

## Coffee Addict

### Chapter 14 – The Raiments

**‘Lidia was Teresa’s first cop lover and it still felt weird to strip a cop out of her uniform. Something a court might describe as nudity with intent to pleasure. Whatever the truth, there’d be some kind of law against it. That was what laws tended to be for, sucking the fun out of life.’**

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Kate Doyle knew that just about anyone could buy ration packs. Julie had acquired them from somewhere, though it wouldn’t have been hard. Probably just one call from someone in the plantation office. People might complain about a private organisation buying military weapons, but food was different. No one cared who was buying and eating ration packs.

“Some of those supplied by the Americans are best.” Said Chad. “Their rations should get some kind of Michelin star. I know soldiers who miss the stuff when they’re home on leave.”

“Right now.....I’d eat just about anything.” Said Ana. “What is ready to eat ?”

“A surprising amount can be opened and eaten.” Said Chad. “Rations are meant for soldiers on the move, with no cooking facilities.”

“I’m so hungry.” Said Kate. “I need something.....I’d happily eat cold Chili con carne.”

Which was just as well, because that was what she had in her hand. They’d arrived back at the main camp in the temple, far too late to enjoy the hot food. The smell of cooking was still in the air though, which was driving Kate nuts. According to the instructions on the vacuum packed ration pack, she could open it up and begin eating.

“I guarantee it’ll taste better than you think.” Said Chad.

“I’m going to give it a go.” Said Ana.

Plastic utensils and cold ration packs and they still hadn’t discovered where their bed rolls had been left. Hardly a wonderful night at the temple, but they had seen the man like creature vanish before their eyes.

“Seems as though its Chili all round.” Said Kate.

There was a night patrol, being led by Jaimie of all people. They went past as Kate was being surprised by how good a cold Chili could taste.

“Jaimie.....Did you see where they put our bedrolls ?” Asked Chad.

“Yeah.....First large chamber at ground level.” Said Jaimie.

“I know where that is.....We’ll be in with Julie and Gustavo.” Said Ana.

There was dessert too; it seemed a hell of a lot of decent food could be vacuum packed. Large packs of nice things, they chose apple pie, topped with cream. It was delicious and Kate was becoming a convert to ration packs.

“You know what.....If my local supermarket sold ration packs, I’d live on them.” Said Kate.

“Expensive.” Said Chad. “I’d stick to living on deliveries of Pizza and Curry.”

“Cheek.” Said Kate, though she did laugh.

“Oh, this apple pie.....I couldn’t make one this good.” Said Ana.

No matter where their bedding had been placed, Chad and her had agreed to move away to as far from everyone else as was possible. Easy to say, but tired and full of Chili and apple pie. They eased into their bedrolls where they’d been placed. A quick kiss and the next thing Kate knew, it was

morning. She was still tired, but the sun was up and everyone else was up and about. No respect for those suffering fatigue, they were packing up for the journey back to the main camp.

"Oh.....Tell them Chad, I just need another hour." Said Kate.

"I saw some of them talking to Julie as though she's royalty." Said Chad. "Us though, you and I.....We're just the hired help. Time to get up and pack our few bits."

A large group of people are slow to do anything; it seemed to be some kind of universal rule. Kate could have had her extra hour, and another on top; by the time everyone was packed and trudging towards the main camp and the helicopters. The only people to be suffering from tiredness as much as Kate, were Maria and her teenage friends. Had they brought a few bottles of beer with them ? Probably.

"We'll be back before dark." Said Chad. "On the whole, it was a memorable night."

It seemed strange that no one had teased Chad about shooting at shadows. They must have heard the two shots from the supergun.

"There are probably people in New York, wondering what it was." As Chad had commented.

Not that they'd mention it to anyone. It was one of those events that probably should remain a secret. Though how it wasn't the talk of the group.....Kate decided Julie had said something. She was the only person with enough of a reputation to shut everyone up. They were out of the jungle and close enough to hear noises from the camp, before Julie was close enough to talk to.

"Kate, you look wrecked." Said Julie.

"Forget me.....Why is no one asking Chad about firing the supergun, twice ?" Asked Kate.

"Though I must say.....Not being teased is rather nice." Said Chad.

"I was asked and of course I had no idea about it." Said Julie. "I told them I'd seen hunters in the woods and it was probably them."

"Simple as that." Said Kate.

"Ana told me the truth early this morning." Said Julie. "I believe you did shoot something, Chad. I also believe these creatures are nothing to do with Muisca, though I can't prove it."

"So, as far as anyone knows, the shots in the night were hunters." Said Kate.

"Simple explanations are rarely questioned." Added Chad.

By the time Chad and Kate were unpacking in their tent, Kate had stopped wondering why Julie had instantly lied about the shots in the night. Not just a lie, it perfectly fitted the situation. Despite being more tired than she could remember being tired for years, Kate undressed herself, before undressing Chad.

"Ahhh.....So we're not grabbing that extra hour ?" Asked Chad.

"Shut up.....I need this more than I need sleep." Said Kate.

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Michelle Thorpe seemed to have taken over ownership of the camera traps. True, Luke did have a lot of other irons in the fire, but she was definitely doing most of the work with the cameras, and the pics they took. It still amazed her that a camera strapped to a tree in the dark; could produce such amazing pictures. Not just the image intensifier at work, the pictures were better definition than anything her phone camera could take. Despite wanting to get her things unpacked from the trip to the temple, the cameras had to come first. Laptop over her shoulder, she ran into Luke on her way to the first camera.....

"Oh, I'm glad you're looking at them." Said Luke. "I couldn't find the cable to connect them to a laptop. Too much going on at the moment."

"Truthfully, Luke.....What did you think of our trip to the temple ?" She asked.

"Just between you and I ?" Asked Luke.

"Yeah, of course."

"Being honest, I'm hugely disappointed." Said Luke. "We did a lot of walking there and back, but never saw much of the temple. Julie Yago seemed so intent on doing her own thing."

"We could organise our own trip to the temple." Said Michelle. "Just our team from Tessera Coffee and a few carefully selected friends."

Luke was giving her the look of a man who'd had the same idea. It would cause trouble of course, but it wasn't as if Julie Yago owned the temple, or the jungle. Plus, they'd been there now and knew the route through the jungle.

"We'll all suffer the wrath of Julie Yago." Said Luke. "There are so many ways she can make our lives here very difficult."

"She works for Tessera." Said Michelle. "One call to Calgary By David Sullivan and he could make her life pretty difficult."

"Talk to the others and keep it unofficial." Said Luke. "If enough want to go, we'll do it."

There could have been a lot more said, but Michelle had just seen the pictures taken by the first camera, which was closest to their camp. The pics never looked much on the tiny screen of the camera. Copy them to a decent laptop though and they were incredibly good. So good that Michelle found herself trembling slightly. A survivor of many secret black ops missions for the Canadian military; yet this was the first time she's been genuinely scared.

"Crap, Luke.....Now we know what the bunnies are scared of." Said Michelle.

"It just ate one of them." Said Luke. "Does this camera do movie clips ?"

"No, we've just got about three dozen good quality stills." Said Michelle. "No mistaking what's going on though."

It was a huge wolf type creature, hunting the large bunnies in the dark. There was no sound to go with the images, which was a definite blessing. The poor things must have been screaming. The brute leapt on several of them, before ripping them apart. It then ate them, chewing at just about everything apart from the larger bones and most of the fur. Three large bunnies became huge amounts of wolf food and it had all happened incredibly quickly.

"I've never seen anything so brutal." Said Michelle. "No keeping this secret.....Everyone needs to know about this."

"I agree, we'll need to have a night time rota to guard the camp." Said Luke. "Say nothing until I've had a talk to David. Everyone will expect us to have a plan, or they might panic."

"Everyone and everything, always needs a plan." Said Michelle. "Don't worry; this'll be our secret, until you've agreed a plan with David."

She didn't want to see more of the pics the camera trap had taken, but they were strangely addictive. She could see it in the stills; it was the speed the huge wolf moved at and its lack of any kind of body language. Watch a cat play with a mouse and it summed up normal predator behaviour. The wolf creature chased, killed and ate the bunnies, as though it was a bunny killing automaton.

"There's no aggression from the wolf.....just a need to feed." Said Michelle.

"I'm pleased that it feeds on the bunnies and not our people." Said Luke.

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On the whole, Cesar De León was pleased that he hadn't left the National Police of Colombia. His injuries that night at the red river would cause him problems for the rest of his life. He'd been shown MRI images of the damage that in all likelihood; would never fully heal. There were the aches and pains, which could make it hard to get out of bed in the morning. On the plus side, he'd given the

untaxed settlement money to a cousin. There would be a new 'De León' tailors, but the cousin would be running it. The biggest reason Cesar was glad he'd remained a cop, was the way his presence could help with localised problems. Cesar had been loaned to the military, who weren't having an easy time protecting the Yago Plantation and the village.

"No use pretending, the local population hates us." Said Mateo Rodriguez. "On the other hand, you are the hero of the village, saviour of teenage kids. I'm hoping some of that good feeling rubs off on my people. Go out with a few patrols and smile a lot, Cesar."

Cesar had to laugh; he seemed to get much the same instructions with every set of orders, from every desperate commander. There needed to be a way of bottling whatever Cesar was considered to possess. A bit of charisma, mixed with gratitude from parents who still had their kids. All topped off with a huge spoonful of heroism. Not that Cesar thought of himself as particularly heroic. He'd just been trying to save himself.

"They're not bad people in the village." Said Cesar. "They're just suspicious of strangers. When you consider some of the strangers they've had to deal with.....I don't really blame them."

"I did hear that Colonel Hernandez had managed to ruffle a few feathers." Said Mateo.

"Not all issues that concern the locals are obvious." Said Cesar. "Being honest about it, they're still not that keen on the new Canadian owners. They may like Kate Doyle and I heard that Chad is quite popular. On the whole though, the people of the village were never asked if they wanted the plantation sold to Tessera Coffee Holdings. The workforce were simply considered part of the deal."

"Hmmmmmm, I can see how that might upset them." Said Mateo. "I'm trying to stay clear of local politics if at all possible."

Cesar had heard the rumours about Mateo Rodriguez and the likely reason why he'd gone from being a full General, to being a general run around for the military. All the rumours tended to involve him being too friendly with an important man's wife, girlfriend, boyfriend.....Or any other permutation of the basic idea. Cesar suspected that all the common rumours were nonsense.

"I will help you anyway I can." Said Cesar. "I know unsolicited advice can be annoying, but that is part of why I was sent here. Ignore it if you like, but can I offer you a tiny piece of advice?"

"Yes, of course.....What is your advice for me?" Asked Mateo.

Cesar knew Mateo wasn't going to like it. Most of the police in most countries, concentrate on protecting the older end of society. They perceived themselves as under the biggest threat. In reality it's the younger end who are much more likely to be at risk of serious violence. Cesar's advice was simple and obvious, though it might take a little bravery to carry it out.

"Look at the numbers, the ages and frequency of the people of the village, being attacked by a creature." Said Cesar. "You'll find that most are youngsters; in their teens, or early twenties."

"I can get those numbers, but for now.....I'll take your word for it." Said Mateo.

"All too often, their kids are out at some isolated spot." Said Cesar. "Like the red river, they go there for sex and booze with kids their own age. The parents will be safe at home, watching some crap TV game show."

"I can see where you're going with this." Said Mateo.

"You won't be popular, but you need to use your available resources to protect the youngsters." Said Cesar. "Traditionally we've concentrated on looking after the older end of society. They'll be behind their front door and quite safe. Look after the kids; they're the ones hanging out in dangerous places."

"You're right about me not being popular if I do it." Said Mateo.

"Will you do it?" Asked Cesar.

“For a while, but I might need to drop the idea if I get too much pressure from Bogotá.”  
Parents voted, but kids didn’t. Cesar realised that Bogotá might well overrule any kid centred protection scheme.

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Teresa fed Rocky at around one in the afternoon and then again at about seven in the evening; without fail. Her strange pet would have probably liked breakfast too, but organising that had proven difficult; or so she’d told Michelle and Lidia. In reality Teresa hated getting up early and had quickly given up on providing Rocky with breakfast at eight in the morning. It all seemed to be about routine and getting enough to eat. Rocky seemed happy with her two meals per day, and she was getting bigger all the time.

“Wow, she really does love cold hotdogs.” Said Lidia Fernandez. “They could use her on an advert.” Rocky could get through a tin of hotdogs for lunch, though Teresa was still experimenting with her food. So far, there had been nothing that Rocky wouldn’t eat. There were even a few green leafed plants that she’d happily chew up and swallow. Not only was Rocky growing, she was also putting on a proper covering of feathers. Not that she was ever likely to be pretty, but Teresa loved her. “She will eat just about anything.” Said Teresa. “Spinach caused her to squawk a bit, but she still ate it.”

Lidia wasn’t there for every feed, but she was there for most. As far as Lidia was concerned, she was a cop taking a bit of a break. She’d try to get Teresa to Rocky for both meals, but if she couldn’t; that was just the way it was. On the whole, Teresa could live with that. There were usually several staff at the house to run her to Doc’s and then pick her up later. With luck, they might not tell her mum where they’d been taking her.

“Who brought you here yesterday, for her evening feed ?” Asked Lidia.

“Mia, but I think I’ve found a solution to needing a lift when you’re busy.” Said Teresa.

Mia was new and from Panama, which meant her mum hadn’t had time to do her usual brainwashing and manipulation. Even so, if her mum found out the staff had been taking her to Doc’s house, she’d begin asking questions.

“You should be alright when Michelle is back.” Said Lidia. “I’m sure that between us, we can get you here twice a day. We can’t have poor Rocky going hungry.”

There had been family dogs, who’d looked up when they heard their name. Rocky was different though, there was an obvious intelligence going on. Use her name and she’d actually move towards her, as if asking Teresa what she wanted.

“Come upstairs.....I’ll show you my idea for the times I can’t get a lift.” Said Teresa.

Doc was probably the typical busy guy, with a house to look after. The place would have probably been filthy, if it hadn’t been for the cleaners. Gone now of course, they’d been with Doc for years, keeping the place clean enough to be used as a doctors surgery. Doc had also used them to clean his rooms, the apartment he had upstairs. Teresa led Lidia up the stairs and along a corridor lined with paintings of Colombian plant life.

“Doc painted most of the artwork.....I love looking at them.” Said Teresa.

“Yeah.....I heard Doc was a nice guy.” Said Lidia.

When Doc Perez had retired and moved, he’d gone to live with an unmarried sister in Barranquilla. Teresa had imagined he’d clear his house out and crate everything up. Some rooms had been emptied, but not all.

“I thought Doc would take everything to Barranquilla.” Said Teresa. “I guess there is only so much bedroom furniture that a retired doctor needs.”

As they entered what had to be the master bedroom, Teresa knew Lidia would gasp. She'd gasped herself, when she'd first opened the door. There was still a little dust, but Teresa had done some cleaning. It was a beautiful bedroom, with a huge wooden bed at one end. Add on the three empty wardrobes and Teresa was tempted to move in, full time. Her mum would go crazy though, if she left Hacienda Yago.

"Wow, this is gorgeous." Said Lidia. "Not what I'd have imagined for an elderly doctor."

"I think there was a wife once." Said Teresa. "Long before I was born, or so I've heard. Might all be nothing but local gossip. If there was a Mrs Doc Perez, she had good taste."

"Well.....If you need to stay here, I'll know you're comfortable." Said Lidia.

Teresa grabbed Lidia's hand, entwining her fingers with those of her lover.

"Not just me.....When my mum gets back, the hacienda will be out of bounds for you. We can come here, no one will know. Bring a bag full of your clothes if you want. It can be our love nest." Said Teresa. "Or if you prefer, our sin bin."

"I can see you've thought this through." Said Lidia.

"Well ? What do you think ?" Asked Teresa.

"I think.....It sounds like a really good idea." Said Lidia.

Teresa might be twenty five, but she'd had what she liked to think of as accelerated experience. Call it putting it about, or being a sex addict, Teresa didn't accept any of the standard insults. She knew what she was doing, once she had another woman naked. Men were easy, you got them to cum and that was it; until you made them cum again. Women were far more complicated when it came to sexual pleasure. As a friend had once said, it wasn't all about scissoring each other raw. There was a gap between Lidia's body and her police uniform trousers. Teresa slid her hand down through the gap, until she touched a fine, delicate fur. From there, she knew where the clitoris was located.

"Oh, you are a very wicked young woman." Sighed Lidia.

"I hate quickies.....Do you have enough time for us to do this properly ?" Asked Teresa.

"You've got me for as long as it takes." Said Lidia.

Lidia was Teresa's first cop lover and it still felt weird to strip a cop out of her uniform. Something a court might describe as nudity with intent to pleasure. Whatever the truth, there'd be some kind of law against it. That was what laws tended to be for, sucking the fun out of life.

"Stop moving about.....I want to taste you." Said Lidia.

Teresa kept still and enjoyed it, all of it, for many, many hours.

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Yoon had met Chad Hudson, when he'd visited the South Korean embassy in Bogotá. There had been a meal in a decent restaurant to celebrate the success of Project Dinosaur. Success in that their superguns would kill the seemingly unstoppable creature at the Yago Plantation. Another reason for the meal had been to get to know Chad a little and thank him for his help in the project. Yoon had been genuinely surprised when Chad had turned up at the restaurant. To her, Chad's reputation was a cross between James Bond and MacGyver. He was a secret agent, a spy; and spies didn't turn up to social functions. Everyone knew that.

Yoon was currently in the one and only decent coffee place in the village, though she didn't know that. She was sipping at her coffee in Café Loco, while trying to get information out of the man who'd served her.

"I'm looking for Chad Hudson." Said Yoon. "I believe he lives in the village. Do you know him ?"

"Everyone knows Chad; he's one of the Canadian people." Said the Barista. "At the moment though, he's out of town. He'll be back soon though."

"Where has he gone ?" Asked Yoon.

"It's to do with business for the plantation, or so I heard." Said the Barista. "If you need lodgings until he returns ? I can recommend a few places."

Damn.....She'd got her timing wrong. Yoon knew about the superguns being needed for a trip to a mysterious temple on a high plateau. What she'd got wrong were the dates. She was sure Jung had told her the expedition was still in the village. She'd travelled alone; flying into Manizales and then hiring an SUV on long term hire. It should have all been so easy, but her dates were obviously wrong. It was beginning to cross her mind that Jung had deliberately given her the wrong dates. He definitely hadn't wanted her to travel to the Yago Plantation.

"Do you have rooms here ?" Asked Yoon. "You're very busy.....Everyone seems to come here."

"We do have a few rooms, but they're not exactly hotel rooms." Said the Barista. "More like student accommodation, or so I've been told. The place is clean though and we serve a good breakfast."

"Sounds good.....I'll get my things out of the car." Said Yoon.

"Do you need help ?

"No, I'm stronger than I look." Said Yoon.

Back to the SUV, which she'd managed to park quite close to Café Loco. She was angry by the time she got to her vehicle. She was now certain that Jung had deliberately given her the wrong dates. She was the architect of Project Dinosaur.....

"How dare he !" She muttered.

The project was hers; she'd designed the superguns and constructed the first two prototypes. There was nothing wrong with her coming to see Chad; she could well give him valuable advice on using the weapons. She'd liked Chad that night in the restaurant and he'd seemed to like her. Yoon might not be exactly young, but many still seemed to think she was pretty. Not that anything had happened that night apart from a quick kiss in Chad's hotel room.....But something had taken root; some kind of mutual admiration.

"If I have to, I'll hire a plane to get to the temple." Yoon muttered.

An advantage of small town Colombia; before leaving the car, Yoon checked for parking limitations and the usual threats about being clamped. There were none, not a single sign about parking restrictions.

"If only they had a decent shopping centre, I'd move here."

Back to the coffee place with her overnight bag and laptop. Not that she expected a Wi-Fi connection in the village, but occasionally, miracles did happen.

"I'll take that room." She told the Barista.

She was beginning to think the guy serving coffee, might be a manager. He came up with a price for the room, which wouldn't have covered breakfast in some places. There was a pause, before the Barista unlocked the room door.

"Don't expect too much." He said.

"Where is the bathroom ?" Yoon asked.

"End of the hall.....There's a sign on the door."

Would there be hot water in the pipes for a shower in the morning ? Yoon didn't ask; she'd survived in some fairly basic accommodation, in some fairly gnarly parts of the world. She could have told the Barista some stories about giant spiders in tents.....But that would feel like showing off. She pushed the room door open and her initial feeling was of relief.

"Hey, it's not that bad.....I've slept in far worse." Said Yoon.

"That was going to be our company motto." Said the Barista.

Space was the main problem with the room, but she'd get used to that if she was living there until Chad returned from the high plateau. Yoon had a satellite phone in her bag and that had no problem finding a connection. She linked her laptop to the phone and.....She had a very expensive internet link with the outside world. Half a dozen emails to various people, just to confirm she was still alive and had made it to the plantation village. Yoon was tired, but had to have a quick Google for small planes to hire; complete with a pilot.

"Not cheap, but I can be there quite quickly." She muttered.

There were helicopters to hire, but Yoon preferred something cheap that came with wings. A friend had a personal horror story about a helicopter trying to land without power. The poor guy would have a limp until the day he died.

"At least planes can glide."

There were several companies offering small planes for hire, at fees that wouldn't empty her bank account. Two of them promised ex air force pilots. She reverted to hand writing names and numbers on a paper pad, just in case there was no internet link in the morning.

"Hmmmm, Caldas Aviation Services..... I like the sound of you guys."

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David Sullivan refused to report to Julie, as though she was his boss. On the other hand, he had agreed a while ago, that Ana would be in overall charge of the expedition. Not that there was any chance of cancelling what his people were calling the Canadian invasion. The trip to the ancient temple by the group from Tessera Coffee Holdings, was going to happen. Ana was grinning at him, while watching his group make the final checks of their gear and backpacks.

"Well David, ten out of ten for avoiding telling Julie Yago." Said Ana.

"As far as I'm concerned this is your expedition." Said David. "I have told you.....Though I suspect Julie will find ways to make me suffer. By then we'll all be back at the plantation."

Jess Fisher had been keeping to the company of her fellow Muisca church members. That was understandable; she was a new recruit to their religion. David had expected her to opt out of the Canadian invasion of the temple. Much to his surprise she'd agreed to go. Jess had even promised not to tell Julie anything about it. At the moment everyone was quite close to the helicopters. David's group were getting a lot of attention. Soon Julie was bound to hear about their trip to the temple, Or, as Jess called it..... Lugar de Descanso – The Resting Place. Who was resting there ? Despite being her boss; Jess had made no promises about telling him.

"Thank you for telling me." Said Ana. "My advice is to head out of camp at a run."

"Good advice, we should be moving." Said Luke.

"I live at the Yago family hacienda." Said Michelle. "Piss her off and she could make me homeless."

"Yeah, I tend to agree." Said David. "Whatever you might forget, we'll have to do without. Close those packs and we'll get going."

They were trying to avoid the woman who terrified just about everyone, even though it was hard to define why. Everyone was working hard and fast, to get out of camp before Julie turned up.

"Anyone got sunscreen going spare ?" Asked Kate. "I have no idea where mine is."

"Yeah, I've got bottles of the stuff." Said Jess.

With that, everyone seemed ready to leave camp and head towards the temple, or The Resting Place as many were beginning to call it. David was quite impressed with his team, as they set up a good pace away from camp.

"I hope everyone with a supergun remembered to bring it ?" Asked David.

"Got mine." Said Kate.



"Me too.....And lots of ammunition." Said Chad

"I have mine, David." Said Michelle. "Did you pick yours up?"

"It's on its straps inside my jacket." Said David.

"I have mine." Said Luke. "Is Sánchez joining us? He has one."

"Can't leave the camp defenceless.....He's staying at the camp."

Jorge was staying too, which meant he'd probably suffer the wrath of Julie Yago, or at least a good tongue lashing. All in all, they did seem to have a good number of pocket howitzers, if they did get attacked by something huge and weird. There was no ambush by the Julie Yago militia, no sign of hostile spies watching them leave. Still before breakfast for most, the Canadian Invasion hoped to reach the temple and have a good look around, before putting down their bedrolls for the night.

"We should have invited Olie and Julian." Said Jess. "They've always got weird stories to tell and their packs are full of junk food."

"The cops stayed with Jorge." Said David. "You're worried about Julie now.....Imagine her mood if we'd taken the cops too."

They were at where the grass and trees of the high plateau, became the jungle type terrain that surrounded the temple. There, sat on a fallen tree, was Captain Sánchez. In full tropical uniform, with a backpack in camouflage colours. Sánchez looked how a professional soldier was supposed to look.

"Nice to have an extra gun, but I thought you were staying at the camp?" Asked David.

"I decided to do what I wanted to do." Said Sánchez. "If you'll have me? I fancy a really good look around that old temple."

"You are more than welcome." Said David.

"Good to have you aboard." Said Jess.

It was another supergun, which was the main way David was viewing it. Captain Sánchez had probably fallen out with the Julie Yago people and wanted a bit of peace and quiet for a day or so. There'd be consequences of course.....Even the normally amiable Gustavo, would see it as the Canadians grabbing an experienced fighter, who was very good with a gun.

"Anyone know why the temple is called The Resting Place?" Asked Kate.

"No, but if anyone has an answer.....It'll be Jess." Said David.

Jess was pointing the way on occasions; it was as if she remembered every tree and bush along the route. A few of them knew the secret path, as Julie called it, but Jess was the definite expert.

"Nothing to do with Muisca, not really." Said Jess. "The Resting Place refers to the Ancient Deities, the ones who gave birth to this world. All conjecture based on ancient scrolls and carvings of course."

"We'll forgive assumptions and conjecture." Said Luke. "Tell us about the Ancient Deities and the temple?"

"My grandmother knew about the deities." Said Sánchez. "She was sure that one day, the old ones would stop resting and leave our world. Without them.....The sun would cease to shine and mankind would be finished."

"That was exactly my understanding." Said Jess. "Your grandmother was obviously a very wise woman. Another piece of conjecture.....The old ones have become bored with us and are experimenting with creatures to take our place."

"They can hardly do a worse job of it." Said Chad.

That conversation seemed to leave everyone with dark thoughts, or simply a lot to think about. No one said much of anything until Michelle won the competition with no prize. She was the first to spot the broken roof of the temple, as it went above the tree canopy.

"There.....I can see the temple roof." Said Michelle, while pointing.

It seemed to take longer to reach the temple entrance, than it had the time before. It also felt different, now there weren't laughing teenagers with them.

"We can sleep in the large chamber again." Said Jess. "Julie claimed it and she has a good feel about where is likely to be safe and comfortable."

"Fine.....The large chamber it is." Said David.

There was an idea from Kate, to leave two behind to guard their gear, while the rest went exploring. There was some understandable resistance to the idea. No one wanted to be left behind.

"We'll leave our packs and bedrolls here." Said David. "There's no sign that anyone comes here. If they do, they can hardly carry off all our stuff."

As he said it, it sounded like a lame excuse, when they came back to find an empty chamber. There was no sensible other option though. David just hoped he didn't end up looking a total fool.

"Can we go right to the top of the temple?" Asked Chad. "I wanted to give the room up there a really good examination. Sadly there wasn't time."

"I wouldn't mind seeing where the human like creature was seen." Said Jess.

It wasn't an official Tessera Coffee expedition. David had envisioned something more like a company outing, but without the beer and minibuses. It was just so that everyone who worked for Tessera, could say they'd been to the temple; that they'd explored Lugar de Descanso – The Resting Place.

"Fine, we'll go right to the top." Said David.

There was a slightly ominous feel to the group, as they headed up various ramps and sets of stairs. Jess kept mumbling about shadows in corners, but she refused to give any details. Despite the strange vibe, most seemed to be enjoying the climb to the top.

"It's not like last time." Said Chad. "Then we seemed to be endlessly climbing stairs. Now I can already recognise that we're quite near the top floor."

"I can see them now, the shadows." Said Michelle. "I've been through too many missions to start hallucinating. I can't see them that well.....But they're there."

"I don't like running away." Said David. "I think we should carry on to the top."

"No, we can't give up.....We have to go to the top." Said Luke. "It's our great white whale, our destiny.....I feel it."

"On we go.....Have your weapons ready though." Said David.

The top floor seemed to be important, everyone seemed to feel it, but had no idea why. Personally, David wished they'd been exploring the deep underground parts of the temple. There had to be basements, every ancient building had such places. Basements and cellars were where the priceless artefacts would be. Chad made everyone jump, when he checked the clip on his supergun and it rattled.

"I needed waking up.....I was daydreaming about underground treasure." Said Kate.

"Me too." Said David.

"And me.....Weird." Said Luke.

"Ignore those thoughts; someone is trying to confuse us." Said Jess.

They didn't seem to need help with being confused, but David didn't say it. As they went up the last ramp to the top floor, everyone had a weapon in their hands. Some superguns, but mostly some

form of handgun, loaded with the most powerful rounds that could be found. David held his supergun in both hands, pointing it straight ahead. The top floor wasn't disappointing.

"Wow, those definitely weren't here before." Said Chad.

If they'd been on a stand, or left on a table, the effect would have been better. The three sets of silver armour, Raiments of the holy; had been left in heaps on the floor. David suspected his mind was wandering a little, but to him; it looked as though three heroes had died there. Their armour had then fallen away from their decomposing bodies. Of course, that would have all needed to have occurred, a very long time ago. Chad ran to one set of armour, running his hands over it, as if checking it was real.

"Why us ? Why give these beautiful things to us ?" Asked Kate.

They really were incredible beautiful pieces of art, as well as being useful. There was no need to test the armour, to know it would help save those who wore it, from all but the most savage of blows.

David picked up a gauntlet, which felt strong, but far lighter than he'd expected.

"A few more sets of armour like these.....And we could declare war on Julie Yago." Said Chad.

"Not funny, Chad.....Not at all funny." Said David.

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