



Act II Scene 4

Lara and Attila were greeted at the door by a stocky, bullnecked fellow. Soldier, his codename was. And boy did he look like one.

Strong features. Thick eyebrows. And a steely gaze that looked like he meant business. Every feature of his face felt accentuated and intimidating. A chunky nose, a protruding forehead, and the stiffest of jaws all culminated in giving him the feel of a man who listened to orders and disobeyed none. There was only black and white, right and wrong, and yes and no in his world. The perfect exemplar of a brute of a man.

Fortunately, while he could hold their gaze and scrutinise them from head to toe — most likely not impressed by what he saw — he could not talk. Lost his vocal cords due to a viral infection, Control had said. Turned him from a killing machine to a silent killing machine.

Yeah right, Lara thought. Probably lost his voice enforcing rigid discipline on some poor cadet whelp who was perhaps too young to realise what they had signed up for.

Control had briefed them about their mission. It was pretty simple, really, and she had been pretty upfront about it all. Basically, the Resistance was running out of resources and running out of ways to equip itself. And what the three of them would need to do would be to raid a government store. In and out, she had said. No funny business.

Just when they were about to depart via the front door, they were stopped by a voice that seemed to ring out from everywhere.

“Woah, woah, WOAHH! Where does this sorry lot think it’s going? And without me? Don’t be ridiculous!”

Cackles of laughter rang out along the hallway. Soldier responded by stiffening his torso and puffing his chest out further, if that were even possible. Lara and Attila tried to imitate his lead, but failed horribly.

And then the owner of the voice materialised from a side entrance. It was the other Resistance agent from before. The one who’d had half the road enter his digestive tract. Or Tailor, as he probably preferred to be known as.

“Don’t even think about going out that front door without me,” he continued. “After all, I’m the main conversationalist around here, and these missions sure are getting boring these days.”

Tailor jokingly jabbed his more muscular colleague, and was met with a gaze that would put any other mortal within mere inches of death. But Tailor seemed relatively unphased.

“But Control stated quite strictly that this was a mission for three,” remarked Attila, ever a stickler for the rules.



Act II Scene 4



“Ah. Control can get stuffed. Fieldwork goes way over her head these days — it’s been years since she last did any grunt work. What would she know? The more, the merrier, I say!”

The three other agents nodded along. The silver-tongued Tailor was very difficult to argue with.

—————

Their target was an abandoned warehouse. Even by the standards of the city, it was a chaotic monstrosity. Sheets of rusted corrugated iron lined its walls and its roof — in some areas where the weathering was particularly severe, cracks had started appearing and flakes of earthen orange dust fell to the floor. This was very much a building that had been left behind in the past — it was the slipshod architecture of a bygone era.

And there it stood. There stood the structure that housed their prize. Barely symmetrical — for the left side of the roof had suffered a slight collapse and now possessed a noticeable lean — and teetering in the breeze like a house of cards.

And, at a cursory glance, looked unguarded.

Control sure knew how to pick out good training missions, Attila thought to himself.

The quartet shuffled quietly towards the entrance to the warehouse. As far as they had noticed, the warehouse had only one passage for access and egress, so they approached it carefully, lest they encounter any nasty surprises that might catch them unawares.

So far, so good.

The door that stood in their way to the supposed cornucopia of munitions was as flimsy as a door could get. Made of similar material to the rest of the structure, but painted in a gaudy white, it was secured with one lock and one chain.

Soldier made quick work of the primitive security system, and, together with Tailor proceeded to open the door to find...

Beep. Beep beep beep.

An explosion rang out, blowing out the eardrums of Lara and her geriatric companion.

In the silence of the aftermath, they could see smoke and shrapnel everywhere. But no munitions. The warehouse had been a lie.

Soldier lay bleeding heavily in the ground. A thin layer of ash had already gathered on his body, threatening to bury him alongside the rest of the refuse.

Tailor, who was in a slightly better position than he was before, lumbered gingerly back up to his feet, before issuing a general retreat.

“IT’S AN AMBUSH! FALL BACK! FALL BACK! NOW!”



Act II Scene 4



And so they ran.



A STICKY SITUATION

Citric ingredient in Pixy Stix

It's displayed on a sticker in a store

Has two doors and a gear stick

Something at an airport that forces you to stick around

Like a glow stick after some time

A person who does this might use a walking stick

Use lipstick to enhance these

Describing someone who sticks to their conscience

Race of soldiers that stick Boromir with arrows

Rowing stick

Hollow smoking stick

Brown, sticky or white

Fishing sticks

The stick floated, but the rock ____

The messenger equivalent of sticking up your finger

Go to ____ exchange to solve a sticky problem

What's brown and sticky?

A stick and a ____ will break a bone

You might become this if you don't stick to an exercise regime

Like a stick insect in a World's Longest Insect competition

How to detect a greenstick fracture



Act II Scene 4

