

# The Contract

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## The Contract

The Contract; brought to light by some Fortuna is going to  
is to hunt the illusive 'Ros' a Neuromancer that has been shaking things up  
with the big-wigs. They want her incapacitated. Not only in body but in  
mind. As her occupation suggests, this will be a difficult task.

"We, meaning you both, are going to be receiving a call from Vitus Mur. You know?  
From MercuryBios, you've probably got some of their tech inside you right now." Jane's  
brief, was well, brief. Eva looked impressed though. She must think she's moving up in  
the world. Well, someone's gotta break it to her.

"So we're fucked then?" I was watching eve's reaction out of the corner of my eye. She  
was confused. Must be new to life, perhaps she'd come from one of the nearby planets?  
She surely must know how suicidal it is to move up in the game here.

"Yous, are fucked, royally, yes. Me however, I'm counting all these little lucky stars"  
Smug cow. She's always playing her cards perfectly for herself. The dimly lit room  
lightened as Jane left, she never hung around much. I start to reminisce on all the  
trouble we'd get ourselves into when we were younger. With age she'd matured, kept  
herself to herself. Me, not so much. I however, had found the perfect occupation that'd  
give the licence to snoop. She'd always call me a nosy bastard.

A small beacon arising from the ground hummed as the door shut behind Jane. A  
portable hologram? Haven't seen one of those for a while, Jane's right, this is expensive  
shit. Bougie always leads to trouble. I looked over to Eva "Any Idea what this is about?"

"As much as you I suspect, I'm here for the netrunning gig Jane posted." Netrunner ey?  
She's scrawny enough. Guess I'll be the brawn this round. Anyways, focus on the holo.

A pink tinted figure surfaced from the holopod, he wore a dark metal mask covering the lower portion of his face and a sharp, dare i say suave, fitted suit. Only the upper portion of his body was visible. Though the focus was on his sharp, almost empty eyes. He most certainly commandeered the room as his voice rung throughout.	
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"I've got a meeting in two so I'll make this quick, my details are being uploaded to your  
implants the now. I have a thorn in my side and i need yous to pull it out. The bastard  
goes by Ros, I mean, what kind of name even is that. Besides, find them, kill them, do  
whatever you fucking want with them, just incapacitate them. I don't care how you do it,  
but they're a Neuromancer so you'd better do it fucking fast. We'll discuss payment after  
the job is done. Capisce?"

What in the ever-loving fuck was that. I turned to look at Eva who had a similar  
expression and then back to this goon and back to Eva again. She was the only one out  
of the pair of us who was alert enough to ask...

"Few questions before you run off uhm, what's a Neuromancer, how on earth are we  
meant to know where to start to even find Ros, what is Ros an-" She's asking stupid  
questions, I'm gonna cut her off, yawn, lady.

"What the fuck do you mean we'll discuss payment after, I think abso-fucking-lutely not." See, professional, straight to the point, asking about the important stuff. You'll get there soon young Eva. Why is she looking at me like that. An exasperated huff is mirrored by Mur.

"It's my contract, I'm calling the shots, get your monkey brain under control. Girl, a Neuromancer is a highly trained individual who has both the technology and know-how to infiltrate neural implants, essentially invading the thought process. The only lead the last dogs sniffed out was that they were seen on some satellite or planet. Ask around, I'm not telling you how to do your fucking jobs. As for payment, I'm not paying a corpse, so get it done first."

Well fuck you too then sir. We'll do it ourselves. I slam the holo off, heard enough of his bullshit. Eva turns to a look of shock which quickly morphs to anger.

"He could have told us more! What on Titan are you doing?"

Urr, us a favour youngling. "He was wasting all our times, we'll be fine" We won't be fine, but it was worth it nonetheless. There was two starting points, either we do this the old fashioned way and stir the shitpot.

Cause as much ruckus as possible to get their attention, or we could see if Eva's as good as she says she is, find someone with a connection to Ros and track her. Either or, its a long shot, the former is much more dangerous and probably will attract unwanted attention.

Yet, the latter will push Ros far more into a corner, maybe make them more aggressive, but it will keep our cover of secrecy.

## THE FORMER

### DO WHAT YOU DO BEST

Right then, lets get this show on the road. I turn to face Eva.

"Okay! We're going to my place, its not far from here" Her head snapped almost as fast as before.

"Excuse me?" The fuck does she mean excuse me? Does she think I'm a creep or something?

"The whole place is bugged. Least' i know my place is safe, yours is probably a shithole." Okay, maybe a bit rude, her face reflected such thoughts. Still, she followed as I led us to my quarters. My mind travelled back to the eggs and bacon on the counter. Gonna have to stick that in the microwave later, can you even microwave eggs?

Pushing back past the hordes of people, we made it back to the apartment in around 30 minutes.

She looked around slowly before settling on the small couch where she made herself comfortable. "So...Nice place, but lets get this done with. What are we gonna do? Do you have any ideas?"

"We do things the good ol' fashioned way. We lose the element of surprise, but we

undermine ourselves so Ros thinks we're idiots. I do something stupid and reckless to grab their attention and you track em'." She seemed to look at me confused whilst considering it but her face purveyed reluctant understanding. She slowly nodded.

"I hope for both our sakes this works. What are you gonna do to get her?" An idea popped into my head, one of the local travelling riggers. They were slimy folk, moving between ships and docking planets every chance they got looking for new workers but, they knew people. Right now that's what matters. Luckily for us,

"I'll think of something in the moment I'm sure. Come on, lets go see someone, he might know where Ros could be" Eva got up and followed me to the exit, I send a ping to an old buddy, Duncan. Had done some jobs for him in the past, used him to travel to the nearby satellites.

**'I'm coming your way, bringing a friend. Need your help with a job'**

The walk to Duncan's was ripe with stench of different foods, pulsing neon signs and adverts blaring from every wall. All after one thing, the poor man's hard earned coin. However the people's faces were cheery enough, as cheery as you could be cramped on a mega-city spaceship hurtling around the solar system.

We arrived at Duncan's, the place was in worse shape than I remembered. A small run down shack wedged between a teleshop and what seemed to be the entrance to quarters stacked miles above.

"Eyyy! Cyclops! Good to see ya! Hah hah!"

"Good to see your still alive too, saw a few in suits looking for ya on the way here"

His face drops as he ushers us into the back. Still as paranoid as ever.

"I'm kidding on Duncan, we didn't see anything. Though that does prove you're still up to no good. So, I need your, hmm... Expertise, in finding someone. Names Ro-"

"Nope, no- nada, not enough coins could get me to do that"

Oh well, we're gonna have to change that.

"Well, you wouldn't be doing much really... We just need any info you've heard from them lately..." Eva says as she leans over the counter, exposing her chest modestly. Didn't expect that from her. I'm sure my expression portrays that as she side glances and stifles a laugh.

"Well, if its just that. ONLY that. I don't want anything traced back to me. You were never here." I really didn't expect that! How come no one looks at me like that! Smartass.

We spent around 3 solar days planning before people started gossiping and Duncan's tips made use of themselves.

## **THE LATTER**

### **GIVE EVA A SHOT**

Right then, lets get this show on the road. I turn to face Eva.

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as before.

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Pushing back past the hordes of people, we made it back to the apartment in around 30 minutes.

She looked around slowly before settling on the small couch where she made herself comfortable. "So...Nice place, but lets get this done with. What are we gonna do? Do you have any ideas?" Do I have any ideas? Not really, not gonna let her know that though. She's a Netrunner yes? Perhaps if we find someone with the right hardware, she can have a go at getting a track on Ros.

"You're gonna pull your end of the contract and find this person, then we're gonna go get them, and I'll pull my end yeah?" She seemed to consider this for a moment then nodded slowly.

"I'm gonna need some specialist equipment though, do you know anyone?" Uhh, hmm, maybe, Oh!

"This guy down on 8th street! I did a few 'errands' for him a couple cycles ago. He owes me. We'll go there and you try your damned hardest to get us a catch, eh?"

She nodded and grabbed an apple from the fruit bowl by the chair and headed back through the way we came, with me in tow. The walk to 8th street was ripe with stench of different foods, pulsing neon signs and adverts blaring from every wall. All after one thing, the poor man's hard earned coin. However the people's faces were cheery enough, as cheery as you could be cramped on a mega-city spaceship hurtling around the solar system.

'Augus, coming over with a friend, gonna need to borrow your back room for a bit. No questions asked. Cashing in an IOU.'

We rounded the corner to the noodle shop, I walked straight through to the back. Not before noticing Eva's nose perk up at the smell. Gotta say, Aus' missus did make a cracking hotpot. "You like your food dont'cha" She looked over almost sheepishly

"My pater was an excellent cook. He almost made sure we were spoilt for food, even when there was little to go around, it always tasted amazing." Sounds like a good man. Shame she said was, we need more good men on this ship. I'm not gonna press any further. Her face seems to be slightly twisted with sadness.

I lightly pull her into down the hallway past the seating, not without a smile and nod to the waiters at the bar. Knocking on the door then entering to go down some stairs to a seemingly dingy blue-lit basement. Past the metal grated door revealed a computer scientists wet dream. Vitus would be impressed.

I turn to Eva who looked like she was either about to pass out or dissolve into a puddle.

"You think you can use this?" I say with a small smirk

"I'm so gonna catch Ros' ass." She replies, half in awe and half in excitement.

We spent around 3 solar days before Eva caught any part of a trace, and for the half minute that she did, she was able to pinpoint it to Station Hades. Though she wasn't confident in the location or if she got in undetected. I guess we'll find out.