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PART TWO



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1602 *Part Two*

*In which Attacks are launched,
and evil Schemes are revealed.*

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*From Sir Nicholas Fury to Her Majesty Elizabeth, By the Grace of God, Greetings.
Madam,*

Since last we spoke, I have despatched my finest agent to the continent. He journeys to meet the Old Man, the Head of the Templars, who has smuggled the treasure of the Templars out of Jerusalem. My man, whom I have only encountered in darkness, will bring him and his treasure to our shores safely.

The Strange weather continues, putting many in fear of their lives.

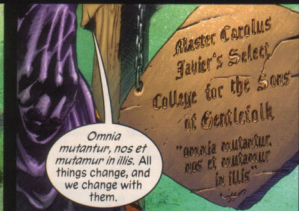
Today, Miss Virginia Dare, the first born of Your Majesty's Colony in Roanoke, will be presented to Your Majesty. I have entrusted my attendant, Master Parguough, with her safety.

I will not be there, alas. It has become imperative that I speak to the learned Carlos Javier, whose educational establishment I have discussed with you on many prior occasions.

*I shall take pleasure in ensuring Your Majesty at all times knows what transpires.
And have the honour to sign myself,*

Sir Nicholas Fury



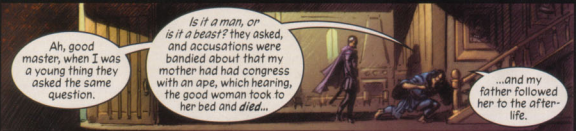


Omnia mutantur, nos et mutantur in illis. All things change, and we change with them.



Sir Nicholas Fury?
Come with me, sir.


What manner of creature are you, then?



Ah, good master, when I was a young thing they asked the same question.

Is it a man, or is it a beast? they asked, and accusations were bandied about that my mother had had congress with an ape, which hearing, the good woman took to her bed and died...


...and my father followed her to the after-life.



Thus I was left alone in the world, possessed of nothing but my *wifs*, which are sharper than those who see my face would credit...

...and men would call me *beast* or *troll* and fling muck and stones at me, until I found that, in strength and agility, I was master of them all.

A creature of few words, then?



Sir Nicholas *jest*s. And yet, in your jest is *truth*, for I am famed for speaking only when words are called for, and otherwise I am silent as the grave.



Do not talk of *graves*, my fine beast. Not today.

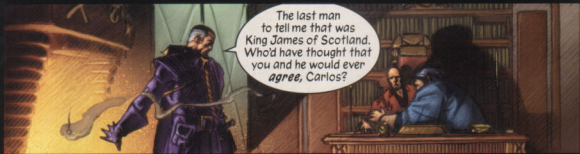
No, sire. Please wait here.



Nicholas! What are you doing?



A noxious weed, Nicholas. *Please*, put it out, it fouls the air and blackens the lungs.



The last man to tell me that was King James of Scotland. Who'd have thought that you and he would ever *agree*, Carlos?



And why would *James* concern himself with a little school for the sons of Gentlefolk?

If you think he'll not find you all, Carlos, you're *dreaming*.

The Inquisition are on your trail. They may hate James, but they hate you more.

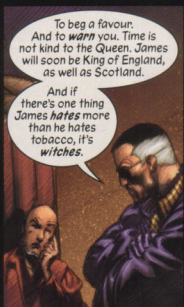
Talking about the Inquisition, I understand that you stole a new pupil from under their noses last week.



Our *Angel*? How did you...?

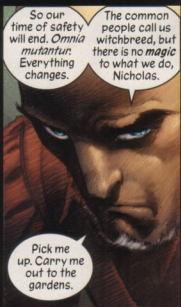
Your pardon-- I forget. You are *Her Majesty's Intelligence*. If it concerns the safety of the kingdom, a *butterfly* will not fall that you do not hear about.

So why are you here?



To beg a favour. And to *warn* you. Time is not kind to the Queen. James will soon be King of England, as well as Scotland.

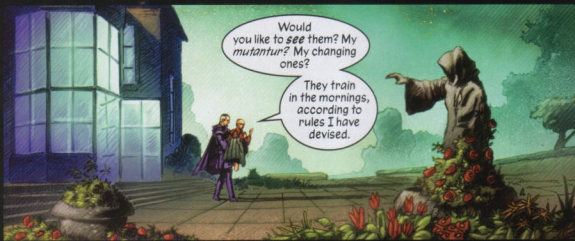
And if there's one thing James *hates* more than he hates tobacco, it's *witches*.



So our time of safety will end. *Omnia mutantur*. Everything changes.

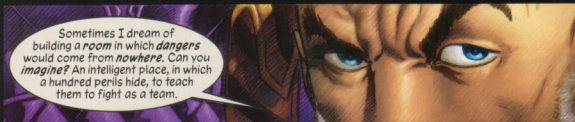
The common people call us witchbreed, but there is no *magic* to what we do, Nicholas.

Pick me up. Carry me out to the gardens.



Would you like to *see* them? My *mutantur*? My changing ones?

They train in the mornings, according to rules I have devised.



Sometimes I dream of building a *room* in which *dangers* would come from *nowhere*. Can you *imagine*? An intelligent place, in which a hundred perils hide, to teach them to fight as a team.



These are my *pupils*.

This is *Roberto*, who knows much about ice.

Scotius is the captain of our team. He has no love for Scottish James. No more than *Master McCoy*, whom you have met already this morning.

Behind him stands our newest addition, *Werner*.

And finally, my page, young master *Grey*.

And now, Sir Nicholas, let us watch them fight.

London. The Bleeding Heart Inn.

I am here to see Mistress *Dare*. Is she within?

Rojhaz? I thought I heard somebody--

Sir? Oh, sir!

Madam... your savage... my hand...

I am... here from... the Queen...

Rojhaz! Let him go!

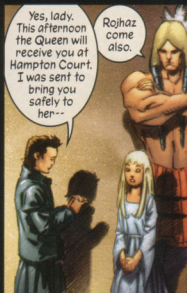
I beg your forgiveness, sir-- he thinks only to protect me.

ROJHAZ!



I must *apologize*, sir. Roj haz is my bodyguard -- he has been so since I was a babe; indeed my father says that without him our colony would never have survived its first winter...

I am *babbling!* You are from the *Queen?*



Yes, lady. This afternoon the Queen will receive you at Hampton Court. I was sent to bring you safely to her--

Roj haz come also.



I am afraid that I was not instructed to bring anyone else, only Miss Dare--



Roj haz come.

En... no...



Put him *down*. You will wait here for me, Roj haz. Do you *hear* me?



You see... I was told to bring Mistress Virginia... Sir Nicholas said nothing about anyone else...



...but... I'm certain... that he would hate to see... Mistress Virginia parted from her bodyguard...



Roj haz come.

Good.

LOMBARDY.

Matthew knows her footstep on the mucky cobbles. And he smells her, of course: she smells of herself, and of jasmine. But he does not turn.

♪ So the captain he ups and he says to Sir Reed, ♪
My crew they are shaking with fear,
So we'll take to the boats and we'll ♪
wave you goodbye...

♪ For we're ♪
leaving the four
of you here, you
here, We'll leave
every one of ♪
you here...

I'll give
you a penny to
stop singing,
Matthew.

Is that you,
Natasha?

Yes,
Matthew.

And is the carriage
ready?

It's coming now.
Everything is as Fury
requested. A change of
horses every two
hundred miles.

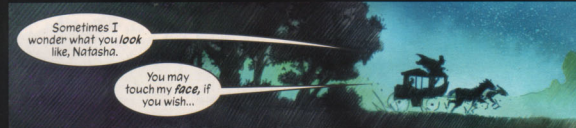
A new driver
waiting with
every change
of horses.

You'll be paid
when we reach our
destination.

I know. England's
money is always *good*. It's
why I enjoy doing business
with Sir Nicholas.

You're my
husband, by the way.
You are *dying* and we
are rushing you
home.

I can
think of *worse*
things to be.



Sometimes I wonder what you *look* like, Natasha.


You may touch my *face*, if you wish...



You must be very *beautiful*.


My husband used to *say* I was, when he was alive.

Were you *born blind*, Matthew?




I was *not*. When I was a boy I could see as sharp as an *eagle*.

Then how did you lose your eyesight?



Damned if I know, Natasha. I was only a *boy*.

It was an act of *God*, perhaps.

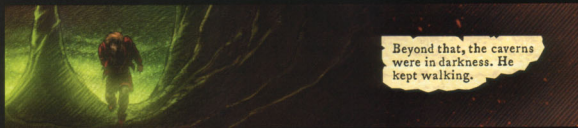


He was always exploring, always getting into things. His Ma said he had no fear of anything, and maybe it was true at that.

And he wasn't scared. Not of darkness, and then, when he saw the green glow, not of that.



It oozed down the walls, and it seemed to pulse as he looked at it. It burned like green fire. He had never seen anything like it.



Beyond that, the caverns were in darkness. He kept walking.

And when he felt the fresh sea air on his face, and felt the pebbles crunch beneath his feet, and heard the sea and the cries of the gulls, he knew he was outside.

He thought it somehow the dead of night, as he fell to the beach, and slept.

His mother had found him there on the beach, fevered and muttering about the darkness and the night.

It was a night that was never to end.



He says none of this.
He says...

And why is it *you* work for Fury, Natasha? You owe no loyalty to England's crown.

As if *you* do, Irishman?

I told you: I work for him because his gold is good.

He needs people in Europe. There are places a woman can go that a man could not.

And besides, with my husband dead...

...I must do *something* to keep my hands busy.

Now, are you going to tell me our final destination?

Not yet. For now, we're just heading *south*.

The High Castle, Latveria.

So, by now, Fury's agents will be heading south. I'd put them ...here.

Do you want us to *ambush* their carriage?



The Court of King James the Sixth of Scotland.

I had a dream, you know, David...

I dreamed that these dark rains and floods and earthquakes, they are the anger of God, because we suffer witches to live among us. The anger of God is a terrible thing.

A fearsome dream indeed, Majesty.

The Inquisitor's man wishes to speak to you.

The pretty man? Back so soon? Very well, David. Show him in.


Greetings, Your Majesty. I relayed your wishes to the Grand Inquisitor, and I have an answer for you.

You do? That was damned fast. How'd you get a message to Spain and back in what, a couple of days?

I ran very fast, Sire.

Haha! I like you, sir. A fine jest. "Ran very fast."

Well, and what does the Inquisitor say?



He *accepts* your terms. He says to tell you that once you are King, he will have the English crying out for the *blood* of the *witchbreed*. He says to tell you that they will be *begging* you to light the bonfires.

And he said one *more* thing -- that when that day comes, Javier and all his *demonic* brood of *witches* and *monsters* must be delivered to the Inquisitor *personally* to be dealt with. They are not to be hurt, except by *us*.

I see...

But if my dream is true, then she would need to die *very* soon. If Providence destroyed the Isles of Britain before I could be King, that would be a terribly *bad* thing.

Will you tell your Master *that*?

Are you asking me to tell him that the Queen of England has lived too long?

That would be a *dreadful* thing to say, laddie.

But *aye*... she's an old woman. And the sooner she was to die, the more friendly I would be to your master.

I see. Very well. I shall *tell* him.

Will you not stay and drink a dram of *wine* with me, pretty man?

Alas, I *cannot*. I must run fast, to give the Inquisitor your message.

A *funny* man! Hurry back to me with his reply.

My father was *sad* when he sent me here. He called me *the Luck of the Colony*.

But if there is truly a Luck of the Colony, it is *Rohaz*. He found us that first winter, when we were *starving*, and he hunted game for us, and *fed* us. We would have *died*...

What did your *mother* think of you coming all this way?

My mother is *dead*, Master Peter. She took an ague and passed away when I was an infant.

And *you*? How did you come into the Queen's service?

My mother and father... *also* passed away. I lived with my Aunt and Uncle.

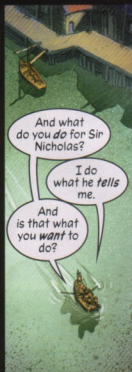
On my last birthday Sir Nicholas Fury came to the door. He had known my parents. He said it was time that I entered his service, and that it was what my father would have wished.

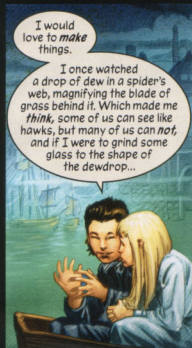
My Uncle Benjamin was *delighted* for me. My aunt wept and bade me to write to her, and return when I could.

And what do you *do* for Sir Nicholas?

I do what he *tells* me.

And is that what you *want* to do?





Dom Daniel,
Spain.

Let me see...
How can we discover
the witchbreed among us? For
surely there are true miracles, sent
by God to the pure. We must not
mistake the dark marvels of the
witchbreed for the miracles
of grace granted to
the holy.

As Inquisitors, none of you
must be confused by the Devil's power.
For the Devil gives his gifts to those whose
souls are weak and dark and small. God
gives his grace only to the great-
souled and the faithful.

We must
never be deceived
by the Devil.

Then
prepare it for my
signature.

Grand
Inquisitor?

Yes, Sister
Wanda?

I...sometimes
I wonder, what if the powers
I have...that my brother has...how
do we know that they are the gifts
of God, and not the tricks of
the Devil?

How?

Because I am
the Grand Inquisitor, Wanda.
And you and your brother work for
me. As long as the two of you are
obedient and faithful to me, I can
guarantee that the Inquisition will
never find a reason to turn its
anger on you.

Your brother
is late. He should
have been here
ten minutes
ago.

Oh! I am
certain that he is run-
ning as fast as he can,
Grand Inquisitor.

Your
faith is
touching,
Sister
Wanda.

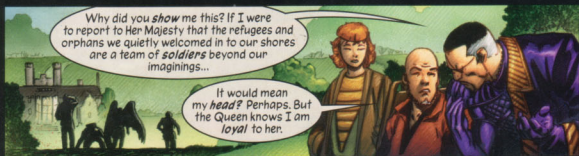
And
your faith is
justified.

Calm yourself,
Petros. Breathe deeply
and slowly. Then tell us how
it went with King
James.



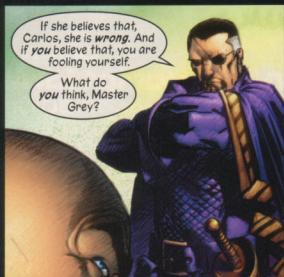
Your pupils are remarkable, Carlos.

Yes. They are.



Why did you *show* me this? If I were to report to Her Majesty that the refugees and orphans we quietly welcomed in to our shores are a team of *soldiers* beyond our imaginings...

It would mean my *head*? Perhaps. But the Queen knows I am *loyal* to her.



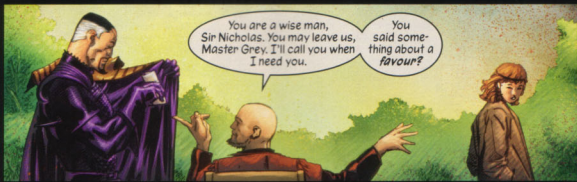
If she believes that, Carlos, she is *wrong*. And if *you* believe that, you are fooling yourself.

What do *you* think, Master Grey?



He is right, Master.

Your loyalty is to the *Witchbreed*, not to England. Just as *ours* is to you.



You are a wise man, Sir Nicholas. You may leave us, Master Grey. I'll call you when I need you.

You said something about a favour?



I *did*. This is a sketch of the man who attacked me, several nights ago. This is his glove. He is in the Tower, and he will not talk to us.

What can you tell me about him, Carlos? Who's he working for?



"I can't tell who he is working for...he is not thinking about it. He is *angry* that he failed to kill you, and was captured...that anger fills his mind..."



"...and he is concerned about his fellows. He is one of *three*. The second was sent here to kill... a girl. A girl newly come from the colonies. She has to die..."



And the *third*?

The third... is here to kill the Queen.



The savage Indian. He must leave his knives and arrows, all weapons, behind. He cannot go in to the Queen, armed.

No.

Rojhaz. Please.

Protect you.

Of course you will. You're here, aren't you?



I'm so scared, Peter. Maybe I should forget the whole thing...

Too late for that.

Your majesty-- Virginia Dare.

Ah yes.

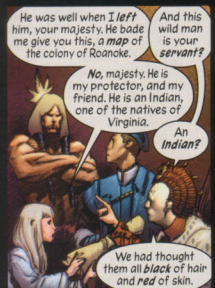


So you are the child they named after us. The firstborn in the Roanoke colony...

Yes, your majesty.

You have brought a day of fine weather with you, child, from the New World. We approve.

How is your father?



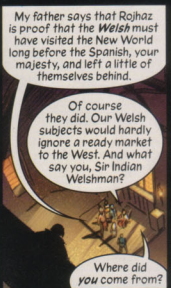
He was well when I left him, your majesty. He bade me give you this, a map of the colony of Roanoke.

And this wild man is your servant?

No, majesty. He is my protector, and my friend. He is an Indian, one of the natives of Virginia.

An Indian?

We had thought them all black of hair and red of skin.



My father says that Rojhaz is proof that the Welsh must have visited the New World long before the Spanish, your majesty, and left a little of themselves behind.

Of course they did. Our Welsh subjects would hardly ignore a ready market to the West. And what say you, Sir Indian Welshman?

Where did you come from?

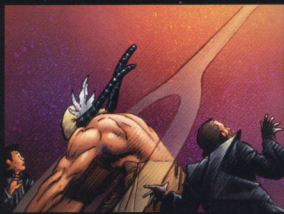


I... am... Rojhaz.

Indeed, Mr. Rojhaz. We have had several Indians here at the court, you know, but they took sick and died, though not before performing several amusing dances for our entertainment.

Do you dance?

Protect her.





To Be Continued...