

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 Chauffeur 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.

He glances into the distorted reflection of himself from the CHROME HELMET. Then finishes his cup.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OVERLOOKING VENERA - SPACE - DAY

The flickering lights of spaceships and the beacons of space highway way-points glow with colors, contrasting the stars in the background.

A dark-gray spaceship flies over us. We HEAR a TRAFFIC CONTROLLER squawks over radio.

TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)
Mercedes SL418, Mr. Morgan, was it?
You are clear to land on Pad 4 Zone
16. Enjoy your stay on Venera.

CUT TO:

INT. RAYMOND'S SPACESHIP COCKPIT - DAY

Raymond, in a darker colored jacket, is in the middle of landing his ship on a platform of the spaceport on the outskirts of Venera Station.

RAYMOND
P-4 Z-16, thank you.

Ray continues his landing procedures. We see him gracefully puts the ship down onto the platform. He puts on his HELMET, and walks into-

THE SPACESHIP CABIN

Ray's ship is nicely kept. Every surface looks to be as clean as new, even after days of travelling in space.

He goes to get his luggage, everything is folded orderly. Ray puts a HANDGUN into it, and leaves for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACEPORT - VENERA - DAY

Ray closes his ship's door behind him and begins walking towards the security check point. A line of FENCES shields the landing platforms from the edges of the city.

Ray looks up to the giant protective DOME dawning over him as he approaches the security check point. An AIRLOCK GATE is right above, a VMC cargo ship approaches and is permitted into the city.

With a quick scan at the checkpoint, Ray officially enters-

SPACEPORT SQUARE

A few billboards with slogans sit right at the entrance: "WELCOME TO VENERA", "FOUNDRY OF MANKIND", and a giant PICTURE of the big diamond. On the billboard with the diamond is a TAGLINE: "VENERA - LARGEST ROUGH DIAMOND EVER FOUND".

As Raymond is looking up, suddenly the reflection of the billboards FLASHES RED on his HELMET. He takes it off and cannot believe his eyes: "MISSING!".

Ray looks around him, a few BYSTANDERS also looks shocked and confused. A VMC SECURITY runs by with chattering in her earpiece.

Ray gets out his phone and calls Charles.

CHARLES (O.S.)
(over phone)
Ray?

RAYMOND
There's been a... situation.

CUT TO:

INT. THE VENIAMIN ESTATE LIVING ROOM - MARS - DAY

It is early morning on Mars. Charles sits on his sofa with an earpiece. He in a bath robe. On the giant curved TV in front of him a movie plays.

CHARLES
What is it?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

RAYMOND
It appears that *someone* got to the diamond first.

Charles sits up from the sofa.

CHARLES
Fuck! Seriously?

RAYMOND
News just broke 30 seconds ago.
Just as I landed. Like some kind of
sorcery-

CHARLES
Ok, well good, that means it still
hasn't left the station yet.

Ray remains calm and collected.

RAYMOND
Well, I knew it wouldn't be that
easy...

CHARLES
This sucks, I know. I sense fuckery
afoot, Ray. Need to be careful.

RAYMOND
Any idea of who the opposition
might be?

Charles also calms down, he pauses his movie.

CHARLES
Uh... Danny Ocean? Whoever it is
gotta be pretty good.
(pauses)
Honestly those VM-cunts should've
seen it coming. Being high profile
like that is basically an outright
invitation for every rich asshole
from there to Salacia to come try
and steal it-

RAYMOND
-Rich asshole huh?

CHARLES
(chuckles)
Piss off, Ray. Anyway, lemme give
Daniil a call, see what he can do.

A subtle NOISE comes from Charles' guest bedroom.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
(looks over)
I think ma's awake, I picked her up
last night.

RAYMOND
 Alright, boss. Go. And say hi to-

BANG! An explosion somewhere further up the ring interrupts Raymond. Smoke rises above the skyline.

CHARLES
 What's going on, Ray?

RAYMOND
 Sounds like my cue.

CHARLES
 How exciting, your first Inner Sol experience. Ha-ha!

Ray hangs up and goes in the direction of the explosion.

CUT TO:

INT. THE VENIAMIN ESTATE LIVING ROOM - MARS - DAY

Charles hangs up his phone and looks out of the window. We are in a luxurious mansion on a small hill with gray-tone marble and concrete aesthetics.

Beyond his blue swimming pool with see a transformed Mars with plants, lakes, and futuristic buildings under the tinted-orange sky.

Charles puts down his earpieces and walks into-

GUEST BEDROOM

In an armchair next to the bed, we see MRS. VENIAMIN (80s) - Charles' mother. A book sits on the table, with reading glasses on top of it. Mrs. Veniamin sits facing the window, watching electric cars winding down the roads.

The pair speaks in RUSSIAN and we SEE subtitled translation.

CHARLES
 [Ray said hi, Ma.]

Mrs. Veniamin smiles and nods.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
 [How's your first morning here?
 Excited for New Year?]

Mrs. Veniamin stands holding her coffee. She strolls to the living room - she looks and moves like she is much younger than she really is.

BACK IN LIVING ROOM

MRS. VENIAMIN

[Oh it's the same for me anywhere.
Different planet, different shade
of the sky.]

CHARLES

[Well, go get some breakfast first,
ma. I'm gonna make a call.]

Mrs. Veniamin smiles and walks over to the kitchen.

CUT TO:

EXT. EXPLOSION SITE - VENERA - DAY

Although sounded severe, the explosion earlier seemed to have caused no casualties. A few of the environment's DEBRIS scattered on the floor, burnt to a crisp. Among them is a shattered GOLDEN SHARD.

VMC ENFORCERS have already set up a parameter around the site. They are dressed in police-like uniforms, but with the letters VMC printed on.

We follow a male FIGURE as he moves through the crowd. This man is tall, in a wine red coat, and has a triangle marking on his helmet. His body is built like an ox, fittingly, his helmet has little OX-LIKE HORNS.

FIGURE

(to bystanders)

Excuse me, sorry, passing through.

This is VIG KAI (30s), who strangely doesn't seem to be interested in the explosion itself. Instead he is looking around, scanning everyone he sees, looking for someone, or perhaps something.

Vig freezes when he notices someone across the crowd. Following his line of sight we recognize the person: it's Raymond.

Vig then notices a few other people, one with a unique BLACK ANGLED HELMET.

MATCH CUT TO:

ACROSS OF EXPLOSION SITE

Raymond sees Vig - it's not exactly subtle with a man of his build. As he does, Vig turns away and fades into the gathering crowd. We HEAR two BYSTANDERS have a conversation.

BYSTANDER #1

Did you see what happened?

BYSTANDER #2

Nope. Didn't hear anything right before either, it came out of nowhere.

BYSTANDER #1

(looks up to the Venus surface)

Imagine the poor bastard getting home from up there and finds out his own front door burnt to a crisp, darker than his own face.

BYSTANDER #2

Hmph, sounds like that really old movie... what was it called?

BYSTANDER #1

Stop it Kev, you are about the only one on this *planet* who watches anything pre-2035.

Ray walks past them and finds a ladder to a-

NEARBY ROOFTOP

Raymond hesitates while looking at the rust on the ladder at first. He looks around for another option, but there is none.

RAYMOND

(whispers)

Fuck me.

He leaves his luggage and reluctantly climbs on top to get a better advantage point. Just as he does, the sun begins to fade behind the surface of Venus above him.

Darkness dawns while many phones of the people below light up. The crowd murmurs.

Ray dusts his hands and turns on his own phone. He is also greeted by the station-wide emergency BROADCAST message:

BROADCAST

(playing on phone)

Attention, please, the following has been reported missing by: the Venus Mining Corp.: Venera - the largest diamond known to mankind; and Queen Celia Odessa, Crowned Queen of Venera. We ask of anyone with information to reach out at 990-0FV. Once again-

Ray turns off the phone before the broadcast repeats.

RAYMOND

(to himself)

You too, huh? Your majesty.

From the rooftop we see the lights of this section of Venera switch on gradually, lighting up the shadows casted by Venus. Ray takes a look at his watch, and begins to look further up on both directions of the ring.

Something catches his eye. A GIRL, with a YELLOW BIKER-LIKE HELMET is running into a pedestrian street a few blocks up.

Ray looks down at his phone again, and on the Broadcast, we see a PICTURE of Queen Celia, in her iconic GOLDEN HELMET, with the SAME SHAPE. He chuckles a little, and prepares to get off the rooftop.

As he does, off in the background: we see the SILHOUETTE of Vig Kai's HORNED HELMET emerging from a different rooftop across. He leaves the rooftop in sync with Ray.

CUT TO:

EXT. PEDESTRIAN STREET - VENERA - DAY

Raymond reaches the pedestrian street. He scans around for the Girl, but to no avail. His eyes quickly lingers on a-

ROBOTICS SHOP

We see racks of mechanical parts, ranging from tiny gears to large and complex milled objects. Most of them are alloy, some polished and some a bit rusty. Two sample robots lie in front: a trash compactor and a sink cleaner.

The SHOPKEEPER (20s) in a baseball hat sits at the counter. She is smoking a black cigarette with yellow tip. She is leaning back in her chair leisurely, with her feet on the counter, watching a soccer game on her phone.

Raymond stops in front of the shop, staring at the Shopkeeper, being reminded of someone.

SHOPKEEPER
(looks up, then back at
her phone)
Can I help you, sir?

Raymond is lost in his thoughts, he does not reply.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
(looks up again)
Sir?

RAYMOND
Oh, no... No, sorry. Didn't seem to
spot what I need.

SHOPKEEPER
Well, what do you need?

The Shopkeeper looks up and down at Raymond's jacket, and sees his luggage.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
Something for travel, maybe? What's
your ship's make?

RAYMOND
(shakes his head)
No need. I was just browsing, sorry
to disappoint you. This all yours?

SHOPKEEPER
Technically it's my dad's shop, but
he barely comes around. I run the
place myself.

RAYMOND
That's quite impressive, a robotics
place like this all on your own.
You know this area well?

SHOPKEEPER
Lived here my whole life.

RAYMOND
I'm truly sorry.

SHOPKEEPER
Don't be, I'm going to Disneyland
next month with my dad.

RAYMOND
How wonderful...

Ray pauses for a second to think, though we cannot see his face through the helmet, he looks up a little breaking eye-contact with the Shopkeeper.

After a short moment, he quickly gets back on track.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Anyway, have you seen some one with
a dark yellow-ish helmet passing
by?

The Shopkeeper shakes her head.

SHOPKEEPER
Don't think I did. This is quite a
busy street.

RAYMOND
That's alright, thanks anyway.

SHOPKEEPER
(smiles)
Well if you are looking for
someone, why not try Arthur's? It's
a pub just over there, owner's a
nice grandpa.
(points at around the
corner)

RAYMOND
Wonderful. Cheers.

He leaves in the direction as the Shopkeeper goes back watching her game.

E/I. ARTHUR'S PUB

Raymond walks into the pub, ARTHUR (60s), the bartender, greets him behind the counter. He is wearing an old fashioned dark gray helmet with a yellow strip.

ARTHUR
Hi there, mister. What can I get
ya?

Ray thinks for a second.

RAYMOND
How about a Piña Colada?

ARTHUR
Ha! Quite an interesting choice!
Coming right up.

Ray finds a seat as his phone RINGS once more. Caller ID shows that it's Charles again. He answers.

DISSOLVE TO:

E/I. ARTHUR'S PUB - VENERA - DAY

A MAN walks into the pub. His uniform reveals that he is a mining supervisor at VMC. He still wears a mining helmet. A NAME TAG on him reveals that this is DANIIL (40s), who owes a favor to Charles.

Once inside, Daniil greets Arthur behind the bar.

DANIIL
Hey.

Arthur nods back while polishing an empty glass.

Daniil scans around the room, and spots Raymond by his chrome helmet. He walks towards the table while taking off his helmet, revealing a thick mustache.

Daniil sits down across Ray, who is enjoying another glass of Piña Colada. Daniil sets his helmet down at the table, seeing the dust on it, Ray moves his drink away.

DANIIL (CONT'D)
Is that Piña Colada?

RAYMOND
And you must be Daniil.

DANIIL
I'm glad! Finally, somebody treats this burning shithole of a place as a tropical getaway-

RAYMOND
Well, Daniil, I think Piña Colada can be enjoyed anywhere, burning shithole or otherwise.

Ray looks to be a little irritated.

DANIIL
Whatever, man. I can never understand you farer out people.

Daniil gets a NAPKIN and a pen, he writes down an address and slips it over to Ray.

DANIIL (CONT'D)
Here. What you asked for.

RAYMOND
Did Charles tell you to do it like we're in some kind of old Bond movie?

DANIIL
What?

RAYMOND
Nevermind... Just, all that could've been a text-

DANIIL
-These people don't *text*. Too easy to leave a trail. It's an underground market, man, literally. You gotta look for this ramen place called Tomako.

RAYMOND
Nice, is their ramen any good?

DANIIL
What? No, no one goes there for ramen.

RAYMOND
But they do have actual ramen right?

DANIIL
Yea? They do. Anyway, I talked to Tomako, the owner. She's one of the best fixer in town, the middle-woman, if you will. Helping set up the black market deals and whatnot. And apparently there's this mysterious buyer from Europa or Saturn or something, somewhere far out, like you, they offered
(pauses)
100K bits-

RAYMOND
-That's a low price.

DANIIL

(scoffs)

For you, maybe, but for us here that's a huge fucking number. We're talking Bitheriums here, not the standard-

RAYMOND

-Okay, okay, I got it.

DANIIL

Yea, and get this: the other end of the deal is to get the seller off Venera. And this seller...

(leans in)

Has a yellow helmet. Same color, same design, same shape. And what that seller is selling-

RAYMOND

-is the diamond itself.

Daniil leans back and nods.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

That was quite impressive, Dani!
Can I call you Dani?

Daniil shrugs.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

So it seems that this deal has been set up long before the diamond even left Franco's building, huh?

DANIIL

I would think so. Hey, do you think that this yellow helmet is...

(whispers)

The *Queen* herself?

RAYMOND

Woah, careful there, Dani, think twice before gossiping in a pub.

DANIIL

Look, any idiot with half the brain on here can see through the VMC's lies. All these years, only work and never real fucking pay. Gotta say, I'm rooting for her you know.

RAYMOND

Good, then let's help her. I'm guessing that we, well, I meant, (scoffs) Charles just need to outbid this mysterious buyer for Tomako to cut him out of the deal?

DANIIL

Yes, this way Tomako can arrange you as their new "chauffer".

RAYMOND

So how much do we need to pay?

DANIIL

Fuck if I know? You oughta go talk to her yourself.

He points to the napkin he gave to Ray.

RAYMOND

(sighs)
Alright then. You said it was... underground?

DANIIL

Yep.

RAYMOND

(to himself)
Fuck...

DANIIL

Hey, this should settle my debt with your boss, right?

RAYMOND

Oh don't you worry about old Charles. I'm sure he's thankful. See you around?

DANIIL

With all due respect, I hope not.

Daniil stands and goes to the bar for a drink.

RAYMOND

(raises his Pina Colada)
Enjoy your drink then!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND MARKET - VENERA - NIGHT

Raymond, with his helmet on, stands at the end of a sewage tunnel. His hands in his pockets, trying as hard as he can not to touch anything.

RAYMOND
(takes a deep breath, to
himself)
The shit I do for you Charlie...

A rat leads us below the city of Venera, and into an underground market inside a tunnel. Neon signs luminate different shops across dozens of tunnels.

Ray walks towards the ramen booth labeled TOMAKO'S. TOMAKO (40s) is the woman standing in front of him behind the counter, in a chef's gown, and a chef-like helmet on.

We SEE the pair talk, but cannot hear their conversation. Instead, we SEE the GIRL with YELLOW BIKER-LIKE HELMET just in the shadows nearby, monitoring Ray's moves.

FADE OUT:

Over black, we once again HEAR the same Radio message as the opening.

RADIO (V.O.)
-kidnap Queen Odessa herself too,
sure! Says here in my notes that
I'm suppose to say: "the search
continues"...

This time we also HEAR Raymond standing up and opening the pub's door. The white noise of the street drowns out the Radio's tune.

FADE IN:

EXT. ARTHUR'S PUB - VENERA - DAY

Raymond is in his pebble-colored suit as we saw in the opening. He tails the GIRL down the pedestrian street. She wears a black jacket and her YELLOW BIKER-LIKE HELMET.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSSROAD / OVERPASS - VENERA - DAY

The pair stops by the red light at a crossroad. Few electric cars pass by, among them a blue VMC branded POLICE CAR.

The Girl turns for a pedestrian overpass. Ray waits for the light instead, but keeping an eye on her.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - VENERA - DAY

Once they are both across the Girl turns into a tight alleyway in the shadows. Raymond follows her in but lost sight of her. He walks deeper into the alley.

HISS! Suddenly the Girl jumps down behind him out of nowhere, blocking his retreat with a PLASMA BLADE - a strangely shaped weapon that resembles a mixture between a cello bow and a katana. The white-hot glow of plasma flames burns on the cutting edge, and is dangerously close to Ray's throat.

He is pinned to the wall. The Girl speaks to him, also with a British accent.

GIRL
Who are you?

RAYMOND
Easy... I'm not with the blues.

GIRL
Who are you?

RAYMOND
Shaw, Raymond Shaw.

Raymond lies about his name.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Tomako sent me.

GIRL
So you are the pilot?

RAYMOND
Listen, *your majesty*, I don't know where you got this flambeau de la mort but it's really difficult to conversate when my throat is being bloody *barbecued*.

The Girl pauses, and backs up a little. Raymond takes a breath and sorts out his suit.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
(relieved)
Thank you.

Ray raises his hands, the Girl sees his HANDGUN - though Ray has no intention of using it.

GIRL
Why weren't you at where we are
supposed to meet?

RAYMOND
I was getting lunch nearby and
happens to run into-

GIRL
Who sent you?

RAYMOND
(pauses)
Does that matter? I get you out,
and I get the diamond.

The Girl pauses, and stares into Ray for a moment.

Suddenly, POLICE SIREN. It was the police car we saw not too long ago, rushing back into a different direction, passing by the alley. The Girl gets startled by it.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Come on, your majesty. Let's get to
the-

The Girl cuts him off.

GIRL
Stop calling me "*your majesty*". I
am *not* the Queen, not Celia.

Raymond is surprised.

GIRL (CONT'D)
We have to get off the streets.
Follow me.

She shuts off her plasma blade and walks past Ray deeper into the valley. He follows.

RAYMOND
Wait, how do I know if you have the
diamond?

She stops and turns back to look at Ray.

GIRL
I don't carry an 8000-carat diamond
on me. *Follow me.*

RAYMOND
Fair enough. If you are not Odessa
then who are you?

GIRL
Catherina.

RAYMOND
Just... Catherina?

CATHERINA (20s) does not reply. Ray sighs and follows.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Great talk.

The sound of POLICE SIRENS still lingers, being echoed across
the city blocks.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - VENERA - DAY

With the sound of POLICE SIRENS we transition to a coffee
shop by the road. Another POLICE CAR zooms pass.

We see ZARA ZIMMERMAN (40s), a tough lady in black trench
coat holding a BLACK ANGLED HELMET - the same one Vig saw at
the explosion site. In her other hand is a frozen green drink
with a straw. She takes a sip as her eyes follow the police
car off into the distance.

Three youths sit on a bench nearby. JOHN (20s), LILA (20s),
and MASON (19) all look bored, John has his hands in pocket
while Mason scrolls on his phone. They are close, but clearly
not related.

LILA
Boss's back.

JOHN
Did you get us anything?

Zara speaks a strong Scottish accent.

ZARA
No, frozen drinks are not good for
your stomach.

John rolls his eyes.

MASON
(still on his phone)
She's right, John. Don't forget
last night-

LILA ZARA
-God, no one is ever Oh please not again-
forgetting last night.

JOHN
-WHAT? Traveler's diarrhea is a
perfectly common thing!

MASON
Destroying the toilet isn't.

Zara chuckles and chokes on her drink, she coughs. John gets up and tries to fight Mason, but Lila stops him.

A group of VMC ENFORCERS walk hastily past behind them. They are dressed in black uniform with helmets on. The two men leading has assault rifles in their hands.

Zara turns and looks at them. Lila notices, she stands from the bench as John takes his chance to try and snatch Mason's phone from his hands. He fails and Mason puts away his phone in his pocket. Mason taunts John with the middle finger.

LILA
That's a lot of firepower.

ZARA
Yup. That's why I brought you lot.

LILA
How much we were promised for this
job again?

ZARA
(looks back at Lila)
300K, Bitherium.

Lila raises her eyebrows.

MASON
300 thousand bits?!

JOHN
If he would pay that much for it, I
wonder what that diamond can sell
for on the streets-

ZARA
Keep it down, lads.

JOHN
(under his breathe)
Sorry... But we better see where
they are headed then. Right, boss?

ZARA
Yup, but we keep our distances,
lads. Can't be too careful.

Zara and her clan leaves following the V.M.C Enforcers. Off in the distance, in the direction that they are going, a large olive colored APARTMENT BUILDING resides.

CUT TO:

E/I. APARTMENT BUILDING - VENERA - DAY

Raymond and Catherina reaches the same APARTMENT BUILDING. The exterior is painted a tinted shade of olive green, but the paint has long been decayed and is falling off, revealing the metallic walls behind. The building itself is gigantic, monstrous in a way.

An OLD MAN (70s) sits in a rocking chair by the entrance. He is in an old miner uniform, but with the top part stripped open. Underneath is a stained tank top. BURNS and SCARS all over his arm. He is scrolling on his phone while smoking an electronic cigarette.

Ray stops at the entrance. He sees a PILE OF TRASH at the corner under a WINDOW, just in front of an alley. He then looks at the building doors, rusty and dirty. He fixes his glasses, and he squints his eyes.

RAYMOND
This is the place?

CATHERINA
I have a safehouse here.

RAYMOND
(sighs)
Fuck me sideways...

He follows Catherina into the elevator, avoiding to touch anything. Catherina gives him a look. The elevator goes up.

CATHERINA
How much are you getting paid?

RAYMOND
Huh?

CATHERINA
Must be a lot of money, motivating
your posh arse this close to the
sun.

RAYMOND
(scoffs)
Heh, yea.

CATHERINA
So how much?

RAYMOND
This is kind of sensible
information, miss.

CATHERINA
Sure, merc.

We are on the lime colored balcony walkway of the building.
The balcony is facing inside towards an atrium, we can see
more floors and units just across, with wires hanging in
between.

Ray and Catherina walks down the balcony. Ray is curious. He
pokes his head out and looks up to catch a glimpse of the sky
from the atrium, but all he sees is Venus.

RAYMOND
Don't you get claustrophobic living
here?

CATHERINA
I don't live here.

RAYMOND
Well, who does?

CATHERINA
Someone I knew.

RAYMOND
Don't *they* get claustrophobic
living here?

Catherina stops and looks at Ray in disappointment.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
What?

She does not reply. We reach the door to Catherina's
safehouse - 14Y. She unlocks it with her phone.

INT. SAFEHOUSE (APT 14Y) - VENERA - DAY

We are in a surprisingly well kept room. Although dusty, furniture seems to be in order. TRASH CAN, a trash compactor robot rolls out of the kitchen, it looks like a trash can.

TRASH CAN
Hello there, Catherina! Welcome back!

RAYMOND
Jesus-

Ray is startled.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Is that fucking thing sentient?

TRASH CAN	CATHERINA
I'm a trash compactor!	No...? It's a trash compactor.

RAYMOND
How is it talking then?

TRASH CAN	CATHERINA
I have been modified with a Class 2 AI by my former owner!	Class 2 AI.

RAYMOND
(relived)
Class 2, huh? Could've warned me. I fucking hate these things.

Trash Can makes a sad beep.

CATHERINA
Huh. Don't you have these on... wherever you're from?

RAYMOND
We do, I just-

Ray hears a NOISE from the bedroom, he quickly turns around. Celia walks out, with a MATTE BLACK HELMET on, and in a tourist T-shirt that say: "I", a heart, and Venus. She holds a PISTOL behind her back.

CELIA
Cat? Who is this?

CATHERINA

This is one Mr. Raymond Shaw. And he, is going to be our new pilot.

RAYMOND

Wait, this isn't part of the deal. I didn't know there's going to be two of you.

Celia whips out the pistol and points right at Ray with both hands, shaking lightly. Catherina takes a step back and blocks the door.

CELIA

Well, you do now, Mr. Shaw.

RAYMOND

Oh great. Twice in a day.

He raises his hands.

CATHERINA

I think you owe us a little explanation. Why don't you start with: who sent you?

RAYMOND

(to Catherina)

I work for a man on Mars. A rich man.

CATHERINA

And why does he want the diamond?

Ray looks confused.

CELIA

Everyone's got a reason for it. The worst kind is continue to use it as a symbol of the greed, to control with it, to-

RAYMOND

(to Celia)

A symbol, like you? Is that why you stole it from Franco Nelson in the first place, huh?

Catherina gives him a warning look.

CELIA

(pauses)

Took us a while to find someone who can help us, someone on Salacia.

(MORE)

CELIA (CONT'D)

They were actually going to use the diamond for good.

RAYMOND

For good? How?

CATHERINA

That big of a diamond, with its structural complexity, could be very useful in optics, refraction, light sails development...

CELIA

If we are going to work together, Mr. Shaw. Can I at least know where the diamond will end up?

(pauses)

I just need to think, that I am doing the right thing.

Ray took a long pause looking at Celia. Her last sentence reminds him of something. He raises his hand to touch his HELMET.

RAYMOND

What will you do even if we aren't the same? Just here for the bits or greed like the rest of them? I'm still your only bet off this station.

CELIA

(sighs, lowers pistol)

Perhaps you are right...

RAYMOND

If it's any better, it's a gift.

Celia looks back at Raymond.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

My boss, his family was one of the engineers at the 45's, group of people who designed this station. And he wants to give his mother the diamond as a New Year's gift.

Celia does not reply.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Yeah, I know. Still not for science or the greater mankind or anything, but hey, it's a gift for an old lady.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
(to Catherina)
Is that better?

CELIA
(small chuckle)
Alright, Mr. Shaw. It's a little better.

RAYMOND
Well then, glad to have you on board, your majesty-

CELIA
Please, just Celia is fine.

Ray nods.

TRASH CAN
Excuse me!

Trash Can rolls near them, Ray jerks and lifts his feet up as he is avoiding a cockroach.

RAYMOND
Fuck!

CATHERINA
(laughs)
What kind of a merc has a weakness for trash robots?

RAYMOND
It's not a bloody *weakness*, damn it. It's...
(stutters)
I just really don't like that it fucking *talks*.

Catherina and Celia shares a look. Ray does not notice, instead he stares at Trash Can as it's rolling away.

CELIA
Why can't it talk?

RAYMOND
I have a bad history with talking androids.

CELIA
What kind?

RAYMOND
Don't think we're close enough for autobiographies yet.

Awkward pause.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
So, can I see the rock now?

Catherina puts her hand on her BLADE, still not fully trusting Ray. Ray notices but says nothing.

Celia goes to her room and drags out a BACKPACK, she opens it in front of Ray. The GLOW of the diamond shines and reflects off of Ray's helmet. We DON'T SEE it directly, but Ray is speechless at the size of it.

CATHERINA
Yeah. It's a rock.

RAYMOND
It's such a big fucking rock.

Catherina closes the backpack.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Well, when are we leaving? Got my ship at the Northern port.

CATHERINA
Is it fast?

RAYMOND
It's a VX-8, of course it's fast.

CATHERINA
Good. Let's wait until we're on the dark side. Shadows make for good cover.

She checks her phone, the time has just past 4pm, but a DIAGRAM on the weather app shows that their section of the Dyson-ring will enter Venus's dark side in just around 45 minutes. Once it does, the shadow of Venus will cover the sun like we've seen before.

BANG! Suddenly, a strange loud commotion echoes through the atrium just outside of the door. It sounded like a GUNSHOT. Celia almost jumps, as Ray and Catherina turns in alert. He puts on his helmet.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - VENERA - DAY

The olive green APARTMENT BUILDING where Ray is at looms in the background. We are on a street just a few blocks away.

Zara and her clan stalks the VMC Enforcers to a street corner. The Enforcers stop, seemingly awaiting orders. Zara signals her clan to hang back.

Mason sees an OFFICER with a VMC branded helmet in a gray suit approaching the Enforcers.

MASON

Boss.

ZARA

I saw. Lila?

LILA

On it.

Lila walks towards the VMC personnel to eavesdrop.

OFFICER

We are approaching the location in the tip.

ENFORCER 1

Yes, sir.

ENFORCER 2

Have we confirmed the source of the tip?

OFFICER

Not yet, it was anonymous. Still, let's expect at least two suspects, armed.

ENFORCER 1

And her highness?

OFFICER

Not among them.

ENFORCER 3

Meaning we have the permission to fire then?

OFFICER

Correct. But we need to pin point where are they keeping the diamond first. Let's get into position and wait for Team 4...

Their conversation continues, but Lila walks back to Zara.

LILA

I heard the D-word.

JOHN

Nice.

ZARA

Looks like our luck has changed,
lads. Don't let your guard down yet-

MASON

-we're just getting started.

ZARA

(nods)

Let's see where they are headed.
The rock must be close.

Zara's clan hangs back in the shadows and waits for the VMC Team to make another move.

Just across the street from them, on a-

ROOFTOP

With the Ox-like helmet, Vig aims down the sight of a RIFLE with a SILENCER on, staring right at the APARTMENT BUILDING. He looks antsy.

The sun begins setting behind Venus, darkness covers the upper part of the Dyson-ring, and is quickly approaching where we are.

Through the sight of his rifle, he sees another VMC TEAM about to enter through the building's entrance. Upon seeing this, he puts his finger on the TRIGGER. And fires.

CUT TO:

INT. SAFEHOUSE (APT 14Y) - VENERA - DAY

BANG! The weird noise was a bullet going through a wall somewhere in the building. It missed Catherina's safehouse by quite a lot.

This warning shot puts Raymond, Catherina, and Celia on high alert. Celia puts on the backpack and gets her pistol ready.

RAYMOND

We better get going.

CATHERINA

Wait.

Catherina plants a small BOMB on the door before going to Trash Can. She presses a button on him, a memory stick ejects.

RAYMOND

This is not the time-

CATHERINA

We can't let them get to the data
in him, can we?

She grabs the memory stick and a small machine gun.

RAYMOND

Fine. Just don't rebuild it on my
ship.

Celia goes to a floor tile in the kitchen and reveals a HIDDEN HATCH. It leads to the apartment one floor down. The trio jumps in and closes the hatch behind them.

CUT TO:

I/E. APARTMENT BUILDING - VENERA - DAY

From the perspective across the atrium, we see rows of balconies, each with columns of doors to different apartments.

On the 14th floor, a team of VMC Enforcers has reached the door to apartment 14Y, where we were just at. They line up on the sides of the door and prepares for assault. A BREACHER walks up to the door.

VMC BREACHER

Whoever is inside 1-4-Y, listen up!
We have authorization to search
your apartment for evidence. Comply
now or we will use force!

Silence.

VMC BREACHER (CONT'D)

Once again, 1-4-Y, open up or-

BANG! The bomb Catherina planted explodes, blowing the door open right in the Breacher's face, almost knocking him off the balcony. The explosion leaves a dense ORANGE SMOKE, engulfing the area.

On the 13th floor, the door to apartment 13Y opens, Ray walks out first, then Celia with the backpack with Catherina taking point behind.

The smoke provides the trio cover, they make a run for the elevator at end of the hallway. Celia is about to press the call button but Ray stops her.

RAYMOND
Don't, they'll have backup in
there. Take the stairs

They turn for the-

STAIRCASE

At the turn of a corner, Raymond runs directly into two VMC OFFICERS. They all pause for a moment out of shock.

One Officer reaches for his gun, but Celia draws her pistol in an instant and shoots both of them dead.

RAYMOND
Thanks.

CELIA
(trembles)
Oh God...

Celia takes a moment to calm herself down.

CATHERINA
Come on, Cel, we gotta move.

They continue running down the stairs.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - VENERA - DAY

The VMC Team Zara has been following runs towards the APARTMENT BUILDING in a hurry. Some GUNSHOTS can be heard in the distance.

JOHN
Boss, let's go!

Zara and her clan runs to follow the VMC Team.

EXT. ROOFTOP - VENERA - DAY

Vig carries his rifle on the back, and starts running towards the same direction too. He free-runs through obstacles on the roof, and jumps seemingly impossible distances from one rooftop to another.

From a bird's eye's view, we can get the sense that EVERYONE is converging on the apartment building.

CUT TO:

I/E. APARTMENT BUILDING - VENERA - DAY

Raymond breaks through a WINDOW on the second floor, right above the PILE OF TRASH.

RAYMOND
Here! Jump!

CELIA
What?

RAYMOND
It'll break your fall, come on!

Celia jumps, Ray then signals Catherina to be the next.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Ladies first.

Catherina looks down at the pile, Celia has made it down safely. She looks back at Ray.

CATHERINA
You sure you'll be fine?

RAYMOND
It's not like that I have a fucking choice, do I? Jump!

Catherina jumps too. Ray takes off his suit jacket and throws it down before jumping too.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Fuck!

He lands on his jacket, but it doesn't help. He still stumbles through the pile.

CATHERINA
Not bad, merc.

RAYMOND
Yeah, and there goes my Dior.

The trio runs into the alley as the sound of more PURSUERS approaches. Leaving Ray's jacket in the pile.