

Leverage Foxstyle

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Kapitel 1: The Nigerian job - Part I: The Pitch

"I checked, Sir. The airport shuttle goes in fifteen minutes."

The barkeeper sat down the iced tea in front of him and left. From the inner pocket of his jacket he produced a tiny flask, opened it and poured the clear liquid into the glass, trying desperately to tune out the sound of a failing heart monitor.

"I'm sorry. Mister Minyard? Sorry..."

He looked up to find a man stumbling toward him. He looked nervous and kind of tired. Not that 'Mister Minyard' cared. "I know who you are." The man placed his cup of to-go coffee on the counter, "Excuse me." and sat down beside him.

"Andrew Minyard. I know all about you." Why didn't he go away? He was losing his touch if people found him approachable. "For example I know about the Monet painting in Florence and that you saved your insurance company... what? Twenty... twenty-five million Dollars? Then there was the identity theft thing. You saved the company... I don't know how many millions of Dollars."

Why was he still talking? If he wouldn't stop, Andrew would him.

"I just know... when you needed them... what happened to your family"

That was enough. Andrew slammed his glass down and turned to the pest: "You know this part of the conversation where I stab you in the chest one or ten times is coming up really quick."

That shut the prick up for about half a second. "I just want to offer you a job."

A job. He wanted to offer him a job? Andrew sneered. "Yeah, of course. What you got?"

If this asshole was leaning in any further, the stabbing part would come much quicker. No one invaded his space and lived to tell the story.

"Do you know anything about airplane design?"

For a second Andrew wanted to laugh. Airplane design, this was hilarious.

"I can give it a shot", he grinned wide but definitely not friendly. It was the manic smile he learned while on mood altering drugs in college. "Just give me pencil and one of these little rulers..."

Again, the man in front of him, just wouldn't shut up or go away. Instead, he still spoke!

"Somebody stole my airplane designs..."

"Ah... I see. And you'd like me to find them, right?"

He wasn't a fucking insurance employee anymore. Andrew was just about telling this ass that he could go fuck himself, when he spoke again!

"No! No, I know where they are. I want you to steal them back."

That got his interest at last and brought out the laugh which was bubbling up since the beginning of this insane conversation. Of course. Because every human being on this planet thought he was some kind of immoral monster. There had been only one person who put up with him despite everything. Who believed in him, who tried to break through all this emptiness inside him. But he was gone now. He was gone because Andrew hadn't been able to save him.

"IYS is their insurance company."

Oh. Oh finally, this was becoming interesting.

They settled at a round table and Dubenich – the really desperate but also very clingy

and annoying man – spread out everything he got on the man who had his designs.

“What makes you so sure Pearson Aeronautics stole them?”

“Only five weeks after the designs went missing they came up with a similar project. I mean... please, this is too obvious.”

It was indeed, but then again humans were stupid like this. He didn't catch thieves because they worked perfect.

“I don't know. I'm not a thief.”

“That's not why I'm here, Mister Minyard. I have thieves. I just need one honest man who watches over them.”

One honest... this man thought he was honest? Something in Andrew's chest stung at that. He hadn't even been hired because his employer had thought he was honest. He had been hired, because he was good and wasn't interested in paintings or money. He had been hired because he loved the thrill of a plan going right. Because the triumph over a competitor made him feel something more than endless emptiness.

“Look at whom I've got. You sure recognize some of the names.”

Andrew took the file with the profiles of the three hired thieves and stopped for a second, taking in all the names. Of course he knew them. He hunted each one of them at some point of his career. They were the best of the best.

Kevin Day – Hacker

He was an absolute 'behind the scenes' guy. Recognized mainly because of the '2' tattooed on his left cheek. Before he went solo he worked together with Riko Moriyama and never took another partner after Riko died when one heist went horribly wrong.

Renee Walker – Hitter

A very christian girl and one of the deadliest persons Andrew knows. Rumor had it, that she found her faith somewhere a few years back and never killed another person. Before that she worked mainly for the government.

Jean Moreau – Thief

Nothing much was known about the Frenchman. Orphaned at birth, he went into the underground pretty young. No one really knows what stolen pieces he is responsible for.

“These three?”, Andrew asked with doubt in his voice.

“Yes. There isn't anyone better, is there?”

“No... but they are all insane.”

Every single one of them would be able to bring down an entire country singlehandedly. They only didn't because they weren't interested in this kind of stuff.

“So, are you in?”

“They have all the same rep. I don't think this will work. They all do jobs alone and only alone. They won't work for you.”

“Oh, they will. Trust me, for three hundred thousand each they will. And for you leading the operation it will be double. And don't forget your bonus. Pearson Aeronautics is insured by 50 Million Dollars by IYS. Mister Minyard, how badly do you want to screw the insurance company that let your cousin die?”

Kapitel 2: The Nigerian job - Part II: The job

Andrew sat the laptop Day had prepared for him on a simple wooden table in a room opposite the Pearson building. A small projector was screening the picture of the building on the wall right behind him. It was a huge skyscraper – of course.

After a few tabs on the keyboard the picture changed to the plan of the floor where they would find the designs. He put on the communication device: "You hear me?"

"What is this?", Day complained immediately. "Out of which museum did you steal this crap? I've got something better."

"No surprises now, Day", Andrew warned but all he got was a grunt in response.

"Fuck you Minyard. Not even Riko could discipline me."

Whatever that was supposed to mean. Andrew heard rustling.

"It's a single earpiece and works off the vibration in your jaw. You can't lose it. It's better than this shit."

"Thanks Kevin", Walker answered in her sweetest voice. "This seems very handy."

"Yeah... whatever."

"Day, don't be stingy. Give me one, too." That was Moreau and Andrew could feel the smugness from Kevin when he gave him an earpiece, too.

"You could thank him, you know.", Renee suggested.

"This girl is really supposed to be a Hitter? You can't be serious."

"Be careful what you say, Moreau.", Andrew warned. "You shouldn't piss off the person who once took down a room full of Hatfords."

"No way!", Day screeched but Andrew didn't give them time to start an argument.

"Concentrate, we have a job to do. We go on my count, not a second sooner. Moreau, no Freelancing!"

"Relax, Andrew.", Renee interrupted and tried to sound as reassuring as possible. "We know what we are doing."

"On my count: Five... four... three..."

"He's gone!", Renee informed him and seemed to be utterly amused.

"Son of a bitch!", Andrew grunted. He could hear the rope unfurl from the fixing. That was what you got when you trusted thieves. Lesson learned.

The next second he saw Moreau falling off the building, coming to a halt precisely at the window he was supposed to stop. At least he knew what he did.

"That was impressive", Renee commented cheerfully.

"Just another adrenaline junkie."

"Don't stand around and stare like idiots. Go!", Andrew shouted, already out of patience. Never again. Never.

"Vibration detectors are on.", Moreau reported.

"So no cutting, use the binary."

Well duh, of course he wouldn't cut if the vibration sensors were on. What did Minyard think he was doing? Jean did this stuff all his life.

So he used the paste which dissolved glass and with a vacuum handle he removed it so a man wide hole was the outcome.

He placed the remote control for the rope and harness on the desk by the window made sure he could support himself on the table and snapped the rope loose. With

utter precision he hoisted himself into the room made two steps on his hands and finally lowered himself to the floor without making a noise or triggering the vibration sensors. He sneaked out of the room and entered the one next to it. 'High Voltage' said the sign.

Meanwhile Renee and Kevin entered the elevator shaft.

"You know, Moreau. Any minute... woah" Day stopped mid sentence, because the elevator they were standing on, began to move downward.

Day had given him a device to manipulate the electronics and see through the CCTV devices, without anyone noticing anything. He just had to manipulate a few cables.

"Moreau, you get anything from the guards?"

"They don't see a thing." Day knew what he did, obviously. The guards didn't even recognize the elevator movement which stopped a few floors down.

"Door is open", he told Walker and Day.

"Okay, it's showtime." Jean rolled his eyes to these dramatics from Minyard.

Renee and Kevin made it to the designated room, Kevin attaching a device to hack the keypad.

"Moreau, you get any chatter from the guards?", Andrew asked while looking at a chart projected on the wall instead of the building plans.

"No, why?"

"There are eight enlisted for duty tonight, but only four people in the room."

"How do you know that? I can't say who's who."

"The haircuts, Moreau. Look at the haircuts."

Stunned Jean paused for a moment. "I... I would have missed that", he whispered.

"What?" - "Nothing!"

"Problem?", Renee asked, still waiting for Kevin to crack the code.

"Maybe. Moreau, look through the cameras."

Kevin mumbled something about a ten digit code, while Jean searched for the missing guards.

"Got them! They are on their round. An hour early! What are they doing?"

Yes what indeed? What was so special about tonight? What was different than any other time?

"Because it's the playoffs", Andrew proclaimed. "They do their rounds early so they can see the game. Alright, where are they?"

"They are at the stairwell."

It would be only seconds until they found the open door and would call in a security breach. While everyone was stunned, Andrew was thriving:

"Okay, here is what we'll do: We gonna squelch them."

Knowing what to do, Jean tapped away on the device Day had given him, sending a deafening signal through the security's communication devices, cutting them from all communication.

"Walker, clear the zone and use Day as bait."

"Wait what!?"

Kevin who still tried to crack the code, looked up only to see Walker shedding her jacket already and running away. But Kevin stayed for the sake of his task.

"Day, they are almost there", came the heads-up from Moreau, making him a bit nervous. He really wasn't meant to be on the field like this. He was the one pulling the strings from behind the curtains, he should be at the control room, where Moreau

was, not down here, where security would find him in a few seconds!

No, this was too much. He let go of the cracking device, which now dangled on the keypad, took his bag and was about to dash, when four people came around the corner, guns in their hands pointing at him: "Stop right there!"

"Fuck!" He raised his hands over his head indicating surrender, when Walker snuck up behind the man, not looking so sweet anymore.

It didn't take her more than five seconds before all four men lay on the ground unconscious. She made sure every gun was disposed of ammunition, then smiled sweetly at him: "No reason to run, Kevin. I'm here to take care of you."

"Yeah, hopefully not", he mumbled to himself, before being interrupted by the beeping of his cracking device. The door opened and they went inside.

Kevin's eyes lit up. Finally - the server main room.

"Hey, you have to talk to me. What's going on?", Andrew asked, sounding a bit stressed out.

"All good, I'm stripping the drives right now."

It was not long after, when Day reported that they had what they wanted. All files, all copies and leaving the servers bare of the files.

"Good", Andrew said. "Now drop the spike."

The spike was a mixture of multiple viruses that led to the system failing completely and entirely. The IT guy wasn't to be envied.

They packed their things, leaving behind the four men who Renee had tied up just to be sure they wouldn't make any more problems.

"Problem", Moreau reported. "These guards you ganged? They reset all the alarms on the roof and all floors above us. We can't go up. It's every man for himself now."

"What? No! I'm the one with the merchandise! You can't leave me alone!", Kevin complained.

"Oh, we can fix that", Renee suggested cheerfully.

"Stop it!", Andrew ground out. "Be quiet for one second in your lives, will you? I have a plan."

This operation wouldn't fail, Andrew would make sure of it.

"I know you don't play nice with others, but this time you have to. I need you to hold it together for exactly seven minutes. Now, get to the elevator and head down. We are going to do the burn scam."

"This is Plan B then?", Renee asked on the way to the elevator. Inside they started to change, pulling cloths from the bags they brought with them.

While they made their way down to Moreau's floor, Andrew explained: "It's actually Plan G."

"How many plans do we have? Is there like a plan M?", Day asked. Andrew could hear the elevator pling, letting in Moreau.

"Yeah. Day dies in plan M.", Andrew answered, grabbing everything in the room he brought with him, stuffing it in his bag and leaving.

"I like plan M", said Moreau and began to change as well. The other two faced the walls and so couldn't see him.

"You know what to do Moreau."

"Shut up, Minyard!", he sneered, then ripped the buttons of his dress shirt apart.

When the elevator came to a halt at the bottom of the building, he rushed out.

"I won't stay here a minute longer! Look at this!" He shouted back at his two companions, gesturing in front of his very scarred chest.

"Hey man, I'm sorry. I freaked out. I didn't know and I didn't want to rip your shirt."

"Should have thought of that before you did it!"

Walker was by his side a steady hand on his back, trying to steer him out of the building, mumbling reassurances frantically.

She looked at the guard standing in the entrance hall: "Stop staring! Don't you think this is hard enough for him?"

The three of them, now wearing nice office clothes, took their first steps through the hall.

"I... I'm sorry. Just..."

While Day was still apologizing and Moreau still shouting at him and Renee telling the guard to not stare, the poor security man hadn't time to stop them before they were out of the building.

In front of the entrance, a car driven by Andrew came to a stop let them in and drove away.

They drove until they knew they were safe. Andrew made sure that Kevin sent the designs, then they got out of the car.

"The payment will be on your accounts some time today.", Andrew said, pulling out a much needed cigarette and lighting it up.

"It was nice being on the same side for once", Renee said. Andrew blew a bunch of smoke at her.

"We are not on the same side. I am not a thief. This was a one time thing", he clarified.

"You are now", Moreau proclaimed. "Come on. You had fun playing the black king instead of the white knight just this once."

Day sneered at that but didn't say anything.

It had been fun, Andrew gave him that. But after being called a monster half his life, he wouldn't give the assholes who thought he was a threat to society any reason to think they were right. He wasn't a thief. He wasn't the most honorable man on the planet, but he was on the right side of the law.

Without another word, he got into his car again and drove away.

Kapitel 3: The Nigerian job - Teambuilding I

Only a few hours after they parted, Andrew found himself in a bar.

The rush of the job was still lasting, so with the alcohol he could live in a state of mind, where there wasn't the sound of a heartmonitor. Where he didn't see Nicky in front of his eyes still smiling in the last hours of his live, apologizing for never doing a good enough job as a legal guardian and thanking Andrew for being there. Saying that he hoped he would be happy one day, that he hoped he and Aaron would find a way to finally be a family and that he would look down from the clouds, looking over them, while screwing every single one of the hot angels he would meet.

Andrew didn't remember even one of the syllables. Not one. Not now. No...

He felt dazed, when someone sat beside him.

"It is only ten o'clock. I didn't know they served alkohol at this time of the day."

They didn't but it wasn't impossible to spike drinks.

"What do you want?"

Walker smiled at him, patient and warm like she talked to a kid. He hated her.

"I saw the darkness in your eyes and I thought you could need someone to talk to."

"Fuck off. I don't need anything. Espacially not your pity, Walker."

As if Renee Walker hadn't her own share of problems and darkness. Every one in the Crew had it.

"We wouldn't have been able to go through with the job without you. Thank you for keeping an eye out for us."

Andrew just grunted. It had been his job, he had been supposed to be the good one, the honest one. So he got everyone out alive and in one piece.

"I said I would."

"So you did.", she hummed joyfully. "Andrew... the scars on Jeans body-"

"Not my story to tell", he interrupted her. He wouldn't betray someone's privacy. Bad enough he had to expose Morreau's scars.

"Okay, right, sorry."

"You are still here.", Andrew stated indifferently.

"Yes, Andrew. And I will stay. We don't need to talk, of course. But I will sit here and drink a soda or ten, until you feel comfortable enough to go home."

Go home. There was no home. His home was in Columbia and he wouldn't get near that house anytime soon.

"Whatever."