

VENERA

Written by

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Over black, we HEAR the ambience of a pub and a voice on the RADIO.

RADIO (V.O.)

And hello again, Venera, it's 1:32  
P.M. T.S.T., December 3rd, 2098.  
And welcome back to 224.7 Roses FM  
joining us in this cozy Saturday  
afternoon. Phew, it's been quite a  
crazy couple of weeks huh? It's  
like if finding the largest diamond  
ever known to man wasn't enough...

FADE IN:

INT. ARTHUR'S PUB - VENERA - DAY

A smokey little pub with metallic window blinds half-shut.  
Its walls and furniture painted, trying to look rustic, but  
is clearly not from a familiar era.

Patrons in here are in thick utility overalls with letters  
"VMC" printed on them. Everyone we see, including the  
bartender, has a space HELMET. Many wears an industrial  
looking one while others have theirs set aside.

Almost everyone here are men, and on the faces of those who  
we can see, they look either tense, or perhaps just  
exhausted.

RADIO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Someone has the *balls* to steal it!  
Not only that, kidnap Queen Odessa  
herself too, sure! Says here in my  
notes that I'm suppose to say: "the  
search continues", huh, what a  
joke. Why don't we, instead, start  
our afternoons with some good ol'  
Marv Gabe? So hopefully I don't  
bore you lot to the death... shall  
we?

MUSIC IN: A synthetic jazz tune starts to play.

We find RAYMOND MORGAN (30s) sitting by the counter, a man  
with a stubble goatee in a pebble-colored three piece suit,  
and glasses. His gesture and attire drastically different  
from those around him.

His CHROME HELMET is next to his glass of drink on the  
counter. A half-finished plate of chips suggests he just ate.

He seems pleased with the music, he takes another sip of his glass.

The figure of a GIRL walks past the pub's door. She has a YELLOW BIKER-LIKE HELMET. Ray stands, leaving his glass unfinished, pays by tabbing his phone on the counter, and walks out.

MUSIC OUT: The Radio tune gets drowned out by the WHITE NOISE of the outside.

EXT. ARTHUR'S PUB - VENERA - DAY

Raymond walks out onto a street engulfed in shadows. Tall metallic buildings tower over him.

Above Ray a transparent protection DOME reveals the surface of VENUS with its occasional purple lightning peering through the clouds. The sun peeks out from behind the planet surface.

We are on the inner rim of a Dyson-ring structure in orbit of Venus. Horizons curve up on both sides, with many space elevators connecting the ring to the planet.

CUT TO:

EXT. OVERLOOKING VENERA - SPACE - DAY

The beauty of Venera is revealed. The thick, giant Dyson-ring wraps around Venus. Dozens of space elevators make the whole planet look like a giant steering wheel.

Thousands of lights from spaceships glitter near a spaceport. With paths created by space-highway lights winding around and shooting off into the deep darkness.

TITLE CARD:

"VENERA"

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MARS - NIGHT

A futuristic kitchen with mostly dark and bamboo colored décor. The counters are topped with black marbles. The place looks luxurious but lived in.

Raymond walks into the frame holding a cup of hot drink in pajamas. He puts the cup down a machine to refill.

BUZZ-- The doorbell rings. Ray fixes his glasses on the nose and walks to-

I/E. DOORWAY

CHARLES VENIAMIN (30s) speaks over the intercom.

CHARLES  
Surprise, surprise!

Ray goes to open the door. We see Charles fully dressed up in an expensive wine-red tuxedo. An electric limo parked behind him, with the CHAUFFER standing next to it, with his helmet on. Ray speaks in a British accent.

RAYMOND  
Charles? Aren't you suppose to be  
at the dinner or whatever?

Beyond the driveway we catch a glimpse of the Martian city's night lights.

CHARLES  
I would literally die if I stayed  
for another minute. These  
pretentious clowns- Can I come in?

Charles seems a bit drunk.

RAYMOND  
It's late.

CHARLES  
Yeah, well, it's not like you are  
going to be anytime soon, Ray.  
Besides, it's about a job.

RAYMOND  
I don't need another job right now.

CHARLES  
Ray, let me in.

The drink machine BEEPS from the kitchen.

RAYMOND  
Alright.

CHARLES  
Lovely!

Charles signals his Chauffer to wait in the car as he walks into Ray's house, and sits down on a chair in the-

KITCHEN

Ray follows back into the kitchen for his drink.

CHARLES

I'm going to tell you a story I heard tonight. One of a fascinating tale of manipulation, exploitation, deception, all in the faraway land...

(pauses)

Of the Inner Sol.

RAYMOND

Let me stop you there. No.

CHARLES

Aw! Let me finish!

Ray sighs and drinks from his cup.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Venus, "Quarry of Mankind", Sol's biggest mines, where you got all of these from, is having a bit of a problem lately. You ever heard of Franco Nelson?

CUT TO:

INT. GALA DINNER - VENERA - NIGHT

Sitting at the top of the table is FRANCO NELSON (40s), a man with a well-groomed beard, dressed in an extravagantly over-the-top designer suit.

CHARLES (V.O.)

Pathetic old bastard, this In-y. Pathetic, but lucky. Got the whole damn VMC handed to him on a fucking platter...

A WAITER comes in and serves Franco a bowl of soup on a silver platter.

CHARLES (V.O.)

All thanks to his late daddy, Marco.

Behind Franco, a framed portrait of MARCO NELSON (60s) looms over him.

CHARLES (V.O.)  
 But his fortune doesn't end there,  
 oh no! You definitely heard about  
 the news, didn't you? You knew-  
 (pauses)  
 Venera!

INT. DISPLAY ROOM - VENERA - NIGHT

A gigantic diamond covered by a piece of red cloth is displayed in the center. Only a rough shape can be made out. Many security measures layered around it.

CHARLES (V.O.)  
 Still a confusing and lazy name, I  
 think. How many fucking carats they  
 said this was? 8000? 9000? All we  
 need to know is that it's big, it's  
 fresh out of the crest, and one  
 thing for sure...

CUT TO:

INT. RAYMOND'S KITCHEN - MARS - NIGHT

Franco already stood from his chair and is pacing around as he speak.

CHARLES  
 Too fucking big for a fake  
 patrician In-y like Franco. But  
 Ray, that's not all. Not at all!  
 Have you heard of a, *Queen Odessa*?

Raymond takes off his glasses and rubs it between his clothes.

RAYMOND  
 "Venus in Furs".

CHARLES  
 Fuck! That was a shit movie by the  
 way. The 2084 one, of course. But  
 yeah, *Queen of Venus*, the  
 mysterious figurehead, only the  
 voice, never the face. But I think,  
 she's up to something.

Ray puts his glasses back on.

RAYMOND

How so?

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND HALLWAY - VENERA - NIGHT

We are in a beautiful brutalist hallway. The angled concrete walls and incredibly high ceiling dramatically contrasts the city outside.

At the end of the hallway, a huge floor-to-ceiling window resides. Outside is a lawn of grass with a patch of chrysanthemum. Beyond the elevated garden is the night sky, stars glistering through the protection dome.

QUEEN CELIA ODESSA and Franco walks down the hallway. Celia is in a beautiful golden gown, though she seems a bit uncomfortable in it. Even at night and indoors, she has her GOLDEN BIKER-LIKE HELMET on.

FRANCO

My God. 20 grand, they said. Didn't know you could spend that much on a bottle of Ropian.

CELIA

These are the guests from Outer Sol after all.

FRANCO

(chuckles)

That indeed, your majesty.

CELIA

Don't you get tired? Running around having to put on an image-

FRANCO

Actually, your majesty, it wasn't that bad.

Franco pauses, both his words and step.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

You know, it's only when you have something they want, they'd bother giving you two shits. Pardon my language.

CELIA

That's alright-

FRANCO

But you do agree, don't you, *Celia*?  
You've seen them come, go, and take  
as they please!

CELIA

I-

Franco ignores Celia.

FRANCO

I made my father a promise when I  
took over the Corp. I promised to  
lead us out of these depths, to  
rise, to *ascend*! And now, with a  
key to Olympia, to *there*! I will...

He points to the night sky. As Franco continues to rant, his  
voice gets DROWNED OUT.

CHARLES (V.O.)

While our dreamer-boy rants on and  
on about all these diamond talk, it  
seems to have made him forget about  
his most valuable piece in his  
game, the Queen.

Celia stares at Franco blankly as he waves his hands around  
as he is seemingly talking about all his grand plans.

CHARLES (V.O.)

If you want to play dress up like  
some kind of third grade dictator,  
you better keep the fake monarchy -  
that your *dad* helped you put there -  
in check! Otherwise, sooner or  
later, they will stab you in the  
back.

Franco has finished his grand speech. We HEAR his voice  
again.

FRANCO

Anyway, I better get back to the  
table. Can't let our *guests* wait  
too long, am I right?

CELIA

(whispers)

You are always right.

Franco doesn't hear her. He fixes his tie in the mirror and  
walks toward the door back to the gala dinner.



FRANCO  
Remember, Celia, you just keep on  
doing your job, and everything will  
be a lot... *easier* soon.

As he exits the hallway back into the dinner, Celia wanders  
out to the-

EXT. CELIA'S GARDEN

Wind grazes through and lifts off a petal flying upward  
towards the stars. Celia looks up into the starry sky,  
thinking of something.

CUT TO:

INT. RAYMOND'S KITCHEN - MARS - NIGHT

Raymond has finished his cup, he puts on the machine for  
another refill. He sits down himself.

RAYMOND  
Impressive storytelling, Charlie.

CHARLES  
Why thank you!

RAYMOND  
So how do you know all this.

CHARLES  
Jimmy.

INT. HIGH-END RESTAURANT - MARS - NIGHT

JIMMY (30s) is taking shots after shots and talking about his  
trip, as Charles observes at the other end of the table,  
holding a glass of liquor himself.

CHARLES (V.O.)  
He just came back from Venera  
himself, and was talking all about  
of it at the dinner.

INT. RAYMOND'S KITCHEN - MARS - NIGHT

BEEP. Raymond's third drink is complete. He grabs the cup off  
the machine.

RAYMOND

Great, everyone got a cool story  
before bed.

Charles grabs another chair and sits closer to Ray.

CHARLES

Don't you see, Ray? This is just  
the prelude, an intro to what might  
become an absolute chaos. And it'll  
be the perfect chaos for us-

RAYMOND

-To go in and snatch the prize?

Charles nods.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

(chuckles)

Charles, you've had too much to  
drink. We are not just bits-thirsty  
thieves.

Charles pauses, he is surprised Ray thinks this way. Then he  
remembers.

CHARLES

Ah! Ah! I forgot to tell you,  
didn't I? I'm not asking this for  
me, I wanted it to be a gift, for  
my ma. For the New Year. It'd be  
wonderful wouldn't it? Something to  
commemorate-

RAYMOND

Yeah, yeah, alright. Then can't you  
get Dima to do it.

CHARLES

Why can't you?

Ray looks a bit uneasy, he takes off his glasses again to rub  
it, although it doesn't need more polishing.

RAYMOND

Charles, it's Venera. It's a  
shithole. I've never even been that  
far Inner.

CHARLES

But you are the best I got, Ray.  
Come on! Don't you worry about the  
bits-

RAYMOND  
It's not about that...

CHARLES  
Plus, you heard what I said.  
Stinging that asshole Franco right  
in the arse, you will be doing Sol  
a favor, something good! For all  
parties concerned! Especially those  
poor souls on Venera. Am I right?

Ray does not answer, instead he looks towards the doorway,  
where his CHROME HELMET is sitting on a shelf.

After a short pause, Ray sets his cup aside.

RAYMOND  
If I do this, this will be the *only*  
time you send me on a job to Inner  
Sol. Deal?

Ray holds his hand out for a handshake, but Charles pulls him  
in for a hug instead. Ray squints his eye as Charles smells  
of alcohol.

CHARLES  
You are the *best*, Ray! Deal! Oh  
this is going to mean a lot to ma.

RAYMOND  
Yeah, yeah, and you're just in it  
for the thrills huh?

CHARLES  
You know me!

Charles heads back towards the door and prepares to leave.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Oh and, by the way, Venera is out  
of our jurisdiction after all, and  
now that the word is out, you must  
be careful of... well, running into  
rats there. Understand?

RAYMOND  
Thanks, Charlie, I can handle it.

CHARLES  
(chuckles)  
My man.

Charles leaves, closing the door behind him. We HEAR his limo  
driving off. Ray's eyes linger at the doorway.