

GHOST TOWN

The Whiterock Incident Part III

by
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Doctor Tesla

Doctor Victor Tesla rushed down the cold, dimly lit hallway. He was flanked by two of his warriors—intimidating women carrying shotguns with EPD pistols clipped to their belts. He worried that there hadn't been word from the surface in over an hour. Tesla knew that his daughter Morgan had been out there, on a mission with his warriors, but there were risks. He'd begged her not to leave the lab and let the warriors handle the mission, but she was determined to be a part of the operation. Victor's hands trembled as he packed more tobacco into his long-stemmed black pipe and lit it, puffing quickly as he walked.

Victor sighed as he rounded a corner and saw Morgan coming out of her chambers. She was in the process of putting on a white lab coat over her black tights and matching tank top, both with the Ghost Town Labs symbol on them. Her face was flushed and her hair was wet. Morgan smiled when she saw her father coming towards her.

“Dad,” Morgan said. “I was just coming to find you.”

“Why didn't you report in?” Victor asked coldly. “What happened out there? Why is your hair wet?”

“I took a shower, Dad,” Morgan said hugging her father. “I was sweating just standing outside. The plan worked perfectly. The RAW Troops have suffered catastrophic losses. Maria Diego sent a communication that they were about to enter the lab. Every group has been dispatched.”

“I heard a report that you were hit,” Victor said. “Someone shot at you. What happened?”

“One of the RAW Troops,” Morgan said lifting up her top to show the mark where she was hit by the EPD. “Wanted to be sure I wasn’t a ghost. It hurt, but I’m fine.”

“I was worried about you, Morgan,” Victor said. “You’re all I have left. They took everything else and I want to make sure you are safe.”

“I’m safe, Dad,” Morgan said. “I couldn’t be any safer. I know why this has to happen, and I agree with you that people need to pay for their sins, but we are going to kill a lot of them. Do we have to hit a large city? Couldn’t we just leave it with Whiterock? What gives you the right to pass this judgment on these people?”

“You were so little when your mother was slaughtered,” Victor said starting to walk down the hall. Morgan walked beside her dad while the two warriors followed two steps behind, guns at the ready.

“I remember the day it happened, Morgan. How could I forget? I relive it every night in my dreams. Once they had the information they needed, they killed her and your sister. They wanted to kill me. They tried and they would have succeeded if I hadn’t had a friend on the inside. You must always have friends in high places, or at least someone you control. I escaped with you and fled here to continue my work. And yet, I still see corrupt governments testing on civilians; people who had done nothing wrong, committed no crime. People who were tortured by the government sworn to protect them. That’s when I decided to take Ghost Town Labs private. That’s when I knew that I could trust no member of government. They would have killed us both once the work was finished. I couldn’t let that happen again. When I’m done, Morgan, governments will live in fear. When I’m done, no government will ever abuse its citizens again.”

“You will be known as a devil for what you’re about to do,” Morgan said protesting. “Your name will be blackened with evil.”

“So be it,” Victor said. “If I accomplish my goals, I don’t care how history views me. Once the city test is complete, we’ll take the device to my former country and teach them what real power is. Then they will know, and the world will know, and fear will keep them in line.”

Morgan was about to continue, when they entered a large room buzzing with activity. The walls of the room were lined with computer equipment and monitors. Ten warriors, with white lab coats over their combat gear, monitored the equipment as it focused on a cage sitting on a pedestal in the middle of the room. The cage was a ten feet square and eight feet tall chain-link fence box. There was one door into the cage, with an electronic lock system on it.

Morgan looked over the activity in the room. She knew that there were many tests being run and even more left to do before the system was taken into the city. She hoped her father would reconsider what he was about to do, but she knew that there was little chance of talking him out of it. She knew the horror that was about to take place in this room; they’d reached the final testing stages.

A door swung open to a side room and Mackenzie and Hannah, the FBI agents who’d met Ethan Drew in New Church to give him information, entered the room. Mackenzie was wearing blue jeans and a black tank top with the Ghost Town Labs logo on it, Hannah was handcuffed, a bag over her head, stripped to her underwear, and being led by Mackenzie. Hannah was whimpering and shaking with fear. Mackenzie wasted no time in leading Hannah into the cage and Victor locked the door once both girls were inside.

“Are you ready for this Mackenzie?” Victor asked handing Mackenzie a black belt with a small device attached to it. “You do understand what’s about to happen, correct?”

“I understand,” Mackenzie said taking the belt, putting it on, and activating the device. “I’m ready and honored that I’m the first person to try this.”

“You will be well rewarded for this,” Victor said puffing away at his pipe. “I promise you that.”

Mackenzie smiled as she took a small set of keys out of her pocket and undid one of Hannah’s cuffs. She quickly secured one of Hannah’s arms to the side of the cage. A warrior handed Mackenzie three more pairs of cuffs and Mackenzie used them to lock Hannah’s other limbs to the cage. Mackenzie took the bag off Hannah’s head, revealing that Hannah had a gag in her mouth preventing her from talking.

“Don’t be afraid, Hannah,” Mackenzie said as she removed the gag. “There is a reason for this.”

“What are you doing to me?” Hannah screamed. “Please, let me out of here.”

Hannah struggled with everything she had, but she couldn’t break out of the cuffs. Morgan watched with sad eyes, knowing that Hannah was about to die. If all went well, Mackenzie would live. Victor was at a bank of computers, opening a can of Coke, looking over all the information with some of his warriors as Mackenzie unlocked the door to the cage. Four warriors pushed in another cage. This one had a solid black walled box, with a buzz of electricity running through the cage through a large side door. When the new cage was near the first one, the women locked wheels and left the room.

A buzzer sounded as the remaining warriors in the room worked quickly on the computers. A third, large cage, this one round and tall, descended from the ceiling and surrounded the other two cages, with Hannah and Mackenzie inside. When the cage was secured on the ground Victory started a program on the computer to electrify the outer cage. Once the cage was at full power, Victor turned off the power to the black box inside the large cage.

“There are four ghosts,” Victor said, “inside four compartments within that box: two spirits, a shadow, and an apparition. Mackenzie, open the door. The device I handed you will prevent the ghosts from attacking you.”

“And us?” one of the warrior women asked. “How are we safe here?”

“Simple,” Doctor Tesla said. “They cannot pass through a heavily electrified field. It would have the same effect as fire on them, dispersing them instantly. Mackenzie, open the door.”

Mackenzie slowly opened the door, causing two doors inside the box to pop open and the two spirits slowly made their way out. Both were teenage boys; they looked around confused, not knowing how they got where they did. In a flash, a woman in an elegant red party dress shot out of the box. She tried to attack Mackenzie, but couldn't. She tried twice to touch Mackenzie, but her hands were deflected by something each time.

The woman quickly turned to Hannah and she rushed her. Hannah screamed out in fear, crying, begging, but the woman quickly killed her. It only took a moment for Hannah to return as a spirit. She was confused, looking at her body, not understanding what had happened.

“How am I here?” Hannah asked Mackenzie. “When my body is there?”

“You were turned,” Mackenzie said. “And now you will die, be forever banished, if you don’t do exactly as I say.”

“Don’t listen to her,” the woman in the dress said. “She lies.”

“I wouldn’t speak,” Mackenzie said pulling a gun and turning it on the woman. “You know what this is and I will disperse you if you say another word. Stay right where you are.”

“What’s going on, Mackenzie?” Hannah asked.

“See those boys?” Mackenzie asked. Hannah looked and nodded. “Kill them. Take their souls for your own. Grow stronger.”

Hannah looked confused. She looked over her body and the woman that Mackenzie had at gunpoint. The boys were trying to look for a way out of the cage. They weren’t even paying attention to the people around them. Hannah slowly made her way over to them. The first one put up a fight and Hannah was knocked backwards, but she bounced back and took the boy’s soul. The second boy tried to fight as well, but Hannah was stronger now and she took him with no problem.

“What’s happened to me?” Hannah asked. “That felt so good. It felt better than anything I could have ever imagined.”

“You’re gaining power,” Victor yelled out. “Kill the woman! Do it now!”

Hannah turned to the woman in the dress. The woman smiled and slowly walked forward, stepping right in Hannah’s

face. She showed no fear and was ready to fight. Hannah licked her lips and took a step back.

“Scared of me?” the woman asked. “You should be.”

Without a word, Hannah rushed the woman and pushed her back against the wall of the black cage. The woman was stunned and let out a scream. Hannah screamed as she hit her in the head before taking her. Hannah grinned widely. She was glowing, thin beads of sweat ran down her neck. She looked at Mackenzie and stalked up to her former friend.

“You should get out of here,” Hannah said. “I wouldn’t want to kill you.”

“You’re too weak to kill me,” Mackenzie said with a grin. “You’ve always been too weak, little, and pathetic.”

Hannah tried to rush Mackenzie, but the device protected her. Try as Hannah might, she couldn’t break through the barrier of the device. Mackenzie just smiled at her and Hannah tried everything she could think of, but nothing worked.

“Save your strength,” Victor shouted out. “You’ve got someone who you can do battle with. Someone you might not be able to defeat.”

“No one can defeat me,” Hannah shouted back.

“I can,” a soft but powerful girl’s voice said from behind her.

Hannah turned and was in shock at what she saw. It was Amanda Charles, still wearing the same matching tank top and shorts set that Hannah had seen in the missing persons reports. Amanda stood in the doorway of the black cage, looking ready

for a fight. Amanda was the apparition and Hannah was in that cage to fight her. Only one of the ghosts would be getting out.

“Amanda,” Hannah asked with a gasp, “what happened to you?”

“I figured out what I was,” Amanda said stepping forward. “Finally. Once I knew I started taking people. That night, when the warriors showed up, I feasted on souls. I’m more powerful than you could ever hope to be. I’m going to take you, then kill her, and take her soul.”

“You can’t take me,” Hannah said. “I’m not going anywhere.”

As Hannah finished her last word, she rushed Amanda. The pair started to fight, with Amanda easily getting the upper hand. Amanda tried to take Hannah, but Hannah resisted, putting up a solid fight. Amanda was shocked that Hannah was as powerful as she was. Amanda worked quickly to try to wear Hannah down, but she was able to escape Amanda’s hold.

The two ended up outside the smaller cages as they continued to fight. Mackenzie was simply trying to stay out of their way, while Doctor Tesla and the warriors monitored everything on the computers. There were over ten cameras recording the event. Hannah backed up, almost touching the electrified wall. Amanda smiled and rushed her, but Hannah stepped aside, sending Amanda into the wall.

Amanda attempted to stop, but she was moving too fast and her arm hit the electrified wall. Amanda screamed out in pain and fell to the ground as her arm started to disperse into mist. Hannah took Amanda as she lay on the ground. Hannah looked more powerful than ever. She smiled a sadistically as she looked at Mackenzie in the cage.

“Hannah is an apparition now, Doctor,” a warrior said to Victor.

“Good,” Victor said walking to the edge of the cage. “Hannah, I know what you’re thinking, you want to kill Mackenzie. I would caution you against it.”

“I can kill her,” Hannah said. “I can kill her and strip the soul right out of her, wait a moment, and take the little soul that survived.”

“You can,” Victor said pulling a small device from his lab coat. “But if you do, I’ll push this button and you’ll instantly disperse.”

“You wouldn’t,” Hannah gasped.

“I would,” Victor said as he blew a smoke ring from his pipe. “Mackenzie is important to me, to the project. We need both of you, so killing either of you wouldn’t do anyone any good.”

“Why?” Hannah asked. “I want to kill someone.”

“I know,” Victor said pushing some buttons on a computer screen. “And you’ll get you chance, just not Mackenzie.”

As Victor finished talking, a door opened and four people were brought into the room by two warriors. The people were shackled together and they all look to have been taken from the streets. They were dirty and grungy, but alive and well. Hannah’s face lit up. Victor motioned for Hannah to back away from the door and she did.

The electricity to the door was shut down and a warrior opened the door and shoved the people inside the cage. The door

was shut behind them and power restored. Hannah stalked the people like a cat, waiting for just the right moment to pounce. She killed all the people and then took what little bits of their souls returned. Hannah was now a phantom. Victor smiled, but he held up the small device that would disperse Hannah.

“You’ve done well, Hannah,” Dr. Tesla said with a smile. “Now get back into the black box. You will need to conserve your strength there.”

“In the box?” Hannah protested.

“Yes,” Victor said flatly. “In the box for now. You will be the first ghost allowed into the city. You will be allowed to wander the streets and take anyone you want. You will be the beginning, the Genesis Ghost, of Ghost Town Labs and the project.”

“I can kill as many as I want?”

“As many as you want,” Victor said holding the device up. “Just get in the box.”

Hannah looked over Mackenzie and the warriors. She slowly made her way into the box while Mackenzie closed and locked the door as Morgan returned the electricity to the walls of the box. The box hummed, stronger this time, as Morgan ran as much power through the box as it could handle. The main cage was lifted while other warriors pushed the box out of the room.

Dr. Tesla worked furiously at a computer, looking over the data and records of what had just taken place, studying the life and death patterns those who died. Mackenzie and Morgan approached him and looked at the large computer monitor that he was looking at. Before anyone could say a word, Dr. Tesla’s phone vibrated with an incoming text message. He looked at it and motioned the girls to follow him out of the room.

The doctor walked quickly, Morgan and Mackenzie one step behind him, two warrior women, guns at the ready, just behind the girls. Morgan tried asking her father what was going on, but he simply held his hand up, refusing to speak a word to her. They rushed down the cold, dimly lit metallic hallways, taking twists and turns, passing other warrior women, other doctors, until they reached a heavy black metal door. Victor didn't knock or waste any time in entering.

In the room was Maria Diego. She wore tight black slacks and had just finished putting her bra on. The dress she wore outside was on the floor next to heavy boots. Maria was startled when the group burst into the room, but she smiled upon seeing the doctor. Maria quickly grabbed a black Ghost Town Labs t-shirt from her bag and put it on.

“Have any trouble on the surface?” Doctor Tesla asked.

“None,” Maria said in her heavy Russian accent. “It went like clockwork. I would call it a complete success. You have no idea how powerful the ghosts are. You will not believe what they did.”

“Tell us,” Morgan said with excitement.

“They put out a fire,” Maria said sliding on a belt. “We blew up the school and it caught many of the surrounding buildings on fire. The ghosts arrived with fire trucks. They also set traps and tried many different ways to kill us.”

“So everything worked?” Doctor Tesla asked. “In your opinion, are we ready for the Genesis Event?”

“Beyond ready, Doctor Tesla,” Maria said. “There will be nothing that can stop us when we go out into the world.”

“We have to make sure that everything works,” Victor said. “Very soon we will shut the Underground Separator down.”

“But won’t that cause all the ghosts in the area to disperse?” Mackenzie asked. “Without the power of the machine the ghosts cannot survive long.”

“That’s something we need to test,” Victor said. “If we run into problems, I want to know how long after we shut down the machine the ghosts will disperse. Maria, what was the status of the RAW troops when you left them?”

“I convinced them into splitting up,” Maria said. “We went into two groups and I was in the group with the Whiterock survivor and the sleeper. I wanted to see her transition. Of all things, another one of the women knew who Jeanie was—knew her as Jamie.”

“Impossible,” Mackenzie said. “The odds of that...”

“It happened,” Maria said. “The girl knew that Jamie had been kidnapped in middle school, even knew the birthmark that Jeanie had.”

“What’s the trigger to awaken the sleeper?” Morgan asked. “When will Jeanie realize what her true purpose is?”

“There’s a key phrase that was drilled into the deepest levels of her consciousness,” Victor said. “Only hearing me speak that phrase will awaken her.”

“And we’re sure that she’ll hear you say it?” Mackenzie asked.