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"You mean for those sexy female sports announcers," Delliah chuckled. That earned her a 'well duh' look from all the other women.

"Before I consent to the strip search and inevitable follow-up anal probe, are we really going to be in a situation that requires us to fight this time?" Virginia asked.

"We should be perfectly safe," Rachel responded.

"Check - bring extra ammo," Virginia nodded.

"Good for you, Ms. Maddox," Pamela winked. "One day there is hope your life will have some meaning to me."

"Great," Special Agent Maddox muttered, "now I have to think of what to get her for Christmas." We all laughed. Christmas was such a long way away.

We packed up, rode to a private airfield near Doebridge, learned that SD was smarter than the rest of us, boarded our flight, and then finally entered US airspace from there. Around Ohio, a thought occurred to Maddox.

"If we were somehow forced to land and have the plane searched, how bad would it be?" she requested of Rachel.

"Bad enough that we have a better chance of fighting our way free than seeing freedom before dying in prison," Rachel answered calmly.

"Hmmm... Rachel, if something like that happened... how many parachutes do we have?" Delliah joined in.

"Enough. Mona rides down with Cael because he's a virgin," Rachel stated.

"Oh! Come on Rachel," I fell down on my knees. "Can't I bungee jump it?"

"Luv," Delliah snorted. "If the drop didn't kill ya, the bounce back would snap you in two."

"Cáel, we are at thirty thousand feet," Tiger Lily giggled. "You are more likely to end as a streamer than a pancake." An Amazon giggle - a most joyous noise.

"Rachel, I have been unkind," Virginia confessed. "Cáel is so personable and so dead set on getting himself killed. I had no idea your assignment was so herculean."

"Acknowledged," Rachel said, "and we don't use 'that' word." Hercules was Greek too.

"We have it worse," Delliah patted Maddox on her shoulder. "We must obey some sort of legal code that doesn't allow us to preemptively save him."

"We must too," Rachel gave a depressive sigh. "Her," she pointed at Pamela.

"Hey," Pamela pouted. "I'm more a force for vigilante justice than a team player. I ride alone."

"Alone?" I took a quick headcount and added our Amazon pilot. "I count ten, Lone Phaser."

"Am I included in that count?" Miyako yawned from under her blanket. "This jet lag is killing me."

"Where did she come from?" Virginia hopped up.

"She was here when we boarded," I told her. "I searched her, I swear."

"Yes he did," Miyako gave a sleepy, Hello Kitty smile. She'd 'searched' me too.

"I bet you did," Rachel glared at me... then Pamela... then me again since I was the titular boss.

Thankfully we all 'bought a vowel', played a card in Clue, and shared an Inspector Clouseau moment. The gang settled down for a nap. Sleeping was not complicated. Rachel, as my bodyguard, slept beside me. The airplane's touchdown was so flawless I had to be shaken to alertness. Did I fall asleep? More on that later.

It would have been better if Virginia hadn't figured out our pilot had violated numerous FAA regulations... like dropping below radar at one remote airport then sailing along for an unknown number of kilometers at nape of the Earth until we reached our final destination (This is great in date flicks, btw. It convinces the girl that we should 'live in the moment'/screw as much as possible.)

We weren't there yet, of course. That level of un-convoluted thinking would have been an Amazon indicator of senility. Being a male Amazon, I was immune to such considerations - that meant I was always nuts in their regard, but they chose to humor me. Our plane had to park in a camouflaged hangar before we were allowed to disembark.

I concluded we must be getting close to our desert gulag/re-education center as the sharp glare of sunlight was accompanied by an equally heartless glare of hostility rolling forth from our waiting all-terrain vehicle caravan. Thank goodness Rachel had the foresight to bring sunscreen for the passel of us. I swallowed the bitter realization I'd lost a \$1000 bet concerning our landing zone with Virginia (a Temperate Rainforest) and Delliah (the American Southwest). In retrospect, betting on the site of 'Camp Rock' wasn't my smartest wager.

The Brit made off with \$2000 of our money and she wanted to be paid in Euros. That's €778 from me, offspring of those who didn't have the courage to cross the Atlantic 100 years ago. Neither Virginia nor I really cared. With the level of violence about to escalate, it was all looking like 'funny' money to us. I didn't share my misery. Our Welcome Wagon ladies hardly looked sympathetic, or all that opposed to utilizing scalping as a valid debating tool.

They didn't view this moment as just a bad thing - me showing up. My arrival was apocalyptic: #1 - a man, #2 - with a member of another secret society, #3 - #2 was a professional assassin, #4 and #5 - two more outsider women, #6 - an unscheduled visit... as in 'the camp guardians hadn't been given six months to plan out all contingencies'. And you think your daycare takes its security seriously?

"Cáel Ishara," the curt, mega-harsh bitch addressed me in English. As the other seven women dismounted from the four Jeep Wranglers (Delliah enlightened us), it was obvious they were well armed and armored, right and ready to provide some extra-curricular para-military fun. "Welcome," and 'oh please tear out one or two of my fingernails you Ginormous Pain in my ass' she greeted the exalted me.

[OKH] "I am \*\*\*\*\*," which I hoped meant 'I had shed blood in battle with sister Aya'. "No other name means more to me right now." Ah... the lovely jerk that full-blooded Amazons gave the first time they heard a male speak their tongue. The slot machine of her intellect kicked into high gear. No arm grasp was coming my way. I almost forgot.

[OKH] "The outsiders are to remain armed as guests of House Ishara." That command was crucial. When/if I got my way with my first request, I was going to be rendered 'one of the girls'.

[OKH] "If that is your wish. (Evil grin) Grab your bags and make it snappy," the woman ordered. "I don't like any extended activity at this airfield."

"Ladies, let's hurry up and get our bags," Pamela barked. "You too, you hairless ape." That would be me, if there was any question. The Super-friendly camp counselors, with their slung FN P90's, didn't lift a finger to help us. Miyako flounced around without a care in the world. Pamela... eh, there were only eight of them. Three of my SD group were cautious while the pilot was already effecting her refueling and departure.

Rachel shot one of the guardians a look I perceived to be friendly. A double-take elucidated things. She was Rachel's younger sister and had already been updated on my bona fides.

[OKH] "Male, you are agreeable to the eye," Rachel's sister fired off. Three whole seconds.

[OKH] "Why thank you. I run faster than you would think, thankfully heal even faster and have the venerated outdoor skills of Bigfoot," I smiled.

The seven other ladies weren't sure what to make of that jocularity.

[OKH] "A very, very young Bigfoot," Rachel corrected.

[OKH] "There is nothing wrong with the size of his feet," Tiger Lily added to the fun. And then all the homicidal fanatics chuckled.

Pamela's whispered translation brought a subdued, yet similar reaction from the non-Amazon contingent. Sure, the new group knew about the New Directive, my fun encounters which I equated to my life and death struggle in those earlier days, my rise to house leadership, Constanza's blinding, the grenade launcher episode and the totality of my last confrontation with Hayden. Amazons are some hard-ass bitches.

As we were loading up the jeeps, the leader tapped me on the shoulder with some force - in the same way a teacher catches an unruly student's attention.

"What was sex with an augur like? My name is Caprica Mielikki."

"Out of respect for your authority, I will answer this personal question that is really none of your business," I looked down a good ten centimeters at her. No fear.

"It was beautiful... like every other woman I have had the treasured pleasure to have sex with," I continued. My reply's undercurrent was simple: I am not a House Head while I'm here. I am an Amazon, not a slave, or outsider male.

"Did you suffer stigmata?"

"Yes. To be fair, I was also having intercourse with her personal guardian at the same time. I'm not sure where to lay the blame, or importance," I inhaled her rugged fragrance.

"Both?" a different camp counselor questioned.

"As I told you, he has a really big and craftily-wielded foot," Tiger Lily teased.

[OKH] "And he is banned from having sex with any Amazon women for fifty more days." Pamela reminded them. Miyako, Delliah and Maddox weren't involved so were left uninformed of that detail. That bludgeoning innuendo dealt with, off to camp we went. Our journey was a pleasant diversion, punctuated by our trail, or lack thereof.

The jeeps split up once we hit the aerial cover of the desert pines. At that point, every rock, shrub, tree and loose bit of debris revealed its God-given mission in life was to kill us. I kept telling myself that surely our Amazon driver abhorred suicide as much as I frowned on vehicular manslaughter as a means of me dying.

Failing to believe that left me with tuck, duck and roll and that death-defying move would leave me lost and waterless... somewhere. I would have thought 'somewhere without cell reception', but none of our mobile devices had made the trip - despite a valliant effort at skullduggery by Special Agent Maddox and some highly creative types back at the Hoover Building.