

## Coffee Addict

### Chapter 22 – Moving Rocky

**“Ana knew the supergun was only to be used on the megafauna. She’d been there when Chad had given them the introduction to superguns 101. She hadn’t even been curious what it might do to a human, or maybe she had been mildly curious. Ana was high up in the Muisca religion, but that didn’t make her a pacifist. Too many in the village had been killed by the creatures. When the soldiers opened fire using assault rifles, she fired back using her supergun.”**

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Teresa Correa was beginning to know how fugitives from justice must feel, even though no one was actually looking for her. Firstly there had been getting away from Hacienda Yago. Her mother would never have admitted it, but she appointed some of the servants as official informers when she wasn’t at home. All done out of concern of course, and her mother’s need know what everyone under her roof was doing. Teresa recognised the signs now, the servants who were a little too interested in her movements. Avoiding them was quite easy, though even Lidia didn’t want her walking far; until she was feeling better. Lidia was waiting in an unmarked cop van, about a quarter of a mile from the hacienda. On the rare occasion that prisoners needed transporting in the area, Jorge had insisted on having a van to get the job done safely. Teresa had no idea how Lidia had managed to get hold of it for the day.

“Hi, do you think anyone saw you leave ?” Asked Lidia.

Teresa kissed her lover, just a quick kiss on the lips.

“No, I was really careful.” Said Teresa. “Thank you for helping me; I couldn’t do this on my own.”

“I think the world of Rocky too.” Said Lidia. “I just hope she fits in the van.”

“Rocky isn’t that big, I can still just about carry her around.” Said Teresa.

The moment had arrived when Rocky had to be moved from Doc’s house. She was outgrowing the place and now the village had been attacked. People had died, quite a few people. If anyone found Rocky, there’d be no contacting her mother to see what was going on. Rocky would be instantly killed and her remains incinerated.

“She seems to learn a new word every day.” Said Lidia. “She said ‘delicious,’ after I fed her last night.”

“We can’t let them hurt her.”

“I know, Teresa.....I know.” Said Lidia. “No matter what, we’ll keep her hidden and safe. One day though, she will need to be set free.”

“I know.” Said Teresa.

Jaimie’s disused poultry sheds were huge, but eventually Rocky would outgrow them. By then their strange pet would be an adult; she’d want to find a mate. Teresa knew it was a good thing and inevitable, but it still made her feel sad. When they arrived at Doc’s, it was obvious Rocky had understood when Lidia had told her she was being moved. She’d collected some of her favourite toys together in a heap. All of them intended for cats and dogs, from the squeaky mouse to the huge cow’s shin bone she could chew on. There everything was, ready to go to her new home.

“You understand more than you’re letting on.” Said Lidia.

"Don't worry; we won't make you wait for your food." Said Teresa. "Breakfast first and then we'll take you to your new home."

Lidia had already collected together Rocky's food bowls and it was surprising how little she required to live a comfortable life. It all fitted into four heavy duty sacks. There'd be a squeeze to get Rocky and her things into the van, but she wouldn't be squashed up for long. Teresa fussed over her pet for a few minutes after she'd eaten, but they really did need to get moving. The cops were short-handed and Lidia was running out of excuses for not being where she was told to be.

"Come on, Rocky." Said Teresa. "I got a bash on the head, but I'm sure I can still carry you outside to the van."

"Give me five minutes to open the side gate." Said Lidia.

Luckily it had been dry for a while; the van had gone right up against the side gate to the garden, with no chance of being bogged down in muddy soil. There was zero chance of even the most nosey neighbour seeing Teresa carry Rocky into the van.

"You know you're going to a new home, don't you?" Asked Teresa.

"Yes." Said Rocky.

"There's room to fly inside the poultry barns." Said Teresa. "Not outside though, you'd be seen and the soldiers would look for you.....Do you understand?"

"I know.....Sad.....I like the outside."

Teresa hugged her weird pet and carried her out into the back garden, through the side gate and into the van. Rocky seemed happy, she enjoyed new places and experiences. The only reminder of Rocky in the house would be her odd scent, which was likely to hang around for some time. Teresa realised she was crying.

"Are you alright?" Asked Lidia.

"I will be, once I stop feeling guilty about keeping her inside." Said Teresa.

There were several roads which would take them out of the village. Lidia chose the one which usually had less traffic. Neither of them wanted to be seen by anyone they knew, just in case it led to awkward questions at a later date. Less used roads tended to be poorly maintained though and the van bounced on a pothole. Teresa leant over the seat and Rocky was taking it all in her stride.

"Won't be long.....Soon be there." Said Teresa.

Rocky made one of her happy sounds and seemed to be enjoying the journey. Teresa might have enjoyed being bounced about in a van, if she'd been kept on one small room for months.

"I'll take the old road out past the Wilkins place." Said Lidia. "We're not likely to run into any cop vehicles going that way. Explaining where we're going together might be awkward."

"Go for it, Rocky doesn't seem to mind being bumped about." Said Teresa.

She turned on the radio and like most radios in the area; it was set to pick up V-Boom. There was one golden oldie, before a sad piece about Craig dying. The announcer went straight from that to an update on the death and carnage that had been caused by the attack of the creatures. Teresa turned off the radio.

"Wow, that was all a bit too heavy." Said Teresa.

"Yeah, Mateo is still trying to get agreement to a full evacuation of the area." Said Lidia.

"When my mum says we're leaving.....Then I'll know it's time to get out of here."

The old road always seemed to have muddy areas, even in the driest of summers. To avoid an area of really bad looking mud, Lidia took them cross country; right through an area of grassland. There it was between them and the where they could get back on the road. Luckily it seemed to be dead.

"That must be the one that attacked Jorge's team." Said Lidia. "They said it was big.....But that is beyond big."

"They blew lumps out of it and it still managed to walk this far." Said Teresa.

It had to be two miles to where the beast had overturned Jorge's command vehicle. The dead creature looked too wounded to get two feet, yet it had managed it. Grenades probably, there was actually a hole in its side and Teresa could see its spine. There it was, like an enormous mountain of decaying flesh and bones.

"Jorge called it a dinosaur." Said Lidia. "It really does look like a T-Rex from a late night natural history show, but even bigger. I'd suggest going to have a look at it, but Rocky seems quite upset."

"Yeah, can you drive around it ?" Asked Teresa.

"Just about."

Rocky had scrunched herself up into a ball on seeing the dead dinosaur type creature. She was lying on the floor of the van, making her most piteous and miserable noises. She was either scared of the huge dead brute, or was grieving over its death. Her language skills were improving all the time, but still not advanced enough to ask her those kinds of question.

"Leave here." Said Rocky.

"We are honey.....We're getting out of here." Said Teresa.

Lidia drove well, then again, cops usually did. They came so close to the dead beast that the van's ventilation system began blowing the stink of putrefaction into the inside of the van. There were a few moments of coughing and spluttering, before they were round the carcass and onto the road.

"Should we take a few pictures of the brute ?" Asked Teresa.

"Luke might be interested." Said Lidia. "Lean out of the window though. None of us are leaving the van until we get to Jaimie's poultry barns."

"Give me your phone." Said Teresa. "Pictures of a dead dinosaur might earn you enough points for them to forget you've been dodging calls all morning."

Teresa liked Lidia's phone, though it wasn't as good as her own latest iPhone. She took a dozen pictures of the dead dinosaur type creature. There had been so many movies with fake dinosaurs; it was hard to come to terms with this one being real.

"Ok, drive on.....I'll send these to Luke." Said Teresa.

"Yes My Lady." Said Lidia.

The phones were being weird until; in the middle of nowhere, on a road rarely used. The phone found a link better than the fibre line her mum boasted about having. The pictures didn't exactly hurtle up the line, but they all got there. Teresa put Lidia's phone in the van's glovebox.

"There.....You have the originals." Said Teresa. "I sent them to Luke with a location and put your name on it."

Jaimie's wasn't far away by then, though Teresa knew he wouldn't be there. He's volunteered to be a temporary cop after Gabi Alvarez had been killed. A lot of local people, men and women, had volunteered to fight the creatures and serve the people of the village.

"This place looks a bit bashed about." Said Lidia. "It's bringing back some unpleasant memories. Did you remember the keys ?"

"You're sounding like my mum again."

"Sorry."

It felt too soon to be coming back to Jaimie's; Teresa felt her heart begin to beat faster. They needed a secure and safe home for Rocky though. The lack of people in and around Jaimie's avocado plantation was actually a blessing.

"There, the second poultry shed from the right." Said Teresa.

"And Jaimie really has no curiosity about why you need about five thousand square feet of space?"

"That's Jaimie; and he's known me since I was tiny." Said Teresa. "He'll never go inside the shed.....To him, that wouldn't feel right."

"I hope you're right." Said Lidia.

Jaimie had given her the bunch of keys before the creatures had attacked. The poultry shed had several different doors, for different uses. Of course, they all had a different key.

"The door with an H on it.....You can drive the van inside the shed." Said Teresa.

"I like that.....Load and unload in total privacy." Said Lidia.

"These sheds are relatively new." Said Teresa. "They're built to withstand anything the Colombian climate can throw at them. Rocky will be safe and snug here."

She unlocked the door and luckily the power was on at Jaimie's. One button and the large door marked H, opened up. Lidia drove inside and Teresa pressed the button again. There was plenty of time for her to get inside, before the door clanged shut. They had Rocky there.....A secure home with all her toys, food bowls and other essentials. One of the sacks had enough tinned food to last her for weeks. Lidia joined her, looking the place over with a pleased look on her face.

"They left a few hay bales." Said Lidia. "Where will Rocky sleep?"

It was an old joke, but Teresa felt she had to say it.

"Wherever she wants, Lidia.....Wherever she damn well wants to."

Rocky was making agitated noises and trying to clamber over the seats to get out. It was going to be her new home; of course she wanted to see it.

"Alright.....Wait for me to open the rear doors." Said Lidia.

Once Rocky was out of the van, she looked around nervously; as if wondering if all that space was hers. She was keeping close to the ground and making a peeping noise.

"This is your home, it's all yours." Said Teresa. "Go where you want, fly if you wish.....Nothing in here will ever hurt you."

"No table, we'll need to feed her on the hay bales." Said Lidia.

When Rocky spread her wings and prepared to fly, Teresa realised she hadn't been taking enough notices of their very own creature. The wind from the beat of her wings, was enough to make a mess of her hair. Their pet was growing and would soon be an adult. Rocky flew to the far end of the shed, before doing several circuits. Rather than too large, it felt as though the place was barely large enough for her.

"Wow, she can get up to quite a speed." Said Lidia.

"It was a risk bringing her here, but I'm glad we did it." Said Teresa.

When Rocky came back to them, she left her wings out and used a new sound, which sounded like her singing. Their strange and wonderful pet looked happy.

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Ana could see the doors on the small building from where she was hiding. With the size of the doors and the sound of a powerful elevator motor; she'd expected a creature to come out. She had her supergun in her hands, ready, waiting to fire. It wasn't a creature though; soldiers came through the open doors, heavily armed soldiers. There had to be cameras somewhere and they'd been seen. So obviously really, they should have been more careful. At least half a dozen soldiers dressed in combat armour and helmets that hid their faces. Impossible to be sure of their gender, let alone their nationality.

"You were seen.....Come out and you won't be harmed." Said a soldier.

The voice could have been half of the males on the planet and there was no discernible accent. There in front of them was the enemy, the people sending out the deadly creatures; Yet they could have been anyone from anywhere.

"We won't ask again."

Ana knew the supergun was only to be used on the megafauna. She'd been there when Chad had given them the introduction to superguns 101. She hadn't even been curious what it might do to a human, or maybe she had been mildly curious. Ana was high up in the Muisca religion, but that didn't make her a pacifist. Too many in the village had been killed by the creatures. When the soldiers opened fire using assault rifles, she fired back using her supergun. Michelle used her pocket howitzer too and amid the noise of gunfire; Ana heard Jess firing her huge and powerful hunting rifle. It didn't last long; for once the good guys weren't fighting monsters weighing over a ton. Jess was the first to come out from whatever cover she'd found. By the time Ana had limped over to the dead soldiers, everyone had come running.

"You're limping." Said David.

"Oh, it hadn't registered....Not really." Said Ana. "It doesn't hurt much."

"Probably shrapnel from the wall you were hiding behind." Said Jess. "Your trousers will need to come down a bit so I can look at the wound."

It was embarrassing; sitting on the ground with her trousers around her knees. Her wound needed a dressing though, it was bleeding quite badly. The main thought in Ana's mind was that for once they were prepared. Good weapons carried by people who knew how to use them; and everyone had emergency medical supplies in their backpacks.

"Keep still.....I need to make sure the wound is clean." Said Jess.

"Those superguns really do make a mess of people." Said Julian.

"Better than us." Said Jaimie.

Everyone with one of the creature killers must have wondered, they had to be curious. Jaimie was looking at the ripped apart flesh of what had recently been an enemy soldier.

"One shot and no need to worry about their body armour." Said Michelle.

"Definitely very versatile weapons." Said Ana. "Have they got any ID on them?"

David supervised the search of the dead and they had nothing personal on them at all, Ana never thought they would have. Their IDs and probably much else, would be below ground; where the elevator came from. They all realised it, but only Jaimie said it.

"There are enough of us with the right weapons." Said Jaimie. "We need to go down in that elevator and see what we can find."

"I hadn't meant to explore their base today." Said David.

"We may never have another opportunity like this." Said Jess.

"Fine, but we need to be quiet down there." Said David.

The elevator doors were still open and a hundred soldiers could have fitted into it, complete with all their kit. They piled inside and someone pressed the button with a down arrow on it. Ana thought that was a bad design flaw; there was no up from ground level. The elevator rocked about after a clanging sound began.

"Do we think Jorge will be alright.....Being left up there?" Asked Julian.

"He'll be fine; it's us I'm worried about." Said Ana.

Down they went at a speed that was both worrying and exciting. Ana was expecting to be greeted by a hundred angry soldiers; everyone probably had their own idea of what might be at the bottom of

the elevator shaft. They dropped for a while, far further than any elevator in a building ever dropped. When they finally stopped, they had to be several hundred feet underground.

"Well, I didn't expect that." Said David.

Not a solitary enemy soldier, just an empty, poorly lit corridor. To Ana it seemed a bit insulting, as if they were considered a threat which could be ignored.

"Come out, come out.....Wherever you are." Yelled Julian.

David glared at the local cop, but there was no response to his yelling. The corridor went off to their right and left. When David went to the right, they all followed him. There was a smell in the air, like the elephant house at the zoo. Michelle was sniffing the air.

"We're in the right place.....A definite odour of creatures." Said Michelle.

"Keep your guns in your hands." Said Jaimie. "The beasts can't be far away."

When it came for them it came quickly and rather annoyingly it came at her. Maybe because Ana was in the centre of the corridor, but there was no real way of knowing. Like an enormous snake with tiny front legs and a huge mouth. Probably the equivalent of a guard dog for the underground facility and it was coming at her, open mouthed and ready to bite. The inside of its mouth was so red, as red as fresh blood. Jess fired before she did, but the snake didn't seem to notice it had been shot. Ana aimed at that bright red mouth and fired her supergun three times. The beast was probably dead after her second shot. That loud boom in such a confined space; her ears would be ringing for a while.

"Shit.....What the hell is that thing?" Asked Michelle.

"Part snake and part something weird." Said David. "I'm guessing whoever created these thing gave up on Mother Nature. They're now creating their own types of monsters."

"Those jaws.....They extend beyond its head." Said Jaimie.

"I'm glad it didn't get close enough to use them on me." Said Ana.

"Well done, Ana.....You're damn good with that gun." Said Jess.

It was nice to be appreciated, she smiled back and actually did a little bow. The snake like creature had attacked them at the junction of three corridors, one broader and higher than the others. The way to go was obvious; it didn't surprise her when David followed that corridor, with all of them trudging along behind him. To Ana there was still a school outing feel to their group, but they made a very lethal and effective fighting team.

"The stink of unwashed creatures is getting stronger." Said Michelle.

"Like the elephant house at the zoo." Said Ana.

"Yes, exactly like that." Said Julian.

The lighting was getting better the further they went, which might have been a good sign, or a bad one. When they heard the sound of an animal roaring down a passage on the left, it was no surprise when David went that way.

"Stay alert.....I have a feeling about this corridor." Said Jess.

The floor dropped away and the ceiling rose. By the time they were in front of the doors to the chamber where the stink originated, it might well have been home to something big. Not two tons of wolf big, but something quite big.

"Be ready for anything." Said David, as he reached for the door handle.

It came from the darkness to their left and it must have been keeping very still. One of the snake creatures with tiny front legs, it was on David before anyone could react. The large snake curled around David's torso, before biting into his throat.

"It's got David.....Kill the thing." Yelled Jess.

Ana shot the beast in the head, but it was all over by then. It had almost ripped David's head off his shoulders. David's body twitched a little and his eyes blinked a few times. He was dead though, nothing could have survived that kind of dreadful wound. Julian seemed really upset.

"It's David, our leader.....He can't be dead." Said Julian.

But he could and he was. Ana always asked the family of the deceased before speaking the prayer for the dead. David's family were in Canada, a very long way from Colombia. She spoke the prayer, in the hope of David Sullivan resting in eternal peace.

"I know it sounds ghoulish, but we need his supergun." Said Jaimie.

It was ghoulish, but no one complained as Jaimie gave the gun and its ammunition to Jess.

"Here.....You shoot well." Said Jaimie. "This has more stopping power than your hunting rifle."

There was no talk of taking David's body with them, though several promised to come back for him.

Ana emptied his pockets and put everything they contained into a pocket of her jacket. His family would appreciate getting his personal items. Personally, she thought it was unlikely that anyone would have the opportunity to retrieve what was left of David Sullivan.

"Well.....Where to ? Where do we go now ?" Asked Jess.

"Through the doors of course, where David wanted to go." Said Jaimie.

There was a slight hissing sound as Jaimie opened the doors. Everybody rushed into the chamber beyond, guns pointing ahead and ready to use.

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The part of the village where Kate had her apartment was gradually emptying; Yoon Choi suspected it was a pattern being repeated all over the village and the plantation itself. She'd seen some of the neighbours with cars and kids drive away, while others were picked up by friends, or relatives. Not that she was alone, her neighbour Valeria was there when she went out into the garden, waving at her. It seemed as though they'd become the only people left in the street. V-Boom was still there, with news of where had been attacked and the seemingly rare triumphs of the fighters from Bogotá. V-Boom had become like that friend, the one who is always there for you, no matter what.

"Tonight is all about Craig." Said the woman on the radio. "All his favourites track and singles. We also have a few pre-recorded items from his family."

Yoon was eating the content of tins, emptied into a pan and heated up on the hob in the kitchen. It had surprised her how long it took to get the contents of the pan hot enough to eat. It wasn't great food, but it kept body and soul together. When she'd invited Valeria to join her to listen to 'Craig Night' on V-Boom, she hadn't expected her to bring enough food to feed a family of four. It was nice though, to eat proper food again. After an hour of Craig's favourite songs, the mood was getting a bit sombre.

"You're young, you should leave this place." Said Valeria. "The next time the creatures attack, they'll kill everyone and destroy every building."

"They might not come back." Said Yoon.

"They will be back, Yoon."

She'd never shown her neighbour the supergun before, but she always had it close to her. Yoon removed it from behind a cushion on a chair and showed it to Valeria.

"I need to stay.....When they come back I will use this to kill a big one." Said Yoon.

"Why ? Did they kill someone you loved ?" Asked Valeria.

"The brutes have killed many who meant a lot to me." Said Yoon.

Valeria nodded and patted the back of her hand. It was sort of the truth, but her motivation to face one of the huge wolf creatures was complicated. She'd designed the superguns; she'd actually built

the early prototypes. It seemed right that she should know what it was like to face one of the creatures with one of her guns in her hand. She'd come to love the village, especially Café Loco. In her mind the creatures were attacking her home. Yoon also wanted to prove to herself that she was just as brave as all those who'd fought the beasts with one of her weapons.

"I understand.....But never be too proud to run away if you have to." Said Valeria.

"Trust me.....If my gun won't kill it, I'll set a new record for the 100 metres sprint."

The next morning was quiet, it always was now. No sound of kids playing in garden, or parents using rotary mowers on the grass. Nearly everyone had gone, but had everyone but Valeria actually left the street ?

"Only one way to find out." Yoon Muttered.

Yoon dressed up as if going into battle, putting ammunition for her gun into the heaviest jacket she could find in Kate's closet. It had 'Police' on the back, which seemed perfect. The supergun went into an inside pocket, after a lot of testing to make sure she could get it out really quickly.

"Quick draw Yoon." She mumbled.

It was back to the meat cleaver as her main weapon. The rats were likely to be the creatures crossing her path the most and she wasn't going to waste ammunition on those. The cleaver was a good weapon against the rats, as long as a whole pack of them didn't get her cornered somewhere. No backpack, she was only going to go door to door for no more than two blocks. She looked at herself in the mirror and chuckled.

"Yoon the bad ass." She muttered.

There were no rats to be seen as she closed the front door, there never were. Curiosity would bring a few though, to see if the noises meant the likelihood of food. Yoon started on the first house to her left and rang the doorbell. It would attract the rats, but just about everything attracted them.

Banging on the door was likely to attract more than the musical doorbell. She tried three times before giving up and moving on.

"Seeing who's still here, huh ?" Shouted Valeria from across the street.

"Yeah, it'll be nice to know." Yelled Yoon.

"Just.....Don't get eaten by anything." Said Valeria.

"I'll try really hard not to."

Yoon had rang the doorbell, or knocked on the front door of ten houses, when the first large rat turned up. Jaws wide open and hissing it came at her. The cleaver killed it without much effort; and the rats had no problem feeding on their own dead. A day and the dead rat would be just a bit of fur and few of the bones. A block and a half after starting out, someone opened their door when she rang the bell. It was a tall thin man, who looked like he hadn't changed his clothes since the creature attacks had begun. Probably hadn't showered either; he was developing the odour of bad onions.

"Bless you, I haven't seen anyone from the police around here in.....Must be weeks." Said the man.

It was Kate's cop jacket, which she'd borrowed from someone. It had Police on the back in large letters and in small letters on the front. Yoon had no intention of telling a scruffy man who was larger than her; that she wasn't actually a cop. Kate had probably borrowed it because of the instant respect that went with wearing it.

"Just checking which houses are still occupied." Said Yoon.

"I'll be gone soon; my daughter is on the way to pick me up." Said the man. "She and her husband live in a nice part of Manizales. No more giant rats scratching at my front door."

"I'll leave you to get packed up." Said Yoon. "I hope you enjoy life in Manizales, it's a beautiful city."

"Wait a moment." Said the man.



He came back with a bar of chocolate, the kind of treat Yoon enjoyed. Her tinned food diet had all the essentials, but it was incredibly dull.

"Thank you, I really appreciate that." Said Yoon.

"No problem."

The end of the second block and the man with the chocolate appeared to be the only person still in residence on that side of the street. As Yoon crossed the street to go back on the other side, she heard Valeria before she saw her. Her neighbour had two very old looking rifles hung over her shoulder, which were clanking together. Yoon knew her weapons and recognised bolt action antiques when she saw them. Not that she'd tease her friend about them. It was nice to see a friendly face.

"I thought you might need a hand." Said Valeria.

"Just in time for half a small bar of chocolate." Said Yoon. "I've only had one person come to the door and he's waiting to be taken to Manizales."

"That was it.....Just one guy?" Asked Valeria.

"Yep, looks like we'll soon have the street to ourselves."

The chocolate was good, especially as it was her only treat food in a while. It was Valeria who heard the sound before she did. A kind of panting sound, mixed with heavy footsteps; very heavy footsteps.

"Shit.....I know that sound." Said Valeria. "It's one of them.....One of the huge wolf creatures."

"You need to run." Said Yoon. "Get a good distance away from here before I begin firing at it."

"No.....If you're facing one of those things, I'll face it with you."

"With your type of rifles, always aim for the eyes." Said Yoon. "Don't be tempted to aim anywhere else.....Every bullet goes at its eyes."

None of the buildings in the street were that high, but when the wolf came into view, the top of its head was about the same height as the guttering on the houses; and it was crouching. It was giving off a low growl, as if it had been searching for Valeria and her; all of its life.

"Shit.....That's big." Said Valeria.

"Keep aiming at the eyes.....It'll go down."

The new matt black, 4<sup>th</sup> generation superguns held more rounds than the earlier versions. Yoon had fourteen special bullets to fire, the supergun equivalent of hollow points. It was enough firepower to kill half a dozen elephants and with luck.....One truly enormous wolf like beast.

"That has to weigh a ton." Said Valeria.

"More likely a ton and a half.....Relax, we can kill it." Said Yoon.

If it had run at them things might have ended differently, but it stood and looked at them. It growled a little and screeched once or twice, but it seemed to want a good look at them before attacking.

"What is it doing?" Asked Valeria.

"I think they've learned that people in cop jackets can sometimes hurt them." Said Yoon. "There are no rules to these fights, we can attack first. Fire at it and keep firing until the damn thing is dead."

Valeria fired before she did and the huge wolf began to run at them. Using a supergun in a test range was different to firing at a living, breathing target. It took a second for Yoon to get her breathing slowed down and stop her hands from trembling. She aimed at its open jaws, which seemed full of teeth and ready to bite her. Two shots seemed to have no effect, but the brute yelled after the third.

"Keep going, we're definitely hurting it." Shouted Valeria.

It hit them, collided with Valeria and her just after Yoon had fired the fourth shot deep into that dreadful open mouth. The mouth didn't slam shut on them, but being hit by a beast the size and

weight of a fully loaded fourteen wheel truck.....Yoon thought she'd be crushed to death, but she got lucky. Not that she understood how, but she ended up face down on the ground, with just her left knee hurting. The wolf was quite close to her and it looked dead.

"Fucker." Yelled Yoon.

She put two more rounds into its head at close range and felt she could now relax a little. Her knee was still painful, but that knee was always giving her problems. Arthritis probably; her doctors said it wasn't only a disease of the elderly.

"We got it.....Valeria, we killed the brute." Yoon yelled.

No sign of her brave neighbour, it was as if she'd vanished. Even the huge dead wolf wasn't big enough to have swallowed her hole; anyway they seemed to take bites out of their victims.

"Valeria.....Where are you ?" Shouted Yoon.

There was the dead creature and an otherwise empty street. Not a face in a window, so it seemed just about everyone had left the street to go somewhere safer. It was a clear sky, good visibility; yet Yoon couldn't see a sign of Valeria.

"Just shout.....I'll find you." Shouted Yoon.

Of all things it was one of the huge rats, which gave Yoon a clue where to look. It must have heard Valeria, as she lay pinned beneath a ton and a half of dead wolf. When Yoon used her cleaver to kill the rat, she heard a few faint calls. Her friend had to be close to death; nothing could survive being pinned down by that much weight.

"Don't give up.....I'll get you free of this brute." Yelled Yoon.

If she had to hack it into tiny pieces, she'd get Valeria free. Valeria obviously had luck on her side. As Yoon pushed aside a mass of wolf fur, she could see the barrel of an old bolt action rifle.

"I see you." Yelled Yoon.

After checking no monster rats were around, Yoon reached with her right hand and grabbed her neighbour under her shoulder. She then used her left hand to grab her under the other shoulder. Valeria seemed to be hurt, she'd yelled twice.

"Sorry, this is likely to hurt." Said Yoon.

Yoon pulled and she was strong, far stronger than she looked. Valeria had been caught under a wolf leg, which was heavy, but not as heavy as its body. Her neighbour yelled a few times, but Yoon kept pulling until she was free of the dead brute. When Valeria was lying on her back on the sidewalk, Yoon sat next to her and gave her a quick look over. Poor Valeria had yet to say a word.

"No pool of blood, no screams of agony." Said Yoon. "No guarantees, but I think you're going to live."

"Crap.....Everything hurts." Said Valeria.

"That's a good sign.....It means you're still alive."

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