

EXIT CITY

"No Secrets"

An 8-page story by

Michael Patrick Sullivan

m@redrighthand.net

PAGE 1: FOUR PANELSPANEL ONE:

On an Exit City sidewalk, a wall of video advertising on the right side, cars race by on the left. Up angle from the running foot of a SUSPECT (30, male, ripped leather bike gear) to see MILLER and McCORMICK chasing after him, side-by-side and barreling at us, full speed.

1 MCCORMICK CAP:

My name's McCormick. She's Miller. We're Exit City police.

PANEL TWO:

Eye-level looking past the Suspect - utterly focused on running as fast as inhumanly possible. Behind him, McCormick with a similar look on his face, but his eyes looking to the side where Miller's dropped back noticeably.

2 MCCORMICK CAP:

And right now, she's **lying** to me.

PANEL THREE:

Side view as we see Miller, McCormick and Suspect against the video wall. At far right, Suspect's limbs all at 90 degree turns indicating maximum run. McCormick (center panel) not far behind him, but not as exaggerated. And on the left Miller isn't running at all, she's sliding feet first (as if into first base) with her gun drawn - two-handed grip, up and ready.

3 MCCORMICK CAP:

Not with her words. I can forgive **that**, she does it all the time. It's the least of her violations of police regs...and the law itself.

4 MCCORMICK CAP:

It's what she's **not** saying.

PANEL FOUR:

From behind McCormick as the Suspect ducks around a corner to the left. McCormick's in profile as he turns his head to the right where a bus passes by.

In the bus windows we (and he) see the reflection of what's around that corner (and that' were about to see on page 2), though not too clearly for us.

5 MCCORMICK CAP:

I'm **supposed** to be able to trust her with my life.

PAGE 2: SPLASH

PANEL ONE:

At top left...

1 MCCORMICK CAP:

At the moment, I'm just trying to convince myself she's not setting me up for a sharp **decrease** in my life expectancy.

Down angle. From above and behind THREE ARMED GOONS standing on a car, turned perpendicular to the road, working as a roadblock. One on the hood, one on the roof and one on the trunk slope. All armed and partially armored along with neck gaiters, and goggles. Trying to be uniform but not really getting there.

Desperate for cover, the Suspect dives over the hood, between the Hood Goon's legs.

McCormick, fully exposed, having passed the corner, shoots the Roof Goon smack in the head - fatality. Motion lines and an after image of discharge indicate he's already shot Trunk Goon in the gut - a through-and-through.

Using the corner wall as cover, Miller reaches out with her gun and, through motion lines and after image of discharge, we see she's also made two shots...which miss - one between Roof and Hood Goons, the other between Hood and Trunk goons - flight lines go clear off the page.

At bottom right...

2 MCCORMICK CAP:

Exit City is a man-made special economic zone off the coast of California. In short, the law is "whatever they can **get away** with." Our job is not to let them.

3 MCCORMICK CAP:

What is it **she's** trying to get away with?

PAGE 3: FIVE PANELS

PANEL ONE:

Over McCormick's shoulder as Trunk and Roof Goon fall dead off the car. McCormick shoots Hood Goon in the chest and he drops his gun.

1 MCCORMICK CAP:

I've been forcefully modified through experimental surgery and head-fuckery. Now my brain processes inputs on **multiple** parallel tracks. It gives me a hyper-awareness.

PANEL TWO

Hood Goon's gun drops into Suspect's lap as he hides against the wheel well.

2 MCCORMICK CAP:

That's how I targeted these goons based on their reflection in a passing bus window **before** they even saw me.

PANEL THREE:

Over Suspect's shoulder as he shoots through the open windows of the car. Flight line of his shot goes to Miller's head.

3 MCCORMICK CAP:

However, one of those tracks has been dedicated to **Miller**.

PANEL FOUR:

Exact same shot, but Miller's been pushed (fractionally) out of the way by McCormick side-kicking her out of the way.

4 MCCORMICK CAP:

It started out as looking out for my partner, but certain things would get my attention.

PANEL FIVE:

Exact same shot, but McCormick's picking off Suspect through the windows.

5 MCCORMICK CAP:

Like dropping her speed in hot pursuit or sliding to a stop as if she **knew** what's was around the literal corner...

PAGE 4: FIVE PANELS

PANEL ONE:

McCormick gives Miller a hand up from the ground.

1 MILLER:

Thanks. Good shooting.

2 MCCORMICK:

Yes. It was. Better luck **next** time.

3 MCCORMICK CAP:

...and **missing** every target in the field like she **wasn't** an expert-rated deadeye shot.

PANEL TWO:

McCormick and Miller assess/overlook the scene before them, blood, dead goons, dropped guns and spent ammo on the pavement. In the background, gawking onlookers as well as passersby who can't be bothered.

4 MILLER:

Hey, **not all** of us were reengineered into a hyper-vigilant death machine.

5 MCCORMICK:

We still don't have any intel on the traitor cops feeding our secrets to the corpo-syndicates.

6 MILLER:

Yeah, **Deep Police**. We'll get the next one. I can feel it.

PANEL THREE:

McCormick holds SUSPECT #2 (20s, male, a bit raggy) by the neck against the glass wall overlooking the ocean, another "island" of Exit City in the background, and the connecting bridge leading to it.

Miller leans on the wall nearby, but she's drawing her gun from her holster.

DISPLAY LETT:

THE NEXT ONE...

7 SUSPECT #2:

I don't know! They don't tell me **nothing!** I just swallow the micro drives and dump it where they tell me.

(PAGE CONTINUED)

8 MCCORMICK:
That pun better not be intended.

9 SUSPECT #2:
What pun!?

PANEL FOUR:

Miller holds her gun at Suspect #2's head, but McCormick's free hand grips Miller's wrist.

10 MILLER:
Listen you lying, air-gapped, data mule, If you don't start naming names--

11 MCCORMICK:
NO! We'll take him back and brace him.

PANEL FIVE:

Suspect #2's gut *EXPLODES*, spraying blood everywhere and on the glass over the Exit City in the background.

McCormick still has Miller's wrist in his grip,

SFX: SPLUDGE!

12 MILLER:
Wasn't **me**.

PAGE 5: FIVE PANELS (THREE STACKED, TWO INSETS IN PANEL TWO)PANEL ONE:

Close on McCormick in his car. He's using a digital-binocular device.

In the lens of the device, we see Miller stepping out of a building, looking down the street suspiciously, as if she were expecting to be surveilled.

1 MCCORMICK CAP:

It **wasn't** her. It was the biometric-monitoring micro-drive he gulped down.

2 MCCORMICK CAP:

If it detects stress levels getting too high as a result of, for instance, **interrogation**, it detonates an explosive payload.

PANEL TWO:

Closer on McCormick, the binocular device lowered so we can see his eyes.

Miller still seen in the device, walking away down the street.

3 MCCORMICK CAP:

With my hand on his neck, I felt his **significantly** elevated vitals.

4 MCCORMICK CAP:

Meanwhile, my hand on Miller's wrist got no rise in pulse, blood pressure or stress. She **knew** what was coming.

PANEL THREE: INSET PANEL TWO LEFT (CROSS PANEL ONE BORDER)

Tight on McCormick's hand on Suspect #2's neck.

PANEL FOUR: INSET PANEL TWO RIGHT (CROSS PANEL THREE BORDER:

Tight on McCormick's hand on Miller's wrist.

PANEL FIVE:

On Miller, walking toward us. A limousine pulls up beside her. McCormick watching from outside his car in the background, as if he were going to follow her on foot.

5 MCCORMICK CAP:

It was always going to come to this. I'm **surveilling** my damn partner.

PAGE 6: FIVE PANELSPANEL ONE:

Limo pulled up alongside Miller. Door open. She's stopped, looking inside.

PANEL TWO:

Inside the limo, Miller sits across from THE BOSS (late 40s' fit, slick suit, slick sunglasses, slick hair, exudes power).

- 1 MILLER:
No. He doesn't know.
- 2 THE BOSS:
Then, how is it he **keeps** pulling up on our operatives?
- 3 MILLER:
Cuz' he's a good cop, but he hasn't caught and broken **any** of them. Yet.

PANEL THREE:

Miller's POV. The Boss looks over the top of his sunglasses, menacingly.

- 4 THE BOSS:
Yes, but they're all **dead** now.

PANEL FOUR:

Close on Miller. She puts her hand on the back of her neck. A stress move or something else? Eyes looking out the window

- 5 MILLER:
You made it clear that no one can know who **really** controls Ex-P.D.
- 6 MILLER:
Where are we going?

PANEL FIVE:

The Boss guides Miller into a nondescript room with a conference table. Around the table are the DEEP POLICE CO-CONSPIRATORS (two in police uniforms, two in overcoats and a tie, and two in business suits).

- 7 THE BOSS : (OFF PANEL)
I've called a special meeting to figure out how we're going to get your "**good cop**" out of **our** way.

PAGE 7: FIVE PANELS INCL TWO INSETPANEL ONE: TOP LEFT INSET OF PANEL TWO

Close on McCormick's determined face, at the bottom edge of the panel his knuckles appear, as if gripping a steering wheel

1 MCCORMICK CAP:

She **has** to know she can't hide things from me. She even calls it "bionic noticing." I hate that.

2 MCCORMICK CAP:

Wait! That's it!

PANEL TWO: 2/3 SPLASH

From behind McCormick's car as it crashes through a wall, revealing the conference.

The Boss and everyone around the table react to the sudden obliteration of the wall, except Miller. She's cool as cucumber, seated next to The Boss.

Off the driver's side we can see McCormick diving out

3 MCCORMICK CAP:

She **does** know.

PANEL THREE:

Boss and everyone, except Miller, are unloading their guns on the car.

SFX :

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

PANEL FOUR:

Exact same shot, except that all the guns are emptied. There's a small "klik" SFX effect at every gun. Not on Miller's two guns, one in each hand, now pointed at The Boss on one side and whoever was next to her.

SFX :

KLIK! KLIK! KLIK! KLIK! KLIK! KLIK! KLIK!

4 MILLER:

Anybody moves, they get a bullet.

PANEL FIVE: INSET LOWER RIGHT CORNER OF PANEL FOUR

The Boss, with a hand reaching inside his jacket and a bullet hole in his head.

SFX:

PAHP!

PAGE 8: FIVE PANELSPANEL ONE:

Reverse angle of the previous panel as we look between the Boss's body slumped in a chair and Miller holding up her guns. Between them, we see Miller steps over the wreckage, two guns trained on the others, one smoking.

1 MCCORMICK:

He made a move.

2 MCCORMICK:

Why didn't you **tell** me you infiltrated the Deep Police?

PANEL TWO:

Miller pulls a small device with a button on it from inside The Boss's jacket.

3 MILLER:

I **did** tell you. In every way I could through your **bionic noticing**. And it **worked**, didn't it?

4 MCCORMICK:

There are easier ways. And stop calling it that.

PANEL THREE:

Two shot on MCCormick (guns still up) and Miller as Miller pulls the wiring from the device.

5 MILLER:

I couldn't do anything more because they had something on me.

PANEL FOUR:

Close on a super-electronic-looking contact lens balanced on Miller's fingertip. Circuit patterns, maybe a tiny read-out that says "ARMED/LIVE."

6 MCCORMICK:

If you played in bounds, they wouldn't have had leverage to--

7 MILLER: (OVERLAP MCCORMICK'S BALLOON)

No, they had something **ON** me.

(PAGE CONTINUED)

8 MILLER:

This crypto-wave contact lens broadcasting everything I say and do. Made with nano-polymer explosive. One wrong move and they blow off most of my head.

PANEL FIVE:

Two shot of Miller and McCormick over the kneeling conspirators with their hands on their heads. Blue and Red lights shine from off-pane beyond the hole in the wall. Miller smirks as McCormick grimaces.

9 MILLER:

I knew I could trust you to **not** trust me.

10 MCCORMICK CAP:

Right up to the second that I **did**.

END