

# resistance 2- codename SPECTRE

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*SPECTRE team, a squad of the elite mutated soldiers. Follow their struggle against the chimera, aliens bent on domination of the earth. Thrills and spills wait in this action packed story of comradeship and strength against the darkest situations.*

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# 1 - operation 'storm the gates'

Chimeran tower 7D

Zone 15, downtown Chicago

02:17 hours

SPECTRE team operative codename 'Reaper'

Operation 'storm the gates'

Reaper ran down the corridor of the chimeran tower, his unnatural speed making him seem like a ghost in the shadows. He turned a corner and almost collided with a hybrid working at a console. He stepped backwards quickly as the hybrid raised its bullseye. It was fast, but reaper had the advantage of his voltaic body armour; he snatched out, more out of instinct and training rather than actual thought, and grabbed the bullseye from the chimera's hands. The hybrid was stunned and its grip was relaxed. The bullseye came away easily. Reaper smashed the butt of the weapon against the hybrids head and then fired a three round burst into the chest of the twisted creature. The rounds bounced off. Thicker armour, thought Reaper a fraction of a second before squeezing the trigger, sending a torrent of red energy balls into the hybrid. The armour shattered and thick red blood sprayed into the air and onto the wall. The hybrid fell to the floor, wriggling in agony as its internals spread on the metallic surface. It didn't make a noise, because Reaper's foot was lodged firmly into its spiked mouth. He dropped down low, and put another round into its head. The hybrid fell silent. Reaper's eyes scanned the corridors leading off from the sub section. He let out the breath he had been holding. No alarms, no reinforcements. He was undetected. It would be awhile before the hybrid was missed. He pulled the clip from the bullseye then ripped out the firing matrix, leaving the weapon useless. He rose into a sprint down another of the corridors, one hand sliding the acquired ammo into his pack. He was a spec op, tasked with the tricky missions and with gathering and dividing ammo to the rest of his team. And they needed all the fire power they could get.

The chimeran tower was huge, but that maps Reaper had on his HUD gave him a general idea of where he was heading; the second level sub reactor, which just so happened to power the security systems for the cargo bay two levels down. If he could disable it, it would give the rest of SPECTRE team the chance to slip in unnoticed. Frankie would kill him if he messed this up. They had planned this operation for days, and it all rested on them getting in unnoticed. If this went wrong they'd all be screwed. He couldn't let that happen. He wouldn't let that happen. His pace quickened as he made his way into the final corridor. He dropped dead against the wall as he heard voices coming from within the room ahead. Voices was the wrong word. The chimera didn't speak, they growled. Only a few phrases were recognisable by human ears, one of the few remaining human traits left in the creatures. He checked his BERSERK charge meter. It was fully charged. Reaper pressed a few buttons and selected the invisibility option. He activated it and stepped away from the shadow of the wall. Sparks seemed to dance across the plates of his armour, before in the blink of an eye he disappeared. All that remained was a slight shimmer in the air in the shape of a person.

Reaper stepped into the room, moving in slow and deliberate steps. The light bending powers of the suit were good, but were easy to see through if you moved to fast. There were a dozen chimera in the room

hovering about terminals; all with bullseye's hung at their side. In the far corner was the reactor, a collection of glowing orange rods sandwich between two circular pieces of machinery. On his HUD the radiation meter peaked. Beads of sweat rolled down his face as he made his way to the side of the reactor. He pulled out a proximity mine from his pack and armed it, then slipped it in between the rods. He could practically feel the skin on his hand blistering. He couldn't just blow the reactor. It would be clear to the chimera what had happened and he wouldn't have a chance to get clear and tell the others the plan was a go. Instead he pulled out a micro frag grenade with an experimental timer. SRPA hadn't perfected the device for larger bombs yet but it was perfect for what he had in mind. The timer would go off, damaging one of the rods. Then, one of the hybrids would come over to check it out, detonating the proximity mine and take out the reactor as well as the rest of the chimera in the room. He set the timer for thirty minutes, enough for him to get out and tell the others. Reaper placed the device behind one of the rods then moved slowly out of the room. He smiled at how easy it had been as he started running down the corridors, the invisibility wearing off. What he didn't know was a pair of golden eyes as dark as the shadows in which he spent most of his time had watched every move he had made.

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
02:40 hours  
SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

Frankie Fumbles stared at the time on his HUD. He shifted his weight onto his other foot. He wasn't one to show his nerves, but he couldn't deny he had doubts about this mission. He turned his sights to the chimeran structure towering above him, its peak blocking out the sun. Images of its internal structure flashed through his mind. He looked at the clock again. Reaper was running late. He checked his wraith full the third time. The hulking weapon looked menacing in the early morning light. The crisp air of dawn tingled against his skin, playing with his already on edge senses. He focused on the mission; to destroy the main reactor of the tower before it went live. Not an easy task when the entire area was crawling with legions of chimera. The city was designated grey territory for a reason, and if it fell the liberty defence perimeter would be next. He turned his attention towards the rest of SPECTRE team. His lieutenants, Lusitanian and death icon, were sitting in a corner talking quietly. The rest of the team were sitting together, listening to laughing gamer's jokes. Their weapons sat ready on the floor next to them, seemingly awaiting the moment they would be used. A creak, the barest of sounds in the silent alleys of the abandoned city, came from the other side of the broken door. Instantly the entire team was on guard, their weapons aimed at the door. Their silence was pieced by the sound of three knocks. Frankie barely tapped the wall in reply. The door fell open and in slipped the barrel of a marksmen rifle followed by Reaper, a living shadow against the wall. Damn, thought Frankie, sometimes he seemed too sneaky for his own good. Reaper made his way over to Frankie, who listened as Reaper told of his exploits, as did the rest of the team.

"Okay, the explosion should be within the next few minutes. You know what to do, keep low and move fast, standard formation. Move out SPECTRE."

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago

02:48 hours  
SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

It was eerily quiet in the streets of Chicago. In the distance the first light of morning was beginning to skirt through the tops of the abandoned skyscrapers. In the streets there were signs of life, but nothing more. Everyone who had ever lived here was now evacuated or dead. Or worse. Jutting from the middle of the city was the giant tower of unknown origin, casting strange shadows upon the city below. Through these shadows moved eight figures, dropping and darting through wreckage that remained in the streets of the city. They vanished down an entrance to the subway, just in time too, for at that moment something happened within the tower. It started as a small explosion, a tiny fireball suspended in space. But this fireball started to grow and within a second it destabilized, the energy contained within too much. The silence of the ghost city was shattered by a massive explosion on the towers south side. A fireball spread out into the air as pieces of the tower fell to the ground. The explosion wasn't nuclear; the rods were too controlled for the reaction to go that far. But the damage was done and the security systems offline. SPECTRE team had their opening.

The roar of chain guns filled the cargo bay, as SPECTRE team advanced into the complex. The security system was down, but there were still chimera in vast room that needed to be eliminated. Duel rays of life draining energy zapped around the room, as Iron Maiden and Laughing Gamer kept a close eye on the health statistics of the team members. Up on the balcony at the far side of the room a hybrid ran towards a communication relay point. It reached up a clawed hand to the console, but as it did so it noticed a red icon on its hand. The icon travelled up the grey skin of the beast, resting on a spot in between its eyes. Too late did it realise what was happening and an instant later a 3mm slug bored into its head, splattering the things brains on the wall. Death Icon proved for the hundredth time while he had his codename. He needn't have bothered firing though, for Astral had already blocked the communications. Reaper was busy supplying ammo to the team. He had his work cut out for him. Frankie, Darkside and Lusitanian were pissing ammo, the bodies of countless chimeran hybrids crumpling beneath their feet. Reaper raised his weapon and stared down the sights of his custom marksmen. He squeezed the trigger once. The three round burst blasted through the supposedly bullet proof glass and ended the life of the auger armed steel head who had been raining fire down on them. The gunfire ended, smoke streaming from the muzzles of the still spinning barrels of the wraiths. The three vanguard soldiers lowered their shields. Astral helped Reaper gather and hand out ammo, while Death Icon handled the grenades. The two medics went about ending the lives of the wriggling hybrids still groaning in pain. Frankie checked his HUD. It showed footage of the damage to the tower. "Damn Reaper," he muttered, astonished at the level of the destruction. Reaper just smiled. At that moment the doors of a lift opened at the far end of the room. Out poured three squads of chimeran troops, ravengers leading the charge. Frankie turned to this new threat and raised his shield, as did Darkside and Lusitanian. Reaper just smiled. The battle had just began.

## 2 - Darkside

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
03:27 hours  
SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

The air was brisk and still as it hung amongst the silent skyline of the doomed metropolis. Silence was the only sound in a city where once a chorus of life sang. In the air flew flocks of birds, their beady eyes scanning the streets below for any sign of a meal. It would have been peaceful if not for the vast alien structure jutting from the centre of the city. Its tall tower extended far above the clouds, casting a long, deep shadow that stretched the breath of the city. It was an ominous sign of superiority that challenged the majesty of even the liberty defence perimeter. The huge construction stretched from far beneath the ground and twisted into bizarre building patterns that held all manner of secrets within. The strangeness was lost on the members of SPECTRE, who at this very moment were fighting their way through another corridor full of chimera.

The inside of the tower was as unusual as it was intriguing. The dull metal construct had a certain warmth to it that was emitted from within. Blue lights at periodic intervals bathed the halls in an eerie light that complemented the bright dials of the control panels built into the walls. In another time scientists would use the very same system to study and deactivate the tower, but for now SPECTRE's mission lay elsewhere. They had their orders; the chimera were stock piling command units within the tower, in preparation for an assault against the liberty defence perimeter. The perimeter was designed to repel an airborne attack but had little protection from a ground version. It was a major design flaw that SRPA engineers had repeatedly pointed out to the president's advisors, yet nothing had been done. The reason? None had been provided but it was clear to all; there simply were no resources available for improvement. If it fell then so did the six million refugees that were housed within its confines. SPECTRE team were tasked with preventing that from happening. It was a responsibility Darkside took personally.

Wraith rattling in his hands, Darkside took another step towards the wall of hybrids that stood before him. The green shield of the wraith shone in front of him, absorbing the force of the red bullseye energy orbs that spat towards him and the rest of his team. He led the charge up the corridor, Astral at his heels taking pot shots and handing him a healthy supply of ammo. The three soldiers of the group took turns in taking point but more often than not it was him out in front. And he would have it no other way. Darkside had two purposes in life, and one was killing chimera. The other, well the other was something else completely. He pulled hard on the trigger and braced against the recoil as the massive gun sent forward a torrent of fire into the hybrids. The twisted could take a lot of punishment, but even they could not withstand slug after slug tearing through their rotten grey flesh. Finally the last one fell and the team took stock of the situation.

"Okay, we're here," said Frankie Fumbles, the team's leader, whilst pointing at a rough map of the chimeran tower. "The main chamber is still a while ahead, but we've made good time so far."

"Hard to believe we still haven't been ID," injected Laughing Gamer, "perhaps there still napping?"

The Dutch man's spirit was indomitable even in the darkest situations, and his often random remarks kept the moral of the team high.

"I have to admit, it's strange at the relatively low presence of defenders." Said Astral.

"I've got a bad feeling about this." Said Lusitanian, all eyes coming to rest on him. Lusitanian's 'feelings' often had a knack for being right and when he spoke you listened. The team was silent as it considered its next move. Frankie decided that they could only go on the info that they had.

"Come on, we've got a job to do and standing around here isn't going to get it done. I'll take point." Darkside stepped forward.

"I'll do it." He muttered quietly, his grip on his weapon already tightening. Frankie wanted to say something, but Darkside beat him to it. "There're just more things for me to shoot mate, nothing more." The two men stared at each other for a moment before Frankie nodded. The team moved out, silently slipping into a quick jog down the long corridor.

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
04:01 hours  
SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

To Darkside the chimera were nothing. They were a virus, a bug that had to be destroyed. As he ran with the team down the maze of corridors his mind slipped back, travelling through his stored memories. He had been a farmer, once, long before this had all started. He had a ranch where he had lead a peaceful life with his family. All that had changed once news of the chimera reached American shores. His brother had been drafted into the army and had been part of the mission to England. He had never heard from his brother again. The sound of heavy breathing and mixed growling came from around a corner. The team stopped immediately after seeing Darkside raise his closed fist, the hand symbol for stop. He pulled out a small mirror and looked around the corner; there was a group of hybrids escorting a large flat bed vehicle. With them were a number of ravagers and steelheads. It wasn't the troops that took Darkside's interest; it was the collection of non chimeran artefacts strapped to the deck of the large truck. Grey tech. He triggered the light on his HUD, indicting to Frankie the situation. A second later the red light came on inside his helmet. It meant not to attack. They didn't need to attract any more attention. Darkside pulled out a small camera and quickly took a few pictures. Chances were SRPA would want to know about it. Darkside turned to the rest of SPECTRE. They were well trained, every one of them, but they were only human. Well almost human, but they still felt all the emotions other people did, including fear. The barest hint of anxiety could be seen in their eyes. Yes, they could still feel. He could feel. Unfortunately all he felt was loss. The last chimera moved out of view, and immediately he was up and running, as if he were trying to flee from the demons of his past.

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
04:01 hours  
SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

The thespian hall, as it was called by the chimera, was a huge space that had the combined diameter of five football fields. The room curved over into a dome that was eight storeys high. In the centre of the room a huge reactor sat, its orange rods glowing like the eyes of a fearsome dragon. From it a long thick metal tube stretched to the ceiling, more tubes branching off from the main leading to the numerous facilities in the room. The facilities ranged from small consoles to huge glass tubes and metal containers. There were places where smaller compounds had been constructed that had a few levels of iron grid floors, where they constructed various chimeran ground assault machines. The other facilities were used in the construct of all manner of chimeran creatures, from relatively simple processing tubes for hybrids to massive grafting vats where the more monstrous creature were forged together. Overseen from a control room from above, the thespian hall was used as a preparation chamber for the assault force. An entire army was being assembled within its chambers, an army whose single purpose was the destruction of the liberty defence perimeter. Yet unknown to the advancing members of SPECTRE team, the huge chamber was empty, devoid of even the humblest leaper.

Frankie Fumbles checked his HUD for the eighth time, checking the status of his team, the time, his objectives, and a dozen other things. Satisfied, he blinked the green status light twice. A few seconds later Reaper and Iron Maiden appeared from the shadows and retreated into the small alcove the team had secured. Death icon checked his laser sight as the two approached, playfully aiming it at Maidens groin. He saw the gesture and made a certain remark with two of his fingers then sat down in the circle the rest of the team had created. Frankie couldn't help but make a mental note on the leap technology had made since the start of the chimeran war. The equipment he used on a regular basis reminded him of the stuff he saw in the sci-fi comics he used to read as a kid.

"Ok let's review the situation one last time. We're here, on the sixth floor," he pointed at a position on the map, "our goal is the reactor. If we can overload it, it should cause a reaction that will spread to all the smaller terminals and destroy them. Or at least that's what should happen." He looked over to astral, who caught that gaze and smiled innocently.

"Hey, I'm just telling you what the think tanks told me. Blame them if it doesn't work."

"I'll keep that in mind. Ok, as we make our approach I want charges placed periodically along the structures, with particular interest on the bigger ones. There should be plenty of cover so don't be careless. They won't be looking for us but that doesn't mean we can just stroll on through. Be prepared to fight but don't go looking for one. Sentinel recon team x-ray has spotted a number of drop ships entering the tower. Intelligence suggests them to be delivering a number of titan overseers, which means there in the final stages of development. Failing our main objective those are our targets. I'm not going to lie to you, this is our toughest mission to date, but we've got a lot riding on this. We can't fail. I have every faith that we're all going to make it out of here, but if things go bad your orders are to go. A live sentinel is better than a dead one. Any questions?" The SPECTRE operatives stared back at him, their faces harder than stone. Each man was preparing mentally for the battle to come, but none showed any signs of cowardice. "Alright then. No more speeches. Death, take Darkside up to the next level and secure the control room. I don't want any nasty surprises biting our arses, and you can provide cover for us when we need it. Move out people."

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
04:15 hours

SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

The computers of the control room were silent and still. There were no chimera present, nor had there been for any hours previous. Death Icon and Darkside knew there was something wrong as soon as they stepped off the elevator. The lights were on but nobody was home. The expression was shared by both men as they walked gingerly across the empty room. The screens of the strange computers were all blank, and only the hum of servers broke the almost calm atmosphere. For once Darkside found himself in a combat situation he wasn't familiar with. The hush darkness made him uneasy; he much preferred all out open combat. There you knew the rules, the stakes. You knew what to do and what had to be done. Here, now, it was all about the waiting, bracing for the unexpected. While every member of SPECTRE was highly trained in all combat environments, each had their own preferences. And this wasn't his. Death Icon felt the same sense of uneasiness that made Darkside's skin tingle, only for him had the reverse effect. The deep shadows and empty consoles served only to sharpen his already honed senses. Together they moved towards the head of the room where the central terminal sat dormant. Out of nowhere a sound echoed from one corner. Both men spun, the guns trained in the direction of the sound. They were greeted with the small triangular form of a maintenance droid. Its single blue eye scanned them for a moment then, after calculating them as a non-threat, went about its work. The pair tracked it, guns ready, as it made its way to the central terminal. It extended one of its probes and plugged in. The SPECTRE operatives approached and watched as numbers and images flashed across the screen. They came to a halt in a pattern that looked a lot like a tactical overview of a well planned ambush. Bells started ringing in Death's head. He raced over to the window and looked down. The great hall below was empty.

"Frankie come in, this is Death over. Damn it Frankie answer me. Your walking into a trap." It was all too obvious that the chimera were blocking all internal radio signals, which meant they were well aware of what was coming. Death turned to Darkside, who was already at the elevator.

"They've shut down all the controls." He said without turning back. He turned to a small side passage that ran parallel to the elevator.

"Where are you going?" Death asked, although he already knew the answer.

"Someone's got to warn them." Was all Darkside said before he disappeared into the passage. Death Icon watched him go then got into a prone position with his sniper rifle at the ready.

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
04:20 hours  
SPECTRE team operative codename 'Darkside'  
Operation 'storm the gates'

The endless corridors whizzed by in a blur as Darkside hurled his 5 foot 8, sturdy frame along at a speed that wasn't meant to be attainable to normal people. While slightly on the short side he made up for it by having a body that was better built than a concrete monument. Every member of SPECTRE had the body of an Olympic athlete but Darkside worked harder than most to maintain a level of super high fitness. He was easily the strongest of the team, if one of the shortest. With every breath he cursed. How could they have been so blind? They had walked into something they should have seen a mile off. Just



because the chimera didn't use traps and ambushes before was no excuse for missing it now. He pushed himself more, pulling every ounce of speed from his legs. The corridors were dark and empty, the lights shut down along with many of the other systems. The darkness gave Darkside a sense of comfort. He began to think about the past as he descended the countless steps. His thoughts drifted to his family, to a past that was so far away. In the blink of an eye he was back on the ranch. His family was with him. He was wishing them goodbye. It was the moment when he left to join the army. After the death of his brother, he had wanted to do something to help in the war effort. His family had begged him not to go, but his mind was set. The last thing he saw before the memory faded was himself bending down and kissing his daughter goodbye.

Darkside was only a single level above the main entrance when he was confronted by a steelhead contingent making its way to the hall. He had to think fast. He instinctively pulled the trigger on his wraith, an action that felt completely natural to him now. The thick bullets hit three of their number before they had got their shields up. They fell to the hard floor still wriggling in agony but otherwise dead. The hall was illuminated in an otherworldly green light as the rest of the steelheads activated the shields on their augers. The white hot auger rounds shot forth and burrowed through all possible cover. Darkside dropped his weapon and ran at them, dodging blast after blast. When he was just a few meters away he jumped up and ran across the wall, passing overhead the unsuspecting steelheads. As he did he pulled out his magnum, the standard issue side arm given to all sentinels. As he landed he emptied the six round clip at the two nearest steelheads and then triggered the explosive rounds. The miniature explosions splattered the remains of the steelheads across the stunned comrades. They turned and fired, now fully aware of the enemy in their mist. Darkside dove and grabbed another steelhead. It struggled but Darkside, with his heightened strength, quickly overpowered it and used it as a living shield. The auger rounds ripped through the creature, tearing out its twisted organs. Darkside tore the auger from the beast's death grip and fired from the hip at the two remaining steelheads. The auger rounds went straight through the shields. The steelheads saw the rounds and started to run, but one was too late and had its brains painted across the floor. The last steelhead run, knowing it was beat. Darkside aimed down the sights and fired three times, the standards two in the chest one in the head protocol. The steelhead fell as its life was stolen from it. Darkside relaxed and took a deep breath. Only then did the pain from his leg register. He had taken a grazing wound the thigh muscle, but wasn't serious. Still, he had to patch it up. There were rumours that the chimera could smell blood and he wasn't going to take any chances.

With his back against the wall, Darkside reloaded all his weapons. He decided on keeping the auger, knowing that he may need it sometime in the near future. Once done he pulled out a SRPA medical kit. The logo brought back to mind another memory, this time of his involvement with SRPA. As he sat and bandaged his leg he thought about his introduction into the sentinel program. Like all of the current sentinels he had volunteered for project Abrahams, but unlike the others he and the rest of SPECTRE had been given a different vaccine called 'Malikov's beta serum'. There were only two people who had been given the alpha serum, one of which was the legendary Nathan Hale. The other sentinels had been given the delta serum, a watered down version that had less effect on the bio mechanics of the subject. The beta serum was an experimental version that had unique properties. Like other sentinels they were faster and stronger, but they lacked the near instant healing properties of the others. Instead, after taking a sufficient amount of damage, they would enter a comatose like state that would protect them from further damage. Then, they could be revived by a medic at a time when their fighting had ceased. He had taken his injection and was then sent to a guard post in Orrick, just three days before the chimera launched a massive spire attack. He, along with the other test subjects, had survived the crawlers to

awake with the supernatural chimeran powers. Under his leadership they had lead a group of refugees out of the danger zone. A day after that he had been recruited into the SPECTRE team. That was the day he would never forget, because on that day he received a telegram informing him that his ranch had been involved in a spire attack. What it told him was that his life as he knew was over. The body of his wife had been found but his daughter was missing. His life was destroyed by the chimera.

That was why they called him Darkside. In battle he would turn all his anger, all his fury, against the bastards who had stolen everything from him. He didn't care that they were once people. All he knew was what they had done to him personally. He knew the others had lost loved ones as well but for him it was all he could do to get up in the morning. There was only one thing that kept him going, and it wasn't the urge to kill all the chimera he could, although that came a close second. It was hope. Hope that somewhere out there his daughter was still alive, waiting for him to find her. In his spare time he would scan the records of those inside the liberty defence perimeter, looking for any sign. It was his intention to prepare a full search for her when the war was over. Darkside reached into his pocket and pulled out a small, crumpled photo of his daughter. It was the only one he had. Staring at it gave him a renewed sense of vigour and he picked up his wraith and set off for the main entrance.

Chimeran tower 7D  
Zone 15, downtown Chicago  
04:46 hours  
SPECTRE team  
Operation 'storm the gates'

It had been easy going for the rest of SPECTRE team. They had taken the elevator to the bottom floor and had made their way to the reactor in good time. They were well aware that the hall was empty and that something was going on. Each member sensed that something was very, very wrong. Still, they didn't turn back, instead using the opportunity to move faster and get the job done before the chimera returned from whatever had taken their interest. Only after they had placed the last of the explosives on the reactor did Frankie Fumbles check the status of the other two members of his team. The radio crackled but no response came. All of a sudden Frankie felt very alone and vulnerable. He walked over to Reaper, who was preparing a set of detonators.

"Listen, this entire operation is about to go the wrong way down a certain creak and we don't have a paddle. I want you to take the detonators. You know what to do, if the situation arises." Frankie spoke low so the others wouldn't hear. Reaper nodded and pulled out a bag. Frankie bleeped his green status light once and an instant later the rest of the team had emerged from there covered positions. He put two fingers to the gaps in his thick helmet and then made a 360 degree circle with his hand, the symbol for the team to keep a visual on all directions. While it wasn't required for them to use non verbal communication, the team had become very adept at getting their meaning across using basic signals. They began to move back to the entrance in a tight circle formation, with the two medics shielded in the centre. They had covered three quarters of the distance when simultaneously four huge doors opened up around the room, while from the floor hidden elevators began to rise. On them were four of the most terrifying creatures ever to walk the earth: titan overseers. The huge creatures towered above their normal brethren, being three times the size of a normal titan and clad in heavy armour, they wielded a deadly plasma cannon and were the most fearsome of the chimeran breeds outside of the new marauder strain. Out of the doors poured hundreds of chimera, squadron after squadron of hybrids,

steelhead, ravagers and all manner of variations in between.

The SPECTRE team didn't hesitate now. There was no need for hand signals now or stealthy movement. They made a break for a chimeran guard house adjacent to the exit. It was a simple two floored building found on most chimeran battlefields, but it offered good protection. As they entered they noticed that no enemies came from the main entrance, as if it wasn't worth blocking.

"Spec ops on top, Maiden go with them. Laughing you stay with us, I need you as an ammo runner. Lusitanian get the other exit, me and you are on guard duty." The team had already set off before Frankie had spoken the words. The spec ops would need Maiden, the better medic, more. The shields on the wraiths were good, but even they couldn't stop the entire force of a blast from one of the titans, hence why Frankie had Laughing stay with them. The chimera had quickly converged on their location and were now using suppressing fire while the titans advanced. It turned out the chimeran built structure was good at repelling normal titan and even auger rounds, but if the chimera couldn't blast them out then the titans would simply smash the place to bits. The overseers weren't invincible, but it took time to bring one down, time they didn't have. The chimera had shifted to a new command structure since the initial outbreak of the invasion. Matriarchs were the first level of command, classified as a level one target. Next came the primarchs and overseers, at level two and three respectively. Next was the angles, yet hardly any were seen any more. No one knew what had happened to them, but there were rumours of a fifth level, a single unit in command of the entire chimera force. None of this mattered to SPECTRE. All they concentrated on was how many chimera they could kill before their time came.

Darkside heard the fighting before he saw it. The sound of battle was refreshing against the silent backdrop of the tower's corridors. The flash of a thousand weapons made his eyes hurt as he carefully stuck his head out from a side door to the main entrance. The situation looked bleak. The overseers had stopped their advance and were controlling the engagement from the rear. Only one continued, slowly moving forward as if it were savouring the moment. If it wasn't for the titan the rest of the team could fight an escape to the exit, but from where they were they couldn't squeeze out without getting killed. Darkside knew he had only one option. He looked up at the windows of the control room. Every couple of seconds a brief flash came from the corner, Death Icon picking off any chimera that tried to climb up the walls of the guard house. He pointed a small laser pointer at the location of the flash. A second later another flash returned. Darkside knew Death was watching him through his rifle and indicated to him what he was going to do. After he had finished the hand signals he received another laser flash, telling him Death understood what he was going to do. There was a final muzzle flash, then the control room fell dark as Death disappeared. Darkside looked out at the scenario one last time. The fire coming from the guard house paled in comparison to the barrage from the chimera. It wouldn't last much longer. He took a deep breath then ran from the cover of the side passage. His plan was sketchy, but it was the best he had.

Just as Darkside had suspected, the chimera were so busy trying to destroy the human intruders that they paid no attention to their backs. After backing tracking around the side for a bit he found himself with a clear route to the reactor. Using the available cover he had made his way right to it and after a quick search he found what he was looking for; one of the charges the rest of the team had placed earlier. He pulled it off the reactor and stuck it in his pocket. Next, he pulled out the auger from before and let his wraith hang at his side. His next moves were going to be the riskiest he had ever tried, but he refused to abandon his team. He slipped into the shadows, moving as close as he could to the titan blocking the team's retreat then, when he could get no closer, he made his move. He darted from the wall he had been crouching behind and ran for the titan. It, like the rest of the chimera, had its back to

him. Reaching the titan was easy, as the other chimera had learned to give it a lot of room for fear of being flattened. He had still gone undetected when he had leapt from the ground and grabbed onto the leg of the overseer. Before the lumbering creature, made from dozens of human bodies, knew what was happening Darkside had clambered up its back and had a strong grip on the cooling device embed into its skin. It let out a deafening roar of annoyance, as if it had been violated by the touch of a human. It began to thrash and struggle, trying to reach the parasite clinging to it. The titan dropped the plasma cannon and reached up with its massive arm, but the huge muscles prevented it from finding its target. Despite what he knew, Darkside was still surprised by the mobility of a creature so enormous. It seemed unnatural that such a creature could move with such ease, but then again what was natural about the chimera? Finding his balance, Darkside began to climb until he was within arm's reach of the titans head. He pulled out the explosive and stuck it to the titans head, along with a small timer charge. A few seconds passed and the titan swung to the left, exactly what Darkside had been waiting for. He let go, flew through the air and rolled across the floor. He got up quickly and moved behind the closet cover as the overseer was already bearing down on him. It had picked up the plasma cannon and was about to fire it when a strange bleeping noise from above took its attention. Its golden eyes looked up in confusion. A second later a reaction took place that ended in an explosion that ripped apart the mutated creature's skull.

The sound echoed through the vast hall, making the entire chimeran army stop and stare. The body of the overseer fell limp to the floor with a crushing blow, and for once the chimera looked scared, or at least for a second their equivalent of fear crossed their twisted faces. The members of SPECTRE had watched with unbelieving eyes as Darkside had performed a minor miracle and singlehandedly taken down the overseer. It took a moment for the act to register, but then they were firing on all cylinders. "Let's move SPECTRE!" Frankie shouted, but the team needed no prompting. Within seconds of Darkside's kill they were out of the guard house and heading for the exit, firing blindly behind them. Darkside was providing cover with the augers shield, while from the exit Death Icon was taking aim with his a portable turret he had spent the time setting up. White hot rounds let rip as SPECTRE team pulled back into the exit, Darkside bringing up the rear. When he entered Astral, who had hacked into the controls, triggered the door. Its circular design slammed closed and the world seemed to go deaf after the noise of the hall. Frankie moved over to Darkside and the two men looked each other in the eye. They didn't say anything; there were no words to be said, but it was clear something passed between them, a sense of respect and gratitude. Frankie, SPECTRE team, owed him their lives. After a few seconds Frankie gave a huge smile and embraced Darkside, who could do nothing but stand there, uncomfortable on many levels. Frankie stepped back and gave a low laugh at Darkside's face and said: "Don't worry, I'll make sure you get your ribbon." Their playing about was cut short by the sound of pounding on the door from the other side. The chimera were forcing their way through. Frankie turned to Reaper, who already had the detonator ready. He nodded. "Boom baby." Reaper muttered under his breath, more to himself than to the rest of the team, as he pushed down hard on the red button of the detonator. He causally threw it aside as all eight members of SPECTRE team began to run for an exit from the tower, knowing that in less than two minutes the reactor would blow and wipe out all the chimera in the hall. Just as it should be.

Inside the thespian hall the chimera were going crazy, claws and fangs attacking the metal door. In their frenzy at losing the human filth they had lost all rational thought and were no better than animals now. Only one of the three remaining overseers had the sense to use one of the other exits. Just in time to, for at the very moment after it had left the explosives detonated. Other than the initial fireball, at first very little seemed to happen. But then the effect of the destroyed orange rods started to show. Within a

second of this, twelve miniature nuclear reactions joined together and began to expand uncontrollably. The reactor was shielded from such an event but the smaller substations around the room were not. The powerful energy surged through the system until it came to a head simultaneously at the hundreds of points in the room. A light and heat a thousand times more intense than the sun flashed through the room, raw untamed energy in its purest form. It rushed through the vast hall in an instant. After a few seconds it faded, leaving behind a scorched husk where only moments before stood one of the most sophisticated construction plants on the planet. The floor was covered in meter of thick black ash, the only remains of a 250,000 strong army destined for the liberty defence perimeter. Other than, of course, for the one overseer that had escaped.