

Prompt - A hitwoman and two belligerent anacondas are guests at a party  
By Ocean

Cynthia plucked a tall, thin champagne glass from the tray as a waiter passed by. Bringing the drink to her lips she took a quick sip, careful not to ingest too much alcohol. Now was not the time to dull her senses with booze, she was on the job.

Any minute now, the Prince of Moldova would come in and be introduced. Until then, Cynthia was left waiting, pretending to mingle as one of the many invited guests at the Tuxico Midnight Christmas Ball and Gala Event.

'Patience, patience.' She thought to herself, faking a smile to an elderly man passing her by. 'Once he comes out, the plan will go into action. The contract will be fulfilled and I'll be paid. Just think of where we'll vacation next. There was that nice property you were eyeing up in Saint Marten. I hear the weather is lovely this time of year. You could hang those drapes in the-- No! What is *she* doing here?'

Cynthia had to resist crushing the slim glass in her hands. The daggers in her eyes shot out at the entrance way to the hall where guests were lined up to enter. At the front of the line, handing over their party invitation, stood a short, plump woman in a red dress, matching hat and incredibly long green scarf that draped over her shoulders and wrapped around her neck numerous times.

'The Duchess!' Cynthia's eye twitched as she gritted her teeth. 'How did she convince Madam Bartlet to get her into this party? But if she's here, the Duke must be nearby.'

She scanned around the room until her eyes fell onto the unusually long centerpiece on the main table. Down the center of the long, thick golden rope that stretched from end to end.

'Of course, how did I not see him before. He's positioned perfectly. Blast!' She down the rest of drink and slammed it down, turning her attention back to the lady in red. The large lady now stood at a table, drink in hand, chatting with another couple. Cynthia stared at the green scarf, watching as the end of the scarf lifted one of its ends to match her gaze. A quick flick of a tongue shot out from the scarf's mouth and Cynthia had her confirmation.

The anaconda twins had made their way into the party and were here to steal her kill.

The plan was compromised. Cynthia started to back pedal in her mind, calculating other options but her train of thought was interrupted. The band picked up and the stage lights turned on. The MC of the evening came out and announced to everyone their special guest of the evening.

'Quick! Think!' Cynthia shouted to herself. 'The plan is toast, the snakes will get to him before I can carry out my own plan. The best I can do now is stop them but what are they up to?'

She glanced at the head table but nothing had happened yet as the prince was still on the stage shaking hands with the MC. Looking back to Madam Bartlet, the woman remained, still chatting but her wildly original apparel no longer sat on her shoulders. The snake was gone. The hitwoman's head searched the room but the green anaconda had vanished. Glancing back to the stage, she was out of time. The prince was being helped to his seat, unaware of the wriggling table decoration slithering closer to his seat. The Duke was about to strike.

Cynthia reached under her table and grasped the semi-automatic tactical rifle she had strapped underneath in case of an emergency. She tried to run over to the main table but found herself glued in place. Grunting, she looked down to find the Duchess wrapped tightly around her legs and moving upwards to her torso, triangular head staring her down, tongue flicking in and out of the snakes mouth.

"You bitch!" Cynthia yelled as punched the Duchess in the nose. "I won't let you get away with this!"

A scream echoed against the walls and the hit woman turned to look back. The prince's mouth was agap, his arms flailing wildly as the Duke now arched over top of him.

"No!" Cynthia grunted as flung her weight against the snake, toppling both of them over. As she fell to the ground, Cynthia aimed her gun at the head table. Closing one eye, she bit her ruby lips and fired her gun twice.

The bullets shot through the room, skimming across the floor before impacting into the two back legs of the prince's chair. As the snake was about to sink down onto the prince, the chair gave out and the squealing prince fell backwards out of harms way. The security detail grabbed the man and dragged him out of harm's way while the rest formed a wall between the yellow snake and the prince.

The Duchess hissed angrily at Cynthia before slithering off. Cynthia let out a sigh of relief before realizing that security was making its way over to the woman with a gun in the room. She scrambled to the floor and pushed a table into their way before running out the back exit.

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The end of the cigarette glowed in the chill night's air. Cynthia leaned against the roof access and exhaled a puff of smoke into the sky. That was close, too close. The snakes had the jump on her but she managed to foil their plan. It's too bad they had slithered away before they had been captured.

The hit woman leaned over the edge of the roof and watched the security detail ushering the prince to his limo car. They shut the door and commented into their walkie-talkies. Cynthia waited until the car started to pull away before she flipped the detonator switch in her hand.

The night's sky lit up from the large explosion. Cynthia took one last puff off her smoke before tossing it over the building.

"No target gets away from the Red Cyst Cynthia, nobody."