

## A Bio 40

Chapter 40: ...Where can I get one of those [Signals]?

“[Warning, high speed object traveling near host. Caution is advised].” Was the warning she got from Main Core.

As soon as she got that warning she turned her head to look for the object that [Main Core] had detected, she was barely able to find it when a voice spoke into her ears from the [Mask].

“[That is your signal everyone, look for the fireworks.]” Was the voice of [Billy] speaking through the masks. His voice carried some mirth and while Alexa wanted to ask what was a [Firework] and how it related to the cylinder traveling across the sky at high speed. She didn’t have enough time to do either.

Why? Simple. The thing burst into around fifty smaller projectiles that rained down from the sky far away in the distance.

“[And done, this will keep most of the Heroes busy, from your location there are a few low-rank Heroes and some sidekicks, but they will be sent to search and rescue...not that Vulcanus hit anything populated, but still. Happy hunting.]” The voice of [Billy] faded away and soon enough Alexa was left alone looking at the explosion in the distance.

“[Machine Designation: Vulcanus threat level updated. High.]” Main Core said as Alexa looked at the destruction on the horizon.

“Well, Vulcanus always likes to do something like that, should have seen two years ago. He used a kinetic missile from low orbit. The explosion was wonderful and most important, ecologic!” [Mikey]

laughed at that and turned to [Golem]. “Well bossman, you were going to teach Rhapsody about the guards and how to deal with them?”

[Golem] was brought back from his reverie thanks to that, and in turn, he looked at Alexa. He acted as if he wasn't as impressed as she was, but Alexa could see that he kept stealing glances at the distance, as if to make sure no one would come from that direction nor more of those [Fireworks] would come their way.

“The first thing you need to know about guards is...” Golem started speaking as they moved towards the small [Room] where a man was [Sleeping]. “They don't get paid enough to actually do their job, they are mostly to scare off low-level criminals, most of the time when they see a Minion they will run on their own.”

[Golem]'s words weren't...quite right, if they were being paid to guard something, shouldn't they actually guard it as it was their job description?

“Hey...wake up.” [Golem] said while using one of his fingers to hit the crystal [Window], the man recoiled at the sound and opened his eyes looking first at her, then at her chest, and finally to [Golem].

“Huh?” And just uttered those words for a few seconds, as if his [Brain] was starting to process the information that it had got. “....HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE IT!”

And after processing all of that he hastily stood and pulled a [Gun], it...was pitifully small compared to what [Lieutenant] had used, not one of those working with [Haephestus's Forge], but the [Blonde] that she fought while on her [CRAB] form.

“See, this is a panic reaction. Some react like this when they get a gun. Are you sure you can survive it?” [Golem] asked her as he pulled the [Door] out of its [Frame] and threw it at the side.

“Yes, even if he somehow managed to hit a dangerous spot, that model of [Gun] does not have enough bullets nor the capacity to shoot them in a quick enough succession to actually [Kill] me,” Alexa answered, if her sneak search on the [Internet] was to be trusted, that model of weapons held only seven bullets. She just needed to wait for the seventh round to fully heal and in the meantime, she could move [Main Core] somewhere behind bulletproof parts and delegate her organic functions...

Should her [Brain] be damaged that is.

“...You know these are more like bullet resistant and not actually bulletproof right?” [Golem] said pointing at her [BodySuit].

“I WILL F#CKING SHOOT YOU, HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM!” The [Guard] kept saying the same thing.

“So they only resist some degree of [Gun] variations?” Alexa asked at that revelation, that made her less...secure.

“I mean, they will stop these guns. But will not stop a full assault rifle burst...Not that you should stay in one place to get one of those.” [Golem] said as he ripped out the [Barrier] that was designed to stop [Vehicles] from coming into the site. “The first and best defense against guns is...”

And before [Golem] could continue speaking Alexa’s automatic responses activated and she moved to the side, what came next was the sound of a [Gun] discharge, followed by [Golem]’s hand moving slightly and a [Gun] projectile case hitting the floor.

“....dodging. Nice reflexes.” [Golem] said as she turned from looking to her to the [Guard], “Now I can ignore you insulting me, shooting me...Hell, I could even respect you if you had tried to do that to me.”

Alexa could detect an undertone in the [Golem]’s words...[Anger].

“But you shooting my companion here? She is a girl, and you shot her? Why? Because we don’t respect you? Fear you?” [Golem] said as he put his hand atop the [Guard Station] and ripped it off, the [Guard] at this point had dropped his [Gun] and there was a wet spot on his pants.

Did he have a [Bladder failure]?

“Now, you are lucky...Haephestus’s Forge doesn’t condone harming civilians.” [Golem] said as he grabbed the man with his arm, at some point [Golem]’s arm had grown in size, it was almost as if he was grabbing a [Toy].

“LET ME GO YOU FREAK OF NATURE!” The [Man] screamed while trashing within the hold of [Golem].

“Yes, I may be a freak, but tell me...why did you shoot Rhapsody if I am the Freak?” [Golem] said in an even tone, the [Man] only continued trashing around, so [Golem] turned to her instead, “And this is the next lesson Rhapsody, there are people like these. They feel powerful just because they have a gun. To these you need to teach them a lesson, if we were working for other types of crew he would be dead already.”

That was...interesting to know, so there were [Crew]s that didn't mind killing other [Humans].

"To these Hephaestus's Forge has a neat solution, they taught it to me while I was waiting for you girls to finish buying new clothes." [Golem] said with some [Mirth] in his voice, he pulled his arm backward and in one smooth motion, he launched the part of his arm that was holding the [Human]. "And like that, we have solved the problem and made a statement, he will land somewhat around the lake area."

"[Calculating trajectory, weight, approximate mass loss from decomposition...Estimated travel time before hitting the ground is 5 kilometers.]" Main Core brought the data, the missing arm that [Golem] had thrown was already losing mass as parts of the rocks fell.

"The older minion that taught me this called it the Baseball especial, it seems that it was a classic he used but after retiring from active duty due to a wound he hadn't found someone to follow in his footsteps." [Golem] said as he moved the remaining part of his arm as if checking everything was in order. Somehow that stub of an arm grew to reform to the same size it had before it grew.

Alexa noticed how the ground around them seemed more...brittle, had he taken the missing mass from here? Interesting, he did tell them that he could use materials to grow in size and power, so he had done that?

"Now let me call the other black minions...." [Golem] said and pushed a button on his belt, she noticed a signal on her mask with the words [All Clear], and sure enough after a few minutes the [Vans] showed and started moving into place within the compound.

They all went to specific squares within the floor, she noticed how each square seemed to be of the right size to hold a [Van], had they been designed with [Vans] in mind? Interesting, so if she was judging by the amount of squares on the flooring...This place was designed with plenty [Vans] in mind.

“Okay everyone, move out. We don’t have any teleporter with us right now, so we will do it the hard way. Sylph, you are on energy duty. Find the generator and cut it.” [Golem] started speaking, at the side, Alexa noticed other groups of minions moving to their respective [White Mask] leaders.

They all seemed to have different orders and ways to move after making it inside.

“Do I cut all the warehouses' power or just ours?” [Skye] asked raising her hand. That was an interesting question, if it was up to Alexa she would focus only on her [Warehouse], it was her [Mission Goal] after all.

“For now only us, we don’t know what the other Minions have in mind, better to not mess around with someone’s else plans. If they have an Electric Core or ElectroMaster Core we could be messing with their plans.” [Golem] answered, wait. There were of those too?

No wait, hadn’t she seen one of those? If [Lieutenant] awoke one with her...hadn’t he showed [Electric-like] powers?

That [Blonde] awoke a [Core Power] that could give [Energy]?

The world was unfair. If she could awaken that power she wouldn’t need to worry about energy ever again. Instead of her current threshold for a week of activities or a month of no activities....

“What will be my [Role] on this?” Alexa said turning the attention towards her, most of the [Black Mask] minions seemed to want to keep a distance away from her, were they still [Worried] about how she had planned to deal with the [Human]?

Even though [Golem] dealt with throwing him away? Wasn't his solution worse? If the math was to be trusted, the landing would probably [Cripple] the [Human]!

“Hmm....Okay, when Sylph cuts the power you will sneak in, search for the guards inside and incapacitate them,” [Golem] said after thinking for a few seconds, “And by that I mean that they must be alive and with all their arms and legs still attached to them, no crippling wounds either.”

Tch...

“Roger, any other [Mission parameters]?” Alexa asked while shifting around under her [BodySuit], she made sure all her muscles were at peak performance levels, all of them warmed up and ready to be used.

“[Status nominal, no errors detected.]” Main Core sent back towards her.

“Nope, just deal with the guards inside. If someone shoots at you, you can break their arms a little...But try to not get shot if possible.” [Golem] said pointing towards the [Warehouse], “Okay, get to it. I will be waiting outside the warehouse door, when five minutes have passed I will open it and walk in. If there are guards around then you will not get another of these missions Rhapsody.”

And then turning to [Skye] [Golem] added, “And if the lights are up you will get a smaller cut.”

“What? But what if they have generators?!?” [Skye] said while grumbling.

“If you find the generator and bring it to me I will not cut your pay, fair?” [Golem] asked, [Skye] didn’t answer and instead flew upwards and looked around the [Warehouse], when she deemed it ready she made some motions with her hand.

Alexa didn’t see anything with the motions, but even so, she did see the results, in the directions [Skye] moved her arm cables got cut, and in some places, she could see marks on the floor or walls of cuts. Deep cuts.

As in very deep cuts, probably almost as deep as what she could do with her [CRAB] form.

“[Detected Mana readings on atmosphere, Human Designation: Skye seems to be using high-pressure wind blades to cut her targets. Current methods for host survival: 1, dodge.]” Oh, thank you [Main Core]. Yes, I would very much like to DODGE THE INVISIBLE CUTTING TOOL!

“That should be it, no cables going in or out of the warehouse remaining boss!” [Skye] said after flying around their assigned [Warehouse], she also did a [Salute] gesture and waited for [Golem]’s response.

“Good work, you are up Rhapsody. Wait at least two minutes and then infiltrate.” [Golem] commanded, so Alexa walked near the building and started a timer.



When the clock hit 120 seconds she quickly jumped upwards and latched into the building, she had shifted part of her fingers into serrated metal claws. The gloves on her hands had given way as soon as the serrated edges started wanting to pierce the fabric.

It was an interesting design, it moved around her transformation with such ease that she was almost inclined to believe that it was [Alive], alas, she didn't have time to indulge in that line of thought. Instead, she started climbing upwards.

As soon as she was near a window she started shifting again, this time from her neck she extended a tendril of flesh that traveled around her arm and then up into the nearest window and checked inside. First, she made a simple light sensor, but when she noticed how it was dark and there wasn't any light inside, she started making a more complex sensor. She settled for a [Camera] design and sent the feed towards her [Consciousness stream].

Sure enough, the room was empty, so with some small changes she sent her [Nanites] into the window and deconstructed what kept it in place, before the thing could collapse either inwards or outwards she put her hand atop it and made it stuck to her hand, to achieve this she shifted the base of her palm into suction cups. She had fought some P-series subjects that had plenty of tentacles and had these things to grab objects.

They hadn't worked against her exterior plates, but she kept the design. And never had she thought that it would be used like this. Either way with the window secured she sneaked into the room. Leaving the window open like this was a tough choice, but in the end, she decided to leave it open.

If Alexa needed to run away it was better to have an open route than needing to destroy something and waste biomass or energy on it. So putting the thing against a wall Alexa started moving forward.

Her next step was to incapacitate the [Guards] inside, she couldn't detect anyone near her current position, so moving slowly and making sure her feet did as little sound as possible Alexa started prowling forward.

As she moved she could detect vibrations on the ground and nearby windows, was this from people speaking? Moving closer to those she found the answer soon enough.

"Can we get the power back?" Someone asked.

"Doesn't look like, they cut all the power lines. And since the generator hasn't been replaced we can't get any power, it looks like we will have to do it the hard way." Someone else answered.

"Did you send the signal?" The first one asked back.

"Yeah, she should be coming, ETA around 20 mins." Someone was coming?

That was no good, no good at all.

"She better be soon, the big boss is paying her big bucks to keep this place safe. If she isn't the first one we will get asked awkward questions." The first voice said back.

Alexa wasn't quite sure who or what they were waiting, or what [ETA] was. But she didn't need too much information to get to the bottom of it, as far as she could infer she had less than 20 minutes to solve this and then check on her cellphone what it was.

She had already turned it off since the mission parameters asked them to turn it off while in combat, something about GPS tracking and matching, she wasn't quite sure what that was all about. But now? Now she had more important things to do, like planning her entry.

First Alexa put her right arm against the [Door], she started sending small tendrils within the [Frame], she wanted to imitate the design she had seen on the [Underground Mall], the one that would break the target into big pieces, only instead of making places to hide. She would do this and when [Main Core] answered it was done she raised her hand and balled it into a fist.

Taking a deep breath she pulled her fist as back as it could go and with one smooth motion she [Shifted] her arm into a more muscular form and hit the door.

"WHAT?!?" Was the normal answer she got from the people on the other side of the [Door], others answer went from "AAAAAH" to "HEEEELP!" and finally one was a simple "FIRE AT WILL!".

She didn't like the implications of the last one, so while the [Humans] scrambled to get into position Alexa locked in the last voice, it was the same that had asked about the situation and about if someone was coming or not.

What she found was a pudgy man with a stick in his mouth that was releasing smoke, her initial analysis of the atmospheric gas around detected traces of some [Drug], and she guessed that the stick was the origin.

He was also the only [Human] that wasn't panicking at the hit of the [Door's Fragments], instead he was looking at her. She didn't like that look.

"[Full burst, releasing 200% energy and increasing reaction speed.]"

The world slowed to a crawl, she could see the fragments of [Wood] flying around, and yet...this [Human] stood there, staring at her.

"[Warning, Human reaction not within normal parameters. Caution is advised.]" Main core chimed in her accelerated world.

But Alexa had no time remaining to think, she could feel the effects of this accelerated state wouldn't last long. So putting as much strength in her legs as she could she jumped straight at the [Human], she wanted to make sure everything would end as quickly as possible.

So when she was within the reach of her arms she balled her fist and prepared to hit the [Human] into his solar plexus, if she was reading her own anatomy right a strong enough hit there should empty the [Man]'s lungs and leave him unconscious.

She would then have enough time to deal with the other [Humans].

\*BANG!\*

“Hmph, they got a better crop this time huh? Good thing I came.” The [Man] said as Alexa’s fist crashed against a blue translucent wall.

“[Warning, bones within wrist are broken, there are several fissures within the arm. Fixing.]” Main Core reported as she felt the biomass and energy be expended to fix her wounds.

“You are a Core user?” Alexa asked as she made sure her fist was healed.

“No, I just have the correct set of friends.” The [Man] answered, then turned to the others [Humans] around and said “Fire! If any of you ends with a gunshot wound I will give extra hours and vacations!”

And as if that was all they needed to hear they pulled out their [Guns] and pointed at Alexa.

Well, this may get....hard.