

Fresh Meat

MICHAEL BRADLEY

Nessa advanced cautiously down the access corridor, the pale-yellow cone of her underslung photo lumen illuminating the bare rockcrete walls, pitted from where a foul yellow liquid had dissolved through the plasteel ceiling panels and was slowly eating away at the floor, pooling and mixing with the congealing trail of blood, that sucked at the enforcers boots with every step they took.

The click of her shotgun's stock folding into place seemed to echo unnaturally loud along the gore-streaked hall, but as she shouldered her weapon, its reassuring presence stamped down the gnawing unease roiling within, like a caged phelynx, feeling the thrill of the hunt return, she couldn't help but grin savagely to herself in the enclosed privacy of her helmet.

Thane consulted the handheld Auspex scanner, the small green screen flickered with static sporadically, scanning for any potential hazards that may lie ahead. "Got any leads on where this is leading us Thane?" asked Konrad from his position as rearguard of the fireteam, making sure no hostiles attempted to flank the trio. Holstering his stub gun, Thane checked their position on his gauntlet mounted terminal, noting the same sporadic static was also present there, "Judging by this it should bring us into sub sector C167 but continues all the way through to sub sector C452," kneeling to examine the foreboding trail, as it stretched off beyond the reach of their illumination.

"Isn't that Cawdor territory?" mused Konrad, sweeping his bolter back along the path they had traversed, the light glinting off exposed metal piping. "Definitely seems like

something those fanatics would be up to," the barely perceptible shift of Nessa's flak armour passing as a shrug. "So then why leave all the loot? There was some serious hardware back there," continued Konrad. "Why go to the bother of doing all the heavy lifting and then leave the goods behind?" Exasperated by the continual questions Nessa turned to address her fellow patrolman, "This is the same bunch of promethium sniffers that routinely set themselves on fire in search of 'redemption', they're not exactly the poster children for rational thinking!"

"STATUS REPORT!" Sergeant Gunrick's voice barked over the vox, cutting off the bickering Enforcers. Thane rose from where he had been examining the grisly path, "We have yet to locate the culprit, but they have been kind enough to provide us with a path to follow and judging from its quality they've got a 10 minute head start on us" holding up his combat knife to the light of the enforcers weapons, the tip of the blade coated in congealed blood, "Continue pursuit, deliver justice upon these interlopers in the name of our glorious Lord Helmar!"

"Pax Hel..." as the enforcers replied in unison Thane's scanner beeped loudly, a second beep sounded a heartbeat later, quickly followed by a third, the individual beeps quickly morphing into a long shrill whine from the scanner! Fumbling at the controls Thane stammered "Reading multiple contacts, twenty meters and closing!"