

NUMINA STAGE

video and her assuming control. Saves doing that before the Evergreen meeting.

Everyone!

TYCHE, ULLR, OGHMA and LILITH pull on lab coats, head the short way onto stage and sit waiting.

Lights.

TIW: You have arrived at the office but have no memory of the drive there. You are expecting the team to hate the video, but are determined to use it as you know you are right.

TIW is focused on SOPHIA. VÖR and ERIS appear to chat quietly while watching TIW and the other side. ERIS soothes WHITE who stops grumbling.

WHITE groans at their response, ERIS soothes her again.

TIW: Everything is as it should be, you expected this. Assert your authority and reassure them that this way is best. And Blame Michaela - make it her fault that they've been taken out. You are not to blame.

WHITE stirs again at LILITH'S response. TIW turns to look at her and sees ERIS quietly talking to her.

TIW: (Quickly to SOPHIA) Carry on, stand up to them. You are now on autopilot.

What in the nine hells are you doing? Taking over the cafe, setting up whole new scenes?

ERIS: The plan - your plan - was for me to make her feel important. For me to support the BS that you've got her believing.

REAL WORLD STAGE

LIGHTS up in a simple meeting room, chairs around a table. Whiteboard. SOPHIA stands still at the door for a moment, apparently contemplating her next move.

LILITH and ULLR are in lab coats. They are sat watching the projected screen and we see the end of the video she has made. It focuses on her competence, how she brought order to technical chaos and her ability to lead into the future. They don't notice that she has arrived and are groaning and exclaiming things like 'bullshit'. It ends.

SOPHIA: (From the door) What do you think?

Surprised, they turn around to see Sophia. Lilith stands.

LILITH: I think it might be safe to say that we're all disappointed. (ULLR nods) You don't talk about the science, how it works, who made it. The team that's been working on this for 10 years.

SOPHIA gets increasingly agitated and angry as the scene progresses.

SOPHIA: I just need to be sure that there's nothing wildly wrong. This is being shown to the investors, so we can't be making claims about the tech that aren't true.

ULLR: There's nothing in there that wasn't already cleared for the press releases. But you do make it look easier and faster to scale up and launch than what we've planned for...than we can actually do.

Quietly and overlapping with Numina
SOPHIA: So it's OK? (Silence, shrugs...A moment) I know it's bit

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TIW: Not how we agreed.

ERIS: I don't remember agreeing to anything. You told me what to do. I improvised, she feels important. Look at her, she's all puffed up and making shit up about how important she is.

TIW: She's not making things up - everything she's saying is true.

ERIS: Sure, she half believes it's true. But she (indicates WHITE) does not.

WHITE is slumped, shaking her head slowly, quietly, holding her tummy lightly.

TIW: She'll be fine once we're through this. We'll get the money, everything will settle down into a normal routine and then... she'll be fine. We'll let her out.

ERIS: We'll let her out? Just like that. We'll get the money, park her in a life of endless meetings and networking events, and then she'll be fine?

TIW: Exactly. It's stable, predictable. WHITE whimpers at Sophia's approach, TIW and ERIS look at her.

ERIS: You actually think that would work? Nerds like us? Did you tell her to say that?!

TIW: She needs stability. Not being able to pay people, thinking that the whole thing is going to collapse... it's stressful.

ERIS: That's not what she's stressed about!

TIW: Of course it is!

ERIS: OK, on the surface, yes. Maybe. But that's not why she's stuck there. This stuff (waves at scene on other side) is nothing. Maybe a bit irritating for you and me, but we're not going to deal with this (waves at WHITE) by doing that (points to SOPHIA).

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focused on my role, but on the science side of things, Michaela, as Chair, was very clear that we show how we have focus and discipline and don't burn investor money on side projects. A story about 10 years of research that still isn't finished would put them right off.

ULLR: But we do have side projects in the plans and budgets.

SOPHIA: Yes, but they won't understand why we need them.

LILITH: Not if we don't tell them about them!

SOPHIA: Look, I want to talk about the science too. But Michaela's right on this. One minute into talking about the science and they're asleep. The investors aren't nerds like us. They're just interested in how fast they're going to make money. They don't want us spending anything at all on research, let alone what we're planning. We keep that in the plans, but won't present it.

ULLR: There's no way we'll have the pilot ready in 6 months. We're miles off.

SOPHIA: What I'm saying to them is that if they give us additional money, we'll be able to bring the pilot forwards.

LILITH: We haven't talked about that! You can't... it doesn't work like that!

SOPHIA: They always ask 'how can we make this go faster?'. So that's what I've prepared for. And it will mean more money for the research.

LILITH: Jesus! We don't have time to make changes, do we?

SOPHIA: No, they'll be here soon. (A moment) And if there's nothing...

LILITH: (Interrupting) I still think they should come and meet the