



COOL RUNNING CELL

8:32: Jorie nodded again as the lawyer prattled on about how successful Strom had been this year. She kept pace just behind him, surreptitiously taking pictures with the modified GameGrrl in her left hand. So far the mission was running according to plan – she had met Mr. Hargrove at precisely 8:00 at the front of the imposing Pioneer building in downtown St. Paul. Her demure handshake, shy glances and her pale green outfit, cut just so, were enough to convince the target that she was no threat. Jorie had Faced her way into the center of Strom Labor’s northern operations.

8:37 and the rest of the Twins were in action. Skiffle surfed down a side street, building on the momentum he’d gotten hitching off an unsuspecting SUV. He bounced and carved his way through the busy loading docks behind the building. The massive trucks and teams of workers fed the building its supplies in barely organized chaos. A hollering twelve-year old in black denim and purple crash gear was quite the distraction. When he yanked an automatic pistol out of a messenger bag, the entire works exploded. Men ran headlong into each other as the gun bucked and roared at them. Skidlifts squealed and dumped loads across the basement-level warehouse. A loader dumped a pallet of copy paper into the half-sized terrorist’s path, but Skiffle used the mass to ollie his way into the air and into the quickly closing freight elevator. “Goelz Hammy, Goelz!”

Hamwise watched the excitement from his laptop, a video window fed off of Skiffle's Trance, chuckling softly as the warehouse crew freaked out over the gun full of gels. He dropped a fat thumb on the orange 'EXECUTE' button of his hand-built Haqbot and the freight elevator rocketed up into the building. His hiding place atop the Northwestern building was secure. No one had thought to look for a slate gray alpine tent on the roof. Checking the feed from Jorie, Hamwise typed back "12" and got ready to electronically gut the people who had stolen more than four thousand jobs from the area.

"You may be too young to truly appreciate what we here at Strom are doing for the common people, Miss Benedict, but given time, I am certain you will see that our purpose is to mediate for our beleaguered corporate interests. Without an economical labor base, there is no way to compete and win against markets in Asia and South America." Hargrove had directed the two of them into his personal observation room, just outside his office. "Look there, and see what American tenacity has built."

Jorie fixed her winning smile, the bovine looking one that X's ate up. "Well, I am amazed at what fine, grand cities St. Paul and Minneapolis are. You'd really think there were streets paved with gold down there," she lied as she saw the muddied waters and industrial smoke over the Mississippi. Through it, she could see how few buildings were full of employees. Street level had knots of folks lined up for day work as office workers, technicians and the like. Tenacity, it seemed, needed very few people to do anything. "I can see where folks would be happy to be inside a place like Strom."

Just as her Gamegrl shook in her hand, Hargrove's office phone chirped. "Excuse me for a moment," he said moving quickly into his office. Jorie had to hold the look of disinterest for a moment or two longer as the lawyer had a hurried and seemingly desperate conversation on the other side of the thick glass doors. *I bet there's a little problem downstairs, she thought, something that requires his direct attention. I hope Skiffle's managed to get everyone's attention.*

Hargrove strode out of his office, his face tight with emotion. "Stay right here, Miss Benedict," he said, "I want you to stay safe until I return." With that, he half-ran toward a private elevator. A few

~~REVOLUTION EVERYONE~~

seconds later, an alarm cycled through the building, along with reassuring messages of "Situation Normal. Security is in effect."

She waited until Hargrove entered and then quickly moved into his office. Pulling a length of cable out of her Gamegrrl, she shoved a connection into the lawyer's expensive looking slab of a laptop. Seeing the screen spring to life, she smiled down at Hamwise's cartoon face, blew him an exaggerated kiss and then set to work on the target's files. Opening the drawers, she dumped a chemical that would ignite the papers the next time they were exposed to fluorescent light.

The Pop worked his programming magic, overriding network protocols and security measures in a few moments. Using Hargrove's authority within Strom Labor, he transferred millions of dollars out of black box accounts and into other desperately starved pensions. The Chicago Cell, the O'Leary's, were ready to kick the pension files direct to cash. There'd be a lot of folks able to take care of their grandkids come tomorrow.

8:48 Skiffle and Jorie were down the fire stairs when Hargrove made it back to the twelfth floor. Confirming reports of one attacker and no casualties, he was desperate to return to his office. The gel rounds that dissolved into skunk spray had only made matters worse. His phone rang its executive alert chime and the girl was gone, there was going to be hell to pay to Mr. Strom.

The Twins did more work before 9:00 am than most Agents do all day.

**Every revolution was first a thought
in one man's mind.**

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Or a woman. hello? It's not just boys
out here. thank you very much.**

- Jorie

C
O
O
L

R
U
N
N
I
N
G

C
E
L
L

