
Subject: STORY: The Scorpion's tale.

Posted by [spreegem](#) on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 16:54:18 GMT

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The vibration was the worst thing, now that their earplugs were in. The vehicle continued down for about five minutes, and started to level off. They then penetrated into the underground network. The vehicle stopped its churning, and set itself onto the rail system that existed. The quiet was greatly appreciated but only lasted around ten minutes.

They must be near the sewer network he guessed as the vehicle left the rails by engaging the treads that drove it through the ground the punch through didn't take long. The vehicle backed out of the ruptured concrete tubs, and spooled down its turbines. The pilot appeared in the passenger compartment, and hit the ramp button. The inner lights dimmed to the red used for exiting the vehicle. Due to the red color's spectrum, it didn't show as well at night, and served to keep the APC from profiling itself against the darkness.

"Gentlemen, good luck. I will be here until I get word the mission is complete. You may not need me, but I will be here if you call."

"Appreciated pilot. We may need you." Sergei replied.

"Alright, move out. Vigo, get in there and take point. The rest of you know what to do." Valdez barked. He grabbed the mic from Becker's man portable radio. "Command, we are in."

"Affirmative, we read you. May Kane's swift hand of justice guide you."

The men approached the breach in the wall, where they could hear water, but not see it due to the darkness.

The breach was about the size of a car, and the men filed through one at a time, snapping their gun-mounted lights on as they entered.

Vigo was stopped up ahead, and waited for the rest of the squad to come through. Sergei moved up to him, and whispered over the roar of water, "Anything?"

"No sir."

"Let's go then."

Vigo half crouched and made his best speed forward, as the other men kept a bit of distance between themselves and him. He was their point man, and as such, he was expected to find booby traps, enemy soldiers, and if everything went bad, to take the first hit. Being point man wasn't the most enviable position, and it wasn't for everybody. The men had great respect for Vigo, and his uncanny abilities to sense traps, and danger.

Up ahead, they could see the pump houses' exit pipes where normally effluent was pumped from the city during times of peace. They were not operating now due the power outages, and destroyed infrastructures the city had suffered during the siege. Only the drains from city streets above as the storm continued now drained into this large structure, and the water rushed ankle deep past them. Valdez consulted a map as they approached a division in the pipes, and Vigo waited for instruction.

He pointed to the right branch, which was dry and had only a trickle flowing down the center, and Vigo continued his scout of the area. He found the first signs of human activity in the area. A

discarded cigarette pack at the bottom of the ladder leading up to the manhole cover that was dripping water. He raised a clenched fist to signal a general stop, and raised the discarded pack as Sergei moved up to him.

"What am I looking for here sir?"

"About 300 yards ahead should be another ladder. Unknown what we'll find, but the facility's location will be directly overhead. Hold here. I want to see what we have above us before we get too deep. As Sergei climbed the ladder slowly, he found a wire across the tube, attached to the bottom of the cover. Anyone attempting to pull the cover would be killed instantly. He traced the wire back to a simple IED that was hidden in the lip of the cover's base. He clipped the wire, and gently put pressure on the cover as he lifted. He got the lid about an inch above the ground, and saw a chain link fence surrounding the facility which was bathed in light from the lamps sweeping the perimeter. Beyond the fence was the facility, and the giant radar dish that swept the area. Above this whole drama the sky flashed with lightning, and struck one of the lightning rods on the antenna. It temporarily blinded him, and he reviewed the area in his memory, as the retinas in his eyes tried to adjust.

He climbed back down, and told Vigo about the wire, and made the signals to the others to let them know about the find. He motioned Vigo to go forward, and 2 minutes into the sweep, he found another wire. This one was fairly well hidden, and he exaggerated his steps over the wire to show the others. They in turn showed each man behind him, and they proceeded. Vigo found more. This time it was a pressure activated bouncing betty. An ancient device, but effective to be sure. If triggered, it would jump to torso height, then explode showering the area with shrapnel, and tearing the men apart. They finally navigated the devices and came to the ladder leading up to the unknown. Valdez had Vigo sweep and mark further down the tube, and had Sanchez mark the way they had just come. If they had to get out of here in a hurry, they didn't want to trip anything. Then their pursuers would walk into their own minefield.

Then, when everything had been marked, Valdez signaled command with three short clicks of the radio transmit key. It would sound like static from the Ion storm to the operators monitoring for ELINT upstairs, but to the BH rep in the base back home, it would signal they were preparing to enter, with no contact with the enemy.

Then he motioned Vigo to go up, and they all aimed their rifles at the manhole cover as Vigo prepared to go through.

He lifted the cover ever so gently.

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Vigo didn't dare move a muscle as the cover hung suspended on his palms one inch above the tile in this bathroom. This was a good sign, and was what they had hoped for. Most sewer access covers were in places like this or in maintenance areas, and were not monitored by cameras. He gently and slowly moved the cover off to his side, trying not to scrape the tile to move. No one was in the stalls, and he felt a sense of urgency as he leaped out of the hole to cover the door in case someone entered while the rest of the team accessed the building. He signaled for the rest of the team to come up.

Sergei was extremely glad the insertion was going well. Now they would have some fighting room, and could stop worrying so much about the booby traps. They wouldn't have them inside the facility. Everyone was up except Becker and Sanchez. Becker was having trouble getting his large

torso through, plus the large Heavy Laser chain gun. He had to take it off, and hand it up, and the come through. After him came Sanchez, and the cover was put back into place.

"Ok." Valdez said. "We need to c-4 the generators, the dish, and the ELINT equipment, and we are also going to try to ascertain who the leak is. First stop; Generator room. Ustinov, did you get a look at where they are?"

"They are to our left. I would guess one or two room s over."

"Get in the duct system, and shut them down permanently. Set timed c-4, and get back here. When the generators go down, we will move, and hit targets of opportunity as they come. The rest of you, hide, and if anyone comes through that door, smoke them Vigo." Valdez ordered.

"Da. Parker help me into the vent. Drubnov, hold my laser rifle. I want to take the mp-5." They helped him into the ducts, and he wiggled into the barely man sized opening. It was cleaner than he figured it would be, but then again, this structure was only two or three years old, and GDI was anal about maintenance. He took the left leading duct, and stopped by a grate. He looked in and saw he was in a machinery space. This had to be it. No one was in the room, and he removed the vent grate, and slid into the room. He placed the crate on a shipping crate, and moved to where he could hear the hum of running machinery. Double fire doors led into the generator room, and he entered. It was noisy. No one would have heard the door anyways, so he moved towards the generators. The hall he was in turned to the left, and he peeked around the corner. Two technicians were working on a broken generator, and discussing how screwed they would be if the other went down in a storm like this.

"It just figures bob. Everytime we really need these things, something happens."

"Well, quit complaining. I really don't enjoy everything being an emergency either."

"I tell you bob, it's because of mismanagement. If they would just..."

"Just shoot me, and put me out of my misery, would you Jerry?"

"Happy to oblige." Said Sergei coolly as he emerged, and unloaded two rounds each into the shocked technicians from his silenced MP-5.

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He dragged them off to the edge of the walkway and after taking their access keys, dumped them into the bilge below the generators. He then kicked all the spare parts into the bilge with them, and wired the generators for a 15 minute delayed explosion. The explosives would be difficult to find even if somebody was astute enough to look for them.

He went out the way he went in, and dropped into the bathroom.

Valdez addressed the men: "Get out your light amplifiers. It's going to get dark soon. If it

They assembled by the door, and Vigo took a peek to see if trouble was coming to them before

"Go right. Left leads to the courtyard, and generator room. Look for the ELINT stuff, and the

main comm. center. They may be together. I also want to blow the main shaft for the dish. It will replied.

The remaining minute passed slowly. Then they heard the 'crump' of the explosion as it destroyed the generators, and the room they were in. The lights flickered and then dimmed forever. The men slipped on the light amp goggles, and Valdez gave the word as emergency lights flickered on in every third light fixture. Vigo burst from the room, and swept the corridor. He moved swiftly away from the smoke and dust coming from the left corridor, and moved down the right. The other followed closely this time. Vigo would no longer need isolation, he would need fire support. They knew what was coming.

An alarm klaxon rang out, and EVA's soft voice sounded from the intercom:

"Attention. Main power down. Backup generators online. Emergency response crews to

They passed the doors to sleeping quarters, and saw scrambling men trying to get dressed. Valdez waved his arm to Becker and Drubnov, and they opened the door and rolled two grenades each into the room, and then hightailed it to catch up with the squad. The barely awake men didn't even know, nor would they ever what destroyed the room so efficiently.

Up ahead, Vigo's laser rifle sounded off as he interrupted the on duty soldiers trying to respond to what they thought was a fire. As he ran past the bodies at the intersection, he followed the path they had come from. They would have been manning the night shift console for monitoring the area. His guess was correct, and as Sanchez destroyed some opposition in the rear, he entered the control room and ruined the day of the officer who was trying to say

Surprise had been achieved, but they would soon lose this advantage. They hurried to wire the communication equipment, and ELINT relays, as Valdez used a small hard drive to download current files from the still online GDI system. Drubnov found the machinery room keeping the shaft rotating for the dish, and housing the emergency generators. Valdez ordered it wired for five minutes, and grabbed the comm. link. He keyed in the Nod radio frequency for the base.

As he was finishing the transmission, Vigo and Ustinov were running into trouble. GDI soldiers had found the bodies, and knew what was going on now. They were firing into the control room trying to regain control.

Valdez burst into the machinery room at the same time the rest of the squad was coming out. "Let's go. Becker, get that heavy up there, and clear us a path out of here. 4 minutes to

Becker ran to the position Vigo held behind a console, and told him to move. GDI was about to encounter an experience they would soon not forget.

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The men gathered behind Becker as he readied for the order. Valdez looked at all of them, and said: "When he goes, all of you go too. Standard extraction procedure. Don't cross lines of

He stepped out into the hall seemingly unafraid. His armor took several rounds, and he staggered, but remained standing, as he pulled the trigger on the heavy laser against his hip. Bolts of focused red light lanced out of the barrel with a high pitched squeal, and burned deeply into the walls, doors, windows, and bodies of everything in front of him. The heavy was slower in its rate of fire, but it was a steady thumping that threw punishment anywhere it was aimed. The facilities' thin acoustic walls were no match for it, and bolts continued through into rooms far beyond the hall. The soldiers facing them dropped to their knees as if not comprehending what they had been killed by. The other team members jumped out from their hiding places, and added to the carnage by firing directly over and under Becker's body. Their fast cycling light lasers added to the absolute destruction being doled out, and entire walls were set on fire. Vigo shouted: "Whoa

He ran down the remains of the hall back the way they had come dodging bodies, fires, and halon dispensers shooting from the roof. The rest of the team followed.

EVA announced almost uselessly: "Attention. Fire crews to sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 9 and 13. General quarters. This is not a drill. Brotherhood of Nod Forces detected. All response units to

Then they felt the facility rock as the timed c-4 detonated the entirety of the command module. The explosion destroyed all that was left of area, and the EVA link with this facility. GDI was now blind and deaf in Sarejevo. The c-4 on the main shaft turning the radar dish severed the shaft due to its shaped nature, and the destruction coming up from below near the generators temporarily threw the severed dish and shaft upwards.

From the outside of the facility, the half operational cyborg laid in a puddle. It had been hit two weeks ago severing its hydraulics, and the organic components had died a week later, but the technology it had been combined with still served as a temporary visual relay. It transmitted back to Nod command the resulting image of the facility as it seemed to erupt into a fireball. Fire leapt upwards from around the dish as it hunched upwards briefly before leaning to the right, and crushing the facilities' west wing in a massive wave of crumpled aluminum. Inside Nod HQ back at base the commander watched the staticy image in awe and muttered something about how beautiful it was before stating in a loud voice: "All units advance. Spare nothing. Destroy what's left of this hated city, and burn it to the ground. Cabal, alert General Slavik and Battle

An image of Slavik appeared. Regulus was at his side smiling.
"Excellent. Burn this city to ashes, and secure the temple site. This is a good day for the

Around the base periphery, units long camouflaged in disuse now erupted into life. Tanks crawled out of muddy pits, and artillery barrages were being lobbed as fast and furiously as possible on pre-selected trajectories. The army assembled in a mile wide front, and hesitated only briefly as they moved forward together. Behind them the flashes of the artillery units were profiled in the darkness under the now brightening dawn sky as lightning flashed around them. Behind the tanks, infantry units assembled into APC's cheering the advance, and a chance to punish the hated GDI for daring to interfere with their holy quest. Cyborg units moved forward individually, mixed in with the armor, and infantry, and rocket bikes zoomed past. Light from the lightning flashes glinted off of shining metal as the army moved forward to reclaim it's birthright in Sarejevo. And above it all in the orbiting Philadelphia station, GDI watched in defeat from their spy sats as their commanders knew the outcome before it even started.

They had lost Sarejevo.

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Inside the facility, sheer chaos was unleashed. The team had barely made it back to the door of the rest room when the dish collapsed on the west wing of the building. This had the effect of disturbing the bouncing betty in the tunnel. It went off as designed, and set every other explosive off in the tunnel as well. The rest room collapsed into the tunnel, and debris showered the team and knocked them off their feet. When they could see again after the dust settled, valdez took a head count, and after deciding no one had taken too serious of an injury looked own into the remains of the bathroom. Water poured out of a pipe that used to lead to the toilets and sinks. It dumped down into the pile of rubble that used to be their escape.

"Go back the way we came. We are going out the front door. Same plan as before. If it moves, kill it."

For the third time tonight Vigo went down this corridor. He spared a glance into the destroyed barracks Sanchez had rolled grenades into. It was an absolute mess of humanity in there, and some of it was in the hallway. He kept moving and came back to the intersection. It was unrecognizable and he went left only because they had gone right to the control room. He could see the dish laying down on the collapsed roof just beyond the control room. A pair of legs was pinned below the wreckage, the rest of the body gone forever. Rain was also coming in, and making the floor slick he noticed. After proceeding down the ruined hall, they came to the front of the facility where damage was less, and he peeked around a right turning hall. GDI soldiers were trying to pull a friend from the wreckage, and he burst out and gunned them down.

The rest of the team followed up on his heels, and they finally came to the front security door which led into the courtyard. In the courtyard, he could see an APC loading up men for extraction to somewhere. He motioned for them to wait until it left. It zoomed out of the lot, and he assumed

was falling back to GDI lines to counter the assault by Nod. They left the facility, and entered the now deserted courtyard. Artillery rounds were heard in the distance and gunfire was everywhere. They had only about 10 minutes before the brotherhood got the range of this place.

"Well, what now sir?" He asked.

"There's a garage over there, let's liberate a truck." Sergei said.

As they approached the garage, they noticed that columns of armor were moving in the direction of Nod forces. Titans intermixed with the older M1A1 Abrahms tanks left over in GDI inventory from the first Tiberian war. From their vantage point on this hill, they could see the battle unfolding in the Dawn light, as the storm abated. Entire buildings collapsed as AP rounds pierced them, and exploded. Fires could be seen across the city, and the artillery was walking it's fire methodically in front of the Nod army.

Valdez re-awakened them by saying: "Drubnov, drive. Ustinov take shotgun. We are going to pretend to be nice friendly GDI troops as we make our way through their lines to the rear. The temple is in the north of the city on the outskirts. We are going there. You two dress as GDI, the rest of you get in the back, and stay low."

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They found some maintenance shirts in the rear of the shop all covered in dirt and grime from trying to keep beleaguered GDI vehicles going during the siege. They put them on, and hopped in the cab after stowing their prototype weapons in the rear. Valdez ordered them to simulate typing them up with loose fitting knots should they be stopped to make GDI think they were prisoners. The old m813 six by six fired to life, and Drubnov rumbled out of the garage, and through the link fence that had been left open by the departing GDI forces. They crawled down the treacherous incline designed to isolate the facility from armor assault. Any conventional assault would have had to climb the hill using this road and the guard towers would have torn them apart. Now that point was moot, considering the facility was in ruins with no power to supply the automated towers. Behind them an explosion rocked the facilities' remains, and it burned in earnest now. If there was anyone still in there, they were doomed to burn.

At the base of the hill, they merged onto the road that was the main artery for supplying the front. In its heyday, it had been the main highway into, and out of town. Now it served Nod as the route north, and GDI as the route south. The front would be smack dab in the middle of the city. They of course turned north, and Valdez connected with Nod command.

"Nest, this is Eagle one, I need the approximate location of the temple in relation to the facility. We are on our way there now."

"Hold on Eagle one. I'm turning you over to operator Brodski." There was a click as the line was transferred, and Brodski came online. "Sir, can I assist?"

"Yes. Directions to the temple from the facility. Quickly."

"Sir, follow route S23 until you see an exit for Zenica. Follow that road until you see the temple off to right."

"Thanks. Eagle one out. You get that Ustinov?"

"Affirmative sir. North to Zenica, turn off when we see the temple on the right."

They traveled past the stream of vehicles trying to reinforce the GDI positions in the south. No one suspected Nod would be this deep into their lines so no one stopped them. They weren't the only supply truck going north either. GDI was stripping the area of sensitive equipment now that open warfare was going on, and the lines were no longer static. Ahead, the highway showed a sign hanging from the post in a skewed position. "Zenica 100 KM"

They got on the exit, and curved off and under the highway they had just been on to head further north. There was a greater amount of the new Titan armor here. GDI was not going to give the temple back without a fight. For Nod to reclaim it meant that Nod would have more credibility, and authority to recruit. It was a symbol of the integrity of Nod, and its worth as their main worship site couldn't be underestimated.

Travel was easy and No one bothered them. The panic in the faces they saw was evident as Nod crushed the GDI forces. They passed a small town and hit open road. The truck stopped after five minutes, and Drubnov said: "Sir, I've got a checkpoint ahead."

"Can you see the temple?"

"Yes sir. We are there, but we aren't getting through that checkpoint. Three Titans, and every truck is being inspected."

"Alright, turn off the road, and hide this thing in the gully over there. We are going to have to do this the hard way. Suit up boys." said Valdez.
