he's serious!" Tony snapped when the broadcast ended, clenching his paws at his sides. "He doesn't screw around, you know that! But he's going after the government too? What kind of..."

Suddenly, his new phone rang. "Ugh! What now?" the ferret demanded angrily as he pulled it out and saw his father's name on the screen. "Oh... uh..." He hit the answer button. "Dad?" he asked.

"First off... thank god you're alive. Second... did you see that moronic broadcast just now?" his father asked.

"Uh... yes, sir." Tony nodded.

"Wonderful people you decided to join, son." his father growled. "But we'll talk about that later. Listen... this is a serious crisis, and I'm not standing for it. Two reasons why: Threatening the government is seriously stupid. You fuck with them, you fuck with the mob, because the government pays us... *all* of us... protection. All five families have their hands in this pie. Two, it would destabilize the city and cause economic chaos... which would be bad for business. Most of the families also invest in the augment business, so perpetrating mass murder and government unrest is simply not tolerable. I'm going to give Emilio Barzini a call here after I'm

done with you, and suggest an emergency meeting of the Five Families. We almost never agree on anything, but this... I think we can agree on. We'll crush those fuckin' Purifiers like the bugs they are. Launch a combined assault... the government may be relatively impotent to do anything about this, but we aren't. I wasn't originally going to help you... but this changes things." Don Stracci stated. "They just made this personal."

"Oh!" Tony stammered. "W-well... that's great!"

"No it's not great... I don't like having my paw forced... but what choice do any of us really have? By the way... you find out more about Ms. North?" he asked.

"Well... yes, we did." Tony added. "Lupis, dad... he's even worse than I thought."

"Figured. He's helping these whackjobs. Do me a favor... kill that stupid son-of-a-bitch, will ya? Any business prospects I had with that moron are now out the window. A Purifier body will be discovered within the hour in a very public place... and what we do to him won't be pretty, trust me. Too bad I don't have any higher-up Purifiers on my payroll... otherwise, Rhaegson would be getting a bullet in the back of his head within the hour as well, but don't worry about that. War is messy... dirty... should only be resorted to as a final push but... this is that final push. Where are you now?" his father inquired.

"Uh... L-Lanthae Heights Mall, in Soho." Tony responded quickly.

"That's Don Cuneo's territory. All right... I'm sure he'd provide you protection for now if you need it... you didn't ding my Berline, did ya?" was the next question.

"No! Of course not, dad! It's fine." Tony said softly.

"Good. I take it you failed your first try, eh? Well the thing about a Stracci is that he never quits. You get back out there when you're ready, and try again. This time... you'll have five armies at your back if I have a say in it." Tony felt himself smile at his father's words. "Anyway, I gotta give Don Barzini a call. I'll talk to you later." His father hung up now and Tony lowered the phone from his ear as if in a daze.

"Uhhh... well... I think we just solved our manpower issue... or rather, the Purifiers solved it for us. They just pissed off the mob by threatening the government... and you *don't* just piss off the mob and get away with it. My father's calling an emergency meeting of the Five Families, and he plans to publicly execute a Purifier within the hour in a... gory fashion I'm sure." he said, still not letting that smile die, suddenly feeling giddy all of a sudden. "This is... this is great!" he exclaimed, his smile turning into a happy grin as he looked at the others.

"Such an injustice will not be permitted to stand. Wholesale slaughter of innocents is the mark of cowards." Vergil stated, narrowing his eyes now.

"Yeah well... they made the wrong move in this chess game, I guess. Great news, eh?" Tony reiterated.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 11, 2014, 10:04:12 pm**

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Those bastards just declared war on all of us' marita said ' so we have 24 hours to wipe them out.. or find a new city to live in, if that fails.. i'm glad your dad is pitching in Tony, because we're going to need all the help we can get.' she turned to marie and rose ' you girls in?' she asked ' you dont need to ask' rose said . i'm in. ' me too marie said ' whatever i can do to help out..'

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lets get back to your car tony, and figure things out..' mmarita said to him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 12, 2014, 01:03:57 am**

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A refined British gentleman in a crisp suit and a blonde mustache walked up to the group in the mall. "My good sirs, would you be interested in a free shoe shining from Cockfosters Curios?" he handed Tony a gift certificate. "Free on this glorious birthday of Dr. Dorothea Wilmut, rest her legacy!"

The certificate had a logo of an O bisected by a claymore, and the motto "*Caveat Astrum.*" Both would be familiar to Tony as the calling cards of Don Cuneo, Stracci's ally in this part of town.

"If you're interested, you need only follow me..." the gentleman added.

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After much pondering, Emilena had pieced enough of what she'd witnessed in her dreams together to start drawing conclusions. Lily was clearly the linking factor; it appeared to have been every person who died in her vicinity since...a completely unrelated experiment escaped the Purifier base. She was capable of putting two and two together.

And that last flashback, as unpleasant as it had been, made her realize something. Something huge.

She unlocked her bedroom door and saw her parents fornicating on the couch.

"Oh! Hehe, sorry..." Emile blushed as Lena darted off of him and snatched her bathrobe off the floor. Emilena sighed heavily. "Hi honey! We saved you some bacon--"

"I've got to go," Emilena said tersely. "I'll need an outfit and my katana. If you have small arms I could use those as well."

Both of her parents were silent.

"I thought you said..." started Lena, bathrobe hanging forgotten from her hand.

"This is more important than me or you two," Emilena cut her off. "It's about a woman in trouble who deserves a second chance far more than I ever did."

She strode past them into her parent's bedroom, ignoring the dozens and dozens of every conceivable sex toy in existence, and scrounged for a clean set of Emile's farming coveralls and tool belt (she tried not to think about the complete lack of locatable clothing for Lena.) She helped herself to a flashlight, M1911 pistol, and a trowel for a makeshift bludgeoning weapon. When she returned to the living room, her parents had a backpack packed for her, with food, survival gear, and her retractable katana clipped to the strap.

"We Kibagamis can't resist being the heroes, can we?" chuckled Emile.

Emilena donned the backpack. "Trust me, I'm anything but."

Lena ran her paw along Emilena's face. "We're both so proud of how you've grown up," she smiled, tear running down her cheek. "And we're so glad we got to see you. Please come visit us again, when you can..."

Emilena stifled a recoil from her touch. "I...If the chance presents itself, maybe..." She regarded her parents one last time. For all their flaws, it was clear they loved each other. "This trip went...differently from how I expected, I'll admit."

She turned and started walking away.

"Oh, Emilena!" her mother called after her. "Last night, you occasionally mentioned a friend named Nairda...could you tell us a little more about him?"

Emilena paused and looked back. "I...he's just this fox who thinks too highly of himself. Has a flair for the dramatic, and too touchy-feely for his own good. I've wanted to stab him multiple times, but unfortunately he helps me in some...less than public ways I occasionally need."

She couldn't grasp what part of her description warranted the fitful chuckling bursts her parents were both stifling.

"He...sounds like a keeper!" grinned Emile, and then couldn't manage to force another word out.

Puzzled, Emilena continued her trek towards the city, until her parents and their farm was a blip on the horizon.

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Back in the mansion, the Doktor jumped up and started waving his arms when he heard who the don was speaking too.

"Gutendag freiulein, vould it bee possible for me to converse vis Nairda? I haff urgent beezness to deescuss vis him!!!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 12, 2014, 03:02:57 am**

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Anne stared at the screen in shock. She ran her finger over her horn. "I...I...I'm gonna die," she whispered.

Her head suddenly swam as she flopped down on a nearby bench. "Fucking hell, I need a pill – or a few!"

Soren shoved his way through the crowd until he recognized Axel and his group. "Hey, Axel, Tony, what's going on?"

"The Purifiers," Anne said. "Wait, how'd you get here?"

"I carjacked someone," he replied. "Anyways, mind bringing me up to speed?" He sat down on the bench next to Anne.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 12, 2014, 05:19:16 am**

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"Soren!" Axel cried, "I thought you were... ah, well, you know. It's good to see you back," he said, clasping his friend's shoulder. Straightening, a worried expression returned to his face. "You... you didn't hear it? The Purifiers, they just announced that tomorrow they're going to launch some kind of... EMP bomb. Every augment in Lanthae's gonna get fried and then they're going to send their guys in to finish the job..."

He crossed his arms over his chest. "But now we have Tony's dad on our side. We can stop them, Soren. We can stop them *and* get Lily back!" Gritting his teeth, he added, "We've got to..."

Axel heard a posh British voice, and turned to see a well dressed man addressing the group and handing something over. "Ah..." he started, puzzled, looking uncertainly at Tony, who the man seemed to be focusing his attention on.

"Tony attacked us?!" Marcus snarled, feeling his blood boiling. If there was something he hated more than the augmented, it was traitors. On the phone he'd said he was with Kibagami... had he thrown his lot in with *him*?! For a moment, Marcus didn't say anything. Then he growled, "We'll deal with him later."

Holding up the toolbox, he continued. "We were finding the last parts for the weapon. Took longer than expected." He brushed past Cavanaugh, heading into the base, then turned. "Have your men sweep the perimeter, make sure there aren't any breaches in our defense, then increase the number of sentries on patrol," Marcus commanded. "If we've had a break in, and they didn't get what they came for, we have to assume they'll be back."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 12, 2014, 12:54:47 pm**

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Marita turned as Soren joined then ' Soren! You made it out.. Next time, dont go rambo on us and charge headlong into a well-fortified building..that only works in movies..' she said. 'so now that we're all together, whats our first move? she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 12, 2014, 05:40:20 pm**

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Tony noticed Anne seemed spooked by the announcement, and he sat down on the bench next to her "Hey... hey no... you're not gonna die." he said softly, trying to reassure her. "My dad's getting involved now... as are the Five Families. We'll crush these guys before they have a chance to use that bomb... OK?"

He looked up as Soren shoved his way through the crowd. Well, well... how had he managed to locate them? Brightening up upon seeing him, Tony remained seated next to Anne for the moment. "Hey, Soren! Glad you're alive! Sorry we had to leave you... but when I picked up Axel, we were getting shot at, and you'd kind of walked off on your own so... we had to put the pedal to the metal." he stated. "Still... glad to see you made it."

It was then that one of Don Cuneo's men arrived and handed Tony his card, which Tony recognized immediately. "Oh! Well sure, we'd love the d... uh... his hospitality." Tony said, remaining purposely vague. "But I have a rather expensive car of my father's outside see, so I'd need to bring that, along with some hardware we're carrying." Tony said, knowing the man would understand.

He looked at the others now. "I was thinking maybe head towards Don Cuneo's, see what the meeting produces, and go from there?" he asked, looking from one to the other.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 12, 2014, 07:40:02 pm**

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Axel shoved his hands in his jeans. "Yeah... I mean, if they'd actually, you know, let the rest of us sit in on a meeting like that..." He nodded and looked at the others. "Knowing what their plan's going to be would definitely help."

Around them, the crowd had started growing increasingly agitated, pushing and shoving one another, voices raised in panic. Axel glanced around, shifting nervously. "Maybe we should, ah, get out of here, guys... It's looking like things could get kind of dicey..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 12, 2014, 10:52:22 pm**

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The gentleman nodded. "Walk this way, please," he motioned them.

After a few pathways, he led them into the backrooms of the mall, away from the rapidly agitating crowds. "My apologies, but Don Cuneo cannot meet with you personally," he explained. "I am Hastings Bitparte, one of his most trusted agents. Follow me; there are known Purifier agents in the crowd, who no doubt recognized you."

(OOC: Anyone who wants to play Hastings Bitparte can; I'm releasing him into the public domain.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 13, 2014, 01:34:38 am**

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Soren scowled but he realized that he more or less deserved it. "Yeah, I fucked up big time."

He then drank in the news of their ultimatum. "Great, what was once a simple arson turns into a city wide hostage situation."

Soren rubbed his eyes as he flopped down on a chair. Hastings had led the group inside the mall's staff room. A plain meeting room with grey walls, nasty looking upholstered chairs and bland motivational posters. A disgusting looking coffee pot and a stained table rounded out the whole room.

He then turned to Tony. "That's good idea but I don't think us non-Family members will be allowed."

"Hey, Anne, what do you think?"

The mare was drinking some beer filched from the refrigerator. "I'll go look around the Night Market in Lanthae Square and see how people are reacting."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 13, 2014, 02:08:03 am**

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marita warmed up some of the leftover pizza in the microwave. the lightbulb in the microwave flickered on and off but the machine did its job otherwise and warmed the pizza. the pizza was tasty, and marita figured she would need all the energy she could get. " want some pizza Soren? We've got lots left. the girls and I ordered a large cheese." She offered as she sat down in a chair. Marie and Rose warmed up slices as well, being jostled by panicking shoppers gave one a fresh appetite.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 13, 2014, 01:51:53 pm**

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Tony looked around at the small break room, and sighed, also shoving his paws into his pockets. "Well I don't mean sit in on the meeting. I could attend of course, but I just meant go to his place until some of the panic subsides, find out the meeting's results, and get on back to the Purifier base once the families start moving. Oh yeah, Soren, this is Vergil Speicher." Tony introduced Soren to the white gecko. "He was a lab experiment back at the base and helped Axel escape. He's got some pretty serious abilities, from what Axel's told me."

"Oh it's... nothing really." Vergil said humbly, giving a small wave.

"Anyway... I can't imagine we were being watched in the mall... but if we were, best get to the car and head to Don Cuneo's place. We have our overall plan for assaulting the Purifier base, and I think we should see that public execution soon of a Purifier as well." the ferret commented.

Poking his head out the door, Tony saw no staff in the corridor, and the way to the exit was clear. "OK... let's go!" he said, waving them on as he stepped out into the employee hallway. Walking casually down to the exit, the ferret popped the door open, looked around again to make sure they were in the clear, and exited out onto the street. He could see the Pierce-Arrow a little ways up the block, and he began heading for it.

"So this... Don Cuneo... he a rival or ally?" Vergil inquired.

"He's closer to my dad than the other dons, I'd say. He's on the level, from what I know. We don't implicitly trust him but... we should be OK." Tony explained as he reached the car, and got in behind the wheel now. Vergil waited for some of the others to choose their seats in either the car or the trailer before he entered.

At the Heights, Don Stracci was about to start the video conference with the other dons when that mechanical Doktor thing approached him. Narrowing his eyes, the ferret glared darkly at it. "You call me fraulein again... I'm gonna rip that head off and use it was a toaster for my daughter... understand?" he asked. "What the hell do you want, anyway? Talk to Nairda? I don't care *what* you want to do with that horny fox. I don't have his number, so you're on your own, I'm afraid. Now if you'll excuse me... I have an important meeting to attend." Don Stracci informed the robot, adjusting the cufflinks on his suit a tad.

It wasn't the don's job to contact others in Tony's group. If the Doktor didn't have their information that wasn't his problem. He paused before entering the conference room though, and turned around. "Look if you don't have his number, call my son, all right?" he asked, then slid him a card with Tony's number on it.

Cavanaugh watched Marcus head back inside. "Coming back? Yeah right... they wouldn't do that..." he murmured as he turned back around. "Ridiculous... he should know we can't possibly watch *every* access point. This place is too damn big." Sighing, he knew he'd just have to do the best he could. "All right you jerks! Spread out! We have to cover as much ground as we can! Those assholes might be back after all!" the Gila monster called.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 13, 2014, 02:51:00 pm**

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"I phoned him but eet doesn't vork!" the Doktor admitted, tears welling in his German cybernetic eyes. "And 'Freuiein' means Friend, doesn't eet? Zat's how I've been using eet zis entire time!"

He jumped for joy when the don gave him the business card with Ton'y name. "Oh *zank you* freulein! Zis makes me wery happy!" He checked the time; right in the middle of dinnertime. Perfect time to call, and he quickly dialed the number and waited for the ring.

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Emilena was just getting out of the woods when she heard rustling in a nearby abandoned farmhouse. Investigating, she stumbled across a naked couple shivering and looking spooked.

"Please, can you give us a blanket or something?" the male asked.

"The city is less than a mile east of here," Emilena looked scandalized. "What in the hell happened to you?"

"We were minding our own business driving along, when Soren Almaya held us up at a stoplight and commandeered our vehicle!" he explained

"How did you know it was Soren Almaya?" asked Emilena, alarmed.

He paused. "...I don't know. Lucky guess."

"Where are your clothes then?"

"We, uh...Soren wanted those too," the female shifted her eyes. "He admitted he was into cross-dressing."

"Does not surprise me in the slightest." Emilena threw them her blanket and whatever clothes she wasn't currently wearing. "There, but I'd appreciate if you tell me everything you can about where he went."

"Oh, the car's GPS is hooked up to a chip in my brain that lets me track it," the female explained. "I work at the Zwings Car Dealership, and was taking this man out for a test drive."

She rattled off the latitude and longitude of the car's current location. Emilena frowned. "I have no way of tabulating coordinates right now, but thank you for the information. I wish you both well."

She kept hiking. By sheer utter coincidence, she hiked all the way to the shopping mall where Soren and the others were! Then she hiked right into the parking lot where the car was parked!

But before she could notice the car, she quickly picked up the atmosphere was not that of friendly Saturday shopping. Yells and screams were breaking out as tensions rose, and some thugs had shoplifted items that doubled as bludgeoning weapons and were itching for a fight.

"Hey Girly, you an Augment?" sneered a particularly large one, brandishing the severed arm of a mannequin.

"No, but compared to you I could be Deep Blue, get out of my face," Emilena threatened. When he approached her personal space and opened his mouth to speak again, Emilena shot him in the stomach. "And never bring a bell sleeve to a gunfight," she spat on his writhing corpse, but the damage had been done. At the sound of gunfire, everyone in the vicinity went into "fight-or-flight" mode, and it quickly spread into the mall and beyond.

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Hastings looked up at the increased sound of fighting and shooting. "Oh dear. It appears I got you out of there in the nick of time." He stood up. "I apologize, but all I had to say was that Don Cuneo has his own problems at the moment and can not help you in any fashion other than assisting your escape. However, he is prepared to offer you two of your father's spies, who he has graciously let live and are holed up in a safehouse just north of here, at 1002 Brady Shanty. A backalley doctor and a Chinese Triad enforcer, both good men when they're not reporting on your every move. If you wish to contact them, the safehouse is programmed to allow Tony and his friends access."

He led them down a set of stone stairs to a locked double door. "This leads to the parking lot; I wish you luck in reaching the car." He passed out Lugers to those who needed firearms, and unlocked the door. "And Tony; let your father know that Don Cuneo will not be able to attend the Council of Five Families either." This would be a major blow; Cuneo was Don Stracci's staunchest supporter. "We're sorry, but our current problems necessitate it."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 13, 2014, 03:25:06 pm**

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Tony could see the mall was starting to break out in some sort of disturbance, so he sighed, and slid out of the car for the moment. "What problems?" he asked acidly. "What's more important than this?" he snapped, raising a paw. "Are you saying the Cuneos are having

problems that's more important than the government collapsing and economic chaos about to erupt? I don't need that!" he angrily pushed the Luger away from him. "I already said I got hardware in the car. What are you trying to do, get me busted for accepting a weapon on the street? You should know better!" He had to raise his voice due to the increased noise breaking out around the mall.

He felt his phone vibrating in his pocket, and gave an exasperated grunt as he pulled it out. He didn't recognize the number, so he hit ignore and pushed it back down into his pocket. "Look, buddy!" he said, raising a claw to Hastings's chest. "Your don *doesn't* support this move, how good do you think that's gonna make him look if he turns down a request for aid from the other four families? Just what's this about, anyway?" he demanded. "And no... you don't get *me* to tell my father Don Cuneo's not attending... *you* can do that!" he exclaimed, pushing his claw into Hastings's chest now. "I'm sure my father's gonna be very interested to hear this... along with the other dons he's meeting with at this point in time."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 13, 2014, 03:40:05 pm**

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Lets just get to this place Tony' Marita said as she marie and Rose got in. ' Lets drive there, and get these two guys to help us.. if possible..' she looked at the gun she had been given and sighed.

The sooner we get on the road the safer i'll feel' Marie said.. ' this place is going to pieces..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 13, 2014, 03:43:42 pm**

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Axel looked down at the luger in his hands, then nodded his thanks to Bitparte, shoving the weapon in the waist of his jeans and pulling his hoodie over it. Following Tony, he pulled level with him.

"So... these guys know what they're doing, right?" he asked anxiously. "I mean, if we do this wrong, I... I just don't want anything bad to happen to her. Lily won't be in any danger from them?" He stopped talking when he saw Tony and Bitparte were exchanging tense words.

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Marcus stalked into the compound, and wound his way to Rhaegson's office, pounding on the door when he reached it. There was a pause, then Rhaegson called through. "Hey, take it easy on the door!"

The doberman narrowed his eyes in irritation and pushed the door open. Inside, Rhaegson was reclining in his chair, holding up a phone to his ear. He held up a finger and continued to speak into the receiver. "Yep. Good." Rhaegson eyed the metal box Marcus was holding. "I think the rest of it's here, so you're good to go. Get ready, the delivery boy's on the way." He hung up, and then turned to Marcus. "Those the amplifiers?"

Marcus nodded. "Took a few extra, just in case."

"Well, isn't that helpful of you," Rhaegson drawled. "Good work. Take them down. They'll know what to do with them."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 13, 2014, 04:06:52 pm**

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A small smile played across Hasting's face. "Don Cuneo is...not in any position to be speaking to anybody. But I suppose his silence will be all the answer your father gets."

He backed away from the door and held the Luger in a more threatening position. "Consider

your survival right now a repayment for my years of dedicated comradeship to the Stracci Family. Your father can call me, but if he holds the same attitude as you, this section of the city may be allying with the Purifiers..."

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"I want to speak to Nairda!" the doktor said urgently. "It regards unusual brain waves he was giving off earlier!"

"Please leave your name and number after the beep!" The voice replied pleasantly. *\*beep\**

"I want to speak to Nairda!" the doktor said urgently. "It regards unusual brain waves he was giving off earlier!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 13, 2014, 04:24:03 pm**

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Tony's eyes widened at this. "I don't... believe this. What did you do to him you bastard!?" he demanded, grinding his teeth down. "You don't make threats like that idly..." He said, taking a few steps forward away from the car now before feeling something pressing into his backside. There was a hand on his shoulder as another human stood behind him, dressed in a long raincoat that seemed older in style. From the feel of it, Tony could tell it was the muzzle of a gun pressed into his backside. Glancing over his shoulder, he could see the man held the gun inside his coat pocket, concealing it from those around him.

"Tony Stracci." The man said in his ear. "You and I are going for a walk. Start moving down the sidewalk... in about 15 yards, a car is going to pull up, and you're going to get in. Say anything or talk to anybody and I'll kill ya, Stracci, ya got that?" he asked softly.

Tony was rooted to the spot at first, starting to tremble as he wasn't sure just what the hell was going on. "I'm insured against kidnapping... for a very large sum. This doesn't have to go this way." he said quietly in response.

"Shut up and move!" the man hissed, and Tony felt a jab in his back, and from this angle, he had a poor view of the car. He'd have to turn his head to look at it, and he wasn't sure he should be doing that. Being pushed forward, the man dropped his hand from the ferret's shoulder and simply walked behind him now, still holding the gun to his back. Tony's jaw trembled, but he noticed Bitparte seemed in no way to be part of this. In fact, the man didn't seem familiar from the brief glimpse he'd gotten of him, and Tony wasn't sure who this was.

"Don't want to wreck your raincoat... do ya?" Tony asked quietly as he counted the steps. He was probably about 8 yards or so from where the guy had said the car would pull up, and sure enough, there it was: a black, unmarked sedan that pulled in to the curb at an oblique angle, so that the black tinted windows were uncomfortably facing him. He tried to signal somehow to the others, but the man was between him and the Pierce-Arrow now, and blocked off view in that direction.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 13, 2014, 05:12:32 pm**

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Axel stared as Tony walked off with the man. He glanced at Bitparte in confusion, but he didn't seem to know any more about what was going on than he did. Turning, he took a few steps towards where the pair was walking, then froze as a black car pulled up suddenly by them. "Tony! What's... what's going on?" he called after them. "Tony?!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 13, 2014, 05:20:41 pm**

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Tony paused in mid-stride as he heard Axel, but was shoved forward once more by the man behind him. "Keep walking!" he ordered, and the ferret closed his eyes momentarily, wondering what he could do. He didn't have any further time to think, however. The door opened, and a man in a black suit motioned for him to get in.

"Tony Stracci... we have some business to conduct." he said, waving his fingers forward.

"What's this abo-" Tony began, but then cried out in pain as he was pistol whipped from behind, the butt of the gun smacking hard against the back of his skull, and causing his eyes to close and his body to crumple forward. Taking hold of him as he tottered, the gunman shoved him towards the door of the car, and hands began pulling the ferret in to their interiors.

"Go!" the man in the black suit ordered, and the sedan's tires burned rubber as the car shot backward away from the curb, pulled into the street, and started screeching off.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 13, 2014, 05:33:01 pm**

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masrita jumped into the drivers seat and motioned to AXel' Get Back in here! We're going to follow them! She said. as she turned the key in the ignition.'come on!"

Those bastards just took tony! Rose said. " not for long" Maritas said. as she pulled out of the parking spot.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 13, 2014, 08:17:39 pm**

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Axel stopped dead as he saw the man behind Tony strike him in the back of the head, and someone else drag him into the waiting car. His hands jerked up involuntarily. "*Holy shit!*" he gasped, started to reach back for the luger he'd been handed... but the car was already speeding away, and it wasn't like he could shoot out the tires.

Swearing under his breath, his voice shaking, he turned when he heard Marita call out his name. Seeing the Pierce-Arrow's headlights spring to life, he forced his trembling legs to start moving, heading back towards the car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 13, 2014, 08:33:40 pm**

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Marie opened the door for Axel as marita pulled up alongside him ' Hurry Axel.. we can catch them if we hurry' Marie said quickly. marita waited until axel got in them floored it, speeding out of the garage and after the black tinted limo. thanks to the modifications Don Straci had put in place, the car could top 100 easily.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 13, 2014, 10:23:25 pm**

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The sedan wasn't driving particularly fast, and instead, they proceeded at a leisurely 45 mph or so before turning into a large parking lot for a nearby office building about three blocks from the mall. The red brake lights came on, and the door opened as they rolled to a stop. Tony sailed out of the door and landed hard on the asphalt. He didn't appear to be very conscious. The man in the business suit stepped out behind the prone ferret, and grabbed the scruff of his neck, yanking him upward to a more or less kneeling position. "Get up!" He yelled, shoving his gun into the back of Tony's skull.

He then waited for his pursuers to catch up, and held the gun to Tony's head with steely determination. Time to end this game.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 14, 2014, 03:03:56 am**

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron had a mag-rifle dangling from a sling as he stood in one of the watchtowers that ringed the complex. He also wore a HMD that looked like a set of glasses, giving him night vision, infrared, UV and telescopic vision.

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(Lanthae Streets)

Soren hastily stuffed the pizza down his throat as he ran after Maria and the others. He leapt into the Pierce-Arrow's trailer.

"Fucking hell, I lost my shotgun at the mall," he said.

Anne drank a bottle of beer. "Knowing the shitstorm that's brewing, someone's probably already used it."

Soren drew the Luger from his pants pocket. Anne did the same, pulling it from a pocket in her dress.

"So what's our plan?" the mare asked.

"Full throttle action movie didn't work last time, so I'm thinking something more subtle. Like say, sniping the guys?" Soren replied as he sat on the couch and crossed his legs.

Anne's ears gently splayed to the side. "Okay, who's skilled enough with a rifle to shoot their target from about 300 meters away, kill them with one shot and not accidentally shoot Tony?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 14, 2014, 04:19:37 am**

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Eyes widening as he saw Tony collapse out of the vehicle, Axel gasped when he saw the man drag Tony up and put a gun to his head. He turned to Marita and the others desperately. "Oh shit... *shit!*" He bit his lip, heart pounding. "Look, there's a... an intercom on the dash, use it to talk to Soren, come up with some... some sort of plan. Someone needs to go out there and talk to them, maybe I can... distract them or something..."

Swallowing, Axel cautiously opened the car door and stepped out slowly, keeping his hands in the air. "Wait! Please just... just stop!" He waited a second for his breath to steady, then called across. "What do you want?! We can talk about this!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 14, 2014, 11:42:50 am**

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The abductor didn't flinch when Axel exited the car with his automated hands in the air. "Keep back, augment! One step closer and I blow his brains out! What do I want? Nothing you can possibly offer me, rest assured of that!" was his response to Axel's question as he dug the gun against Tony's head. The ferret's eyes were fluttering a bit as he struggled to regain consciousness and fight the painful swimming sensation in his head.

"Axel?" he asked weakly, hearing his friend's voice.

"Quiet!" the man shouted down at Tony. "There's nothing to talk about aside from this: get back in your car, turn around, and head on out of here. Forget your friend ever existed, and

stop pursuing us. Failure to comply will result in me torturing him in front of you, and possibly even putting a bullet into his brain, got it?" he asked threateningly. "Don't test me!" he snapped.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 15, 2014, 06:41:36 am**

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Axel froze, the colour draining from his face. "Alright! I get it! Just... just please, don't hurt him!" His mouth opened and closed as he searched for something to say. "Look, the... the Purifier's just announced that tomorrow they're going to try and take over Lanthae... thousands of innocent people are going to be slaughtered! We're going to try and stop them, but we need him with us to do it! Whatever this is, just... just *please* stop..."

Axel's eyes darted around desperately, trying to find a way he could save his friend, but there was nothing... and if he made a move he had no doubt it wouldn't end well for Tony.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 15, 2014, 02:22:23 pm**

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Emilena stumbled out of the melee in the parking lot in time to see her old friends driving away. At the very least, she recognized Axel, who she hoped to speak to.

Sprinting through the parking lot and leaping through hedges and anything else in her way, she came huffing and puffing up to the scene in time to witness the standoff.

Keeping her presence secret from the others, she circled around the back and slinked into the best position for the shot, hidden in the bushes beside the road. The man holding Tony was facing the opposite direction, towards the street and Axel.

Taking careful aim with her pistol, she sighted the man's head and fired.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 15, 2014, 04:01:59 pm**

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Soren remained in the trailer with a rifle he had found hidden under the sofa at the ready. Luckily, a combat helmet and a set of armor was also at hand and he had donned them.

He peered out the door and waited to fire if things went foul.

Anne clutched her pistol tightly. Her arms jittered as she began to feel the effects of withdrawal.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 15, 2014, 05:42:34 pm**

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marita clutched the wheel hard, her mind racing, trying to think off a way out of this situation. the car was parked 30 yards from where the man and tony were. ' trying to drive at him would be a death sentence for tony' she thought ' he'd blow him away before i moved 10 feet' marita hated being stuck in a situation like this. She could try and shoot at the man holding tony hostage, but she wasn't a very good shot with a gun, and in order to save tony, shes have to get off a very very good shot. she shook her head, and continued to watch the drama playing out in front of her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 15, 2014, 06:01:43 pm**

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"That's the idea!" the man shouted back. "Moving against the Purifiers is not beneficial to us! We hold him... and then kill him, we've removed a major threat to their plan! So just back off, ya hear? Otherwise, I guarantee I kill him right now!" He pressed his gun tightly against Tony's head to demonstrate he was serious.

Vergil too had been left behind when Marita roared off in the car, and had ran down the streets trying to catch up. He'd been distracted by looters advancing towards the car, and had had to defend the trailer as they had seen the flashy wheels and wanted a piece of it. After flipping over them and then mentally picking them up to slam them back down into the street, he was off, racing down the sidewalks to catch up with his new comrades. Shorter legs meant longer transit time though, so he huffed along, his cheeks inflating and then deflating with every so many feet he sprinted. He kept an eye on the vehicles as they seemed to pull into a parking lot up ahead... great... hopefully they wouldn't be gone by the time he'd get up there.

As Emilena fired, the man heard the gunshot, and reacted... but whether for being shot at or as a reflex couldn't be determined. As her bullet struck his head his gun went off, and as blood sprayed out of his skull, blood sprayed out of Tony too, and the ferret fell forward, a look of anguish on his face as the man fell on top of him. Where he'd been shot was impossible to say for now, as it had all happened so quickly and the man was now on top of Tony, masking him from view.

Almost immediately, another man stepped out of the car and opened fire on Emilena's position with an MP7, his back to Axel. The driver of the sedan rolled down the window and opened up on Emilena with a pistol he stuck out the car as well. "Get Stracci back in the car!" shouted the driver.

"Working on it!" the guy outside yelled as he began sidling over to Tony's position, which was already beginning to grow moist as Tony's and the man's blood pooled around the two of them.

Vergil finally managed to reach the parking lot, and his eyes got even wider than they already were upon witnessing the scene. "Oh shit!" he breathed, and steeled himself for another dash as he ran on, trying to reach the scene in time.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 15, 2014, 06:47:06 pm**

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Axel flinched back when he heard the gunshot, seeing the blood and brain spray out from the man's head... then, gut-wrenchingly, he realised that Tony had been hit too. Horrified, he stood motionless for a split second, time seeming to pass in slow motion before the shouting from up ahead snapped him out of it. "Fuck! *Tony!*" he yelled, darting around the car door and starting to sprint across the parking lot towards Tony's position.

Gunfire exploded from the car up ahead, and Axel's teeth bared in a snarl as he saw another man exit the car and start heading towards where the injured ferret lay. He didn't register that the man was shooting at someone else, that someone else was helping them. The rat only saw that the man's back was to him, and he seized his opportunity. Wrenching the Luger from the back of his jeans, Axel raised the barrel and charged towards him, screaming as he tugged back on the trigger.

The first two bullets missed their mark, but the next two slammed into the man's back, the force spinning him around to face Axel. The fifth tore through his throat, exploding out the back of his neck. As the man fell, Axel slid on the floor to where Tony lay sprawled under the first body, the rough asphalt tearing through the knees of his jeans and skinning him. Grunting, he heaved the corpse off him as machine gun fire continued to rattle from the car. "Tony, come on! Talk to me!" Shifting to the side, he wrapped his arms around the ferret's torso and started to drag him away from the gunfire. With so much blood spilled, it was impossible to tell how badly he was injured. "*Shit!*" he gasped as he continued to try and move Tony to safety.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 15, 2014, 07:02:20 pm**

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Marita stepped on the pedal and drove as fast as she could towards Axel. He turned the car as she did, blocking the other car from seeing what they were doing. She stopped in between Axel and the other car, as Marie threw open the passenger door. "Get in Axel! Quickly!" She yelled, her arms outstretched to help Axel get Tony in the car. Rose was huddled in-between the back seat and passenger seat.

- Marita glanced nervously around, waiting for the moment to drive away, once Tony was safely inside.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 15, 2014, 07:17:56 pm**

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Axel panted with exertion as he lifted Tony up, blood dripping as he and Marie heaved him into the vehicle. *Please don't let that be his...* Sliding him inside, Axel turned to slam the door shut... and caught a view of Vergil across the other side of the parking lot. "Dammit, Vergil's still out there!" he shouted, "We can't leave him!" Leaning out, he took another few pot shots at the kidnapper's car.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 15, 2014, 07:25:20 pm**

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Marie grabbed Tony torso and dragged him into the car. "Run Vergil! She called out. "we're leaving" she shouted, as Rose tried to help as best she could from her position. Marita honked the horn, so Vergil could hear it and know that they were about to leave." you've got 10 seconds Vergil! Marita shouted out the open door..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 15, 2014, 07:52:02 pm**

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Tony coughed as he was hauled up into the car, the leaking blood coming from his neck, where he'd been hit by the man as he'd gone down. It looked like the shot had also grazed the side of his head, creating a lot of blood, but only a superficial injury there. His neck had been hit close to where the shoulder connected to it, and it was hard to tell if either his carotid or jugular had been sliced, but from the lack of arterial spray, it didn't seem like it... but that could be because he'd lain on the ground for a bit of time too.

Cracking his eyes open, Tony seemed to be struggling with recognizing even where he was. "Axel..." he sputtered, reaching up for the rat's face now. "H-help me!" he exclaimed weakly, and it was clear that wound in his neck would need to be patched, and from how he could barely move, it was also clear the blood loss meant they had mere minutes to help the ferret.

Vergil heard Marita yelling, and raced over to the car. "Wait!" He shouted, holding his hand out, then skidded to a stop, and focused on the black sedan ahead of them, and prepared to flip the car end over end. Focusing with narrowed eyes, the sedan was suddenly tossed into the air and landed hard on its roof, its horn blaring for a moment and then going silent as the air left it.

Running up to the car now, Vergil stopped beside the driver-side door. "Is Tony all right? Who shot the guy holding him hostage? One of you guys? I couldn't see clearly from this angle!" he said, practically out of breath.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 15, 2014, 08:01:41 pm**

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hes been shot in the neck. here vergil, help close up the wound Marita said as Marie fumbled for the bandages and gauze they had brought in from the camper while they had tended to Axel's Ear. " ok, once vergil's gets in, i'll floor it, we'll drive someplace nearby and sew up the wound in his neck" Marita said after getting a look at the wound in Tony';s neck.' Rose put a cloth on tonys neck , and squeezed hard, the towel acting like a tourniquet stopping any further blood loss. Marie bandaged the wound in Tonys neck, trying to tighten it as much as she cold.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 15, 2014, 08:36:12 pm**

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Axel supported Tony's head as Marie wound the bandage around his neck. "Come on, I'm here, just... just keep with us, alright? Everything's going to be okay..." he tried to reassure him, his voice shaking. With his free hand he held on tightly to Tony's paw. "It's over... they're not gonna hurt you..."

Turning to look at Vergil, Axel shook his head. "I... I don't know, I didn't see anyone but... but someone else was out there. I think they were trying to help us!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 15, 2014, 09:09:46 pm**

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Emilena had already retreated back into the trees. She had no reason to reveal herself at the moment. Plus she appeared to have drawn the fire of the assisting kidnapers, she had already given the team the chance they needed to escape.

*I'll catch up with them later... she thought. Because if I were them, I wouldn't stick around long enough to get the chance to grab another passenger.*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 15, 2014, 09:22:33 pm**

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"Ugh... let's just go!" Vergil said, throwing the door open when it became apparent whoever was in the bushes wasn't coming out. Besides... he was starting to see black sedans everywhere, and he didn't like it. Sliding into the front seat (there was precious little room in the back after all), he glimpsed another black sedan heading down the road and driving slowly past the parking lot, as if scanning it. "I'd go." Vergil murmured, trying to look as inconspicuous as a mutant white-skinned gecko with feathers could look.

Tony gripped Axel's hand as firmly as he could, which wasn't very firmly at all, but his fluttering eyes were starting to focus at least, and he was coming back to his senses after the trauma of being clubbed and shot. "What happened?" he asked, trying to relax as best he could. "Damn this hurts... was I... shot?" he asked with some confusion, trying to make sense of it all. He was trembling, the adrenaline coursing through his body to tell him something was wrong... he was in danger... but he tried to focus instead on Axel's calming influence, and not panic.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 15, 2014, 09:33:40 pm**

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Marie shut the door, and Marita pulled out of the parking lot and drove down the road..as quickly as the speed limit allowed.. 'Tony, does your father have any, well ' safe houses' you know places where you can lie low for awhile? i'm hoping he does, because you need a place to lie low for awhile' Marita said as she turned down on to the main street in the area. ' you've been shot in the neck, and lost quite a bit of blood. we're trying to get you to a safe place so we can properly care for your injuries. and I dont think your dad is going to take kindly to the

fact you've been shot. if he finds out.. well we're likely dead. so.. please.. don't tell him about this.." Marita said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 15, 2014, 10:49:32 pm**

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Soren took off his gear and stuffed it back into the locker as the vehicle sped down the road.

Anne pressed the intercom. "Go to Lanthae Square. There's a guy I know who can help him. Name's Tommy Jiang. He's a 'backalley doc'." She spat out the last words. While it was true some backalley doctors were little more than talentless hacks with a scalpel or completely insane, some – like Thomas Jiang – were fully qualified doctors and cybernetic surgeons who decided to go rogue, implanting augmentations without regard to the law, caring only if the would-be Augment could afford the surgery and implants.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 16, 2014, 01:06:29 am**

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"No... no safe house!" Tony protested weakly, trying to pull himself up using the back of the car seat before falling back down. "I'll be fine... I feel fine!" he insisted through slurred speech. He heard Anne's suggestion over the intercom, and thought about this now. "All right... we can do that... but no augments... I don't need augments." he said, shaking his head a tad here. "Just get patched up... some painkillers maybe..." he suggested, coughing a bit again, which caused him to wince in pain.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 16, 2014, 01:44:30 am**

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The Pierce-Arrow roared through the streets. The combustion powered vehicle was a dramatic contrast to the electric vehicles that plied the streets. Then again, most of the output of the algal oil farms went to making plastics, military vehicles, heavy ships, airplanes (try as they might, electrically powered airplanes and heavy cargo ships couldn't compete with the old combustion powered vehicles).

What was leftover was sold to classic car enthusiasts or those who simply wanted the status symbol or nostalgia of driving an old combustion vehicle.

Soren peeked out the window of the trailer. It was starting to grow dark and the LED streetlights began to turn on. He sighed. By the time they got to the Night Market, it would be busy. He only hoped there was some way to smuggle Tony to Doctor Jiang without attracting unwanted attention.

(OOC - In this world, civilian gasoline and diesel vehicles are kind of like real-world horse and buggy. Impractical for modern transportation but still used for their romantic/historical association and sport. As a sidenote, a common entry level "fueler" <slang for liquid fueled vehicle> is what would be recognized in the real world as a Toyota Camry)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 16, 2014, 06:18:19 am**

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"Hey, hey, come on..." Axel coaxed, gently holding Tony down, feeling the ferret trembling. "You can't move so much. Just... just try and relax..." The bandage around his neck was starting to soak through already. He glanced up at the driver's seat. "Hurry it up, Marita..."

Axel looked back down at Tony. "Hey, you got something against augments, pal?" he said, smiling sickly, trying to keep Tony's mind from the situation.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 16, 2014, 10:28:37 am**

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' to the doctor it is then..' marita said as she redoubled her speed, she reached lathae square within a few minutes ' so where does this doctor normally hang out in the square/' she asked through the intercom. we know that twe can drive around most of the traffic and got tony to him sooner.."

-  
rose wrapped another fresh bandage around tonys neck., the towel she was using as a tourniquet was now stained with blood on about a quarter of its surface. she shifted the towel and moved to a unbloodied section of it, continuing to squeeze toght to prevent any more blood loss.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 16, 2014, 09:14:17 pm**

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As they reached Lanthae Square, Nairda continued to be unconscious.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 17, 2014, 12:21:02 am**

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"OK..." Tony said weakly, not protesting against Axel holding him back down. He tried to do as instructed and just relax. He wasn't aware that his blood was already soaking through the first bandage rather handily. "So... how do I look?" he asked hopefully, just barely able to see it if he moved his head downward a bit, and it wasn't much; more like the edge of the bandage. "Oh god...!" Tony exclaimed upon seeing his own blood soaking his shoulder. "Oh god... are we close?" he asked, noting they were back in Lanthae Square. He almost attempted to pull himself up again before remembering Axel's instructions, and sighed and sank back down.

"No... no of course not!" he smiled at Axel's mock accusatory question. "I just... I'm just scared... that's all." he said, the rat clearly seeing the fear was genuine in the ferret's eyes. "I'm not gonna die... right?" he asked, his voice light and breathy as he searched Axel for answers.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 17, 2014, 12:45:51 am**

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We're close Tony! Just hold on for a few more minutes, we're getting you to a doctor' marita said she continued driving through the square."Anne, do you have the doctors number, if you do, call it! Tell him this is an emergency" she said through the intercom.."Time is of the essence!" she said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 17, 2014, 06:00:24 am**

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Axel shook his head firmly. "*No way.* You're going to be fine. You hear me?" Looking up briefly through the window, he could see they 'd reached the square. *Almost there...* "C'mon, you're a Stracci, right?" he continued, keeping a hold of Tony's hand. "You think something as pathetic as a bullet's going to bring you down?! I sure as hell don't think so."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 17, 2014, 04:48:17 pm**

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"No can do, he doesn't have a phone. It's word of mouth," Anne replied.

The car pulled into an empty lot near an alleyway.

Soren opened the door and Anne got out.

The mare knocked on a door that was battered and scarred. A camera on an arm aimed at her. "Password?"

Anne looked around. "Blue Screen," she whispered.

With a hiss, the magnetic locks disengaged and the biting odor of disinfectant wafted out from a white hallway.

"Hurry!" Anne barked.

Soren stood by Axel with his rifle at the ready in case someone wanted to finish the job on Tony.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 17, 2014, 06:30:40 pm**

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Opening the car door, Axel looked uncertainly down the hallway that had been revealed, but Soren's presence with his rifle made him feel more at ease. He looked down at Tony. "Alright, we're here... we have to move you, okay? Just... just lean all your weight on me and Marie, we'll do the all the work..."

Shifting his position, he gently put Tony's arm around his neck and waited for Marie to do the same. "Okay, I'm going to lift you up," Axel cautioned. "Remember what I said, just lean on us. Three... two... *one!*" He heaved him up, one hand around Tony's waist, the other keeping hold of the arm around his neck, keeping him steady. Grunting, Axel climbed out of the car and staggered with Tony towards the white corridor.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 17, 2014, 06:40:53 pm**

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Marie and Rose helped support the other side of Tony while marita got out and helped Axel carry tony's lower half, 'carry him to a stretcher and lets wheel him into surgery' Marita said "The augments with us will have to get theirs repaired' the building was that of a small hospital clinic' we have a shooting victim here she called out to a nurse , who was sitting at a counter reading from looked to be a newspaper. ' you loking fir the doc. hes in room 13. take the patient in yourself '; the nurse replied. a stretcher lay unused near an open door.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 17, 2014, 07:32:45 pm**

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Doctor Tsing "Thomas" Jiang had been alerted to the recent arrival. Room 13 had been prepped and cleaned for surgery and Doctor Jiang had scrubbed up and gotten himself ready to perform the operation.

He turned to the group entering. "I presume he is the patient?" he asked, pointing to Tony with his stainless steel hands. Despite the blue glow coming from his cybernetic eyes, his gaze was businesslike. His voice had the soft, faint accent of one native to Hong Kong and had learned English as an adult.

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Anne watched as the door slid shut and locked itself. Soren was looking around. His rifle dangled from its sling as he watched Axel and the others hustled Tony down the sterile hallway. A Vulpine orderly was wheeling a Wolverine who had just had his augmentation surgery down to the recovery room.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 17, 2014, 07:52:50 pm**

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Yes' Marita said as she marie and Rose helped lay Tony on the operating table. ' we just want his injuries treated, no augments for this one' MARita added, as she removed the bandages, a dobermann nurse entered carrying a tray of thread and stitches' biodegradable stitches ' she said to Marita "We'll go into surgery immediately she said ' the surgery should take a couple hours there are magazines and books in the waiting room we'll buzz you when he is in the recovery room.'

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 17, 2014, 09:04:09 pm**

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Axel nodded at what the nurse said, then looked down at Tony. "I guess you won't be the pretty boy anymore," he said with an awkward grin. Then he gently touched the ferret's shoulder. "We'll be here for you when you get out alright? Just... you'll be fine. Trust me."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 17, 2014, 09:42:21 pm**

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Tony was led out of the car, and then practically picked up and carried (which he didn't think he needed, but he didn't protest against either) into the clinic. He tried to hold back his tears, but he couldn't. He started to cry a bit, sobbing as he was dumped onto the gurney. "I don't know... I just don't know..." he said now, then nodded as Marita practically spoke for him. "Yes... no augments...unless... unless it's needed." he said softly here, not ruling out the possibility that the bullet had paralyzed his left arm... he didn't think so, but he couldn't tell. He could move it at least, but due to the pain, couldn't give it full mobility.

He looked up at Axel, almost pleadingly, and nodded. "I hope so. I just... I'm holding you guys up... you should go on... go fight your fight." Tony said, blinking away more tears. "I'm sorry this happened... I'm really sorry." he whispered. He wasn't being completely logical about his own situation, but the guilt was his strongest emotion right now, and it was winning out over everything else.

"Just uh... yeah... I know you'll be close by." the ferret nodded here, setting his jaw firmly to try and get ready for this. "Guess I always fear being knocked out and operated on..." he offered a small smile here. "Take care and... see you soon." He patted Axel's hand on his shoulder, and let him go.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 17, 2014, 11:27:22 pm**

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Hang in there Tony " Marita said patting him on the shoulder as the nurse put a needle in his arm and began injecting the anesthesia you'll be out in a matter of seconds' she said calmly. once we're done you'll be much better, i promise' she said.  
- marita Rose and Marie headed out to the lobby to wait..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 18, 2014, 04:55:39 am**

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Axel watched anxiously as Tony was wheeled away. Once he disappeared from sight, he let out a trembling breath, finally allowing his features to show how scared he was. Turning, he made his way slowly back to the others in the waiting room.

"Jesus, how did everything go so wrong..." he muttered to Soren, brittle-voiced, rubbing a hand over his eyes in exhaustion. Having to wait while Tony was taken care of was making him nervous. *We need to go back for Lily as soon as we can...* After a second, he paused and looked up at the others. "Hey, didn't you guys say Nairda was messed up from that... pulse thing? Maybe they could help him here..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 18, 2014, 11:28:49 am**

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Lets go bring him in ' Rose said as she got up from her seat ' Comer on Axel' she said. " we wont be more than a few minutes she said to marie and Marita. rose headed to the front of the clinic and out to the trailer where she found Nairda unconscious.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 18, 2014, 02:39:08 pm**

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Nairda lay there, doing and saying nothing. A bird had flown through the window and was pecking him in the forehead trying to eat his brains.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 18, 2014, 03:26:55 pm**

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Marita shooed the bird away and helped the others pick Nairda up " alright We'll need to get his augment repaired.. this is going to be a hefty bill' marita muttered as she lifted Nairdia's upper half. " Letas get him in and get him treated.' She said. the trio began carrying him into the clinic.  
- the nurse at the front desk sighed as sdhe saw they carry nairda in ' whats the problem with this one?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 18, 2014, 04:08:59 pm**

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"I think he's got more than a few problems..." Axel muttered, struggling to hold Nairda up by the legs - his armour weighed a tonne. "But right now, something happened to his augments... Look, could we maybe put him on a stretcher? He's really heavy..." Axel motioned for Marita to help carry him over to another stretcher in the corner, and dumped him in it.

Axel turned back to the nurse as he struggled to get his breath back. "Is... is there any way he could get... checked out now? It looks pretty bad..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 18, 2014, 04:23:33 pm**

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Marita put the fox down on the stretcher in a plop. " Fine" The nurse said ' Room 4, i'll have someone come in to fix the augment implants. What happened?' EMP pulse" Marita said evasively 'Well that will do it, just wheel him down there" the nurse said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 18, 2014, 05:18:39 pm**

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As they rolled Nairda into the back, the other nurse spoke to the healthy members of the party. "Its late, and we understand that these surgeries can take time. As you wait for your friends, we have freely available lodgings prepared for you to stay in on the west wing." On-site sleeping quarters served double purpose; it also ensured that the clients didn't leave until they paid for the procedure...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris on March 18, 2014, 05:32:23 pm**

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A internal cyberneticist had gotten her tools ready and scrubbed up in preparation for surgery.

The surgical suite looked like a cross between an electronics workshop and an operating room. Which made perfect sense since this was a room for operating on Augments.

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Before the operation, a nurse-cybernetician plugged in some wires to some ports on his armor. He examined the results of the scan from his laptop.

"The implants in his head have been completely fried," he said. He then turned to Marita. "Exactly what was he doing to damage his implants so severely?"

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Doctor Jiang had his eyes zoom in on Tony's neck wound. The bullet had ripped open his jugular vein and narrowly missed his carotid artery. Another command ordered his fingers to shrink down to needle-fine points. His magnetized fingers helped hold onto the tiny needle. With that, he began to carefully sew up the gash in the vein.

A nurse arrived transfusion bag of artificial blood that would replace the amount of blood Tony had lost.

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Soren sighed as he put his magazine down. "I don't know. Honestly, if I hadn't charged in like that, we wouldn't be in such deep shit."

The door slid open and a lithe Boa Constrictor slithered in.

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Anne was in another room. Her horn was connected to a similar monitor and another nurse-cybernetician was examining her.

"So how bad is it?" she demanded.

"You're lucky the implant's not completely destroyed. It won't need to be replaced but the repairs under local anesthesia. As for your antenna, we'll properly repair that as well."

"Well fuck," she said. The mare folded her ears back as the nurse-cybernetician placed the injector gun against her forehead and fired.

Two more nurse-cyberneticians came in with tools and spare supplies at the ready.

(OOC - injector guns use pressurized argon to fire dried medicine at supersonic speeds to get them past the skin. It's more hygienic and produces less waste than a standard syringe.)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 18, 2014, 05:41:29 pm**

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there was a electromagnetic pulse in the area we were in that hit him really hard. it didnt affect me because i dont have any augments.' Marita said."Can you fix it?"  
- it could be worse, ewe could all be dead' Marie said as she grabbe a newspaper, which talked about the assassination. ' i honestky dont know how we are going to pull this off..' she sighed.' do we have enough to pay for the surgeries for Tony, Nairda and Anne?'

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 18, 2014, 07:09:02 pm**

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An hour passed. The surgeries were nowhere near finished.

"I'd be willing to show any of you to your assigned sleeping rooms if you like," offered the nurse to those not getting surgery.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 18, 2014, 07:24:30 pm**

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Axel rubbed his hands over his eyes again and sighed, exhausted. "I... don't know. But we'll deal with that when we need to." He turned his eyes up to the clock mounted up on the wall, and saw that the time was into the early hours of the morning. *When was the last time I slept?* He knew every second counted... but going full throttle for days at a time had left him feeling drained. *And I won't be able to do anything for Lily if I'm dead on my feet...*

Running a hand through his hair, he stood up and looked around at the group, dark circles under his eyes. "Guy's, I'm... I need a rest. Feeling like I might collapse. If... if something happens and I'm still asleep, wake me up?" Raising a hand weakly in goodbye, he made his way across the room and followed the nurse towards the West Wing. Once he arrived, Axel let himself into an empty room and collapsed face first onto the bed, half hanging off it.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 18, 2014, 07:40:19 pm**

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Soon, there was a knocking on Axel's door. "Mr. Whent?" Asked the nurse. "You've, uh, got a letter."

She slid a plain white envelope under the door. Other than a stamp indicating the hospital had scanned it for dangerous substances and it came up plain, the only thing written Axel's name and the hospital's address.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 18, 2014, 08:02:06 pm**

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marie rested her head against Maritas shoulders while they waited. rose was doing a crossword puzzle from a magazine, she was about halfway finished, the current question she was pondering was ' what was the first vehicle to go to mac 10? ' the answer was the 'omnishot' and Rose soon filled it in.. the time was 330 in the morning.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 18, 2014, 08:19:16 pm**

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Axel jerked up at the knock on the door, struggling to remember for a second where he was. Looking blearily over to where the sound had come from, his eyes narrowed when he saw the

letter slide under the gap. Blinking, he raised himself up and slowly approached the envelope. Bending to pick it up, he turned it over in his hands, using the moonlight that poured through the tiny window to look at the writing on the front. Taking the envelope back to his bed, he sat down and paused for a second before cautiously opening it.

After he read the letter, Axel let out a trembling breath and dropped it beside him, then lowered his head to his hands. His fingers twisted his hair as he thought desperately about what to do. He knew it was probably a lie... that nothing good could come of it. *I have to... I have to take the chance...* Axel raised his head and looked down with dark rimmed eyes at the letter again.

He made up his mind.

Scrunching the letter into his jeans pocket, he stood up and quietly approached the door. Checking nobody was in the hall outside, he slowly let himself out and made his way down the corridor, heading towards the waiting room. Poking his head around the corner, he could see Marita, Rose and Marie were still there but facing away from him... and from the entrance. Swallowing, Axel crept out and across the room, wincing as his trainers squeaked slightly on the polished floor. After what seemed like forever, he managed to reach the hallway leading down to the entrance. As he approached, the metallic door opened automatically with a hiss. Axel stopped and looked behind him. *I'm sorry... I'll see you all again soon... I hope.* Taking a deep breath, he stepped out, hearing the door lock itself behind him.

Alone on the dark streets, Axel looked around, fingers flexing nervously and breath misting up in the cold. The road was just ahead of him, and slightly further up he could see a taxi parked on the side. Jogging up, he climbed in and told the driver where to go, handing over the last few creds he had left in his wallet. The car pulled out and set off, leaving the backalley clinic behind him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 20, 2014, 05:41:25 am**

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At 5 A.M., the surgeries were finished and all the patients in the recovery room.

Doctor Jiang entered the waiting room. "Marita, Rose, Marie and Soren, the operations are finished. The patients should be coming out of anaesthesia soon.

Soren didn't hear him. His rifle lay across his lap.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 20, 2014, 08:58:36 am**

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maire got up to wake up soren. ' they'e out of surgery' she said as kindly as she could given the early- or late- hur. marita headed to the open door on the left and entered she saw tony on the bed a large bandage wrapped around his throat. ' so how are you feeling now?' she said with a smile.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 20, 2014, 09:41:58 am**

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The sound of the cab's engine faded as the driver sped away, leaving Axel standing alone at the end of the road. The dim sunlight that was just beginning to break over the horizon cast a dull, bronze glow to the street. Axel looked at the street sign, then glanced down to the crumpled note in his hand. *Rhode Way*. This was the right place. Swallowing, he followed the road up, counting off the houses as he passed. 95... 93... 91...

The sound of shuffling ahead of him caught his attention, and he looked in front to see an alarmingly rough looking woman stumble down from one of the doorways, her short leather

skirt dubiously stained. "Hey hon," she barked, fixing her slightly bleary eyes on him, "Quick lay? Gettin' late but I can make it fast, and it'll cost less..."

"Ah... n-no. No thanks," Axel blinked, stepping past her quickly.

"Fuckin' prude!" She shouted after him, turning to wander off.

Chewing his lip, Axel looked at the number of the next house. 89. He nervously looked at the note one final time. *5:00 am. 89 Rhode Way. Right alley. Come alone, or I won't show myself. I know how to save Lily.* He could see the dark alley to the right of the building. Taking a deep breath Axel stepped cautiously into it, the weight of the Luger still tucked into the back of his jeans giving him some small comfort, though it only had a few bullets left. He peered down the passageway, trying to discern anyone who might be lying in wait for him from the dark shapes of the dumpsters and trash littered around.

Axel cleared his throat. "Hey, I... I'm here! And I'm alone!" he called out, trying to sound more confident than he felt. "Who are you? What do you know?!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 20, 2014, 04:22:44 pm**

Soren awoke with a snort. He shook his head to clear the sleep from his eyes.

"Well, that went well."

Anne was already up and walking. Because her surgery was minor, all she got was simple local anesthetic. A bandage was wrapped around the base of her horn. Luckily, thanks to Doctor Jiang's expert hands, there would be no scarring.

"Well, at least everything's back to normal." She tested her horn on a nearby TV, overriding its normal late-night talkshow to put her own face on the TV and her voice. "Well, it looks like my horn's back to working order like when I first got it."

"I'll go get Axel and we can then pay for everything and get moving." Soren got up and slung the rifle over his shoulder.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 20, 2014, 05:08:43 pm**

"Not so loud," cautioned Emilena Echo, emerging from the shadows at the end of the alley. A pistol was clipped clearly to her waist, but she held no weapons and was on the side of the alley that freely gave Axel the ability to exit to the street if he wished. "This is the bad side of town..."

Nairda stirred as he came out of his dream. "Emilena, is you there, biatch?" he muttered drowsily. "I dreamed you n' I were...where is yo slick ass, biatch? Where be I, biatch?"

He shook his head dizzily. "And what tha fuck happened ta mah voice?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 20, 2014, 10:38:18 pm**

Axel started, squinting in the dark as he tried to make out the figure who'd emerged... then recoiling back a step when he recognised Emilena. "You!" he gasped, reaching a hand back to hold the Luger but not drawing it out just yet. "What... where did you..."

Axel's eyes narrowed. "The letter was from you... Why the hell would you care what happens to Lily? You got what you wanted, Lupis has her!" He looked around quickly, half expecting to see the wolf leap out at him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 20, 2014, 10:59:20 pm**

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Emilena sighed. "I made a deal with Lupis to get out of Purifier prison, and that's as far as my allegiance went." She unclipped the pistol from her belt and threw it at Axel's feet. "Of course nobody gave me the chance to explain that..."

Her muscles were tense and her eyes were darting nervously to the opening of the alley. "Lily was the only one of our entire team who didn't instantly think the worst of me. And now I can repay that kindness. But you're going to have to trust me, like she did."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 20, 2014, 11:10:24 pm**

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Soren knocked on the door of Axel's room.

"Hey Axel, the surgery went perfectly. Tony, Anne and Nairda are recovering right now."

No response. Soren knocked on the door harder. To his amazement, the door swung open. The bed had obviously been slept in with blankets piled up at one end.

"Axel?" A shudder ran up Soren's spine. He looked around the room. "Stop fucking around."

Still no response.

The Human suddenly got a sinking feeling in his stomach. He was aware this was a backalley clinic and despite how professional and clean it was, that didn't mean that someone could have kidnapped and ransomed, or worse experimented on him.

Scowling, he got his rifle ready and flipped off the safety. He saw a Golden Retriever housekeeper passing by the room.

"Excuse me, do you know where Axel Whent is?" he asked.

"No." The housekeeper entered the room.

Sighing, he returned to the lobby and confronted the secretary on duty. His rifle was at the ready but pointed towards the ground. "What happened to Axel?" he asked. Soren's tone said one thing: I want answers and don't give me any shit.

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Anne was reading a magazine as she sat next to Tony's bed. "So Tony, I'm guessing this is the first time you've been shot?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 20, 2014, 11:15:12 pm**

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Keeping his eyes on her, Axel bent down quickly to scoop up the pistol she'd thrown. "Yeah... and look where trusting you would have got her..." he said as he stood, holding the gun but not aiming it at her. He didn't trust Emilena, not for a second... but he also couldn't think of a reason why she'd try anything now, when she could have just stayed away.

"And what could *you* do to help her?" Axel asked suspiciously, his uneasiness radiating from his posture.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 21, 2014, 03:22:47 am**

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Emilena took a deep breath and explained her plan to Axel. Regardless of how crazy it sounded, she explained how she 'escaped' the torture chamber, what she saw in her dreams, and her conclusions from them. She left out the part about visiting her parents.

"But obviously, you're going to have to get me into the Purifier base for any of that to happen," she finished. "I know your team must have a plan to get back in there, but there's no way any of them would ever trust me. It'd be up to you and me, but you've got to see that it's the best shot Lily will ever have of being normal again."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 21, 2014, 06:58:32 am**

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Axel stared back at Emilena for a long moment without saying a word. Then he slowly raised his hand and offered her gun back, grip first. "If you try anything... if you put her in any more danger, I *will* kill you." He loosened his hold on the barrel of the pistol.

Sighing, Axel shook his head. "Getting in isn't going to be easy. Last night we tried to go for Lupis and it... it didn't go so well. So the security around the base is gonna be even tighter. Tony knew about some secret ways to get in, but I never got to hear where they were exactly..." He trailed off as he thought of his friend's condition. Axel swallowed. "There's more... The Purifiers built some kind of pulse bomb and tonight they're gonna use it to slaughter as many augments in Lanthae as they can..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 21, 2014, 09:56:20 am**

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He left about 20-30 minutes ago, just walked right out. didnt say where he was going, didnt say anything in fact..' the secretary said.'he could be anywhere at this point, fella. but right now, the more important thing, is paying for the surgeries. once you do that, then you can go hunt down your pal' the secretary showed no fear, as if she was used to gun-toting people in this clinic.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 21, 2014, 02:41:43 pm**

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"I honestly couldn't care less," Emilena folded her arms. "More power to the bastards."

She turned and leaped onto the chainlink fence blocking the exit to the alley. "That 'pistol' you just borrowed is actually a police tracker; its designed to be confiscated by the target so we can trace them. While it's in the lead-lined holster it can't transmit, but that also makes it immune to all abilities to detect tracers. So remove the gun from the holster once you want me to know where you are and no tracer-detecting allies are nearby."

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Nairda walked into the waiting room. "Guys, dis is blingin son! Somethingz wack wit mah rap algorithms muthafucka! How tha fuck can I git dis ta stop?" He looked fearfully from left to right. "I aint goin ta sound like dis forever, be I...?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 21, 2014, 05:48:44 pm**

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Axel stared at her, aghast, as Emilena dismissed what he'd told her about the bomb. "How can you say that? Innocent people are going to die!" *What the hell is wrong with her?*

Shaken at how Lily's only hope might lie with this woman, Axel glanced down at the pistol as she explained how it worked. *So I can't take it out around Anne... she'd detect it in a second. And I can't signal her when Soren's around, there's no telling what he'd do if he saw her again...* "Alright, but you'll need to be ready to move quickly," Axel said, looking up at Emilena as she jumped onto the fence. "If we're breaking in, I won't be able to wait too long." The sky was brightening - he'd need to try and get back before the others noticed he'd been gone for too long.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 21, 2014, 06:35:17 pm**

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Tony groggily came awake, his eyes filmy and unable to focus at first. He heard Marita ask him something... how he was feeling probably. "Terrible..." he murmured, the nausea in his stomach from the anesthetic causing a really sick feeling deep within him. Looking around slowly, he noticed Axel wasn't even there. Wincing, he tried to rise, then fell back against the pillow. "Can I have..." his mouth felt like cotton, and he was unable to get the rest of the words out.

Closing his eyes as a tear or two slid down his cheeks, he tried to rest. "Yes..." he finally managed to say in response to Anne's question. Breathing heavily, the ferret cracked his eyes open a tad. "I don't suppose..." Nairda entering the room talking in that strange fashion which caused his head to swim, and his nausea to build as he groaned pitifully, clutching his abdomen. "Where's... Axel...?" he asked here, and then was unable to suppress it anymore.

He turned in the bed, and retched violently into a container near the bed. He felt like he was vomiting up his stomach as he lost his most recent meal and then some. When it was over after a moment or two, the ferret collapsed back against the pillow, a look of anguish on his face. "Fuck!" he exclaimed sadly. "I can't go anywhere like this!" He started sobbing a bit, the unpleasant sensations of having been anesthetized not sitting well with him, and causing his mind to reel a bit as he was bombarded all at once.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 21, 2014, 06:54:06 pm**

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"Take it easy," Anne said as she rubbed Tony's back. She pressed the call button on the wall.

"Can we get a nurse with an antiemetic agent?" she said into the microphone.

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Soren scowled. "I'll go speak to the others."

He then turned to Rose, Marita and Maria. "So who's paying?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 21, 2014, 11:07:45 pm**

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"Trust me," Emilena assured as she darted off into the blackness, "I've never been one to waste time..."

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"Yo muthafucka, is mah playas listenin ta me son?" Nairda cried, "This is serious muthafucka! How tha fuck is I supposed ta pick up chicks soundin like this?"

He marched up to the receptionist. "Let me peep Dr. Jiang at once!" he demanded, stomping his foot for emphasis. "Shiiit, dis aint no joke. That quack has fucked up hardcore!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 22, 2014, 12:53:32 am**

we'll have to pool our credits' Marita said as the secretary handed them the bill her eyes widened ' half a million credits!' she whistled and looked at the others.. ' guys how many credits do we have?

lets see' Marie said digging into her purse and pulling out a ' credits Counter" this scanned credits cards and displayed a readout of how many credits were on the card' Marita gave hers to Marie and she scanned it 37153; So under 400 dollars' 371 to be precise' Marie said. as she swiped her own. 21170. ok I have a little over 200 dollars. "Rose how about you?' marie said rose handed her hers.. but she barely had any credits 900' You have 9 bucks on you? thats it?' Marita said." and the clothes on me, yeah Rose admitted.

so between the three of us we have 59223 credits, or just under 600 dollars Marie said. You need 50 grand' the secretary said..

\_Please have a seat sir" the receptionist replied to Nairda.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 22, 2014, 01:29:24 am**

Tony relaxed a bit as Anne called for antiemetic. Sighing miserably, the ferret closed his eyes. "I've never been anesthetized before... guess I'm not reacting well to it." he murmured. "God, my stomach... uggggh." he groaned, rubbing it with a paw.

He reached out, and clasped Anne's arm with his free paw, as if for support as he reopened his eyes. "Painkillers would be good too..." he mumbled, a rather ill look washing over his face. "Don't worry about my bill... my family can cover my end of things... I got a card for emergencies." he said, almost in agony. "Uggggh..." he groaned again, still gripping Anne. "Where's Axel?" he asked again, his words slurred.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 22, 2014, 01:42:41 am**

A nurse came in with a tray containing painkillers and the antiemetic as well as a cup of water. Another nurse removed the garbage can to be cleaned up.

Anne shook her head as she wrinkled her nose at the odor of vomit that still hung in the room. "I haven't seen him since we arrived. I'll go ask Soren and the others."

She took a look at the bottle of painkillers. Non-narcotic. The mare made a note to go light up a joint as soon as she got the chance. She turned around and made a move to leave the room.

"Tony, will you be okay by yourself?"

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"I'm broke," Soren replied. He emptied his pockets. All that came out was a credit chit that he had swiped from the car he had stolen ó and it had 150 credits. Just enough for a soda at a vending machine.

He watched as the door slid open and a Human with a glowing red eye went up to the

receptionist.

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Doctor Tsing "Thomas" Jiang entered his office where Nairda was sitting. The doctor's blue electronic eyes bored into the Wolf. The doctor was a lean middle aged Chinese man who looked younger than his 44 years. A neutral expression was on his face as he temples his stainless steel prostheses on the table.

"Nairda," he said, his voice betraying his Hong Kong origins. "I need to speak to you about your non-payment."

Behind him were his diplomas from the schools he had attended as well as his (expired) Lanthae license to practice cybernetic surgery.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 22, 2014, 02:33:16 am**

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"No! Don't go!" Tony reached out for her, and then let his arm fall with another sigh. "I know I've held you guys up long enough but... I would appreciate the company." he said honestly, reaching out for the antiemetic and painkillers and took them, trying not to gag as his reflux acted up again.

Outside, Vergil eyed the approaching man with the red eye, keeping his orange eyes peeled for any further trouble. He'd been dozing when Axel had slipped out, and had woken up a few minutes ago.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 22, 2014, 04:47:26 am**

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Axel sighed as Emilena ran off, then turned the gun over in his hands, making sure it was firmly secured into the holster. It was small, so at least it wouldn't be too obvious he suddenly had an extra pistol on him. Clipping the holster onto the side of his trousers, he pulled his top down to conceal it then walked out of the alley, emerging back out onto Rhode Way. He didn't have enough credits on him to order a taxi, but if he hurried, he could probably make it back in okay time.

Jogging down the pavement, he passed the decrepit-looking prostitute sitting in the gutter and smoking a cigarette. She spat at his feet when she saw him. "Found yer balls yet, little boy? I could help ya find 'em for half price..." Gasping, Axel picked up speed and ran around the corner, heading back to the clinic.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 22, 2014, 09:12:42 am**

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I'm going to go check with Tony' Marita said to the others as she went into the room where Tony was "Hi Tony" she smiled at the ferret ' thought i'd keep you company.. we have a problem Tony, the surgeries for you anne and nairda.. well they're going to cost 50 thousand, dollars not credits. and we have less than 1000 bucks on us. do you have enough money for to pay for it?" she asked as she sat down..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 22, 2014, 05:23:33 pm**

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Nairda's eyes went wide and he sat straight. His apprehension betrayed his attempt to pretend he didn't recognize Dr. Jiang and have a past history.

"Yo ass did dis ta me biaaatch! I thought you was a phat doctor playa! How tha fuck could your fresh ass screw up so badly?" He yelped, trying and failing to sound indignant.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 23, 2014, 06:21:55 am**

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Axel eventually drew near the clinic. By now, the sun had risen high enough to reveal just how grungy Lanthae Square was. *I can't believe they made a clinic here...* Casting his eyes towards the building, he saw with relief that the car and trailer were still parked outside. Staggering over, he leaned against the side of the trailer, trying to get his breath back and thinking of what to say. After a while, he walked over to the barred door, looking apprehensively at the camera as it swiveled over to him.

"Password?" a voice demanded.

Axel's mind blanked for a moment. "Ah... oh, Blue Screen!" The locks on the door disengaged with a clunk and it slid open. Taking a deep breath, Axel stepped into the spotless hallway, making his way down to the reception room. When he reached it he saw Vergil and Soren hanging around and walked over, raising a hand in greeting. "I'm back. Sorry I just vanished, I just... I needed to clear my head for a bit. Things were getting kind of, ah... overwhelming..." He grimaced and scratched his bandage, not meeting Soren's eyes. "Anyway, how... how are the others doing? Is Tony okay?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 23, 2014, 11:06:02 am**

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rose and marie waved to Axel. ' needed some time to yourself? we all need from time to time..' MArIE said ' tony made it through ok, but now we're trying to figure out how to pay for the surgeries. how many credits do you have on you Axel? because its a half a million credits for the three surgeries.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 23, 2014, 12:44:05 pm**

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Vergil nodded at Axel as he reappeared, but noticed the evasive nature of the rat. Narrowing his eyes, he studied the rodent for a moment. He was hiding something... but why? What could possibly be worth hiding?

In the recovery room, Tony looked up as Marita entered. She was "keeping him company", but in reality was asking him for money. "Uhh... no... I don't think I do." he shook his head here. "I think that... ugh!" he put a paw up to his mouth again, waiting for the antiemetic to take effect. "My emergency card is to cover things like my emergency expenses... but I doubt my dad would want me to use it for other things. I could always ask, though. Don't you guys have insurance?" he inquired, rubbing his stomach, as he still felt like hurling again, the nausea not immediately subsiding.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 23, 2014, 01:07:57 pm**

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"Let me see' Marita said.. digging through her purse.. " I asked because we dont have much cash on hand.. ah here.. I DO have insurance.. and you have enough to pay for yours.. that leaves anne and Nairda.. i'm glad to see you pulled though.. you really scared us..' She said softly, as she handed him a tissue.. ' here if you have to throw up again.. So, once we get out of here, i'll be driving the car for a bit until you feel fully up to it. hopefully that shouldnt be too long, because time is not a luxury we have, those lunatics are going to release their bomb in less than 24 hours and we cant afford to make any more mistakes..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 23, 2014, 01:36:28 pm**

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"I don't even know if the doc's gonna let me move in my condition." Tony said a bit despondently as he looked down at the floor. "I mean once the drugs kick in... I should be good enough to drive... but... that's only if I'm allowed to be discharged... getting shot... isn't there usually a recovery time?" he asked, looking up now as he glanced at the clock. The antiemetic was starting to work, but painkillers typically took about 20 minutes, and his throat was throbbing. "If I'm laid up... then I guess I'll miss whatever's coming next..." he said sadly, gulping a bit here as he lay back against the pillow and stared at the ceiling.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 23, 2014, 02:08:38 pm**

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Axel shook his head. "No, I... I don't have anything," he told Marie. "Sorry. Doesn't anyone else have any credits on them?" As he spoke, he felt Vergil's eyes on him, searching him, and he blinked back at the gecko awkwardly. "Vergil? Are, uh... is everything okay?" Axel shifted uncomfortably.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 23, 2014, 02:24:23 pm**

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Vergil's eyes were still on Axel, and he spoke in his even tones as he explained his line of thinking. "You're hiding something, or at least your body language tells me you are. You failed to make direct eye contact with Soren, your posture indicates a defensive and not open stance, so that to me says that you're keeping something back, or at the very least, uncomfortable. What is wrong?" he asked pointedly, raising a brow and frowning thoughtfully. "I take it you did more than just clear your head on this walk."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 23, 2014, 03:14:22 pm**

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Axel flinched. "I... uh..." He sighed, his ear flattening. "Alright... I *did* go for a walk, but when I was out there, I... well, I was thinking about heading off without you guys, trying to get into the Purifier base on my own." He looked up, shamefaced, at the group. "I just kept thinking about how Lily's still in there while they're doing... god-knows-what to her... and I thought about how long we were going to take here, and I just panicked. The only reason I didn't just take a cab and get out of here was because I don't have any credits left **to** go anywhere."

He swallowed. "I... I wasn't even thinking that I'd be abandoning the rest of you. It was *stupid*, and... and *selfish*, and I'm sorry. I wasn't going to say because I don't want you guys thinking I'd just leave you." Axel surreptitiously bit down on the inside of his cheek, and tears welled up in his eyes. "I won't ever think about doing it again, I promise." Inside, his stomach was twisting in knots. Lying to his friends made him feel lousy, but Axel knew he had no choice.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 23, 2014, 03:35:13 pm**

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well, at least you changed your mind.' Rose said looking at him.' but this not something any of us can handle on our own.. only by working together can we have any chance of getting lilly back. i know she means a lot to you axel, and desperate people often do desperate things, but in the future you need to tell us first where you are going.

-  
we'll give you some time to rest at the safehouse.. say an hour or two, but you're going to have to forgo the full recovery time- we cant afford to have you laid up for days on end.. we

dont have that luxury' Marita said.' not when those lunatics are trying to turn Lanthae into a major hellhole. well, a bigger hellhole than it already is..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 23, 2014, 03:44:36 pm**

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Vergil softened here as Axel explained, though the thoughtful frown was still on his face. "Well, I think your apology is owed more to your friends than to myself." he pointed out here. "I barely know you, but I know you seemed really close with some in this group. So perhaps you should tell them what you just told me." the gecko suggested with a slight smile here.

In the recovery room, Tony continued staring at the ceiling. "What if I don't have a choice in the matter?" he sighed sadly. "What if the doc tells me no way? I'm stuck here until I recover?" he sighed again, shaking his head. "I guess I shouldn't let that stop me... even if I risk reopening my wound..." he commented now, lifting a claw to the air and tracing imaginary patterns now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 23, 2014, 03:53:34 pm**

---

we'll convince him to let you out' Marita replied. ' you're going to need to take it easy, at least for a little bit. let your neck heal as best you can.. we have to stop these guys.. whatever it takes.. you hungry?" she asked. ' perhaps we can get you a shake to sip on...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 25, 2014, 10:14:12 am**

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Dr. Jiang was nonplussed. "Mister Nairda," he said as he fixed his blue electric gaze on the Augment. "You have failed to pay your bills with me. Currently, you owe me over a million creds in debt. Pay it all off now and I'll fix your vocoder. Be thankful that you merely sound like a second-rate rapper."

-----

Soren sighed. "Axel, I'm handy with a gun *and* I had a powered exoskeleton. I did the same thing you did and nearly died. You'd be fucked for sure if you did it."

Anne came out of the bathroom. She passed her credit chit to the receptionist. As the repair procedure had cost her all of 900 creds, the card was now empty.

The mare flopped down on a chair. "Well, I paid for my bill, now we gotta pay for Nairda and Tony's."

She looked at the TV and turned it on. The headline "Anti-Augmentation Activist Publically Murdered!"

A crystal clear video of a Purifier being beheaded with a reciprocating saw usually intended to cut concrete played on the screen.

"Turn that shit off!" Soren snapped.

Anne did so. "Could that be the warning Tony mentioned?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 25, 2014, 10:30:34 am**

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Marie dug into her purse as the tv was turned off..' ah. good.. my insurance card.. all the workers at the club had to have insurance, due to the risk of guys getting into fight and stuff. lets see here.. i had enough coverage for 1 million credits, but i had that accident two years ago..she said as she ran the card through the credit counter."ah i have 375000 left' she said she got up and handed the insurance card to the receptionist ' you're paying for the augment huh' the receptionist said.. ' yeah nairda is part of our group' Marie said. ' ok, that leaves 124100 credits, since the augment over there paid hers. the receptionist said.

Rose found her insurance card at the both of her purse, and took the credit counter from marie. ' 50500 credits' the counter said. ' you hardly have any insurance..' marie sighed, 'and i know why..' rose hung her head.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 25, 2014, 11:07:22 am**

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Before Anne had switched the TV off, reports that a second Purifier had been found naked, eviscerated and hanged from a construction site were also displayed. He had been cut from groin to collarbone, and his insides were seen dangling underneath him as his body hung lifeless from a crane. This Purifier was a bit more prominent than the first...

In the recovery room, Tony shook his head. "No I'm... I'm still a little woozy... the drug hasn't kicked in yet." he explained. "If I have to take it easy... I'm probably going to have to do it here." he reiterated. "I'll just see what the doc says. But I want to go... I want to go so badly..." He sighed, still staring at the ceiling. "If I can leave... I will. And even if I can't... I can't just sit here... even if I risk reopening my wound."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 25, 2014, 11:32:49 am**

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you have to let the wound heal as best you can. we barely got you here in time' marita reminded him, ' but i understand your feelings. i'd be raring to go as well. we'll just have to wait for the doctor' she said as a nurse came in..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 25, 2014, 11:34:56 am**

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Axel nodded at the group, gratefully. "Thanks for not taking it personally. The more I think about it, the dumber it sounds." As Marie and Rose paid over the credits they had on them, he grimaced. "I'm... I'm sorry that I can't help with any of this. I mean, money was never something I really, ah... had." Shifting slightly in embarrassment, he looked up at the TV and blanched as he saw the images flashing up.

"I'm, ah, gonna go check on Tony," he choked, quickly turning away and heading down to the ferret's room, knocking on the door lightly. Opening it, he nodded at Marita and gave a small smile to Tony. "Hey... sorry I didn't come sooner. How're you doing? You look... uh, good..." he said unconvincingly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 25, 2014, 12:12:54 pm**

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The conversation with Marita was starting to go in circles now, but fortunately, Axel's entry into the room spared the ferret any further need to agree that yes, ultimately, they had to wait for the doctor.

Tony raised his head, and gave Axel a blank stare. "No... I don't, I'm sure." he replied, looking off to the side here before shifting his gaze back to the rodent. "Where were you?" he asked accusingly, brow furrowed in consternation. "You were the last person I expected to show up last..." He trailed off, resting back against the pillow. "Not that it matters I guess..." He looked

off to the side again. "I don't even know if I can go with you anymore. I haven't heard anything yet on my condition."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 25, 2014, 12:30:06 pm**

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i'll let you chat with Axel' marita said to tony getting up and leaving the room. she went down the hall and rejoined the girls in the lobby.'well tonys hanging in there' she said to them. we'll have wait until the doctor sees him before we know when or if we'll be able to take tony with us..'  
- well rose and i found our insurance cards so we'll be able to cover most of the costs. annes cost wasnt very much, nairdas was' marie said.' how much as we short?" marita said ' 124000' rose said. ' tony has enough to cover his operation so we're good.'Marita replied. ' You guys hungry? theres a Mega Fries in the food court. you girls want anything?" ' sure just get me a mega fry' marie said ' me as well' Rose said. ' so 3 mega fries..' marita said relieved that she could use her credits on something other than hospital bills.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 25, 2014, 12:42:58 pm**

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Axel's face dropped. "I know, I'm... I'm really sorry. I was going to do something really stupid, but I guess being poor worked out, for once." He crossed the room and took a seat in one of the chairs next to Tony's bed. The pistol Emilena had given him dug painfully into his back, and he shifted position. Axel blinked guiltily, wishing he could tell him the truth. "The whole situation just got to me..."

He swallowed and tried smiling again, hoping Tony would forgive him. "Well, anyway, I'm glad you're, you know... still here. With us. And not, ah..." Axel trailed off. "Well, you know." He nodded vigorously. "Oh, don't worry about it! If you need to take it easy... I mean, I'd feel like crap if you got hurt again."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 25, 2014, 02:55:05 pm**

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Tony didn't look in Axel's direction as he sat down, the ferret still looking off to the side and away from him. "What happened to doing this together?" he asked darkly, staring at the wall.

"But I guess I'm one to talk." he continued, his tone still having that edge to it. "Here I go and get myself shot... and maybe I won't even be able to join you guys for your final push." He closed his eyes here and frowned before crossing his arms over his chest. "Which means I'd be useless... and then's nothing worse than that when your friends are counting on you." he said, his body trembling a tad.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 25, 2014, 03:01:58 pm**

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"Oh, did I never pay you all that, biatch?" Nairda rambled nervously. "All Out forgot son! I be bout ta just go git mah credit card outta mah pants...they still up in tha surgery room..." nervously he dodged back into the room he had just been operated on, and began trying to squeeze himself through a small decorative window that was roughly a third the size he was.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 25, 2014, 04:00:38 pm**

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Axel didn't say anything for a moment. Then he leaned forward and put a hand on the ferret's shoulder. "Hey... look, nobody's blaming you for this. *Nobody*. You didn't ask for this to happen. What's important for you right now is that you get better, alright?"

He sighed. "You've already done so much for us... and for me. Lupis meant absolutely nothing to you, but you still went after him. There's... I mean, I can't think of what I could do to repay you for that... and for being my friend." Axel smiled at him. "So you have to stay alive until I can think of something, alright?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 25, 2014, 04:15:07 pm**

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Tony exhaled sharply, and shook his head as if he was fighting back tears, or maybe he didn't believe it. "Sure..." he said now, more a shaky breath than a response.

He turned his head finally, rotating it across the pillow's top to look up at Axel, but he didn't face him directly. "You don't have to repay me... I know that." he responded, pursing his lips as his head started to swim... damn... were they really making painkillers this strong now? Closing his eyes, he all but collapsed back against the bed, sinking down into the pillow as he let the light-headed, swimming feeling wash over his mind. "I think I just want to rest..." he said, more a long sigh than a request.

Outside, Vergil perked up. "Hmm..." he narrowed his eyes now... sensing something. "Excuse me... I'll be right back..." he murmured, standing up out of his seat and making for the clinic's exit. That presence... it was very familiar to him... but why?

Throwing the door open, he looked from left to right up and down the alley, then started walking in the direction he sensed it. This way... yes... but what... or more correctly, *who* was it?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 26, 2014, 06:04:46 am**

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Axel looked down at the ferret as he drifted off. "Alright. I'll leave you alone. Just... take it easy alright? I'll try and stop by as soon as I can." Getting up, he crossed the room and left, quietly closing the door behind him. When it shut, he sighed and rubbed a hand over his hair. *At least he'll be safe here...* After a moment, he started heading back down the corridor to the reception.

Passing one of the doors on his way, he heard muffled thumping and scrabbling noises. Axel paused and looked at the door. **Surgery Room B**. For a second, there was silence, and he was about to continue when it suddenly started up again. Unsure, Axel clicked open the door and peeked through. "Is everything alri-" He stopped when he saw a figure trying to squeeze through an impossibly small window, and after a second, Axel recognised the rear that was wiggling in his direction.

"Nairda?" he gasped. "You, ah... you know there's a door in the reception?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 27, 2014, 03:08:16 am**

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Doctor Jiang crossed his arms as he looked around the room. He was normally pretty patient but Nairda was notorious for fucking up his recovery suites, failing to pay his bills and overall being an obnoxious asswipe.

"Next time he shows up, I'm denying him service until he pays up." He then got up and headed to Tony's room.

-----  
Anne's ears shot up as she heard a faint thumping noise. "The hell's that?"

Soren closed his magazine. "Marita, could you just get me a tempeh burger with all the fixings?" he asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 27, 2014, 11:17:53 am**

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sure marita said ' mind if i borrow a sheet of paper' she asked the receptionist ' the receptionist tore a couple notepad sheets from a note pad and handed it to her. 'Cabn do you do me a favor? get me a burger, would ya, i've been stuck this desk all day and havent had time to go get me anything ' she said ' just a tempeh burger nothing on it. heres the credits for it.. she gave marita 1000 credits. 'whats your name?' Marita asked ' zula came the reply. 'i'm marita' marita replied. as she took out a pen and wrote down each persons order; "vergil, Anne, you want anything/" she asked taking the credits Zula gave her ' justvtell me wghat you want and i'll write it down.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 28, 2014, 02:29:39 am**

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Regrettably Nairda returned to the room where the others were. "I can't pay so I be heroically escaping!" he informed the others.

He noticed that there appeared to be some serious chemistry between Zulu and Marie. "Yo...Zulu," he asked cordially. "Would you like ta travel wit us, biatch? We can always use one of mah thugs wit yo' scrilla sense." Then Marie would not have to live unloved...

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 28, 2014, 04:27:24 am**

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Soren smirked as he put the magazine down. "You really think he'd let you walk away without paying?"

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"Mr. Stracci. May I come in?" Doctor Jiang asked as he knocked on the door to Tony's room.

An orderly carrying a neurotester passed by him.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 28, 2014, 05:49:55 am**

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Axel snorted. "Really? Heroically? If you say so..." They did need to find a way for him to leave though - a glance up at the clock mounted on the wall told Axel almost 45 minutes had passed since he returned. He noticed Vergil wasn't there, but assumed he was just out for a toilet break or something.

One of the orderlies walking through the reception caught his eye. He bit his lip, then turned to Soren and lowered his voice. "The people working here... they can leave the building if they need to, right?" Axel frowned. "And, uh... what's a scrilla sense?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 28, 2014, 11:38:42 am**

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The knock jolted Tony back into wakefulness, and his head snapped up as he came out of his uneasy sleep. "Sure thing, doc." the ferret replied, blinking wearily. He felt a lot better at least, if not slightly drugged out. "So... how's it look, doc? How long do I have to stay here?" he asked groggily as he came more awake.

Outside, Vergil was on the streets, and glanced around at the crowd. There! Up ahead, walking along amongst the people, the white gecko could see a green reptile anthro with her back to him. Narrowing his eyes, he hated how short he was, as he couldn't get a very clear shot of her. But she was there... and she was... familiar somehow. Not too familiar though... perhaps someone he knew briefly from before...

But he halted, sighing as he realized walking away wouldn't help his new comrades, so he turned and headed back into the clinic, shaking his head. Damn... a lead he couldn't pursue... terrible shame, really.

Sulking back to his chair, he sank back into it with a heavy sigh, and rested his forehead on his fingers.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 28, 2014, 01:08:22 pm**

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"Moolah! Dosh! Simoleons! Smackers! Greenbacks! Dough! Aaaarrggghh!" Nairda swore, having attempted to say the word 'money' seven times. "So what do you say Zulu? Come wit us?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 28, 2014, 02:29:48 pm**

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Tony's stomach suddenly rumbled, and now that he was no longer nauseous, the ferret found himself with a certain craving that only mustelids could get in times like this. It was *that* kind of craving... deep and inherent, and he needed it. "Excuse me for a minute, doc." he said, raising his paw. "MARITA!" he called. "If you're going out... could uh... could you get me some... CUSTARD?" he asked hopefully, eyes wide. Yes, custard. Milk and egg yolk... eggs... *eggs*.

"Oh... sorry, doc." Tony blinked, coming out of his custard daze, and looked over at the doctor with a smile.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 28, 2014, 07:40:17 pm**

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Alright Tony' Marita called back' Custard it is" she said, writing it down. Zula glared at Nairda ' Its Zula, with an a.. and well, i'm probably here for another couple hours.. until the other receptionist Musa comes in.. if she comes in early then i'll tag along with you folks, stretch my legs, that kind of thing ' she shrugged.  
- i think you mean marita" Marie corrected Nairda as she stretched her legs, having sat in that chair for several hours. 'already have a girlfriend Nairda' Marita said firmly..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 28, 2014, 09:51:11 pm**

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"Huh, biatch? I didn't mention either of yo slick ass?" wondered Nairda, confused. "I was rappin' ta Zulu!"

He crossed to the door. "Whatever playa letz git tha hell outta here!" He kicked the door open

and scampered into the streets, grateful to be away from the vengeful prowling eyes of Dr. Jiang and his telepathic secretary.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 28, 2014, 11:36:26 pm**

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Or at least Nairda tried. The door to this underground clinic was specially reinforced to prevent people from breaking in.

"Nairda! What the fuck do you think you're doing!?" Anne snapped as she watched him try to break down the door.

An orderly went up to Nairda with a Taser in hand. "Back away from the door," she said calmly. The Puma locked eyes with him. "Doctor Jiang wants to talk to you after he sees another patient."

-----

The doctor looked at Tony's chart and then the wound itself. It was still bloody and the stitches would eventually reabsorb but the liquid spray containing induced stem cells he had prepared from Tony's own blood was doing a remarkable job at healing it.

"It's doing quite well. If you follow the discharge instructions and keep using that liquid, it should heal fully in about a week or two. Right now, you can be discharged. As for activities, you can resume normal activities but nothing strenuous," he replied.

He pointed to the aforementioned bottle in its refrigerated jacket on the nightstand.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 29, 2014, 12:52:32 am**

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"Oh... thank god!" Tony sighed happily. "I was afraid I'd be cooped up here! Thank you, doc!" he exclaimed, climbing out of bed, and wobbling a bit on his feet. "Whoa! So uh... good painkillers!" he complimented the doctor, taking the bottle of fluid from him and heading for the bathroom to change. It always felt good to get released from intensive care and surgery, even though Tony had only done it once before.

Pretty soon, he was back in his usual attire, and walking out, bandage on his neck. "Hey guys!" he exclaimed, throwing his arms open wide. "I'm out! I can go... I'm a little stoned I guess from the meds, but otherwise, feeling OK." he said, nodding. He then noticed Nairda cornered by an orderly, and his eyes widened. "Uhhh... what?" he asked here, then shook his head. "Oh right..." Walking over to the receptionist, he handed her his emergency funds card, and paid his end of the bill. Most places didn't ask for money up front but...

"Anyway... we ready to go?" he asked the others. "Any suggestions on where to?" he inquired, his voice kind of a slurred, almost drunken tone. He was at least confident he could do this... whatever came next.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 01:03:33 am**

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"Nairda!" Doctor Jiang called from the hallway. "I need to see you about your debt!"

The orderly shoved him to get him to start moving.

-----

Soren put his newspaper on the table. "I'm not sure but we need information."

Anne rubbed her horn and smiled. "I have an idea. Right now, the Purifiers are probably creaming themselves over a chance to kill some Augments, right?"

Soren nodded. "No shit."

"Right. I'll use my horn to spoof a transmission, we'll ambush a Purifier and squeeze them for some info."

Soren smiled. He had some "squeezing" in mind...and it wasn't metaphorical.

(OOC - the Purifier they catch is one of the arsonists who destroyed Soren's house. I'm planning that they spoof a message and lure a strike team to what they think is a dinky little Augment store. It's actually an abandoned bakery.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 29, 2014, 01:03:50 am**

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i was going to head out to grab some food marita said to Tony, glad to see him up and about . ' i'll drive for awhile, until you feel up to driving again.' as she said this a large Saint Bernard female entered ' Alright Zula you can get outta here, i'll be at the reception desk for the next triple shift' The bernard named Musa said.

-  
lets go get some food ' Marie said ' yeah we still have leftover pizza, but i'm in the mood for fries.' ' i have my food list ' here marita said, turning to them others ' back to the car everyone.. marita said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 29, 2014, 01:18:36 am**

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"Heh heh, come on now, da perved-out muthafucka holla'd I don't git steez if I don't pay...I was willin ta make dat sacrifice..." murmured Nairda nervously, inching the only way Zula was allowing him...into Dr. Jiang's office. Before he left he cast one worried look at Marita. "Please Marie, help me up here biaaatch! Just pay him, I swear I be bout ta make it up ta you, nahmean biiiatch?"

Then he heard Zula was coming and his mood brightened. "You're coming! Ain't that chill Marie? Yo ass two should smoke heterosexuizzle fries while chillin on each otherz lap up in the trunk of tha car.." whatever else he was saying got interrupted by his falling with a cry into Jiang's office.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 02:06:15 am**

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"I am not in the mood for games Nairda," Doctor Jiang said as he fixed his icy electronic gaze on the Wolf.

"I saw what you tried to do on camera. You ruined a piece of expensive equipment in your 'escape attempt'. That adds another 500,000 creds to your debt. I have however analyzed your augments and they'll cover your debt. Now, you have two choices, come up with that cash by tomorrow or I will have my guards find you and I will remove and sell your augments to pay for it? Is that clear?"

-----

Anne stepped out into the grimy alleyway. She cursed as she crunched a drug vial under her hoof.

Soren had his rifle ready and his eyes peeled for threats.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 29, 2014, 02:12:33 am**

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"Oh yeaaaa certainly sir playa!" Nairda stammered quickly, relieved that hadn't gone worse. "Yo ass won't be pissed tha fuck off hommie! I be bout ta have dat scrilla fo' you as soon as you won't even believe!" Inching his way away from the doctor, he gingerly turned the knob and made his way out into the lobby.

"Dum diddy-dum, here I come biaaatch! Who tha fuck wants lunch, biatch? I be famished fo' a shitload of mah straight-up cereal, *Alpha-Bits!*" He announced joyously to the girls.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 02:17:24 am**

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Anne glared at Nairda. "The fuck's wrong with you?"

Soren rolled his eyes. "Nairda, just shut up until your vocoder's fixed."

A drunken bum staggered into the alleyway and began to relieve himself against the trailer's rear tire.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 29, 2014, 02:18:11 am**

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marita was the first to reach the arrow and opened the passenger side doors so tony and the other back seat passengers could get in. then she opened the drivers side door and climbed in. she wuld wakiit a minute or two for everyone to get in before starting the engine..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 29, 2014, 02:19:12 am**

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Tony nodded, and stepped out into the early morning air, noting his Pierce-Arrow was still there with a smile. "Ahhh good... nothing happened to her... she's still in one piece."

"Well I was gonna suggest I drive but... I can't... I'm not really hungry either, aside for custard. Maybe breakfast in a bit but... for now..." He shook his head. "Gotta just let my stomach settle. Soooo..." Maybe it was because he was high, he wasn't sure, but he was feeling more bold than he'd typically feel under any other circumstance. "Liquid courage" they called it, except he wasn't drunk.

He sidled over to Anne, not wanting to seem as if he was being too direct. "Anne..." he began. "I know you aren't really looking for a long term-relationship or anything but... for some reason... you've kinda grown on me." The ferret blushed here. "I uh... don't mean to be direct but... I don't think we have a lot of time... would you perhaps settle for a... short-term... relationship?" he asked, closing his eyes now, and expecting to get slapped. He seemed to shrink a little here, withdrawing in on himself in anticipation.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 29, 2014, 02:25:20 am**

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Nairda leapt into the Arrow, slamming the door shut behind him. "Hellooooooooooooo ladies and muthafuckas! I be a gangbangin' free man! Now, whoz payin fo' brunch, biatch? I would yo,

but I aint got a gangbangin' finger-lickin' dime biaaatch!" " He fluttered his eyelashes at Soren. "How tha fuck bout you pay snookums? Since I don't wanna distract Marie n' Zula from their...date...."

His idiocy was giving Anne and Tony the privacy they needed outside.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 02:34:29 am**

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Soren shoved Nairda back with his rifle. "Call me 'snookums' again and I'll put a bullet in your groin," he growled.

He then saw the bum. "Hey! Quit pissin' on my vehicle!"

The bum hastily pulled up his pants and ran away.

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Anne chewed her lip. She wasn't interested in a relationship but at the same time, snubbing the son of a crime lord was a bad idea. "Ehh, why not? It'll be like trying a new strain of pot."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 29, 2014, 02:42:02 am**

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"Really?" Tony asked, opening his eyes now and grinning stupidly. "Well uh... looks like everyone's getting into the car so... uh... if you wanted to try this new strain sooner rather than later..." he nodded subtly to the trailer. "I can't drive in my condition... but maybe I could... take something else for a spin?" he asked, raising his brows. "Only if you... want to, of course." he said here, sounding incredibly nervous. Usually, he was much more confident and self-assured, but the drugs were making him giddy.

Vergil slid into the back seat as well, smirking at Nairda's and Soren's antics.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 03:05:55 am**

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(Stephenson Memorial Hospital)

A police officer and a detective entered Kojuuro's room.

"Sir, you are under arrest for public indecency and sexual assault of a non-sapient," the detective said.

"What!?" Kojuuro exclaimed as he shot up from the bed, only to be stopped by a spike of pain.

"Anything you say can be used against you." The police officer then began to handcuff him.

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(Alleyway)

Anne climbed into the trailer. "In a little bit."

She smiled and lay down on the couch, emphasizing her dress's smooth folds.

Soren climbed in after her. He took off his rifle and other gear and sat on a chair. "Tony, I think I have a plan."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 29, 2014, 03:10:37 am**

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"You got it..." Tony practically breathed, watching her lay down on the couch, and taking a moment to just admire her as she lay there, eyes playing over her form. Then Soren climbed in, nearly giving Tony a heart attack.

"Jeez! Well uh... OK... go ahead." Tony said, nodding as he sat down as well. He then buzzed Marita. "Hey Marita... we're discussing strategy back here... you guys can go and get breakfast if you want. We'll wait. Don't worry about it." he told her over the intercom.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 29, 2014, 03:14:20 am**

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"Is this about Lily?" stammered Kojurro. "Because she was still sapient when I..." he trailed off, realizing there was no way they could know about that. "And we didn't even get anywhere with that night! This is absurd!"

But his prior wounds from Kozlov were preventing him from actually fighting back; had he been in his normal form, he would have beaten both of these men to a pulp. However, he did have enough strength to surreptitiously implant both of the men with his signature bugs.

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Nairda's eyes lit up when he saw how Tony looked at Anne. He could tell a romantic upgrade when he saw one.

"Snookums, how bout you explain tha plan ta me, n' our slick asses leave dis trailer...less overstuffed. Y'all KNOW dat shit, muthafucka! Therez nuff room wit tha hoes up in tha car," he offered brightly, winking conspicuously at Tony and leading the way into the car where Marie, Marita, Zula, and Rose were waiting. "Whoz Driving?" he asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 03:34:34 am**

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(Stephenson Memorial Hospital)

"No. Lanthae Aquarium reported that you was engaged in...sexual activity with one of their sharks two nights ago."

The two cops escorted him past the nurse's office and down the elevator.

A nurse exiting one of the patient rooms stopped to let the duo pass.

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Soren got up and promptly kicked Nairda in the groin. Constantly being smacktalked, insulted and being hit on by Nairda finally caused the Human to snap. "Shut the fuck up! And don't *ever* call Marita a 'ho'!" He wasn't attracted to her but he was very thankful for all the help she gave the group. And he'll be damned if someone talking like a bad rapper was talking shit about her.

Anne got up and backhanded him across the face. "That's for being an obnoxious assclown and being a dick to Doctor Jiang. I overheard everything."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 29, 2014, 04:04:04 am**

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Kojurro allowed himself to be led away. "Oh yeah, that. I suppose that justifies this."

He had no further objections as they led him to the station and Broadstreet made him fill out sexual offender registration forms.

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"I said 'ho!'" howled Nairda, clutching his gonads and falling to his knees. "Ho!" He repeated, frustrated. "Ho! G.I.R.L! It auto corrects itself biiiatch! Annit adds 'biiiatch' ta the end of sentences!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 29, 2014, 04:52:11 am**

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Axel heard Nairda's cry of pain, and made his way over to the trailer to investigate. Peeking in, he saw him kneeling on the floor and clutching his unmentionables. Glancing around at the others, Axel shrugged. "I'm... going to guess he probably had it coming?"

Climbing up, he took a seat opposite Soren. "I don't really feel like eating at a time like this. So, ah... what's going on?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 29, 2014, 10:55:56 am**

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marita responded to Tony's call ' sure tony, you guys can hang back here while we go get some breakfast. you asked for custard so i'll see what we can find as far as flavors. ' mega fry was open 24 hours a day ' marita started the arrow and pulled out of the square.

- kojuuro read all the paperwork Broadstreet gave him. ' any chance i can get off this list?' ' you serve 10 years a jail and spend 5 years more on the outside without an instance of recidivism, then yes.' Broadstreet said coldly. 15 YEARS!' kojuuro gaped. ' we dont mess with non-sapiens pal, we have very strict rules against that . swing from either side of the plate, visit strippers, whatever, i dont care, personal choice and all that, but you screw a nonsapien, thats an automatic sex offender listing. you do it again, its life in prison ' broadstreet said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 29, 2014, 12:07:13 pm**

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Both Soren's kicking of Nairda and Anne's backhanding of him caused Tony to hold his sides and start laughing, the ferret rolling a bit on the chair as he guffawed. "Damn! It's about time someone put him in his place!" he crowed, pointing at the disabled Nairda. "Way to go!"

He saw Axel joining them, and then, the Pierce-Arrow got rolling. Dammit... so much for his intimate time with Anne... still... they could have some alone time when everyone was off to breakfast, as the ferret really just wasn't hungry right now. "Well, Soren was about to go over a plan he had with us." Tony explained with a snort, sitting more upright on the chair and composing himself.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 29, 2014, 03:55:03 pm**

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Marita drove through the drive through at mega fry, and began looking at the selections.' good they have fries 24 hours a day, along with breakfast items ' marita said  
- this place had custard in 5 varieties, cookies and cream, smores, mint chocolate chip, twist

and plain vanilla. tempuh burgers were combo number 7. ok i'd like 6 orders of mega fries, 4 numbers 7s 3 with everything one with nothing on it, 7 hash browns and 7 drinks to go with it.' total comes to 3,175 credits' came the voice on the speaker.' marita drove up to the window and paid for the food, and soon several steaming bags of food were being passed to her through the window. along with the custard and drinks. ' ulsa took one of the bags, as did marie. rose took the large tray of drinks and held it as marita pulled into the nearest parking spot. She then buzzed tony.' Tony This place has custard in smores mint chocolate chip, twist, vanilla and cookies and cream what flavor do you want?' she asked. tell me what you want and i'll head in and get you a scoop"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 29, 2014, 05:45:31 pm**

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"*Alpha-Bits*, fo sho!" Nairda piped up from the back. "Thanks Ulsa!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 29, 2014, 09:13:02 pm**

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Axel couldn't help but smile when he saw how amused Tony was by Nairda's pain. "So you have a plan?" he asked, turning to Soren. "For getting into the base? We're gonna need to hurry, we don't have much time left." *And neither does Lily.*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 29, 2014, 11:08:38 pm**

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Soren unwrapped his tempuh burger and took a bite. He swallowed his bite.

"All right, we know that the Purifiers like to attack famous Augments, pro-Augment activists and pretty much anyone associated with them, right?"

Anne wiped some ketchup off her muzzle with a napkin. "Well, yeah."

He looked at Anne's horn. "How powerful is the transmitter?"

"I can transmit anything to about thirty meters."

Soren shook his head. "It'll do. We'll buy one of those prepaid cell phones, have Anne transmit a set of fake coordinates to the Purifiers and then we can press them for info. Sound good?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 29, 2014, 11:41:23 pm**

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"Well yeah, it sounds good." Tony nodded here, glancing around at the group in the trailer, then buzzed Marita. "Banana is technically my favorite... but go with s'mores I guess for now." he answered her.

"So anyway, we get this phone, Anne transmits the signal, and we extract information from these guys. Sounds simple enough." The ferret nodded again, sitting back against the couch. "I was gonna show you some ways into the heart of the factory too, so we still have that."

Tony drummed his paws on his stomach now, and exhaled, looking around at the assemblage as he waited.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 30, 2014, 01:22:37 am**

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Axel listened to what Soren had to say, then shrugged. "Yeah... I guess that could work. We'd need to make sure we don't bring too many of them down on us, though." He considered. "And we need to get them somewhere quiet."

The rat bit his lip for a second, then glanced around at the group. "Hey, isn't there some big, abandoned bakery, or... or something near here? Might be a good place. I mean, it'll be out of the way, and nobody 'll interrupt us ..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 30, 2014, 01:56:22 am**

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Smores it is then" marita replied , i  
ll be back in a coupler minutes Marita said. Marie and Rose mucehed n ther fres, while Ulsa took a bite of her burgers. Marita went inside the resteraunt and soon came out with two smores cusards. the custard had looked so good she had decided to get one for herself. he set hers down in the couholder by the drivers seat, then went to the trailer and knocked on the door" i've got your custard Tony" she said" Open up please!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 30, 2014, 02:28:54 am**

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Tony reached over, and opened the door up, not moving off the couch as he retrieved the proffered custard. "Thanks!" he said gratefully, then eagerly dug in. He still was a bit peeved that his attempt to get some alone time hadn't entirely worked out, but he was still angling it around in his head. "Hm... the bakery could work, yeah." Tony nodded here. He had to admit... he was kind of hoping to move this conference along, as he was still high, and still thinking about this short-term relationship. But he didn't want to come off like Nairda had at his father's place, after all.

Leaning over, he whispered to Anne. "If I had known it would've taken this long, I would've stayed at the clinic and asked you to remain behind... gotta have someone watching over me, right?" he joked with a wink.

"Well the plan sounds good to me." he said in a louder tone here, taking a bite out of his custard. "If you pull it off, we'll get some good info. Anything else?" he asked, looking around the trailer.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 30, 2014, 05:12:50 am**

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Axel saw as Tony leaned over and whispered something in Anne's ear, winking. *Is something going on between them?* he thought, sensing how eager he seemed to speed this meeting up. Axel remembered how they'd rushed into the trailer, alone, and he blinked.

"Alright then, I think I'll just... go check on the, ah... the others in the car," he stated lamely, feeling decidedly like the fourth-wheel, and hurried out of the trailer, moving across to the Pierce-Arrow. "Soren's got a plan to catch a Purifier and grill him for information," he explained to the others as he let himself into the back. "We can't screw things up this time." Looking to the side, Axel saw he was sitting next to Nairda, and immediately began feeling uncomfortable. "Oh, er. Hello... ah... dawg?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 30, 2014, 01:29:43 pm**

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marita had returned to the arrow and was tucking in to her fries, which were still hot, and very tasty. " Once we all eat.. excuse me, these fries are good- we'll tackle grabbing one of those guys' She said to Axel. ' you hungry/ i got plenty of food' she said.

this burger is delicious' " ulsa said between bites.. ' so you lot are anti-purifiers huh.. eh i dont care if you have augments or not, so long as you arent a hoodlum or anything like that..

\_ rose ate a hash brown, and took a sip from her soda.. ' hadnt eaten much since the don's house.' she said.

- is there any way i can.. atone for my mistake? kojuuro said as broadstreet leaned back in his chair. 'look i saw the broadcast about those nutjobs on tv.. and i'm willing to help if you cut me some slack..' what do you take me for, a gullible idiot? broadstreet replied. theres no way i'm letting you out on your own recognizance.. not with your history.you've got quite the rap sheet here, of course most of those we cant charge you with, due to the statute of limitations being expired and all.' i'll post bail, look take all my possessions as collateral, except for what i have on me' kojuuro said.'including my apartment..' the bail is 1 million credits, given your flight risk ' broadstreet said. he reached into a bag that was confiscated from kojuuro and dumped out a number of bugs, the kind kojuuro had used to bug the group at Don Straccis. he held one up..;' by rights i should shove this up your ass for all the trouble you've caused us over the years Kojuuro. by rights you should be spending years in prison with little chance of parole.. on the other hand these lunatics want to overthrow the government and make this place unlivable for anyone who doesnt hew to their warped view. they make the Khmer rouge look like pikers.so, heres the deal. you want to help, you wear this tracker at all times so we know where you are. you take it off, my officers will be ordered to put a bullet through your head.no questions, no mercy, no back to the police station. you help stop these guys, then maybe. MAYBE, you'll get a clean slate, i cant make any guarantees. so thats the deal. you take it, you wear this bug and you go back out there and serve as a police liaison. or, you can turn me down in wghich case its a holding cell for the next week while you're arraigned on charges.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 30, 2014, 01:53:51 pm**

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Anne finished off her tempeh burger and stuck a few fries into her mouth. She blushed as Tony blatantly hit on her.

"Uh, anyways," she said, her ears splaying back in embarrassment. "The wildcard is how many Purifiers show up. If only a few show up, we're good. If like thirty show up, we're fucked."

Soren took a sip of the tea he had brewed in the trailer. "Which is why we have to be careful what we say as a tip. If we say it's a pro-Augment rally, we might get a huge, heavily armed horde. Say its a small augment shop or factory and we might just get a team of arsonists."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 30, 2014, 04:32:34 pm**

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Tony munched on his custard, then got up from the chair, and headed for the trailer's door. "OK guys... I'll drive us over to the bakery. I'll have Axel direct me." he said, and shut the two in before heading around to the driver side door of the Pierce-Arrow.

"All right Marita... I'm taking over." Tony said, hooking a thumb over his shoulder. "I'm gonna drive us over to an abandoned bakery to capture those Purifiers. And before you argue... I'm fine. Not the first time I've driven while on painkillers, after all." he told her. "Now SOMEONE will have to move into the trailer, because there's only room for six up front, and I definitely want Axel up here because I need to discuss a few things with him." *Why is some random secretary from the clinic coming with us?* he thought to himself as he noticed her in the Berline.

"So yeah, don't worry about my driving. I feel up to it." he said sincerely, whipping out his phone and beginning to compose a text to Axel as he waited for Marita to exit the driver's side.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 30, 2014, 05:46:33 pm**

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you folks can drop me off on 17th street. my apartments there Ulsa said.

Marita grabbed her food , went back to the trailer and climbed in.' well guys i'll be back here with you for a little bit.' she said.

\_ rose and marie finished their food and but their garbage into one of the bags and put it at thier feet.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 30, 2014, 06:50:43 pm**

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"Thanks for being a sport, Marita." Tony replied, sliding in behind the wheel, and feeling that sudden thrill of being in command of the V-12 once again. Nothing could beat an internal combustion engine! Turning the key in the ignition, he listened to the throaty roar of the V-12 spring to life. Better than the Lincolns, Packards, and Cadillacs that had come out with V-12s in the same era, Pierce-Arrow had beaten them all, and were renowned for their longevity and power.

Tony turned the radio on as he began to pull out of the lot, looking out the window so he could merge into traffic. Fall Out Boy's "My Songs Know What You Did in the Dark" was currently playing, and Tony drummed his paws on the steering wheel and the driver's side door in time to the rhythm as he drove out into the main street. This was unbeatable right now, as nothing could top driving a classic car to great tunes.

As he pulled onto the corner of 17th Street, he waved farewell to Ulsa (but wasn't her name Zula? Or maybe even Zulu?). "Cheers, miss!" he called, and then accelerated back into traffic. He hit send on his phone before they reached their next destination however, getting the directions to the bakery from Axel. Turning up the radio a bit, Tony bobbed his head and wove through traffic, making the turns Axel pointed out to him rather smoothly and driving surprisingly well for someone who was stoned. Driving was something Tony took insanely seriously, and he went into massive focus mode whenever he did it.

Approaching the abandoned bakery now, Tony slowed it down, and gradually rolled to a stop on the street. Turning the radio down, he pushed the intercom to the trailer. "We have reached our destination, ladies and gentlemen." Turning to Axel, he raised his brows. "Got my message?" he asked without elaborating. Tony kept the car idling, not turning it off just yet. "So I was thinking..." he said, back into the intercom. "We're gonna need eyes and ears on the Purifier base. You guys are gonna need Anne to make the call, and Marita's hacking to make it seem convincing. So why don't Axel, Vergil and myself drive down to the base and conduct some recon, see what kind of defenses they've set up since our last visit, and keep you posted while you get the info?" he suggested now. "This way, you got enough left behind to overwhelm the Purifier contingent, and only a minimal number will be going to reconnoiter the base." he outlined. "Sound good?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **March 30, 2014, 07:12:01 pm**

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I'll start hecking right away' marita said ' give me two minutes, to create something plausible.. you guys should be able to do a proper recon. Let me know if you need anything ' she added.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 30, 2014, 07:30:48 pm**

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Axel nodded. "We're running short on time. If we split up, we can see what the situation's like at the base, you guys can try and get as much new information as you can, then we can meet up again just before we..." he swallowed. "... Before we finish this. It's the most efficient way of doing things."

He leaned closer to the intercom. "We can keep in contact with you, Soren. If something turns up at the base, we'll let you know."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **March 30, 2014, 09:23:03 pm**

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"We be seein you later Ulsa!" Said Nairda cheerily. "Say, what happened ta Zula? Where did she go?"

He had settled for some bowl of Chinese food, and when he finished it he sent it frisbeeing to the trashcan, where it missed by a mile and skittered to the floor amongst other litter.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **March 31, 2014, 01:50:16 am**

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"Gotcha!" Soren said into the intercom. He then looked at the group around him. "All right, first things first is we see what we've got. But before that..."

He went into the weapons locker, got out the rifle, combat helmet and ballistic vest he had worn before.

Anne pulled the Luger out of her dress. She pushed the door opened and looked over the factory. It was quite obviously an industrial bakery with a dilapidated sign proudly boasting of "Lanthae's finest algae crisps". The windows had been shot out and debris was scattered over the weed choked lot. The forced open door indicated that it had been hit by looters at least once. "The lot's choked with weeds but I don't think it matters. But the doors have been forced open."

Soren sighed. "Great. That means we gotta sweep to make sure there's no bums or anything that could fuck this up."

Interestingly, the factory wasn't at ground level, but it was on an elevated platform a few hundred feet up.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 31, 2014, 11:19:51 am**

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Tony waited for the others to exit the trailer and the car, and then waved at the group. "We'll stay in contact! See ya soon!" he called, honking as he drove off. Vergil was in the back seat, and Axel in the front passenger side. "Hoo! OK... hope you didn't think ill of this but... I'm just worried Lily might not have a lot of time." the ferret explained. "Thanks for agreeing to go along." he told the rat.

"Besides, we'll see what's going down at the base, and try and get a read on the situation. I won't be jumping the gun unless it's absolutely necessary." Tony outlined. He started heading for the highway that would take them to the Purifier compound, knowing this would likely be their last chance at getting Lily out of there.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **March 31, 2014, 12:21:21 pm**

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Axel glanced at Tony and nodded. "No, you're right. We can't screw things up... this is it. I don't want to take any chances - we have to know exactly what we're heading into." He let out a trembling breath and stared out the window as the highway rushed past, his jaw clenching. "If they've hurt her, I'll kill all of them." As he spoke, Emilena's tracer gun dug into his back, and for a second he considered if he should let Tony and Vergil know about Emilena, and the plan that he was hoping, praying would work. But if the others found out... especially Soren,

who likely couldn't see past his hatred of her... if any harm came to Emilena, the whole plan would fall apart. And that wasn't a chance Axel thought he could take. The rat sighed and rubbed his face, suddenly feeling drained.

After a moment, Axel raised his eyes again. "And Jesus... killing all the augmented in Lanthae?! Just... fuck, this is *crazy*..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **March 31, 2014, 09:45:16 pm**

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"Take it easy." Tony cautioned as he sped down the highway. "We don't know anything just yet, and going on a killing spree might not be the best thing to keep you alive." he pointed out. "You CAN'T let your emotions run away with you... I know that sucks to hear, but... at least initially, you gotta keep a cool head."

"He's right." Vergil put in. "Losing your head is precisely what they're hoping you'll do, I'm sure. Call me impartial, but from what I can remember of my life, it's never a good idea to go too crazy with your emotions."

"Well hey... I just don't wanna see you dead over this, that's all." Tony continued. "Especially if she's still alive... but only hurt. Remember... the exploding reactor and my father's men will take care of all of them... no exceptions. Either way, they're going to die. Just keep that in mind. MOST important thing is NOT killing them if they've hurt Lily... but getting Lily out of there first and foremost. Any vendetta you have should come secondary to saving her."

"Tony, might I borrow your cell phone?" Vergil asked here.

"Uh... what for?" the ferret replied.

"Internet search." Vergil responded.

"Well... all right. Here." Tony took it out and held it out for the gecko to take, which he did, beginning to tap through it as he did some research.

"Anyway... just let the rest of us handle killing them... cause believe me... I owe them some payback too." the ferret said resolutely. He swallowed as he saw the Purifier complex looming large in the distance. Putting his directional on, he took the Pierce-Arrow down the exit towards the ruined industrial part of the city. Exhaling, he began slowing down the closer he got. "There's an old high rise that overlooks the factory... we could set up in there. What do you think?" Tony asked Axel.

Vergil had found what he'd been looking for, and was reading with some fascination as he started absorbing this new information. This red gecko... was he his old superior officer?

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 01, 2014, 03:38:47 pm**

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As the Purifier's base reared up ahead of them, frustrated tears blurred Axel's vision. Being this close to her, not knowing whether she was alive or dead, was driving him crazy. *Get a grip on yourself...* Grinding his teeth, he took a deep breath and blinked them away. "Don't worry, I'm... I know I need to keep a clear head about this." He looked around at Tony and Vergil. "And I've got no arguments against you killing as many of them as you can. But just... just be careful. I want you guys to make it out too." His mouth twitched, an attempt at a smile. "I want *all* of us to make it out."

When Tony suggested the high rise, Axel craned his neck to look up at it. The ferret was right, it would give them a good overview of the compound. He nodded. "Yeah, let's go for it." The industrial area surrounding the base was a mess. As they drove through its empty streets, the wrecked and abandoned buildings flanked them on either side, the smashed windows and

broken doors gaping like mouths. Axel shivered, his imagination running wild and making him feel like they were being watched.

As they neared the high rise, the sound of Vergil tapping away at the phone drew Axel's attention. "You okay?" he asked, looking back at the gecko, an amused expression flicking across his features. "Checking out what you've missed since you were stuck in that... tube thing?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 02, 2014, 01:10:14 am**

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Tony felt much the same way as Axel did, and it was an easy thing for the imagination to run away with you in an area like this. He drove more slowly here, not wanting to attract any unnecessary attention.

"Dammit!" Vergil exclaimed from the back seat. "No... I was trying to find a red gecko from my memories... and it turns out he's dead. Died several years ago. I recalled him being my superior officer or something. Turns out he was one of the most famous warlords ever from the Scorched Earth War. He almost single-handedly ended it, using at times questionable tactics, but he was lauded as a hero... then he went rogue. Him and this other guy called Kalis, who was another hero of the war. They started terrorizing the planet for a few years with their accumulated forces, but finally, a great naval battle was fought between much of the world's remaining forces and the massive fleet of Kalis and this gecko. Kalis betrayed his former comrade, and fired on the gecko's flagship, killing him in the process as Kalis assumed command of the forces and still leads them to this day. I remember that memory specifically... I could see this gecko battling a female on the bridge of his ship... and then... fire and explosions... how did I survive?" Vergil wondered aloud, shaking his head.

"Anyway... as fascinating and compelling as this story is... he was my one lead, and he's dead. The only other person I can think of is maybe Kalis, but he sounds like a really evil dude, from what I'm reading. I wonder... was I part of the world's navies back then?" he mused aloud. "I just can't... remember." he sighed here, closing his eyes. "This has brought up more questions than answers, I'm afraid."

Tony pulled the car to a stop next to the high rise, and killed the engine. "OK... here we are. Really fascinating, Vergil. Sorry about your lead being dead, though. Hey Axel, you and Vergil check the place out while I lock up the car and trailer and get us some weapons. Be careful, OK?" the ferret cautioned. "The Purifiers sometimes come in here, but it's not very frequently, so we should be good."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 02, 2014, 06:25:14 am**

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Axel pulled out the Luger and nodded apprehensively. "On it. You watch it too, okay? If you see someone coming, call for us." He let himself out, then walked around to the entrance of the high rise and waited for Vergil to join him. Peering through the dusty glass, he couldn't see anything but darkness. Hearing light footsteps next to him, Axel looked down at the gecko. "Hey, I'm sorry you're out of ideas about... you know, who you are. If you ever need any help, then... I'll be there. I mean, it's the least I can do for your help now." He swallowed and shook his head. "As long as we don't all, ah, die in the next few hours. Anyway... you ready? Let's do this..."

Axel pushed the door in, and it slowly opened, the rusted hinges squealing in protest. He winced, and stopped pushing once the door was just open wide enough, then slipped through. The small lobby room was cloaked in shadow beyond the light that leaked through the doorway, the pungent smell of damp clinging to the air along with what seemed to be years worth of dust. Axel fished his phone out of his pocket and flicked it on, using the low blue light as a torch. Shining the light around revealed a dusty tile floor, a moldy couch propped in the corner, and a rotting wooden desk. After checking to make sure nobody was hiding behind it,

Axel turned his attention to the set of stairs in front of them that led up... and a small red light to the side caught his eye. Swinging the phone's light to it, he saw it was the elevator's 'Up' button. *Why give power to the lift?* he wondered.

Turning to Vergil, he pointed towards the elevator. "This has power... Should we take it, or walk?" Axel looked at his small legs with a quick grin. "I'm guessing you're not exactly Speedy Gonzales with taking stairs, huh?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 02, 2014, 02:12:59 pm**

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Marita entered the open doorway and listened for noises above her and below her. Marie and Rose followed her, both looked around nervously as they went up the stairs. 'so what's the plan guys / Rose asked. 'we grab some purifiers question them, and form a plan of attack' Marita said..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 02, 2014, 08:00:40 pm**

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Soren followed. He used his rifle's built in tac light to peer around. Nothing, just various mixers, bread slicers, ovens and other bakery equipment lying around in various states of disrepair.

The catwalk overhead was dilapidated; he dared not climb up there for fear it would collapse.

"All right," Soren said. "We only have five people so we need to position ourselves so we can shoot the Purifiers as they funnel through the entrance. Remember, leave at least one alive."

Anne looked around. "We could just hide behind the bakery equipment." She tapped her horn. "All right, I'm ready to transmit."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 02, 2014, 10:16:34 pm**

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using it as cover' good thinking. but after this we'll need to get some shuteye as i hardly got any sleep at all last night, what with Tony's condition and all'"Marie said' we could do shifts in that case" Rose said. Someone stands watch for an hour or so..

-  
marita walked past the ruined machinery..' looking around..' this place hasn't been used in years..it's a dump' she said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 03, 2014, 12:29:41 pm**

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"Yeah well... I guess... I guess I'll just have to regroup and figure something else out. Maybe I could check enlistment records in that war but... reading about how serious it was, I doubt I'd find anything out on me." the gecko said with resignation. Walking into the building now, he scanned the room with his eyes, but sensed no presences within. Noticing the elevator had power, his face fell a little here and looked at the rat with a "really?" look. "Yes well... I can walk just fine but... elevator would probably be best just to save us time." he informed him with a solemn nod.

Tony entered now behind them, carrying some weapons and a small toolbox-looking chest with him. "All right guys, car's locked, as is the trailer. Oh wow... the power's still on, I see. It used to be on in this building back when I was a Purifier too; that's how I knew about it. Hey Axel..." Tony set the chest down and pushed the call button, the doors opening immediately. "I need to talk to you about something before we get too settled in." the ferret stated, stepping

into the elevator now along with Vergil. "Also, pick your weapons." Tony said, showing off the assortment he'd brought with him. The ferret had selected a non-projectile (aka laser) pistol for himself, and had a small, folding SMG as well. He had a concealed knife on him too that had a little surprise in it, in case of emergencies. He figured they'd more heavily arm themselves when they started their initial infiltration.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 03, 2014, 02:33:38 pm**

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The elevator doors closed behind Axel as he followed the others in. Tapping the button that would take them to the top floor, the lift jerked then started pulling up roughly. The dim yellow light illuminating the compartment flickered. At the mention of weapons, Axel turned to look at what Tony had brought with him. "Good idea," he said, swapping out his Luger for a smaller pistol. "I was almost out."

As he tucked it into his jeans, his arm brushed against Emilena's gun. He blinked. *If more people knew, maybe the plan would have more luck in working... and I trust these guys. They wouldn't do anything to risk it...* "I... have have something to tell you too..." Axel started, then paused. He looked at Tony. "But, ah... you can go first. What is it?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 04, 2014, 04:28:03 pm**

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Anne swore. "Shit. I could've given you a moziafil tab to keep awake but I left them in the trailer."

Soren nodded as he yawned. "I'll rest for a bit."

"I'll go first." The mare then turned to Marie. "Have you got the phone and fake info and script ready?"

"Wait, so how is this gonna work?"

Anne tapped her horn. "I read the script and use my horn to transmit it into the phone. Doctor Jiang implanted a spoofer module that lets me fake coordinates. If we just transmit it with the computer, it'll show that the area the tip says is an abandoned bakery and they'll be rightfully suspicious. But with my module, I can say that the factory's gone and its an augment repair shop."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 04, 2014, 05:24:13 pm**

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Yeah' everything's ready' marita said as she handed it over." so we transmit this data, and hope we dont get 50 purifiers checking it out'  
\_ what can we use as a sort of a bunk, while were here?' rose said, stifling a yawn..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 04, 2014, 09:28:44 pm**

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Nairda spun in a circle and knocked over a cart of stainless silver kitchen equipment while reciting the complete lyrics of *Getting' Jiggy Wit It* by Will Smith.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 04, 2014, 11:14:39 pm**

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Tony blinked, rocking his head back a bit here in surprise. "You do?" he asked, not expecting this. "Well all right... I'll go first." he nodded. "I was thinking... I don't know how long we can wait here... if we see any indication that things aren't going well for Lily or just in general... not that we'd be able to see that from here probably but you get my drift... I say we just go in. I can get you right into that base, we head for the reactor, Vergil points out Lily... speaking of which... she still in there?" he asked the gecko.

Vergil closed his eyes, and seemed to be serenely concentrating. "Yes." he replied after a moment, opening his eyes. "She's still inside."

"OK, good. So yeah, I was thinking we really can't wait if there's signs of trouble. I think I'll call Soren in a bit to see how his end of things is going, and get a time estimate from them." the ferret stated. "But I highly doubt you just want to wait around here either. So anyway... what were you gonna tell me?" Tony asked as the elevator reached the top floor and with a groan the doors slid open. Tony stepped out into the empty offices now, the windows all around them letting in the eerie light of day through the dusty glass.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 05, 2014, 12:32:15 am**

Anne sighed as she heard the crash. "Somebody shut that asshole up before he fucks us all over!"

She looked over the script and the cellphone. The phone had already been programmed with the Purifier tip line that was from the TV ultimatum. The laptop had the script ready, a program that altered one's voice and a dialer intended for use with smartphones – such as the ones they had. The data cable was connected to the phone. The laptop's radio antenna was out as well.

The mare cracked her knuckles.

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Soren, fuming, stomped over to Nairda and promptly pushed him against the wall. "Nairda," he said. "Quit being an annoying bag of dicks and make yourself useful by finding something like a breakroom that we can rest in."

He then pointed to the stainless steel kitchenware on the ground. "If you fuck this up, I will shove the industrial sized mixing paddle so far up your ass that you won't be able to sit down!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 05, 2014, 02:36:17 am**

Nairda giggled and blushed as Soren played rough with him. "Soren, take me up ta dinner first!"

He began picking up the kitchenware. "Yo Anne, biatch? Why did you turn down dat sexy hunk Tony, biatch? Dude would done been tha \*perfect\* boyfriend..." he sighed, imaging himself with Tony...but sadly it could never be.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 05, 2014, 02:57:58 am**

"Fuck you!" Soren snapped. "If you're too horny to think straight, go find some place private and beat off!" He rubbed his temples. Nairda was going to give him hypertension from the stress.

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"Shut the fuck up! I'm trying to work!" Anne shouted. Her train of thought had been interrupted.

She turned to the three women. "Can one of you get Nairda to shut up? I can't concentrate."

(OOC - Bitch is a perfectly acceptable way to refer to a female canid in this universe. In general, the real-life specific terms for male, female and immature animals are perfectly acceptable ways to refer to anthros in this universe. Of course, the Human terms are also acceptable. However, using the wrong species-specific term <referring to a male Golden Retriever as a "bull" instead of a "dog"> is likely to cause offense.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 05, 2014, 07:54:48 am**

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Axel didn't say anything for a moment as they stepped out of the elevator. He walked up to a window and ran an arm across the glass, brushing the dust and grime away. Far below, he could see the base, could see figures milling around inside its walls, looking like they were preparing for something. After a moment, Axel sighed. "Yeah. Maybe you're right. I know how risky it'd be, but... we need to get her out of there as soon as possible. That's the most important thing for me. The reactors... they can come later. But we'll need help rescuing Lily, and..."

Axel turned to face them. "That story I told you before, Vergil. I... I wasn't telling the truth." He glanced at Tony. "When you were being treated back at the clinic, I got a message from someone, asking me to come meet them. It... it was Emilena. She's got a plan to cure Lily." He swallowed and shook his head. "I... I know trusting her again sounds crazy after... you know. And that's part of the reason I was keeping quiet about it. So if something went *wrong*, I'd be the only one who had to deal with the consequences." Walking away from the window, the floor creaking, Axel sat on an old, dusty desk and rubbed the bandage over his ear, staring at the floor. "I... I can't think of a reason why she'd betray us again. Lupis already has Lily, and Emilena was home free. Coming back gives her nothing. And the stuff she told me..."

He looked up. "Back at the base, when everything went to hell, I found out what's wrong with Lily. She's been... I don't know how you'd describe it... *possessed* by some kind of creature, and as time goes on it's taking her over. But... it's given Lily the ability to throw her mind to other bodies. At your mansion, Tony, when Emilena vanished - that was Lily, somehow she managed to teleport her away. And when that happened, it created some kind of connection between Emilena and that creature, so she could see the things that it's seen. And she saw that..." Axel swung his gaze to the gecko. "Vergil, remember that huge rhino that you... fried? He's a clone. Lupis has been making new copies of him again, and again. That means they have the technology to make clones, right there, in the base! Emilena knows how to use those cloning... machines, or whatever they are. And she found Lily's backpack in those woods, with some of her lipstick inside. She has Lily's DNA... If I can get rescue Lily, and get Emilena inside that lab... then we can clone her, and Lily can use her mind-throwing ability to take over the clone! *She'd be cured!*"

Axel looked desperately between the two of them. "Look, just getting Lily out of there... it's not enough. We have to split her away from that creature, before it's too late, and Emilena's plan is the only hope I have left of doing that..." Reaching behind his back, he unclipped the holster with the tracer gun still inside and held it out for them to see. "She gave me this... If I take it out of this holster, it'll start giving off a signal. Once that happens, Emilena can find me and we... we try to help Lily." Axel gritted his teeth. "So what... what do you guys say?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 05, 2014, 10:57:40 am**

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theres is no way i'm mwessing with that guy" Marie said ' cant we fix him so hes not sounding like a third-rate rapper' Rose asked. ' i think he owes Dr Jiang money, and lots of it, from what ulsa told me' marita sighed. ' i'll go settle him down, i guess.. she said heading towards the wanna-be rapper.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 05, 2014, 02:20:41 pm**

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Tony went silent as Axel began explaining the situation to them, and found out he'd been lied to this whole time since the clinic. But on top of that, there was way more to this than he'd been led to expect. It seemed they couldn't just get Lily out of there now, and had to create a clone of her to get her consciousness back into a normal body. Folding his arms across his chest, the ferret looked down at the floor intently as he listened.

Vergil had an emotionless expression on his face, staring ahead but not looking at anything in particular as new details were outlined. When Axel finished, Tony finally looked up, trying to process all of it. "I just..." he began, shaking his head. "I don't really have any objections. I mean... you're right... what does she have to gain by coming back now? I just... as much as I don't want to trust her... what have we got to lose, at this point?" He shrugged here, still not fully shaking the feeling that he couldn't completely trust her.

"This is gonna require a revision to our plan, then. We're gonna need more time... jesus, why didn't you tell me this sooner?" Tony asked with frustration. "Do you know what would've happened had we set the reactors to blow and you sprang this on me AFTER that?" he demanded. But then he considered... maybe Axel hadn't wanted to say it in front of the others, either. Pausing, Tony composed himself. "All right... at least you told us now... and you probably had your reasons not to say anything beforehand. But we can't go right for those reactors in that case. We're gonna need to move more swiftly and secretively to get Lily to safety AND... get that clone of hers... do you even know how long the cloning process takes?" Tony added here as he thought of it. "Based on that, we can figure out how much time we'll need overall in the base, and go as quickly as possible under the circumstances." he stated, beginning to rethink his plan.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 05, 2014, 07:23:23 pm**

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"I *couldn't* say about this sooner," Axel said as he flexed his fingers nervously. "Do you have any idea how much Soren hates Emilena? I've got no idea what he'd do if he saw her again... and I wasn't about to take that chance. She's the only one who'd know how to clone Lily." He bit his lip. "And... no. No, I don't know how long it would take. Not long. If Emilena was here, she could tell us... and it'd be a lot easier to form a plan." He held up the holster and put a hand on the pistol. "So it's alright, then? No arguments against her coming?" Axel looked between the two, then slowly drew the gun out of the protective casing. As soon as he took it out it started transmitting, letting Emilena know exactly where they were.

Axel sighed and put it beside him on the desk. "She said she wouldn't be long, so... I guess while we wait we can start coming up with some kind of strategy." He slid off the desk and padded over to the window again. "Damn it... I was hoping there'd be less of them at the base. You know, if they're planning a mass attack on the city, but..." Shaking his head in frustration, he looked back over his shoulder at Vergil. "You... you said Lily was still there, right? She's not... She's okay?"

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One floor below, five Purifiers were staring up at the ceiling, listening to the creaks and thumps as people walked around in the office above them.

"I fucking told you I heard something!" one whispered.

"How many up there?"

The short, squat leopard in the middle held up three fingers. He looked at the others and readied his assault rifle. "Let's go."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 06, 2014, 01:45:09 am**

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"Right... well I don't blame you for holding out... I'd temporarily forgotten just how much Soren hates her. And well... I don't trust her either but... go ahead." He acquiesced, letting Axel pull the gun without any further protest.

Vergil closed his eyes, and concentrated again. "I'm not detecting extreme levels of duress, no, so I would say that for now, she's all right." he responded, reopening his eyes with a smile directed at Axel.

"Right well... I say we head down to street level. Get out in the open to meet her." Tony suggested. "Also... Axel I had kind of only given you half the story before." he confessed as he started heading for the elevator. "See I was thinking... I think Rhaegson's gotta die... and I think I should be the one to do it. If he DOESN'T die... this hatred of augments is just gonna continue and sure, there will be others taking up his mantle, but... it'll cripple them if he dies and we can ensure it by making sure it gets done right and not leaving it up to chance in the explosion. So I was thinking at some point during our infiltration... I go straight for his office and take him out. What do you think?" the ferret inquired, looking between the two of them now, but mostly at Axel.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 06, 2014, 07:22:55 pm**

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Axel picked up the tracker pistol, leaving the holster behind so it could keep transmitting, and tucked it away. "Going straight after... Rhaegson, was it?" he blinked, following Tony as they made their way back through the office. "You'd... I mean, you'd have to be *really* careful. I don't know how easy it'd be to get to him... But if you get the chance, if you can see an opportunity..." He looked sideways at Tony and nodded. "Kill the son of a bitch."

Reaching the elevator, Axel leaned over and tapped the button... then frowned as the doors didn't open immediately. From below came a low, muffled groan as the lift rose up. He shot Tony a puzzled glance. "Should..." he started to speak, then stopped as the doors creaked open. He turned to face forwards - and a rifle butt shot out of the elevator, connecting against his nose with a crunch and rocking his head back. As Axel stumbled from the impact, a heavily muscled arm darted out and grabbed the front of his hoodie, pulling him forwards and into the group of Purifiers gathered in the elevator, who were all aiming assault rifles at Tony and Vergil. The one who'd pulled Axel in spun him around and wrapped an arm across his throat, holding him as a hostage. The other four stepped out, keeping their weapons steady on the gecko and ferret.

"Drop your fucking weapons!" shouted the leopard who was holding the dazed Axel, looking between Tony and Vergil. He dug a pistol into Axel's temple. "Now. Or the gleamer fucking dies!" Axel tried to say something, but the blood running back into his broken nose made him choke.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 06, 2014, 08:25:19 pm**

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Tony nodded, and then noticed something odd about the elevator. It had gone down a floor. Reaching for his laser pistol, the ferret whipped it out just as Axel's head got cracked by the rifle butt. Firing off a shot, the red beam sliced cleanly through the chest of one of the Purifiers, the fellow giving him a shocked look as he tumbled down dead on the floor of the elevator.

But Axel was quickly pulled in and taken hostage, and while Tony kept his gun trained on the group, he knew he couldn't possibly kill all of them. "Heh..." He glanced at Vergil, who only gave him a single nod. He knew Vergil could take these guys out, but with Axel... it might be too risky at present. "That doesn't sound like a good idea..." the ferret responded. "See we drop our weapons, you kill all of us anyway... so why don't I just shoot as many of you as I can right now. Might take all of you with me for all you know. Bullshit! I know how you assholes work!" He snapped, keeping the pistol trained on the head of one of them. He didn't show it, but his adrenaline was racing, and he was inwardly terrified of this standoff. "You have to give me some sort assurance you aren't gonna retaliate for that jerk I just dropped! Cause right now... me dying fighting back sounds like a better deal than surrender now and get killed in a few minutes anyway. So put your money where your mouth is and show me some goddamn good faith or I swear to god I'll slice this asshole's head from his body!" he shouted, still pointing the pistol threateningly at one of them.

He didn't let on for the moment how worried he was for Axel, or how worried for his own safety he was, but he knew Purifiers were lying, cheating bastards, and their words weren't worth shit. He needed to somehow make them agree not to harm them, or their lives wouldn't be worth a grain of salt if he lowered his own weapon.

"How about this?" Vergil suggested, stepping forward now to try and diffuse the situation. "You let one of us go to avoid any further shooting, and the other one will surrender willingly. Tony, your father's men are starting to arrive." Vergil told the ferret now, giving him a nod.

"Right!" Tony breathed, gripping his pistol tightly and relieved to hear that. "So what do you guys say? Let one of us go... and I'll put down my weapon." he said, not budging.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 06, 2014, 09:07:46 pm**

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Emilena jumped when the scanner suddenly flashed positive. She had guessed the correct side of the base they would attempt to break through. Setting off at a brisk run, she headed for the run-down industrial area surrounding the Purifier base.

She didn't relish meeting the others again. Hopefully Axel didn't screw something up and she was about to walk into some angry mafia goons...

Crawling up behind a large abandoned generator, she peeked at the coordinates of the transmitting pistol. She only saw two people she'd never seen before. *Well, crap, what exactly do I do about...*

After they spoke to othes, she realized there was a currently a standoff going on. Axel was being held hostage. Her first impulse was to draw her pistol and snipe the hostage-taker, but that hadn't turned out too well for the teammate last time she did that.

Slinking back down the generator, she began circling around. She'd have more options if she could get behind the hostage-taker.

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Nairda giggled. "So, like, when is dis Purifier gonna show up, you know what tha fuck I be saying?" he asked. Y'all KNOW dat shit, muthafucka! "Cause maybe they didn't take tha bait, you know cuz they have way mo' blingin thangs ta do than bother one anonymous 'came git me' message fo' realz. Such as preparin ta fire a giant laser dat kills dem all up in one fell tha fuck swoop. And what tha fuck shiznit exactly was our crazy asses hopin ta git from tha

hostage anyway, biatch? We already have they location, they plan, they base layout, n' they strength up in numbers."

This entire monologue was very poorly rapped to the tune of *Gangsta's Paradise* by Coolio.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 06, 2014, 09:21:38 pm**

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The leopard's eyes shone for a second when Vergil mentioned Tony's name. "Tony Stracci... I thought I recognised you. Fucking traitor." His mouth twitched. "And your father's men are coming? You don't say..." He drilled his gun harder against the side of Axel's head. "Stracci, if I wanted to kill you right here, right now, why the hell wouldn't I have done it already? No. It's not going to be that quick. Not for you. I'm sure we're all gonna want to know why you thought you'd attack us. So *these* are your options."

He tightened his arm around Axel's neck, cutting off the rat's air supply. Axel thrashed, his mouth opening as he desperately tried to suck in a breath, but the leopard's grip was starting to crush in his windpipe, making it impossible. The leopard dragged Axel forwards, out of the lift. "Option A. Both of you drop your weapons, we take you in and you live a little longer. Or option B, watch your friend choke out, my men open fire on you, and you die now." He grinned. Axel's struggles had started to become weaker, his chokes becoming ragged. "Better hurry, Stracci. Looks like you don't have much longer." The leopard stared Tony in the eye. "So what's it going to be?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 06, 2014, 10:24:48 pm**

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Tony ignored the comment about his father's men gathering. "All right, listen! Knock it off! Cut the crap!" he yelled. "You know damn well you touch one hair on my body and my father will crush your organization and you know he's fully capable of doing so. We have men everywhere... EVERYWHERE... even in your little base, all right? So unless Rhaegson wants to wake up with his balls in his mouth and his entrails hanging out, you'll cut the shit, stop strangling him, and take me to Rhaegson, all right?" Tony started lowering his pistol slowly, but not all the way, watching as Axel was throttled. "Lay off him, cause if I see him pass out, you aren't getting shit, and I'm gonna opt for option B, cause it's sure as shit better than getting tortured to death by you cunts, got it?" he asked, his pistol pointing more at the groin now of the Purifier who had his rifle trained on him.

"I need assurances. No harm comes to me... or these two either. Cause if it does and my father finds out... you're all dead anyway, got it? I'm NOT dropping this weapon till you lay off, and if you don't... well we'll see how many of us are standing at the end of this, capice?" he asked again. He knew he couldn't just give in to this crap. If he did... he could be used against his father... and that was the last thing he wanted. He could NOT compromise his family... even if it meant his own death. The way he saw it, there were no real options anyway, because of the Purifiers' threat against the city. Either they stopped them now, or they didn't stop them at all.

Vergil suddenly sensed the same presence he'd sensed back in the bushes the last time a standoff had occurred. He knew it wasn't hostile, and figured it might be this Emilena they had been talking about before. Good! If they could buy a few more minutes... then maybe... at least he knew Axel would pass out first before dying. It took several minutes for the brain to die from oxygen deprivation after losing consciousness, so they had time. He maintained his non-threatening posture, getting ready to spring into action the minute the tables turned.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 07, 2014, 02:44:50 am**

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(Abandoned Bakery)

Anne had managed to shut Nairda out long enough to complete her work. She rubbed her muzzle with a hand.

"All right, now all we do is wait," she said. The mare then ducked behind a disused automatic package and pulled out her pistol. "And Nairda," she added. "If you fuck this up, I will sodomize you with my horn."

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(Lanthae Streets)

A simple electric sedan cruised down the streets and elevated highways of Lanthae. The four beings inside were dressed in casual clothing. All in all, one could mistake them for a group of friends out for lunch or another activity.

The truth was far more sinister. The four were freshly inducted Purifiers eager to prove themselves to Rhaegson and the tip they got was just the ticket.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 07, 2014, 04:41:08 am**

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Emilena had circled around the group and was now behind the conversing forces. Drawing her katana (but not activating it, for fear of the Purifiers hearing), she crept forward towards the back of the one holding Axel hostage.

For their part, the ferret and the gecko were doing an excellent job demanding their assailant's attention, and she basically had to trust that they would consider her an ally and not give her away.

Once she was close enough, she swung with precision, aiming to bifurcate the hostage-holder from the gun-holding shoulder blade through the heart and out the other hip. The blow was designed to be instantly lethal while also quickly severing the muscles allowing the trigger finger to operate, to prevent a repeat of the reflex shooting when she intervened in a situation like this before.

Of course, now that she's made her surprise move, every other Purifier in the team will instantly hear her, and she has no cover..

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Nairda shrugged. "Whatever n' shit. I just don't git why they wouldn't instead go fo' legitimate, already obviously existin Augment stores like tha one you used ta own, Soren."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 07, 2014, 08:45:44 am**

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Axel felt the pressure on his throat suddenly release and he fell back, collapsing over the lower half of the leopard's corpse. Rolling to his side, he gasped for air, coughs wracking his body... and saw the Purifier to the left spin around and aim his rifle at something behind him. Without thinking, Axel snatched up the pistol the leopard had dropped, and fired a volley of shots at him. The bullets caught the Purifier in the chest and he dropped to the floor, gurgling.

The other two Purifiers swore and opened fire on Tony and Vergil.

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The sedan eventually pulled up outside the abandoned bakery. The driver frowned, keeping the

engine running. "This doesn't seem like a gleamer shop..."

One of the men sitting in the back shook his head. "I *told* you. This doesn't make any sense. Why the hell did we even come here? We just have to wait a little longer, and we can take them out then... This is a fucking trap, I'm telling you."

The driver turned in his seat. "If they found out we took the initiative and did this now, we're gonna get some kind of reward or something. I'm telling you, Felix."

The man in the back, Felix, looked back at the driver. "You're a moron."

"Fuck you." The driver looked back at the old building apprehensively. "Alright, one of us checks it out. If something looks off, we get the hell out of here. Felix, you're up."

"The fuck I am."

The other two Purifiers nodded their head, pleased they weren't being nominated. "Just check it out. Don't be a pussy."

"Felix, you don't check it out, we'll leave you here and you can walk back." The driver glared at him. "Hurry up."

After a long pause, Felix sighed and opened the Sedan's door. "You guys are assholes. You'd better wait here for me." The others nodded, and after giving them the finger, Felix climbed out and approached the bakery cautiously. Reaching the door, he pushed it open slowly and stepped in, drawing his gun. Peering around, it was obvious the place wasn't being used any more. He was about to turn and leave when he heard the faint noise of what sounded suspiciously like someone rapping. Glancing around rapidly, he caught a glimpse of someone hiding behind a disused package, their horn poking up and giving them away. "Oh shit! Guys, it *is* a fucking trap! I told you!" Felix cried, turning to bolt out the door.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 07, 2014, 11:28:29 am**

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It was over in an instant. Tony blinked, and the leopard holding Axel hostage was down. Whatever this was, he was not one to question providence. Firing off a blast, his laser beam cut through the lower abdomen of the Purifier, causing him to drop to the ground, screaming in pain before Tony permanently silenced him with a shot to the head.

Vergil merely concentrated on the final Purifier, halted his initial salvo in mid-air, and then picked his body up, the bullets clattering harmlessly to the ground, before tossing him against the wall and watching him fall lifeless to the floor. "I think that covers that." the gecko stated simply, brushing his hands together.

Nodding, Tony ran over to Axel, helping him get back to his feet. "You all right? Sorry I didn't negotiate but... I CAN'T compromise my family's integrity. You know how some don't negotiate with terrorists? Well I don't negotiate with assholes." Tony joked, helping support the rat. He looked in Emilena's direction now, recognizing her instantly. "So... you got the signal." he stated, not holstering his gun just yet, but not raising it at her either.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 07, 2014, 12:37:29 pm**

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Soren stepped out from behind the pile of moldering boxes near the door that the Purifier had overlooked he had crouched behind.

"Going somewhere?" he asked as he leveled his rifle with the man's chest.

Anne also trained her pistol on the man.

(OOC - What species are the Purifiers in the sedan?)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 07, 2014, 02:07:34 pm**

(OOC: They're all human, but it probably doesn't matter :p )

Felix stopped dead in his tracks when he saw Soren blocking his escape. Just beyond, the door hung half open, tantalisingly revealing the street behind it. He could see the sedan, his partners staring out of the windows in open mouthed surprise. "Guys, get-" he started. There was a squealing of tires, and the car sped away. "Assholes!" Felix shrieked.

Slowly, he looked around the room and raised his arms in the air, letting his pistol fall to the floor. A nervous smile creased his thin face. "Uh... this isn't the Robo-Ninja convention? My mistake, I'll just be going..."

-----

Axel coughed and spat out a mouthful of blood as Tony helped him up. "It's alright... I'm... I'm fine," he said, rough-voiced. His nose throbbed with pain, and he put a hand to it. Something crunched again, and he winced, taking his hand off quickly. "Dammit..." Raising his eyes, Axel looked at the person who'd saved him and saw it was none other than Emilena. He nodded appreciatively. "Thanks. You, ah... you weren't kidding when you said you'd be fast..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 07, 2014, 02:39:35 pm**

Marita came up behind Felix' Sorry pal you're not going anywhere' Marita said aiming the pistol at his face. ' so heres the deal. ' your boss wants to liquidate all augmented people in town, and overthrow the government. which will make life here for the average folk even worse, those who aren't killed because had some 'work' done. we know its going to happen tonight, and we need information on how to stop it. you talk, we'll let you live. you dont, well lets just say things will become VERY uncomfortable for you.' maritas voice had an edge to it.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 07, 2014, 03:46:17 pm**

Diving out from behind cover, Nairda opened fire on Felix with his pistol turned sideways. "Dis is fo' Emilena moddafukkas!" he screamed with relish. "Come and get it *biiiiiiiiatch!!!*"

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Emilena sheathed her katana. "I've heavily scoped this area out between our conversations. There's a portion of fence out of line-of-sight from the overlooking watchtowers just past the ventilation sheds to our south. Unless there are objections, it's our best way into the base."

She turned to go, and then paused. "Look, I know you have valid reasons not to trust me, and everyone seems so willing to just question me whatever chance they get, so for once I'm not interested. If you're planning on giving me some ultimatum where you'll *only trust me* until you have reason not to and then you *won't hesitate* to shoot me...just fucking leave. I've had it with that and you can just stay behind." Her plan was made for two people; two extras would obviously help, but were not necessary enough to put up with the nonsense she'd no doubt be getting from the last group she'd tried to work with. "We work as a team in there to get Lily out. So only team players are allowed to come."

She removed the helmets from the four Purifiers and threw the best-fitting one to each person.

"They don't really have uniforms beyond these hats, so just keep these on. I don't need your name, but if you could tell me something of your skillset, I can figure out where you could best help."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 07, 2014, 04:11:49 pm**

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Tony stepped forward now, holstering his gun. "Or, I could figure out where YOU best help." he stated with a level of derision. "No ultimatums, no. You've heard enough of them, as you've said. An objection, however." he said now, raising a claw. "No one died and made you boss. This was my plan from the start, and my family that's about to hit the place. You say don't say we don't trust you, but we don't fully trust you so tough shit, you're gonna hear it again. You don't like that, you can just go... how did you put it? Fucking leave?" He asked here, folding his arms over his chest. "Anyway, I don't give a shit how badass you think you are, you can drop the attitude, all right? As you said... we're all on a team, and I can do without the condescension. Now... my suggestion..." He looked around at the group.

"Since you're NOT in a position to take command nor do this on your own, I suggest an alternate method of breaching the base. There's a little known entrance under this building that leads right to the reactor room, which is also close to the labs. See where I'm going with this?" he asked sarcastically, treating Emilena with the same level of condescension she'd shown them. "Anyway, it'll give you the perfect access point to the labs without having to go over the fence and traipse your way through the main base. It's ALSO not guarded. My family's about to hit the place, so things are gonna get hot and heavy real quick. I suggest you take Axel, do whatever you need to do to safely get Lily out, and I'll work on eliminating a few key figures and setting the reactor to overload. How much time do you need to complete the cloning process? That's basically the only thing I didn't know." Tony informed her. "Everything else I had figured out ahead of time. Something tells me you aren't gonna need more than Axel to rescue Lily, nor would you want us breathing down your neck, so staying out of each others' way is probably best, for now." he concluded.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 07, 2014, 05:02:47 pm**

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Luckily, "gangsta style" was a very poor way to use a firearm. Consequently, none of the shots hit anything.

Anne, fuming, holstered her pistol and punched Nairda square in the jaw. "That's for being a dumbass!"

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Soren reached over and shut the door. "Do exactly as I say or be shot. Empty your pockets and strip naked."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 07, 2014, 05:39:47 pm**

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Axel caught the helmet as Emilena threw it to him, wiping a blood smear from its surface with a grimace. He looked up quickly as Emilena and Tony launched heated words between each other. "Guys, just... just calm things down for a second, alright? Look, if we start arguing, we're not going to be able to think things through properly. Okay?"

He paused and bit his lip. "Emilena, you said you were looking the place over just now? And you found a way in?" Axel glanced at the ferret. "Tony, I... I think that might be the safest way to get in. I mean, this other way, the one that leads to the reactor room... How do you know it wouldn't be guarded? Like, sure, maybe under normal circumstances it'd be clear but... well, this isn't a normal situation. For all we know, they *could* be guarding it. Emilena just scoped it

out... so her way might take longer but at least we won't be walking into an ambush."

-----

Felix watched as Nairda crumpled onto the floor, landing from his admittedly impressive diving skills, then turned his head slowly as he heard Soren's order. "What?! What the fuck for? Are you fucking kidding?!" He saw that Soren wasn't. Felix gritted his teeth. "So *that's* what you want, huh?" With all these guns trained on him, there was no way he could make a run for it.

Glaring around, he pulled his T-shirt over his head, then unbuckled his trousers and pulled them off. "Getting a good view, you motherfucker? Cocksucking pervert..." Spinning around, he tore his underwear off and threw them at Marita's face, the business end connecting with a satisfying *flump* noise. "And you too, like what you're seeing, huh? Need to put on the tough guy act to see some dick? Don't get enough of this at home, bitch?!" Felix demanded angrily, indicating his bared package with a furious flourish.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 07, 2014, 06:08:50 pm**

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"I'm just getting that out of the way now," Emilena stated. "This plan was designed for two people, and will work with two people. It could work even better with four competent people, but if one of them is going to train a gun on me immediately if Lupis gets the chance to play mind games, they're better off staying home."

She glanced in the direction she wants to go. "My way is guarded too; all ways are guarded. But my way was initially guarded by these goons, so we have a small window of opportunity to cut in before the guard changes and the alarm sounds no matter where we are."

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Nairda nodded approvingly as he checked out Felix. "Nice! Nice!" he grinned his approval. "I certainly don't git enough you know what tha fuck I'm saying, biatch? Say how tha fuck bout you n' mah crazy ass go up fo' dranks afta this?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 07, 2014, 06:27:04 pm**

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"My ONLY reservation..." Tony pointed out now. "Is that over the fence means we have to go through the interior of the base... and the reactor is the heart of it... the heart... meaning more fights, more patrols, more unknowns. I know my way isn't guarded because..." he reached into his pocket and pulled out an elevator key. "I picked this up before I defected from the Purifiers. It's the key to this elevator... leads to the service tunnels under the building, which were used as evacuation routes in case of emergency. However, lacking this key, the tunnels were useless as evacuation routes because there was no way out of them. I picked this up a week before you guys captured me, and DIDN'T let the Purifiers know I had it before that little event took place. The reactor room itself isn't guarded because it's in the middle of the base and currently useless..."

He looked at Emilena then back at Axel. "Remember the plan? It's not JUST about getting Lily out, but blowing the base sky high so that things like your limbs don't become useless the minute we step outside. We can go her way, but I think there's a far more likely chance of running into security if the alarms go off... which it seems like they will, than if we come in from underneath. Where's security gonna rush to when alarms go off, after all? The perimeter. Where are they NOT gonna rush to? The interior areas. See my point?" the ferret asked, looking from one to the other.

"Anyway, it's your show, Axel. I just got you out here. However you do it is up to you, but I need to make it to those reactors, and I'm gonna have a much harder time coming in from the

outside than I am if I just walk into the room itself from the tunnels. So do what you want, but yes, we shouldn't debate this any further." the ferret said softly. "Go with her if you want, and I'll come along, but just thought I'd voice the opposite perspective here, because it seems you're fixating on rescuing Lily, and we've got some bigger goals here."

### **Somewhere over the Pacific**

Over the stormy and tumultuous waters of the northern Pacific, an aerial fleet of warships hovered in tight formation, currently idling on standby and consuming minimal power. Several massive carriers formed the core of this fleet, with battleships, cruisers and destroyers rounding out the group. At the heart of it all was one particularly powerful flagship, the name *Red Castle* emblazoned on her side.

Upon the bridge of this behemoth, a creature in long, flowing red robes stood with his arms across his chest, his features pale as death, and his eyes an intense and brilliant yet very dark golden in color. Most of his face was covered by a contraption that concealed much of it, with some of the nose, eyes, and forehead visible. What kind of creature he was was hard to say, for what little could be seen of his skin had been bleached and scarred heavily.

"Lord Kalis..." the words came from an admiral clad in black who approached him from further down the bridge. "Our agents in Lanthae picked up an interesting broadcast a few hours ago and transmitted it here. You'll want to see this."

The one called Kalis turned to look at the datapad in the admiral's hand, and narrowed his eyes as Rhaegson's broadcast began to play. At his mention of the dropping of Lanthae's defenses, a great exhale escaped his mouth. When he spoke, his voice came out raspy and metallic, and not natural in the slightest. "Lanthae... I've been after a way to conquer that city for years... perfect... continue to monitor the situation... if this pulse indeed strikes and lowers their defenses... we'll gate-jump the fleet to the city and commence an attack."

"Yes, my lord." the admiral bowed his head here, slapping the cover of the datapad shut.

"Perhaps I'll finally find what I've been looking for as well..." Kalis said in a wispy voice that sounded like death. He shifted his attention out to the forward viewport, and stared intently into the night, clasping his hands calmly behind his back.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 07, 2014, 06:40:07 pm**

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"I likewise throw to Axel the choice of how we break in," Emilena folded her arms. "I do not care in the slightest if they set off that bomb; the world will probably be a better place if it truly kills only Augments. I'm here to rescue Lily. But if you have an easier way of infiltrating the base, I'm not demanding we follow mine. I'm a teammate, I'm not demanding I be the leader."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 07, 2014, 06:58:08 pm**

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I prefer girls, you twit' Marita snapped and tossed Felix's underwear back at him' Now start talking pal. the quicker you tell us what we want to know, the sooner you can get the heck out of here, and get your clothes back on.. lets see if any of these things still work ' she said motioning to them.. marita was perfectly willing to break a few rules if it meant stopping the purifiers.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 07, 2014, 06:58:25 pm**

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Soren scanned up and down Felix's body. "Good. No concealed weapons or tracers."

He turned to Nairda. "Make yourself useful and go through his clothes to see if he's hiding anything."

Anne returned with a disused and dusty office chair and forced Felix into it. "Have a seat." Her hands trembled as a side effect of her drug withdrawal starting to set in.

"Good. Rose, Marie, Marita, tie him up and then we all can have a 'private discussion' with him." Soren angled his head to a door that read "machine shop". As befitting any industrial area, the bakery had its own machine shop to repair and replace broken parts.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 07, 2014, 07:11:32 pm**

Marie grabbed a length of cord and tied Felix's arms behind his back. and Marita and Rose Carried the Chair- With Felix tied to it, Into the machine shop, with marie holding the doot open for the other girls. roses paws began to shake, from biproxytol withdrawal.. Marita flicked the switch- nothing happened. 'Lights burned out in this area.. Ah well' She said as she amd Rose Set Flix down between a couple of machines.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 07, 2014, 08:04:47 pm**

"Tony... I *am* focusing on Lily," Axel said quietly. "I know it sounds selfish but... Lily's not augmented. Even if the bomb goes off, she wouldn't be affected. But if we can't get her out before, then she's dead. Or worse." He looked at the key Tony was holding out and paused for a moment. "You know for sure it'll be clear? You're *positive*?" He swallowed, then shrugged, cradling the helmet in his arms. "Okay then. Let's do it your way. Then you can work on the reactors, and me and Emilena can go ahead." Axel looked at Emilena and nodded.

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Felix clenched his jaw and pulled against the cord. It wouldn't give. After a moment, he gave up and looked up at Marie and Rose. "Come on, what the hell are you guys doing?! I don't know *anything*! I just joined up last week, why would they tell me shit?! What, you think I'm in their, their inner circle or something?!"

He struggled again. "Jesus, come on, just... just untie me! She's a dyke, but you're not, right?" Felix rambled, staring across at Anne. "What do you want? I'll fuck you, or get you drugs, whatever you want! I'll fuck you *while* giving you drugs!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 07, 2014, 10:54:32 pm**

*To the exclusion of practically everything else* Tony thought with disgust. "Great... so Lily's safe... and what about you?" Tony asked as he turned the key. "Stupid sacrificing yourself if you can't be with the one you love. You PROMISED me we'd ALL come out of this. You even made it a big show to state you wanted to see me alive at the end. Well... do you?" he asked now, punching the button for the bottom floor, which the key would override and take them down into the service tunnels. "And yes... I'm positive. I wouldn't have brought it up if I wasn't." the ferret responded simply.

He took one of the helmets with him, but figured he wouldn't need it. *See what this chick does? She brings up a plan to save Lily, and it's all he thinks about. He didn't even seem to acknowledge her statement about the city being better off if all augments had been killed, including himself.* Tony had to admit, his respect for Axel was plummeting with the floors as they rode the elevator down. *Never mind the millions that'll be killed. That's all good, so long*

*as you save Lily, right? Bullshit! What a load of pussy-whipped crap!* If for some reason they failed... and Emilena decided to help the Purifiers out on their unholy crusade, Tony swore to himself he'd kill her if he got the chance. Still... at least they had the advantage of having an army of mafia surrounding the place. Getting the Purifiers out into the city would be a difficult proposal, at best, though Tony knew their death squads were probably already out there.

The elevator didn't stop at the ground floor, and continued down further, into the tunnels. Sliding open smoothly, the doors revealed a tunnel stretching ahead of them. "All right... let's go..." Tony led the way, Vergil donning the helmet as he followed, noting it was way too big for him, so he simply tossed it aside. It was a bit of a trek. Perhaps 300 yards or so, but at the end, there was only one way out. Tony pushed up on the manhole cover as gently as he could, and peered around.

It was deathly quiet in here, and cold, as no power supplied this part of the base. Sunlight did filter in from some dusty windows, so there was that at least. He held out a paw for the others to remain in place, and slid out lithely through the hole, drawing his gun and scanning the room. The reactors towered like mountains over him, stretching to the ceiling far above his head.

He heard nothing... no chatter... no footfalls... nothing. "OK!" he whispered back down. "Come on!" he motioned for them to exit. "We're clear. Axel, you and Emilena, listen up. When you exit hang a right. Two more rights, you're in the laboratory area, OK?" he told them, still whispering.

"I can sense Lily, if it's any help." Vergil spoke up now. "She's there all right." he nodded.

"Text me when you've got her and the cloning process is complete." Tony instructed them. "I'll turn the reactors on, and that'll give us plenty of time to get out of here. If you think you're gonna be late for any reason, tell me NOT to start overload and I'll hold off. I'm gonna stay here and keep our exit open. Good luck, OK?" he said, looking at them now.

Suddenly, some dull explosions could be heard from way outside. It sounded like rocket and mortar fire, and Tony smiled a bit. "Guess dad's started the offensive with the other families. All right! That'll provide the cover we need!" he exclaimed. He knew his father wouldn't be present in person, nor would any of the other dons, but it was good knowing he had backup all the same.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 08, 2014, 06:59:27 am**

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Outside, standing on the walls of the perimeter, Marcus stared up at the small balls of light as the explosives curved their way through the air towards the base. Some of the Purifiers nervously shifted, looking as if they wanted to make a run for it. He held up a hand without taking his eyes off the view and growled. "Hold!" Above, the explosives began to arc down... and suddenly exploded harmlessly, far away from the base. As they did so, a faint, dome-shaped blue haze could be seen surrounding the compound. A few cheers went up as more mortar fire detonated against the shield, the sounds dull and muted. Marcus pulled out a radio and clicked a button. "It worked. Force field is active."

Rhaegson's voice cracked through. "Remind me to give Petersons a pat on the back," he said smugly. "So the mob *is* attacking us? Nothing like the ritualistic killing of my men to make it obvious somethin's gonna happen. Just keep them busy a little longer."

Marcus put the radio away without saying anything else, and returned his attention to the perimeter. The force field would prevent their attackers from launching a long range assault on them. The mob would need to get up close if they wanted to accomplish anything - across the grounds which provided no cover, and had a few surprises buried away. "Hayton!" someone called across to him, and Marcus turned.

A Purifier came puffing up. "One of our squads is giving us radio silence. We can't raise them."

Marcus frowned and looked at the industrial section. They could spare the men. "Increase the security inside. Go!" The man ran off.

He turned back. "Ready your weapons!" he barked, and all around the perimeter Purifiers cocked their guns, resting on the wall for cover. 50 cal. guns set up on each corner swiveled around, and up in the watchtowers snipers drew back the bolts on their weapons. Marcus fixed his eyes on the horizon and waited to see what the opposing force would do next.

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"Of course I want to see you alive," Axel said, narrowing his eyes slightly at Tony. "But we all have our priorities. You made that pretty clear when you chose your family's *integrity* over me just now." He folded his arms across his chest and didn't say anything the rest of the ride down.

Once they reached the reactor room, he stared up at the machinery. *These things'll turn this place into a crater...* Listening to Tony's directions, he nodded. "Alright. Three rights. Got it." Axel put the helmet on. "And... good luck to you too."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 08, 2014, 12:46:08 pm**

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Emilena nodded and began the trek to the cloning room. They passed several Purifiers in the hallways, but just looking like they were supposed to be there did wonders.

"Now there's going to be some sort of science team, so we eliminate them quickly before they can sound the alarm," she cautioned, and once the coast was clear threw the door open to the cloning chamber to find...nothing. No personnel. "Huh..." Shrugging, she began setting up the cloning machine. "All right, now we gotta grab Lily while this warms up."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 08, 2014, 02:09:14 pm**

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(Purifier Compound)

Aaron's finger twitched as he viewed the scene through his scope.

He sniffed the air; the heady scent of high explosives hung in the air.

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(Abandoned Bakery)

Anne's tremors began to worsen. She bit her lip as the offer of drugs.

"E...Excuse me." She bolted out of the room.

Soren shrugged. "I know you're hiding some more info, spill. Or do I need to introduce your body parts to some machinery?"

The watery sunlight filtering in through the dusty windows provided sufficient illumination.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 08, 2014, 05:32:49 pm**

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Axel looked over Emilena's shoulder at the machinery as she prepared it. The mess of buttons, keys and switches left his head spinning. He nodded at what she said and crossed back over

the room to the door. "Where... where are all the scientists?" he asked nervously as he creaked open the door, peering out the crack. The hallway was empty.

He pulled the door open further and held it for Emilena, pushing the helmet back over his eyes.

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Felix's breaths became faster, his hopes of escaping vanishing along with Anne. He looked at Soren and gritted his teeth. "What? What the hell do you want to know?! You probably know as much as I do... They made a bomb, it's gonna go off *really fucking soon*, and then they're gonna make their move. You want to know what time we take our fucking lunch breaks, too?!" he spat, pulling against the chair. "Shit!"

Slumping back, he shook his head. "Look... you won't be able to stop it. You'd be better off if you just got out of Lanthae... as far away as you can. I, I won't tell them about you! I'll leave the Purifiers! Just let me go!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 08, 2014, 05:44:41 pm**

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Soren nodded. "Keep going. What's the base like? Any defenses? Approximate strength of troops?"

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Anne reached inside her dress and pulled out a white tablet from a blister pack. She popped out the tablet and quickly gulped it down. A electric jolt ran through her as the stimulant began to take effect. Her jitters began to fade away and her mind became razor sharp.

She cracks her knuckles and entered through the machine shop again. She leaned against a beat up lathe. "Anything good?"

Soren sighed. "We haven't gotten shit! I'm starting to think your plan fucked us."

Anne raised her hands. "Hey, how the fuck was I supposed to know we'd get newbies? What's your plan? Go in full throttle? Fat lotta good that did us the last few times ya tried!"

Soren opened his mouth but instead, closed it with a scowl. He turned to the women with him. "You all deal with this fucker. I'm going to ask Nairda some questions."

The door slammed as the Human exited the machine shop.

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"Nairda!" Soren called. "Have you found anything useful in his clothes?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 08, 2014, 06:39:47 pm**

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"Uh... I don't know, last thing I saw they were bringing in a lot of guns. There were a lot of people, I, I think they were preparing for some kind of attack against them." Felix blinked the sweat out of his eyes. "Defenses, uh... apart from the guns, I'm not sure. They were hooking up some kind of machine, it was a, a shield I think, I don't know for sure."

When Soren left, Felix tried to control his breathing and looked around at the others. "Why're you even trying? It's going off in an hour, you've got no chance of stopping it!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 09, 2014, 03:29:31 am**

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Emilena strolled casually towards the laboratory where Lily was being held. *Just like last time. Keep your face set. If you look like you're supposed to be here--*

She walked into the lab. It was empty.

"She's not in one of the pods," Emilena reported after a quick sprint through the labs. "Well, no wonder they don't care at all about this part of the lab. Where the hell is she?"

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Nairda had dressed himself in the clothes of the captive. "Blingin'!" he whooped, turning 360 and modeling his new attire. "Oh, and this."

He handed Soren...Felix's passcard! Complete with a small schematic of the Purifier base on the back, and a magnetic stripe that grants the holder z-level security clearance. It also had a little red sticker noting that Felix was an organ donor...*or would be...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 09, 2014, 06:45:04 pm**

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"What?! Nonono, she has to be here, she *has to...*" Axel moaned, pushing past her and craning his neck around, looking for himself. Emilena was right, there wasn't anything - or anyone - here. He turned back, hand grasping the side of his helmet in anxiety. "Oh jesus... come on, come on, where are you..."

Leaving the empty lab, he turned right and kept following the corridor along. Axel couldn't tell if the dull booming he heard was from the attack outside or the blood pounding in his ears. From further up came the clattering of boots, and Axel fought to keep his expression neutral as a group of Purifiers came charging around the corner toting heavy assault rifles. They rushed past him and Emilena, not paying them any attention. Axel turned left into the corner they came from... and halted mid-step. Further up the corridor, a heavy metal door was guarded by two burly rottweilers. A small man in a white lab coat was speaking to one of them. They nodded and stepped aside, letting him through. Axel half turned to Emilena and jerked his head in their direction, then strode up to them, steeling himself and trying to look confident.

"Rhaegmar says we're taking over your shift," he said, standing up straight and setting his shoulders. "He wants you out front."

The rottweiler closest to him frowned and looked at his partner. "Rhaegmar? Don't you mean Rhaegson?"

Axel glared at the Purifier and leaned in, their noses practically touching. "The *fuck* do you think I just said? He wants his best men out there, or are you too fucking stupid to know there's about to be a goddamn war out there?! If you're too pussy, I'll go tell him myself..." He turned to leave.

"No, wait!" the second rottweiler blurted out. "We *are* his best. We're damn *soldiers!*" The other guard nodded in agreement. "Yeah. Soldiers. Getting bored of babysitting these guys anyway."

"Then get out there, prove it and stop wasting my fucking time." The two guards nodded at each other and lumbered off. Axel waited until they were out of eyesight and looked at Emilena, letting out his breath. "I... guess they don't look for brains when they hire here..." he said shakily, his shoulders returning to their slight slouch. "Come on..." Gesturing towards the now vacant door, he pushed the handle down and shoved the heavy structure open with his

shoulder, nervously fingering his pistol. He made his way through, stepping aside to allow enough room for Emilena to enter, and scanned the room. Four scientists - three humans and a golden retriever - were milling around computers and other machinery Axel didn't recognise.

"She's a little more stable, but we're going to need to keep an eye on her," one was saying. When they registered Axel and Emilena in the room, they all paused and looked at them curiously. Axel ignored their gazes and looked past them, his eyes drawn to a table at the far end of the room... and he felt himself go numb when he realised what - who - it was. Neck, wrists and ankles strapped down to the metal table, Lily was fastened down tightly. Needles were stuck into her, clamps biting into her skin. Several cables snaked out from each, leading to the parts of machinery scattered around the lab. He couldn't tell if she was conscious or not. Axel felt his hands trembling, and he heard a ringing in his ears. He slowly pushed the door shut behind him.

The golden retriever put down the pen he'd been writing with, and walked over. "Uh... excuse me, are you-"

Axel raised the pistol and shot him in the head, gore spattering the wall behind as his body dropped heavily to the floor. One of the other scientists squealed and rushed across the room, trying to make for the emergency alarm. The rat tracked him and pulled the trigger three times, each bullet tearing through the man's chest. The scientist fell sideways into a cabinet, instruments clattering to the floor, and lay coughing, choking on his blood.

Axel turned to the two remaining scientists who were cringing at the far end of the room, his pistol shaking as he pointed it at the both of them. "Get her out of there! *Now!*" he screamed.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 09, 2014, 07:44:56 pm**

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Soren took the card. "Thanks! At least you're good for something."

He then entered the machine shop.

"All right, 'Felix'," he said, holding up the keycard. "It seems we have something. Now, care to explain what 'z-level' security clearance is?"

Anne smiled as she leaned against an old laser CNC milling machine. The computer was long gone as was the laser module but the motors were still intact. "You could just have given that up and we'd let you go."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 09, 2014, 10:03:23 pm**

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The first scientist scrambled over and grabbed the controls.

"Don't!" the second one shouted. "They'll kill us if we do what they want!"

Emilena shot the second one. "Don't listen to him," she said to the first one, not even bothering to put believability into her words. "We'll let you live if you release her and explain what this machine does."

Quaking, the scientist rushed over and detached all the diodes, clamps and needles. "At-at the m-moment, its in stasis mode..." he stammered. "We drained her of psionic energy, a-and now we're waiting for her to recharge..."

After he removed the last hypodermic needle, Lily stirred. As the scientist attempted to step away, her hand lashed out and her claws embedded into his thigh. As he screamed and tried to tug out to safety, she bared her teeth and dragged him closer, digging her claws up from his thigh and into his abdomen, sending his intestines spilling onto the floor. As his hands flew to

his stomach, her other fist swatted them with a force that snapped his arm bones audibly. Finally, she ended his life by baring her teeth and ripping his jugular out of his neck.

Following this Lily slunk out of the chair. Teeth bared and shoulders hunkered, she hissed at them and paced around the table, eyeing the exit they were blocking her from.

Emilena took a step back, drawing her katana defensively. "Uhhh...Axel, you have any ideas?" she asked.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 10, 2014, 03:17:44 pm**

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Axel drew back, keeping close to Emilena as Lily prowled around, making sure he was out of range of her claws. "We need to... restrain her somehow..." His eyes darted around the lab, looking for something that could be used. One of the clamps the scientist had removed was connected to a thick, sturdy cable that snaked across the room, its end attaching to a machine near Axel. Slowly, not taking his eyes off Lily, he reached over and yanked it out then reeled the rest of it in, the clamp skittering across the floor.

Axel quickly glanced at Emilena. "Alright, just... just keep her attention," he breathed, curling the ends of the cable around his hands. "I need to get behind her..." Cautiously, Axel edged back and strafed his way across the edge of the room, his heart hammering as he tried to move with as little noise as possible. He prayed that, whatever they'd been doing to drain her psionic energy, it had left Lily physically weaker than normal... otherwise this could end very badly.

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Felix rose his head when he heard Soren say his name, and swallowed when he saw his keycard. "Z-level... it'll get you access to the shitters in the compound, not much else." He grinned bitterly at Anne. "Must have slipped my mind. Next time you want to play at being James Bond just to use the fucking john, let me know."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 10, 2014, 07:30:10 pm**

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Emilena gritted her teeth and leapt forward. Lily snarled but retreated.

"Dammit, if I'm too aggressive I'll just make her tougher to flank..." she murmured to herself. Backing off, she tried to look nervous so that Lily might press the issue but Lily didn't seem interested.

Drawing her pistol, Emilena fired wide, sending Lily cowering. "Make up your mind! Fight me or not!" Emilena snapped at her. She took two more steps forward, sword brandished. Lily took two steps backwards.

Finally Emilena just fired repeatedly at Lily, leaving her huddling in the corner. "I'll try not to hit you!" She called to Axel.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 10, 2014, 08:11:56 pm**

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Gritting his teeth, Axel raised his hand in a thumbs up gesture. *That'd be nice.* He'd managed to skirt his way around the room so that he now stood just out of Lily's line of sight. He swallowed tensely, his throat feeling as dry as sandpaper. With her animalistic, unpredictable movements, getting close to her was tough - and Axel didn't want to think about what Lily would do if she suddenly turned just as he was creeping up.

Another shot from Emilena sent Lily cowering further back, closer to Axel... and he made his move. Leaping onto Lily, he planted a knee in her back and drove her to the floor, face first. As they fell down, he looped the cable around her front and drew it tighter when they landed, pinning her arms against her waist. Axel looked up desperately at Emilena as he put his full weight on Lily, struggling to keep her down and the cable tight around her as she thrashed, clawed and snapped beneath him. "*Get another cable! Tie her feet!*"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 10, 2014, 08:18:32 pm**

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might as well come clean pal.'marita replied to felix..' z-level clearance isnt given to newbies.. you had to have shown some ability to get this level of clearance..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 10, 2014, 08:49:08 pm**

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Emilena vaulted over the middle table and grabbed the shredded coat of the diswmboweled scientist. Rat-tailing it into a rope at top speed, she tackled Lily's backside and quickly restrained her lower appendages.

Lily thrashed and snarled, but something kept her from howling or making loud noises; perhaps she still knew that there was no such thing as rescue or safety from those around them. In addition, she was already exhausted and drained from the machine, and soon enough she was limp and couldn't fight back as Emilena hoisted her over her shoulder.

"You're gonna have to serve point," she groaned, staggering somewhat. "God only knows who's gonna see us with this thing..."

She stumbled out the door, letting Axel take the lead.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 11, 2014, 04:01:31 pm**

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Axel followed Emilena out the door then stepped ahead, leading the way as they wound their way back through the hallways, Lily in tow. He could feel his pulse racing. They were nearing the cloning room, and so far they hadn't come across any Purifiers. *So far, so good...*

They turned into the corridor that lead to the cloning room... and Axel stopped dead when he saw the two rottweilers he'd lured away walking down towards them. They were engaged in a heated conversation with each other, and didn't immediately notice the three intruders standing in front of them. "-told you we shouldn't have listened! Next time I see that guy, I'm gonna..." The rottweiler who was speaking trailed off when he glanced ahead and saw them. "Hey! You! What the hell's your problem, making us..." His eyes narrowed as he noticed Lily draped over Emilena's shoulder. "What the fuck are doing with *her*? She's supposed to be locked away!"

For a long while, Axel and the two Purifiers stared at each other. Then the second rottweiler's hands scrambled for his gun, and Axel quickly raised his pistol, firing a volley of shots at them. The second Purifier crumpled as a bullet tore through his skull, and his partner collapsed back, coughing, against the wall as two holes appeared in his chest. Then Axel's gun clicked as it ran dry. The Purifier staggered away from the blood smeared wall and looked weakly up at Axel. The rat desperately pulled the trigger again to no avail, and gasped when he saw the rottweiler's shaking hand reaching down to draw a sawed-off from the waist of his trousers.

Axel felt his stomach drop. Letting his pistol fall to the floor, he quickly turned and yanked Emilena's katana from its scabbard, then started to sprint up the corridor. The Purifier managed to pull out his weapon and raised it. A panicked noise escaped Axel as he tucked his head lower and threw himself forwards. There was a deafening *boom* as the sawed-off was

fired... but the Purifier's aim was slightly off, and Axel felt heat along his side as the shot just missed him. The rat brought the sword in low as he drew even with the rottweiler, and the razor-sharp blade sliced through his middle, spilling out coils of intestines. The blade caught on his spinal column and stuck, throwing Axel off balance. Gurgling, the rottweiler slammed an elbow down on the top of the rat's head, and Axel was forced down - but he was still gripping the sword's handle, and the movement pulled it free of the bone with a grating screech. Screaming, the rottweiler fell back to the floor. Picking himself up, Axel stumbled over him and raised the sword, then brought it down, stabbing through the Purifier's chest again and again until he stopped moving.

After a moment, he looked up at Emilena, his face spattered with blood. Gasping for breath, he motioned for her to hurry up. "Come on... we... we're almost there..." As they drew near the door to the cloning chamber, he held out Emilena's sword with a trembling arm to her free hand. "Here. Need to do this quickly... there's no telling who heard those shots...."

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Felix laughed in Marita's face. "What level of clearance? I just told you it's the worst kind. It's the *only* kind they give to new members, you stupid bitch."

He slumped back in the chair. "Look... there's nothing else I can tell you. I don't give a shit if you all get yourselves killed trying to stop this thing. But I've got to tell you, this isn't exactly a picnic for me. So if that's what you're going to do, then let me go and fuck off. Or if you're going to hurt me, stop acting all high and mighty, and just get it over with." He spat on the floor and glared up at them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 11, 2014, 04:37:17 pm**

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"You are no longer the boy I had to drag along back at Soren's house," Emilena complimented. "Keep the sword for now, until I can put this down..."

They entered the cloning room and headed over to the readied pod. But before they could get there, they heard voices blocking their path.

"What was it this time? Tell me!"

"I refuse to talk about it..."

Putting her finger to her lips, Emilena stumbled forward as quietly as she could. Around a corner, Agent Lupis was talking with a freshly cloned rhino.

"Goddammit, how many of us have you killed?" The rhino was shouting angrily. Tears were running down his eyes. "We're *not him*, you asshole! Each time we die, we stay that way! I don't want to die!"

"I never plan for it to happen, John," sighed Lupis, but the rhino cut him off. "--No! Don't call me that! Give me a new name, let me leave, and figure out your own problems without sending me to die like you did all the others!"

The two stared silently.

"You've had this conversation before, haven't you?" The rhino spat. With that he stomped off in the other direction.

Lupis rubbed his temples with his thumbs and groaned with irritation. He then walked away as well.

Emilena paused a few moments, then when nothing had been heard for a few minutes

continued creeping toward the aisle with the prepared pod. "Well, that was--" she began, when suddenly Lupis came barrelling out from behind some tanks, smacking I to her and sending she and Lily skidding along the floor.

"*Why won't you die, Officer Echo???*" he snarled furiously, pinning her and lacerating her chest with his claws.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 11, 2014, 05:50:43 pm**

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"Marita, why don't you use the card reader on your laptop to see what's on the ID?" Soren asked. He turned to Anne, Marie and Rose.

"I'm gonna need all of you to help me have a 'private discussion' with him."

Anne nodded. "Cool."

Soren and Anne picked up the office chair and carried it over to another section of the machine shop. There, a decrepit spindle sander and a drill press were present.

The Human rubbed a finger across the sandpaper. It was a very rough grit intended for roughing up a metal surface in preparation for applying a coat to it. He pressed the on switch and the motor hummed to life.

He placed a hand on Felix's shoulder. "Now, you see that spindle sander?" He pointed to the aforementioned machine tool. "We're gonna make that and your balls good friends."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 11, 2014, 06:49:54 pm**

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Axel stumbled backwards as Lupis suddenly charged Emilena down, tightening his grip on the sword. In the split second it took for him to get over the shock, he recognised the wolf and his lips drew back in a snarl. It looked like he hadn't been noticed, but from what he could see it looked like Emilena was getting torn apart - he had to act *now*.

Coming up behind Lupis, Axel drew back a leg and kicked Lupis as hard as he could, the blow connecting solidly with the wolf's ribs. As Lupis rolled off Emilena, Axel pursued him and raised the katana. "*Fuck you!*" he screamed, starting to swing it down, aiming for the wolf's face.

-----

Felix's body started to shake when he looked at the sander Soren was pointing out. He swallowed, tears starting to flood his eyes. "Torture f... for no reason, huh?" His voice trembled and Felix closed his eyes. "You fucking... fucking psycho! Just fucking do it then! I can't tell you anything else!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 11, 2014, 07:21:27 pm**

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Marita ran the id through the check and three names popped up, Ffelix's, a human named grivis and a salamander named Rico.. 'so this id was used before' she said 'twice before it seems..' she got up. and headed into the room with the others ' so, Felix, why are there two other names associated with your id?' she asked pointedly.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 11, 2014, 07:45:36 pm**

Soren smiled. Anne's ears involuntarily lay back. The smile was a murderer's smile.

"Psycho?" Soren replied softly. "How dare you call me a 'psycho' when your band of Luddites plan to slaughter every Augment in the city and kill everyone who's worked with them?"

As the door opened he then turned to Marita. "That's odd. Is the clearance level what he says it really is or is he full of shit?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 11, 2014, 08:02:38 pm**

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its not z-level,, its aa level' Marita said smirking at Felix. ' aa level is 5 levels above z level indicating a rather high rank. so not only are you not the only person identified with this id, the security level it provides is much higher. so felix, yes, is full of crap.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 11, 2014, 11:15:53 pm**

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Lupis tried to deflect the sword with his hand. This worked about as well as could be expected.

He cried out as his hand was severed at the wrist. Lashing out with his foot, he kicked at Axel's stomach.

Emilena staggered to her feet, her chest plate having prevented most of the damage. But Lupis drew a pistol out of his jacket and hit her twice in the same chest plate, which shattered it and sent her staggering with a grunt.

Lupis turned to shoot Axel when something hit him from behind. Lily had freed herself and in a desperate attempt had hit him with a flying tackle. Clamping her jaws around his neck, she hadn't expected a heavy knee in the crotch to send her rolling over his front.

Staggering to his feet, he blasted a cloning pod, sending the green fluid spilling onto the floor around them. His wounds were already recovering; his wrist stump had already clotted over. His other hand blasted Emilena's pistol out of her hand.

"What the hell?" muttered Emilena, trying to get to her feet.

"Genetic regeneration," smiled Lupis. "My father was an experiment from Pelvanida, back when they dabbled in bio-eugenics in the early 2000s."

With the last bullet in his clip, he shot out one of the many wires leading to the incandescent lighting fixture above the pods. This sparking wire dropped down and flooded electricity through the green puddle all four of them were standing in.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 12, 2014, 11:41:58 am**

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Lupis' foot had connected heavily with Axel's stomach, and he was knocked back. Winded, he'd started to try to move back in, shoes splashing in the liquid. Then he saw Lupis shooting up at the lighting, saw the wire tumble down, and his eyes widened. "Look out!" he started to shout, attempting to back peddle out of the liquid... then the wire touched down, and it felt like he was hit by a truck.

The next thing Axel knew, he was lying on his side, staring at the floor with a blinding pain tearing through his head. He wasn't in the pod's liquid anymore - his momentum from trying to escape must have carried him out, though not fast enough to prevent electrocution. A shivering sensation was coursing through his body, and he couldn't breath. Faintly, Axel

realised he was in shock. In the position he'd landed, he couldn't see the others and his limbs couldn't seem to obey him. Thin breath whistling through his teeth, Axel desperately tried to push through the pain in his head and get up.

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Felix blinked at Marita. "Two other people? What... what the fuck are you talking about?! I don't know anything about them!" He swung his gaze to Soren. "I just joined up a week ago! I got that card, and that's all I know! Maybe there was a... a mistake on it or... or something. *Shit*, I don't know!" Felix swallowed. "Look, if I was high ranking, do you honestly think I'd be wasting my time checking out a fucking augment shop? Are you fucking kidding me?!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 12, 2014, 01:59:39 pm**

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Soren sighed. "Well, at least we got one thing out of him. Think he knows any more or can we just dump him over the side?"

Anne shrugged. "Maybe you're the team leader? I'm not military but I know enough ex-servicemembers to know that the team leader is always higher ranked than their subordinates. Speaking of which..."

Soren then walked over to Marita. "What areas does this aa clearance level allow access to?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 12, 2014, 02:18:32 pm**

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After a few minutes, the circuit breaker tripped and the electricity cut out. All was silent for a few minutes.

Then Lupis slowly and shakily got to his knees and elbows. He panted heavily, the electric burns covering his body already starting to heal. He was halfway to the door when he heard a noise behind him.

Still sparkling with electricity, Lily got to her feet at well. Her muscle mass had bubbled out as if she were covered in tumors, and her fists were meaty and rippled with energy. She looked enraged.

Lupis tried to crawl faster but Lily was on him in a heart beat. Tearing savagely into him with equal parts brute force and razor-sharp claws, she ripped his limbs from his body and fried the remains with bolts of electric shock.

In a few minutes, Lupis barely resembled a corpse. Sitting up, Lily glanced at the fallen bodies of her friends. Axel and Emilena were both alive, but neither would be for long.

Walking over to the cable that had caused the short circuit, she wrappped her hand around it and grunted as she absorbed a second dose of electricity. Then, she walked over and administered a defibrillating shock to Emilena's heart.

Emilena heaved and vomited blood. Buckling over, she choked and coughed and breathed for the first time in minutes. "Oh god!" Was all she could say at first.

Lily smiled but soon left Emilena for Axel. Touching his cheek softly, she put her hands on his heart and administered a similar shock.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 12, 2014, 03:15:35 pm**

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everything except an area that's classified' marita said ' 50 credits says that's where they are holding Lily.' she turned to the others ' i think we've gotten everything we can out of this guy.' she waved the id card in Felix's face ' alright, we've gotten enough out of you. we'll let you go, but we'll hang on to this id..' - wait. we're letting him go' rose started. 'all the info we needed was on the id.' Marita replied ' it allows us clearance to just about anywhere on the base.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 12, 2014, 03:56:32 pm**

Axel's legs jerked as the electric jolt shot through his chest. Rolling onto his stomach, he wretched, opening his mouth wide and sucking down lungfuls of air as the dark edges to his vision gradually faded. After a moment, he tried to push himself up, his arms trembling. He looked up, then gasped when he saw Lily crouching over him. Axel twisted and weakly tried pushing himself back across the floor, stopping when his back hit one of the containment pods. His eyes took in the scene; the torn pieces of somebody (*Lupis?!*) scattered around, Emilena struggling to get up... and lastly, Lily herself - who didn't seem like she was going to attack.

He paused, then edged forwards cautiously on his hands and knees, his body still feeling unpleasantly numb. "Li... Lily?" Axel slowly held out a hand to her.

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Felix started. "You'll... you'll let me go?" He tugged at the ropes binding him. "Come on then! Hurry up and untie me!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 12, 2014, 06:35:32 pm**

Lily nodded and kissed him gently. The electricity had knocked the primary conscience out, allowing her to control her body for the last few moments in it.

Emilena staggered to the cloning pod and opened it. A familiar 20-something dark-skinned body greeted them. "It's...ready..." she panted painfully. "You've just got to..."

Lily nodded. Stepping forward, she helped Emilena remove the mindless clone body and lay it on the ground. Then she climbed into the pod and allowed Emilena to seal it shut.

Emilena closed and sealed the door. "This won't hold the creature for long. Hopefully we're long gone by the time it wakes up."

They waited. And waited. The clone body remained lifeless.

Emilena grew nervous. "Without a mind, this body won't last for much longer without suffocating itself. What's taking her so long???"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 12, 2014, 08:02:21 pm**

Axel looked from the pod to the body lying on the floor, his hands clenching into fists restlessly. He looked at Emilena and clenched his jaw. "Did... did you do something wrong?" Axel walked unsteadily to the pod, looking at the switches and buttons next to it. "Damn it, I don't... I don't know what any of this stuff does..." Thumping a fist on the glass, he called through to Lily. "Hey! Hey, Lily, come on! You've gotta hurry up!"

Giving up, he collapsed to his knees next to the clone's body and shook her shoulders gently. "You have to do it! Please!" *It couldn't go wrong... not now, not when they were so close...*

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 12, 2014, 08:49:24 pm**

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Further minutes passed. Nothing.

Emilena growled and thought over the steps, leading up to now. *Everything is perfect...* she thought with frustration. *Why the hell isn't she...?*

She took a deep breath. *There's* the problem. She's been thinking of HER role in all this, not Lily's. Had Lily ever shown an ability to throw her conscience at will?

As Emilena began to understand the problem, a solution slowly presented itself.

"Axel..." she started, trying to put this as delicately as she could, "Lily needs an impetus to jumpstart her conscience's expulsion from the old body, such as someone trying to kill her. Normally, a near-death experience is enough, but she knows neither of us would ever kill her after all this. Now, while seeing through her eyes, I saw all her near-death experiences...and, though I didnt understand why, your moment with her in the tree..."

Emilena opened the pod and dragged Lily's mutated body onto the floor. "The alien has no concept of life after reproduction. It's a primitive animal; once you reproduce, you die.. It thinks you're trying to kill her through impregnation." She trailed off. She hoped he would get the hint.

She hefted her sword and Lupis' pistol. "I'll, er, guard the entrance..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 12, 2014, 09:49:24 pm**

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Soren shook his head. "Marie, we can't let him go. He's gonna arm up again and come after us. We need to dispose of him, *now!*"

Anne sighed. "As cruel as it sounds, Soren, I think you have a point." She pulled her pistol out from under her dress and clicked off the safety. "Sorry, but we'd like to make our raid a bit easier."

Soren shook his head. "Let's not waste ammo. We're on an elevated platform. We'll just dump him from it."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 12, 2014, 10:16:24 pm**

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Killing him, wont solve anything' Marita said.' we have the info we need, now we can let him be on his way. if we run into him again along the way, and he dies then, thats one thing.. but this is another..

- soren, dont be a dick ' marie said. we'll drop him off somewhere and head to to rejoin the others..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 12, 2014, 10:37:51 pm**

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"His group has already killed numerous innocents." Soren's face was icy cold and neutral. "And what if we just release him and he goes ahead and rearms himself?"

"Marie, these people are fanatics. Do you want to put Augments like myself at risk?" Anne asked, pointing to her horn for emphasis. "Don't be mistaken, I'm not in favor of wanton slaughter but he's too high up in the command to keep alive. You saw what his keycard's

clearance is."

"Which is why we need to kill him!" Soren snapped. He then gently brushed Felix's naked chest with the muzzle of his rifle. "Pity, you really weren't a z-level operative. We might have let you live if you were."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 13, 2014, 05:26:40 am**

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Axel gaped at Emilena, flushing. "Huh? I need to..." He blinked and looked down at the mutated Lily. "She thought I was trying to kill her with... with *that*?!" *You're losing time!* Swallowing, he nodded quickly at Emilena and ran a hand through his hair awkwardly. "Alright, alright, I'll try. Just... yeah, just guard the door."

As Emilena walked away, Axel crouched down in front of Lily, his eyes roving over her body. He loved her, but... in her current transformed, bloodied state, sex wasn't exactly the first thing that came to mind. Axel spread her legs apart gingerly, and winced. She was spiky down there, too. He let out a shaky breath and started unbuckling his jeans. "Alright... come on..."

Pushing them down, Axel grimaced when he saw there was another problem. After being shot at, beaten, electrocuted and killing people, he was finding it difficult to get his friend in the mood. "Aw, you son of a bitch! Not now..." Rubbing up against her, he accomplished nothing aside from getting poked by something sharp. Leaning back, he tried desperately to help himself along with his hand. Still nothing. "Goddamnit!" he growled after a moment, stopping and punching his leg in frustration. *The one time you could use it to save someone's life!* Grinding his teeth, he looked around for inspiration... and his gaze settled on Lily's clone lying just to their side. Axel remembered the first night they'd met, how he'd felt the first time he'd looked into her eyes. Leaning over, he grasped the clone's outstretched hand tightly and closed his eyes, memories flitting through his mind of how happy she'd been that morning at Soren's house, when she knew she wasn't alone. And he felt himself stirring.

A small laugh escaped Axel. "Alright! Just... just keep it up..." Pushing forwards, he entered the mutated Lily and gasped as he poked himself on something again, keeping his eyes closed. Keeping a hold of the clone's hand, he started to pick up his pace, his breaths getting quicker.

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Felix glared up at Soren with hatred. "I told you, I *am* Z-level." He spat in his face. "If you're going to kill me then hurry the hell up, you fucking bastard. I don't have all day."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 13, 2014, 06:36:21 am**

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There was a sharp intake of breath as the creature stirred. But Lily kept the conscience forced down. She had already worked herself into a bit of a panic when she couldn't escape, but once she realized what Axel was doing, she became determined to use it.

The tattoo on her chest was at one. This was the only chance she was going to get. Like before, she felt herself leaving the body and settling into Axel's.

*No!* she thought with determination, *Not there!* She used Axel's gaze to pinpoint the clone body to her left. He was holding her hand, making it even easier for her to lead herself to her intended destination.

And then...it was done. Sitting up now and breathing for the first time, Lily took several deep breaths and opened her eyes. She felt herself. This body didn't feel like hers, even though it looked like it; this would take some time to get used to.

"Axel..." she whispered, trying to sit up. "Axel...you did it."

The creature under Axel, freed of Lily's control, pushed him away and scampered out of the room. Having remembered how this rat had bested it in ambush before and was proceeding to display the ultimate act of dominance, the creature was more than willing to flee instead of fight.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 13, 2014, 03:42:27 pm**

When he heard Lily speak, Axel's eyes flew open. "Huh?! Oh! *Argh!*" he cried as the creature pushed him away and he was tugged out roughly. He groaned, holding his crotch as the mutant scrambled away, then looked back up as he heard Lily trying to move. "Oh my god! *Lily!*"

Dragging himself across, he put an arm around her and helped her to sit up. "Holy crap! It actually worked!" Axel pulled Lily closer and kissed her, then looked her up and down anxiously. "How... how are you feeling? Does everything feel okay?"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 13, 2014, 04:18:48 pm**

"Yes..." Lily smiled, but upon attempting to breathe again she began coughing. Her face turned slightly purple and she clutched her throat.

Emilena rushed back into the room at the sound. "Her lungs are full!" She announced, recognizing the symptoms immediately. Hoisting Lily onto her knees and elbows, she spanked her violently until Lily had cleared her lungs, like a newborn baby.

"Now to clear her trachea...sorry Axel, but it looks like I get first kiss," Emilena pushed Lily back down and administered CPR until Lily vomited green fluid. "Okay...okay, we're good now," Emilena sat back as Lily sat up, looking queasy.

But that didn't stop her from hugging Axel. "Thank you..." she smiled weakly. "I can't believe you managed to..." without further words, she pressed her lips against his, even while crying softly with overwhelming emotion.

Emilena averted her eyes and couldn't repress a disgusted grimace; cloning fluid breath would have to be the worst possible thing to kiss...

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 13, 2014, 08:04:21 pm**

Soren wiped the saliva off his face. "Okay. Anne, mind giving me a hand?"

Anne nodded as she picked up one half of the chair and Soren picked up the othe half.

"Okay," Soren said. "Someone needs to hold the door open."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 13, 2014, 08:37:40 pm**

Lily's breath *did* have a chemical quality to it, but Axel didn't care. He returned the kiss, eagerly pressing against her mouth in unbridled adoration. He could barely dare to imagine that she was finally okay again, and it was as if by maintaining contact, he was reassuring himself of the fact that she was safe. When they finally broke apart after what seemed like forever, he smiled down at Lily and brushed some hair from her eyes. "I said I wouldn't leave

you, didn't I?" Leaning his forehead against hers, he whispered, "I love you so, *so much*."

Axel unzipped his hoodie, pulled it off and wrapped it around Lily to keep her warm. "Here, I, ah, know it's a little big for you... and a little, uh, bloody. Sorry." Looking across at Emilena, he nodded gratefully to her, tears in his eyes. "Thank you."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 14, 2014, 01:24:53 pm**

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Suddenly the lights in the building where Soren and the others were dimmed, and then a single spotlight silhouetted Nairda and a mic on the second floor.

With a two-finger kiss in Felix's direction, Nairda hit the background music, and busted some passionate chords. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHEvx9GTHVI>)

-----

Lily, with Axel's help, got to her feet. "Thanks..." she said gratefully for the sweater.

Emilena glanced at the door. "Wish we had time to get you a shower; I know that stuff isn't pleasant on the skin. But right now we need to get in contact with those two characters we broke in with. Do you have any way of contacting them Axel?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 14, 2014, 06:54:36 pm**

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Nairda's lyrics could use some work, but Felix had to admit - the guy sang with *heart*, dammit. He twisted around in his chair to look at Nairda as he finished his rap. "Hey! Yeah, we've got chemistry! Loads of it! I can feel it too! We *can* be Bonnie and Clyde! Just stop these goddamn crazy pricks from killing me!"

-----

Axel nodded. "Yeah, right here..." He fished his cell phone out of his pocket and flipped it open, then winced. "Damn..." The phone's screen had a large crack running through it, but at least it was still working. He quickly tapped out a text to Tony:

*Have Lily. Didn't see or hear anything about bomb. Ideas?*

He closed the phone and put it back in his jeans, then looked at Emilena. "The bomb, it's... it's still around here somewhere. I have to try and stop it. But if you still want to leave, I... I won't stop you." Axel swallowed and turned to Lily. "If she does, you should go with her. Staying here... it'll be dangerous."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 15, 2014, 03:25:05 pm**

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Tony had been waiting patiently in the generator room for the past half hour or so. It was approaching the 40 minute mark now, and he couldn't hear anything further from outside, namely because he was starting to doze. Had the attack failed? But no... the shield they had erected didn't last very long. It soon suffered critical failure, and dissipated like early morning mist. The mob had insiders everywhere, and their insiders had killed the Purifiers manning the shield generator and promptly ensured it could never be used again. Rocket and mortar fire resumed, with the rumblings in the street indicating the mafia were bringing forward a large tank with a bulldozer blade fitted to its front. It clanked rapidly down the main avenue, heading right for the front gate as its 88 mm gun opened fire on the compound's doors.

The vibrations from outside stirred Tony back to wakefulness, and he shook his head,

wondering what time it was. Feeling his phone vibrate in his pocket, the ferret reached in and pulled it out in bored fashion, tapping the screen and seeing Axel's message. Oh right... about time. Tapping back *Get back here. I'll start the reactor to blow this place if you're ready.* he sighed, then slid the phone back into where it had come from. Still leaning against the mammoth generator, the ferret gazed out into the empty room, his sense of unease and low morale only getting lower with each passing second.

Turning, he silently began throwing some switches and twisting some knobs, listening as the reactors rumbled to life with deep, throaty hums, awakening after decades of disuse. He was only starting them up, not raising them to critical level just yet, but that could easily be done in a matter of seconds, and then he'd sabotage the whole thing to ensure they couldn't be shut down again.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 15, 2014, 05:11:18 pm**

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Emilena folded her arms. "I Did not come thus far to just trust that Lily can keep herself alive as an unarmored human. Consider this done once we've gotten her to safety."

Lily smiled at her. Emilena expected Lily to ask why Emilena was doing this, like everyone else had, but somehow she already understood.

Lily turned to Axel. "I'd never leave you. But I don't understand...how are you planning on destroying the machine? That's not possible...unless that's where the others are right now."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 15, 2014, 05:31:38 pm**

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Axel shook his head. "No... No, Soren and the others are still out in the city. Tony's down setting this place to blow." He frowned. "Wait, what do you mean? Why would it be impossible? I mean, once we find where they're keeping it, we just need to... to sabotage it. Right?"

He walked over and put a hand on Lily's shoulder. "Look, I know it might be hard for you to remember, but did you hear anything, anything at all about where they're keeping it? Some kind of storage area or... or lab maybe?" Axel swallowed. "We're running out of time..."

-----

Marcus looked up as the shield overhead broke down. The mortar fire continued down and hammered against the walls and grounds of the compound. Several Purifiers guarding the walls flinched, and made to run for cover. The doberman snarled and fired in the air. "*Don't run!* We have to keep them out as long as we can!" Turning back to look out at the grounds, he spat and raised his radio. He hadn't wanted to play this card so early, but since the shield wasn't working... "Sniper teams!"

From the tops of the high rises dotted around the industrial district, Purifiers armed with sniper rifles stared down at the action below. "Here," several voices returned.

"Have any teams managed to locate the mortars yet?"

"Team A."

"Team C."

Marcus nodded to himself. It made sense, they were the two teams posted the furthest away from the base. "Take them out. And make sure no more take their place." From far in the distance, there was a series of tiny, indistinct pops, and the mortar fire abruptly stopped. "Other teams, scan the approach and get ready to fire. They've got to make their move

soon..." Marcus frowned when he looked up and saw the tank rolling down the main path to the front gates. The gun opened fire on them, and they started to crumple inwards... then the tank rolled over one of the mines that had been set up, and was promptly blown up. Marcus grunted as the burning wreckage crashed to the floor. *Did they really think it was going to be that easy?* He could only hope the mob would be as careless when they began moving across the grounds. Turning to the Purifier next to him he barked, "Find someone to repair that gate!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 15, 2014, 07:15:35 pm**

"Axel..." whispered Lily softly. "It's off-site. They drained me and sent the energy via wires, but the bomb itself isn't in this base. They weren't going to leave their trump card where everyone knew to look..."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 15, 2014, 09:41:08 pm**

(Purifier Base)

Aaron swore as a piece of shrapnel kicked up by the mortar fire pinged off his helmet.

He aimed at at one of the attackers about 500 meters out and squeezed the trigger. The German Shepherd had never shot at anything so far away but the HMD and its associated scope made him into a near-perfect sniper.

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The Poodle next to Marcus slung his rifle across his back and nodded.

He then darted into the base where several of the Purifiers were waiting for orders.

"Drop yer cocks and grab yer socks!" he shouted. "One of you fuckers needs to fix the gate!"

The troops immediately leapt to attention and filed out to get their tools.

The Canine sighed and pulled out a burner from his pocket. Yanking the small metal tab, he took a deep draw of the now smoking tobacco.

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(Abandoned Bakery)

"Shove it up your ass!" Soren snapped. If he wasn't holding the chair, he would have unslung his rifle and smacked the fucker right in the groin with the muzzle of his rifle.

"Not interested in a bigot like you," Anne replied. She smiled, Nairda, for all his obnoxiousness, was actually not a bad rapper. She turned to the three women. "Look, could someone open the door? We don't have all day!"

(OOO - Damn, I loved that rap!)

(OOO - Nick, you're up.)

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 15, 2014, 10:04:03 pm**

mArita went and opened the door, a so the others could carry Felix out. Nairdas singing was actually quite decent, she thought. ' you know nairda, once you get that voicebox of yours

fixed, you should take up singing as a career' she said as she looked down the hallway, at of which and staircase could be seen, or at least the top of one.. ' lets get this over with, so we can go find tony and the others, hopefully they are having better luck finding lilly than we are with this guy..

---

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 15, 2014, 10:10:01 pm**

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Soren and Anne quickly hustled him down the stairs.

Soon, they arrived at the "ground level" of the abandoned bakery. Grass grew from between the cracks in the decrepit lot

Small scorch marks, drug vials and beer bottles indicated that this area had probably been used for late night parties more than once. Pockmarks and cracks in the walls hinted that the parties had gotten violent multiple times.

Anne and Soren grunted as they lifted the chair onto the concrete ledge. On the other side was a drop of at least 150 feet to the ground level where more industrial buildings and city infrastructure lay. All it took was a single push from the two to send Felix on a one-way trip to hell.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 15, 2014, 10:53:57 pm**

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marita pulled out her phone and sent axel and tony a text' -have info on compound thanks to a purifer we caught. have you found lily yet? the sooner you get her out of there the better Marita.' ' hopefully that text gets to them ok..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 16, 2014, 05:42:03 am**

---

Felix screamed as he plunged down the huge drop, landing with a wet crunch and turning into what looked like a red soup. The world would never know what adventures he and Nairda could have had together.

-----

Axel didn't say anything for a long time. He stared back at her, his eyes wide. "Wha... no. No, no, that's not..." He trailed off when he realised how much sense it made. Why *would* they leave their main weapon in a place as well known as this? Axel slumped back against one of the pods. "*Oh god...*" He thought of the thousands of innocent people that were about to die... and it occurred to him numbly that he was about to, as well.

He felt a vibration in his pocket. Taking out his phone, he saw the text from Marita. Blinking back tears, Axel texted her back: *Got her. BOMB NOT HERE. GET SOMEWHERE SAFE.* As he sent it, he saw the time on the screen. They had 10 minutes left. There was no way they could stop the bomb now. They'd lost. He swallowed. "I guess that's it, then." Axel looked at Lily. "I'm... I'm sorry..."

He started, then glanced between her and Emilena. "Wait! *Holy shit*, I think I know a way we can..." Axel ran a hand through his hair. "Lily, remember before, when you ran into this place? That lab, I... I don't know if it was the walls, or what... But while we were in there, the Purifiers set off a, a kind of mini-pulse, and it didn't affect me!"

Axel swung his gaze to Emilena. "If we can get there, then maybe... maybe we'd be okay!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 16, 2014, 12:01:51 pm**

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they've got Lily' Marita said, upon receiving Axel's text ' problem is the bombs not there. they must have movced it off site ' we need to get out of here and find a safe place to bunker down" she said to tghe others its 1150, so we have 10 minutes. we have to move NOW! \_ so they have lily' Marie began ' but they didnt find the bomb? Oh Crap" rose replied.' don't worry about that.. we need to get out of here' marita said..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 16, 2014, 03:16:20 pm**

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(OOC: Thanks, felt inspired when I finally got one hour of free alone time in my apartment and wanted to do something hilariously embarrassing to celebrate!)

Bowing his head sadly, Nairda dropped his mic over the side of the building to rest with Mr. Died.

"Well, let's go to the base and finish this," he said, steely-eyed, before instantly becoming wild-eyed and shouting, '*It's fixed!!! I can speak normally again!* The rap was too intense for the language filter, and it broke down! I can talk without randomly inserted 'biiiatch'es!"

Tears welled in his eyes. "I've been saved....by the power of *rap*..."

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Emilena narrowed her eyes. "That's right; the lab is sealed against psionics, and this is a psionically-charged pulse. That could work."

She peeked out the doorway and plugged two Purifiers who had been running past the door down the hallway. "We might be able to figure out how much time we've left once we're there.

Lily hugged Axel nervously. "We've got to get you to safety. I don't you to die because of...something I played a big part in operating..." her voice wavered.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 16, 2014, 05:42:30 pm**

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Axel put his hands on Lily's shoulders and looked her in the eyes. "I don't want you to blame yourself for this. *Ever*. Okay? What they did to you... You didn't ask for that. It *wasn't* your fault." He lightly ran a hand through her hair then started to lead her towards the door. "Besides, big scary guy like me, I'm not gonna give up that easy," Axel continued, giving her a nervous smile, before ducking out next to Emilena.

He nodded at what she said. "Right, 10 minutes to get across to the lab... we can do it." The hallway was clear, so Axel slunk out and pulled a shotgun from the grip of one of the Purifiers Emilena had just shot. Shouldering it, he turned to the two women and gestured. "C'mon, let's get going before more of them turn up..."

-----

In the center of the city, an indistinct white van was parked on the side of the road. It had been there most of the day, and pedestrians walked past it without giving the vehicle a second thought. Stored in the back, a large, box-shaped structure glowed blue, the colour pulsating like a heartbeat. On the top was a blank digital screen. It beeped, and suddenly numbers flashed onscreen - counting down. *00:10:00... 0:09:59*

In a car across the street, Rhaegson smiled and put a silver, remote-like object back in his

jacket pocket. A burly man in the driver's seat next to him frowned. "You didn't need to be here... shouldn't you be somewhere safer? There'll be *some* fighting back, you know."

Rhaegson looked at him and shrugged. "I don't want you to have all the fun. Everyone's in position, anyway. Anyone who fights back is going to be put down. And the mob's being kept busy back at the compound. It's all going to plan." He looked down at his watch. *10 minutes left...*

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 16, 2014, 07:12:26 pm**

(OOC - I'm assuming Doctor Jiang didn't quite program the vocoder properly and it just reverted back to normal.)

Soren looked over the edge. He turned away, not out of disgust but out of indifference. "Okay, let's finish this shit off."

He and Anne returned into the bakery just as Marita spoke. The Human's eyes widened. "Okay, let's find the bomb, disable it and then slaughter as many Purifiers as we can find!"

"But the pulse!" Anne cried out. "We can't search a six square mile city of forty million people in ten minutes!"

"Once that pulse hits, we'll know who the Purifiers are. We'll strike then."

Anne's eye twitched and stomped over to Soren. "Is that all you care about?" she growled, her ears pinned and swiveled back. "Revenge? This isn't about your fucking workshop any more! If this pulse goes off, Axel and myself could very well be killed! How goddamned selfish do you have to be to not give a flying shit about your friend and only about your workshop! Put aside your fucking revenge-boner and actually consider what could happen if these freaks get the upper hand!"

Soren could only gape as Anne verbally ripped him a new asshole.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 16, 2014, 07:57:59 pm**

shes right' marie spoke up. " this more than about any of our petty gripes anymore. there's several million folks who have augments in one form or another, and you're willing to see all of them maimed ior even killed? what kind of nut are you?"

-  
we need to get to somewhere thats shielded from am emp, likw underground, for instance, or in a bunker..'marita said ' we need to move guys.. argue once we're safe..

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 17, 2014, 06:20:27 am**

"There is another way..." Nairda said, steely-eyed. "We don't have to search the entire city if we *destroy the entire city...*"

He tried to think of how they could do that and drew a blank. "Just providing a third option," he chuckled nervously. "Heh heh...luckily I'm not the boss so I don't have to make the call."

-----  
Emilena led the way towards the laboratory, and they reached it via brisk trot in a few minutes.

Too bad at this point there were several personnel present; scientists, specialized guards, anyone who worked for the Purifiers but had an augment for job purposes had relocated here. Emilena was about to suggest they try to blend in when she spotted a few individuals who were rogue cops and would almost certainly recognize her.

"What are you doing?" squealed Lily as Emilena hoisted her gun.

"We're using the only thing we've got; the element of surprise," Emilena replied. There was no time for anything else.

Rolling into the room, Emilena targeted the two guards with heavy weapons first, then dove for cover hoping to get a clear shot on her former colleagues.

-----

Back in the other room, Lupis stirred. Any other being would be dead, but his regenerative factor was slowly working its genetic magic. Anything short of a beheading was recoverable; he couldn't move yet, but he'd be able to soon.

Then a shadow loomed over him. Extasis was back. Grinning grimly, Exstasis drew a knife and placed it on Lupis' neck. He was the only person in the world who knew Lupis' only weakness.

Lupis' eyes went wide and he shook uncontrollably. He tried to speak but he wasn't healthy enough.

"Don't worry..." Exstasis whispered back, guessing what Lupis wished to convey "...if we ever want you back we can just *clone* you."

The knife tore through skin and bone.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 17, 2014, 01:49:24 pm**

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One of the guards started to turn, startled, as the sound of Emilena's gunfire filled the room. He started to raise the Uzi that he was clutching, aiming at her as she went for cover. Charging in after her, Axel swung the barrel of the shotgun to face the guard and pulled the trigger - the blast tore the Purifier's arm from his shoulder, a red mist spraying out over the terrified scientist who was standing next to him. Gritting his teeth, Axel awkwardly racked the shotgun and fired it again, sending a tattooed poodle flying backwards with a gaping hole in his chest.

The rest of the guards had managed to raise their own weapons by this point, and started to return fire, taking cover on the other side of the lab. Swearing, Axel kicked a table over and pulled Lily down behind it, his breaths growing panicked as bullets *pinged* over their heads. A clock on the wall behind them was shot down, the glass shattering. Axel saw the time as it tumbled to the floor, and he swore again. "6 minutes!" he shouted across to Emilena. "We've gotta clear this room *now!*"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 17, 2014, 08:50:31 pm**

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Tony pushed off from the generator, sighing again as he glanced at his phone. No new messages... "Let's get outta here." he stated.

"What? But you haven't set the reactors to blow yet!" Vergil responded.

"Yeah well... we have ten minutes left... which is 20 minutes too long before these reactors go off if I set them now. Meaning we've already lost. IF Axel and Emilena and Lily were coming back here, they would've been here ten minutes ago. It was timed beforehand... and now they're not here. Something's clearly gone wrong. No messages, no calls, no fucking nothing!"

Tony elevated his voice at the end there, stamping his foot paw into the ground. "Best we can do is hope they weren't killed and pull back into the tunnels to avoid the pulse... cause if my phone gets fried again... not that that's the worst of my worries..." he murmured here, thinking about how many were about to die.

Tapping out a quick *We're pulling back. No idea where you are. Lost contact. If in trouble, let us know.* to Axel, the ferret headed back for the manhole cover, knowing he was gonna lose reception once he entered the tunnel.

"Go ahead." Tony nodded, letting Vergil hop down first. He waited an extra minute before descending the ladder, waiting to see if Axel needed help.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 17, 2014, 10:00:36 pm**

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Emilena ducked under the table, shot someone in the foot, then shot them in the face when they helpfully fell to the ground and exposed it.

*We need another advantage...* she thought. With the remaining bullets in her clip, she sniped as many lights as she could to increase concealment. Several scientists were radioing for help; this served only to expose them to her line of fire.

As she focused on gunning down the scientists, she didn't notice the last pocket of resistance, the small cadre of rogue officers who had taken cover behind the computer array in the far corner of the lab. One of them primed a grenade and, under the cover of darkness, chucked it at Axel and Lily.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 17, 2014, 10:46:26 pm**

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"We're on an elevated platform. There's no basement!" Soren snapped.

Anne looked around. "There's got to be a metal lined room somewhere we can hide!"

"We don't have the time! We'll need to get to the ground level as fast as possible! There's an elevated highway nearby that goes to telecommunications center on the ground level. If we can just carjack someone, we'll be good to go!"

Anne looked at stolen watch. "We better hurry then!"

"Right!" Soren took off in a sprint for the main road. "Everyone else, when you see a car coming, throw something at them. Once they stop, I'll carjack them!"

He readied his rifle and clicked off the safety.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 17, 2014, 11:02:10 pm**

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or there might be a car parked somewhere' Marita said as she ran after Soren. rose and marie were right behind her at this time of night there was not many cars on the road.. marie sighed as she looked up and down the road- there were no cars in sight ' marita looked at her phone ' they had 4 minutes left.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 17, 2014, 11:22:25 pm**

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Soren never thought he'd hope there was traffic but sure enough, he found himself wanting.

Even the steady drone of repulsorcars and flying frames had vanished. All that he saw was the pallid glow of street lights.

"Okay, there's no traffic. And we've got four minutes left." Soren sighed and put the safety on his rifle back.

"Well, I guess we're boned." Anne got out a packet of pills from her dress. "Well, I'm dying on my own terms, not theirs!"

"Anne! Don't do that! We'll think of something!"

Soren looked around. "Any ideas?"

Anne looked at the pills and shrugged. She put them back in her dress. She then noticed a "No Trespassing" sign on the battered fence. "Guys, I have an idea. It's *seriously* illegal and wrong but I don't think we have a choice."

Soren snorted. "I already carjacked someone and committed murder. Albeit, murder of a bag of shit."

Anne looked at her watch. "Look, we get the police to respond, kill the cop, dump the body and swipe the car."

Soren looked askance. "Are you fucking *serious!*?"

"Got any better ideas?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 17, 2014, 11:33:04 pm**

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marita suddenly noticed a car lying in a ditch further down the road; guys look..' an abandoned car! she said pointing to it.. ' soren, you know how to to hot rig a a car right..' she shouted as she ran towards it. upon reaching it she noticed the windows were dusty:the car had been there awhile.. ' someone must have abaindoned this here..' she said..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 18, 2014, 12:29:25 am**

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"Modern cars can't be hot-wired. They need a radio signal from the key to start," Anne cut in. She then smiled and tapped her horn. "And I got a universal key!"

She led the group over to the car and climbed into the driver's seat. She closed her eyes and focused as the microprocessor in her skull tried to spoof the reciever in the car.

The electric motor suddenly started up with a whine. "Okay, I managed to use my horn to trick the dcomputer into thinking there's a key." She looked at her watch. "We've got like two and a half minutes left."

Soren bundled into the passenger's seat. He decided against buckling up as he may need to use his rifle.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 18, 2014, 12:36:48 am**

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marita jumped into the back seat, and Marie and rose joined her. just drive anne!' rose cried. ' we need to find a safe place..' marita sighed with relief as the car pulled onto the road.' we

just need to drive towards the outskirts of the city..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 18, 2014, 05:46:15 am**

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Axel popped his head out of cover, aiming the shotgun at the rogue officers taking cover on the other side. Yellow flashes of light illuminated the room as they exchanged gunfire, the darkness making it hard to see if he was hitting anyone. Finally, his gun *clicked*. He dropped back down and let the gun fall to the floor in frustration. "Crap! I'm out!" *As long as Emilena doesn't run out of bullets, we should be okay...* He couldn't see how much time they had left, but it couldn't be much longer.

Axel shook his head. He couldn't just sit here and do nothing. He looked at Lily. "I'm gonna try and grab a gun from one of the bodies..." he started to say. Then a metallic clink stopped him as something landed in between them. Axel squinted down at it, and felt himself go cold when he realised that it was a grenade. He stared at it blank faced for a second then dived for it, a strange whistling noise escaping him. "Ohfuckohfuckohfuck!" Fumbling for it, Axel grasped the grenade, stood up and blindly lobbed it back across the lab in the direction of the rogue officers, then knelt back down and squinted his eyes shut.

The man who'd thrown it yelled as he felt something bonk against his head. He caught the object as it fell, and his face paled as he and the other officers saw what it was. "Motherfu-" In the closed confines of the lab, the explosion was deafening. Shrapnel, and parts of the computer array system were thrown across the room. With a wet splat, a foot landed next to Axel.

He waited, then slowly stood up when he didn't hear anything else, his ears ringing. Nothing but bits were left of the rogue officers. "I... I think it's over," Axel said, helping Lily up then nodding across to Emilena. Feeling his phone vibrate, he took it out, trying to control his shaking fingers, and read the text from Tony. *Taking cover in lab, safe from bomb. Hide, regroup when it's over,* he sent back, then started when he saw the time.

"1 minute! We've got to seal the room!" Axel shouted. He turned to the door and heaved it shut... then froze when he heard a huge crash behind him. Turning slowly, he saw that a large section of the lab's wall, weakened by the grenade's blast, had collapsed outwards, flooding the room with light and exposing it to the outside. Axel blinked. "Well, shit."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 18, 2014, 02:52:21 pm**

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Emilena blinked. "We're...uh...we're fucked," she finally admitted, looking at the plastered remains of their protection against the pulse. "I mean, really you are, Axel. Lily and I will survive, the only augmented parts of me are my hands."

Twenty seconds left.

Lily balled her fists. "No..." she whispered, and it wasn't a whisper of desperation or disbelief; her tone was commanding and defiant. *I've been fighting to control a psion in my mind for the past week; I psionically powered this very bomb, I am not about to let it let it tell me what that pulse will do to my loved one.*

As the remaining seconds ticked off the clock, she wrapped her arms around Axel and touched their foreheads together. Emilena just stood off to the side, seeing if she could spot any way to save her hands from the coming EMP pulse. Sadly there was nothing in the way of a shielded box or anything.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 18, 2014, 06:10:10 pm**

20 seconds... Rhaegson sniffed and pulled out a radio. 10 seconds... The man sitting next to him licked his lips and drew back the safety on his assault rifle. The timer kept ticking down. 5...4...3...2...1... Rhaegson smiled. 0. Inside the van, the bomb beeped, and started humming. Slowly, the noise built up, growing louder and louder. Citizens walking past the vehicle started to pause, looking at it curiously. They started to back away nervously when the windows in the van started to rattle. The bomb started to shake, its vibrations growing violent...

And then, with a sudden roar that resonated through the body of everyone nearby, a huge blue wave erupted from the van. The windows exploded as it shot up in the air, then spread out in a growing dome formation, the blue light washing over buildings and shooting down the streets as the dome traveled outwards, spreading over the city of Lanthae.

From inside the car, Rhaegson could hear screaming, cars crashing. One of the people who'd taken an interest in the van, a dalmatian, fell to the floor and started convulsing. Raising the radio to his mouth, he pressed the button on the side. "We're a go. Have fun, boys." The man next to him grinned, and got out of the car, making his way towards the shaking dalmatian.

Throughout Lanthae, the Purifiers began their slaughter.

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Marcus shot down another approaching member of the mob, then ducked back down behind cover to reload. The Purifier next to him shouted for more ammo, and Marcus tossed him a spare clip. "Keep fighting!" he shouted, his voice hoarse. "It's almost time! Just..." The doberman stopped when his ears picked up a faint buzz.

Turning, he looked in the direction it was coming from. Far in the distance, a blue glow was getting brighter... and then Marcus saw the pulse itself, rushing towards the base, the buzz turning into a roar that grew louder with every passing moment. As the Purifiers around him started cheering, Marcus smiled.

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Axel swallowed numbly, Emilena's words drowned out by the panic rushing through him. Looking dazed, he stepped towards Lily. As she put her arms around him, Axel felt his frame start trembling. He gritted his teeth and let out a breath as he heard a rumbling from outside get louder and louder. Axel hugged her tightly.

"I love you. *I love you*," he choked as their foreheads touched. He squeezed his eyes shut as a blue light rushed through the hole in the wall and flooded the lab.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 19, 2014, 01:37:06 am**

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Anne screamed as the pulse washed over her. She was far enough that the pulse didn't fry her augments but it still caused massive amounts of pain. The car was now at the outer rim of Lanthae where they were now actually at ground level. Sprawling fields of algae and assorted farms as well as a few factories provided a huge contrast to the towering black neon lit monoliths of the Lanthae city core.

She gritted her teeth and clutched her hands to her forehead. The car swerved wildly as she took her hands off the steering wheel.

"Anne! Get a fucking hold of yourself!" Soren screamed as he reached over and wrestled with the steering wheel to keep them from ending up inside an algae farmer's tank. The mare was still screaming in agony as the remaining pulses continued to wash over them.

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(Dr. Jiang's Clinic)

The clinic was shielded so all the Augments inside were unharmed.

Unfortunately, the same could not be said of the security systems. Thanks to the pulse, they had been fried ó and anyone seeking to do harm could just walk in.

"We need to move," a Krait nurse exclaimed.

Doctor Jiang turned on the TV. Live images of Purifiers running amok and slaughtering Augments and allies" alike ó in horrifyingly sadistic and innovative ways; the screen showed a group of Purifiers throwing a young Augment, not much older than ten years old, off an elevated sidewalk and onto the train tracks below.

Chants of "Death to Gleamers!" and "Burn in hell, orgo-traitors!" filled the night air.

The Chinese doctor then turned the TV off. "We can't move now. It looks like the whole city's affected. If we leave now, we'll all be killed. We need to stay here until the furor dies down ó and then we move."

He reached into desk and swapped out his left hand for one that contained a two foot vibroblade. It was intended to laborers to use in cutting concrete and other hard materials but like many class 2 augments, it has been often been misued as a weapon.

(OOC - Orgo-traitor is a term that refers to a Baseline who has a relationship with an Augment. It doesn't matter if the relationship is sexual, friendly or even just professional. Needless to say, this is a *highly* offensive term.)

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 19, 2014, 02:26:21 am**

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pull over soren! Marita said loudly, as rose and marie held onto the dseats in front of them. ' get her back here so we can calm her down! pull over to the side of the road; ' marita looked at her phone,the pulse was far enough away that her phone wasnt fried.'obvious;y the bomb has gone off and those loons have begun attacking anyone they can get theor filthy hands on..'

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 19, 2014, 02:34:09 am**

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Soren straddled the center console and wrestled with the wheel as he pulled the car over to the side of the road. On the other side of the fence was an algae farm.

Anne staggered out of the car. "My head," she moaned. She collapsed onto the hard tarmac.

Soren sighed and got out of the car. He placed both arms under the mare's armpits and tried to drag her into the backseat.

After a few minutes of backbreaking labor, she was safely in the backseat. Soren wiped some sweat off his forehead.

He turned to Marita. "We need to get in contact with Tony and the others!"

Soren looked off into the distance. "If they successfully do a pogrom in Lanthae, what's to stop them from doing a nationwide one?" He shuddered at the implications. What he had once thought was a small-time group of thugs had now turned out to be a group of genocidal anti-Augment fanatics.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 19, 2014, 02:48:38 am**

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i'll send Tony a text message' Marita agreed 'she began texting 'Outside of city, pulse too far away to fry phones but did give Anne massive painful jolts. will need to regroup. what is best place to meet up?' marita sent the text then sighed.'those poor people ' Marie said, the full knowledge of what was going on, sinking in, and the golden retriever began to weep. rose was cradling annes head and trying to keep her stable.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 19, 2014, 10:38:40 am**

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As the pulse washed over the lab, Emilena cried out and fell to the ground as her hands sparked and sent her to her knees. Her hands literally would not function anymore, and blood started to trickle out from her cuticles as the inner wires frayed and short circuited.

Axel, on the other hand, was unharmed by the pulse. As it washed over them, Lily squinted her eyes and clenched his hands in her fists. The pain he would have felt was absorbed into her body and the harmful effects of the pulse could not enter her domain.

Some of the surviving wounded on the floor cried out as the pulse didn't spare them from its effects. A few seconds later, the pulse had passed.

Emilena, half preoccupied with her bleeding hands, still spared Lily a surprised look. "How did you...?"

Lily smiled softly. "Psionics are a mental strength, and I've had training from hell these past few days..."

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Inside the car, Nairda's broken body convulsed as it finally succumbed to the pulse it had sustained over the past few milliseconds. As he flatlined, he managed the strength to grab one of his teammates ignoring him and pull the girl close to him.

"T-tell...Emilena...tell her I...love her..."

He choked out, then, as his hand went limp, he managed the ghost of a smile as a single tear rolled down his face. He would later be buried in an unmarked grave, without ceremony or mourners, just another casualty of the city that he had fought for.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 19, 2014, 12:06:35 pm**

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Tony managed to jump down into the tunnels just in time, killing his cell service and sealing the cover shut. Panting, he waited, though was unable to tell the effects of the devastation up top. The pulse served to fry everything, knocking out the city's defenses and cooking hundreds of thousands of augments at once.

"Wait!" Tony held up his paw, wondering if the others had made it to the lab and survived. "Just wait... give it..." he checked his phone, "ten minutes."

As the defenses dropped citywide, agents of Kalis observed the spectacle, having taken proper precautions to avoid the pulse by moving to just outside the city's limits. There was no point to being in the city anyway, after what was about to be unleashed.

Broadcasting the news out to the fleet, the message was received without problems. Kalis's fleet admiral once again approached him. The dark warlord was standing calmly on the bridge

of his flagship, still staring out into the dark. "Lord Kalis..." the admiral began.

"I know... I sensed it..." Kalis responded in his wheezing, raspy voice. "So much death... it's wonderful! It courses through my veins... enlivens me with a certain kind of vigor! Open the gate, Admiral Carrack."

"Yes, my lord." Carrack bowed at the waist, and turned. "Open the gate! Prepare to jump!"

Soon, a blue spark exploded in front of the gathered fleet, growing larger and larger until a portal took form, appearing like a miniature blue-black hole that rotated clockwise in on itself. It grew in size until it was several miles across, easily large enough for the fleet to pass through. Gate-jumping was a process that bent the fabric of space-time and allowed faster than light travel across vast distances provided there were relays existing at points A and B. Most major cities had relays for the delivery of goods long distances, and Kalis's fleet had an array of relays equipped on its carriers that were normally reserved for experimental space travel but could be used to traverse the planet just as easily. With Lanthae's government now in total chaos, there was no way to prevent Kalis's fleet from making an unauthorized jump into the city.

The ships' engines rumbled to life, and began moving towards the gate, which quickly sucked them through like a vacuum, and they streaked across the sky like meteorites before suddenly appearing over Lanthae's morning sky.

Massive ships began blotting out the sun, and the attack was swift and merciless. Explosions and sheets of flame blossomed around the city as the aerial bombardment commenced.

Inside the Purifier base, Tony was just emerging back into the dusty reactor room after ten minutes when he could feel the ground shaking all around him. "What the hell?" he demanded, struggling to keep his balance. "Is this part of the Purifiers' attack?" he wondered aloud, looking around.

"No!" Vergil exclaimed, pointing upward out the windows now. "Look!" Tony craned his neck and gazed out the windows, gasping as he saw a titanic aerial battleship looming overhead, resembling a giant hammerhead shark as it opened a heavy caliber fire on the Purifier base. The shots ripped gaping holes in the complex and started to leave craters on the grounds large enough to drive multiple big rigs through rather comfortably.

"What the... hell?" the ferret whispered, and noticed Vergil seemed shocked to see this particular ship.

"No... it can't be!" the white gecko gasped.

"What? What?" Tony proclaimed, trying to press Vergil for answers.

"It's Kalis's fleet! I... I recognize it!" he replied, shaking his head in disbelief.

"Kalis? What's he doing here?" Tony asked.

"Wish I knew!" Vergil responded, still looking at the ship as more shots tore into the base.

"We... we gotta get out of here!" Tony stammered. It was clear the base would be flattened in a matter of minutes if this kept up. Tearing his phone out of his pocket, he silently prayed it was still working, and much to his relief, could see that it was. The tunnels had protected it, and he sighed in relief as he fumbled with the screen, noticing he had a message from Marita, and quickly read it. *outside the city!* he replied, and began writing a message to Axel. *You guys make it? We gotta get to the car! Still at the tunnel* he wrote. The one small glimmer of hope was that the labs were located close to the old reactors, so it shouldn't take very long for Axel and the others to make their way back here if they could. He also noticed a message from one of his father's capos, indicating they were pulling back in the face of the aerial attack.

As the attack over Lanthae commenced, the government was sending out what distress

messages it could, pleading for help. The nearest aerial fleet was some distance away, but did respond to the message, and began making for Lanthae. As they lacked gate-jumping capabilities, they would have to travel at sub-light speeds to the city, but even despite this, Admiral Bryce McCormick vowed to do his damndest to reach the city in a timely fashion with the 9th Fleet, as Kalis was a wily and dangerous warlord they'd been hunting for some time now, and had finally appeared over one of the world's largest cities.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 19, 2014, 01:02:00 pm**

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broadstree was defending the police department from assault by purifiers, their bodies lay blocking the doorway as one by one they fell to broadstreets bullets.. the city was in ruins, and the death toll was likely near 1 million. broadstreet cursed the purifiers as the last attacker fell dead.' we need to gget out of the city and regroup..'take whatever vehicles you can get, and bring along any survivors you can pick up..' he ordered. the surviving officers saluted him and hjeaded out.broadstreet then went to the armory, picked out a bulletproof vest and.put it on. he then grabbed a pair of guns and as much ammo as he could, then headed out the back of the police station to his car. like many police issued car the windows were bulletproof. broadstreet headed out of the police parking garage and headed towards the city outskirts. \_ tonys alive! ' marita said upon receiving the text message ' nairda isnt' rose said indicating his limp body..'we'll have to bury him somewhere" marie replied as marita sighed upon seeing nairda's body.' that'll have to wait until we get reunited with the others. I'm driving for now' marita said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 19, 2014, 03:29:41 pm**

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"Forget burying him!" Soren shouted. "We'll just have to ditch his body by the side of the road!"

Anne fished in the pockets of her dress. "Any of you got some headache pills?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 19, 2014, 03:43:17 pm**

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i have some' marie said ' i have them for when i get dizzy from climbing stairs' she said digging into her purse and coming out whuiith a white asparin bottle ' here take a couple' she said giving the bottle to anne.' marita started driving the car' we'll dump him off once anne is better' she said. she sent tony a text' nairda is dead. everyone else ok.reply once you are out of city.'

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 19, 2014, 04:11:49 pm**

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Anne took about five of the pills and gulped them down without water.

Soren looked around the farms that surrounded them. "What are we going to do now? We can't fight against all these nuts!"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 19, 2014, 04:55:41 pm**

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we are going to have to start over somehow' marita said.' we'll need to stop these guys, however, in order to do that..how we are going to do that.. well i dont knowe..

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 19, 2014, 08:25:28 pm**

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As the pulse entered the room and Lily's grip tightened, Axel shuddered at the tingling sensation that ran through his body... then it was over. Hesitantly, he opened his eyes and was surprised to see that his vision still seemed to work. Glancing down, he flexed his fingers and gave a small laugh, disbelievingly, when they actually moved. "*Holy crap*, I'm... okay!" He looked at Lily and smiled. "I... I've got no idea how you did that, but... thank you..." He hugged her and kissed the tip of her nose.

When Axel pulled back, he saw the state Emilena was in and his eyes widened. "Oh jesus... We've got to get out of here..." He started to make his way over to her when a dull *boom* from somewhere in the distance made the ground tremble. Axel paused for a second. "What's..." There was the sound of another explosion, this one much, much closer and the floor jolted beneath him, hard enough to send him stumbling into one of the metal cabinets. "What the hell's going on?!" he gasped. Feeling his phone vibrate again, he snatched it out and saw Tony's message. "Ah crap..." *On our way!* he sent back, then looked quickly between Lily and Emilena.

"Tony's waiting for us in the tunnels, it's our only way out of here!" Axel rushed over to the Emilena and helped pull her to her feet. "Come on, we've gotta go!"

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Marcus shoved a Purifier out of the way of the ship's gunfire, then rolled back to avoid it himself. His mouth twisted into a snarl as, sliding to his feet, he looked up to take in the flying ship that had opened fire on them. *What the fuck is going on?! Gunships?! Where the hell had they come from?!*

A tower started to collapse behind him. It smashed onto the ground just behind him with a deafening crash, crushing several unfortunate people, dust and debris flying outwards. Marcus leaped into one of the craters to avoid the parts flying lethally through the air, then scabbled back up the other side, spitting out dust and looping the strap of his assault rifle over his shoulder. Glancing at the base as it crumbled before the ship's gunfire, he could see staying here was pointless. "*We're retreating!*" Marcus shouted across to the Purifiers who'd managed to take cover and avoid being torn apart. "Get moving! *Now!*" Charging through the alleyways of the base, sprinting to avoid the bullets that tore through its structure, Marcus led the remaining Purifiers across the compound to the exit on the western side.

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Rhaegson blinked sweat out of his eyes as he took cover from the aerial bombardment, looking up into the sky. His men had been given orders for different strategies to adopt in the event of various problems arising... but warping spaceships? *Didn't see that coming... Now that's just fuckin' rude...*

He spat to the side and looked around at the men who'd gathered with him. Staying up on ground level obviously wasn't an option. Across the street, he could see an entrance leading to the subway system - if they could make it down there, they'd be able to take cover, regroup and come up with a new plan in response to this, he regretted to admit, unforeseen set-back. Rhaegson just had to hope the other Purifiers would realise the same thing.

He pointed across. "Get into the subway! Go!" Rhaegson waited for them to look at where he was gesturing, then sprint across. Gritting his teeth, he tore after them, ducking his head as he ran through the flaming debris that rained down on them. Raising his eyes, Rhaegson saw they'd all managed to make it down - he was the last Purifier left up top. A few more steps brought him closer to the stairs. He was almost there...

Then a massive explosion next to him threw him to the side. He landed with a *crack*, his left arm snapping as it twisted under his body. When Rhaegson regained consciousness 10 seconds

later, he coughed and rolled over onto his back. Looking up, he could see the ship hovering way up overhead, continuing to fire down at Lanthae. He couldn't hear as building parts crashed to the floor near him, couldn't hear anything, and it occurred to him, almost absent-mindedly, that he might be deaf. *Gotta get moving...*

Rhaegson tried to get to his feet... but he couldn't move. Frowning, he raised his head, looking down at his body... or at least, what was left of his body, which now ended at his waist. Below was just a red smear, with the start of an intestinal coil poking out. Looking around, he squinted and could just make out one of his legs, torn and bloody, lying a couple of meters away. The strength in his neck suddenly gave and he let his head fall back to the ground, his vision starting to darken, the colours fading. *Well, that puts a crimp in my day*, Rhaegson thought. Then he died.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 19, 2014, 08:56:06 pm**

Kojurro coughed out blood as he staggered down the street. he hasd fought off a group of 5 purifiers who had attacked him, and while he had killed them, he was pretty banged up.. the sight of the carnage around him filled him with fury at those responsible.; gotta get out of here' he thought, as as an injured St Bernard Augment grabbed his leg, and pleaded for help ' please' he begged ' Kojurro sighed and helped the injured dog to its feet,one of the Bernard's hind legs had a large piece of metal sticking out of it..names Manny' the Bernard said through gritted teeth ' Kojuuro' Kojurro said Manny weighed 200 pounds and it was not easy for Kojuuro to lift him, finally he sat down on a sidewalk ' we have to get that debris out of your leg.. i'm no doctor.. Kojurro said.. he reached inside of his shirt and found the the beeper Broadstreet had given him to activate the bug. Kojurro pressed the beeper which gave off a noise. a few minutes later Broadstreet pulled up next to him in his car.' you have more lives than a cat.. Broadstreet said to him. then noticed Manny. ah an injured civilian. Didnt know you gave a damn Kojuuro. You surprise me.. Broadstreet went over to Manny and with a sharp pull removed the blood soaked shrapnel from Mannys leg . Manny yelled out in great pain, as Broadstreet tossed the debris away. ' put him in the backseat. theres a first aid there with bandages and gauze' Broadstreet said to kojuuro.' we're getting the hell out of here. the two helped manny into the backseat of the car, and kojurro climbed in after huim. broadstreet climbed back in and took off again, while Kojuuro bandages Mannys leg.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 19, 2014, 10:27:39 pm**

Emilena got to her feet awkwardly since she couldn't use her hands. "I hope you can keep all three of us alive, rat," she grumbled. She attempted to pick up her katana but could only waggle her fingers around it like raw strips of bacon.

Lily bent over and helpfully clipped the sword to Emilena's belt. "Let me take your hands for a second," she offered. Closing her eyes, she bit her lower lip and focused.

Emilena sighed reflexively as the pain started to disappear. Glancing down, she noticed with alarm that blood was starting to trickle out of Lily's nails and her hands were shaking. Realizing the nature of Lily's healing abilities, Emilena snapped, "Not right now!" and snatched her hands away, causing Lily to gasp in surprise. "I'm fine! Your hands are more valuable than mine at the moment." She rubbed them, then followed Axel. "Let's get moving."

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 20, 2014, 08:44:02 am**

Axel quickly bent and snatched the Uzi from the guard's severed arm, grimacing as he pulled the gun free from the fingers wrapped around it, then crossed the room. "Alright, let's... get going," he grunted as he shoved the lab's door open. Whatever was going on outside, the noise had become relentless, and Axel could feel his teeth setting on edge as the compound

around them shook, dust falling in waves from overhead and settling on them as they dashed through the halls. On the way, they came across a group of three Purifiers dashing down towards them, their eyes widening in surprise at seeing the intruders. Before they could say anything Axel mowed them down and jumped over their bodies, his legs carrying him faster as the racket outside grew deafening.

Turning the corner, Axel could see the door that lead to the reactor room. "Come on, we're almost there!" He started leading them down the hallway... and suddenly, behind them, the wall began collapsing inwards as something punched through. Axel turned and gaped. Was that gunfire? *What kind of guns can do that?!* Whatever it was, dust, glass and rubble started flying towards them as the destruction tearing the place apart rushed up the corridor in their direction.

"*Fuck! Run!*" Axel yelled, seizing Lily's hand and sprinting down the corridor. The door was getting closer - but, from the sound of it, so was the gunfire that was shredding where they'd been just moments before. *No way... we aren't dying now, not when we're so close!* Reaching the metal door, Axel kicked it open and shoved Lily and Emilena through into the reactor room. Diving after them, he tripped and tumbled down the stairs, landing at the bottom with a groan as the ship's gunfire tore past, destroying the doorway and bringing down the roof behind them.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 20, 2014, 02:20:05 pm**

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"Jesus, you made it!" Tony exclaimed, seeing the group charging towards him as the base began to collapse and come down. "We gotta get the hell outta here!" Holding his paw out for them, he helped first Lily down into the tunnel, then Axel, and finally, noting Emilena couldn't seem to use her hands, he grabbed hold of her armpits before she could protest, and let Axel grab her from the lower half so she wouldn't fall down the ladder and break her neck. "Here!" He said, quickly following down after her as the building was torn apart, the room they were standing in starting to act as if a giant were punching its walls.

The ground shook violently, a virtual earthquake going on around them as the battleship's big guns ripped the base apart, shredding it as effectively as if it were a toy being put through a pulverizer. "Hope this goddamn elevator still works!" Tony said through clenched teeth as they ran down the tunnel, the ferret hearing the sounds of tearing metal and collapsing walls further back from the complex.

Vergil was the first to reach the elevator, piling in and slapping the up button to the ground floor, but then jamming his bulbous finger down on the door open button to ensure everyone got inside. Once they were, his white finger mashed the close button, and they were soon making their painful way upwards, Tony silently praying that the elevator wouldn't tumble back down as the building they were in shook like a leaf in the wind.

The elevator rattled and rumbled its way up to the ground floor, and Tony let out an exhale as the doors opened and he ran out first to get the car ready. Everyone could fit in the car, and they wouldn't need the trailer, but Tony knew the car was powerful enough to reach 100 even with the trailer attached. Throwing himself behind the wheel, the ferret fumbled with his keys, eyes on the destruction of the Purifier base ahead of him, and he swore as he dropped the keys briefly. "Shit!"

Reaching down, he retrieved them and started up the big V-12. Vergil got into one of the back seats, and once everyone was inside, Tony gunned the engine and whipped the car around in a 180 degree turn, tires squealing as he pointed the car towards the highway, but then thought better of it. Looking at the sky, he could see the aerial fleet was concentrating its attack on major buildings and thoroughfares, and the highway was the place to avoid right now. OK... time to take some back streets to escape the city.

"So... I take it Lily's back?" Tony asked when he was certain he was safely away from the Purifier base, and could focus a bit less on driving like he was being chased by all the forces of

hell, which in a way, he kind of was. He felt his phone vibrate, and he pulled it out to quickly glance at a text message from his father.

On the bridge of the **Red Castle**, Kalis was gazing with satisfaction at the destruction of the city. If they submitted, fine, but he doubted he'd have time to occupy this place. Already his fleet had intercepted emergency distress calls to the 9th Fleet, so he knew they were at least inbound. Still... nothing wrong with a little chaos every now and then. Even if he wasn't ready for a stand-up battle just yet, this was an opportunity he wasn't going to waste.

But there was something here... a distant presence he was sensing... a presence he hadn't felt in a long time. But that presence was impossible. There was no way he could be feeling it. Narrowing his eyes, he pushed it from his mind, and instead focused on watching the explosions and the decimation below him, reveling in the sight as if he were at some intense sporting event.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 20, 2014, 06:54:04 pm**

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"That's me," Lily said shyly. "I know I look different from how you've seen...but this is how I normally look. Thank you for putting up with me when I was...less than hospitable."

Emilena narrowed her eyes as she watched the destruction outside. "Where exactly are we going?" she asked. She suspected Tony was returning to his father, and Emilena suspected she shouldn't be at the planned reunion.

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Nairda's body hit the street and tumbled as he was forcibly ejected from the car. In a few seconds he stopped rolling when he hit the side of a barn.

A few hours later, he came to in the bed of the farmgirl that nursed him back to health. As she unsubtly came on to him, clearly sheltered and desperately inexperienced in the ways of men, her father kicked the door down and angrily chased him from the town with a burning pitchfork.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 20, 2014, 08:59:32 pm**

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Axel hunched over in his seat as Tony sped the car through the narrow side streets, feeling exhaustion seeping into his limbs now that they were out of the immediate danger of the base. *As long as we don't get bombed by those things in the sky, it'll be smooth sailing...* Rubbing an arm across his face, he took Lily's hand in his own and leaned across to Emilena. "Whatever happens... you're welcome to stay with us. I... I don't know if I can repay you for what you've done." Axel looked at Tony and smiled. "You too. If you hadn't shown us that way in... Things could have gone differently. Thank you."

He sighed and leaned back, then stared out the window at the huge ship hovering over Lanthae. Axel swallowed. "Vergil... what... do you know what the hell's going on?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 20, 2014, 11:50:25 pm**

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"For now, out of the city. I can drop you off if you have a specific destination in mind and it's not being bombed to hell." Tony responded to Emilena. He glanced in the rearview mirror at Axel now. "Uh... sure, no problem." he responded, nodding. "You don't have to repay me." Plus I don't think you can, he didn't add. It was certainly high praise for having done essentially

nothing but show him a way into the base. Still, it had helped get Lily out of there, and that was their main goal. This Kalis or whoever he was... he was doing their job for them now by helping to eradicate the Purifiers... but it was coming at a very high cost.

Axel also seemed to have gotten over the whole "you chose your family over me so I'm choosing her over you" thing. Tony figured not to bring it up, especially if the rat wasn't going to do so further. He needed to put it behind him, and just go on with his life. Whatever the future held, he wasn't sure, but there were things still remaining to be done, with or without his friends.

Vergil glanced up again as they wound their way through small side streets, staying clear of the aerial attack and away from major centers of commerce. It was working out well so far, as the ferret's route was keeping them clear of the bombing. "Well... I can't say with any certainty... only that Kalis is here... I don't know if it's for me, or just because he's a warlord bent on ruling the planet, but he's here." Vergil stated with some finality. "This attack is too big for me... and I don't know why he'd concern himself with someone like me anyway. I don't know how prominently I factor into his past, if I factor in at all." he murmured here. "But I DO remember this fleet distinctly. I can't... say if I served in it at some point in time or not, though. It's all just... a blur." he muttered with some dejection.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 21, 2014, 04:08:33 am**

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"Few miles out of town would be great," said Emilena, who was focused more on gauging her location using the remaining landmarks still standing. She didn't particularly like Tony so the sooner she could be on her own, the better.

"Hey," Lily said firmly, waiting until she had Emilena's eye contact, "Axel was serious about his offer. We both owe you, and you need somewhere to live. We could all use each other, and we've earned each other's trust."

Emilena smiled weakly, not out of insincerity but lack of practice. "Thank you for the offer. I'm pleased to have cleared my debt to you. But I have to insist that we part ways." Axel has wisely kept his full name secret from most relevant parties and Lily will be tougher for the Purifiers or mafia to recognize in her fully-human appearance. In contrast almost everyone on every front knows Emilena's name and face, and most of them would like to see her dead. She would only jeopardize the best chance Axel and Lily have of successfully slipping under the radar.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 21, 2014, 11:37:58 am**

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Axel nodded. "Alright... well, just know that the offer always stands. If you ever need somewhere to stay, then... uh, you know." He blinked, then looked at Lily. "And, ah, speaking of which... we need to find somewhere to stay! I mean, I don't have a second house in the country or any surprises like that." Sighing, he looked out the window. "Well, as long as it's far away from all this... and as long as I'm with you... It'll be okay." Axel felt something sharp dig against his leg and, wincing, he pulled out the remains of his phone - it must have broken when he fell down the stairs. He swallowed. He'd have to trust that Soren, Marita and the others were okay.

After a while, Axel glanced at Tony and Vergil. "How about you guys? I'm, ah, guessing the Straccis don't need to worry about being homeless?"

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 21, 2014, 03:40:46 pm**

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Tony shook his head. "No... my dad is going to relocate though. He's getting some larger movers in to get all our stuff... no use sticking around in a ruined city, after all." Tony sighed. "I grew up here but... I guess it just wasn't meant to be. But... at least my dad's made arrangements to save all our stuff... including the cars." Tony smiled here. "Maybe I'll get to drive one to the new location. My dad's got homes all over, after all." he shrugged here. "But... I... yeah I guess I'll just stay with him for now." he concluded, sounding unsure.

Vergil shook his head. "No idea what I'm going to do or where I'll be staying. I need to find out about my past and who I am after all... as well as my link to Kalis. Maybe I'll start traveling... interviewing everyone I can find who was connected to the Scorched Earth War and who might've known about my service... and well... I'd like to learn about Kalis's former boss... who he was, why he suddenly turned traitor... I feel I'll find answers that way." he explained as they exited the city. Open fields stretched on before them, and Tony drove towards some woods he knew about to the southwest of the city.

Slowing the Pierce-Arrow down, the ferret could see refugees in this area were minimal so far. "This place good?" he asked Emilena, looking over at her now.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 21, 2014, 05:54:10 pm**

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"Perfect." Without so much as a thank you, Emilena exited the car before it had even fully come to a stop.

Lily smiled sadly. She seemed to guess Emilena wouldn't be swayed. "At least give us some way to contact you, then. In case you change your mind."

Emilena paused. "If I change my mind, I'll be able to find you. It used to be my job to find people, you know."

And then she took off at a brisk sprint until the smoke and ashes emanating from the neighboring city had swallowed her.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 21, 2014, 07:00:14 pm**

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(Farmlands outside Lanthae)

Soren looked at the column of smoke rising from the ravaged city. The booming of the fleet's massive cannons echoed around the countryside.

He sighed. The countryside was a throwback to earlier times. Except for the tall gleaming towers of refineries, factories and vertical farms dotted throughout the are.

The Human sighed. "Well, the city's fucked. And we're equally fucked. What do we do now? Meet up with Tony and Axel?"

"What else can we do?" Anne replied.

Soren nodded. "Can someone text the two again?"

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(Purifer Base)

Sirens screamed throughout the ravaged compound as the relentless bombardment continued.

Aaron swore as the hallway he was in shuddered, knocking him to the ground. His smart rifle was just an ordinary rifle and the HMD associated with it were all but useless, fried by the EMP.

Pausing a moment, he ripped the HMD from his combat helmet and the scope from the rifle and tossed the two useless pieces of electronics away.

The German Shepherd panted from the near constant running. His lungs and legs burned fiercely as he sucked in the dusty air.

It was then he saw it, the green glow of the exit sign and the lights of the outside. The flickering of the exit sign indicated he had little time left before the exit collapsed.

He urged his muscles to worker even harder and shot through the opening. And not a moment too soon as the reinforced concrete finally failed, entombing anyone unfortunate enough to be left inside.

The Canine looked around the group of Purifiers for Marcus.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 21, 2014, 07:25:48 pm**

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I'm Not getting any Response from Axel, i'm guessing the pulse must have fried his phone.' Marita said she she texted Tony" Outside city near some farms. got a place in mind where we can meet up?' she finished the text and turned to the others. ' at least we have each other. its not much, in the grand scheme, but its better than nothing.'

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broadstreet drove through the ruined city and made it out to the outskirts. by his count, he had just 14 officers left, not including 8 he had been unable to contact. this was out of 125 under his command, and broadstreet blinked back a few tears for all those lost, officer and civilian alike. manny growled softly behind him as kojuuro bound his injured leg.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 22, 2014, 04:35:55 pm**

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Tony felt his phone vibrate again, and pulled it out as Emilena got out of the car. It was from Marita. Looking behind him at Axel and Lily in the rearview mirror, he cleared his throat. "Ahem so... where can I drop you guys off?" he asked, starting to drive forward at a slower place once more.

He texted back *Not sure I'm meeting you. Need to help my family first. We're relocating to Marita.* He really had no reason to link up with the others right now, and the texts he was getting from them meant they were safe for now, so he didn't have to worry about that.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 22, 2014, 05:05:54 pm**

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Marita got the text and smiled " Understood. At least you guys made it out of there. Go handle your family business first, its more important than worrying about us..thanks for your help Tony.' she sent it and turned to the others.well guys it looks like we're on our own. Tony and the others made it out and but are headed off to handle thier own business. so i suggest we head towards a new town."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 22, 2014, 06:31:53 pm**

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Axel watched through the window as Emilena ran off, his ear flicking as she disappeared into the smoke. He turned as Tony spoke, biting his lip. "I, ah... I don't know. I mean, there's gonna be plenty of small towns around here in the country..."

He looked at Lily and put an arm around her shoulder. "What do you think? Take our chances..."

find somewhere quiet, settle down and try to make a new start?" Axel smiled at her. "Late lie ins... Dinners in front of the TV... I can make a *mean* macaroni-cheese on toast."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 23, 2014, 02:49:48 am**

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Lily laughed. And cried. And hugged Axel. It was beginning to dawn on her just how lucky this all turned out. "Of course," she sobbed with equal parts elation, devastation, and fatigue, "God...anything. Anywhere. I love you!"

She flung her arms around him again and cried uncontrollably.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 23, 2014, 03:59:51 pm**

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Axel held Lily tightly, resting his head against hers as she sobbed. "It's alright. Everything's over now," he murmured, stroking her cheek. "*We're* going to be alright."

He looked up to the front of the car and nodded at Tony. "Drop us off at the next town. We'll... we'll take it from there."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Pterano** on **April 23, 2014, 05:06:17 pm**

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"No problemo!" Tony responded with a grin. "Can do! Fortunately, my dad's manor is kind of in the next town over anyway, so we should be able to work that out. I'll drop you off before then and I'll be on my way!" He drove through the open fields, and finally managed to get on the Garden State Parkway, having made his way there over bucolic country roads. The Pierce-Arrow seemed to blend in perfectly with this atmosphere in a way, as the countryside, while having high-tech farms, wasn't over the top with its technological sprawl like Lanthae was.

Reaching the town where his father lived, Tony slowed down on the main street and then pulled over at the curb. "Here we go! This good?" He asked, rotating in his seat to look behind him at the couple now. "Hey! Stay in touch, OK?" the ferret asked, raising his brows.

Back over Lanthae, Kalis was growing a bit frustrated. He had sensed her presence in the city, but it had vanished rapidly, and the warlord was convinced he'd missed her. "Damn!" he wheezed, shaking his head "Clever of you... but I knew you were here."

"Lord Kalis! The 9th Fleet is approaching!" came a shout from one of the bridge techs.

"Mmm... very well. Prepare to withdraw. We've sown enough devastation today..." Narrowing his eyes, Kalis glared out the front viewport. "I'll find you..." He murmured. "Don't think you can hide from me forever!"

A few minutes more, after delivering more devastating shots to the city below, Kalis's battle fleet began withdrawing, opening up the gate once more to prepare to jump. Several minutes after that and it was all over, the powerful fleet nothing more than a very close memory as the skies over Lanthae cleared.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 23, 2014, 06:52:43 pm**

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Lily smiled. "We'll keep in touch," she beamed back at Tony. "Thank you for everything, and best of luck in getting home."

She got out of the car and turned to say thanks to Vergil next, but stumbled when she made eye contact. There was something...dark in his subconscious. Not even in his thoughts. In his destiny.

She managed a weak smile. "I...I'm sorry..." she tried to hide her discomfort but did poorly. "You've got a lot of power, and even more potential...just, when you get the chance to use it...remember compassion."

Not knowing what else to say, Lily stepped away from the car and averted her eyes, waiting for Axel to say his goodbyes so they could leave.

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Emilena stumbled along the side of the road, coughing almost as rapidly as she was sprinting. Her burning lungs be damned, she needed to get as far away from Lanthae as she could.

Still, part of her was glad at how everything turned out. She'd paid her debt, and was free to live the rest of her life alone and away from everything in her past. She would never have to see any of these idiots ever again--

"Woooahhh!!!" Someone came out of the smoke too suddenly for her to avoid and crashed into her, making a stupid noise she was all too familiar with.

"Nairda..." she snarled, stifling an exasperated groan. "Of all people..."

"Sorry about that, madam!" Nairda brushed some ash off his shoulder, thereby making it the least ashy part of his body. "There's a psychotic farmer chasing me who wants my gonads on his pitchfork!...or at least there was when I started running thirty minutes ago..."

She slapped him to get him to shut up, and he double-took. "...*Emilena!?*"

Despite herself, she grinned. "God, you're an idiot. Come here."

Grabbing him by the collar, she smothered him in a passionate kiss.

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **bushwacked** on **April 23, 2014, 08:27:21 pm**

Climbing out of the car, Axel walked over to Tony's window and leaned through. "Sure, we'll keep in touch. You haven't heard the last of us, Stracci! Maybe someday *I'll* take one of your dad's cars for a ride," he grinned, nudging the ferret's shoulder. "Or, ah... maybe not. Thanks, Tony and... take care of yourself, alright?" He looked over to Vergil and nodded. "You too. I know you've got some... *a lot*, of questions but be careful out there."

With a last smile, he stepped away from the car and took his place next to Lily on the sidewalk, raising his hand in a wave. "I guess we'll see you guys later!"

Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Nick22** on **April 23, 2014, 08:43:36 pm**

marita turned towards the car when marie tapped her on the shoulder ' um, marita before we head off theres one thing i want to say.. thanks.. for letting me tag along, and not leaving me on my own after the night club blew up..' marita smiled at her ' well marie you've become a friend. i'd be glad to share an apartment with you.' Marita offered ' just as roomates' marie asked.' marie..marita started but didnt get to finish as marie kissed her on the lips.marie kissed her for a few seconds then broke away.' well, if you feel that way..' marita shrugged. i still have my drug problem to deal with rose said as she approached them. ' we'll get you

detoxed' marita promised her..rose hugged her, then hugged marie, who kissed her in response. rose blushed as she pulled away from Marie' well i'm ready to get going ' she said.

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **aabicus (LettuceBacon&Tomato)** on **April 23, 2014, 09:06:53 pm**

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Eventually Emilena and Nairda found themselves in the lonely stretches of the desert outside the Northern suburbs of Lanthae. The next city over was a night's walk, but for the time being Emilena had set up the tent she'd been lugging since she left her parent's home, her hands having regained most of their functioning by now. The remainder of her food provisions were cooking over a fire, and Nairda was looking hungrily at them.

Instead he quickly found himself pressed forcefully to this ground by a naked vixen. "Hey Nairda," Emilena's eyes flashed mischievously. "I figured out why lovemaking with you was so goddamn boring."

"You...uh...you did?" he asked nervously, as she ripped his clothes off him.

"Yeah," she grinned, "you were missing the funnest part."

She punched him. Then punched him again. Then kept punching him until he punched her back in self-defense. Then she kneed him in the crotch until he kicked back. Soon the two were a whirlwind of claws, sex, and dirt.

Hours later, panting heavily, Nairda dragged his exhausted but satisfied body over to the food. "Where do...what's our plan now?" he exhaled, ripping into some jerky.

Emilena was squeezing blood out of her hair. "Who the fuck cares. Go anywhere. Fuck the world."

That night the two ignored the tent and slept outside, the desert wind wafting along their bruised skin.

"It's not an easy life you know..." Nairda murmured, wrapping his body around his lover. "We'll be outsiders, slandered, treated like dirt...its not an easy life on the streets..."

"Oh, shut up," Emilena rolled her eyes. "Just watch me." She glanced at the plumage of blackened smoke forming a mushroom on top of Lanthae. "We brought the last city to its knees, and it was the crime capital of the nation. The next town won't know what hit it..."

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Title: **Into the Black**

Post by: **Serris** on **April 23, 2014, 10:10:38 pm**

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Soren nodded.

"Where would everyone like to go?" he asked.

"Drop me off at the nearest maglev station. I'll hitch a ride to the nearest big city and then make my living there," Anne replied.

As Soren drove along the highway, he looked around the area. The farms and factories around him still had the dirty industrial look to them but they were nowhere near as bad as Lanthae.

All there was along this lonely road and bathed in the icy white of LED streetlights and light emanating from the many farms and factories in one of the busiest farming corridors of the nation was a single stolen Fisker Karma and its occupants, heading off to who knows where.

(End RP!)

