

The Request
By
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Twenty miles west of Miami sat a deserted sun bleached asphalt road. Beyond the occasional palm tree, the area was wide open with overgrown tropical grass and marsh weeds. At one time in the past, the land was going to be developed into another planned community. Yet due to funding problems the developer never got past the construction of roads and a few drive ways. In the end, the spot became deserted and off the beaten path.

Along one of those old unused streets sat a lonely white van. This vehicle was a rather non-descript sort of affair. It's tall sides had no signs proclaiming who owned it.

While outside it appeared quiet, inside three people sat working at their computer stations. Around them were numerous screens displaying various video feeds. Each was trained on what appeared to be an abandoned concrete plant. While a few others displayed the active thoroughfare that passed before the structure.

"I wish we could have gotten a camera on the opposite side. There's got to be more going on back there," wistfully spoke an Asian man.

"Sorry Dylan, I tried. But when I drove the boat up the tributary, a security craft stopped me." Responded another man sitting beside Dylan. "Thankfully they bought my fishing story."

"Don't feel bad Jack, I couldn't approach that side from land either," admitted Dylan. "But at the very least Ava did find their unlisted phone number."

"True, but how much did she pay for it?"

"I heard a million."

"Wow!"

"Tell me about it!"

"Ok pay attention you two," admonished a woman who was focused on her surveillance screens.

"Yes Andrea," sullenly responded both men.

"Hey I'm getting something on that wire tap," quickly spoke Dylan donning a pair of headphones. The other two followed

suit. Each heard the tapped phone ring for a couple moments. Then after numerous rings, someone finally answered.

"Yes," asked what sounded like a deep inhuman male voice.

"Hey Luke, long time no speak," greeted the other. This male voice sounded like they were relatively human. Yet there were still hints of inhumanity to the voice. Plus the ocean was quite loud in the background.

"Edward, how long has it been," greeted the deep voice.

"Too long. It's been a couple months since I last surfaced," casually gossiped Edward.

"What'cha been up to?"

"Having lots of fun in the Bermuda."

"I bet!"

"What have you two been up to?"

"Same as always."

"Speaking of which, how's our numbers?"

"Growing. So far we have three clubs, here, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles."

"Anyone else go aquatic?"

"Beside you, two others."

"Oh wow, I wish I could meet them," exclaimed Edwards.

"Well, you'd have to swim over to the pacific," Luke answered.

"Oh."

"So what do we owe this pleasant call from a denizen of the sea?"

"It's related to those other Transformed Improved," Edward spoke with a wistful tone.

"How so," inquired Luke.

In the van, the three people were making sure to record what they were hearing. Dylan and Andrea were taking copious notes. While Jack made sure the signal was strong.

"I guess, well, I'm getting a bit lonely," admitted Edwards.

"You knew that might happen when you agreed to be transformed."

"I know and I still love how I am now. But, I was thinking of getting you two to procure me, um, a lover?"

"Lover?"

"Yea, maybe someone who's willing to join me in my journey undersea."

"I don't know Edward? You've been the only sea monster we've been asked to create. I can't say when the next person who requests that will come along. Nor could I say they'll be easy on the eyes."

"I understand."

"Sorry."

There was a pause in the call. Then Edward spoke up with an eager tone. "Oh hey, here's an idea. I've heard of others using the nanobots to adjust people's minds."

"Yes, I've heard that as well."

"Well then how about this, get a good looking woman, adjust her mind, then transform her into a companion for me," Edward eagerly proposed.

Luke did not respond right away. "I don't know. That'd take a lot of work and risk. Are you saying we kidnap an Improved?"

"I don't think you could. Why not just get a regular human girl and do it to her?"

"Oh, I see what you mean. How much is this worth to you?"

"A couple million."

"Three."

"Three million dollars for you to kidnap a girl, change her mind, then transform her?"

"Yes."

"Alright. I'll have my escrow account transfer money to yours."

"Very good, do you have an idea of what you would like her transformed into?"

"Sure, a mermaid?"

"Going for the classics aren't ya?"

"Yep!"

"We'll try to make her like that as best as we can."

"How long?"

"Hmmm... I'd say two weeks."

"That long?"

"Yea, we're going to have to go through a few intermediaries to track down the right woman for you."

"Ok, I'll contact you next week to discuss this further."

"Very good, as soon as I see the money in our account, we'll start," promised Luke.

"I'll get it as soon as we're done here. Been fun gossiping with ya."

"Same here," answered Luke before hanging up.

Back in the van, the three silently pondered what they had just heard. Each was trying to figure out what the two speakers were talking about. Finally Dylan spoke up, "were those Improved?"

"The source said this was an Improved center," commented Andrea.

"But that was a rather strange request," interjected Jack.

"Well we've seen others create pet monsters. Sounded like one rich Improved wants a personal mermaid," chipped in Dylan.

"Think we can stop them before they hurt another innocent," asked Jack.

"Don't know, but we've got two weeks to try," answered Andrea as she picked up her phone and began dialing. They listened as she filled Ava in over what they heard. It sounded like their leader was going to deploy all here resources to try and find out who Luke was going to kidnap.

Two people lay hidden by the tall wild grass. Each was covered head to toe in camouflage. One had a set of binoculars aimed at the van containing Audrey, Dylan, and Jack. The other held a laser microphone.

The pair listened to what was going on inside the vehicle. After Dylan had hopped into the driver's seat, started up the car, and drove off, both put away their things. Then one pulled out a cell phone and dialed a number.

"Yep, that group took the bait. When? Well the monsters are plotting to make another in two weeks. It sounds like those humans will try and stop them. I know funny huh? Yep, two birds with one stone. Ok, we'll keep watching the monsters. You? Oh, follow the van and make sure they do what we want them to."

The one person hung up his phone and put it away. Afterward he pulled off his hood exposing his handsome cleanly shaven face with military cut blond hair. Peering about he smiled at how things were working. That exposed his sharp shark like fanged teeth. The other followed suit exposing a cute

feminine face and long brown hair. She had two prominent snake like fangs and green lizard eyes.

"Things are working out exactly as planned Maria," he appraised her.

"I'm glad Adrian.?"

"Hopefully this sends the right warning to those freaks."

"And put a stop to that idiotic anti-Improved group."

"I wish we could just smash them outright," Adrian wistfully spoke.

"I agree."

Mandy Williams sighed exasperatedly again over what her boyfriend had done to her. It was why she sat in a cheap motel north of Miami in a seedy neighborhood. Also why she sat on the room's single bed contemplating a laptop with a job search on its screen.

"Don't worry hun. We're going to be rich," Neal, Mandy's boyfriend, had promised her.

"But I don't want to go down to Florida! I like it here in the city," she whined.

"But hun, if we bring the shipment like Rob asked me to, then our cut is a quarter of a million! Think what we could do with that?"

"But why do we need to live down in Miami? I don't know anyone down there?"

"Honey, don't worry. You'll make new friends. Plus with who Rob's hooking me up with, I guarantee we will be raking in more. Please come, I would be so lonely if you weren't with me?"

Mandy did love Neal. Despite him being a member of a drug cartel, he had always treated her right. Much better than some of his cohorts who liked to beat their women. Plus the money did sound nice and he was a good earner.

"Alright, ok. I'll leave New York City with you. But you gotta promise me you will get us a nice ocean side villa," she softly demanded peering into his eyes.

"Anything you want," Neal eagerly replied leaning in to passionately kiss Mandy.

Neal did all the driving and Mandy enjoyed the scenery. It's trunk was full of bags stuffed with white powder. While their suitcases had to go into the backseat.

Two days later they checked into a good place in Miami. After having Mandy wait, Neal went out to conduct business. Rob wanted him to drop off the drugs, get the money, then transport it to his new boss, Hector Ramirez.

Unlike most in the cartel, Neal was not a street man any longer. Sure he had spent time there, but he had gotten a college education. Afterword Rob hired him to do the books. Later Hector needed a new man to do his own finances and Rob gave him Neal. Plus to kill two birds with one stone, Rob also had Neal deliver a shipment under the promise it would be safe.

However unbeknownst to Neil, the people he was delivering the drugs too had different ideas. They wanted the drugs but they had no plans to pay for them. Plus they were ballsy enough to think they could rip off a Mexican cartel. Thus before Neal knew it, they shot him in the head and stole the drugs.

At first Mandy sat clueless in their hotel. The cartel had no idea she was there. Yet while waiting she decided to listen to the local news. There Mandy learned of not only of the theft and Neal's death, but also the cartel's bloody retaliation.

Distraught, Mandy did not know what to do. She was unsure if the cops knew she had been in the car with Neal. The woman did not want to go to jail nor did she want that gang to come after her.

Then it dawned on Mandy that she could not afford to stay in the hotel that long. She did not have that much money on her. Plus what cash Neal left her would not last long. On top of that, she had nowhere in New York to return to. They moved out of their apartment and her estranged family lived in Oregon.

That was why she now lived in a seedy motel and was searching for a job. Employment in a city she did not really like and was too hot for her tastes. Yet she had to eat and find a permanent place to live. At least until she earned enough to get out of Miami.

Perusing the online want ads, Mandy found something that caught her eye. A club in south Miami was looking for an exotic dancer. She had done that once before and knew the moves. Plus she was in her twenties and her looks were quite eye catching.

At the very least, she could do that and earn for something better.

With that she called the business number and got the club manager. After filling him in on her previous experience, the man invited her to come down. Already having done that sort of thing before, Mandy knew exactly what she needed to do for the interview.

Then a long and expensive cab ride later, she stood outside a non-descript looking cinderblock single story building. The only indication it was a dance club was by its tall neon sign above the main entrance. She saw a few nicely maintained Mercedes sedans parked beside the place. Plus a suited guard stood beside the door.

Getting out of the cab, Mandy carefully walked over to the entrance in her high heels. Briefly she adjusted the tight black dress she put on for the interview. It showed off her curves quite nicely.

"Um, hello? I'm here to see mister Nero," Mandy greeted the guard. His eyes briefly appraised her body before focusing on her face.

"Is he expecting you," he studiously responded.

"Yes sir, he asked me to come down."

"Wait please," the man spoke while again gazing at her body. Then he brought his hand up to his mouth. She could see he had one of those discrete radios up his sleeve. "Yes sir, I'll let her in," he responded into the radio before opening the door for Mandy.

"Thank you," she spoke entering. She knew he was once again checking her out as she entered the dark club interior.

The space appeared to be the typical stripper club. Lots of booths, a long dance way with a few poles, a bar, and a DJ cubicle. Off to the side she saw two men sitting in a booth watching her. When they saw Mandy enter, one waved her over.

Walking provocatively, she made her way around empty tables to the two. Both were dressed in suits and had neatly kept hair. Each looked to be of some sort of south American descent.

"Mandy Walker," the man who waved her over casually asked.

"Yes sir, I'm here for the dancer job."

"And you said you had experience?"

"Yes sir, I worked in a club in New York City."

"Which one?"

"The Playmate Society."

"I know that place. Had some sweet girls. If you worked there, then you should know what to do out there. Show me what'cha got," Mr. Nero spoke gesturing to the runway.

"Yes sir," Mandy studiously replied. She had expected he was going to ask her to dance for her. Briefly peering at the stage, she ascended up to its top.

Mr. Nero then spoke to the other man in the booth, "go have Rob cue up some music." That man got up and strode across the room.

There she waited for the club DJ to get some music and lights going. Once she was lit and had good music, Mandy began her dance. She briefly walked around the stage provocatively. Then at the right moment she slowly started to strip down to her black lacy underwear. Next she took a spin on the pole. Then after seductively flipping around on the pole, she stripped further. Finally nude, she continued to dance for another couple minutes to the music.

Once the final song ended, Mandy finished dancing. The two men enthusiastically clapped from off to the side. She grabbed her things, hopped off the stage, then got dressed. Afterword she crossed back over to the two men.

"So..." Mandy posed to Mr. Nero.

"Splendid. You have a beautiful body and style," he graciously complimented her.

"Thank you."

"You said last job was in New York City?"

"Yes?"

"How long have you been in Miami?"

"Only for a couple days," Mandy admitted standing before the two men,

"Wow, that short of a time and here you are looking to work? Why?"

"Well, um, my boyfriend and I were planning on settling down here. Yet he was murdered."

"I'm so sorry to hear that. How long ago?"

"Only a couple days."

"Wow, and you're here?"

"He was involved in something..."

"Oh I see. And do you," he leadingly asked.

"No I have never."

"I see. Then you're looking to raise money to what end?"

"Maybe to go back up north to the city," Mandy admitted.

"So the first paycheck you get your darting?"

"No, I'll stay for at least six months."

"Ok, then what about family?"

"None around here," she replied suspiciously.

"I just want to make sure there's someone here to help you beside my club." Mr. Nero paused to ponder her for a moment. Then he clapped his hands to his knees and smiled, "great, you're hired. John, go get us something to drink to celebrate Mandy's new employment."

"Yes sir," the man beside Mr. Nero spoke getting up.

"Here have a seat and lets discuss your salary."

For the next couple of moments the two chatted over how much she was going to get paid. Before long Mr. Nero decided to pay her under the table. Because she needed the money, she readily accepted.

Soon John was back carrying Mr. Nero's whiskey and Mandy's soda. She sipped the drink while the three gossiped for a moment. Yet something in her didn't feel right. Her vision became blurry and she felt woozy. Briefly she tried to get up but abruptly collapsed to the floor.

"I'll give Luke a call and let him know we've got his girl. She's perfect for his client. Get a couple of guys to bring her out back. Then go to the motel she's staying at and clean it, pay the bill, and make sure they have no record of her," Mr. Nero instructed John. He pulled out his cell phone and began dialing while the other man got some people to help him move the unconscious Mandy out of the main room.

"Wow, there's more security here now than before," Jack exclaimed scurrying back into the van.

"Are you sure," responded Andrea remotely moving a few cameras.

"Yea. I'm not sure if either the Improved increased their security or we just missed them before. Yet I counted at least ten guards around the property."

"Do you think they know we're here," interjected Dylan.

"No," Jack quickly responded. "Plus, I saw this," he spoke while he showed them something on a screen. The three stared at numerous images of power and telephone poles spaced throughout the property. At first they seemed like normal wooden poles. Yet as they zoomed into each, the group noticed small sphere like objects near their tops. Then they saw other pictures that showed those same spheres on a few trees and buildings.

"So its fully under surveillance," Audrey surmised.

"It seems like that," answered Jack.

"So sneaking up to them is a no-go," Dylan added.

"I think it's best that we go in fast and hard," Andrea answered. "Dylan contact the strike group and get them ready."

"Hold on Audrey, a van is driving onto the property," Jack announced pointing to one of their monitors. They saw a white unmarked van slowly drive up the property's long main driveway. It carefully turned left and drove around the giant main building towards the back away from their limited cameras.

"This is the right spot," questioned one of Mr. Nero's men.

"I think so. He said it was an abandoned concrete plant," the other man uncertainly replied while driving the vehicle.

"But why drop her way out here?" The passenger asked gesturing to the drugged woman laying in the back. Mandy's nude unconscious body was splayed out on the floor.

"Don't know and don't care. If the boss wants it like this, then that's it!"

"Got it."

Silently they steered around a turn and drove along a short road. To their right was the tall fading white concrete building. To the left was a sun drenched wild grass field. Strangely before them was a wide open fenced paddock that contained a small group of cattle.

Then they turned right again and drove along the back of the building. They came across numerous tall roll up doors large enough to allow a tractor trailer to easily enter the giant building. Then the two glimpsed a smaller door with a number two painted upon it.

"Is that the spot?"

"Yep."

"Alright, lets unload her and get out of here," responded the driver as he parked the van and got out. The two went over to the right side and slid open the door. There they got into the back and grabbed a set of limbs. Picking her limp body up, the two carried Mandy out of the vehicle and moved her over to the door labeled two. Finally they softly lowered her down to the ground. Afterword both got back in the van and drove away.

For a couple minutes the space was silent and unmoving. The only sounds were the constant breeze, mooing from the cattle, and the gentle lapping sounds from the nearby water. While Mandy's nude unconscious body lay under the sun.

Abruptly the door opened outward exposing the building's dark interior to the bright Florida sun. Emerging from the door came what looked like a giant brown six limbed cougar. The thing's paws appeared more like hands then cat feet. Plus it had a third eye in the center of its forehead.

Briefly the cat thing peered about checking to make sure the area was clear. Seeing nothing nearby, it briefly went back inside and pulled out a gurney. It then padded over to the unconscious woman and reached out its two front limbs to pick up Mandy. It then put her atop of the gurney before pushing it back inside the building. The thing briefly used a free limb to close the door behind it.

"That's her," asked a deep bestial voice from within the space.

"You got it Luke. Nero found us a beautiful one," spoke the cat with a male voice.

"Very good Jake. I'll send him the payment," Luke responded as Jake rolled Mandy across the room.

"Did you get her transformation programmed in," Jake asked a huge being standing across the space. The other monster was truly bizarre. It's center body appeared to be some sort of dragon like dinosaur. It had five necks and heads. Each one had numerous eyes and insect mandibles. Emerging out of its sides were eight huge spider legs. While it had four scorpion arms and claws, two scorpion tails, and small grasping limbs in its rear.

"Yes and I think he'll like what we chose," Luke giddily spoke out of one of his heads.

"Alright I'll inject her." Jake spoke crossing the space, grabbed a syringe full of a metallic substance, and went back to Mandy. There he injected its contents into her left arm.

"Did you hear that," questioned Maria.

"No what," Adrian responded pondering Andrea's van. The pair had repositioned themselves when the van moved to a different spot. Over the past few days the Improved pair had rotated shifts with a few others. Each had been shadowing the van wherever it went.

"Those humans plan on attacking the Transformed Improved center soon."

"Good good, I'll get our forces ready to attack as well."

"Did you catch what that other van dropped?"

"Looked like a girl?"

"Think they're going to eat her?"

"Don't know. Though this pair seems to like cattle more than humans," Andrea dismissively spoke.

"That's another reason why I don't like those freaks. They don't enjoy the taste of human flesh like we do," mocked Maria.

Mandy still lay on the gurney Jake had deposited her upon. She was still unconscious and unaware of what was happening to her. Yet large portions of her unmoving body did not even look human any more.

From her hips on downward was a long multi shaded grey fish tail. Its distal end terminated in curved shark fins. Plus emerging from halfway along the single limb were small fins.

While she may have been on her back when Mandy was rolled in, somewhere along the way she was flipped over. That allowed a large triangular grey dorsal fin to grow out from her spine. Also along her chest sides were tri-slit gills. Then above her gills were not two but four arms in two pairs. Each ended in black clawed webbed fingers. Lastly Jake was inspecting her open mouth peering at her newly grown shark teeth.

"Her changes look good," Jake commented.

"Is the tank ready," Luke asked turning a few heads toward the cat monster.

Jake stood up and crossed the space to a large open yellow plastic tank. It had a grouping of wheels along its base and had been designed to move around large fish. The cat monster climbed a ladder to inspect the tank's interior. He saw it was nearly full of salt water.

"Yep, it's just about done," he spoke getting down and turning off a spigot filling the tank.

"Good," responded Luke as he crossed the distance to the gurney. His eight huge hard legs clacked against the concrete floor with each step. After gesturing for Jake to help him, Luke transferred Mandy from the bed to his scorpion claws. He was trying to be as soft and gentle as his large frame allowed.

The giant monster carefully carried the fish girl across the space. There he dropped her into the tank with a splash of sea water. Afterward both peered over the tank's edge to see Mandy's newly grown gills begin to breathe water.

"Let's finish up her mental conditioning then contact Edwards," Jake reminded Luke.

Thirty miles northeast of Luke's compound flew two unmarked choppers. In the back portion of both craft were ten people dressed in black combat gear. Each cradled a large menacing rifle. Their protective masks hid their eager faces.

"Talon one to recon one," responded a male trooper near the front. He held in his hands an encrypted radio.

"Go ahead talon one," responded Andrea over his device.

"We're two mikes out from the target. Operation slam dunk still a go?"

"Yes, operation slam dunk is still a go. Once you land and take the building, I'll join you inside," Andrea confirmed.

"Roger that," the uniformed man spoke ending the transmission. "Everyone get ready. We're going to go in hard and heavy," he called out to the people on his helicopter. Then he transmitted the same instructions to the other craft.

Back at the van, the three people inside watched the two helicopters approach their target. Each angled for a good spot to touch down and disgorge their troopers. Yet suddenly teams

of people emerged seemingly out of nowhere and began firing at the two helicopters. "We're taking fire," the troop commander radioed to Andrea.

"Return fire," she commanded him.

"Roger that."

With that response, one trooper slid open the chopper's side door. They were tethered into the plane as they maneuvered a machine gun out the door. The pilot strafed a group of attackers while the trooper sprayed them with bullets. Behind them the other craft followed suit.

Abruptly out of nowhere came a scream of a missile. It lanced out from the bush and slammed into the second helicopter. The craft had no chance as it exploded killing everyone inside.

"Chopper two is down, I repeat chopper two is down," Dylan urgently yelled out.

"I see that, what's the status of the first craft," Andrea yelled.

"They're having a hard time landing. The Improved forces are putting up a constant fire."

"We need to put this center out of commission! I'm going to call for re-enforcements."

"But Andrea, the nearest group is still a day away," Jack protested.

"I know, but we're neck deep in it and we're going to need the help!"

Unbeknownst to Andrea and her fighters, she was not engaging an army of Improved. Instead she was being repelled by Luke's security forces. The real improved fighters were quietly sneaking their way around the battle and towards the main building. They were using the conflict as a diversion for their activities

A group of five people, each wearing black combat gear, slowly crept up to the main building's back door. Three kept a look out while two approached the metal thing. One, a woman by her shape, reached into a pocket and pulled out a small bit of explosive then planted it on the door lock.

"Move away," Maria commanded the others. Each moved to a safe distance.

Then when she was ready the others raised their rifles. Next she pressed a radio trigger. That caused a sudden pop of a bang which blew in the door. It flew into the dark space.

After that the five streamed into the huge interior. Yet instead of encountering large amounts of servants or scientists, the group saw no one. A silent gesture from Maria caused them to fan out. Some crossed the space towards Luke's mainframe which controlled his nanobots. There they hurriedly began planting explosives. Another pair scouted the other areas within the darkened space. While Maria climbed a ladder to peer into the tank. There she saw the unconscious Mandy floating in the water.

"Did you think I'd be fooled by that little war going on outside," Luke amusedly remarked out of one of his heads. It sounded nearby Maria. Then before she knew it, he raced a claw out and ripped her away from the tank.

"Let me go you ugly monster," Maria screamed.

Meanwhile in the background Jake quickly leaped out of nowhere and tackled each person planting explosives. One he used his jaws to bite their head off. While the other he raced over and slammed into the ground with a heavy swipe of a paw.

"Who are you," questioned Luke. He brought a few heads close to Maria while he lightly squeezed the claw holding her. That caused the Improved woman to scream out. Her enhanced strength was no match against his.

Luke noticed the other two free attackers trying to sneak up on him. Quickly he lanced out one of his tails and speared the Improved in his back. The other, Adrian, Luke shot a head out and swallowed the improved man whole.

"Mark sent us," hurriedly gasped Maria.

"The manager of the Miami Club?"

"Yes him, he's unhappy with what you two have been doing out here."

"And those fighting my security? They're yours as well?"

"No, They're an anti-improved group we duped into attacking," Maria painfully cried out.

"So Mark is behind all of this is he? Well we're just going to have to send him a reply won't we," Luke appraised Jake as the cat monster came closer.

"That bastard," spat Jake. "I thought we were off his radar?"

"Apparently not, how's our forces outside?" Luke asked as he crossed the space. Maria was still struggling to free herself from the monster's powerful shelled claw. She knew at any moment Luke could snap it shut slicing her in half.

Jake hurriedly checked a few surveillance cameras. On them he could see their men overwhelming Andrea's forces. Already the attacking team had gotten somehow to the ground yet were taking heavy losses.

"They've got it under control," answered Jake.

"Good, I'm glad we got those guys. But just in case, call Edward and get him over here."

"You got it."

"Now about you," spoke Luke as he focused a head on Maria. "What shall I do about you? I could eat you. Yet that would leave Mark guessing about how his 'message' went." Luke paused to ponder an idea. "You know I think it's time I send a message of my own."

With that, Luke carefully angled a few heads over to Maria. Then before she knew it, he used both heads in to bite off her legs. Each bit was quickly swallowed while Maria screamed out in pain. Next he used the same heads to rip off her arms which were also consumed.

Satisfied she was not going anywhere, Luke deposited Maria's limbless body on the ground. Blood began to pool around her. Finally to put her out of her misery, he lanced out one of his scorpion tails and speared the dying woman. He felt his poison overwhelm her.

Once the last bit of Andrea's forces had been destroyed, Luke recalled his security commander. The man did not flinch at seeing the gigantic monster. Luke instructed him to take Maria's body back to Mark as a message to leave them alone. The security man assented then reached down to easily pick up the limbless corpse with one hand.

Afterward Jake informed Luke that Edward was eager to receive his girlfriend. That he would meet them by the channel at midnight.

Andrea could not believe what she had witnessed. All of her forces had been wiped out. Not only that, but Jack was

driving their van hurriedly away from the scene. Behind them was a trio of cars, each had someone firing their weapons at them.

"The longer this goes on, the more chances they have at stopping us. We've got to get rid of this van and find another ride," Andrea hastily spoke.

"I thought I saw a used car lot a few miles away near that gas station," answered Dylan. "We could hotwire one of the cars."

"That'll work," agreed Jack. He then began driving the van down a side road. Their pursuers just narrowly made the turn and were back firing at them.

Finally after a couple tense minutes Jack made it to the outskirts of the used car lot. It was just at that moment that their rear tires were shot out. That caused the van to become unstable.

Suddenly the van came to a halt and all three occupants rushed out of the vehicle. Each push their way through the brush and into the back portion of the car lot. There they found all sorts of cars of different makes and models. Meanwhile their pursuers began encircling the lot looking for the three.

Jack finally found a sedan. He silently signaled the others, pulled open the unlocked door, and discovered the keys were in the ignition. After that the trio jumped inside, started the car, and roared out of the parking lot. By the time their pursuers had realized what had happened, the three were long gone.

Midnight found Jake wheeling the water tank with the transformed Mandy inside. He pushed the heavy cart with its sloshing contents across a long concrete jetty. Behind him walked Luke who was having to carefully place his eight legs due to the narrowness of the pier.

"You did it," Edward abruptly called out from the water's surface.

"Yes, we crafted her like you asked," L answered uke shifting a head over to where Edward swam. He saw the aquatic monster had poked his large fanged jawed head out of the water.

The monster used a few of his arms to hold himself onto the pier. Plus Luke thought he saw some tentacles raise out of the water as well.

"Sweet, can I see her," Edward eagerly asked.

"Sure hold on," responded Luke. He reached out two giant claws and carefully grasped the tank. Then he gently tipped the container over pouring its contents out into the channel. Maria limply fell out into the water beside Edward.

"She's still drugged but that should wear off in an hour," Jake informed Edwards.

Edwards effortlessly swam over to where Maria had landed and cradled her in a few of his arms. He began inspecting her body. "She's stunning," he replied with awe. "You've made her absolutely gorgeous. And her mind?"

"When she wakes up, she'll be completely subservient to you," explained Luke.

"Excellent. She really is something to behold isn't she?"

"Yes she is," agreed Jake.

"What's her name?"

"Mandy, but you can name her anything you like. Her conditioning will mean she'll agree to whatever you suggest."

"Sweet! I'll make sure to credit you two something extra for getting this done a couple days ahead of schedule."

"Thank you and it's been good doing business with you," professionally answered Luke.

"Now if you excuse me, my new girlfriend and I need to get acquainted!" Happily responded Edwards as he dove underwater dragging Mandy with him.