

Mernation

Ep. 2

*Going Under*

By A. C. Zito

“How much you got?” The guard asked me. I had nothing, but I wanted to impress the guy.

“I worked as a high-end exotic dancer, I’m guessing that’s not a job I can get down there is it?” I wasn’t actually a high-end dancer. I was actually just a low-end stripper that was at some cabaret right outside *Boonieville, USA*.

They took the blindfold off me. That was unusual. This was something I was not expecting so soon. They looked nervous as they stared me and up and down; checking me out, like they had some other ideas up their sleeve.

“Give us what money you have.” One of them said to me, holding out his hand. He scanned the ocean even though we were out in the middle of nowhere. I took five submarines to get to the loading dock. And do you know how many decoys they have running the ocean a day? Depends mainly on the importance of the person or the Level they’re going to on any given day, but it still wouldn’t make a difference at where you looked. Mernation would be like trying to find a needle in a haystack. Putin even switched from using Siberia to Mernation because he trusted it that much more.

“I’m not giving you any of my money! I still have to buy a place to stay and clothing gear when I get down there.” I took a step back. I was a little angry at these two trying to take advantage of me. I just wanted to be brought down to Level 5 and start my time in prison; not waste it. It was not like I was expecting anything these two *bimbos* could possibly do for me. I mean, looking at them; they really did look like *Beavis and Butthead* with their security uniforms on, and their official rescue tubes not leaving either of their sides. They looked like two Nazis that still lifeguarded at the local pool on the weekends.

I began to scan the waters. It looked like we were here... but how was I supposed to know? It’s all ocean. I was hoping to see a sign. Something that would say ‘*caution*’ or something clever to let people know to not come around the area. Making people think the area is dangerous but, in actuality, is home to the one and only, *Waterlands*, the place where people go when dark paths are taken.

“I’ll give you my money,” I say, “I’ll give you all twenty-three million dollars of it,” I wanted to see their faces. I wasn’t even sure if someone in my kind of profession made that type of dough... unless... they thought I did a little something on the side.

“Fork it over, and we’ll bump you down to Level 4, maybe even 3. How would you like that, lady?” I was disturbed by their offer. They must think the people in my type of work are dumb sacks of *shit!*”

“I’ll give you both a hand job and a pack of cigs once I get back up to land, but I’m not giving either of you *jack-shit!*” They both looked distressed when I said this. They gave each other a look of panic before one of them spoke up, replying:

“You don’t understand, Ms.-“the guard had to check his papers before adding: “Drake; we’re trying to help you. We want you to live! You don’t understand how bad it is down there...” he had to look nervously at his partner before saying, “down there in five,”

I looked at them like they were both completely mad.

“I’m going down to Level *five!* Not seven or eight, you dumb sacks of lard! Level 5 is a cakewalk compared to *six through ten!*”

The other one shook his head before saying:

“Just trust us, Ms. Drake... you don’t understand how your life depends on it!” They began to worry me. Something wasn’t adding up with these two. I tried to gather my thoughts.

“Okay, okay... but what if I don’t have that type of money.” Their countenances changed upon these few words.” They both gave me a look of disgust with a hint of darkness flinted, just for a second, in both of their eyes.

Communicating silently amongst themselves:

“I told you we should have picked that red-headed kid who looked like he had rich parents!” The other guard shook his head, angrily, saying:

“No, no, *no!*” he bought those *Yeezies* and that fake-ass *Supreme* shirt right before coming here! I heard it from one of the other guards!” The first guard quickly flared back:

“He was lying to you, *dipshit!* Do you know how much money they are about to make from that kid’s family! They even *said* she was a high-end stripper,” pointing to me, “like the *freakin’* girl *said!* It was a lie the whole time! They did their research better than us before coming here!” The second guard got mad at this, saying:

“No, no, no... we got this job right at the perfect time: *tax season!*” At this remark, the first guard smacked him up-top the front of his head, leaving a nasty red mark that might be there for weeks. But it didn’t matter to me! I was home-free! During their whole ranting *sesh*, I went into the closet, in the back, and used one of the cards I snipped off one of them to open it up.

“*No way,*” I whispered to myself in a lighthearted glee, but, while at the same time, trying to keep my voice down. The closet was *stacked!* It had *everything:* harpoons, underwater firearms, underwater bombs, underwater dark guns, tridents, underwater net guns, knives, tomahawks, swords, I could go on and on... I felt one of the blades and the coating they put on it felt weird to the touch. It must’ve been a gel-like substance because it brought shivers down my spine. It had to be what kept the blades from rusting due to being underwater *twenty-four seven.*

I began to suit up. The elastic swim-wear felt old and overused. I already felt itchy from being in it. But I wasn't going to be in it long. I still had my money and those greedy *bastards* weren't getting a dime-worth of any of it! I filled my backpack with a couple of underwater guns, a couple boxes of bullets, a couple underwater dart guns, a couple boxes of darts, I left the underwater bombs pretty much alone but still grabbed one just in case an extreme circumstance were to arise, and I put it in a special compartment away from everything else because... well, I'm not suicidal, that's for sure! Last but not least, I grabbed a harpoon, stuck it in between a couple of strings on the top layer of my backpack, and then I had a fifteen second panic attack. Because this would be it! For the next seven years of my life I would be living in an underwater dungeon where, if I'm not careful... I could get every penny on me stolen, my body turned into a mutilated pulp, my throat cut, or worse... I could become someone's *bitch*.

I grabbed a trident because this world I was headed for wasn't ready for what was coming! This world wasn't ready for Neptune's seat to be taken! A new woman was about to take charge! It was time for everyone to move over because Lora Drake was taking over!