

Simple. That was what all of this was supposed to be. Mark sat there, black trench coat helping to conceal him in the shadows, waiting for just the right moment to make his move.

"Fence cameras are down, get going!" came a female voice in his headset and he put his legs into motion. The iron fence in his way proved to be little obstacle, the metal beams gave no resistance as he sliced right through them with his laser handcutter. One by one parts of the fence fell to the grass and Mark made his way through the rectangular hole he'd made, careful to mind the red-hot edges that surrounded it. He ducked into a bush and pulled out his binoculars to observe the Avalon Technology Group facility ahead. The multi-story building loomed in the night sky, its black glass windows reflecting the moon above. His eyes wandered downwards as he saw something moving out from behind one corner of the structure. Flicking a switch on his binoculars gave him a clearer view as the night vision function activated. One of the facility's security robots was making its rounds, the six wheels of the miniature tank rolling smoothly along the paved circular walkway that surrounded the building.

"Lawnmowers are still rolling, Julie," Mark said into his headset.

"I'm working on it, just gimme a minute," the voice on the other side replied.

Mark heard the sounds of furious typing and sure enough the armed machine stopped dead in its tracks.

"Outer drones down, cameras down, alarms down. Nothing on the radio, security doesn't know a thing yet."

"Perfect," Mark replied. He made his way out of the bush and darted across the lawn, backpack bouncing behind him, slowing down as he reached the disabled security robot. These drones were top of the line tech, and heavily armed to boot. Just months ago the presence of just one would have prevented Mark or any of his team members from getting this close to one of their targets. Now with Julie on his side, and her connections to their target's computer network, Mark could simply stroll right past them without breaking a sweat. Mission after mission had been a success, each one a blow to the bottom line of the corrupt megacorps that held such tight grips on society.

"What are you waiting for? We only have a few minutes until the guards know what's up. You've got to keep moving!" Julie reminded him.

"Right, right, got it," Mark replied as he ran towards the building's glass front door.

"Look, just because none of us have been caught yet doesn't mean we can let our guard down. Stay focused on the mission."

"What do you mean? I've got you looking after me, how could I fail?" Mark said as he stopped in front of the door and placed a flat rounded object on the glass. With the press of a button it began to hum and the pane started to rattle violently in its frame before shattering

into pieces, shards of glass crashing to the floor. Mark's calm was also shattered seconds later as an alarm began to blare throughout the building.

"Julie! I thought the alarms were down!" Mark shouted into his headset.

Only exasperated sputtering came as a reply before Julie found the words to speak up. "They were!" she cried. "Everything should have been disarmed! Mark, you have to hurry and get out of there, I'll tell Geno to meet you at the extraction point and-"

"No, we're going through with the original plan. I just have to do it a little more quickly than I'd thought," Mark interrupted. "Plant the charges, blow the mainframe, cost Avalon millions in lost research data."

"Mark, I said we have to-"

Julie was cut off again, not by Mark but by the sound of machine gun fire as bullets peppered the wall next to him. He spun around in an instant only to be greeted by the sight of the once-disabled security robot quickly rolling across the lawn towards his position. He turned back around and sprinted into the building as quickly as his legs could carry him, past the lobby and through a maze of hallways and stairwells. He was thankful he'd taken the time to study the building's blueprints ahead of time, as the closing sound of thunderous footsteps indicated he didn't have much of that precious resource to spare.

"Mark, please listen!"

"What is it?" he asked, nearly out of breath as he barrelled past offices and laboratories.

"Look, security is massing around the main server room. You won't be able to make it past all of them, you've gotta get out of there!"

"Julie, the schedule said that their CEO would be doing a review of the facility tonight, right?"

"W-well yeah, why? Mark, you're not going to-"

"Change of plans!" the man said, turning and running for the nearest stairwell. His chest was on fire as his legs pumped furiously up and down and he ascended the stairs to the topmost floor where the executive offices resided. All he had to do was find the CEO, one Tiffany V. Heart, and take her captive long enough for the police to arrive and try to intervene. Mark would show them just what kind of evidence he and his team had gathered against Avalon, then they'd surely be shut down! So what if he'd still be arrested, his captivity would be a small price to pay if it all worked out like he'd hastily planned it.

"Mark, please! Turn around! There's still time!" Julie cried.

Mark didn't respond, he only steeled his resolve. He came upon a small lobby, with a

few chairs along the wall, a set of expensive-looking wooden doors, and a large desk with a very frightened-looking fox woman sitting behind it. She was on the short side, with her long blonde hair done up in a large round bun. She quickly adjusted her glasses and fumbled for something underneath her desk.

"Freeze!" Mark said, reaching into his coat and pulling out a plasma pistol. The vixen hurriedly nodded and put her empty hands in the air. "Good girl."

The man gathered his remaining strength and charged at the door, busting through as the doors swung wide on either side. He found himself in a lavishly-furnished office, his boots digging slightly into the soft carpet that covered the floor. There before him was a desk, an empty leather chair behind it. But if it was empty, where was-

"Have you seen my heliotrope?" a feminine voice called out behind and to Mark's right, interrupting his train of thought. He turned, just in time to see something long, narrow, and metallic fill his vision. He heard a loud crack as the object made contact with his face, sending the room around him spinning as he collapsed to the floor in a heap with something warm trickling from his nose.

The vixen from before ran into the room, looking from the man lying on the floor to the white wolf woman that had put him there with the golf club that was still in her hand. "Excellent form, ma'am!" she said, relief evident in her voice upon seeing her employer safe and sound.

"Mary, please tell the security team that I've already taken the liberty of subduing the intruder, and that they should come and collect him quickly before he gets blood on my new rug," the wolf woman replied, casually inspecting the golf club in her hands. She was tall, and her shapely figure was covered by a black suit with shining golden trim. Her black hair was pinned back in a very large bun and secured in place with a pair of chopsticks. Her oversized black-tipped tail flicked idly back and forth behind her.

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Mark awoke with a gasp, eyes flying open only for him to have to shield them from the bright lights above him that reflected off of the square white walls all around him. He rose to his feet and patted himself down, groaning at the soreness he felt. What he didn't find was any of his equipment. Laser cutter, plasma pistol, even the various small tools that had been hidden in his pockets were all missing from his person. The only addition came in the form of a thick collar secured tightly around his neck with what felt like a metal badge or tag attached to it. He punched himself in the side, cursing himself for being sloppy enough to get himself caught so easily.

"Take it easy in there," a male voice said though a speaker hidden somewhere in the ceiling.

"Who said that? Show yourself, now!"

"You're not in much of a position to make demands, Mark, but very well," came Tiffany's voice. A large rectangular panel of the wall slid downwards, revealing the wolfess herself along with a small host of scientists and technicians of various species busying themselves with control panels and instruments. They were safely separated from their prisoner by an undoubtedly thick pane of crystal clear reinforced glass.

"Here's another one for you, how did you know my name?" Mark asked.

"We've been watching you for quite a while, dear," Tiffany responded. "Your friends as well. Every break-in, each attack on our competitors, and your petty 'triumphs' against 'corporate oppression'. Not like they were earned, of course, we practically handed them over to you on a silver platter as part of our little deception."

"What do you mean?"

"What I mean is that you've been tricked. Fooled. Even, dare I say it, 'bamboozled'," Tiffany answered, chuckling. "It was all a set-up, dear. One of our operatives has been helping you along in your exploits. I think you know her as 'Julie', yes?" the wolfess responded, making Mark's jaw drop. "She's been feeding us information ever since she joined your little band of merry men. Leading you on, directing you to whichever target we'd like you to... devalue. I have to admit you've been most useful to us. Well, at least until you unintentionally decided to bite the hand that fed you." Tiffany turned to her assistant. "Do remind me to congratulate our covert agent in our next communication."

"Yes, ma'am," the vixen said with a nod as she jotted down the reminder.

"Julie is one of you?" Mark asked, part of him refusing to believe even as a cold dread spread through his body.

"How else did you think she was hacking into such secure systems? Indeed, she is one of my employees. And you'll be one soon, too, if everything goes as planned."

"Me? Work for you?" Mark scoffed. "As if. My friends have got enough firepower in our mobile HQ-"

"Your van," Tiffany interrupted.

"-to break me out of here. They'll probably be blowing down the doors any minute, just you wait!"

"Then it pains me, terribly so, to announce that they've already left you behind. Our cameras recorded your 'mobile HQ' leaving the area shortly after we took you into custody. So much for 'friends'," Tiffany added with a frown.

Mark's arms fell limp at his sides, all of the fight knocked out of him by this last revelation. He'd fought and worked alongside his comrades for nearly a year, yet they would

simply abandon him? No, that couldn't be true. Could it?

Tiffany looked down at her watch, frown still tugging at the corner of her muzzle. "I think we've wasted enough time here. Doctor, shall we begin?"

Mark winced as he felt a strange tingling sensation in his neck. His hands rushed up to feel it, exploring the area around the collar as what felt like fur began to sprout up all around it and his Adam's apple smoothed down and vanished. "What the hell are you doing to me?" he asked, his own voice suddenly sounding alien to him.

"Oh, it's really quite simple, actually. That collar and badge you're wearing is one version of our patented nanotech enhancement suites. This one I programmed myself," she added, no small measure of pride in her voice. "Think of it like recycling, dear. It turns unlawful ruffians like you into productive, useful members of society."

"You'll pay for this!" Mark shouted, his voice coming out in strangely husky yet feminine tones. The fur covering his neck grew in thicker, fuller, before spreading up and down. The same electric sensation bloomed throughout his chest as his muscles grew in size and strength. Those muscles would soon be covered up, however, as his chest swelled larger still. His once flat chest sported a pair of small mounds that quickly swelled in size, developing into a more than healthy bust partially covered by fur. Mark's hands moved from his neck to his chest, cupping these heavy new features as beneath his stretched black shirt they were covered over in a thick, fluffy layer of snowy white fur.

"Me? Pay? It's quite the opposite, really. We've already had quite a few clients asking about the technology, and once they see what it can really do then they'll gladly pay whatever we like for it." Tiffany chuckled. "You're going to help me make so much money," the wolfess added, taunting her captive further.

"You're making me a woman?!" Mark asked, too dumbfounded for the barbs to sink in as he stared down at his chest. Something else was entering his vision. He crossed his eyes and watched as his nose widened, darkened and seemed to slide forward, his face painlessly pushing forwards into a pronounced muzzle. His hands finally moved away from his chest and to his face, rubbing his growing snout as it stretched longer and longer and filled in with sharp meat-tearing teeth. Fur covered it over, a mix of light grey and white.

"More than that," Tiffany answered. "Our human security team is obviously lacking in efficiency, so I thought a nice lupine upgrade was in order. Though I could be just a little biased," she continued, a predatory grin spread across her own muzzle.

The changing human pulled his hands away again to rub and scratch at his torso and arms as the familiar feeling spread across them. Fur was growing in all over, itching and tickling what bare skin remained. He had to stop when he started hearing the sounds of ripping cloth. He looked down at his hands and his eyes narrowed, watching as his fingernails slimmed and

grew into sharp claws that had left scratches and tears in his already weakened shirt and trench coat. White fur rapidly covered most of his hands while his palms and fingers swelled into puffy black pads. "You can't do this!" he shouted and balled his transformed hands into tight fists. The muscles in his arms swelled beneath the soft fur that covered them as he ran up to the glass wall and began pounding on it.

"I can," Tiffany calmly reassured him, smugly safe behind the bulletproof barrier separating her from the increasingly agitated prisoner. "Now do calm down, dear. Wouldn't want to scratch the glass, would we? That's company property."

All at once Mark stopped, fists gently propped against the wall before being withdrawn. Company property? She wouldn't want to damage that, Tiffany would take it out of her paycheck and- No. Mark shut his eyes and shook her, no, HIS head and rubbed his temples as a grey haze flowed through his mind.

"Ah, fantastic. The nanomachines are installing your new personality already."

Mark was too busy trying to reconcile the conflicting thoughts that clouded his thoughts to pay any more attention to the wolfess. He was supposed to take down Avalon, why would he worry about some stupid glass? Because it was her duty to make sure that everything in the facility is secure. She is a security guard, after all. Right? She opened her eyes back up, the orbs a brilliant amber colour instead of the brown they were before. Her ears twitched, perked, pointed upwards as they migrated towards the top of her head and grew a layer of thick fur to nearly complete her new lupine visage.

"That's a good girl, now step away from the glass so we can get a good look at you."

Mark complied, against her old self's better judgement, stepping backwards. The movement was awkward, heels lifting upwards as her feet stretched out longer and strained against her boots. She reached down to undo them, only to watch in stunned silence as they grew and shifted along with her feet to better contain her exceptionally large wolfish paws. Her pants also began to retailor themselves to better fit her now digitigrade stance. Plenty of room was made for her hips as well, allowing them to grow and widen considerably as her lower body gained in mass. More than enough strength and endurance for chasing down the swiftest suspects. Her legs were further shown off as her trench coat seemed to flow upwards and the sleeves shrank away, material condensing and reforming into a thick black protective vest with a number of pockets on the front and sides.

"Good, good, now turn around?" Tiffany asked of her, still grinning.

The almost-wolfess nodded and did as she was told, turning on the spot to give Tiffany a better view of her back. Something bulged against the seat of her pants, bigger and bigger until a hole opened up to let a bushy grey and white tail escape. The fluffy appendage, now freed, wagged weakly back and forth as it gained greatly in size and softness until it reached Mark's

calves. Her short hair, once subsumed by fur, made a dramatic comeback as it tumbled down the woman's back in a thick cascade of light blonde tresses that bounced down to her hips before being quickly tied back in a ponytail.

"Alright, Sarah, I think you're just about done. Give me one moment and I'll join you."

The wolfess' ears twitched at the name. To her shuffled mind it was perfectly familiar. She turned back around to face the window but Tiffany was gone, leaving only a group of nervous scientists and her secretary to watch her. A whirring of motors and a rush of air from Sarah's right made her turn, just in time for her to see a section of the cell wall push in and move to the side, creating an opening through which Tiffany entered. Properly face to face, Sarah realized how much larger she'd grown. Tiffany was not a small woman, yet the new wolfess was easily a full head taller. Given her newfound size and strength, she would be more than capable of brushing the CEO off to the side and making a run for it. Yet... No. She couldn't do that. Not to her boss. Her alpha. Especially not after what she'd tried to do earlier.

"Now then, who do you work for?"

"Avalon Technology Group. Security division," she dutifully replied.

"And what about your previous 'associates'?" Tiffany inquired.

"Wanted for involvement in several crimes including burglary, vandalism, destruction of private and public property, and..." She seemed to hesitate, the next words dying in her throat.

"And what, dear?"

"Leaving me behind when I needed them most."

Tiffany shook her head, looking very disappointed. "Such reprehensible behavior. You'll find it a much more enjoyable experience working on the right side of things from now on."

Sarah couldn't help but feel ashamed for having worked alongside her former friends. Her tail sagged and her muzzle drooped when she remembered all of the things she had done in her past life. It was positively criminal.

"Chin up, dear," Tiffany said, reaching out and gently lifting the larger wolf's muzzle back up enough to lock eyes with her. "I'm perfectly willing to overlook your past transgressions," she reassured her.

"Thank you, ma'am," Sarah said. "I can get started right away. When can I start my next shift?"

"No, no, dear. You've had quite the rough night, I insist you get some rest first. If you'll follow me, I'll escort you to the break room myself." With that Tiffany spun to face the doorway. She paused for a moment, then turned her head to glance back at the wolfess behind her. A grin

spread across her muzzle again, though this time it seemed warmer, more genuine. "Welcome to Avalon."