

**(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)**

**A/N: Mirko Time it is!**

**-x-X-x-**

Rumi Usagiyama, known to most people as Mirko the Rabbit Hero, was out looking for trouble. Technically it was dressed up as 'patrolling' but in reality, she knew what she was about. There was a reason that she'd been bouncing back and forth between No. 5 and No. 6 on the Hero Billboard's Top Ten Chart for Japanese Pro Heroes for about a decade now, after all.

And that reason was... that she simply didn't care. Rankings? Bullshit. Popularity contests in their purest form. Hell, the Hero Public Safety Commission didn't even try to hide it. 'General Popularity' was one of the official factors taken into account for each year's updated rankings. Alongside shit like personal strength, how many situations they resolved, and their overall contribution to society.

Someone like Endeavor managed to keep his No. 1 spot despite being not as popular as the up and comers solely because he handled more cases and solved more crimes than any other Pro Hero in all of Japan. But Mirko... she'd never actually been a workaholic like that. No, what she was... was a battle junkie.

Despite her general derision for the Hero Commission, the Hero Billboard, and the overall ranking system, she would be lying if she said she wasn't at least a little proud to be the only Pro Hero in the Top Ten who wasn't affiliated with a Hero Agency even after all these years.

Everyone else thought that making it to the top meant you just had to join a team, that the only way to rise was to rise together. Bullshit. Mirko had never been a fan of that type of crap. Sure, she'd help out when she saw some of her fellow heroes in a pickle, but actually joining a team? No, she preferred to rely

on her own strength rather than that of what might turn out to be fair weather teammates.

Indeed, Mirko had a system that wasn't replicated by anyone else. Her Hero Philosophy was based on fearlessness and independence, traveling across Japan and bravely facing any villain, crisis, or crime that she comes across.

Of course... some days are slower than others. Some days, she doesn't find the fight she so desperately craves. Some days she finds herself getting cats out of trees with nary a villain in sight. Those days are always a little frustrating for the battle junkie of a Pro Hero, and when they do come up, Mirko usually finds herself 'patrolling' well into the night.

Which is how she finds herself coming across a developing situation that looks quite... promising. Hopping across rooftops, she pauses upon seeing what looks like a robbery or a smuggling operation in process. There's no alarms going off and no broken glass or busted down doors, but even still... who the fuck loads trucks from a warehouse this late at night?

Admittedly, the Mirko of ten years ago would have leapt in without a second thought, confident in her first impression of the situation. The Mirko of a decade older though... well, she pauses for a beat to really take in what she's seeing. It's a bunch of big guys all in black, loading crates into black trucks.

The warehouse's garage doors are fully open and the lights are on inside and at first it really does look like there's no sign of foul play. But then, Mirko hops over to the warehouse's roof and looks in through the skylight.

Immediately, she sees something that brings a savage grin to her face. First, there's a pile of knocked out security guards, five in total with zip ties restraining their hands behind their backs, all laid on their bellies over to the side. Second, there's a costumed woman in all black overseeing the loading of the crates, with a large black mask covering the bottom half of her face and glowing red lines coming off of her support equipment.

The equipment and costume are new, but Mirko nevertheless recognizes the villainess as Himiko Toga, one of the only members of the League of Villains to escape capture and go to ground. And that meant... that meant Mirko got to let *loose*.

She almost goes right through the glass of the skylight without worrying about the property damage, but again she's had a bit of time to mature... so instead she carefully opens the skylight up, making sure not to make too much noise or give away her presence.

Of course, once she has the skylight fully open, the Rabbit Hero immediately gives up on any pretense of stealth, hopping from the roof through the opening and down into the warehouse below. One of her extremely powerful legs is aimed right at the top of Toga's head as she plans to take the villainess out right off the bat with overwhelming force.

C-CRACK!

However, just before she lands, something slams into her from the side, spinning Mirko away. The pain is tremendous, but she manages to get her bearings anyways and lands on her feet instead of in a heap. Only for her leg to immediately buckle under her a moment later.

Wide-eyed, Mirko finally registers that she'd been shot, glancing down with a sliver of trepidation and horror at the prospect of finding one of her precious legs mangled and blown to chunks. But... to her surprise, her legs are fully intact. The pain is still considerable so... had she just been shot with a rubber bullet or some other kind of nonlethal round?

"Oh shit, it's Mirko!"

"Fuck me!"

"Where'd she even come from?!"

The men loading crates into truck react predictably to her presence... with fear and shock. Meanwhile, Toga doesn't look at all surprised or afraid, even though Mirko had just about been ready to drive the villainess into the concrete with all her might. Instead, the little psychopath coos.

“Oooh! Mirko the Rabbit Hero! This is going to be *fun!*”

Before anything else can happen, a voice rings out through the warehouse, loud and clear and no-nonsense.

“Keep working. Toga and I will handle the Rabbit Hero.”

Despite Mirko's intimidating presence, the men seem more afraid of the owner of that voice than her. They all quickly get back to work, shooting her glances as they do so. Meanwhile, Mirko is tempted not to take that disrespect lying down... after all, to have a bunch of fucking goons be told to 'keep working' right in front of her, like she isn't a threat... it's fucking insulting to say the least.

But instead of immediately leaping back into the fray, Mirko uses the short lull to get her bearings and figure out just who she's up against. Unfortunately, while her hearing is excellent, her eyes aren't enhanced in any way so she struggles to peer through the darkness of the warehouse to find the owner of that domineering voice.

What she sees... is the glint of a rifle barrel just as her instincts scream at her to dodge. With every fiber of her being, Mirko throws herself to the side just as another shot cracks out through the air, punching the concrete behind her instead of taking her in the gut.

In that instant, Mirko knows exactly who she's dealing with. How can she not when the Hero Commission had demanded she and the other Top Ten Pro Heros attend a shitty briefing on the subject a few weeks back?

The only successful breakout in Tartarus' history... a guy in a trenchcoat and a mask causes a riot in the prison, all to jump in and grab one single woman from her cell. Lady Nagant, a Hero Killer.

Heh, between Nagant and Toga, Mirko might actually have a fucking fight on her hand! At least, that's what she tells herself while ignoring the fact that technically she should already be bleeding out on the floor from a destroyed leg and the only reason she wasn't was Nagant for some reason using nonlethal rounds.

Indeed, while she can practically feel the heavy bruise on her leg forming in real time and has no doubt that it goes all the way to the bone... that's the extent of her injury so far. Strange, but Mirko isn't about to let it distract her from the fight at hand, especially with Toga lunging forward with a cackle, very real and very sharp knives held in her hands.

Nagant might be nonlethal for whatever reason, but Toga definitely wasn't. Mirko quickly finds herself fighting for her life against the vampiric villainess, dodging back and lashing out where she can. Generally, she holds her own... but it's frustrating because Mirko knows it shouldn't be like that.

Toga is faster than she was before. Stronger too. Whether it's the support equipment or something else, it doesn't matter... because even with the enhancements, Mirko is confident she would be able to beat the villainess in a one on one fight. The problem, of course, is that this is not a one on one fight.

Lady Nagant continues to provide covering fire from her spot in the warehouse rafters unabated. Mirko is able to anticipate and dodge most of the rubber bullets, but by the third one that lands on her, making her jerk back and almost costing her throat as Toga tries to slash it open with a knife, she's thoroughly done with the interference.

Thinking fast, she lets out a growl and stomps the ground HARD. This has multiple effects. First, the shockwave sends Toga stumbling back, giving her some breathing room. Second, she kicks at the warehouse floor in just the right spot to cause a nice big slab of it to break off and stick straight up, deflecting the next shot from Nagant.

And finally... well, she's given up on keeping the property damage down anyways, so fuck it. Time to go all out.

“E...NOUGH!”

With a massive kick, she sends the slab of concrete she'd dislodged sailing through the air directly at Nagant's little sniper nest. It doesn't whistle so much as it roars through the air, zipping up there far faster than such a large, unwieldy piece of cement has any right to.

Mirko's rabbit ears catch a muffled curse from Nagant as the other woman is forced to jump free of the rafters to dodge the huge chunk of concrete, which in turn goes right through her previous position and tears its way out of the warehouse to boot, landing somewhere outside.

A savage grin alights upon Mirko's face as she sees Nagant fall... because even if the other woman had leapt, she'd been forced to do so and there was nowhere safe for her to land. Unlike Mirko, she didn't have the legs to make the landing unscathed either so-

Just as she's expecting to see the damned sniper go splat however... a swirl of purple smoke appears under her and a pair of arms reaches up to safely catch her.

Mirko gawks as the man the Hero Commission had identified as Shroud catches Nagant easily in his arms, holding the Hero Killer aloft in a bridal carry. She's lucky that Toga is just as caught up in the moment, because otherwise her distraction probably would have cost her life.

“Aww, so cute!”

Instead, the villainess is so busy cooing over Shroud and Nagant that she does nothing to capitalize on Mirko's gobsmacked reaction. Mirko, in turn, quickly collects herself and bristles, setting her stance as Shroud puts Nagant down on her own two feet and turns to face them.

This situation just got a whole lot tougher on her. She'd already been struggling against Toga and Nagant combined, but if Shroud joined the fray...

**“You two, get with the convoy and make sure nobody stops them from reaching their destination. I’ll handle the Rabbit Hero and meet you back at base.”**

... What? Mirko blinks as Shroud... sends away his firepower, just like that. Toga pouts while Nagant frowns, but before either of them can even object, Shroud just lifts a gloved hand.

**“Go. Now.”**

And that’s that. Mirko narrows her eyes as the two depart. Her large rabbit ears twitch atop her head as she realizes she hears a lot less idling engines outside than she did mere minutes ago. They really are leaving... fuck, they’re getting away.

“Oh no you don’t!”

Ignoring Shroud entirely, Mirko bounds for the warehouse’s garage door, fully intending to stop as much of the ‘convoy’ as she possibly can. Only, just before she can do so...

**BANG!**

The sound of a real bullet hitting concrete stops her in her tracks. Not because it’s anywhere near her or anything like that... but rather because it’s not anywhere near her. Whipping back around, Mirko stares at Shroud... and the five unconscious security guards on their bellies. Then, she stares from the smoking end of his handgun to the bullet hole next to one of their heads.

“Tilting his head to the side, Shroud moves the muzzle of his handgun so that its pointed unerringly at one of the security guards.

**“You could chase after the convoy if you wanted to. But then who is going to stop me from executing these eyewitnesses so they can’t report on me and my people?”**

Oh... oh this *bastard*. Fine, he wanted to be that way? The idiot had left himself completely alone. So if he wanted to stop her from going after his people... Mirko would just beat him silly and cut the head off the snake right here and right now!

Muscles flexing, hands curling into fists, she grins savagely.

“I’m going to enjoy kicking your ass, fucker!”

Then, she launches herself forward without a second thought.

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**A/N: Remember to Vote, leave a Like, and let me know what you think!**