

One Strain Too Many

Somewhere outside Minsk, Belarus

4:13 AM

"Oh my god!" the biochemical security agent thought as he positioned the electron microscope zoom to almost full max.

"This can't be, I've never seen such growth or such a rapid destruction in cellular nuclei as this" he said, "they actually freakin' did it!"

"This will take some time," he muttered inside his full biohazard suit as he maneuvered inside the portable Agency bio-chem lab. "I just hope there's time before they actually try to use the damn thing," he contemplated.

The agent worked feverishly in the lab, looking at different samples of known, and some not so known, strains of biological and manmade viruses. This was not your ordinary strain of suspected influenza; this sucker would put you down in a matter of days... permanently. Trigger was pulling apart and comparing some of the most deadly viral concoctions known to man when a multitude of knocks on the lab door came crashing though.

BLAM...BLAM, BLAM, BLAM.

Trigger spun around to see who was at the door, only to realize the roar of cool morning air rushing into the laboratory via a volley of deadly bullets.

"Oh shit!" he shouted as he hit the deck.

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It was like seeing an elephant doing a swan dive as the Agent tried to leap through the air for cover in his biohazard suit as bullets rained down on him.

"Where is it...I know I took it out of the holster for safe keeping," Trigger peered over to the opposite side of the lab, seeing his pistol sitting on the centrifuge machine spinning round and round like a top, as he remembered how it would be funny placing it there and playing a real game of Russian roulette.

"Think, damn it...think," he said under his breath. Just then the door burst open and four armed men with submachine guns entered the facility.

The four gunmen saw Trigger's eyes open wide through his bio-helmet as sweat started to run down the agent's face, not due to the 20° hike in temp from the bio-suit but from the sure terror of dying. He frantically looked around for anything he could use to thwart his attackers and then suddenly realized that he possessed the perfect weapon in a situation such as this. Pure unadulterated lies and deception. Trigger stood up slowly and raised his hands in surrender. The agent began analyzing his captives and started to speak in broken Belarusian.

"You know, men, your cloth is not of...solid clothing. This place is full of small...much death...and fear. All you men will die...for your rudeness."

The men looked at all the lab equipment: broken petri dishes, spilled beakers and broken machinery, and then looked at Trigger who now possessed a rather evil looking smirk on his face. The gunmen knew exactly what their grave situation was...so they imagined.

As the gunmen fled from the lab, the Agent thought to himself, "What a bunch of school girls. Glad I had the good shit in the freezer when all this went to hell in a handbag. I can't wait till those guys wake up in the morning." He started laughing, looking at the petri dish he was working on. It contained Ecolien-concalitsuenza, a mutated form of influenza, whose major side affect was one of the worst cases of diarrhea and bowel spasms known to man.

Trigger grabbed his pistol, put the terrorist viral sample into a refrigerated biohazard carrier and made his way outside.

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Trigger cautiously made his way out of the lab, making sure no one else decided to pay him a visit. Once outside and far enough away from the contamination zone, the agent set a record unsnapping and unzipping his bio-suit and started walking in the cool morning air to his vehicle to drive to the US-BSO transport.

"I feel like I've been cooked in an easy bake oven for twenty-five hours, only to be stuffed in a freezer for later use," he groaned as steam ascended off him from head to toe.

"I'm gonna catch freakin' pneumonia out here, which would be a treat compared to the crap I'm carrying," Trigger thought as he strapped the viral sample in the back of his Jeep Rescue, turned the key and started to drive away.

"I love this part," the Agent grinned as he pressed a small red button on what looked like an average garage door opener.

KABLAMMM!!!!!!

The portable bio-chem lab was now only memory as 5 lbs of plastic explosives erupted and ripped through the dwelling, totally destroying everything inside and the lab itself.

20 minutes later

"Correct, I have the package and am bringing it in," the agent yelled into his communicator.

"Do you have confirmation of the origin?" a voice squawked through from the other side.

Trigger made a sharp turn to regain control of his vehicle due to the poor condition of the road he was traveling on and was almost to the US-BSO airlift before replying. "Negative control, the package has not been identified," he stated. "The package is HOT, I repeat the package is HOT," Trigger barked back through the device. A long pause ensued before an unfamiliar voice responded back

"Abort mission, I repeat, abort mission."

Trigger almost drove into the ditch and furiously responded "On whose authority...who is this? I repeat, I have the package, I have the package."

"I'm almost at the extraction site..." Trigger cut his sentence short as he looked through the jeep's windshield and saw his helicopter transport, or at least what was left of it.

"What the hell is going on?" the agent yelled.

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The burning wreckage of what used to be a transport helicopter lay scattered all over the field, smoke billowing for about a quarter mile for all to see.

"Oh, this just isn't my day," Trigger sighed. He grabbed for the COM mic again and smashed the button down. "This is field agent Trigger, comeback."

"Go ahead," the voice responded.

"What the hell is going on here?" he asked abruptly.

The audio speaker crackled back, "We have reports of possible resistance in your area, so take the necessary precautions."

"**RESISTANCE!**" Trigger yelled, "I guess you can call my ride out of this god forsaken shithole burning like a freakin' marshmallow dropped into a campfire... **RESISTANCE!**" he countered. "When and where is the next extraction site...over." A pause resided in the communication as Trigger knew what the answer was going to convey.

"Extraction is negative, I repeat, extraction is negative. The location is too hot; you have consent to make arrangements for withdrawal on your own with no restrictions." The voice's tone lowered. "I'm sorry Leonard, we can't take the chance. We don't have anyone left that can make it to you and get you out," he said regretfully.

5 miles away

"Correct...I heard the exchange, shall I intervene?" the pilot questioned.

"Affirmative. Retrieve the package along with the agent and rendezvous back at destination Alpha," the woman responded back.

"What if the Agent is uncooperative...over?"

"We could use a good bio-chemical field agent in the ranks, but if it comes to it, eliminate the agent and bring back the package... over."

"Affirmative," the pilot answered as he started up the rotors to the Bell Huey II chopper and lifted off the ground. The pilot flew the helicopter with ease as he laid in the coordinates to where the agent's last transmission was intercepted.

"God, I hope this guy's not glowing like radioactive sludge or losing limbs from whatever shit he's been fondling or making love to," Agent Greyhound thought as he banked the chopper, diving under a power line and proceeding to the destination.

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Trigger sat in his Jeep trying to think what his next move was going to be when what sounded like a bucket full of marbles dropped from a five-story building exploded all over his vehicle. He hesitantly peered out the lower half of his windshield, only to see a military vehicle with a SACO M60 mounted to the top, starting to shred his Jeep in half. He jammed the gearshift in reverse and slammed the accelerator down to the floor boards.

"For the love of God!" he shouted, trying to drive his Jeep Rescue as fast as he could backwards as bullets ricocheted off the hood and door panels.

"No...not now, you piece of shit!" he cursed.

The vehicle bucked and jolted as a billow of white smoke rose from underneath the hood and came to a sudden stop. The military vehicle approached, armed and ready to unleash a volley of steel directly into the agent when...

KABLAMM!!

The military vehicle exploded in a ball of flame, sending it and all those inside end over end to land upside down in a fiery crimson metal mass. The wind started to pick up as the agent, unaware as to what just happened, peeked from underneath the dashboard only to see a Bell Huey II chopper landing directly in front of him. Trigger, taking no unnecessary chances, opened the car door and stepped out slowly, only to see the pilot of the helicopter do the same, hunch down and blow the trickling plume of smoke from the now empty slot of the chopper missile launcher.

"I guess they won't be bothering anyone any time soon," Greyhound chuckled assuredly.

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"I don't have any time to explain, but you need to get in the loach with the sample so we can get out of here."

"Who are you?" Trigger asked.

"WHAT PART OF I DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLAIN DIDN'T YOU UNDERSTAND?" Greyhound reiterated. "Ok, look...I work for a secret organization that goes around foiling evil masterminds and organizations only to triumph and save the world and stuff. You know, like Mission Impossible shit."

"You're putting me on, right?" Trigger leered.

"There's even a position waiting for you when we get back, if we start moving now," Greyhound countered. "How do you think I got here? How do you think we knew what was going on with you and the package? Or that your name is Leonard Christopherson, born 01-14-73, divorced in 1999, worked for the US-BSO for the past three years? The Organization, who, by the way, couldn't get you out due to insufficient resources even when you're in possession of one of the most highly dangerous..."

"Ok...Ok, I get the point," Trigger interrupted.

"I need to get this sample to a lab pronto, and continue breaking this sucker down or a whole lot of people are gonna die."

"We got just the place at destination Alpha," The pilot said, now waving his hands in circles in a sign to get moving. "Destination Alpha will make your portable lab look like a Fisher Price play room when we get there." A hardened stare became apparent between the two men. "Are you on board, Agent Trigger?" Greyhound asked.

Trigger extended his hand in thanks. "As long as you get me there before anything else freakin' happens today, ya...I'm in."

As the newly formed friends jumped into the helicopter in a race against time, Trigger knew this was the making of a new and adventurous beginning.

The End.