

(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

A/N: Rosalind done fucked up~

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The moment that news of Kurt Hansen's death reached her ears, Rosalind Myers had made her way to her office and secured herself inside, locking everything down and blocking out everyone else for the time being. Not because she was afraid or anything like that, but because she was anticipating the other, far more important message that would soon arrive.

After all, Hansen was the side gig at best. His death, while certainly incredibly cathartic, was nothing in the grand scheme of things. Her Songbird, on the other hand... Rosalind needed her Songbird back. These past couple of days without her had all but proven that fact.

Sure, it hadn't exactly been very long since she'd made it back to NUSA, but even still Rosalind felt like she was flying blind. She'd made initial probing inquiries into trying to find out who had betrayed her to Hansen in the first place, but without her Songbird, the NUSA President knew they wouldn't go anywhere.

No, she needed the Netrunner back at her side, helping her stay afloat in this cutthroat world. Without her Songbird, Rosalind was already all but drowning within mere days... even if she would never admit it out loud.

That said, how much longer could it possibly be? It had been more than ninety minutes now since she'd received proof of Hansen's demise and sent the payment for a job well done. But if Kurt was dead, then surely Songbird's retrieval should have been nothing more than an afterthought, right?

Especially considering how competent V and his team had proven to be so far. If they could get Rosalind out of Dogtown and Night City and back to NUSA in less than a day, then there was no doubt in her mind that they could extract her

Songbird and provide her with an update on the mission's status within two hours of offing Hansen.

As the minutes tick ever closer to that two hour mark, Rosalind stares at her monitor intensely, just waiting for any message at all to come in through her secured systems. Sure, maybe two hours was arbitrary... but she didn't care. She was the President of the New United States of America, for fuck's sake! If she wanted to be arbitrary, she could damn well be fucking arbit-

Ping!

Rosalind straightens up as a call comes in... from the man himself. And with nine minutes to spare before the two hour mark too. A satisfied smirk spreads across the NUSA President's face as she answers the call, V's features suddenly filling the screen in front of her.

"V. I imagine you have good news for me."

V smirks right back at her.

"I have good news and bad news, Madame President."

Rosalind's eyes narrow. Bad news? She didn't like the sound of that. But V doesn't offer to let her choose or anything, he simply carries on with that same smirk.

"Good news first. So Mi is safe and secure. She's in good health and good spirits."

A weight that Rosalind hadn't even known was weighing down on her chest abruptly lifts as she exhales in relief. Of course, then she realizes what V just said. He just called her Songbird by... her name.

"The bad news, which admittedly is only bad news for you in particular... is that I'm not giving her back to you, Myers."

The weight comes crashing back down and Rosalind snarls as she leans forward in her chair, hands gripping the edge of her desk.

“Excuse me?! Think very carefully about what you’re saying, V. If you renege on this deal, if you stand in my way...”

“I’m altering the deal, Myers.”

The audacity! Rosalind slams a fist down on her desk and points a finger at the monitor with her other hand.

“You don’t get to do that, V! You don’t have what it will take to survive making an enemy of me, do you understand?! I will burn you and everyone you love to the ground. I won’t stop until my Songbird is back in my possession! I-!”

She’s cut off mid rant as something sharp and cold is placed against her neck. Rosalind’s eyes widen, but even as she starts to launch herself back in a desperate bid to free herself from the hold of the assassin, their other hand comes down on her hair and grips down harshly, holding her in place and keeping the blade pressed against her neck.

Rosalind goes still just as fast as she’d tried to burst into motion. Seconds drag on, seconds where the assassin who’s somehow managed to enter her secured office and sneak up on her COULD have slit her throat a hundred times over. As those seconds turn into a minute, Rosalinda forcibly calms herself... and meets V’s eyes on the screen.

“This isn’t real. You did something to me back in Dogtown. Put a backdoor into my cyberware.”

It’s the only thing that makes sense. V and his team are all on the other side of the damn country. And it was much, much easier for him to have snuck something into her head, rather than sneaking an entire person into her rescue.

He confirms it a moment later with a dip of his head, still smirking.

“Clever girl.”

Of course, she was definitely going to have to fire some people after this. She'd undergone a deep scan upon arrival back in NUSA. A scan that should have picked up anything like what was happening right now. But without her Songbird, it would seem the people she had at her disposal simply weren't up to the task.

Still, now that she knows it isn't real, she tilts her head back, looking up at the would-be assassin seemingly holding a blade to her neck. A featureless black mask gazes back at her, just reflective enough for Rosalind to see her face in it. The assassin appears to be a woman judging by the curves under her armored bodysuit.

... But none of it is real. There's no threat. She just has to keep that in mind and-

Rosalind gasps as she tries to push through the blade at her throat, only to stop dead in her tracks again as she feels the very real bite against her neck and a dripping of blood. Her head is also wrenched back a moment later by the grip on her hair.

“This isn't... you aren't...”

“It might all be in your head, Myers, but that doesn't mean the threat isn't very real. Can you say with certainty what your hands are doing right now, hm?”

That... they were gripping the edge of the desk. No, she'd stopped doing that. She'd punched her desk and jabbed a finger at V, last she remembered. And now she was... her hands were...

“Let's talk facts, shall we? You seem to be upset that I'm reneging on our deal, so lets address that first. Because from where I and the rest of my team are standing, you reneged first, Madame President.”

What? What is he talking about?”

"I told you not to contact Solomon Reed. I told you I didn't want his mess in the middle of my operation. And what did you do? You tried to get in touch with him anyways. You tried to activate him against my express wishes."

Rosalind's eyes widen. Reed's silence had been... disconcerting. Troubling, even. The thought that the FIA Agent really wouldn't answer the call had crossed her mind and unsettled her deeply. But from the sound of things...

"You intercepted the message. You stopped Reed from being Activated."

V laughs.

"Of course I fucking did. I already told you he would have just made a mess of things. But you didn't listen. You don't ever listen, do you Myers? You don't do anything you're told when you think that you can do better if you do it your own way instead."

Gritting her teeth, Rosalind snarls.

"I needed eyes I could trust on the ground!"

"I gave you Alex, didn't I?"

"Exactly! You think I wouldn't notice you knew exactly who she was before I let you activate her? She was compromised, clearly. Not trustworthy."

V has the audacity to chuckle at that. He just... chuckles. Rosalind gnashes her teeth at the disrespect. Unfortunately she's not in a position to demand anything right now. That doesn't stop her from trying though.

"You've overstepped V, massively. But you can still walk this back. Do you really think my Songbird will just let you keep her? She'll fight tooth and nail to escape you and return to my side. You can still give her back and we can still complete the gig. I assure you, trying to cheat me here will only prove to be too big of a headache for you to handle in the long run."

For the first time since this conversation has begun, the infuriating smirk on V's face... drops. He stares at her for a long moment in silence before slowly shaking his head.

"You really don't know, do you? Even now, even with everything else, you still haven't figured it out. It's too big of a blind spot. Or rather... she's too big of a blind spot."

What? What was V even talking about? Rosalind's brow furrows, her lips turning downwards as she frowns. Before she can speak, he raises an eyebrow at her.

"Had any luck figuring out who sold you out to Hansen, Myers?"

It hits her then what he's implying... but she shies away from the thought all the same. It wasn't possible. It wasn't true.

"It... it hasn't been long enough, these things take time V. And I-!"

"-don't have your 'precious Songbird' to help you out, right?"

Rosalind stiffens up, eyes narrowing in fury.

"I see what you're trying to imply. I refuse to believe it. Songbird would never betray me. She has no reason to; I've given her everything she could ever want in life and more."

"Everything... except for life itself, Myers."

That-!

"You were killing her, you stubborn bitch."

... What?

"Every time you forced her to use the connection to the Blackwall to do your bidding, every time you made her 'get the job done at all costs'."

What? V shouldn't know about the Blackwall. That was top secret stuff. But then he knew about so many other things...

"You killed her by inches, Rosalind. Every task, every mission, every victory. It all came at her expense. She was killing herself at your behest. Is it any wonder that she wanted out? Is it any wonder that she needed to escape? Is it any wonder that she ran away from you?"

N-No. That wasn't... he had to be lying. Only... as much as she hates to admit it, his words ring with the truth. Still.

"I could have helped her. I have the resources here in NUSA. We could have saved her."

"Right. A temporary fix so she could go back to being your Songbird, hm? You'd save her only to have her kill herself in inches all over again."

Rosalind Myers is not a woman prone to flinching. And yet, at having it thrown into her face like that... she flinches back. V seems to take note of that, though he doesn't comment on it. Instead, he goes back to smirking.

"Here is what's going to happen, President Myers. You're going to pay us two million eddies for a completed gig."

What? She wasn't going to-! But it turns out V isn't actually dictating terms to her so much as telling her what's literally about to happen, because as soon as he's done talking, hands reach around her. The blade at her throat and the grip on her hair disappears, but Rosalind finds her body frozen in place, unable to do anything but watch as the masked woman reaches over her shoulders and begins typing away at her monitor.

The phantom presence shouldn't be able to do what she does, but mere moments later Rosalind is helplessly watching as two million eddies are transferred to the same account that she'd sent five hundred thousand a mere

two hours before. Had her own hands done that? Just... just how much control do they have over her?

“Furthermore, Alena Xenakis is ours now. Dress it up nicely though, assign her to my team as a permanent FIA Liaison. That way you can keep an ‘eye’ on So Mi during her convalescence.”

Rosalind narrows her eyes even as the gloved hands do that next, making it an order that came directly from the President’s own system. In the end, if Rosalind was right, then Alex already was theirs... this just made it ‘above board’. And given V knew Alex’s birthname, she had no doubt that they’d turned the FIA sleeper agent ages ago.

“Finally, you are going to leave So Mi in our hands. Her life is her own now. Her decisions are her own. She is free and she will never be your Songbird ever again. However... that doesn’t mean we won’t work with you if you pay us for our services.”

And there it was. The carrot to go with the big stick. Admittedly, it felt like a pretty fucking small carrot in Rosalind’s estimation. Her eyes narrow and she grits her teeth.

“You want me to hire you again? After you cheat me and renege on our arrangement? After you make me pay you for a gig that will never be completed, while taking two of my finest assets from me in the process? You must be out of your mind.”

V though... just hums.

“Maybe I am. Or maybe I know you better than you know yourself, Rosalind Myers.”

What? Rosalind stiffens up again as the masked woman at her back suddenly leans down next to her ear. The woman’s voice is... surprisingly smooth even coming through the mask.

“For someone who is supposedly upset by all of this, you are exceptionally aroused right now, Rosalind. Just how wet would you be if I stuck my hand down your pants and felt you up?”

That... she... Rosalind tries her best to keep her flush at bay. She's been... fighting against her own body's reactions this entire time. Trying to ignore it. Trying to pretend like she's not immensely turned on by all of this. She thought she'd done a decent job. Only now it seems she's being called out. She's been caught nearly creaming her panties to all of this.

“I'm not...”

She trails off because even to her own ears, her voice sounds so damn *weak*. The woman next to her chuckles and hums.

“It's your call, Madame President. Do you want us to... take care of that for you? Or should I go?”

Rosalind trembles, suddenly standing at a precipice. Humiliation awaits her in the abyss below. She knows she should step back from the edge. And yet... and yet...

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A/N: Remember to go back and VOTE!