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Subject: STORY: The Scorpion's tale.

Posted by [rm5248](#) on Mon, 11 Oct 2004 17:27:54 GMT

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Further northwest, the Team was in for round two of the river crossing. The vehicle had reached the best speed it could manage, and launched into the swift current. Armed with better knowledge of the river, Parker was able to navigate the current better, but the noise was getting louder, and he knew time was running out for them. They had just about made half the crossing before the hole in the APC started leaking badly from both top and bottom of the Beam strike. Every time the vehicle was submerged by a swift current, and pushed around, water would leak past Sergei's temporary plugs. Finally the bottom one gave way as they smashed into a submerged rock, and almost tipped over. As Parker fought for control again, the water shot up, and hit the roof of the craft, which effectively showered every one inside with cold river water. Sergei leaped onto the leak, and tried in vain to stop it up. He shouted at Parker: "Get us ashore anywhere. I

The noise directly below sergei's hands changed from grinding to a series of banging clunks as water, silt, broken spider gear teeth, and melted metal destroyed the differential. There was one last clunk as the drivetrain locked up forever, and Parker announced: "That's it.

Almost simultaneously, the pig rammed an outcropping, and lodged itself into the hollow it formed. They were finally stopped, but the water was now rising quickly. Valdez popped the hatch, and started to get out, but a gush of water met him, and he sputtered. He finished climbing out, and the others followed, standing on the deck of the pig as it slowly took on water. Their surroundings didn't lend them much help. They were pinned by the outcrop at the hairpin curve of the river in a canyon with steep vertical walls. Sergei saw only one way out, and announced it. "We

A groan came from becker, and Valdez followed Sergei up the outcrop, and onto the wall face. Inside the pig, water was now getting into the electrical systems and despite their waterproof

complete. The water started to overflow the top deck as the men left it behind, and as they started their climb, drubnov looked down as he heard water rush into the open hatch. Now filling with water, and no longer buoyant, the craft sank deeper into the river, and was loosed from the outcrop. The swift water pushed it down river, where it struck one last boulder, and sank like a stone.

Sergei never looked back. He was not going to die like this. His renewed energy now drowned out the cold that pervaded his body from the river water. He climbed with renewed fire.

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