

The official job title that Jake Lachlan held was “Project Manager.” It said so on his contract and in smaller letters on his ID badge, but his real purpose was cleaning up other people’s messes—a job that never seemed to end. It seemed like every few minutes there was another thing that he had to fix. The latest, was Rosalind’s face off with the faceless man.

“What the hell was that?”

Jake looked up from his phone to see a swarm of people in suits pace toward him, the leader of the group was his boss’s boss, John Maccan.

“Rosalind is supposed to be our finest agent, Lachlan, you said that she could get the job done,” Maccan said as he tugged sharply on his navy blazer, smoothing out a non-existent crease.

Maccan was dressed sharply with his dark hair slicked back. Jake was the complete opposite; his dirty blonde hair was unruly. It stuck up in all directions no matter how hard he tried to tame it. While his superior was decked out, Jake wore a beige checkered shirt and an old pair of jeans accompanied by rust stain half way down one pant leg.

Jake slipped his phone into a pocket, “Well, respectfully sir, she did get the job done. She neutralized the threat.”

Maccan’s assistant gave a small tut and tapped on the tablet she was carrying. She presented it to Maccan with a small look of satisfaction. He glanced at it and turned it so that Jake could see. Playing on the screen was footage of Rosalind’s tumble backwards down the hill. Maccan turned it off as she landed at the bottom.

He took a small step closer to Jack as he spoke, “Does this look like our finest agent? The best that we have to offer? This—,” he gestured to the screen, “—is an embarrassment to this agency. You had better deal with it before the press get wind of it. The FDA have been looking for an excuse to shut us down and I’ll be damned if she’s the reason.” He gave another sharp tug on his blazer and set off down the hallway with his gaggle of businessmen trailing after him.

Jake raced after them. “Sir, what exactly do you want me to do with her?” He had to jog to keep up with their brisk pace. “She made one mistake. She can’t be punished for falling.”

Maccan stopped and turned to stare down at him. “It was a mistake that could have got her killed and would have let a target get away. Do you know how much paperwork a mess like that would produce?”

“Actually, sir, I do,” Jake said. One of the joys of his job was filling out mountains of documents detailing the dangers of one’s mistakes. He continued, “But that doesn’t mean—”

“Do you know how much time and, more importantly, how much money goes into training a new agent? People are scared. We are getting more assignments every day. It’s a struggle as it is to keep all of this under wraps. Can you imagine the widespread panic that would happen if the general public knew that monsters or demons or whatever you want to call them are not only real, but running amok in their towns?” Maccan spat.

“Like I said, Lachlan, deal with this or I’ll have to deal with you and you know what happens when I get my hands on an agent’s file,” Maccan said sternly.

Jake knew all too well what happened when Maccan got involved: memory wipes, arrests, and if worse came to worse, death.

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