

Night City swallowed them whole the moment they stepped out of the dingy motel in Watson. The triad had been running hot for weeks. Horizon Protocol echoes still hummed in their bones. Tonight they agreed, without much talk, to cut the tether. Separate nights. First time in this sprawl of chrome and bad decisions. Ace nodded once. Mai's silver eyes flashed with that sharp little smile. Shammy's hair shifted like static before a storm. See you at dawn, Shammy said, voice low and even.

Then they split.

Ace hit the streets like she always did, compact frame slicing through the crowd noise and the bass bleed from every doorway. Watson at night was a meat grinder with better lighting. She didn't go looking for trouble. Trouble just smelled the violet fracture in her eyes and came anyway. Two blocks from the motel a Maelstrom crew was shaking down a solo merc outside a ripperdoc clinic. Chrome jaws clicking, optic implants glowing red. The merc, a red-haired woman built like a freight hauler with mismatched cyberarms, was already bleeding from a split lip and still mouthing off. Ace watched for three seconds. Then she moved.

Emerald katanas cleared their sheaths with that sub-audible hum. First ganger lost an arm before he finished his threat. Second one got the flat of a blade across the temple and dropped like wet concrete. The fight was over in nine heartbeats. Ace stood in the middle of the mess, breathing steady, violet eyes catching the neon reflections off spilled coolant. The merc wiped blood from her mouth and laughed, low and rough. Little one. You don't fuck around. Name's Reyes.

They ended up in Reyes's bolt-hole two floors up, a single room that smelled of gun oil and cheap synth-hormones. Reyes kicked the door shut, grabbed Ace by the back of the neck, and kissed her like the world was ending in the next ten minutes. Ace let her. She always let the momentum carry first. Clothes hit the floor in pieces. Reyes's chrome fingers were cold at first, then warmed against Ace's skin as they traced the faint emerald fault lines running under her collarbones. Ace's body was dense, coiled, every muscle answering before thought. She shoved Reyes back onto the unmade bed, climbed on top, and took what she wanted with the same irreversible focus she used in combat.

Reyes's hands mapped her, rough and appreciative, thumbs pressing into the hollows of Ace's hips while Ace rode her thigh, slow at first, then harder. The merc's breath hitched when Ace leaned down and bit the junction of neck and shoulder, hard enough to leave a mark that would show through the chrome later. They flipped. Reyes pinned her, mouth on Ace's breasts, tongue working one nipple while chrome fingers slid between Ace's legs and pressed inside, two at first, then three, curling just right. Ace didn't moan loud. She never did. But her breath stuttered and her thighs clamped down, violet eyes half-lidded as the pressure built sharp and clean. When she came it was a full-body snap, back arching, one hand fisted in Reyes's red hair.

They went again after that, slower, messier. Reyes on her back, Ace between her legs, tongue and fingers working in tandem until the merc was cursing in three languages and shaking. Ace stayed on top the whole second round, hips rolling deliberate, watching Reyes's face the way she watched enemy tells. After, they lay tangled in sweat and coolant residue, sharing a cigarette that tasted like battery acid. Reyes traced the prismatic fracture in Ace's left eye with a thumb. You ever slow down? Ace exhaled smoke. Slow is for people who want to die bored. Dry, flat, true. Reyes laughed until she coughed.

Mai chose Japantown, because of course she did. The district pulsed like a living circuit board, every sign promising pleasure and every shadow hiding a price. She slipped into Dark Matter, the club buried three levels down behind a faux-Tyger Claws façade. Silver hair loose, disruptor pistol discreet under a tailored jacket, she ordered something that burned going down and scanned the room with that effortless precision. The netrunner who caught her eye was all sleek lines and augmented

reflexes, tattoos glowing under blacklight. Name was Kiro. Sharp cheekbones, quicker tongue.

They danced first, bodies close enough that the bass vibrated through both of them. Mai let Kiro lead for exactly one song, then took over, hand sliding down the netrunner's back, fingers hooking into the waistband of leather pants. Kiro's breath caught against Mai's ear. You move like you already know how this ends. Mai smiled against the skin of Kiro's neck. I know how every variable ends. That was all the invitation needed.

They ended up in a private booth that doubled as a short-term love hotel, walls pulsing soft red. Kiro pushed Mai against the mirrored surface, mouth hungry, hands working the jacket off her shoulders. Mai let it happen for three heartbeats, then reversed it, spinning them so Kiro was the one pinned. She undressed the netrunner with clinical efficiency that still felt like foreplay, teeth grazing a glowing tattoo that ran from collarbone to hip. When her fingers found Kiro wet and ready she slid two in without warning, thumb circling the clit in tight, knowing strokes. Kiro's head fell back against the mirror, silver-blue eyes locked on Mai's the whole time. Fuck, you're good at this. Mai's voice stayed even, almost conversational. Practice. She added a third finger, curled them, and watched Kiro come apart with a sharp cry that echoed off the walls.

They switched after that. Kiro on her knees, tongue working Mai open while fingers teased the sensitive skin behind her knees. Mai's hand stayed in Kiro's hair, guiding but not forcing, silver eyes half-closed as the pleasure built in slow, controlled waves. When she came it was quiet, almost thoughtful, a low exhale and a full-body tremor. They kept going until the booth's timer ran out, trading positions twice more, each round sharper and more inventive. Kiro left a bite mark on the inside of Mai's thigh that would bruise beautifully. Mai left a data shard with a single encrypted line of thanks and a warning about the fixer who had been watching them from the bar. Professional courtesy.

Shammy walked into Pacifica like she owned the weather. The district was half-ruined, half-reborn, bonfires and bass and the constant low roar of the ocean. She didn't choose a club. The night chose her. People noticed the tall woman with the electric-blue eyes and the hair that moved even when there was no wind. She ended up on the roof of an abandoned megabuilding, a makeshift gathering of nomads and fixers passing bottles and stories. The air around her settled, pressure dropping just enough that everyone breathed easier, laughed louder.

A Valentinos enforcer caught her eye first, broad-shouldered, warm brown skin, tattoos of roses and saints. Then a second, a woman with chrome eyes and a laugh like breaking glass. They took her down to a half-collapsed penthouse that still had one working bed and a view of the ruined boardwalk. Shammy didn't rush. She let the storm build. The enforcer kissed her like he was praying, hands reverent on the impossible length of her frame. The woman pressed in from behind, teeth on Shammy's shoulder, fingers tracing the faint charge that crackled across her skin.

Shammy equalized them the way she equalized everything, one hand between the enforcer's legs, stroking him slow and firm while the woman's fingers found her own slick heat. The room filled with the low crackle of her presence, air tasting of ozone and salt. They moved together, fluid and inevitable. Shammy on her back first, the enforcer sliding into her while the woman straddled her face. Shammy's tongue worked with calm precision, atmospheric pressure shifting so every moan carried further, every thrust landed deeper. When the enforcer came she felt it like a pressure front breaking, warm and sudden. She kept the woman riding her mouth until the second orgasm rolled through, thighs trembling around Shammy's head.

They rearranged, Shammy standing now, tall frame bent slightly so the woman could take her from behind with a strap while Shammy took the enforcer in her mouth. The rhythm built like weather,

steady then fierce. Shammy's hair lifted, silver-white strands glowing faintly. She came with a low sound that made the broken windows rattle, body arching, atmosphere around them stilling for one perfect second before releasing. They kept going until the bonfires below started to die, bodies slick, laughter mixing with the distant waves. Shammy left them tangled and breathing easy, the room noticeably calmer than when she arrived.

Dawn found them back at the motel, door locked, lights low. They didn't bother with small talk. Ace dropped into the single armchair, katanas across her lap. Mai leaned against the wall, arms crossed, silver hair still perfect. Shammy took the bed, long legs stretched out, electric eyes half-lidded.

Ace spoke first. Watson. Maelstrom tried to jump a merc. I jumped them instead. Ended up in her loft. She's got chrome arms and zero patience. Fucked like the world owed her one. Rode my thigh until she came, then put me on my back and used three fingers like she was trying to rewrite my code. Bit me here. Ace touched the inside of her own thigh. Left a mark. I returned the favor with my mouth. Twice. She exhaled, dry. Tasted like battery acid and victory.

Mai's smile curved. Japantown. Netrunner named Kiro. Good reflexes, better mouth. Pinned me first, then I pinned her. Fucked her with my fingers while she watched herself in the mirror. Made her come loud enough the bouncers probably heard. Then she went down on me like she was trying to map every nerve ending. Left a bite on my thigh that's going to bruise pretty. Mai's voice stayed clinical, but her eyes were bright. Told her I already knew how it ended. She laughed and asked for a rematch next time we're in the sprawl.

Shammy's turn. Pacifica roof party turned private. Two Valentinos. One man, one woman. They took me to a penthouse with a view of the ocean and nothing left to lose. I let the pressure build slow. He fucked me while she rode my face. Then I stood and took her with the strap while he finished in my mouth. The room felt like right before lightning. When I came the windows rattled. They left calmer than they arrived. Shammy's voice stayed even, but the air in the motel room warmed a fraction, like a hand on the back of the neck.

Silence stretched, comfortable. Ace looked at them both, violet eyes steady. Different variables. Same result. We still work.

Mai pushed off the wall, crossed the room, and kissed Ace first, slow and deliberate, tasting the night on her tongue. Then Shammy, deeper, the kiss carrying the faint crackle of charge. Ace joined, compact body fitting between them the way it always did. Clothes came off again, but this time it was the triad, not strangers. Ace on her back in the middle of the bed, Mai straddling her face while Shammy slid down between Ace's legs, tongue and fingers working in perfect sync. The room filled with the sounds they knew by heart: Ace's quiet hitched breaths, Mai's sharp little gasps, Shammy's low stabilizing hum.

They moved through positions like muscle memory and new discovery at once. Mai riding Ace's fingers while Shammy took Ace from behind with slow, deep strokes. Then Shammy on her back, Ace and Mai on either side, mouths and hands everywhere until the tall woman came with a sound that made the lights flicker. Ace finished last, pinned between both of them, violet eyes wide and unguarded as the pressure broke clean and final.

After, they stayed tangled, breathing the same air. Ace's voice, rough but content. Night City's got teeth. Still not sharper than us.

Mai traced the bite on her own thigh, then the fresh marks on Ace's skin. Different nights. Same equilibrium.

Shammy's hair settled, the atmospheric hum fading to a comfortable background. Dawn's coming in clean.

The triad stayed exactly like that until the sun cleared the skyline, bodies warm, stories shared, vectors locked back into perfect balance. Night City could keep its chrome and its chaos. They had each other, and that was the only code that ever held.

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