

Machines

Hamburg in the shadows

Von Alaiya

VIII - Protection racket

[JUSTIFY]It was around noon when Pakhet arrived at the address Kah Pak had given her. She was cursing herself, while pulling up with the Jack Rabbit, additionally to Dacart and Kah Pak and she promised herself to strangle that fucking grinning idiot of an adept the next time she saw him – just before reminding herself that she actually did not plan on seeing him again. Such a god damn fool![/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]It was a street in the south-east of Stormann, where several smaller shops occupied the houses to the right. The shop she was looking for was called *Fai Congs fernöstliche Taliskrämerei* and it looked more like one of those mythical Chinese medicine shop, as they had been depicted in different movies throughout the years. In those movies a misguided character would come in, talk to the most stereotypic depiction of an old Chinese guy and then some magic would happen to him, which would then often be the plot hook for the entire movie.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Thankfully Pakhet was pretty sure no such magic incident would happen to her here – even though in this case Fai Cong was probably indeed a practitioner mage. Well, and normally real magic was not used to bring misguided people back on the right path, but rather to kill.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]In front of the shop two people seemed to be waiting: Kah Pak and Baramus.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“Oh dreck”, she muttered, when she realized that was probably everyone. Was she really to get stuck only with those two? Fuck, why had Kah Pak even phoned her? He seemed to not been to keen on working with her and if he was not totally dumb he would have noticed that she was not very fond of him or anyone else of the group.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She would have turned around, but if Kah Pak had not lied before, there maybe was the life of a young girl on the line and she just could not turn away from that.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The street was in one of those areas of Hamburg, where some very old buildings were standing next to brand new ones, making the line-up look somewhat messed up. The Chinese talismonger shop was fittingly located in an old house build from crumbling red bricks. There were different artefacts – probably magic – sitting in the shopwindow. When she got out of the car, she could see some knives, some pottery and feathers, bits of fur and some herbs.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“So, this is the shop?”, she asked without saying hello or anything.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“Yes”, Kah Pak answered. “It belongs to a friend of my

talismonger.”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“And his daughter was kidnapped?”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“Yes. From all I know.” Kah Pak's voice was once again calm.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Baramus made an annoyed sound. “Can't we just take care of it?”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Yeah, Pakhet thought, she really should strangle him sooner or later.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]But Kah Pak nodded. “Let's go inside”, he said and turned around.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]As she wanted to know what exactly was going on, Pakhet did not say anything and just followed him, when he went into the shop.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Inside there was the strong smell of incense, mixed with some other herbs it seemed. The entire shop looked very cliché – though others might have called it “authentic”. The entire walls were covered with wooden shelves filled with small drawers labelled in Chinese. There were also several vitrines standing in the room their glass fronts dusty, filled with all sorts of artefacts. There was a Chinese man standing behind a counter with an old cash-register on it. Old in this case meant really old, as the register seemed to be at least 150 years old or at least be made in such a way.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“Hello”, Kah Pak started unsure. “You are Mr. Cong?”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The Chinese man was hard to put age wise. His face seemed immensely tired, but not really old, while there were already thick white streaks in his short black hair. He nodded. “Yes. Does this mean you are the one sent over?”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“About your daughter, yes”, Kah Pak replied.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]There was relief appearing on the man's face. “Oh, thank the gods. Finally.”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet cleared her throat and stepped forward a bit. “Could you tell us, what happened.”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“It is the mafia”, the Chinese man said. He looked beaten. “They take protection money from everyone on the street. But this shop... It doesn't make much revenue... And I have been falling behind and so they took my daughter, my dear Huan, so I would pay. But I *don't have* the money.”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Both Pakhet and Kah Pak had a question, but it was Baramus who in before they could properly start talking: “What do you mean, you have no money? Does it mean you cannot pay us?”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The man looked sad. “Well, I can offer you one thousand. But that is really everything.”[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“A thousand for each of us?”, Baramus pressed, but the man shook his head.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“Sorry, pal”, the mage exclaimed, “but we don't work for that little m...” It was then that Pakhet lay her hand on his shoulder and shoved him aside.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“Shut up”, she whispered. “Just shut up.” Then she turned at Mr. Cong. “What mafia?” She did not know about the Vory being active in Stormann, so it confused her. This was not even Likedeeler turf.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“The Italians”, Mr. Cong said.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet raised an eyebrow and looked over to Kah Pak and Baramus. While Kah Pak looked a bit confused, Baramus was just pouting again. But from all she knew, the Cosa Nostra was not really active in Hamburg. She did not say anything, but made a mental note to ask Michael about it later on.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]“When did they take your daughter?” Kah Pak seemed to at least try to be empathic.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Three days ago", the talismonger answered. "And there is something else..." He was hesitating. "You see, those Mafia guys have a cigar cutter and just this morning... My daughters finger..."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet swallowed. She felt pity for the girl who probably had nothing to do with anything. "How much do they want?"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Ten thousand..." The man's voice was shaking.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]This time Pakhet exchanged gazes with Kah Pak and was glad, that he, too, seemed to be content to take this run. Who cared about Baramesus?[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Do you have any clue, where your daughter might be?", Kah Pak finally asked.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Mr. Cong seemed to think about this for a moment. "Well, the Mafia owns a fastfood store down the street... Maybe you find somebody there, who knows something."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Kah Pak nodded. "Alright. We'll see, what we can do."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"But...", Baramesus started, but Pakhet shoved him out the shop.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Thank you", the man said. "Thank you so much."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]They left the shop, just for Baramesus to once again start to protest just when they were outside: "We don't work for one thousand! That's barely more than three hundred for each of us!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet gave an annoyed snort. "If it makes you feel better, I'll pass on the payment, okay? Then it five hundred for each of you!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"That is still too little!", Baramesus exclaimed.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Calm down", Kah Pak said quietly. "Let's go at that fastfood shop and look into what is going on, alright? Maybe there is an easy way to solve this."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Whatever", the mage muttered.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY] [/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The fastfood restaurant Mr. Chang had told them about turned out to be a small filial of one of the newer soyfood-only chains that had started to appear all over the western hemisphere during the last 20 years or so. Of course, McDonald's and its kindred mostly served soyfood, too, but if you paid extra (meaning tenfold) you often were able to order real beef and chips made from real potatoes. But not so with those new chains was McHugh's – named in a way, that was entirely not to mimic the older companies name.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]They were known for the huge amount of fat they used to fry their food – and they tended to fry almost everything on their menu. Burgers, chips, everything.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]This particular store was situated in one of those standard fastfood squareblocks. It was a low building, seemingly a bit older. Maybe it had hosted another fastfood chain before. The half, in which the dining area was located had wide glass fronts and you could see from the outside, that the tables and small round chairs were fixed to the ground. The back half of the building was made of concrete, probably housing the kitchen, some sort of office and a storage room.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet had left her car in front of the talismonger shop, as this was just down the street.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Well, let's do this", Pakhet said and made two steps, but while Kah Pak followed her, Baramesus stood still.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Wait a moment", he suddenly said. "Just wait. I'll make a short phone call."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Raising an eyebrow Pakhet looked at him, but he did not elaborate. He just

put some distance between them and himself and got out his comlink. Then he went into the space between two of the buildings and while they could hear single words, they could not really make sense of what he said. There were words like: "Need a name" and "make it up", but that was the gist of it. Then after maybe two minutes he came back to them saying nothing.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Can we go now?", Kah Pak asked and seemed a bit on edge.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet nodded. "Only waiting for Baramaus."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"We can go", Baramaus said shrugging.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]And so they went. The entry to the restaurant was at the side of the building and not directly facing the street. As it was the standard these days there was a metal detector and a security guard – a young girl at the beginning of her twenties, the chestnut brown hair bound into a pigtail – standing next to it. Of course the detector went off, as soon as Pakhet went through it.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Wait a moment", the girl said. "Weapons are not allowed in here."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet sighed and looked at her. She raised her hands and showed the cyber-pistols. "It is hard to detach these", she replied. "Please, I work as a security guard, too." To show her, she showed her full SIN, which identified her once again as a private security guard. "And I just want to have some lunch."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The young guard looked at her with a faint smile. "It's alright", she said. "Come in."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Thankful Pakhet nodded at her and followed Kah Pak and Baramaus, though she indeed got herself something to eat to not proof her words obvious lies. So she soon had a burger and some fries, both smelling of fat, on a tray in front of her.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The dining area was half empty. There was a man sitting there, seemingly reading a book, there was an old man with a young child, and several people, that looked like some wageslaves eating lunch.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Baramaus meanwhile went straight for a obese man, sitting on one of the tables. He had black, greasy hair and was eating fries, while typing something into a comlink with his left hand. The man was so fat, that one could not wonder how he was able to move. Still he was wearing a suit, even though it was riddled with stains.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Baramaus, who wore a good, expensive looking suit himself, took place across the table from him, while Kah Pak sat down on the next table after a moment of hesitation.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]With a sigh Pakhet went to the table Kah Pak was sitting at, but faced the obese man. She took one of the soyfries and regretted it instantly. It was sickeningly oily.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"You are Mr. Caivano, right?", Baramaus asked.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Who is asking?", the man replied, without looking up from his comlink.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"We came from Mr. Cong", Baramaus replied making Pakhet to want to bang her head against the table. Was he unable to be subtle?[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]But for now Mr. Caivano just looked up and got out a small book. "Then you are here to pay for him?"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"No", Baramaus replied. "We are here to talk to you. You have taken his daughter, right?"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Caivano shook his head, browsed through his book and showed one of the

pages to Baramesus. "Look. He has not paid us in five month. We allow him to conduct business on our turf and he has to pay us for it."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Well, he does not have the money", the mage replied with a bit of anger in his voice.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Once again Caivano shook his head. "That is not our problem", he just said. "If we leave him of the hook, the next guy will expect the same treatment." He spoke in a matter-of-factly manner, as if he was explaining it to a five-year-old.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"I understand that", Baramesus pressed on. "But the guy does not have the money. What is he supposed to do."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"That is not my problem. You can pay for him, if you want."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]It was clear from his body language that Baramesus started to get angry. "Don't mess with me like that. You cut of the girl's finger!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Yes, and we'll cut of more of her fingers, if he does not pay soon", the mafioso replied, his voice now strident. "If you are not going to pay for him, just go back to him and tell him, that he should pay soon. And don't come back without the money, understood?" He was rather good in making the threat audible without being to direct.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Don't talk to me like that", Baramesus started and got up, when Pakhet stood up, too, and laid her hand on his shoulder. She had noticed several man in the room, as well as the guard, looking at them and some seemed to have their hands on guns.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Let's go", she said, her voice resolute.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"But...", began Baramesus.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Let's go", she repeated and more or less dragged him out of the restaurant.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]When she passed the guard she had a weird feeling for a moment. She thought that the girls tried to make eye contact, but when she looked at her, the girl looked away.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet did not think to much of it – mostly because she was still busy dragging the mage along. Also she was thinking about what other approaches they could take. After all this really was not the team she would have picked to have a gun-fight with the Mafia. Till now she had not seen either of them do anything useful. She still regretted to have allowed Baramesus to speak.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Why did you get me out?", Baramesus screamed, when they were back on the street.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Because you'd nearly had get us shot, you moron!", she shouted back at him. "Can't you control your temper at all?!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"You cannot lecture me! You've no right!", the mage yelled.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet snorted. "Well, your temper might have gotten the girl killed."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Once more Baramesus muttered something under his breath, but did not reply outright, before Kah Pak came out after them and looked at them.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"So... What now?", he asked.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Let's go back to Cong", Baramesus said snidely.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"To do what?", Pakhet replied.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The mage looked at her defiantly. "Talk to him about money."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She really could not belief him. Of course it more the rule then the exception that runners were more out for their own wealth and did not care about others, but was it so hard to understand, that this was all the man was able to offer?

"And to what end? Don't you think he would have paid the Mafia, if he had the money?"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"I don't care", he muttered. "Let's just go."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]And because Kah Pak did not object they returned, even though Pakhet did not like it. If she had had any back up, anyone else who was with them, she would have just asked him to accompany her, while ending this without the two awakened. But this way she really did not know what else to do. She was good, but she really not want to take the risk of going up to several Mafiosi on their hometurf alone.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"I'll make a phone call", she said, when she reached the talismonger shop again and opened her car, to get inside.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]If the two of them wanted to press the poor man for more money, she did not wanted to have any part in it. A part of her wanted to stop them, but then again she did not want to argue even more. Maybe, she told herself, Baramus calmed down, if he talked with Cong again. She did not really believe that, but still she managed to calm herself down.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]From outside the car she looked over at the shop, but then just got out the commlink to call Michael.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]This time he picked up rather quickly. "Oh hey, Pakhet", he greeted her, apparently having recognized her number. "What's up?"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"The Cosa Nostra in Hamburg, what do you know?", she asked.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"I am not sure what I know", he said innocently and it was clear that he wanted money.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Once more she snorted. "I am just asking for general information."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Well, what about general payment?", he replied.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Fifty, cannot give you more."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]There was a short silence at the end of the line. "Well, they are not strong, but they have some business here. Try to stay as far out of Vory territory as it is possible in this city. That's about it. Why?"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Some problem with Cosa Nosta in Stormann", she replied. "Thank you."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Don't forget about the money", he purred.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Of course." She hung up and gave another sigh, before looking over to the shop.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Even though she could not hear them, it was clear that Baramus was arguing with Mr. Cong. Then he just opened one of the glass cabinets and took something out. It was clear what was going on: They were trying to get some of the items as payment.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Fucking idiots", Pakhet muttered and got out of the car. She hurried over to the shop and opened the door. "Stop, you two!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"No", Mr. Cheng said. "It is okay."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet looked at him. "No, it is not." Angrily she glanced at Baramus. "Now come."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]For a moment she thought that Baramus was going to argue back, but in the end he snorted and then just left the shop, stomping angrily.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Kah Pak shrugged. "Alright", he said, before turning around to Mr. Cong. "I am sorry."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"What about my daughter?", the talismonger asked.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"We'll try to find a solution", Pakhet reassured him – even though she really was not sure how to go about this. "I'll tell you, if we make any progress."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]With tiredness in his eyes he just nodded and she turned around to follow Kah Pak and Baramaus outside.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The later was already waiting for her. "I hope for you, that you have a pretty good plan!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Well, you two are magic", she said. "Can't you find out, where the girl is? We find her and bust her out."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Sure, with all the Mafia guys around?" Challenging Baramaus looked at her.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Maybe they held her somewhere without that many guards", she replied. "And at night there tend to be less guards anyway. First we need to find out, where she is anyway."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]For a moment there was silence. But much to Pakhet's surprise it was Kah Pak that answered: "Maybe I have a way to find her. I could try to summon a spirit and ask it to see whether she is in that restaurant and if not ask it to follow Caivano. Maybe we can find her that way. Otherwise we might have to ask Mr. Cong for something like a hair of hers to make it easier to find her from the astral plane."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]While Pakhet did know, there was something like an astral plane, she did not understand any of it and just nodded. "Okay. Well. Let's try that."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Whatever..." Baramaus muttered.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY] [/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Soon they found themselves in somebodies small front yard, where Kah Pak knelt down next to a thorny bush and closed his eyes. "I'll go into astral space and accompany the spirit. You'll have to take care of my body in the meantime."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Okay", Pakhet just said, while Baramaus just leaned against the small wall that separated the yard from the street, arms crossed in front of his chest.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Kah Pak closed his eyes and Pakhet could see that his body went numb, which looked rather uncanny. But she knew that it was because his spirit – or whatever mages called it – had somehow left his body to look around in some kind of metaplain. Instead of paying it too much mind, she just eyed up and down the street, but while some people looked at them, nobody did anything against them.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]In the end she was rather thankful, that apparently the house owners were not home or did not care that the three of them were sitting in this yard.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]While nothing happened it was only a few minutes, until Baramaus comlink started to ring. He picked up and started to talk to somebody. This time Pakhet could hear, what he was saying: "Yes. That was me." – "I am sorry. I did not..." – "Yes. I am sorry." – "No, I won't." – "Yes, for sure." – "Thank you." – "Good bye." Much to her surprise his temper did not rise during that conversation or at least he managed to keep it in check. And it seemed from the long pauses he made between talking, that whoever he had been talking to had given him quite a sermon.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet said nothing to it, but looked at Kah Pak until he woke up after a few minutes. He took a few deep breaths until he started to speak: "The girl is actually in there", he said. "In a office behind the restaurant. She is guarded by at least two guys. I cannot say how many of the other people work with the Mafia. In total there are eighteen people in that restaurant right now, but I think most of them are civilians."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Okay", Pakhet said and thought about it.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Maybe we can take a look, how many guards we can see", Baramaus said impatiently. "It is still day. Considering that HanSec will look over... Though I have to say one thing: I won't go in there again."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"It is not like you are much of an asset", Pakhet muttered.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"You haven't done anything so far", Baramaus snarled at her.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Like you haven't done anything during like the last few runs", she countered and then shook her head. "Well, let's go over again."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Whatever", Baramaus once again said.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Kah Pak nodded and stood up, so they could go down to the restaurant. They were two blocks away right then but it did not take them long to return to the right street, where Baramaus started to get rid of the Jacket of his suit.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"What are you doing?", Kah Pak asked before Pakhet could make a comment about it.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"This suit is pretty noticeable", the mage explained himself. "I'm just going down the street and will use magic. I need to try something. And this way I might be able to find out how many guards are in there."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]For a moment Pakhet wanted to say something, but then she stayed silent. She did not think this was a good plan, but as long as nobody noticed that the idiotic mage used magic on them, she did not think anything would happen.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Well, she was wrong.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Baramaus, now only wearing a T-Shirt he had been wearing underneath, tried his best to look inconspicuous, while going down the street and did a horrible job at it. The gazes he threw over to the restaurant were just too easy to notice. She would have thought those Mafiosi would be angry about it and tell him to get the fuck away, but she was wrong: Two guys came running out of the restaurant, screamed something and then started shooting.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She cursed, before putting on the helmet she had been carrying around the entire time and running for one of the cars parked on the side of the street opposite to the restaurant and took cover behind the vehicle.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]By now there were three people in front of the restaurant – one of them being the guard she had already met at noon. But she did not think about it then but rather started shooting herself using the cyber-pistol in her left hand.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She hit one of the Mafiosi in the shoulder and he fell over onto his back.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Still the guard girl and the other guy ignored her but kept shooting at Baramaus, who seemingly was not yet hit. But it was in that moment that he gave a short scream before hurrying into the next alleyway to take cover behind a trashcan. The girl and the second Mafiosi – a young man with brown hair – followed him, running over the street.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]By now there were people running out of the restaurant screaming or had taken cover behind chairs and tables inside, while the people on the street were running away and screaming. One would think that in a city like this they would have grown accustomed to shoot-outs.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet wanted to shoot at the other guy, when the door opened and another younger man ran outside followed by Caivano – both with pistols drawn. Caivano saw her and started firing at her, even though he was apparently not a good shot.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Can't you use a bigger calibre?", a voice asked next to her. It was Kah Pak who had gone for the same cover.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Just shut up", she replied, aimed for Caivano's shoulder and shot. As it had been with the guy before the bullet hit the target and threw the man onto his back, where he kept lying, apparently unable to bring his massive body back onto his feet.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet saw how the guy who had ran for Baramesus jerked for a moment and understood that it had probably been magic. She shook her head and fired another bullet, this time aiming for the guys ankle and once again managed for him to fall over.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Now another man came out of the restaurant. He wore a well armoured suit and looked around bewildered. He shouted something in Italian, so Pakhet could not understand. But she did not care. Another bullet to the shoulder, another guy fell over, leaving only one of the young man and the guard standing.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Carefully Pakhet stood up a bit. "If you give up, I won't hurt you further!", she yelled over.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The girl looked over to her, then fell to her knees and carefully laid down her pistole before holding up her hands.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]The guy hesitated for a moment, but then did the same.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet sighed and lowered her arm. Just in that moment a man came out of the building, went over to the man that had exited the building last and got out a pistole. Pakhet remembered the man: He had been sitting right next to the door when they had been there before. Once again she raised her arm, but the man just shot the other man on the floor into the head before running away, letting go of his pistole on the way.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]For a moment she was puzzled but then she remembered that there were more important things at hand.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She had not planned on killing any of the Mafiosi – as living enemies tended to be able to answer question. As Caivano seemed to be the highest up from the people around them, she went over to him first.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Okay, let's talk again", she said.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"I'll do anything", the man whimpered. "Just make sure I survive."[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Sure", she replied, knowing well that his obesity was more likely to kill him then the bullet in his shoulder. But if it meant getting the girl out without any more complications she could easily do some first help.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She wanted to get her med-kit out of her backpack, when the bang of a gunshot made her jerk. It took her a moment to realize, that somebody had shot Caivano right into the head. That somebody had to be standing right behind her.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]She turned around to see Baramesus who had taken up one of the pistols from the knocked out Mafiosi. His eyes were cold.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"What did you do that for?", she yelled at him. "He was going to collaborate!"[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"I cannot keep anyone alive", he whispered and turned around towards the girl, who still held her hands up.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Don't do that!", Pakhet said slowly, quickly thinking about what she could do. Of course she could just shoot him, but she really did not want to get that kind of reputation, even though she right now would have enjoyed killing him. Then again tackling him with her arms would take too long and she was not sure whether she would be able to control herself enough to not kill him like that.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]"Don't!", she repeated when she saw him hesitate at least. Still his finger

was on the trigger, ready to pull. It was then that her hand found the gun Heidenstein had given her. Narcoject! Of course![/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]His finger tensed up, but she was quicker. She pulled the dart pistol and shot, positioning the dart right at his neck. Quickly he turned around to her, but he had not even the time to realize what had happened before falling down onto the street.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY]Pakhet looked at the guard girl and saw tears in her eyes. "Run", she whispered and the girl jumped up to run.[/JUSTIFY]

[JUSTIFY] [/JUSTIFY]