

Chapter 1: Do Over

Becoming an adult was rough.

It was in the following months that Honey the Cat would learn this after today. For the longest time, she longed to be an adult so that way she could strike out on her own. She was emancipated from her parents at a young age, but it was because of this that she couldn't do much until now. But she was finally able to embrace her lifelong dream of becoming a fashion designer—at least, if her cousin would get off her back about becoming a Freedom Fighter.

"Come on, H," Her cousin said. He was often known in his heroic deeds, but Honey wanted no part in it. She hardly ever enjoyed that type of limelight. It escaped her once, and she would be hard pressed to keep it that way.

"I said no, Sonic," She replied. "I've been working at this forever, I can't just ditch it now..."

The blue hedgehog wore a white tanktop, a red jacket, and black pants. He sat down casually in her "office," looking rather calm and collected as he normally was.

"I want none of it," Honey continued. "I have way too much to do. I love you, cousin, but I'll have to pass..."

Despite not having the resources necessary to develop a fashion design business, Honey was determined. She may have been a little too happy-go-lucky and naive, but she knew what she had to do. Unfortunately, she did not know the harsh reality of such a business. She practically needed money coming out of her bosom in order to start out.

"No problem, cuz," Sonic said, standing up. He looked around for a bit. "I like what you've done with the place. It definitely looks..."

"Looks like what?" Honey asked.

"It just looks."

Honey grunted angrily. "So what?"

"Nothing," Sonic said nonchalantly. He was trying to bait Honey, and it seemed to be working at the least. It was a trick he learned long ago, as it had been used against him more than a handful of times. "It just seems like you can't handle it without a functioning office even. And if you can't handle that, then maybe you really aren't fit to become a Freedom Fighter."

"Of course I am! I...I was in a tournament!" Honey declared. "Not to mention I saved your life from Rocket Metal Sonic!"

"I could've handled it...I was just going easy on him."

"If I had a dime for every time you said that, I would've had this funded," Honey mumbled. "But no matter! You can count me in!"

"Good," Sonic replied.

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"All the world's gems belong to me."

That was a personal rule Rouge the Bat set out for herself ever since she had first gotten into the treasure hunting business. And it hardly changed when she finally found herself enlisting in the Guardian Unit of Nations, otherwise known as G.U.N. for short. But of course, even a know-it-all success like herself would happen to have off days, and here is where we find ourselves displaying another ironic literal/metaphoric situation.

The alarm screeched rather loudly, as it was one of those old-fashioned alarms that looked small in size, and were hard to set up. Wearing nothing but her panties, she groaned groggily as she lifted her head up, her fur looking all tossed about. She soon after covered her ears quickly, yelling in that same groggy tone.

"Ughhhh...turn it offfff..." She said. Rouge hated being tricked, but she was no match for the deceptions of drinking. "Shit..."

She slowly moved towards the alarm, but the minute her right hand left the corresponding

ear, the screeching turned into flat out shrieking in her mind. She toppled over onto her side on the ground, and quickly picked herself up, soon after she slammed her fist down onto the alarm, breaking it into pieces. It wailed a bit more before ceasing. On her knees, she yawned and stretched a bit, and stood up.

"You know, you probably shouldn't spend your nights and days off drinking irresponsibly," A voice said from her left side. She jumped, and looked out to her balcony. There, a black and red hedgehog stood, his back to her. He wore something resembling a grey detective's coat with grey pants.

"Shadow, what are you doing here?!" Rouge asked. She felt her headache worsen as she walked towards him.

"Don't come near me unless you have clothes on," Shadow said. "You don't have fur to cover everything up."

She growled angrily, and then went to her closet. A few minutes later, she came out with a pink crop top. "Is this better?"

"...no," Shadow said, looking back at her for a few moments. "But it'll have to do."

"You've never been easy to please, Shad," Rouge chuckled. "But why are you here? You usually never come visit me unless we have a mission..."

"You told me to remind you about something...whatever it is, I don't remember."

"Looks like the old man memory is kicking in," Rouge said teasingly.

"...whatever. But I wouldn't want you to forget whatever it is you're trying to do," Shadow said, and he disappeared in a flash right before her eyes.

"Wh--Shadow!" Rouge called out, but he had already gone. She growled in a frustrating tone. "Sometimes I just fail to understand that hedgehog! I was only kidding..."

But Rouge had forgotten what day it was today, then her wrist communicator blared. She looked down towards it, and soon remembered what she was going to do today.

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Honey would often go to the beach to clear her thoughts, and today was no exception. No her dream of becoming a fashion designer was on hold, and all because she fell for her cousin's tricks. But she would just have to deal with it for now until she was finally able to fund herself.

She wore a red two-piece bikini, and she was laying face down on the sand. Her pitch black hair was littered here and there with sand, and not even her fur could camouflage it.

"So how does it feel?" Someone said behind her. She looked up, and saw Rouge in a black one-piece, a lot similar to her bodysuit except without the chestpiece.

"What are you doing here, Rouge?" Honey asked.

"What, a girl can't hang out with her friend?" Rouge asked back.

Honey worked part time for an establishment known as Team Relic, a treasure hunting group that would collect ancient artifacts for museums. Honey has ran into Rouge on a solo mission, and the two became rivals. But soon after, they pushed that rivalry aside as they helped each other take out a common enemy, and they hit it off in more than one way. However, the relationship didn't exactly work, and the two just remained friends. But that didn't make Rouge any less annoying.

"Knowing you, it'll have something to do with jewels," Honey said.

"Of course not! I just wanted to wish you a happy birthday," Rouge explained. "Also, I heard you're apart of the Freedom Fighters now."

"How did you know that? I doubt you and Sonic even talk..."

"Of course we don't. But the FFs are an independent branch of G.U.N., meaning we have access to their files, as well as have a role in which missions they partake in. Of course, they work by themselves on other things too...and some of us are even drafted on certain occasions to help them."

"Oh," Honey said. She sat up on her bottom, and she looked out towards the sea.

"Who knows, we might be working together soon..." Rouge said, smirking. "But of course, I'm pretty competitive."

"I know that for a fact," Honey replied, chuckling.

"When do you start?" Rouge asked.

"Tomorrow, but it's mostly just initiation stuff," Honey said.

"Well, good luck, kid," Rouge said. "You're going to need it."

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Honey felt sort of relieved that her orientation was pushed back a week or so, but nothing could prepare her for trying to become one of the elite Freedom Fighters. There were many other groups involved with the Freedom Fighters, and yet her cousin wanted her to be involved with the one he was in, led by none other than Princess Sally Alicia Acorn, the heir to the throne of Soleanna.

Before the Gamma Ray Beam hit, Northamer used to be known as a place called the "U.S.A." They never had any kings and queens, and Honey often wondered how different it would be in that world.

"Are we almost there?" Honey asked, walking behind a pink hedgehog. She wore a red dress, and she carried around a red hammer as well.

"Yeah," She replied. "Sonic talks a lot about you. Are you..."

"What?" Honey said.

The pink hedgehog turned around and gave Honey a strange stare. "You aren't a new girlfriend, are you?"

"W-what?" Honey stammered. "Of course not! I'm his cousin! M-my mom was Queen Aleena's sister, although they were half-sisters...but still!"

"...are you a distant cousin? Because that still means that--"

"N-no." Honey was a bit flustered by the question. Why did this girl think that Sonic and herself were going out? And why was she so defensive?

"No problem then," The hedgehog replied. "My name is Amy Rose. You probably think I'm some obsessive girl, but I'm not that interested in him anymore."

"Oh," Honey said. "I thought he was going out with Sally, anyway..."

Amy chuckled nervously, but Honey could tell that she should probably have kept her mouth shut. After a few more minutes, the base came into view, and it was taller than the forest itself.

"Whoa," Honey said in amazement. "You live here?"

"Yeah. People are always in need, so we always need to keep moving. That's what Sally always says, anyway."

"It looks like it would be immobile though. You're telling me it moves?"

"It flies, actually."

Honey felt a bit excited. Maybe this would be an exciting start for her. A fitting one, as well. She began to feel something else now. She didn't feel dread, she felt hope.

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"So you're the new member," Sally said. She looked to be a bit intimidating to Honey, but if there was one thing she wasn't afraid of, it was other people. She wore an azure blue denim vest, a black tanktop, black skintight shorts with white trim, and azure blue knee-high boots to finish it off. She also wore white gloves with blue rings, and they looked similar to the rings Sonic wore, excluding color. "My name's--"

"Princess Sally," Honey interrupted. "Sonic talks about you a lot."

"Oh? What does he say about me?" Sally asked.

"He says you're very...take charge," Honey replied.

"He would be right to say that. But don't worry. If you were able to defeat Rocket Metal Sonic with ease, then you should be a great asset to our team," Sally said. "Nicole?"

Suddenly, a lynx girl appeared out of pixels, seemingly. She wore a purple, white, and black sleeveless dress, along with black pants. "Yes?"

"Take Honey around and give her a tour. We have to get going soon."

"Of course," Nicole responded. "Follow me, Honey."

Honey did as she was told. Everything was amazing her now, and it felt as if nothing could go wrong.

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"Hey, uhh..." Honey struggled to remember the lynx's name.

"It's Nicole. What is it?" Nicole replied.

"Is it okay if I...umm..." Honey tried to find a way of saying what she wanted to say without offending Nicole.

"If you are asking to touch me, it's all right," Nicole said. "Just try not to be frisky. Sonic says that you are quite that way with both males and females."

"What?" Honey asked.

"It was an attempt at humor. Searching through your file in the database, I looked up your sexual preference and tried to transfer it into a light hearted joke," Nicole explained.

"Haha," Honey chuckled. "I guess it was good."

Honey just placed her hand on Nicole's shoulder, and it felt real. Everything from the fur to the clothing.

"Whoa. How is this...?"

"I am made up of little tiny machines called nanites. Over hundreds of thousands of them make up my body as to how I see fit. Or rather, how I was supposed to be made according to my creator."

"That's cool," Honey said. "Maybe you could be a model for me sometime. You look really photogenic."

"Perhaps. But I doubt I would enjoy that line of work," Nicole said. "We should probably return to the conference room now. Sally is waiting for us with our first mission."

"Conference room?" Honey asked.

"Yeah. Being a Freedom Fighter is an integral part to the entire group. Even if you won't be joining us on your first mission, everyone contributes to how we carry out the mission."

"Do you ever accompany them on the missions?"

"No. I stay here and provide intel as well as communications. Someone has to protect the Sky Patrol."

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"5 hours ago, we got a report from G.U.N. of a group of rogue agents causing trouble. Unfortunately, G.U.N. hasn't been able to take them in because they've amassed both the numbers and power to be a threat. Since Rotor and Antoine are both in deep cover right now, Sonic and Amy will take Nicole and do recon and send a report back to G.U.N. Then they will retaliate as necessary," Sally explained. "Me and Bunnie will stay here and show Honey around a bit."

"Recon just isn't my style," Sonic said.

"What, you don't like hanging out with me?" Amy asked.

"I'll back myself into a corner if I answer that one..." Sonic said under his breath. "Don't worry your highness, they don't call me the fastest thing alive for nothing."

"That's not always a good thing," Sally said, smirking. "But I'll be looking forward to what you have."

After a few moments, Sonic and Amy had left with the handheld version of Nicole. In order to pull that off, Nicole had to go back into the main computer.

"Well, ah'll say," The rabbit girl said. "Ah never expected Sonic to go through with bringin' in another member. But he sure has made you look like quite the strong one over the past few months." She wore a pink singlet, but her left arm and both legs had seemingly turned her into a cyborg.

"Yeah," Sally added. "It's still surprising that you were able to take out Rocket Metal while Sonic was down."

"Well, he's the only family I really have. I wouldn't be doing anyone any favors if I let him die," Honey said.

"I thought he told me you had a sister?" Sally asked.

"...not anymore." Honey seemed to grow very serious, and almost depressed.

"I won't nag you about it. We all have a dark past, especially during the Great Civil War," Sally replied.

"That's how ah got my robotics," Bunnie began to explain. "Some crazy doctor kidnapped me, and ah...ah have these now." She lifted up her left hand, and it looked to be entirely robotic.

"Who did that?"

"It was--" Before Bunnie could finish, the alarm on the Sky Patrol began to wail endlessly. Sally stood up and ran to the computer.

"Nicole, what is it?" Sally asked, her voice filled with concern.

"Amy has sent out a distress signal," Nicole replied. "And it seems that Sonic's tracker has gone of the map as well."

"What?" Sally said. "Bunnie, we're going!"

"What about me?" Honey asked.

"You as well. I hope you don't mind saving your cousin another time," Sally said.

"Of course," Honey said. "If there's one thing I can do, it's fight."

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The carrier that Sonic and Amy were on landed without a single sound, setting the tone for just how quiet they were supposed to be. But knowing the two, one thing was for certain--quiet was not on the menu tonight.

"Man, I hate this whole recon thing. Why can't we just go in there, take them all out, and call it a day?" Sonic asked.

"Because, you heard what Sally said," Amy replied.

"I hear Sally say a lot of things. You're going to have to be more specific," Sonic said, smirking.

"Quit being a jerk, you know what I mean," Amy replied. "We have to be careful. She said they have more than enough firepower to take us both out."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," Sonic said. He soon lowered his voice as he saw the encampment that Sally was talking about.

"That looks like the place," Amy whispered, pulling out some binoculars.

"Where did you get those?" Sonic asked.

"That doesn't matter now, we just have to look out for whatever they have," Amy said.

After a few moments, Sonic grew irritable. He hated sitting around doing nothing. If this mission was truly dangerous, he wanted it to feel like it was. But that wasn't on the agenda, and he knew the princess would get mad at him if he didn't do as he was told.

"This is boring," Sonic said. "I'm gonna go run for a bit." He tossed his tracer to the side, and it cracked. However, neither he nor Amy noticed.

"We can't," Amy said. "Someone's going to hear you!"

"Oh I'll be fine," Sonic replied, getting ready to blast off. And with that, he sped away in a blue streak.

Amy growled. "SONIC! YOU'D BETTER--"

"Freeze!" A voice said behind her. She grabbed her hammer, and turned around, prepared to fight, but as she did so, she felt an electric shock behind her back, and she screamed out in pain. She fell down face first, unconscious, and her hammer landed on the ground, making a strange clicking noise as it did so.

"Miss Candy! What should we do with her?" The soldier that approached Amy at first said.

"Take her in. Find the other hedgehog and take him in as well. If you can't do that, then kill him," Candy said. She looked strangely identical to Honey, except she has pink fur instead of yellow, and she also had blonde hair and a sky blue dress identical to Honey's as well.

"But Ma'am, isn't he your--"

"Just do what I say!" Candy yelled. "If the rumors are true...he'll be my key to seeing my sister

again."

* * *

"How did Nicole know that Amy sent a distress signal?" Honey asked as they flew down towards where Amy was last spotted. Bunnie was carrying Sally, and they all had headsets to communicate through the ear-piercing wind.

"Amy musta got into some trouble, and maybe her hammer fell down. That's how we know somethin's up," Bunnie explained.

"But how?" Honey asked again.

"Tails placed buttons onto a piece of everyone's equipment. For instance, Amy's hammer. There's a large button on the side that looks like it would be part of the hammer, but it could actually be used to send for help."

"Yeah. We could outfit you with one of them things if you'd like," Bunnie offered.

"Well, let's focus on saving Amy and Sonic first," Honey said as they landed on the ground.

Sally took off her headset, and so did Bunnie and Honey. "Look around for anything that could give us a clue of what we're dealing with here. And put your headsets back on in case we get separated."

"Will do, Sally-girl," Bunnie said.

Honey couldn't believe that she was already on her first mission. And nonetheless, she was saving her cousin again. As she was thinking to herself, she accidentally tripped and fell face first onto the ground. She felt dazed for a minute, but she picked herself up rather quickly and looked at what she tripped over. There in front of her was Amy's hammer, and it was making a high frequency sound. So high, in fact, that not even she can hear it. Nicole must've used the sound in order to figure out it was a distress signal.

"You alright, Hon?" Bunnie said, walking over to Honey.

"You must have a lot of nicknames for people," Honey replied, straining to pick up the hammer. "How does Amy even hold this thing?"

"Me and you both," Bunnie said. Honey was surprised that she agreed. "Even with my robotics, ah can't lift it up without struggling."

Honey fit her headset back on rather quickly in order to tell Sally what had happened. "Sally, are you there?"

"I'm back at where we departed. I couldn't find anything. What about you two?"

"I tripped over Amy's hammer. But there's no sign of Sonic anywhere," Honey explained.

"So maybe they did capture him after all. But I wonder how--"

Suddenly, in the distance, there was a large explosion, followed by a loud commotion.

"Ah guess that answers your question," Bunnie said.

"Get back here, you two. We need to come up with a plan, and quick."

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Amy slowly opened her eyes, feeling like a truck had hit her. She had never dealt with that much voltage, so it was something else for her, that was for sure. As they opened, she looked at a seemingly familiar face, one that got her angry. It looked as if though Honey had been the one who attacked her. But why? She had to have been dealing with someone else. If there was one thing Amy had learned over the years, it was that just because someone looks similar to someone else doesn't mean they are the same person.

"Who...are you?" Amy asked. She still didn't have complete thought, so her speech was slowed, and it seemed like it was struggle for her to even do so.

"...strange. I half expected you to confuse me for my sister, given your track record," The Honey look-alike said. She was a blond cat with pink fur and a sky blue dress that looked identical to Honey's.

"Oh goodie," Amy said to herself. "My reputation precedes me."

"It's a shame we couldn't catch my cousin, but we'll have to do with you for now."

"Your cousin?"

"The hedgehog you were with! You really are dense, aren't you?" The Honey look-alike said.

"Who are you calling dense?!" Amy yelled.

"You, obviously," The look-alike said insultingly.

Amy tried to stand up, but the other soldiers pushed her onto the ground.

"Ms. Rose, I would implore you to not try anything funny. I wouldn't want to have my soldiers here kill you before I can see my sister once more, so just sit tight," The look-alike commanded.

Amy felt herself become frustrated. She didn't know where she was, or who her captor is. And the similarities between her and Honey were disturbing at worst. "Just who are you?!" Amy exclaimed. As the look-alike was about to leave the room, she looked back at Amy and smirked.

"I'm Candy the Cat," She replied. "And I'm about to get my sister back."