

## **Deleted chapter: The Medusa Project – *Hunted***

**In this early version of *Hunted* (that didn't make the final book), Geri tells Dylan about The Hub. Later, I changed this so that Dylan found the information in varied ways, hopefully making the story more suspenseful.**

Questions flooded my head none of which I could answer. Still, Geri presumably could. And she was downstairs right now.

I slammed the little diary shut, shoved everything back in the mother-o-pearl box and hid it under my bed, then raced down to find her.

She was still in her office, hunched over her Blackberry.

“Geri?”

She looked up. “Yes, dear?”

“What’s ‘The Hub’?” I said.

Geri blinked, clearly surprised at my question. “Why are you asking?”

“It’s in my mom’s diary,” I said. “Seeing Aunt Patrice made me think about her so I was looking through her old stuff and she mentions this ‘Hub’ thing as a place my dad used to go.”

Geri nodded. “Well, that’s not surprising,” she said. “Your dad knew that place through me. I’ve told you before, I was part of a team of government agents set up to look into all sorts of unexplained phenomena – the U.P.T. My code name was Medusa and I was tasked with looking into claims of psychic behaviour specifically, remember?”

“Yes.” I remembered that conversation well, in fact. It had taken place when Geri had explained how she was forcing us to come together and work as the Medusa Project.

“Well, The Hub was the name of the U.P.T.’s original headquarters,” Geri said.

I stared at her, thinking fast. If The Hub was the HQ of the team behind the Medusa gene implantation programme, then it would naturally hold all sorts of information about my dad and his work. If the other families affected had discovered that my dad had infected the mothers of the Medusa babies, then they had a perfect motive for killing him.

“What did The Hub tell Ketty and Ed’s families about the Medusa gene?” I said.

“Nothing.” Geri frowned. “William kept their identities secret from us, remember? We only knew about you at the time. And, though we found out about Nico soon after your dad died, Ed and Ketty’s identities were kept secret until earlier this year.”

“Why did my dad keep them a secret?”

“I don’t know.” Geri rolled her eyes. “He was a secretive, obsessive, suspicious man, Dylan. The last few weeks before he died he became totally paranoid... thought people were trying to kill him. He refused to meet with me... insisted on meeting after meeting with my boss, the head of the U.T.P. It was all a complete waste of time. I mean, I’m sorry, dear, but if ever a man was going to get knocked over because he wasn’t looking where he was going it was your father.” She paused. “Now what’s this about?”

For a second I almost told her. But there was no point. I didn’t have any proof – not after the records office deleting my dad’s murder file. Geri would just say the same as Aunt Patrice: that my dad’s death was an accident and that he was paranoid and my mom was hysterical.

On the other hand, if I could find out what my dad had told the head of the U.T.P. *that* would give me a genuine lead for finding out more.

“So where is this ‘hub’ place?” I asked, as casually as I could.

“It *was* in London,” Geri said. “But it’s not anymore. The UPT was closed down *years* ago. My boss, the man your dad talked to... he retired soon after and died of a stroke about five years ago.”

I nodded, thinking fast. I knew from our Medusa Project briefings that notes were *always* taken... often recordings too. I was willing to bet that had been the case at the U.P.T. too.

“Where are the archives held?” I asked.

Geri raised her eyebrows. “And what possible interest could you have in them?” she said.

“I want to know more about my dad’s work for you,” I said quickly. “I mean, Uncle Fergus showed me some of his notes but there must be more.”

“Well, the files are stored in the National Archives building in Kew,” Geri said. “But none of the U.P.T. data is available to the general public.”

“Awesome.” I made a face. “Never mind, I was just wondering about it.”

Geri relaxed a little. “I’m sorry, dear, but--”

“It’s fine,” I said. “Really.”

I left the room and went back upstairs.