

Sample #1 from upcoming webcomic *Detonator*

[Roland (a rebel) rides on the shoulder of a mostly machine, Allison's heavy armor, through the city's wreckage.]

Roland:

This is some little trip. I can't believe we're trucking through this so fast. This would take us half the day on foot.

Allison Reid:

It helps that the rest of your buddies stayed to watch over the hospital. Besides, I've made this trip a few times now. I know the clearest route.

[Reach hospital. Roland gets down. Allison detaches from the Heavy Arms]

Roland:

Dr. "Upper" is going to flip his tie when he sees all this. You sure you want to haul all of these supplies now?

Allison Reid:

Dr. Opir's supplies are desperate for a boost. Besides, it's not like any of this will do anybody any good lying around here.

Roland:

Yeah, well, you can bet not one gauze pad will go to waste. Every one still alive has at least one extra hole they didn't ask for. If it's not our trusty military gunning us down, it's your boy.

Allison Reid:

Don't worry about him. I know what I have to do.

Roland:

You really think you can put him down?

Allison Reid:

I just need the rest of you to get clear. I don't want to risk hurting anyone else. You'd think I'd be used to killing.

Roland:

Why's that?

Allison Reid:

I've already killed dozens.

Roland:

You mean they had you out there making a mess out of a bigger mess? Didn't you say you were one of us?

Allison Reid:

Yeah, but...

Roland:

I don't get why you'd want to be all out here blowing up our homes, our families, our friends.

Allison Reid:

No, I never killed anyone like that. It's... I killed a lot of military personnel.

Roland:

So, what? They're supposed to be helping us when there's a natural disaster, right?

Allison Reid:

It's not that easy, Roland.

Roland:

Sure, it is. Look at all this. Do you think it's okay that they're leaving us out here to drown and suffer while they get to hunker down in their dry cozy bunks? Our homes are gone. You know what our shelter looks like? Concrete slabs propped up by other concrete or steel beams.

Allison Reid:

I don't think it's that simple.

Roland:

Then explain it to me.

Allison Reid:

You have family, right?

Roland:

Used to.

Allison Reid:

I'm sorry. I've lost mine, too. Look who makes up our military. Where do you think they come from? Those are our brothers, sisters, cousins, nieces, nephews, children... It's us, Roland.

Roland:

They aren't any of my people, Allie, and they sure as hell aren't me.

Allison Reid:

But they are us. I never had a clue what stepping into a battlefield was like until this. I've never held a gun in my life let alone used a bomb. I can't stop being this... what I am. At least you can put your guns down and hide in a crowd. Where do I go? Where do I fit in? I'm not even human anymore. Even like this, I was terrified to go out to battle and I'm... I'm different now. I can't imagine what it must be like to be a kid holding a rifle for the first time, forced to use it on someone who could've been at their last family holiday.

Roland:

So, trying to figure out how they cope?

Allison Reid:

I guess. There were so many. All those tanks gone in no time just burning, smoking steel.

Roland:

Well, if you ask me, they had it co-. Tanks? Hold on, as in rows of big, ugly Badger 9's?

Allison Reid:

At least 20, at least.

Roland:

You poor little lamb.

Allison Reid:

I can't believe you. You have no respect for life other than your own -

Roland:

Me? You've got it all wrong. I'm no fellow of big, hulking tanks. Maybe you are right to feel sorry-for dusting your brother tanks.

Allison Reid:

What are you talking about?

Roland:

Those high dollar-killing machines you're all sore about, those are remote controlled. There was no one manning those things. Sorry, Allie, just steel killing steel.

Allison Reid:

You're lying....

Roland:

You really don't know a thing about warfare, do you? The military was getting ready to deploy this model of tank to the Far East when Mother Nature decided to stomp us for ruining the environment. Allie, if that's the worst you've done, you haven't hurt a soul.

Allison Reid:

I don't believe it.

Roland:

So, if you'll get over your grief for a bunch of murdering remote-controlled cannons, I'll chew on your point and see if I can't find the humanity at the other end of my rifle. Promise.