

# Chapter 89: Infiltrating QuickLinks Logistics Pt.3

Having located where our missing target, the boss of QuickLinks Logistics, could potentially be, we quickly set off from the security control room.

We had left Mark in the control room to dispatch anyone who came to investigate, run interferences in their comms, and more importantly, prevent our friends in the basement from making contact with anyone outside. He could also guide us, despite the fact we had to use the integrated terminals throughout the building to communicate.

With access to their systems, we took the elevators. I pushed the button, and we disabled our camouflage the moment the doors closed.

“Are we still doing this quiet, or can I go loud now?” Thorne asked, as he checked his weapons.

“I don’t think anyone will be able to hear what’s going on in the basement. As long as Mark has control of the security room, they can’t contact anyone outside. Let’s make this quick.”

Thorne proceeded to take out the large caliber shotgun he had bought exactly for this occasion and loaded it with armor-penetrating slugs. Once he was done, he looked up at me and nodded.

“Where’s your rifle? We’ll be dealing with some heavily armed borgs down there.”

“It was too unwieldy to bring along, and I don’t think firepower is what we’ll need to take them out,” I said as I patted my pack.

He shrugged as if he disagreed, but didn’t bother arguing. There wasn’t any time to argue anyway as the elevator dinged, alerting us that we had arrived at the B2 level.

Donning our camouflage again, I placed a hand on Thorne’s shoulder as he carefully strode out.

The floor we arrived on looked unimpressive appearance-wise. It had dreary colored walls without any furnishing whatsoever. It was only to be expected of a maintenance floor, though.

We came up on a janitor’s closet and moved to clear it lest someone surprise us from behind later on. I deployed my Nyes and got a good grasp of what was on the other side before opening the door. It was surprisingly an actual janitor’s closet with nothing remarkable inside, so we continued.

We came across various mechanical rooms, garbage collection rooms, or other closets filled with supplies, and we would stop in each one to scout the road ahead with my Nyes. At every crossroads, we would contact Mark in the control room to verify we were going the right way, and that nothing had changed about the cyborg guards on the cameras.

After ten minutes of taking this cautious approach, we finally spotted the borgs in person. There were half a dozen of them and they hung out in front of a narrow corridor that led into another mechanical room.

“Prepare to rush in,” I said. “I’m sending in the Pixies right now.”

Thorne nodded back to me as I took out the drones from my pack. I had a dozen left, but that was more than enough to take care of those cyborgs.

We followed closely behind the Pixies in camouflage as they closed the distance to the borgs.

“I hear something!” One of them shouted out.

*I guess all their cybernetics weren’t just for show.*

They all were on guard and looked in our direction with their weapons held up. The Pixies were small, like mice, but with the help of active camouflage, it didn’t matter that they were large enough to be visible to the naked eye.

Unfortunately, their smaller build meant they could only fit a standard optical camouflage and our opponents weren’t poorly equipped enough for me to risk using it and alerting them to our hostile actions. I commanded the Pixies to venture forth without using their optical camouflage.

“My optics picked up something! Rats?” the husky voice of a woman sounded out.

“Doesn’t matter, shoot them.” Another man commanded.

I could see a few of the guards step back while they watched their allies place carefully aimed shots at the approaching Pixies. They were all on autopilot because wireless connections weren’t possible, so they were predictable after the first few missed shots.

“Haha, come on Bernard, hit your shots.”

“...Wait a second, zoom in with your optics. Those aren’t rats!”

The man had noticed a little too late because the Pixies had already gotten close enough that it became hard to aim at with their unwieldy rifles. His allies all tried to join in shooting the Pixies down, but a loud and powerful shot rang out, which gave the cyborgs pause.

One of them grunted and fell flat on his back as a hole the size of a tennis ball appeared in the center of his chest.

“Contact! Spec ops, everyone spread!”

The commander quickly took cover behind the contours of the hallway and readied a grenade from his pouch. It was a neon-colored grenade that looked more like a toy than a weapon.

He was too late, though.

Thorne's shot had bought enough time for the Pixies to close the distance and they each found their target and exploded with the might of the EMP they carried. The commander was in mid-throw when he got hit, and his grenade dropped weakly to the ground beside him.

A colorful cloud bursted out of the grenade and when it cleared, the entire area was stained with colorful paint.

*Was that a countermeasure against stealth tech...? Why didn't they just use EMP grenades—well, maybe not if you're a team of cyborgs.*

Their entire team fell to the ground as their limbs locked up. I pushed the useless thoughts aside and rushed in with Thorne.

"Watch the door!" I shouted to Thorne as I raked in the sweet experience points with my vibro dagger.

+20 EXP  
+20 EXP  
+20 EXP  
+20 EXP  
+20 EXP  
+20 EXP

With the threats eliminated, we swiftly made our way to the mechanical room where we suspected our target was. If there was anyone inside, they had likely heard the commotion by now.

I once again sent in my Nyes to spy behind the door. A moment later, they returned. What was on the other side was a large office room where a lone middle-aged man was. He had a head full of grey hair with a well-groomed appearance. His suit almost sparkled and was evidently made of expensive materials that would have cost a normal worker their entire salary.

"I think that's him in there," I reported to Thorne.

"He's alone? Let's go in and finish this."

"...Wait. Let me deploy the surviving Pixies first."

The drones weren't small enough to fit under the door, so I deployed them by our feet, ready to rush in the moment we opened the door.

Once I was ready, I nodded to Thorne, who began wrestling the door with his cybernetic limbs. The metal groaned, but after a full minute, it hadn't budged one bit.

“Stop it. I don’t think we can open it with brute force. This is probably his bunker or something.”

I plugged into the panel beside it and began hacking into it.

In the meantime, I used the connection from plugging in to ask if Mark could open it on his end. He replied after several minutes that the controls to the door were linked to a different terminal, so I persisted with my hack.

No inspiration hit me upon seeing its defenses, so I continued my trial and error. When the ten-minute mark was to come up, I was able to breach into the system with a stroke of luck.

I cautiously pushed the door open and moved in with Thorne, while the Pixies followed behind.

“Rollo Halls, I know you’re there. Why don’t you show yourself and have a little chat with me?”

The middle-aged man loudly declared with the back of his chair facing us.

*...He knew I was coming?*

I instantly was on guard and positioned myself toward the exit.

“Come on, now. You have won, haven’t you? I never expected you to have dodged the ambush that I took the trouble to lay out for you. Tell me, what gave it away?”

*Whatever he knew, at least he didn’t have any intel on about my latest creations. Still, I would be an idiot to expose myself when I was this close to ending this war.*

“Still staying silent, are you? I didn’t take one who had the guts to infiltrate my headquarters to be a coward, but I guess a man can wear many masks,” He continued, “if you really are the clever man I thought you to be, then please hear me out.”

I decided not to answer and inspect the room for any signs of danger.

“The West Coast Agroindustry you chose to get into bed with was a poor choice. They have powerful enemies, much more dangerous than a little corporation like mine. You should—”

*There’s nothing here, and he is obviously buying time...Okay, I’ve heard enough. There is no way I can even consider betraying my new allies or else no one would dare to affiliate themselves with me in the future if it got out.*

I gestured for Thorne to end this.

He took a shot with his shotgun and the armor-piercing slug broke the sound barrier. Upon hitting his chair, it surprisingly ricocheted off to the side. The same slugs that had penetrated the cyborg outside were ineffective against a chair.

“How dare you! Only barbarians like the wastelanders attack in the middle of a conversation. I guess I was wrong to try to make you see reason. Now die!”

Following his words, several turrets deployed from the ceiling of the room between us and our target. Two of them fired their HMG rounds at us while the other two swept the room with their flamethrowers.

We quickly jumped down to a prone position and waited.

I only had to wait for a second before the electric buzz noise of EMPs going off reached my ear and the turrets twitched.

I immediately brought out a grenade from my pack and pulled out its pin before I lobbed it at the boss of QuickLinks Logistics. As it sailed through the room, it was suddenly cut in half mid-air and exploded.

I could spot the shrapnel deflecting off something invisible in the room, a sight I've come to be familiar with. I quickly reached out for an EMP grenade and threw it at the same spot. It went off much earlier this time, as I had set a short fuse time. That meant it went off slightly away from where Benjamin Links sat.

The space in front of the office table flickered, and parts of a silhouette of a person became clearer and clearer, as tiny sparks marked the malfunctioning of whatever stealth device had. A thin yet fit man soon materialized into existence, wielding a pistol in one hand and a katana in the other.

He grunted and quickly sliced off the suit he wore and tore it off himself, exposing the one cyberarm he had up to his shoulder, wielding the sword.

*Active camouflage, advanced ones too. My optics didn't pick it up at all. Whoever that guy is, I'm sure as hell not getting close to him and his katana.*

Thankfully, Thorne shared my thoughts as he quickly took another shot from a different angle at the new enemy, but the man reacted way too fast. His hand blurred and cut the slug shot at him in half.

While Thorne distracted him, I loaded my Suri with explosive rounds and fired them at him as he slowly walked toward us. It seemed like he couldn't figure out where we were and he knew there was more than one of us, so he could only cautiously move forward.

The explosive rounds went off as they made contact with his blade, but a blue shimmer appeared in front of him. Once the dust from the explosion settled, he appeared completely unharmed.

*Is that...a forcefield or something?*

He charged at the location where I had shot at him and slashed out at the empty space. I had already relocated, having learned from my experiences.

Thorne shot out at him again from a new angle as I did the same. This time, the sound of the explosives was followed by a crackling noise, and he swung out at where I was again while shooting his pistol wildly around.

*He must really not like my explosive rounds. Which is why I quickly made some space and unloaded my entire clip as fast as I could.*

The dust cleared out and when I could see the aftermath of my attack. The skinny man was crouched on the ground on one knee, nursing his head.

Before I could even finish reloading, another gunshot rang out that punched a hole through the man's chest. He instantly dropped to the ground and silence suddenly overcame the room.

Not wanting to waste the opportunity, I swiftly reloaded and placed another shot at his head, just to be sure.

+30 EXP
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I then looked up toward the desk where Benjamin, the boss of QuickLinks Logistics, sat. He had turned his chair and was facing us now, with a shocked expression.

“Larson...H...How can... This be...”