

SHEENA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE

ISSUE 1

PAGE 1

Open on the huge skyscraper that serves at the headquarters for Trevor Enterprises. It's tall, black, imposing against the surrounding skyline.

"Gentlemen. You have good news, I assume," says an off-page voice.

PAGE 2

We're inside the top-story office of Deborah Trevor, as she stands facing a wide-screen video monitor with a bit of signal distortion. On the screen is Devon James (the man from the first issue dressed in the jungle explorer's clothing). Over each shoulder stands one of the men in black that were riding in the helicopter with him (the bald one is to the right). Deborah is a beautiful, late-twenties woman clad in a form-fitting, tailored business suit/skirt, with thick red hair that falls beyond her shoulders. Her office is sleek, antiseptic, laden with tech toys and ergonomic furniture.

"Yes and no," answers James. "We've checked out the equipment, and it's all still operational. We're still on schedule."

"So what's this bad news?" she asks.

James' brow is furrowed a bit in concern.

"Well, as I made you aware when you first contacted me, the tribe of Shashan lives in a village at the base of Mt. Hansha. They've lived there for centuries. The land is considered very sacred to them."

"I trust you'll make your point soon."

James is a bit more desperate now.

"The point, Miss Trevor, is that they've ignored any attempt on my part to consider relocation. I thought I would be able to convince them of the imminent danger, and get them to move. But they're not budging."

"Mr. James...I hired you because of your intimate knowledge of the terrain, and of the associated hazards. You've helped develop my plan beautifully. But you must have understood all along that the fate of these...natives was of entirely secondary priority."

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Deborah looks to one side, where an illustrated diagram sits on an easel. It shows the volcano to one side, and a fault line running along

it. Arrows point to a glowing cache of elements several miles away along the fault.

"After all, it's not every day that our satellites discover the location of a substantial quantity of weapons-grade uranium. In its current location, traditional mining techniques would take time and resources I'd prefer not to expend.

"However, the selective application of explosive charges at key points along Mt. Hansha has already rendered the volcano unstable. The remaining explosives should trigger an eruption of sufficient magnitude to expose the uranium at a considerably reduced expense."

James is a bit more agitated now.

"Miss Trevor...I beg you to reconsider this. There are at least two hundred people at risk here, more if any of the roaming tribes happen to be nearby. You simply can't put a dollar figure on human life--"

"You're absolutely right, Devon. And that's why it's unimportant."

She smiles as she continues to speak.

"This is about the bottom line, it always has been. Don't tell me you don't realize that. Trevor Enterprises is no different from any other megacorporation in that respect.

"Chemical plants leak. Tankers gush their contents into the seas. Factories send contaminants by the ton into the air we breath and water we drink. And aside from some token nods toward environmental protection by various governments, the beat goes on, every day."

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Trevor continues to make her point.

"We ravage the world, raining all imaginable forms of despair on the human race. And when it comes right down to it, no one really gives a damn. As long as they have cheap plastics, computers, gas, and cable television, they're perfectly happy.

"So don't be so surprised if we don't bend over backwards accomodating the survival of some backwater tribesmen. Something like this was bound to happen to them sooner or later, anyway."

She holds up her hand, cutting him off.

"Miss Trevor..." James says.

"That's enough on this issue, Devon. Your appeal has been heard...and denied. The plan is continuing as scheduled."

The men behind him smile, and the bald guy puts his hand on one of James' shoulders menacingly. Devon appears a bit unsettled.

"Of course, I'm sure you'll continue to assist in the effort, won't you? I mean, it would be tragic if Mr. Kyle or Mr. Branson were forced to...remove you, wouldn't it?"

"Um...yes, Miss Trevor. Yes it would. I'll speak no more of this."

She presses a button on her desk, and the screen fuzzes out.

"I thought as much. Carry on with the operation, and notify me when you've achieved the goal.

"The next sound I want to hear from South America..."

PAGE 5

Exterior view of Sheena's team helicopter as it races toward the distant volcano. Voluminous smoke rises from it's top.

"...is the sound of thunder."

"Mt. Hansha, dead ahead," says a voice from inside the chopper. "Looks like it might have stabilized a bit."

Inside the chopper's cockpit, Sheena rides in the passenger seat, while Rudy pilots it. Franklin is leaning between them from the cabin behind, talking to her.

"How can you be sure?" she asks.

"Well, you can't be totally sure. But it was putting out a similar quantity of smoke twelve hours ago, so this may be a good sign."

Rudy looks at them and speaks.

"Just remember that volcanos are impossible to predict. I've seen them flare up and drop off a lot, but just as often I've seen them erupt with almost no warning at all. We just can't assume anything."

"True," says Sheena. "We'll have to assume the worst in this case. I'm not taking any chances with the safety of the villagers."

Page 6

Laney snakes her head under Franklin's and points out in Rudy's direction, toward the mountain. She's holding binoculars in the hand she's pointing with.

"Hey, guys!" says Laney. "I saw something by the base of the mountain. Looks like some kind of activity."

"Activity? Let me see," says Sheena, reaching for the binos.

Sheena peers down with them.

"HMMMM..." she says.

Through the binos, she sees a cleared-away area within the trees, with a wide (20' or so) cave entrance running into the mountain. The cave appears hollowed out artificially, a bit too smooth and regular. An empty helicopter landing pad is before them. Standing to either side of the entrance are a couple of guys in black jumpsuits, wearing caps, sporting assault weapons.

Sheena has handed the binos to Rudy, who is now looking himself.

"Well I'll be...something is definitely rotten in the state of Philop," says Rudy.

"That's what I'm thinking," she says. "That cave is definitely man-made, and those goons outside it don't look military to me."

Page 7

Now Warren is looking.

"Insane! Why in the world are they manning a site at the base of an active volcano?!? No one would do something like that! Unless --"

"Unless maybe they know something we don't know," answers Rudy.

Inside the cabin of the helicopter, Franklin and Laney are returning to their seats. Warren and Miguel are strapped in on the opposite side. Sheena is poking her head around to speak to them.

"Okay, everybody, make sure you're strapped in. I'm going to have Rudy go in for a closer look at that cave. I don't know what we might find, so stay prepped."

"Gotcha," says Warren as he buckles himself down.

Sheena is looking at Rudy, who is peering forward with concern.

"How close do you think you can get before they get a good look at us?"

"I dunno, maybe half a klick. Depends on -- uh oh."

"What?"

Ahead, the Trevor Enterprises chopper approaches.

"We've got company," he says.

Page 8

Mr. Branson (the bald guy) leans out the side of the chopper, brandishing a machine gun.

Sheena and Rudy are wide-eyed as he yanks hard on the sticks.

"Rudy, get us the hell out of here --"

"One step ahead of you!"

Branson fires a burst at the chopper (**BRRRRUP!!!**), and mostly misses it, with only one or two glancing off the belly.

Sheena and Rudy look around wildly.

"Where did it go?"

"I don't see it. This could be bad...." he answers.

From behind and level with them, Branson unloads again, this time hitting the engine compartment just below the main rotor (**BRRRRAAAP!!!**).

Rudy fights to control the chopper as it lurches.

"Rudy!" Sheena's hands clutch the top of the dashboard as if to control the flight. "How bad is it?"

"It's bad, believe me. Hold on, we're goin' down!"

Page 9

Branson watches as Sheena's chopper plummets toward the jungle.

"Got 'em!" he says. "Radio home base -- target taken down," he says.

The jungle looms in the foreground as the chopper goes down.

"I see a clearing!" Rudy says. "Cross your fingers!"

"One step ahead of you!" she says.

The chopper careens into a small gap between several trees.

KERRRRASH! It wipes out, hitting and sliding, sending clumps of grass and dirt flying.

Page 10

The cockpit glass is cracked and broken; Sheena has a small cut on her temple, and blood from it trickles down her cheek. Rudy's head is tilted back, his hand on his bruised forehead.

"Ooooh...." she moans. "R-Rudy...are you alright?"

"I'm great, considering the alternative."

Sheena puts her hand on his shoulder.

"That was some nice flying. I didn't think we were gonna make it."

"I flew Hueys in 'Nam, and we went down a couple of times. It's like riding a bicycle, I guess.

"You'd better check on the others."

"Right."

Sheena moves into the cabin. They're stunned-looking, and Miguel is down on the floor, holding his leg.

"How is everybody?"

"W-we're alright," says Franklin. "Miguel's restraint snapped on impact. I think he hurt his leg."

Sheena is kneeling beside Miguel, gently extending his leg with her hands.

"How does it feel?" she asks.

"I jammed it pretty good on the floor when we hit," he answers. "I can't put weight on it."

"I don't think it's broken, but you'd better not try to walk for a while."

Page 11

Sheena addresses the group as Warren stabilizes Miguel's leg with splints to either side.

"Okay, this is what we'll do. We're quite a ways from both home base as well as the tribe, and the closest thing to us is that cave. It's around five kilometers east of here.

"Warren, you stay here and help Miguel. The rest of us will pack some things and head out to that installation. We'll see about finding out what they're up to, and try to get back here with some help."

"Alright," says Warren.

Rudy, Sheena, Laney, and Franklin emerge from the chopper; all but Sheena bear backpacks.

"Sheena, I'm not against your plan, but..." says Franklin.

"But what?" she asks.

He's looking at her with concern.

"Well, I think we can assume that that chopper that shot us down was connected with that cave we saw. They're obviously willing to resort to any means to keep people away.

"We don't have any weapons with us because we weren't expecting that kind of trouble. We're at a real disadvantage."

"Perhaps," she answers.

Sheena smiles, and pats him on the shoulder, and he smiles back. They're deeper into the brush now.

"Franklin, I'm disappointed. As long as you've worked for me, have you ever known me to go into a situation totally unprepared?"

"Well...no. But I'm just trying to bring up possible complications. I don't want to see you -- or any of us -- get hurt."

Page 12

Laney has come up beside Sheena.

"Do you think Warren and Miguel will be okay? I hate leaving them back there like that."

"As long as they stay in the chopper, they should be fine," she answers. They've got supplies and medicine. None of the wildlife should be able to get to them."

Sheena is startled as an anaconda zips down from a tree and begins circling around her.

"Besides, Warren has paramedic training. He should -- ooh!"

"Sheena, look out!" yells Laney.

Sheena stumbles back as the snake attempts to immobilize her.

"Rudy!" yells Warren. "Do we have any weapons?"

"No!" he replies. "Not even a flare gun!"

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Sheena is on her back, as the snake starts to coil around her.

"Damn it --" she exclaims.

"Sheena!" yells Laney.

Rudy and Warren try to pull it off, but the creature isn't budging. Sheena is pushing back on its head, trying to keep it away.

"Rudy!" yells Franklin. "I can't get it off!"

"Neither can I!" he answers. "It's too strong!"

Sheena rolls over on top of the snake, her hands gripped around its throat just below its head.

"You want to play, eh?" she says.

"*HISSSSS*" it hisses.

Straddling its body, Sheena really starts choking the hell out of the anaconda.

"Okay, let's see what you've got!" she yells.

Page 14

The snake's head begins to droop.

It drops a bit further.

"That's right..." she says.

It goes unconscious, its forked tongue hanging out of its mouth, some foam bubbling out from the sides of its jaws.

"...just go to sleep."

Sheena pulls herself up to one knee, shedding the snake's body from around her.

"Y'know, I wonder why I even bother worrying about you," says Rudy. "I shoulda known that critter would wish it had stayed up in the trees."

"Yeah. Is it dead?" asks Laney.

Sheena stands over it, looking down, hands on her hips.

"No. I just choked it out. I prefer not to kill unless it's absolutely necessary."

"Okay, we've had enough fun here. We'd better keep moving."

Page 15

Back at the chopper, Miguel and Warren talk.

"Is this splint too tight?" asks Warren.

"No, it's okay. Thanks."

Warren looks up.

"No problem -- hm?"

"What?"

"Do you hear that? It sounds like a chopper."

Warren is looking out the door, up at the sky.

"Is it a rescue bird?" asks Miguel.

"Umm..." says Warren.

The Trevor Enterprises helicopter is lowering toward them.

Warren has a look of concern on his face.

"...I don't think so...."

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The group's obviously been walking a while, and is strategically sweaty.

"Okay, everybody, be quiet. We're near."

"Yeah..." says Rudy.

He points toward the cave, and the guards, who stand around fifty yards ahead.

"...real near."

They crouch together, looking at the distant men.

"What's the plan, Sheena?" asks Franklin.

"Franklin, Laney -- you circle around and handle the guard on the left. Rudy and I will wait until you draw him out, then deal with the other one."

"Right," he answers.

Laney leads the way as they walk off.

"Okay, Laney, this is how we'll do it. I'll --"

"Oh, hush. We're going to do it *my* way this time. Clam up and I'll fill you in."

"Um...okay."

Page 17

The guard they're to distract is talking to his buddy. The jungle is visible in the distance.

"I mean, let's take health care. Our medical plan *sucks*, y'know? I mean, I've got back problems from luggin' a damn rifle, but does anybody at Trevor care? Of course not!"

"Could be worse," says his buddy. "I mean, the dental plan is pretty comprehensive."

"Yeah, but -- huh?" he says at the sound of a nearby **CRACK!**

He moves off toward the jungle; the other guard pulls his weapon ready and watches after him.

"You stay ready. I'm gonna check this out and see what's what."

"Yeah. I got your back."

He moves into the brush, stepping over a large, broken branch.

"Okay...what's going --"

He stops as he sees Laney, sitting as though she's fallen, holding her leg. She looks *really* cute/sexy.

"Um, sir? Can you help me? I think I hurt my leg."

"Oh! Uh...well, sure! Let me --"

Franklin drops down from above onto him, wrapping his arms around his neck.

"HAAAAAI!!!" he exclaims.

"What the hell?!?" says the guard.

Page 18

The guard flips him off, and he lands on his butt.

"Whooooah--" he exclaims.

Franklin swings and misses, and gets a fist in the stomach for his trouble .

"Whoouulf--" he shouts.

As the guard pulls him up, Laney springs toward him.

"Okay, loser, now I'm gonna --"

"Hey!!!" she exclaims. "Leave him alone!!!"

Laney catches him across the jaw with a flying kick (**BRAK!!!**)

Page 19

Laney nails him with a jump-spinning backfist (**WHAK!!!**)

Laney blocks a punch, and palm strikes his midsection (**BIFF!!!**)

Laney flips him over, and he lands on his back (**THUMP!!!**)

"Whoaaaaah!!!" he exclaims.

A backfist to the forehead knocks him out (**THUMP!!!**).

She helps Franklin up tenderly; he's holding his stomach, dazed.

"I've got you! Are you okay?"

"Y-yeah, I think so. What happened?"

"I took him out. You were a *great* distraction."

"Gee, thanks. Remind me not to do it *your* way anymore."

Page 20

Franklin and Laney walk out of the clearing, with Laney holding the guard's gun; Sheena and Rudy have disabled the other guard, who lies unconscious. Rudy has the assault rifle.

"You two okay?" asks Sheena.

"Yeah," says Laney. "Just fine. What now?"

They turn at the sound of a chopper (visible overhead as it descends toward them).

"Well, now we go in and -- what's that?"

"A helicopter!" says Rudy. "Get ready, people!"

The Trevor Enterprises chopper has landed, and Branson has Miguel and Warren at gunpoint.

"Okay, the party's over, people. Drop the guns and get down on the ground..."

"...if you want your friends to keep breathing, that is."

END -- ISSUE 1