

**SHEENA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE**

**ISSUE 2**

**PAGE 1**

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."

**PAGE 2**

Sheena's got him sighted.

"Who the hell are you?" asks Sheena. "Why did you shoot us down?"

"Are you deaf or something?" he answers. "You aren't in any position to be asking questions. Drop the gun or I smear your friends."

Sheena stares at him, not dropping the rifle.

"Sheena...." says Rudy.

Rudy puts his hand on her shoulder as he lowers his rifle.

"Sheena, he's got the cards. You'd better drop it."

Scowling, she lowers the rifle.

She drops it to the ground.

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Guards (including Mr. Kyle) surround the group, as Branson pushes his prisoners along.

"Okay, folks," says Branson. "let's make acquaintances. Tell me who you are -- now."

"My name is Sheena, and this is my research team. We're investigating some anomalous evidence around this volcano."

Branson buttstrokes her harshly.

"We suspect that someone is intentionally destabilizing this mountain. Is that what you're doing here -- uuuhf!!!"

"Shut your hole, lady! We ask the questions!"

Rudy moves to help Sheena up.

"Gee, I hope that doesn't leave a mark.

"You'll find out what's going on soon enough. Now, let's go inside. Time for a chat with the boss."

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They move into a control-type area, with a very finished look (walls, lights, etc.) Some banks of controls line the walls, with techs working at them. Devon James is here, watching as they enter.

"It's like this," says Branson as he walks behind them. "You can behave yourself and stay alive, or cause trouble and buy it. Your choice."

Franklin mutters to Sheena.

"Sheena," he says, "this place has been here for at least a few months. You can't just bore out the rock and set something like this up overnight."

"You're right," she answers. "And Mt. Hansha was fine up to a few months ago. I don't think it's a coincidence."

Devon James walks over to them, and notices Sheena.

"Hello, everyone. Just relax and I assure you that you'll be well taken care of --

"Sheena?"

Sheena doesn't appear pleased to see him.

"Hello, Devon."

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They stand together, she with her hands on her hips.

"I suppose I shouldn't be surprised to see you here. There must be a lot of money to be made."

"Sheena...it's really not like that. I promise you."

She's pointing her finger at him.

"Is that so? The world's foremost environmental mercenary associated with a megacorporation? Should I be surprised?"

"You simply don't know all the details. There are...unfortunate circumstances at work here, and I promise that I'm trying to help."

"Sure, Devon. Tell it to somebody who might buy that line."

Devon turns and activates a wall-mounted video screen.

"I wish I had more time to persuade you of my sincerity, but I have someone that you need to meet. She's the sponsor of this exercise.

"I give you..."

Deborah Trevor appears on the monitor.

"...Deborah Trevor, chairwoman of Trevor Enterprises."

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Sheena crosses her arms as she regards Trevor coldly.

"I know you. You're the one advocated de-protecting Oregon's old-growth forests for logging."

"Yes. And a few million more dollars in lobbying fees would have made it happen. A pity. I won't make that mistake again.

"As for you, I've seen you in our files. You're Sheena, correct? The tree-hugging adventuress of legend?"

Sheena and Deborah continue to speak.

"Something like that."

"So, you've decided to tilt your lance at an even bigger windmill, I see."

"I might be, if I knew exactly what was going on."

Deborah smiles as she speaks.

"Well, I assume you've deduced that we're rendering Mt. Hansha unstable. If you're at all curious as to *why*, it's because we've found some weapons-grade uranium situated along a nearby fault.

"We pop the volcano, the fault opens, we get the goodies. Simple."

Sheena shakes her fist at Trevor.

"*Uranium?!?* You're endangering hundreds of lives in some scatter-brained scheme to procure radioactive material? How can you possibly justify something like that?"

"I guess I watched too much violent television or something. Desensitized me and all that."

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Kyle and Branson approach the group.

"Now, enough of the small talk. Mr. Kyle, Mr. Branson, have our guests incarcerated for the moment. I'll decide how best to deal with them later."

"Right away, Miss Trevor," says Branson.

Sheena turns back to the monitor.

"Trevor..."

"I'm going to stop this from happening. I promise you that."

Deborah smiles back in return.

"Bring it on."

They're led away.

"Okay, people," says Branson, encouraging them along with the point of his rifle. "Time for a little trip to our storage room. Should be nice and comfy."

"Does it have HBO?" asks Franklin.

"Shut up," says Kyle.

Devon watches them led away with concern.

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In the box-laden storage room they've been locked inside, they hunt through the containers and find nothing.

A caption reads, "Later..."

"Find anything?" asks Warren. "Crowbar? Lockpick? Kalishnikov assault rifle?"

"Nope. Not even a friggin' slingshot."

"Darned inconsiderate of them," notes Miguel.

Warren holds up his arms.

"No spare weapons or tools? No means of escape? You mean these are *competent* bad guys?"

"Looks like it," answers Miguel.

"Great. Just what we need."

Laney cradles/massages the somewhat puny Franklin. He seems content with things.

She says, "I'm so sorry you got hurt outside, Franklin. Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I think I'll make it. Just keep rubbing."

Warren sneers down at them.

"Laney, please. I'm your brother. Can't you wait until we get outta this to fawn all over that dope?"

"Oh, hush, Warren. I'm not fawning. I'm...ministering."

"Yeah, Warren, she's ministering. Go underachieve somewhere else."

Sheena and Rudy discuss the situation.

"Knock it off, people," says Sheena. "Rudy, what do you think?"

"I've looked over the room, and don't see any means of escape. I hate to say it, but we're stuck."

"I thought as much," says Sheena. "We'll have to wait for them to make a move."

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Sheena and Rudy continue to talk.

"Do you really think they can trigger this volcano to erupt?"

"I have no idea, but apparently they think so. If they're to blame for its instability, then perhaps."

Franklin looks up at Sheena; his head is resting against Laney's lap, and she's rubbing his temples.

"If Trevor has ample explosives, then I think they can. All it would take would be to open a few pipes and the release of pressure would do the rest. I mean, nobody's ever tried this kind of thing before, but it's theoretically possible."

"Obviously, Trevor is putting theory into practice," says Warren. "At the expense of a lot of lives."

Miguel joins in, intense.

"More lives than you realize," says Miguel. "The damage to the local area will certainly incinerate and bury everyone for several miles.

"But depending on the volume of materials and noxious gases thrown into the atmosphere, this could have adverse effects on the whole planet. It would trigger acid rain over several countries and drop temperatures worldwide."

Sheena crosses her arms.

"We *have* to stop them," she says. "If there's the remotest chance they might succeed, the effects would be cataclysmic."

"Worse yet," says Laney, "if they're successful here...I don't think they'll think twice about doing it again."

Sheena takes a seat against a crate; the others begin to settle in, Laney curled against Franklin.

"You're right, Laney. We've got to keep this from happening in any way we can.

"Okay, people, let's settle in. There's no telling when they might come back for us, and I want us rested when they do."

"And what then?" asks Rudy.

"I'll figure something out," she says.

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The cell is dark, and they're slumbering.

The door has opened a crack, the light falling on Sheena's face, awakening her.

"Hmmm?" she says.

It's Devon.

"Sheena," he whispers. "Come with me. I need to talk to you."

He closes the door and re-secures it as she stands beside him in the hallway.

"Why shouldn't I just knock you out now and let my friends go?"

"Because that would be an exceedingly bad idea at this time. You're unarmed and outnumbered.

"I can help you."

They've moved to his quarters, where he's closing the door. The furnishings are very spartan, consisting of some folding chairs, a simple table, and a cot. Sheena stands near the table, hands on her hips.

"I imagine you're rather disturbed by Miss Trevor's plot to trigger the volcano," he says. "I was as well. Despite what you might think, I wasn't hired to assist with forcing the eruption.

"Then what brought you to here?"

Devon is standing closer, pleading his case.

"They told me about what they were intending, and wanted me to assist in helping them set up their equipment. I knew I could never stop them from attempting their plan, so I agreed, hoping to use whatever time I could to get the locals to evacuate.

"Unfortunately, they refused. This is sacred ground to them, and they feel they must live or die on it. I failed."

"So why are you still here?"

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Devon continues to speak.

"When I begged Miss Trevor to reconsider, she made it abundantly plain that her henchmen would delight in scattering my remains over the rain forest if I didn't go along. But your arrival is rather fortuitous, because now we've a chance of stopping them.

"I can provide you with weapons and a means to escape. My plan is to set up a distraction to draw away the bulk of the guards, which will allow you to make your way into the jungle."

Sheena looks at him with a suspicious smile.

"I'd like to trust you, Devon. But we go back a ways, and I remember that you could be pretty mercenary. How do I know that you're not just setting us up to be 'killed while escaping'?"

"Sheena...I'll admit that I haven't always been the noblest man on earth, nor the wisest. But we...shared something once, something rather pleasant. I hope that experience taught you that I care about you."

Sheena is pulling at his shirt, unbuttoning it. He's gently holding her arms.

"I suppose it did," she says, smiling. "And against my better judgement, I trust you. And since we're here and alone, I say we take the opportunity to do some...catching up."

"I can't argue with that."

She's pushing him down onto the cot, crawling atop him.

"Of course, you realize if you sell me out after we do this, you'll *wish* Trevor's goons had scattered your remains over the rain forest."

"Oh, I realize it, alright. Some risks aren't worth taking."

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Daybreak opens over Philop, with the smoking mountain looming ominously.

Inside the complex, Branson and Kyle are sitting at a table with some other guards, playing cards. Branson is tossing a couple down onto the table. Some bills are stacked in the middle.

"Gimme two," says Branson. "Make 'em good."

"Oh, sure," says the dealer, smiling. "Wanna pick 'em out yourself?"

Kyle looks at Branson.

"What do you figure'll happen to the prisoners?"

"Ah, give it a day, and then Miss Trevor'll have us cap 'em. We'll just leave the bodies behind when the volcano blows its stack."

A big **BOOM!** shocks them, shuddering the card table.

"Kinda nice, actually. Won't be any evidence to -- *what the hell?!?*"

They rush to the entrance; they see a smoking hole in the ground near the chopper.

"You!!!" says Branson, pointing at a guard. "What's going on?"

"An explosion, sir!" he answers. "We think somebody's lobbing grenades from the treeline!"

Branson points at the guards.

"I was afraid of this. The natives must've gotten wind of what we're doing. Okay, mobilize security and do some reconnaissance and force around the perimeter. Shoot to kill, you got me?"

"Yes, sir!" answers a guard.



"C'mon," says Branson to Kyle. "Let's see what we can see from the air."

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Back in the complex, Devon is opening the door to the cell holding Sheena and company, releasing them. He's handing her an assault rifle, with a few more leaning against the wall beside him (for distribution purposes, naturally).

"I set off a timed charge in the compound outside," he says. "That should send enough of them outside to permit your escape."

"Take these rifles. You may not need them, but --"

-- but better safe than sorry," says Sheena. "Thanks, Devon. You've really come through."

Devon walks along with them as they make their way out.

"I promised I would, Sheena. Consider it an act of redemption, if you will."

"I'll lead the way, and try to get us out before shots are fired."

"Sounds reasonable," she says.

Devon approaches a pair of guards who are still near the entrance.

"You there!" he says. "I heard an explosion. What's going on?"

"We think the natives are attacking, sir," says the guard. "We have patrols searching the jungle now. Mr. Kyle and Mr. Branson are combing the air in the chopper."

Sheena buttstrokes one of the guards from behind (**BRAK!**), as Rudy nails the other (**WHAK!**).

"We expect to know something more shortly -- uuuh!!!"

"I doubt that," says Rudy.

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Sheena and Rudy step over the unconscious guards, looking out at the jungle. Devon leads the way.

"Rudy," says Sheena, "what kind of cover will we have? Will that chopper be able to see us in the jungle?"

"Not further out. But the foliage close to the mountain is sparser. We need to move fast."

Sheena looks at Devon, who smiles.

"You're coming with us."

"Sheena...I can help you more if I'm still inside --"

"Nonsense. They'll figure out who helped us, and that'll be it for you. Now come on, or I'll hurt you."

"I...never argue with a lady."

The gang is in the jungle, stepping over fallen branches and whatnot.

"I almost hate to ask this," says Franklin, "but where are we headed?"

"We need to get to a defensible location first," says Rudy, who has taken point. "We can formulate a plan once we're out of trouble."

Everybody hits the ground as bullets fly overhead.

"So," says Franklin, "where might this 'defensible location' be -- *look out!!!*"

***BRRRRRAAPPP!!!*** comes the gunfire.

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They return fire.

"Everybody, get down!" yells Rudy. "Use short, controlled bursts! We don't have a lot of ammo!"

"Right!" says Warren.

Laney fires at the bad guys wildly, while Franklin tries to get her to crouch down.

"You jerks! Take some'a this!!!" she yells.

"Laney!!!" shouts Franklin. "Get down! You're wide open!"

Rudy looks concerned, sweat running down his face.

"Sheena, we're running low on rounds," he says. "What do you want us to do?"

"Sheena?"

A lone panel showing that where Sheena was located is empty.

"Uh, oh...." he says.

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From on some of the guards, who have our gang pinned down.

"Won't be long now," says one. "We've got 'em outgunned. They'll be dry soon.

"Radio Branson and tell him that we found the prisoners--"

Sheena drops down behind 'em.

"--huh?!?" he says.

Using her martial arts skills, Sheena kicks one (**WHAM!**), and buttstrokes another (**KRACK!**).

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She hits two more with a double clothesline.

"Uuuuk!!!" says one.

Two guards fire after where she dives into some foliage.

"Get 'er!!! Get 'er!!!" screams one.

"Diediedie!!!" yells his buddy.

The investigate where her body ought to be.

"Where the hell is she? She shoulda landed right --"

She swings down from a tree, nailing both of them (**BRAK!**).

"UUUHH!!!" he says.

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The gang looks on as Sheena engages three advancing guards.

Devon says, "She's certainly still the hellion I remember!"

Rudy answers, "No, she's worse!"

"Okay, people, let's move!"

Sheena roundhouse kicks one guard (**SMACK!**), while Rudy puts a big fist into the gut of another (**BIFF!**).

Sheena says, "Took you guys long enough."

Rudy answers, "Right, like you needed our help."

Laney is sitting on the chest of one, pounding away at his face (**BAM! BAM! BAM!**). Franklin is holding her shoulders.

"I'm gonna beat your face in!" she yells.

Franklin says, "He's out, Laney! Ease up!"

They rise and survey the carnage.

Sheena asks, "Think they got a message off?"

Devon answers, "Perhaps. That means we'll have to act quickly."

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Devon pulls out a map.

Sheena says, "Devon, now that we're out, Trevor is certainly going to order the explosion. We've got to stop that."

"Agreed. The explosives to trigger the eruption are positioned at three crucial junctures around the mountain," he says. "They're capable of considerable explosive force, as you're doubtless aware."

The map is of an overhead view of the mountain; three red dots mark the locations of the explosives, all at near the base of the volcano.

"How long will we have to avert it?" asks Franklin.

"Two hours at most," says Devon. "They're providing ample evac time for their own people, but if a few get caught, I doubt Miss Trevor will lose much sleep over it."

Laney approaches them.

"I hate to say this, but there's no way we can get to all three sites in two hours, even if we split up. We might've been able to if we had the chopper, but that's toast."

"She's right," says Miguel. "The terrain's too harsh. We'll be lucky to make it to the first site."

Devon points to the closest site.

"We won't have to. The charges are interlinked - either they all blow, or none do. If we can shut this one down, then we can prevent the whole thing."

"That's fantastic," says Sheena. "How far to that site?"

"An hour on foot, maybe a bit less," he says. "But it's heavily guarded."

"Don't worry about that," she says. "To stop me at this point..."

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Shot of the Trevor Enterprises chopper as it cruises the mountainside.

"...they'd have to have a bloody regiment."

"What do you mean they've escaped?" comes a voice in the chopper.

A guard on a monitor is speaking to Mr. Branson.

"I'm sorry, sir. They took out some guards and got away. They're in the jungle somewhere.

"They had inside help. We think it was Devon James."

Kyle cracks his knuckles.

"James. Figures. We should've greased that Brit when he started making noise about saving the natives."

Branson says, "I want you to take whatever guards you've got and start patrols. We can't let them get back and warn the Philopian government. Shoot on sight. Is that clear?"

"Yes, sir," he answers.

Branson and Kyle talk.

"What's the plan?" asks Kyle.

"Simple. We stay up here and start looking for them," he says. "And when we find 'em..."

Closer on Branson's face, smiling evilly.

"...we erase 'em."

**END -- ISSUE 2**