

The Phone Call

MacGilravie, Athena, and Minerva jumped in surprise as a crash intruded on their work. “Fucking worthless assholes!” shouted Gavin. “Absolutely infuriating! Is there no justice in the universe?” A dent in the wall and tiny pieces of plastic and electronics told the tale—Gavin had thrown his cell phone across the room.

“Grandpère,” said Athena. “Did you just throw your phone against the wall?”

“No. I threw a piece of trash, which apparently was invented and manufactured for the sole purpose of harassing me.”

Minerva snickered as she went and began picking up the pieces. “This was the US one. The people who call you on that are pretty important: Conner, Melanie, Mr. Flarahty, the dean at Harvard, the Commandant, and the President. So who was on the phone, and what did they say to upset you?”

“I’m not upset; I’m seething with righteous fury,” replied Gavin through clenched teeth. “And it was none of the above.”

“Well, then who was it?” asked Athena. “Will you stop being mysterious and tell us what has poked you?”

Gavin ground his teeth. “It was Rachel,” he muttered. “From the Dealer Service Center. They have been trying to reach me about my expired vehicle warranty.”

The others stared at Gavin a minute, then they all exploded in laughter, even Miss MacGilravie; Athena and Minerva almost collapsed to the floor. Gavin was silent, but his face

was a thundercloud. As the laughter continued, the cloud grew ever darker. Finally, he exploded, “Will you three monkeys knock it off? What is so goddamn funny, anyhow?”

Through her snorts, Minerva managed to get out a few coherent sentences. “Grandpère, you are one of the wealthiest, most powerful men on the planet, and yet you still get spam calls! It’s hysterical! Don’t you see the irony?”

“Irony, my ass,” replied Gavin. “It’s not irony; it’s damned infuriating. Someone ... should ... do ... something.” As he neared the end of his statement, Gavin slowed down. A look came over his face, both eyebrows went up, and he grinned.

Halfway around the world, Gregor Droz’s phone buzzed.