Venturing: Cailing

We gathered around the entrance of the store. Our attention was looking inward, towards the dimly lights that flooded the store where we had saw everything there; from snacks, to drinks to just about anything that was there however. I only exhaled a breath, giving a slight nod towards my unit while Zander and Kyro were the first to pile on in. Grabbing hold onto the front door, they walked right in calmly with the rest of us following close behind.

A flood of fresh air bit upon my scales as my attention was drawn towards my surroundings; towards four or five different aisle that was in front of me. All parallel to one another. To the extremely left, was a small corridor that leads straight into the bathroom and the employee break room. There were two white signs posted upon their surfaces, both of which I had never cared about however. My ears perked upon hearing Natty spoke loudly towards the store manager as my attention was drawn towards their conversation. I walked up towards the pair; while the store cashier nodded his head, yet shift his attention towards me upon the following silence. His expressions showed me that he was worried; his eyes were pointing to me and Natty in silence, his wings were spread; hanging lowly behind him as if he was scared or fearful about something. Most likely from Natty herself, no doubt however.

I gave a nod towards the cashier in silence; before turning my attention towards Natty who commented towards me. Explaining about one important detail that she had managed to dig up however. I was a bit interested upon this detail and further prompted her for it while she answered back to me, “The store cashier had shared a thirty minute phone call with another one on the other side. Yet he refuses to state what or who was the client or customer that was on the other side however.” “Then who is it then?” I questioned th cashier who flinched upon my question towards him; holding his claws up upon himself as if he was defending himself from the ‘attacks’. “I do not know. But the store manager was always getting a message or phone call from this particular client all the time, everyday to be honest!”

“Everyday?” I questioned, my eyes lit up a bit surprise by this important news while Natty just stared upon me in silence, shaking her head following it before departing from me. Onto that moment, I furthered the conversation questioning him “Can we have the conversation?” “Who are you guys?” He questioned reflected back towards me, a bit stern and frustrated. But mixing that with the fear and anxiety amongst his voice as he added, “I could get the police involve with this if you do not cooperated.” “We are the police. VPD.” I commanded, in response. He just looked upon me afterwards; then quickly flustered as he turned his attention towards the phone. Pressed upon something on his side of it and; a white long ticket was spit out from the small little slit hole at the bottom of the phone, something that he grabbed upon and ripped apart; before handing it back towards me.

“Do not tell the store manager,” The cashier commented, frantic and panic was upon his voice as I kept staring onto him afterwards, he continued speaking “He will have my head if he does know.” “Well good to know.” I answered back, barely above a whisper while I gave a nod towards him, smiling only faintly before departing from the register. I walked off some steps away from the counter behind me, bypassing two or three aisle over on my left side long before I had paused so suddenly and hanged my head upon the ground, staring well towards the paper that the clark had handed me for. Indeed, it was a long piece of paper, something that I had never seen before however. As my eyes scanned upon the pieces of words that were there; imprinted. I imagine the conversion upon my own head however.

But before I could even start it; I heard something flushed to the north of me and immediately I raised my head high towards the horizon, glancing towards the north where I had spotted Zander was already coming out of the bathroom apparently. In his claws was a map; a screwdriver and a knife apparently. It was something that I was rather surprise with that I had walked a bit faster towards the black dragon just as he held his claws high above his head and called out towards; the rest of my units. “I had found something in the bathroom!” “Quiet.” I growled, already reaching onto him first after he had said his piece. Glancing over to me with a surprise over his face, but nonetheless kept himself quiet while he nodded his head. Afterwards, I removed my claw from his snout while he unfolded the map before us. It was just in time too when the other members of the unit had arrived as well.

“It is indeed a map.” Kyro remarked, staring onto the large piece of paper in front of him, “But where are all of the exits? All of the important pathways and things and such that every customer should know about?” “More importantly.” Natty commented, her eyes narrowed while she lingered onto the paper silently, “Why is it showing these strange numbers on there.” “What strange numbers?” Zander questioned Natty while she stabbed the paper silently and ran her claw across it; exposing the numbers for what they were. Indeed, there were strange numbers. Starting from extremely left to right, from Zander’s point of view however, it was the following ‘(1,0), (2,3), (1,2), (3,0) and (4,1).’ “It had only gone up to four on the x axis line and three on the y axis line.” I commented, informing the others while they double take on the paper, before confirming what I had observed.

“So what does this mean then?” Natty questioned after a small pause of silence; we exchanged some looks. Kyro, Zander were frowning. Natty had some sort of concern upon her face and I, on the other claw, was rather looking interested by this important information however. That I spoke up after Natty just as the others had turned towards me in silence; waiting to hear what I had to say. “Natty and Kyro; Figure out about the conversations within the phone call. Starting from the top towards the bottom. Do not leave anything else behind.” Both dragons gave a nod towards me, a silence upon their snouts as they departed rather immediately. Leaving me alone with Zander, I motioned towards him just as we were the second ones to depart from the corridor of the hallway behind us. Returning right back into the small room that makes up the store in front of us however.

“You and me will be figuring out about the map, its strange numbers and what it relates towards the store itself.” “Got it.” Zander confirmed just as he walked off a few feet from me, immediately turning himself around and questioned me, “By the way; where are we starting?” “Extremely left,” I chuckled in response towards him, “Closest to the register, closest to the exit and entrance door of the store.” Before hanging my head down and commented to him, “Our first target is ‘(1,0)’” Zander muttered something to himself about something, but I had ignored him otherwise and we walked on forward towards the first aisle, closest to the register where that cashier was still hanging about, looking a bit worried and anxious as his attention was drawn towards Kyro and Zander however.

The first aisle holds the drinks area. We had seen many different types here apparently; and there were a variety of them however. From popular drinks like Drinky, Dork, Crine and others. Though sometimes I had wondered if the author was just making these up at the top of his head sometimes. I shake my head to rid of that following thoughts however. As Zander walked on without me, I turned my attention towards the drinks that were towards my left side; noticing a variety of colors amongst those drinks either. Orange, black, gray and white or crystal clear apparently. The other colors were either mixes of these colors or something entirely new and rare; such as the fruit punch soda that I had saw moments beforehand. As Zander stopped and called me over, I immediately turned towards his attention and soon caught up towards him.

He then pointed to the first strange number that was held upon the piece of paper of the map that was held onto his claw, showcasing that (1,0). I nodded while he raised his claw high and silently pointed towards the drink in front of him. Surprisingly enough, it was gone. A small hole left upon its wake, in between the blue flavor sodas and gray common soda. My eyes squinted, narrowing as I crouched downward to level eye with the small hole in front of me. I saw something there; blocking the light that was on the other side of me. Something sharp; or likewise however. I reached in with my claw towards the hole; entering right in. I grabbed onto the object in silence and tried to pull; quickly hearing something snapped that I immediately retracted my claw and Zander exclaiming “Watch out!”

Barely, it had missed me as I dive out of the way. Hitting upon the grounds hard while I groaned; my claw already bleeding lightly as we hear a shot in the air. Something wooshed above me and hit upon the drink onto the other side. Me and Zander glancing towards the ruined drink, just as it continued spilling its contents, pooling upon the grounds. Making a mess upon the flooring. In silence, I stared for a good moment while Zander crouched down and stared onto the object within the hole, then grabbed hold onto his flashlight with his right claw and turned it on, revealing what it was. He breathed, gasping lightly.

“It is a gun.” “Its a gun?” I questioned Zander, who quietly nodded his head. Raising himself up onto his feet, immediately turning his attention towards me while he confirms it “It is a gun.” “But what is a gun doing in a store?” I questioned, with a small frown upon my snout as a small pause of silence was held inbetween of the two of us. Only the black dragon exhaled with a small breath, shaking his head as if he cannot answer that however as we had immediately departed from the first aisle and immediately head onto the next one, the cashier, likely hearing the gunshot, exclaimed to us. Yet it had fallen onto deaf ears as we had entered through the second aisle in silence.

We had repeatedly seen the same scenario in each aisle apparently. Each strange number had a hole within them at a particular spot within the aisle. Thus it had made sense that the first aisle was numbered one; the second two and so on and so on. The number zero on the y coordinate on the first aisle and the number three on the y coordinate for the second; indicates what spot will the hole be in and where the pistol would be hiding if one were to ‘steal’ it however. “What bugs me however…” I trailed as Zander glanced towards me, his eyes widened after reeling his claw back; the bullet barely missing him by an inch, already hitting against the cloth adjacent to the black dragon. “Is why go through extreme lengths just for these particular holes? Is there something that we are missing? SOmething like a favorite food of the employees that was kept on missing? Missing shipments? What?” “You do bring up a good point however.” Commented Zander, dusting himself while he raised himself onto his feet. A smirk upon his face while he turned back towards the piece of paper.

“Our next one is a two.” “This will just repeat otherwise.” I commented to Zander, who just froze in his spot, glancing towards me before silently nodding as if he was agreeing with what I had just pointed out. “If that be the case, then we can just assume that all of the holes have pistols in them and are trying to kill/murder customers over specific items then.” “But what is this special item that they are so keen on protecting?” I questioned Zander who just fell to silence, frowning before jabbing his paw up forward and spoke “Should we raid the backrooms then? See what we can find there?” “Ozkun and Takari are already doing that now apparently.” I commented, immediately turning around and headed back as Zander just frowned otherwise and followed right behind me.

We walked down the length of the aisle, my attention was hang to the horizon above. Silence was hovering above us as we out footsteps were the only thing echoing upon our ringing ears anyway. Reaching upon the entrance of the aisle, we turned our attention towards the register center; where Natty and Kyro grinned, exchanging some nods before departing from the register in silence. But they only walked a few steps before they had regrouped with us however; their heads hangs silently while their eyes met up with mine, I cough to remove the silence held as Natty held up her claw, sill holding the piece of paper and spoke, “We found out that the culprit is the store manager.” “Why thought?” I questioned, prompting her to answer which she had delivered.

“Sources say that he was the one responsible for the killing and murder of the dragon customers here, additionally self sabotage, based on all the items taken off from the shelves.” “That makes sense.” Zander commented, shifting his attention towards me as I gave a silent nod towards him, “Indeed. But it just raises one more question however.” I say while Kyro and Natty blinked their eyes, tilting their heads to one side questioning me, “And that is?” “What were the importance of those items? So much so that the store manager and its employees would withdraw them back; only creating holes that would murdered them, instead of stating that they do not have them.” “he could be the ring leader of a murderous gang.” Kyro pointed out, I shake my head “That is impossible.” I narrowed my eyes glaring at the red dragon, “There were no criminal activities that had unfolded upon this realm. We practically took care of them all in between the stories.” A short pause of silence emerged between us; yet it was something unbearable however as I had found myself snarling because of it. I immediately turned my attention towards the third aisle and entered right in. Walked down the aisle towards the end where the corridor was once was and entered through it afterwards. My unit followed close behind me, curiosity were written onto their faces as they too had wondered also.

As a cold breeze washed over all of us, we entered into the backrooms. Yet it was something that we had never suspected however. The backrooms was only a small little room; cluttered with thousands boxes scattered all around the place. It had felt like a maze or something, something that I was rather surprise about however. Zander, Kyro and Natty widened their eyes staring at the clutterment of the backrooms; shortly before turning their attention towards me, I shake my head. “Remember what we are looking for.” I responded, reminding them of it as they spread themselves thin, Kyro and Zander heading towards the left with me and Natty heading the opposing way.

Did I ever mention how cold and chilling the backrooms were? As if there were some sort of freezing coldness that shot upon the interior of the room? It was really cold here and I do mean that it was freezing that me and Naty were shivering in our spots; grounding tightly upon our fangs as we make our way through the seas of boxes surrounding us. Often times, I did shift my attention towards the side, gazing upon the boxes that were scattered around us; I took a few moments however too to grabbed onto those boxes and even held them up towards my own eyes, staring onto the labels that exposed themselves for me. Like for example, the box that was held upon my own claws were the toys. Yet at the bottom of the label; there was a symbol of a bullet somehow. Something that had peaked my interest about, yet I just ignored it and continued onward. Trailing behind Natty as she walked on without me however.

Once regrouped; we continued walking. Further and further down the path before us; as our attention was drawn towards the sea of boxes about and the variety of items that was sealed within them. I had also assumed that, each of the boxes have that same symbol imprinted upon them. Something that my mind was keen upon working on for hopefully decipher what that symbol of a bullet meant as perhaps it cannot be that obvious however.

As we continued on, I immediately paused in spot with Natty taking a few steps forward, before she had stopped in front of me. She turned around, fixing her attention towards me while I look towards the side. Staring well towards the grayish wall in front of me. A black line was seeping through the thin line of cracks, something that had taken my interest however while Natty stepped forth back towards me and hanged her head high; staring onto the line that was in front of us. We held an silent exchange between us; a nod that followed afterwards before we spread our wings silently and hovered just above the grounds beneath us. Heeding straight towards the wall where the line was; we paused while our wings flapped noisingly upon our silence as we stretched our claws forward. Grabbing onto the thin layer of the line before us and pulled back.

“If Zander was here,” Natty chuckled silently as we turned to look upon one another, “He would make a breeding joke.” I just rolled my eyes, remembering dragon slits. But shake my head afterwards as we had turned back towards the line before us; now stretched. There was a huge pile of black bags before us and within them. We grabbed onto what we could; hurryingly flying back towards solid ground before landing back with our feet intact upon the grounds beneath us as I nodded towards her; she immediately ripped opened the bag while I mirrored her. Thus, while the contents were spilling in front of us. We were surprise to see what was contained within those bags.

“Party supplies.” I muttered silently, “What were they planning to do with hoisting a party?” Natty questioned me, but I remained silent. For no words were retained upon my own snout; just an opened snout, staring well onto the revealed clue, that finally concluded this case of ours. Thus without any sort of hesitation, I gave a acknowledgement nod towards Natty and whispered to her, “Arrest the cashier and find out where the store manager is. Arrest him and close down this shot.” Natty nodded and radio in for some backup.