

Werewolf 91

Chapter 91: Altered Hunter Ranks

Despite surviving the full moon, the amount of things Gary had on his mind hadn't really reduced. For some reason he had put this one in particular to the back of his mind. Perhaps because it had been the first thing he had been confronted with after reverting back, or maybe it was because Blake being an Altered Hunter seemed as unbelievable as him being a Werewolf.

'Man what is it with this school? Does it have some special attraction to strange people? I'm seriously starting to worry about running into vampires, dragons, demons or the like... Out of everyone, why did HE have to be an Altered Hunter?'

Planning to avoid the confrontation, Gary decided to do the easiest thing. He lifted his hand to wave at the other... and then, tried to promptly walk right past Blake. However, as he did, a shadow was cast in front of him. The high schooler quickly moved to the other side, yet the shadow copied him. It was clear that the young Altered Hunter was blocking his way.

'Come on! You really want to do this, in school of all places? I can't get into any more trouble! I just came back after being excluded for an entire week! Look, I'm pretending that I never saw you, that everything was just a bad dream yesterday, so why can't you do the same?!' Gary was screaming internally, as he decided to go for a spin, trying to get past his schoolmate.

Right now, Gary was imagining himself on the field with the rugby ball in his hands, and he was trying to get past one of the defenders. Unfortunately, Blake seemed to have predicted this and was already in the right position to catch him.

'Sh*t. Couldn't things have gone my way for once?!'

Blake, placed his hand on Gary's shoulder quite confidently and leaned in so no one else would hear.

"Look, I'm not too eager to have 'that' conversation either, but we really need to talk about yesterday. Don't worry, I'm not planning to do anything else to you. Let's just head to the bench outside near the art block. I believe it's in both our interests to decide what to do next." Blake whispered, before he patted the other on the back and continued on his way.

'Well, a talk doesn't sound too bad, but I haven't even had time to think about what to say! Damn it, Blake is a nice guy, right? I mean, he let me go yesterday in the woods. Surely, he wouldn't lie to me to try and kill me now. We're in school with far too many potential witnesses. If he really wanted to, he could have approached me outside of school.'

Being relatively sure that it was safe, he decided to follow behind the other. Nobody found it too strange that they walked together. Although they hadn't won the match, everyone in school knew that Eton High had beat up nearly all the regulars. Gary had only recently become one, and their teamwork had secured them a draw, making the two of them the superstars of the Rugby club!

Alas, Gary was being reminded just how popular Blake actually was. Everyone went out of their way to greet him, a few girls even stopped by to bring him gifts. The high schooler wasn't too sure, but he wouldn't be surprised if some of those cookies had been baked early in the morning just for Blake...

On the other hand, only a few congratulated Gary here and there. It was obvious that he was treated mostly as an afterthought, when they noticed that he had been behind the real rugby star

'Damn it, would they all be thinking the same if they knew he was an Altered Hunter? This lifestyle, everything he's doing is fake...' It was then that Gary realised the hypocrisy. Was what he was doing really any different?

Altered Hunters had a bad reputation. After all, becoming an Altered was something that everyone aspired to be or wished for. They were superstars and instant celebrities, yet one crazy group of people had chosen to kill them for no apparent reason.

Or at least not a reason the general public could understand. If anyone did find out Blake was an Altered Hunter, he would probably be chased after for the rest of his life.

Eventually, the two of them reached the bench, and he realised why Blake had picked this spot. There was no one else there, other than students far away in their classrooms practicing art instead of going outside to play.

The two of them sat together for a while, neither one really sure how to start such a serious conversation.

'Should I go first? Is he waiting for me to say something? Or should I just wait?'

Just when Gary was about to speak, Blake started instead.

"My family... They have been Altered Hunters since seemingly forever. 'Altered' have actually existed for much longer than you're led to believe. Just like us, they used to have a different name, but that's beside the point. It was only recently that 'Altered' started to become more public about their existence.

"I don't know how someone like you managed to become an Altered. I actually chose to go to a no-name school in a Tier-3 town because I believed that it would allow me to separate my two lives. I never wanted to run into somebody I knew, but then I met you."

It made sense, although Blake hid the fact that he was an Altered Hunter, in the end he was still a teenager like Gary. Gary knew how hard it was to kill someone that you know, or someone you saw everyday, the connection made it harder.

Going to a no-name school, it should have been impossible for anyone to afford to become an Altered, or have the potential to be selected as one, apart from Blake himself of course.

"I'm guessing it started when you got better at rugby. I didn't think much of it at the time, and I thought that it was actually fun to just forget about everything and try to compete for a change. You helped me forget about what I was..."

'Damn it, the more I listen to him, the more I realise the two of us are alike. That's why I started to enjoy rugby a lot as well.'

"And then you saved me, which is why I decided to do that favour for you the other day but at the same time Gary, this is a warning. There aren't many Altered in this town, which means that you will become one of our targets.

"How much do you know about Altered Hunters?" Blake asked.

“Not much, just what is on the news. I had no idea that you used that strange armour of yours.” Gary replied honestly.

“We Altered Hunters have ranks.” Blake explained. “These ranks are tattooed on their shoulders in the form of stars and a lot of hunters are proud of this. The more stars, the stronger the Altered Hunter, and my father, who lives here with me in this town, is a three-star hunter.”

“A three-star hunter? So what are you, and how do hunters even get these stars?” Gary asked.

It was the first question that the other had asked, that made Blake pause for a while.

“I don’t have any stars on my shoulder yet. An Altered Hunter will only get a star if he manages to successfully kill five Altered. Right now, I’m still an apprentice to my father and you were actually meant to be my very first kill.”

Now Gary understood why Blake’s father was so dangerous. If he was a three-star Altered Hunter, it meant that the other had already killed Altered in the double digits, beings that were superhuman with all sorts of different forms. He was experienced beyond belief.

“I guess I was lucky I ran into you then and not him.” Gary chuckled nervously.

“That’s my point and it’s why I came to talk with you. Since I’m in my apprenticeship phase, my father will accompany me until I earn my first star. We never expected to find two of you in Slough, making us split up. However, if I was you, I wouldn’t go out anymore.

“The next time I’m with my father and we spot you again, I won’t be able to stop him. If anything I will have to help him.” Blake admitted, stood up and got ready to head back to class.

“Wait, Blake! The other Were- the other Altered, did your father manage to catch him? Do you know where he is?” Gary asked.

Blake turned around, his face didn't look pleased, which was a rare sight. This whole time while they were walking through the hallway, Gary had only seen a smile on the other's face, though he could tell that it was just for show.

"No, we didn't. Some White Rose agent got in his way and according to him, he used the chance to escape one that other Altered fled. There's nothing in the news, so I guess they were unable to find that one afterwards." Blake shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm sorry, I thought that the two of us might become good friends, but because of what I am, and what you are, it might be best if we kept our distance outside of rugby."

Although Gary didn't know Blake too well, for some reason, the words of the other stung. Maybe it was because he learned that the two of them were close, or maybe it was something else, but if Gary did meet Blake again, he didn't want to be his enemy. That was for sure.

"Shut up!" Gary shouted. "Don't go deciding that crap on your own! I'll kick your arse at rugby, and I'll kick your arse in fighting as well, but that's it! We can still talk in school, we can still laugh and have fun!

"You're still you, and I'm still me, nothing has changed! Who cares about who or what we are outside of school?"

Turning back around, Blake gave the other high schooler a sad smile, yet didn't say anything.

'And that is why you're dangerous, Gary, because of your beliefs. I hope I won't ever have to pick between you or my father...'

Chapter 92: Shortcut to power

Back in Gary's classroom, there was one student who hadn't moved at all from her seat, and that was Xin. She had kept her head down, which was still pounding from the lack of sleep. After everything she had experienced that night, the most frightening thing for her was waiting for her when she got home, because she had been forced to confront her father.

As the mayor, it was impossible for her to keep something of that magnitude hidden from him, especially since the bodyguard assigned to her had been killed in active duty, leaving her no other choice

but to tell him the truth. Xin had confessed to everything, though she claimed that she had wanted to celebrate with some of her friends because of the rugby match, before they had been attacked by an Altered.

The news report later revealed this fact and the police report made it so her father believed her. Unlike what she had expected, the mayor had hugged her tightly and had just been thankful that it appeared to have been a random attack rather than someone trying to go after her.

Of course, that hadn't been the end of it. This morning, after having thought things over during the night, he had told Xin about the changes that would happen to avoid such a situation. The increase of bodyguards was the least of her troubles.

'The worst part is, I can't even complain about him changing the rules of this deal. Still, he could at least have allowed me to go home by myself. How am I supposed to make any friends, if I have to drive to and from school in a car? I guess the only freedom I have left is in school.' Xin sulked as she could hear the sound of giggling from behind.

The annoying high pitched laugh had become an annoyance and it was giving the high school girl a bigger headache than usual.

'How great would school be if Tiffany wasn't around... She has yet to actually do anything since our talk, but I can't shake this feeling that she is plotting something big.'

However, right now Xin was simply too tired to care whatever that banshee was preparing. Her last thought before she fell asleep was where Gary had actually disappeared to yesterday.

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When returning to class, Gary spent some time talking with Tom. During the breaks they were trying to come up with ways of preventing what happened the first time, and on top of that, his best friend was actually trying to figure out ways to deal with the other Omega wolf.

"The only weakness we know of is chocolate. Even that is something we can't be too sure of. In the worst case scenario it might actually be something completely unique to you, but even in the best case

scenario, it's not like we can get rid of him by throwing a chocolate cake in his face. Say, do you think if I smother myself in chocolate that it might act as a repellent, so he won't eat me?" Tom questioned him.

"That is the strangest suggestion I have ever heard." Gary commented, as he couldn't believe what he was hearing. "Do you want me to wear gauntlets or something and smear that in that stuff to deal poison damage to him or something?"

"If it works, why not? Although it might be a bad idea for you to be the one to use them. Double-edged sword and everything. Who cares if it sounds stupid? You have to remember that our freaking lives are on the line here! And for some reason that Werewolf seemed to have taken a particular liking to Innu." Tom whispered.

Over to their right, Innu was snoring lightly. Gary had a feeling that he already knew why the other Werewolf was after him.

'I don't think something like chocolate is going to do much. At best it might make him vomit Innu out if he tries to eat him, but it won't really stop him from killing him. Eating human flesh seems to empower a Werewolf.

'I can only assume it will either be an increase in stats or more stat points to assign, or maybe a direct increase like it was for hunting down a target. As long as one can actually live like that, the pros seem to outweigh the cons. It really seems to be the easiest and fastest way to get a power boost.'

Later in the afternoon, it was time for club classes again, and when Gary and Blake met they looked at each other, before giving the other a nod. It seemed that their little talk had improved the relationship between the two of them.

Instead of their regular training, Mr Root talked about the game, telling everyone what went well and what went wrong, but in the end, how it was ultimately not their fault that they didn't win. Eton High had used an even dirtier method than usual, so not losing was already a huge achievement. Most surprisingly, he actually thanked all the non-regular players for taking up their role, calling them out by name instead of just referring to them as 'the benchwarmers'.

All of the regular players gave them a big round of applause and Gary was starting to think that Mr Root actually was one of the better adults he had seen in his life. Practice continued on as normal after that

but there was one thing that the high schooler had noticed a certain student hadn't arrived who had done every time since.

'His Mark is too faint, so he can't be in school. Just what is he up to? He seemed fine yesterday... Maybe he isn't over Barry's death yet?' Gary wondered.

Apparently, he wasn't the only one who had noticed his disappearance. He could overhear some of the students talk to each other.

"Hey have you noticed that Gil isn't here?" A student asked. "I heard that he went to Headmistress Young this morning to drop out."

"Seriously? Are you sure he didn't just plan to transfer to another school? You know, he and Barry were inseparable. Maybe he just wants to be elsewhere to not be reminded of his childhood friend."

"I thought the same, but someone told me that Gil had actually joined a gang. I doubt he has a need to go to school if one of the big gangs accepts him."

The students carried on talking about Gil, and Gary could only think of one gang that he probably had joined. The grey colour gang which was related to the Grey Elephants.

'Tomorrow I have that fight with Innu, so we were meant to do some training today, but if we run into Billy again, there isn't much chance I can beat him.

'If I meet Gil again, I wonder if that Quest will activate again. I wouldn't mind farming him for some Exp.' At that moment he crossed eyes with Blake, remembering that there were others out there.

'It should be okay. As long as I don't transform, I'm just a normal high schooler. I can't avoid taking risks. If I just sit around, my friends, and family could all be in danger. I need to get stronger.'

Thinking about his last remaining hunting target, Gary thought back to the last time he had seen Gil together with the colour gang, how he had almost killed a defenceless old man. That had just been a

test after joining the gang. Now that he had proven that he didn't shy away from dirty work, he might actually be given worse things to do, and thinking along these thoughts...

'Billy has eaten multiple people already, that's why he was so much stronger than me. If I were to do the same I might gain the power to rival him. I can't bring myself to end innocent lives like Billy does, and Barry was just an accident.'

'However, there are some people that don't deserve to live in this world anymore, and if I have to kill, if I have to get stronger to protect the ones I care about, then I would rather them die over my friends.'

Thinking about this, without realising it, saliva was dripping out from Gary's mouth

Chapter 93: An Important Bond

After training was over, Innu actually came over to Gary to tell him that there would be no practice today. Although Innu had just joined the school, he had been advised to join the Rugby club by someone in particular, and it had been no surprise to him when he had arrived the other day that he could see Gary there. Kai was clearly a person that just loved to pull strings and act as the puppet master behind everything.

As for Innu's reasons for canceling practice, for one, the high schooler was still mentally tired from what had occurred yesterday. He didn't want to stay out, and his other reason was that he considered it important to rest before an important match, like the one they would have tomorrow.

Too much training was just as bad as no training, and he thought that whoever they would face in their match tomorrow he was confident the two of them could deal with it. Before leaving, he informed Gary that he would update him on anything to do with the Billy front, but since he would be staying at home today it was unlikely anything would occur.

It seemed that Innu hadn't put together that Billy and the Werewolf were the same person, but Gary couldn't blame him. Were it not for his Werewolf System, even he would find it impossible.

The fact that training was cancelled was great news for the high schooler, who quickly hit the gym on his way back. There was no need for him to consume extra meat since he had already had his fill thanks to the generous 'donation' of a certain Altered superstar.

[Exp 105/628]

'I know that my stats have gone up, but training is starting to seem pointless with how long it takes me to increase any of my stats naturally. With a measly 5 Exp per session it will take me ages to Level Up even once.

'If I want to get stronger, I need a faster way to earn Exp and for that I'm going to have to take risks. By now, the colour gangs should have calmed down, so perhaps I can incite another turf war. I can't just sit around and allow Billy to get stronger on his own. But first, I need to do something else.'

Arriving home, Gary pushed the door open, and was positively surprised to see his mother in her work clothes. She was wearing a plain blue top with a badge that had her name along the top. He figured that today might have been one of her very rare free days, or perhaps her shift had been moved to later.

"What are you doing here, mum? Did they call you for a late shift again?" Gary asked, as he popped his head into his room, hoping to find his sister, yet she was nowhere to be found either.

"Yeah, they have me on the late shift again." His mother replied as she was texting on her phone. The middle-aged woman had a smile on her face as she did this as well. Which worried Gary, if this was the case she was either talking to her friends, or it was with another man, and Gary dreaded the thought of meeting another person from Slough.

That and he didn't like the idea of another person being introduced into their family, he was the one that would help their family out of their situation, not a stranger who didn't know the struggles they had gone through.

His mother worked as a cashier at a twenty-four hour supermarket. They would call her in for extra work at all sorts of times and she would always accept. Because they knew she always said yes, they always asked her first.

For Gary though he hated it, the later the shift the more likely there was for trouble to be caused. The only saving grace was that the supermarket was under the Underdog's territory in Slough, so no one touched it. If they did, they would be facing the biggest gang in Slough.

Still, that didn't stop some gangs, or strays from trying to do things once in a while.

"If you're looking for Amy, she's staying over at Stacy's tonight." His mother shouted, noticing that her son was looking in every room, and even knocked on the toilet.

'She went out... Well as long as she stays indoors, I guess they're safe, but I really wanted to do something today.' The reason Gary was a little bummed was because he had been planning to create a Bond Mark with her.

Although it was unlikely that Billy would go after his sister, it wasn't impossible and it was mostly a question of when the Underdogs might unearth his real identity and the people around him. After hearing what Tom said about him protecting him as a full Werewolf, Gary was confident he wouldn't harm them.

'Well, I guess I will just have to leave it for next time then.' Gary thought.

There was still one other person he could Mark though. Going up to his mother, he pulled a chair and sat down opposite her. She intricately turned her phone over, which made Gary even more suspicious that she was talking to a guy on the phone. However, seeing this gave him an idea.

"Mum...I don't mind you talking to other people, but... I get kinda jealous sometimes. I know looking after me and Amy can be hard sometimes. It's just that I get worried that sometimes...you might leave us." Gary had his face down and was putting on an Oscar worthy performance.

His mother immediately raised her arms and gave him a big hug.

"Gary, you and Amy are the most important people in my life and that won't change. You even saved up all that money for me. I hate to admit it, but you can't even imagine how much it has helped our situation. I wouldn't give you two up for anything in the world! I will never leave you!"

"You promise?" Gary asked, holding out his pinky.

“I promise!” His mother replied as her own pinky touched her son’s.

And at that moment, a notification from the system had appeared.

[A spoken deal has been made, would you like to Mark “Maya Dem”?]

[Yes]

[3/5 Marks have been assigned]

Gary was pleased that the system was pulling through for him for once, but that was when he received another message he never expected.

[You have successfully bonded with another person!]

[The system has decided to reward you for your hard work, keep going!]

[At the end of each day, you will receive 10 Exp for every active Bond Mark]

[Protect those promises, and the people you trust.

Loyalty is the number one priority for every upright Werewolf!]

‘Huh, is the system sick today or is this supposed to be a type of reward for surviving the full moon? Either way, it’s finally actually giving me some good things for once! With this I can easily get 30 Exp every day with the Daily Quests!’

‘That’s not all, I still have two free Marks. ...Hey, System, what do I have to do to increase the number of Marks?’

Chapter 94: The Altered Rookie

Just when Gary had thought the system might have turned over a new leaf, the system returned to being as unresponsive as ever. Aside from leveling up, the high schooler came to terms that he would have to hope that he might to either luckily unlock a way to increase that number, or the system might decide to drop him some tips.

Nevertheless, Gary needed to be careful about the promises he made. According to his system, should the other party end up breaking that, then his Bond Mark would automatically turn into a Broken Mark, making those people into hunting targets. While that might not be bad in his daily lives, it would lead to disastrous consequences during a full moon. It was something he wanted to avoid at all costs.

Fortunately, when seeing his mother on the phone, he had come up with what he deemed to be a perfect plan. He had made his mother promise him that she would never leave him. Gary was completely convinced that she would never do such a thing. If their mother had wanted to, she could have left the two teenagers ages ago, making this an unbreakable Bond Mark.

“Thanks, Mum.” Gary smiled, elated that he would be able to protect mother whenever she would be in danger now. Like Tom, the mark that appeared was green, although the smell coming from them was different. It looked like he would have to try his best to use his nose rather than his eyes more.

‘Now I just need to think of a promise that I’ll be able to keep with Amy. It would be best if it could be something as foolproof as Mum’s. Right now, nothing comes to mind, at least nothing that she is guaranteed to keep.’

A little while later, his mother received a call, and it was time for her to go to work. Gary knew her shifts were long ones, so when leaving the house late today there was no need for him to worry about sneaking out.

The high schooler waited a little while until the sun set, yet he noticed something odd about Gil’s marking. For some odd reason it was becoming clearer, leading him to believe that he was coming in his direction.

‘What is he doing? The guys at school said that he dropped out to join a gang, but the grey colour gang’s territory isn’t anywhere near here. Could he have some sort of personal business in this area?’

When it was finally dark out, Gary decided to head out. He wore his trusted hood covering up his head, and he had made sure to wear something black. At first glance, he appeared like just another member of the black colour gang.

Curious about Gil's Mark that had become slightly paler, but seemed to be still around the area, Gary followed it. However, even before he could see the drop-out, he could clearly make out the sound of conflict from a mile away.

Sneaking through some trees and past the roads he found the source of it. Underneath a bridge, there were members of the red colour gang and members of the grey colour gang fighting against members from the black colour gang.

Initially, Gary believed this to be a three-way fight, but after watching for a while it became clear that the the other two had banded together to attack the black colour gang.

'What is going on? Did the Grey Elephants take over the gang behind the red colour gang? No, could it be that the two of them entered an alliance? Sh*t, if that's really the case, this could endanger everyone in Slough!'

It was then that Gary realised that he could hear the sound of even more fighting going on. This wasn't just a small scuffle between two gangs, right now he could tell that there was a war going on. The other two colour gangs had clearly invaded the black colour gangs areas.

'Crap, why did it have to happen today of all the days?! If they're pushing the black colour gang this much, then it will force the Underdogs to act!' Gary was starting to panic, looking around to check if he could still escape if things went south.

However, before he left another thought crossed his mind.

'Wait, there's chaos, too much for the police to handle. In the past situations like these, they would leave it so the gangs take each other out, only coming at the end to arrest the losing side. If that's the case, can't I take advantage of all of this? As long as I avoid the members of the real gangs and just go after the colour gangs, this might be my one chance to earn big time!'

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Just as he had expected, things were about to change. A distance away, walking confidently through the streets was Kirk. Instead of his iconic red suit that he wore whenever he appeared on TV, right now he had a black suit on with a yellow-spotted tie, representing the Underdog's Cheetah Squad.

Following him were five menacing-looking men. They had received reports from the black colour gang members who had called for backup, and they had arrived just outside what looked like a pub.

"Didn't your superiors warn you to only go so far? We don't usually involve ourselves with the affairs of colour gangs, but you guys have pushed it too far this time. You do know that this pub belongs to the Underdogs, right?" Kirk asked with a smile.

There were several injured black colour gang members rolling on the ground in front of him, while members of the grey and red gang seemed to have suffered minimal casualties. There were still more than a dozen of them on each side, with the total around thirty. Immediately, the one closest to Kirk ran forward with his baseball bat, and swung it with all his strength over his head.

Not wasting any time, Kirk took a stance and threw out his fist. The second the bat and his fist collided, the piece of wood snapped in half.

"What the..." the grey colour gang member looked at his bat in disbelief. "Is he a robot or something?"

"You idiot, that's Kirk Summerfield! He's an Altered who recently won that Rookie Tournament!" One of the red colour gang members shouted. Kirk was quite a well known figure in the public, yet not many knew that he was also a member of the Underdogs.

The gangs were quick to run away. Alas, they didn't get far. Kirk had transformed the bottom part of his legs to run past them all. He would have been even faster if he hadn't taken off his expensive shoes beforehand, to block off the juveniles' path of escape.

"Since you guys are already here, I'll have you answer a few questions. You didn't think I would let you go this easily after what you did, right? First, who are you working for, second why do your bosses

believe that they could just barge into our area and take over and lastly... have you seen a kid about this height, around sixteen years old with green hair?"

Chapter 95: The sister of the Dem family

Amy Dem and Stacy Turnhell had been inseparable ever since kindergarten. They had known each other since seemingly forever and both girls had been lucky enough to be able to always go to the same school.

Unlike Gary, his sister had always received good grades, and had even passed the 11 plus. It was a test one did when reaching the age of 11 to determine whether or not the student could enter a grammar school.

Those grammar schools were state funded and were exclusive for the best of the best, those that the state believed had the most potential. This came as a blessing to the Dem household as it meant, everything would be paid for. Their mother was very happy when she found out that they would not have to worry about school supplies or lunch or any other things Amy might need for any club she might have chosen to join.

Gary hadn't even come close to passing his test, but Amy and Stacy had both managed to place relatively high, allowing them both to choose which school to attend. Although not the most prestigious one, Amy had chosen to go to Slough's only all-girls grammar school, so her family wouldn't have to worry about her.

Now that she was in high school, she and Stacy were the only ones who had passed the test from her old school, making the two friends naturally grow closer to each other.

When Amy had come over, Stacy had told her that they would be doing something very special today. After putting on the black dresses the latter had prepared for the two of them, both went out of the house.

"I really don't feel comfortable in this. Are you sure this makes me look slimmer?" Amy complained, as she walked. The dress felt far too tight to her skin, something she just wasn't used to. Originally, Stacy had also prepared some high heels, but this was as far as Amy would go. She had tried to slip them on and felt like her toes were constantly being squeezed to death. She didn't understand why other girls put themselves through such torture.

“Come on, it’s just for today!” Stacy encouraged her, pulling out some red lipstick and a mirror, as she masterfully applied a thick coat on her lips, making them seem bigger than they already were.

Stacy was an unnatural blonde haired girl. In the past she used to be quite shy, but ever since she had entered high school she had begun to become far more outgoing. Amy didn’t know what had caused that seemingly sudden change, her best guess was that Stacy might have just wanted to create a completely new image in a new school.

At least when it was just the two of them alone, Stacy still acted like always, so Amy hadn’t addressed the change. For all she knew people changed as they got older. Her brother and his green hair were a perfect example of that.

However, lately Stacy had become far more interested in fashion, make-up and lipstick, and it showed. She had applied it well onto her face, as if she had spent hours upon hours watching video tutorials to learn it. It was scary, how Amy could see her best friend turn a few years older with a couple of steps.

Both of them were merely fifteen years old, Amy was just one younger than her brother, and usually parents wouldn’t let girls out so young, but for some reason, Stacy’s parents didn’t seem to care as long as her grades weren’t affected. As for Amy’s mother, with how busy she was with work, it had been ages since she had last seen Stacy, probably still thinking of her as the shy little mouse she used to be.

“Here, let me help you out a bit.” Stacy offered as she came over. With surprising expertise she applied some of her make-up and lipstick onto her best friend. At first Amy had wanted to reject but she found it hard to say no when looking at her happy friend. She didn’t want to ruin the mood between the two of them.

“Done, you look amazing. You really should start wearing this stuff more. Just say the word. I got Mum to buy me new ones after I aced that last test, so I will be happy to share my old ones. It really brings out your looks.”

Stacy held out the mirror for her best friend and Amy barely recognised herself. The one who looked back at her appeared to be a young and very pretty university student. It was definitely something she could get used to... though she would still rather wait a few years for such a change to occur naturally.

The two girls hailed a taxi, something Amy was thankful for. Walking the streets, especially at this late hour and dressed up like they were, seemed to be a guaranteed recipe for trouble.

“Why do we have to dress up, anyway? I thought we were just going to karaoke?” Amy asked.

“Yeah, but we’re meeting someone today. Shoot, did I forget to tell you? Oh, I’m so sorry, I was so excited that I thought I told you already. My boyfriend’s going to be there and he also invited some of his friends. Who knows, maybe one of them has green hair like your brother.” Stacy teased her best friend.

Now, Amy wasn’t feeling so great and it wasn’t just because of what Stacy insinuated. She had thought it was just going to be the two of them, like it always had. Stacy had mentioned her ‘boyfriend’ a few times recently, but Amy had believed it had just been something she had made up to look better compared to the girls of their class.

At their age, their only chance of meeting boys was through school, yet at an all-girls school that was impossible. Most of their male teachers were up there in their years, but even the youngest one was easily more than double their age. She hadn’t seen Stacy hang out with anyone around school, so just where had she met him?

“I mean...at least we’ll be in a public place, so I guess it’s going to be okay.” Amy mumbled, still a little worried.

Eventually, the taxi pulled up on the main high street of Slough. It looked different at night with all the lights, but it was considered a relatively safe area. The general public believed it was due to the mayor, who had promised that the town centre was the one place that he would guarantee all of their safety.

Another reason why Amy thought it was okay to be here, until she got out of the taxi with Stacy. Immediately Stacy ran up, and hugged someone that was more than one head taller than her. The ‘boy’ wore a grey beanie with his hair sticking through slightly. He also had both his ears pierced and his bottom lip.

He wasn’t alone either; he had brought along two friends, one of which was currently smoking. Seeing this sight, alarm bells were screaming in Amy’s head, but the main reason was due to Stacy’s boyfriend

clearly being older than them. The three of them had to be either in their last year of high school, repeaters or most likely university students... unless they worked somewhere else, of course.

"I've been sooo looking forward to this! I'm glad that we finally get to meet!" Stacy greeted him.

Hearing this, Amy just wanted to slap her forehead. The two of them hadn't even met?!

'Stacy please don't tell me you actually met him over Binder or some other app! Oh, who am I kidding, given the age difference, where else could they have met? I bet she lied about her actual age and that's why she was so adamant to put on that make-up.' Amy believed to have seen through the situation.

The next second, she saw the two of them holding hands, and Stacy turned around.

"Come on Amy, you're a great singer! You're always hogging the mike when it's just the two of us, so let's show them what we got!" Stacy invited her best friend.

Every bone in the high school girl's body was advising her not to go inside, yet Amy couldn't leave Stacy alone with those strangers. If she were to suddenly make up some excuse like her stomach hurt, then who knows what might happen to her best friend. Three young adults with one naive little girl...

'What if they do something to her? ... No, I can't leave her alone. She must have known that it would be dangerous alone, I'll just have to try to convince her to go home early.

'Who knows, maybe it's all just in my head. There's always the chance that they might be decent guys... but if not, I'll just have to tell them that I got a sudden stomach ache or something. She shouldn't mind too much if this is their first meeting.'

Amy thought about what to do in this situation. The police would be too slow to respond, they had too much to deal with in Slough. Who knows how fast they would react even if it became an emergency.

Just in case of anything she typed in a text, noting her current location. She didn't send it out to anyone yet, but it would only require a click to send it to the one person she trusted most.

Chapter 96: White powder

An opportunity was exactly what Gary needed. Billy was far stronger than him, and if Gary wasn't willing to eat people like he was, then there was almost no way for him to catch up, so much so that he had even gone through his head a number of times just exactly what he might do to Gil.

However, the system was a strange thing, and noticing that a gang war had arrived the system had answered him once more.

[New quest received]

[When two fight, the third one takes the prize]

[As an outsider you have been chucked into the midst of a (colour) gang war]

[Are you following trouble or is trouble following you?]

[Either way, show them the strength of an Omega wolf that follows no one!]

[Quest reward: 50 Exp per defeated person]

The system was still telling him to get his hands dirty but not too dirty. Seeing the fight between the engagements in the bridge continue out in front of him, along with the system screen he couldn't help himself.

'Gil, you will just have to wait a little longer.'

-

Entering the Karaoke club, the boys rented out the room and were even nice enough to pay for it on their own. At first everything seemed fine, apart from the fact that Amy found herself on the couch surrounded by two guys she had never seen before.

Meanwhile, Stacy was busy brushing her body against her boyfriend who had introduced himself as 'Hawk', of all things. Amy was convinced that that couldn't be his real name, no parent would ever subject their kid to that.

Amy was sipping on her juice, left with the other two boys. The fellow to her right was slightly larger in his bottom half making him look like a pear, whose name was apparently Pierrece. The one on her left was the complete contrast to his friend, seemingly nothing but bones, who had told her to call him Ben. Given her outer appearance she was easily able to remember their names as well.

The room was quite large with a bench around the back, and two microphones. At the moment, Stacy and Hawk were doing a duet, and the two other boys were slowly creeping their way over to Amy.

"So Amy, I guess you don't have a boyfriend since you're here on your own tonight?" Ben asked carefully.

"Unfortunately, I haven't found the right one yet. It would have to be someone my brother approves of." Amy replied truthfully. Just like Gary, she also had a hard time lying to others, but she hoped mentioning him might perhaps make them back off somehow.

"A brother..." Pierre murmured. "Who does he wo- I mean, is he still in school? Could he be someone we know perhaps?"

Pierre seemed to have wanted to ask something else at first, but he had quickly corrected. Amy had no clue why though, as he had almost instantly replied with 'Westbridge'. The next moment she regretted it. Now that she thought about it, it would have been far better to have named a university, to make it seem that Gary was older.

Unfortunately, her answer seemed to have calmed the two teenagers, and they continued their questioning, but thankfully it looked like Stacy and Hawk had just ended their duet.

"Finally, me next!" Amy quickly jumped up from her seat and almost snatched the microphone out of Stacy's hand, as she chose a longer song and began to sing straight away. This was her only saving grace from the other two.

'It felt like forever but according to the clock, we've only been here for half an hour. I haven't even had time to speak to Stacy. Why didn't she pick up on me telling her that I needed to go to the bathroom.' Amy was trying to figure out a better excuse, but by the time the song had ended she hadn't come up with anything better and decided to sing the next one as well.

When singing she was in her element, it really was something she truly enjoyed doing, and running up she closed her eyes as she hit a high note, yet suddenly, there was no background music, and the large screen that would show the lyrics had turned off.

"Hey everyone, so I think that's enough singing for now, let's do something more fun!" Hawk suggested. It was clear he was the one who had pulled the plug, and he swiftly pulled out a deck of cards which he laid down on the table.

Looking towards her friend, Amy didn't even try to hide her annoyed face. The guy could have at least waited for her to finish her song before doing this and Stacy could only form the word sorry on her lips, her eyes pleading to not make a big deal out of this.

Sitting at the table, Hawk dealt out cards while Bones lit up another cigarette. This only further annoyed Amy, as they were all in the same room together. While smoking was allowed, she was of the opinion that he could have at least asked them before forcing them to enjoy his second-hand smoke.

A short while after, a waiter entered the room and placed some more drinks on the table, which Ben seemed to have ordered when he had left the room previously. Looking at the foam, it was clear to the high school girls that they had just been served alcohol.

'They can order alcohol, then just how old are these guys? They have to be at least over eighteen... This is worse than I thought. Come on, Stacy, even you should see that is going to end badly?' Amy cried internally, but her best friend was too busy flirting with Hawk.

The guys began to drink without any hesitation, and Stacy joined them after her boyfriend talked her into it. Amy had a bottle in front of her, which she would just pick up occasionally and pretend to drink from. The smell alone was strong enough to keep her from trying it and she was definitely not going to start drinking around strangers who she knew for less than an hour.

After a while of playing cards though, Amy was slowly lowering her guard. The guys had talked a bit about themselves and had even managed to make her giggle from telling some jokes.

'Maybe I was just being too cautious, judging them based on their appearance too quickly. Living in our area for too long does that.'

Alas, Amy soon discovered that she had been right all along. As the round finished and it was her turn to shuffle cards, Hawk stopped her and brought out a small bag with white powder. He started to use the cards to spread it out into five lines.

"Is this..."

"Yes." Hawk answered with a proud tone. "My brother is a high-ranking member in the Grey Elephants. Girls like you might not know them, but they are one of the gangs in Slough who have a say in how things are run. It's easy for me to get my hands on this type of stuff thanks to him. Come on, try it out. It's hard to explain just how good this feels!"

A few seconds later, all the boys had snorted their lines, before they shook their heads for a few seconds. While Stacy had played along with the alcohol, hard drugs were something crossing even her line. Amy could see that this was also far beyond what she had been expecting.

"Thank you very much, but I think I shouldn't. I haven't been feeling well for a while. Maybe it's the alcohol. I think I need to lie down. Stacy, I'm staying at yours tonight, right? Maybe we should go." Amy insisted.

"I think you're right." Stacy instantly agreed, happy that she had dragged Amy along. However, as she tried to stand up, Hawk grabbed her by the wrist.

"Hey, you can't just leave. We still have so much time left. We paid for this room, paid for your drinks and we haven't even done anything yet. Don't you think we deserve something in return?" Hawk smiled mischievously.

Seeing this, Amy immediately stood up and was planning to grab her best friend and make a run for it, but Pierre grabbed the high school girl's hand. He had a surprisingly tight grip around it.

“What are you doing? You’re hurting my wrist let go!” Amy shouted. “I’ll scream if you don’t let you now!”

It was then that Ben had gone over and plugged the karaoke machine back in, before turning it on at full volume. Now even if they did scream, nobody would hear them, or just think it was the music.

‘We’re in real trouble.’

Using her free hand, Amy placed it into her pocket and hit the send button. She wasn’t sure if he could help, but they just needed someone who could help them out of this situation.

Chapter 97: Perfect time

Gary knew that the smart thing would be to keep on watching, waiting for both sides to weaken each other further, so he could snoop in and finish off the losing side. This way he wouldn’t use a lot of Energy, while still being able to get some Exp.

However, he had decided to take some risks. Given the content of the Quest, it seemed wiser to get involved in the fight before any surprising backup could arrive. He didn’t know how long this gang war would last since it was just a matter of time that the Underdogs would send out their muscle.

If he waited too long the gang war might escalate to the point it would be too dangerous for him to get involved. At the moment, Gary was dressed in all black, so the only colour gang he could help out and pretend to be a part of was the black colour gang.

‘It’s two gangs against one, so I have to join in while the black colour gang still has some members standing.’ Gary thought. He ran across the top of the bridge, and waited for a few moments. Looking below, the group were fighting at an underpass, and the black colour gang members were slowly being pushed back, making their way out from the tunnel.

He could see three members still standing. They were hunched up together, obviously hurt but still fighting. It was clear that at this point they were basically running on fumes. Unfortunately, running away wasn’t an option. Turning their back on the other colour gangs would just seal their fate. They wouldn’t get far before the other members caught up to them.

'Damn, I was hoping they would be in a better fighting condition so they could help me grab some last hits. I know my skills have improved but without the boost from the moon I'm not too sure I can handle all of the others on my own.'

In his hesitation, he thought back to his fight with Billy, at least what he could remember of it. Fighting a bunch of 'humans' seemed a lot easier. Just then, he could see multiple people run from under the bridge.

'1...2...3...4...5. they just keep coming and there could be more.' Gary counted.

It wouldn't stop him, he saw the black colour gang members had engaged with the others, and this was his chance. Two more people ran from the bridge, and with no fear, Gary leaped from above.

He was on the path to land directly onto them and that's exactly what he did, stretching out his legs he made sure his foot hit the back of their heads, causing them to fall over and their heads to slam in the concrete ground.

[Your opponents (2) have been knocked out]

[100 Exp gained]

[Exp 205/628]

Such a move would knock anyone out, yet the high schooler was also a little afraid that he might have hurt them too much. Just as he considered checking their condition, someone swung a bike chain from behind and struck him across the face. Fortunately, it only cut his cheek, around his mouth.

[- 4 HP]

"There's another one of those black colour f*ckers over here!" A young man dressed in red called, who had hit him. "That bastard knocked out Stan and Kenny, get him!"

Behind him, Gary could see seven more people, but on top of that he noticed something else that his nose was able to catch on. There were colour gang members that had been left on the side of the road, some of them bleeding, while others looked to be in much more critical condition.

If this really was a gang war, then ambulances would be hard to come by today. The police must have already been told about what was happening right now, and they would tell ambulances not to enter the area until things had calmed down. It was very possible that a lot of people would die tonight...

'I almost felt sorry for the two that I hurt...but you're all just the same.' Gary thought to himself, as the red colour gang member swung the bike chain again.

[Skill activated Charging Heart]

[All stats have temporarily been doubled]

[-10 Energy]

At the right moment, Gary used his bare hands to grab onto the chain, then the next second he pulled on it. The one holding it hadn't even recovered from the shock that someone had managed to grab his makeshift weapon, yet the next moment, his face connected with the 'black colour gang member's' elbow.

As his head flung back, he let go of the chain. Gary knew he wasn't done yet, because the system had yet to notify him. Lifting his leg, the high schooler quickly spun and hit the red colour gang member right on the neck, sending him to the ground.

[Your opponent has been knocked out]

[50 Exp gained]

[Exp 255/628]

'Hey. Who is that guy?' One of the black coloured gang members asked his companion. They were still in the middle of their fight, but had noticed what had happened.

"No idea. I can only see the back of his hood, but with him here, maybe we can get out of this thing." Another answered, as he barely avoided the strike of the grey colour gang member in front of him.

After taking on that one member, and seeing the others back off, Gary noticed something. He had been around gangs long enough but the one he had dealt with appeared to have had some authority amongst them, most likely one of the better fighters out of their group. Since Gary had dealt with him so effortlessly, as well as his imposing entrance, they were afraid of him.

Noticing this, he quickly changed his plans.

"I'm sorry." Gary said, having overheard the earlier conversation. "I'm on no one's side, I'll be taking everyone out!"

Gary had been forced to use another Charging Heart later on, but with his power boost, he had managed to defeat them all. Innu's lesson had proven quite effective, allowing him to have an easier time defeating them. It had been easy to tell which one had trained or not and thankfully all of them had already been tired after fighting beforehand.

It had become clear to Gary that they all were mostly relying on their makeshift weapon, making them lack actual skills. After the first three, he had knocked out all remaining ten, granting him an additional 500 Exp, enough to Level Up.

'I've finally gained another stat point! Argh, but still no new skill. I don't get it, do I need to fulfill some special conditions or something? Or are you just a miser, system? I know that you at least have that Hardened Will skill saved up!

'Oh well, I will just have to keep grinding today. It's not everyday that I get to beat the sh*t out of gang members without having to fear any consequences, so I should make the best out of it.' Gary thought, as he checked his Status.

[Name: Gary Dem]

[Level 6]

[Exp 127/765]

[Health: 68/100]

[Energy: 92/120]

'I got hit way more in that last fight than I needed to, I guess some of my Energy will be used up to heal my wounds while I'm not fighting. Shoot, I should have grabbed something to replenish it. If only I had more money... looks like I might have to grab a bite on the way.'

Gary's enhanced hearing allowed him to hear the sounds of fighting in other areas. With how faint it was, he would probably have to run over to get there in time to actually have anyone left to fight though. However, before he could even decide between searching for some food and heading towards the sounds, he felt his phone vibrate.

He instinctively grabbed his secret phone. At this time, it should be either Kai or Innu who might want something from him, but to his confusion the screen only showed him what time it was. There was no new message or missed call.

It took the high schooler a moment to put it back into his pocket and grab his regular one. Just as Gary had suspected, he had received a message, but the most surprising thing was the sender. It was from his sister of all people.

[Me and Stacy are at the main high street at the Kobo Karaoke club. I got dragged along to meet up with her internet boyfriend and he brought two friends along. If you get this message, then we're in trouble. Please bring help!]

Chapter 98: No one to rely on

The police station was currently busier than ever, receiving non-stop calls from residents living in a certain part of Slough. All of them reported that they could hear fights, moans and groans, with some even testifying to have seen teenagers in red and grey beat up others dressed in black on the street.

It didn't take long for the police to figure out what was going on, but just like Gary had predicted, due to the scale of the gang war, they couldn't respond immediately. The police force simply lacked the numbers to contain large-scale fighting like this.

Chief of Police Anton Millstun was in charge of the people's safety. Right now he was sitting behind his desk, grabbing his head in frustration as he didn't know how to deal with this situation.

"Those damn White Rose agents! They're only interested in their stupid Altered, yet when we have a situation like this on our hands, the only course of action they're willing to take is to 'let things play out'." Anton complained, though more to himself than to Roo who was with him in the room. The rookie was nervously standing in the office waiting for his superior to give out orders.

"How is it possible for such a situation to break out without any prior signs? All our informants have been telling us was that the black colour gang have been getting into more fights with the red colour gang, but what does that have to do with the grey colour gang?"

"We know the black colour gang is controlled by the Underdogs and that the Grey Elephants are behind the grey colour gang. We still have no clue who is behind the red colour gang. Could it be that the Grey Elephants found out before us and took over?" Anton spoke his thoughts out loud. It was one of his ticks and his subordinates had gotten used to it. They knew why he did so, in case anyone wanted to chime in on his thoughts.

"I don't think it has always been the case, sir." Roo spoke up. "I looked into them, just like you've asked, but while not as numerous, there have also been many incidents between the red and grey colour gangs, the last one dating only a few days ago."

Learning this fact, Anton thought it could be one of two things. Either the Grey Elephants had approached the red colour gang's backers to pull off this stunt to massively piss off the Underdogs, perhaps some retaliation for something yet to be determined... or there was an even bigger figure behind it all. Someone, who the Grey Elephants had no choice but to listen to.

“I just hope that none of those Kings are involved in any of this. If they are, then this town will become a battlefield before it’s all over.” Anton mumbled, before he stood up from his seat, ready to move out.

“We might not have enough hands to stop the colour gangs from fighting, but we can at least prevent them from going after the other areas. I want every available officer placing barriers around Chavley.

“Call in those who might have taken a day off, and maybe even those who have just retired for the day. Make sure that no one enters or gets out for the time being. As soon as things settle down, that’s when we will make our move, understand?”

Although Roo did understand he had a concerned look on his face and he could see it.

“Sir, does that mean we won’t be acting out on the reports? What about the public places being attacked? Or the request for ambulances? This is a colour gang war we’re talking about, not the big gangs!”

What Roo meant by this was the difference in crimes. The bigger gangs, such as the Underdogs and Grey Elephants, actually acted more like businesses. Of course they both laundered their illegally obtained money through their businesses, but even if the police knew that, it was impossible to catch them without evidence.

At some point, a tacit agreement seemed to have occurred between the two parties. The gangs tended to stay out of the way of the public, not causing them any trouble and the police didn’t try to make life hard for them.

However, while the big gangs seemed harmless at first glance, the same could not be said about the colour gangs. Those were filled with young frustrated teens and tweens that found it hard to get jobs, hoping to prove themselves out on the streets to rise in the ranks and get accepted into one of the bigger gangs.

In the past, when situations like this occurred, the colour gangs tended to get a bit wild, drunk on power, and would start to rob stores, plunder and steal from the civilians. They all felt like they were unstoppable in those moments.

“I’m afraid that will have to be a sacrifice we will have to make. Trying to save a few will just risk us getting dragged into this mess and the colour gangs spreading throughout the whole town.” Anton slammed the table. He didn’t like that this was the only choice they had, but with their limited power what else could they do?

“Roo, believe me, I wish it was different, but I have a feeling that this fight will push the Underdogs to act. If that’s the case this little war will be over far quicker than you might imagine. Let’s just hope they will be the only ones to come out... otherwise, I’m not sure what it would mean for Slough...”

—

Just as Anton had predicted, after the red and grey colour gangs managed to overwhelm the black colour gang on multiple fronts, they were starting to become a little wild. One group in particular was getting particularly crazy. They were full of mostly new recruits, one of them being none other than Gil.

The drop-out had just picked up a trash can from the side of the street, which he promptly dunked on a black colour gang member’s head, before kicking him on the ground. The others were impressed by the new member’s ruthlessness, who seemed to be even better at fighting than before.

‘I was a little worried about him after what happened last time, but it seems like it just gave him an extra push.’ The group leader thought.

There were around thirty-ish grey colour gang members causing rampage. They were attacking everyone on sight, no longer differentiating between black colour gang members and regular civilians and that’s when their group came across a certain twenty-four hour supermarket.

Its lights were still on, yet it appeared they were in the middle of closing the shutters down for safety. Seeing this, Gil picked up another large trash can and ran towards the supermarket.

‘That guy, he looked at me like I was a loser! I’ll show you who the real loser is!’ Gil thought, reaching the man and swinging the trash can. It reached the man before he could completely close the shutters. Gil didn’t stop there, as he lifted the can and began whacking the man again and again.

“Hey everyone, the store’s up for grabs!” Another member shouted, and soon the other members of the grey colour gang started to storm the supermarket store. Once Gil was done, he entered as well, leaving behind a no-longer moving man lying in a red puddle of blood.

Inside the supermarket, seeing what was going on, the employees were going crazy, and immediately ran towards the supply room to the back. Five of them had saved themselves, yet the last one, a frightened large woman, had slammed the door shut behind her, locking out three of her colleagues.

They banged on the door, again and again.

“Let us in, please they’ll kill us if you don’t!” One of the women begged from the other side.

“We can’t! They’ll get us too, just hide for now!” The large woman cried out, holding on to the door.

At the same time, the pet food aisle was emptier compared to the rest of the store. When stealing things pet food was somewhere on the bottom of the priority list for looters. Here, there were two female employees hiding out.

One looked to be a middle-aged woman, while the other looked to be a young university student. The university student had her head tucked into the middle-aged stomach, both were on the floor shaking, doing their best to be as quiet as possible.

“Calm down, it’s okay, we will be okay, the police will arrive and get us out of this place.” The older woman whispered to the other to calm her down. Still no matter what she did, the student was still scared, and honestly, she was as well. Based on the situation as an adult, and imagining the girl as her own kid, she knew she had to put on a brave act.

“They might come, but they’ll be a bit slow.” A male’s voice could be heard from above the two.

The middle-aged woman looked up at the person who spoke to them. A teenage boy who couldn’t have been much older than her son stood there, covered in blood. He walked forward towards the two females.

“What a couple of pretty looking girls. I should have joined a gang a long time ago. Out here, there are no rules.” Gil spoke, liking his lips, as he considered whether to start with the university student or the older woman, whose tag read ‘Maya’.

Chapter 99: 200 BPM

Pierre still hadn't let go of Amy's hand, so the high school girl let out a scream. Unfortunately, the loud music from the karaoke was indeed overbearing, drowning out her loud shrieking cry. Even if there had been no music, Amy doubted anyone would come to help them and not just because the room seemed to be pretty soundproof.

‘This is a public karaoke place, right? There has to be a camera in here or something!’ The high schooler desperately looked around, and that's when she noticed that the camera in the corner of the room had at some point been turned around to face the wall.

‘These guys... I should have known when they brought out the drugs. They must be in cahoots with someone from this place and seem to have planned this from the very beginning. Oh Stacy, what kind of mess did you get us into...’

No matter how much Amy thought about it, she didn't see any way out of here. It seemed impossible for two normal high school girls to overpower three bigger and older young men. Even now as she tried to wiggle her arm free, she could feel Pierre just tightening his grip to the point she couldn't move it at all.

“Hey!” Hawk shouted from the other side of the room. He then held up a phone, yet it didn't look like the one he had been using, instead it was one with a pink case. Now that she took a closer look, she recognised it as Stacy's.

Her best friend's make-up was completely ruined by now. Tears and snot were all over her face. Stacy felt the worst out of everyone there. Not only had her internet boyfriend turned out to be a complete and total douche, but he had hurt not only her but also Amy. She had never wanted to drag her best friend into any of this.

“I'm sorry.” Stacy cried. “I'm sorry Amy, I'm so sorry!” She continued to sob, yet Hawk seemed to have had it with her. At this point, he swung his hand, slapping her right across the face. It was clear that he hadn't held back either as Stacy's face had gone bright red in a moment, leaving an imprint of the guy's hand.

Stacy fell into a silence after this, her eyes wide open. She had gone into shock and didn't know quite what to do anymore. The high schooler looked at Amy, unsure what to do, but the next moment, her hair got pulled up, making her scream out in pain once more.

"Shut the f*ck up, will you?!" Hawk shouted at her as he pulled her up to his eye level before letting go of her. "You two, make sure to confiscate the other slut's phone. We don't want them to call the police on us!"

Following the order, Pierre used one hand to pull Amy's arm out of her pocket, restraining her while Ben came over, searching for the phone in her pocket. As he did that, he made sure to press his body quite a bit up against hers.

'This...is so disgusting! What are they going to do with us?!' Amy thought, as hundreds of thoughts were running through her head. She already had a very bad idea about 'what' they were going to do to the two of them, the real question was what would the three do to them, to make sure the girls wouldn't go to the police right after.

She had heard cases of where they would be filmed, and the videos would be shared around if they were to tell anyone.

"Sh*t! The bitch seems to have already messaged someone. Some guy called Gary!" Ben reported, after checking the messages. Although the phone was locked, they could see the preview of the reply from Gary, claiming he would be there in a second.

"Who did you message?" Hawk asked. "Tell me!"

Amy didn't answer him, trying to think of the best response in this situation. Hawk took that as a sign of deficiency, so he decided to make her talk. Instead of going after Amy, he grabbed Stacy by the back of her head, pulling at her hair causing her to scream out once again.

"Ahh it hurts! Please stop, it hurts!!!" The high schooler cried out.

“Did you not hear me? I told you to shut up!” Hawk shouted, as he pushed her head, banging it across onto the table. Everyone in the room could hear the teenager’s skull hit the table. Her teeth had pierced her lips causing a small amount of blood to fill the table.

Pierre and Ben looked at each other, despite being high, even they began to question their actions. Hawk, however, didn’t stop there and continued to apply force, swinging Stacy’s face against the table.

“I can do this all day! I won’t stop until you tell us who that guy is!” Hawk looked at Amy, hitting Stacy once more to stress his point.

“DON’T! GARY’S MY BROTHER!” Amy confessed straight away.

The two boys, Pierre and Ben laughed after hearing this. They had already asked her about him, so they knew he was just some random nobody going to a no name high school. Even if he were to come, what was he going to do? Hawk, giving the thumbs up, it looked like they had permission to do as they wished.

“Feel free guys!” Hawk said, as he started to unbuckle his belt, and the two boys next to Amy were about to do the same.

‘No...they can’t! I have to get out of here, I have to save myself!’ Amy thought.

Her arms were still being held up by Pierre. She had considered kicking him between his legs, but the high school girl was afraid he might see it coming, so she used the only body part she could at the moment. Opening her mouth, she bit down hard on Pierre’s arm. He immediately let go, and without looking back Amy ran for the door.

Alas, before she could get far away enough, Ben, his trousers already dropped, grabbed the back of her hair pulling her back in.

“It looks like you need to feel some pain as well!” Ben shouted as he pushed her up against the table. Her thighs hit the edge, but next she felt a large force hit the back of her head, and she soon could see it being banged against the table.

She could feel a shooting pain in her face, not quite knowing what happened, her eyesight slightly blurred, but desperate to get out of the situation, she kicked behind her, hoping to hit the shin of Ben.

“Just stop trying to resist!” Ben shouted, and now he held her head as well. He banged it against the table, not once, but twice, and continued to, but Amy didn’t give up struggling, still kicking and moving every part of her body, by the second her eyesight was getting more blurry and she was wondering if she was about to pass out or not.

“AMYYYYYY!” A voice shouted. The three guys could see a green haired boy suddenly enter the room.

‘Gary...but why...are you alone...’ Was Amy’s thought before completely passing out.

Ben lifted her face up, and Gary could see his sister’s face banged up, bloody and bruised. His younger sister, his family that he had promised to protect...

The others laughed, seeing the young teenager enter the room and walk towards them on his own. They could see he was far smaller than them, making them even less afraid of him. Even if he could fight a bit, there were three of them and just one of him.

Not saying anything, Gary made a fist, and swung it towards Ben’s face. It was too fast for Ben to react and hit him right across the face, causing his teeth to fall out, and for him to let go. In that second he grabbed Amy before she could fall to the ground, and now he could see Amy in his hands.

His whole body was shaking, Gary’s body was shaking from head to toe.

“What the f*ck did you do to my sister?!” Gary shouted.

[You are heavily enraged]

[You have exceeded 200 BPM]

[Partial transformation has begun]

His eyes narrowed, his teeth and fingernails started to sharpen, the rage had taken over Gary completely.

Chapter 100: Judge, Jury & Executioner

When reading his sister's message on his phone, Gary's heart went into a panic. Amy wasn't the type to joke around with him nor was she someone who would usually ask him for help. Since she did, it could only mean that the situation was seriously bad.

Gary's heart started to beat faster to the point that there was no need for him to use the Charging Heart skill. Looking at the Status his Heart rate was currently at 169 BPM, making him twice as fast and twice as powerful for no Energy spent.

The high schooler didn't think about anything else, and just ran towards the Kobe Karaoke club the two girls were supposed to be at. He no longer cared about the gang war happening at the moment, nor did he care about gaining Exp. His only wish was to get there in time to prevent anything bad happening to his family.

'Please be safe, Amy! Please be safe, Amy!' Gary kept repeating it like a prayer in his head as he ran and ran, completely ignoring all the fights happening around him. Eventually, he found himself in front of the right place on the main high street.

The high schooler quickly ran up the stairs until he was in the reception area. It was dark, and he could hear the loud thumping of music behind several of the doors. Originally he had planned to use his enhanced senses to find out where Amy was.

Unfortunately, his enhanced senses proved to be a detriment for once. It took him a few moments to get used to the - to him - incredibly loud noise. However, in the end he pushed through because of his sister.

Behind the reception, there was a young man with sunglasses standing behind the desk. Gary thought it was a little weird since they were indoors, it was dark and it was already late, yet he would be lying if he claimed that it didn't fit the image of this place.

“Hey.” Gary called out. “I’m looking for two girls who came in here earlier today accompanied by three guys. One girl’s an unnaturally blonde girl, the other has brown hair and looks a bit like me?” He pulled his hood down revealing his face.

Usually, he wouldn’t be revealing his face, but right now he wasn’t thinking things through, too preoccupied with getting to Amy.

“Sorry kid, I can’t just tell you what room people are in. Customer privacy and all, I don’t even know who you are.” The man replied, shrugging his shoulders.

Were it not for the severeness of the situation, Gary might have tried again by politely asking the man, or he might have started arguing with him to convince the other how important the matter was. Right now, though, he didn’t have any time whatsoever.

He noticed that there was a tie around the man’s neck, another item that the man appeared to be wearing as a fashion statement. Dangling in front of Gary’s face, it became the perfect thing to grab. When the high schooler pulled on the front, the neck tightened and the man was pulled down so fast that his sunglasses fell off as he reached Gary’s height.

“Listen here, one of them is my sister and she asked me for help!” Gary practically growled at him. “Now tell me where they are!”

“You think threat-“

Gary didn’t let him finish, just pulled harder on the tie, to the point it was starting to suffocate the man. Seeing how determined the green-haired teenager in front of him was, he quickly pointed in one direction of the hallway. Gary immediately let go and followed to where the man had pointed.

Gary didn’t like what he had just done, it was something more along the lines of a real gangster, using violence to get his way, but this was an emergency case he told himself. Rushing, Gary looked through these small windows in each of the doors, that would show who was inside of the room.

He looked through each one, until one of them caught his attention, not because he could see his sister but he could make out the smell of blood. Opening the door, he witnessed a strange sight. One guy had his trousers down, and was holding a girl by her head.

“AMYYYYYY!” Gary shouted as he recognised her. That’s when the three guys noticed him entering the room.

“What the f*ck did you do to my sister?!” He shouted as he decided to act, punching Ben in the face, sending him off to the side, as he carefully picked up his sister, holding her in his arms.

[You are heavily enraged]

[You have exceeded 200 BPM]

[Partial transformation has begun]

[All stats increased to 125%]

His eyes narrowed, his teeth and fingernails started to sharpen, the rage had taken over Gary completely. The teenager’s body had changed slightly, yet the high schooler had yet to notice since the change wasn’t on the level as it had been during the full moon.

“Stacy!” Gary shouted, as he could see that she was still conscious. “I want you and Amy to get out of here. Grab a taxi and get to the hospital!”

Although Stacy had just seen Gary send one of the boys across the rooms she still felt he was outnumbered. She was afraid to move as Hawk was directly next to her and Ben was already recovering, holding the side of his face.

Pierre was still pissed from having been bitten by Amy, so he ran over to where Gary was, yet before he could do anything the other had already kicked him in the stomach, sending him flying back. His back had hit the table, and he was hit so hard that his body flipped down on top of it. Knocking all of the bottles onto the floor.

He quickly placed Amy onto the side of the bench, then jumped on the table himself, stepping on top of Pierre ignoring him. He walked across the table, stepping on Pierre's body along the way, not caring about him one bit. Hawk, seeing that the situation was getting out of hand let go of Stacy, and pulled out a pocket knife.

He attempted to stab Gary who approached him, but the green-haired high schooler dropped down from the table and just opened up his fist, grabbing onto the other's hand, allowing the knife to pierce through the palm of his hand. Gary was bleeding, yet the knife was stuck.

Looking into his eyes, Hawk was seriously scared. No sane person would ever try and stop a knife by sacrificing their own body. Clenching his fist, Gary started to crush the other's hand, who immediately started to scream in pain. He could feel his fingers breaking.

"GET GOING STACY!!!" Gary shouted once more. The high school girl didn't need to be told again as she went over to where Amy was and grabbed her best friend. Luckily, Amy had somewhat woken up, yet her vision was still blurry.

"Come on, Amy, let's leave it to your brother. I think he's got this." Stacy spoke as the two of them fumbled out of the room.

"Do you have any idea who my brother is?! You screwed up big time, Gary!" Hawk shouted yet his voice contained a hint of hesitation. "My family are part of the Grey Elephants and we will make sure to hunt you and your sister down! I will return this favour ten times worse."

It was then that the sound of the door was heard opening behind them again, and the man who had been at the reception came in.

"Hawk, do you need help, bro?!" The man asked. Gary had initially felt bad about his earlier treatment, but now it looked as if he had been in on this all along.

Hearing these words, hearing what Hawk had said, and remembering this sister's face. The bruising marks, she was hardly recognisable to him.

“That girl...she is the best sister in the whole goddamn world! She never complains, and she works hard...she’s only f*cking 15 years old! What the hell were you planning to do to her?! All of you are guilty!” Gary shouted as he looked at Hawk.

[Bloodlust has been detected]

[Forced Bond has been activated]

[4/5 Marks have been assigned]

[Skill activated Claw Drain]

[-15 Energy]

His hand transformed slightly, and Gary swiped with it along Hawk’s chest, causing a deep scar and blood to gush out everywhere. As the blood was felt on his clawed hands, he could feel a strange refreshing energy inside him. The effects of the Claw Drain were working. The next second, the receptionist, Ben and Pierre charged forward.

As for the events that followed... it all became a blur for Gary. A blur of red.

When it was over, he stood there in the centre of the room, covered in blood, glad that the music from the karaoke machine had been so loud. The entire room was now covered in blood, with the lights from the TV screen flashing once in a while revealing the state of the room.

None of the four men would ever move again.

‘I’ve gone and done it now... only this time it was no accident...’