

Westcrest – Season 2

Episode #19: Press Conference

Lights are shining everywhere. The stage is empty except for a podium decorated with the insignia of the Sanctum—a round shield with a stylised “S” in the middle. Cameras flash as Police Chief Hogan Dale appears and beams at the audience. *Tonight is the night*, he thinks to himself.

“Greetings, everyone,” he says, tapping the microphone. As is typical of these sort of press conferences, there is a moment of ear-splitting feedback. “Hello, can everyone hear me?” says Hogan Dale and he grins blindingly under the camera bulbs and spotlights that are fixed on the stage.

The questions begin at once. There is a flurry of them. They’re things like “will the streets ever be safe again?” and “how do you feel about holding the worst Sanctum arrest record of all time?” but everyone knows that the Police Chief isn’t going to answer any of them. He simply holds up a hand, still smiling, and he says: “I know that many of you have concerns and that’s is exactly why I’m here tonight.”

“What, exactly are you here to talk about?” says one feisty female reporter in the front row. Around her, several reporters attempt to jostle closer to the stage.

“Thank you for asking, Mandy,” says Dale and tips the woman a wink that doesn’t go unnoticed. “If I can have your attention... please,” he continues and for a moment at least there is silence. Somebody coughs and somewhere else a mobile phone goes off, but the questions have stopped for now.

“Thank you all for coming out tonight,” says Hogan Dale. “I’m very glad that you did, and soon everyone in Genoa City will have reason to be glad as well. Tonight is the night, my friends. Tonight is the night that the Sanctum regains control of Genoa City’s streets!” He waits for applause, but there isn’t any. Not yet. *Wait for it*, he tells himself.

“Tonight, I am priveleged to be able to introduce you all to the Sanctum’s latest weapon against crime. A new elite taskforce called... *Enforcers*.”

A figure clad entirely in black body-armour walks stiltedly out onto the stage and stands beside Dale. The officer’s face is covered by a shiny black visor. A machine-gun is strapped to the Enforcer’s back and it has a pistol attached to its chest. Several grenades hang like narrow tubes from the belt of the soldier. It is an imposing sight and several of the journalists step away from the stage. The Enforcer says nothing.

“Utilising the latest state-of-the-art technology, each Enforcer is better equipped to deal with threats to our safety than any other previous Sanctum officer,” says Dale. “Their armour is entirely bullet-proof and flame retardant.”

“What about teeth?” calls one voice from the crowd.

“Tell us about the weapons,” says the Chief’s lady friend, Mandy.

Dale smiles and explains: “The Enforcers have been highly trained in the use of cutting-edge weapons technology, including the AR-49 assault rifle...” as the Police Chief speaks the Enforcer removes the machine gun and brandishes it before the crowd. “As well as the Oasis Swan pistol you can see strapped to the front of the officer’s chest.”

“Impressive,” calls one reporter once the initial shock has worn off. “How much are they costing?”

“How long until they hit the streets?” chimes in another.

“Who *are* the Enforcers?” asks Mandy and Hogan frowns because he wasn’t expecting her to ask *that*, but then he steadies himself and he smiles. They watch as his smile slowly stretches into a grin and more than one person in the room is reminded of that fairy tale with the wolf. Far fewer of them realise that story is actually true.

“The Enforcers will begin patrolling tonight, at the conclusion of this press conference,” says Hogan Dale. “And I can assure you that there will be enough of them to ensure a safer night’s sleep for every citizen of Genoa City.”

“Exactly how many will be deploying?” asks another reporter. “The crime rate has risen by more than a quarter this past few months. How can we expect a handful of armoured goons to make the streets feel safe again?”

“Due to a close contact within a private security firm I have been able to obtain the Enforcers at virtually no extra cost to the Genoa City Police Department,” says Hogan Dale and his grin grows wider—if such a thing is even possible.

“What does that mean?” calls one reporter.

“Who is this security firm?”

“No more questions,” says Hogan Dale and holds up his hand. “But I will tell you that the streets will be protected by no less than *two-hundred* Enforcers tonight,” he says, still flashing his teeth. “*Nothing* will be occurring on the streets of Genoa City that we don’t know about.”