

TYPE: THREE

Written By:

Christian Maxwell

cmaxwell1347@gmail.com
(347) 819-3591

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

Light years from Earth, across the vast expanse of space.

A binary star system; two luminous spheres - a massive yellow sun, and its red companion star.

A large blue-green world orbits them.

SUPERIMPOSE: LUYTEN

12.2 Light Years From Earth
Right ascension 07h 27, 24.4991s
Declination +05° 13 32.827

An advanced starship, designed for stealth, decelerates into orbit:

The ship's hull is conspicuously unmarked. No signs of origin or affiliation - by design. It slides over us until we reach:

The belly of the ship. Hangar doors open, revealing another smaller ship: an armored personnel carrier tethered to the mothership.

The docking clamps release, and the personnel carrier detaches from the larger ship and descends...

EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE - DAY

The darkness of space is replaced by brilliant white light and a thick layer of clouds as the personnel carrier, its hull glowing red, plummets toward the surface.

INT. CABIN - PERSONNEL CARRIER - DAY

It's small, cramped and filled with a RETRIEVAL TEAM of a dozen SOLDIERS in unmarked body armor -- all carrying large automatic weapons. Various overlapping conversations taking place. Two of SOLDIERS, #3 and #4, discuss:

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #4
What is this place again?

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #3
(shaking her head)
You never read the brief. It's a
listening outpost.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #3 (CONT'D)

(beat - as something
occurs to her)

You ever wonder why we've got all
these outposts beaming messages out
into space, but we never hear
anything back?

SOLDIER #4's look of complete disinterest suggests he hasn't;
undeterred, she presses on:

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #3 (CONT'D)

'The Dark Forest Theory'. Says
there's plenty of alien life out
there, but the aliens stay hidden,
because they don't want some other,
more advanced civilization to learn
about them, say 'Hey we'd like all
their resources', then invade.

(beat)

Or maybe they decide 'Hey you don't
get be in the galactic community',
then just destroy them.

SOLDIER #4 stifles a yawn:

SOLDIER #4

Fascinating.

Next to them, trying to tune them out, is CHIKAKO 'CHIKA'
SHIMIZU: Japanese-American, 30s, formidable, athletic,
coursing with nervous energy.

To calm her nerves, she reaches into a pocket and produces a
well-worn omamori: a tiny purple prayer book, golden kanji
characters on the cover, encased in a plastic sleeve.

She grips it tightly, then casts a concerned glance at the
mission leader at the front of the cabin:

NELSON WEEKS African-American, late 30s, radiating a calm,
quiet confidence and a cerebral quality that sets him apart
from the RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIERS.

NELSON presses a pad on a nearby console, revealing
schematics for a trio of pre-fab buildings.

NELSON

(to the TEAM)

We need to access the cloud server
on-site. If we encounter
resistance, you're authorized to
engage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The team barks in response.

SOLDIERS
(in unison)
Sir, yes sir!

NELSON smiles, holds up his hands in protest.

NELSON
We've been over this guys. I'm a
civilian. You don't have to call me
'sir'. Weeks or Nelson is fine.

PILOT
(over speaker)
Weeks. You might wanna take a look
at this.

NELSON turns and enters the:

INT. COCKPIT - PERSONNEL CARRIER - DAY

Just as cramped, filled with advanced navigation equipment.
Beneath the forward windows, the air is a swirling mass of
smoke and ash.

PILOT
(off his panels)
Something seriously fucked up is
happening on the surface, I'm
getting massive radiation spikes,
electromagnetic surges.

NELSON studies the panels:

NELSON
Looks bad, but I've landed in
worse.
(beat)
Stay on this heading and continue
your descent.

He pats the PILOT on the shoulder reassuringly, before
heading back into:

INT. CABIN - PERSONNEL CARRIER - CONTINUOUS

The RETRIEVAL TEAM is tense, quiet. NELSON struggles to get
comfortable and control his pre-mission jitters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

We're getting some radiation readings from the surface.

CHIKA

What's happening down there?

There's clearly a familiarity between the two of them, that they don't share with the rest of the TEAM.

NELSON

We're about to find out. Suit up.

The RETRIEVAL team start removing unmarked blue E.V.A. suits from a nearby rack.

EXT. CITY RUINS - DAY

Buffeted by high winds -- flakes of what could be mistaken for snow, but is actually ash -- fall through swirling clouds of smoke.

Through the smoke we can see the jagged skyline of destroyed buildings. Destruction on a massive scale. Think Berlin, Dresden at the end of WWII.

EXT. GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - DAY

Just outside the blast zone. A collection of three pre-fab buildings, each marked with red with white lettering and the Geo Energy logo. The complex is one of the few remaining structures still intact.

The personnel carrier slows its descent over the trio of buildings, the air filled with the WHINE of powerful turbine engines.

The ship touches down, causing a small eruption of dirt and ash, as the landing gear sinks into the ground.

The hatch door opens with a HISS. Now wearing protective EVA suits, the RETRIEVAL TEAM disembarks. Each member of the team immediately moves into position:

Two TEAM MEMBERS move into position to guard their flanks.

CHIKA, carrying a large metal case, sets it on the ground, and opens it revealing: a pair of drones.

She keys a pad on her sleeve, and the drones rise into the air.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the drones hover in formation, CHIKA taps a small glowing bio-interface, just behind her ear, showing us her:

POV: A digital display. Data flashes on the periphery of her vision. Two small picture-in-picture screens, display the drones p.o.v., as well as her own.

CHIKA

I've got eyes on the perimeter.

NELSON scans the buildings themselves, finally locating the main entrance. He keys his helmet.

NELSON

(into com-link)

On me.

With NELSON in the lead, the entire RETRIEVAL TEAM continues to move toward the entrance of the main building:

INT. SERVER FARM - GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - DAY

Deep underground. Built to withstand a nuclear blast. Dark, lit only by the blinking lights on dozens of rows of server racks; the twinkling is like an underground star field.

NELSON, CHIKA and RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #4 enter the server farm. NELSON scans the racks, finally stopping in front of one midway down the row.

NELSON produces a pad. Enters a sequence, syncing it to the rack. He types several lines of code that bypass the security. Past their firewalls, he enters a command to download a file.

NELSON

(off his pad - surprised)

Body-cam footage?

EXT. GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - DAY

A pair of Geo Energy armored helijets BUZZ over the site like menacing red dragonflies. They set down just outside the complex and disgorge a squad of heavily armed GEO ENERGY SOLDIERS, in blood red armor.

The GEO ENERGY SOLDIERS form a V-shaped wedge and advance on the complex...

Their arrival is observed by the drones, automatically sending the feed to:

INT. SERVER FARM - GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

POV-CHIKA: She sees the livestream. A group of GEO ENERGY SOLDIERS about to enter the building.

CHIKA
We've got incoming.
(beat)
Six hostiles.

NELSON continues to monitor the upload. Her tone becomes more urgent:

CHIKA (CONT'D)
Unless we want to spend the next
six months in a black site, we need
to move.

NELSON'S pad CHIMES that the upload's complete.

NELSON
Done.

The trio hustles out of the server farm to find themselves...

INT. FIRST CORRIDOR - GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - DAY

... already under fire. NELSON, CHIKA and the RETRIEVAL TEAM quickly take cover behind stacks of computer equipment.

The GEO ENERGY SQUAD is slowly advancing on their position, showering them with automatic weapons fire.

Debris and fire rain down on them. CHIKA and the TEAM raise their weapons and return FIRE, trading volleys with the advancing GEO ENERGY SQUAD.

NELSON produces his pad, studies the complex's layout. He taps her shoulder, directs her attention to the pad:

NELSON
There's another way out of here. We
reach this security corridor, we
can seal off our egress.

CHIKA nods.

CHIKA
Got it.

NELSON
I'm going to buy you some time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sees her concern, acknowledges it.

NELSON (CONT'D)
I'll be fine. Go.

She wants to argue, but doesn't. She simply nods then motions for the other to follow her...

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

CHIKA leads the team down a corridor. Behind them, NELSON is actually advancing on the GEO ENERGY SQUAD, gun raised, laying down a SUPRESSING FIRE, forcing them to take cover.

The GEO ENERGY SQUAD emerges from cover, and returns fire, forcing NELSON to take cover behind a door frame, before retreating down a...

INT. THIRD CORRIDOR - GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

...where a pall of black smoke is already rolling down the corridor. WEAPON FIRE ECHOES around them as NELSON and the RETRIEVAL TEAM return FIRE, almost blindly moving forward through the smoke.

A member of the TEAM, RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #3, wounded, stumbles through the smoke. NELSON catches her as she starts to fall, then sets her gently on the ground.

She coughs up a mouthful of blood, that SPLATTERS against the polymer visor of her helmet - before she dies.

Suddenly, an explosive shell SLAMS into the wall just above NELSON. He scrambles to avoid the falling debris then rises to his feet, weapon ready, as a series of SHELLS SHOOT past.

NELSON
Keep moving!

The RETRIEVAL TEAM keeps moving forward, careful not to stumble over the bodies of fallen comrades as they advance, and turn the corner into...

INT. FOURTH CORRIDOR - GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

They cross the threshold of a sleek, high-tech security door:

Once CHIKA'S safely across, NELSON calmly walks over to the door control - punches in a sequence - and the door slides down between them with a heavy THUNK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIKA stares at NELSON through the small observation window in the door - as the GEO ENERGY SQUAD advance toward him.

CHIKA
(through the window)
What are you doing?!

NELSON
Wait for me. I'm right behind you.

A moment passes between them. The concern written all over her features; but the moment is interrupted by the sound of GUNFIRE.

NELSON turns and returns FIRE. As the GEO ENERGY SOLDIERS take cover, he takes a corridor off to his left.

EXT. GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - DAY

Once they've reached a safe distance, CHIKA trains her weapons on the twin helijets -- peppering them with fire. They explode in twin balls of flame.

Having successfully stranded the GEO ENERGY SQUAD on the surface, CHIKA leads what's left of the RETRIEVAL TEAM the short distance back to the...

INT. CABIN - PERSONNEL CARRIER - CONTINUOUS

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #4 does a quick headcount. Most of their team is gone. He notices the mission leader is missing.

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #4
Weeks?

CHIKA
Covering our egress.
(more wishful thinking
than certainty)
He'll be here.

INT. FIFTH CORRIDOR - DAY

Despite the cumbersome EVA suit, NELSON races toward another exit. He can hear the THUNDEROUS FOOTSTEPS of the GEO ENERGY SQUAD just around the corner behind him.

He stops, turns and raises his weapon. As they appear at the end of the corridor, he's already FIRING:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A fusillade of shells tear through the GEO ENERGY SQUAD, ripping through the SOLDIER on point, unleashing ribbons of blood. A second BURST of bullets kills the SOLDIERS just behind him.

INT. CABIN PERSONNEL CARRIER - DAY

Temporarily safe, but not completely out of danger, RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #4 turns to CHIKA.

RETRIEVAL TEAM SOLDIER #4
Hate to be 'that guy', but we need
to get out of here before they send
another strike team.

CHIKA
(firm)
We wait.

PILOT
(from cockpit)
I'm ready for dust-off. Just...

CHIKA
We wait.

Her expression cowers him into silence. A long beat. There's a loud KNOCK on the hatch. Adrenalin pumping, the RETRIEVAL TEAM train their weapons on the hatch.

It opens with a HISS, to reveal: NELSON.

Relief washes over CHIKA. NELSON offers an easy smile:

NELSON
What are you waiting for? Let's get
out of here.

EXT. GEO ENERGY COMPLEX - DAY

The hatch of the personnel carrier closes, the vertical jets fire -- and the ship lifts off into a cloud of swirling dirt, smoke and ash.

The surviving members of the GEO ENERGY SQUAD emerge and fire in vain at the escaping craft.

INT. CABIN - PERSONNEL CARRIER - DAY

NELSON settles in at a console, away from the other members of the team. He syncs his pad to the console, transfers the datafile. The 'Play' icon is visible on the monitor.

NELSON'S finger hovers over the button. CHIKA already knows what he's contemplating, can sense his reluctance.

CHIKA

You read the mission brief. We're not supposed to open that.

She looks back, over her shoulder, to make certain they aren't being observed or overheard.

NELSON

Someone set off a nuke down there.
(tapping the console for emphasis)
We lost most of the team for this footage. Aren't you curious about what's on it?

CHIKA

You know what they say about curiosity, especially in our line of work.

She can see he's determined to watch it. He starts to press the 'Play' icon, but stops at the last second. He's still wavering.

She makes the decision for him. She presses the 'Play' icon. With that, they both turn to the console.

Their faces bathed in the blue glow of the monitors, they can hardly believe what's unfolding on the screens front of them.

NELSON

Is that what I think it is?

EXT. BOSTON - NIGHT

Skyscrapers, universities housed in massive pyramids. The lights from flying vehicles dance over the skyline, like fireflies on a summer night.

SUPERIMPOSE: BOSTON, MASSACHUSSETTS
42.3601° N, 71.0589° W

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (V.O.)
As soon as we're back...

EXT. STREET - NEW COMBAT ZONE - NIGHT

An automated taxi comes to a stop. The door opens, NELSON, gets out.

NELSON (V.O.)
...we find a way to send this to
O.S.P...

The street's lined with holographic billboards floating mid-air, advertising sex in a variety of languages, and window displays, bathed in lurid red and purple lights, where scantily clad SEX WORKERS display their 'wares'.

NELSON (V.O.)
...then we disappear...

He turns off the main street and down an:

EXT. ALLEY - NEW COMBAT ZONE - CONTINUOUS

A couple of MEN loiter, leaning against the wall. As NELSON approaches, they look up, regard him, then smile conspiratorially.

NELSON (V.O.)
...before they realize, that we
know.

He walks past them, toward an entrance marked by a holographic lotus. NELSON opens the door to reveal:

INT. BAR - NEW COMBAT ZONE - CONTINUOUS

Appropriately seedy. Mostly empty. One person at the bar: A MAN, late 40s, gruff, nursing a drink - this is NELSON'S CONTACT.

NELSON sidles up to his CONTACT. They exchange the briefest of glances; the CONTACT produces two small transparent chips, sets them down on the bar.

CONTACT
These were not easy to get ahold
of. Consider my debt paid...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON
...in full.

The CONTACT slides the chips down the bar to NELSON.

CONTACT
Two new identities. I booked you on
an E.I. flight, out of Logan, to
Meridian. From there, you can
charter something out of the
system.

EXT. STREET - COMBAT ZONE - NIGHT

The streets are alive with the sound of holographic
commercials and conversation.

NELSON moves through a crowd of PEDESTRIANS. He looks around,
scanning the environment, satisfied he isn't being followed,
he taps his EarPod.

INT. BEDROOM - CHIKA & NELSON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CHIKA'S packing a bag for herself, and one for NELSON. Her
EarPod CHIMES. She stops to answer it.

CHIKA
Did you get them?

EXT. STREET - COMBAT ZONE - NIGHT

NELSON stops at a large automated food truck, checking every
reflective surface - to survey the area around him - before
answering:

NELSON
Everything's set.

EXT. TERMINAL - LOGAN SPACEPORT - NIGHT

Orbital shuttles lift off into the night sky. On the ground,
a caravan of automated vehicles disgorge passengers at the
entrance.

INT. TERMINAL - LOGAN SPACEPORT - NIGHT

NELSON and CHIKA, anti-grav suitcases floating behind them as they approach the E.I. gate area. They discreetly scan the terminal around them.

NELSON glances at the bathroom.

NELSON
Meet you at the gate.

There's a moment of hesitation, then CHIKA nods.

INT. BATHROOM - LOGAN SPACEPORT - NIGHT

Empty. Lit by bright fluorescents. NELSON moves to a urinal, the luggage floats nearby. As he does he hears the CLUNK of door locks sliding into place.

He runs to the door, tries to pull it open. They're locked tight. He looks around, urgently searching for a means of escape, when he hears a HISS.

He looks down to find a thick cloud of yellow gas billowing from the vents.

The yellow gas fills the room. NELSON covers his nostrils and mouth, but feels himself losing consciousness; with his last bit of strength, he pounds on the door:

NELSON
Chika! Chika!

The gas takes effect, and everything goes black.

INT. TERMINAL - LOGAN SPACEPORT - NIGHT

CHIKA'S bags float, abandoned, at the E.I. departure gate.

There's no sign of her - just her still-blinking EarPod, lying on the ground.

INT. INFIRMARY - RIM - DAY

NELSON lies motionless on a bed in a white hospital gown, tubes running from his arms to an I.V. stand, and electrodes blue-toothed to a series of monitoring devices.

His brown skin is dry and ashy; cheeks sunken, lips gray, and the lower half of his face is covered with a thin beard. If

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

not for the electrodes, you could easily assume he was dead or near to it.

His eyes slowly open. His vision is blurred. He begins to focus just as:

The monitoring devices sound, accompanied by the infirmary door sliding open with a HISS. DR. CARMEN DIAZ, early 30s, professional, warm, great bedside manner, enters.

DIAZ

Well, good morning sunshine. How are you feeling? A little hung over I bet.

NELSON rubs his head, looks around uncertainly.

NELSON

Feel... pretty... lousy... Where am I?

DIAZ

That's typical. Nothing to worry about.

NELSON

Typical of what? Doc, where the hell am I?

DIAZ starts to respond, but thinks better of it. NELSON tries to sit up and get his bearings - but the effort clearly takes a lot out of him. DR. DIAZ eases him back down into the bed.

DIAZ

(gently dodging the question)

You better take it easy.

She checks her monitor pad for heart, brain and cellular activity.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Heart and brainwave activity are all returning to normal. The side effects, the weakness and disorientation from the stasis should wear off in a day.

NELSON

Stasis? Where am I?

EXT. GLIESE PRIME - DAY

The planet covered by a swirling mass of gray and blue storm clouds - a vast star field visible behind it.

SUPERIMPOSE: GLIESE PRIME

18.6 Light Years From Earth
Right ascension 15h 19m 26.8269s
Declination -07° 43 20.189s

EXT. BASE - GLIESE PRIME - DAY

A remote outpost on a frozen landscape. A collection of pre-fab buildings: infirmary, mess hall, command center, living quarters arranged in a circular formation - and ringed by three landing pads; yet the base seems tiny and fragile set against the buffeting winds and harsh alien tundra.

INT. INFIRMARY - GLIESE PRIME - DAY

NELSON, now rested, shaved, and dressed in form-fitting survival gear - and despite his situation, once again radiates confidence and power.

He stares out the window, surveying the Arctic-like landscape beyond: frozen, barren, devoid of vegetation.

VOICE (O.S.)

Excuse me, Mr. Weeks?

CPL. ALEX SCHIFF, thin, mid-30s, fatigues, but with shaggy hair, more hipster than soldier. He's socially awkward, struggles to introduce himself:

SCHIFF

Corporal Schiff...

He hesitantly offers his hand. NELSON takes it, and despite the circumstances is amused by SCHIFF'S awkwardness.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)

...I'm doing your in-take.

NELSON still calm, but there's agitation bubbling just beneath the surface.

NELSON

Corporal. I've been alone in this ward, I don't where I am or how I got here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His frustration now visible:

NELSON (CONT'D)
...and the good doctor refuses to
tell me anything. Do you guys get
some kind of bonus for not
answering direct questions?

Not quite picking up on NELSON'S sarcasm:

SCHIFF
I wish.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

NELSON and SCHIFF make their way down a dark corridor lit
only by fluorescent running lights in the floor and reflected
pale blue light from the planet.

Small video cameras are mounted at intervals overhead, pan
slowly from side to side.

SCHIFF stops in front of a large double door.

SCHIFF
How can I put this... Major
Homan... takes some getting used
to. He'll give you the answers
you're looking for, but you're not
going to like them.

SCHIFF presses the pad next to the door to reveal:

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

A military office, that doubles as a surveillance center:
flanking walls covered with a series of screens, displaying
sections of base and the harsh alien landscape beyond.

MAJOR CHAD HOMAN stands facing the screens, with his back to
the door. As he hears the door open with a HISS, he repeats
an Einstein quote:

HOMAN
"I think the most important
question facing humanity is, 'Is the
universe a friendly place?'
(beat)
This is the first and most basic
question all people must answer for
themselves."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns, revealing: He's in his early 30s, tall, slim, and despite his age has a receding hairline forming a widow's peak, with a smug, punchable face.

HOMAN (CONT'D)

Do you know why I'm the commanding officer here, why I've been given this post?

(without waiting for an answer)

Because I can see the universe clearly, I see it for what it is. I can answer Einstein's question, and the answer is: "No".

HOMAN and NELSON exchange a long stare, each silently sizing up the other.

NELSON

Where the hell I am? How did I get here?

HOMAN

This is 'Rim'. Armed Forces base on Gliese Prime, approximately eighteen light years from Earth.

NELSON

(trying to remain calm)

I'm not in the Armed Forces. I work for the Office of Special Plans, or at least I used to.

HOMAN

Mister Weeks, when you joined O.S.P. you signed an employee contract, did you not?

NELSON nods slightly, almost imperceptibly. HOMAN presses a pad on his desk, placing a document on one of the wall monitors:

HOMAN (CONT'D)

In that contract, section forty-five, subsection one, paragraph nine, it states that even after resigning from active duty, O.S.P. retains the right to recall former employees and loan them to other agencies or the armed forces should the need arise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

For an instant NELSON thinks it must be a joke; his lips twist into the barest hint of a smile:

NELSON
Bullshit.

HOMAN
It's all right there in black and white.

As he reads the document on-screen, HOMAN can see NELSON growing angrier, but fighting to remain calm - so he remains polite, but firm.

HOMAN (CONT'D)
It seems you've been recalled to active duty and loaned to us.
(a beat)
For the time being you're going to be stationed here. Abide by the rules here, honor the terms of your contract and I'll do everything in my power to make your stay as pleasant as possible.

Reading the contract, NELSON realizes HOMAN is right. HOMAN smiles. It's a politician's smile, easy and completely without meaning.

NELSON
(Defiant)
I left O.S.P., I don't care what...
(re: the screen)
...that says. You don't control me and you can't keep me here against my will.

HOMAN
(trying to maintain a cordial tone)
According to section forty-five, subsection one, paragraph nine, I do control you.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

NELSON moves down the corridor briskly, no real destination, just trying to blow off steam. SCHIFF catches up to him.

NELSON
(muttering to himself)
We'll see about that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF interrupts him, then subtly directs NELSON'S attention to the cameras mounted on the ceiling:

SCHIFF
(quiet - short of breath)
Hey, uh, you may want to cool it
with that.

NELSON gets his hint.

NELSON
What is this place?

SCHIFF
Long range base, listening station
for the Wolf, Lacaille, and
Teegarden systems.

NELSON
They aren't inhabited, and they're
pretty stable. Can't be much too
much to monitor.

Awkwardly, under his breath:

SCHIFF
One of the many reasons this is
such a shitty posting.

They stop at an elevator. The door slides open.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

SCHIFF presses a button, and the car slowly rises to the second level.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - DAY

They pass a complement of MARINES: MORALES, BEYER, and SOTO. A tight-knit group, weapons slung, moving down the hall in the opposite direction. In passing we hear:

SOTO
(to the other MARINES)
...we're gonna have to throw you a
going away party then... I got some
Blue Label I've been saving for a
special occasion...

As they disappear around a corner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF
Okay, we're coming up...

INT. JUNCTION - LEVEL TWO - DAY

They pass through a junction connecting four corridors.
Marginally better lit than the main corridors.

SCHIFF
...to the...

SCHIFF takes the corridor to his right, and NELSON follows.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)
...next stop on the tour.

SCHIFF expertly punches a code into the keyboard next to the door, which slides open with a loud HISS.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - CONTINUOUS

The base's nerve center - a split-level room designed like a air-traffic control tower. Floor to ceiling data banks. Quiet. The few PERSONNEL there absentmindedly checking monitors.

SCHIFF
This is the command center. We've got a skeletal crew here in command, a few scientists, and a few Marines.

They move toward one of the SOLDIERS: GARY RAGSDALE, 20s, buzz cut, a little on the heavy side, debauched and generally unctuous.

The monitors at his station display: videos of two women in a soft-core porn video.

RAGSDALE
Another 'newbie'? Second one this week.

SCHIFF
This is Ragsdale, comms.
(seeing the screen)
Come on, man, really?

RAGSDALE
Yeah, this one with your Mom is my favorite.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF is about to respond when they're interrupted by a WOMAN'S voice with a Southern accent (o.s.):

FEMALE VOICE

What do you expect, he went to Duke.

The voice belongs to another SOLDIER positioned at a console nearby: LINDSAY 20s young, trim, her blond hair cut military short, very self-assured, sits behind the main control station, watching the main monitor.

SCHIFF

...and this is Lindsay, who pretty much keeps this place running.
(looking around)
Where's the Lieutenant?

As LT. THOMAS ABBOTT enters: mid-40s, a light beard, stocky, genial and avuncular; holding a half-eaten sandwich. SCHIFF and LINDSAY snap to attention.

ABBOTT

(swallows his food)
At ease.

SCHIFF and LINDSAY relax.

ABBOTT (CONT'D)

Homan and Edlow are the only ones around here that care about protocol. I try and keep things relaxed, long as everybody's doing their jobs.

He slaps SCHIFF good-naturedly on the shoulder - then goes back to his sandwich.

SCHIFF

Lieutenant, this is the new addition to the team, Nelson Weeks.

ABBOTT stops chewing long enough to ask:

ABBOTT

I take it the corporal has already given you the run-down.

NELSON

You're a monitoring station with nothing to monitor.

ABBOTT, amused, looks him over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBOTT

You're not military, wait, let me guess, they got you on a 'Section Forty-Five'.

Before he can even answer, ABBOTT chuckles and goes back to his sandwich. SCHIFF turns to LINSDAY.

SCHIFF

Where was I? Lins, this is the new addition to the team...

LINSDAY

I heard, sugar. You were only five feet away.

NELSON notices an ease between SCHIFF and LINSDAY. He smiles.

NELSON

Good to meet you.

LINSDAY

Help you orient yourself...

LINSDAY punches a sequence on her touch screen console, and it instantly creates a 3-D map of a section of the Milky Way:

A computer-generated stellar map, highlighting the seven systems with human colonies or outposts. Overlaid, a dotted yellow line marks a path from Earth to the Gliese system.

LINSDAY (CONT'D)

...this is where we're at, long way from Chapel Hill...

She punches another button, and the star map dissolves into a high-res map of Gliese Prime.

LINSDAY (CONT'D)

...nitrogen, methane, ammonia atmosphere and an average surface temperature of minus twenty Celsius, Gliese Prime isn't the 'least' hospitable planet I've ever heard of... but it's close.

ABBOTT can't help but overhear. He puts down his sandwich, stifles a chuckle before adding:

ABBOTT

Welcome to the ass end of the known universe; the good news is, the chow ain't half bad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDSAY punches another sequence on a console, and the hologram of the star system is replaced by a schematic of the base.

LINDSAY
We're here in the center of the
hub.

NELSON notices a lone structure about 20 miles away.

NELSON
What's that?

SCHIFF
Antenna array. A four person team
maintains it. Thanks, Lins.

They move past LINDSAY and pass: DAVID HUANG, 30s, heavy-set, balding, dark circles under his eyes from not enough rack time - at a nearby console.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)
This is Dave.

He only GRUNTS by way of response. Their eyes follow him to his station, which surprisingly is decorated with pictures of tropical beaches; hedges against the barren landscape and the claustrophobia of the station.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)
Dave, great talking to you, as
always, I could chit chat with you
all day, but we've got places to
be.

HUANG grunts again in acknowledgement. They move to the far side of the room, to another large door and into:

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Back down on level one. Another dimly lit corridor, almost identical to the previous ones.

NELSON
Can... Ragsdale... send a message
for me? I need to contact someone,
let her know where I am.

Receiving an incoming message, SCHIFF holds up a finger. He touches his EarPod communication device. Then turns to NELSON.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF

Doc says you need to eat. Let's get some food in you, then I'll show you to your quarters.

INT. NELSON'S QUARTERS - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Cramped. Half the size of a Manhattan studio apartment. There's room for a bunk, small half-fridge, laptop station and not much else.

The door opens. SCHIFF and NELSON step inside.

NELSON

Your Lieutenant was right about the chow... hey, I wanted to ask...

SCHIFF motions for silence. He reaches into a pocket on his sleeve and produces a small hand-held device - which he uses to scan the room.

As SCHIFF moves the device toward NELSON'S bed. It makes a repeated BEEPING noise. SCHIFF shakes his head.

SCHIFF

I'll let you get settled in.

SCHIFF types something onto his hand-held, then holds it up so NELSON can see the display: Storage facility. Two hours.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - NIGHT

The sky is leaden with thick gray storm clouds. On the surface, the air is filled with the sound of HOWLING winds, as a furious snowstorm creates a thick white curtain reducing visibility to near zero.

Through the walls of white, the exterior of the base is barely visible.

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - LEVEL ONE - NIGHT

A maze of anti-grav titanium-alloy military and technical equipment crates. The stacked crates, float four meters high, lit only by flickering fluorescent lights.

In each corner of the room is a surveillance camera, but large sections of the room fall into complete shadow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF is already there, standing in one of the few pools of light when NELSON arrives.

NELSON

Why here?

SCHIFF

One of the only blind spots...

(looking around)

...cameras, key stroke logging,
everything around here is filmed,
recorded, logged, documented and
examined...this is one of the only
safe places to talk.

You can almost hear the wheels in NELSON'S head turning,
analyzing the data, before formulating a hypothesis.

NELSON

Remote location, heavy
surveillance, this place isn't a
'monitoring station'...

(beat)

It's a black site. Who'd you piss
off to end up here?

SCHIFF is about to answer, then thinks better of it. He
pauses before continuing:

SCHIFF

How do I know you're not a 'plant'?

A real conundrum. A tense moment passes as they both stand
quietly, considering their options, before NELSON speaks:

NELSON

How about this, I'll tell you why
I'm here, then you can decide for
yourself whether I'm trustworthy.

SCHIFF fidgets as he considers, before finally nodding:

NELSON (CONT'D)

Geo Energy lost contact with their
operation on Luyten. Officially it
was an 'industrial accident'.
O.S.P. suspected otherwise, so they
sent me and a team to retrieve some
footage of the accident, hoping
it'd give us some answers.

SCHIFF

What was on the footage?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

We were under strict orders not to
watch the it, but we were
curious...

BEGIN BODY-CAM FOOTAGE:

INT. COCKPIT - HELIJET - DAWN

The BODY-CAM is pointed straight ahead at Luyten's, pre-nuclear detonation, lush green flora; a forbidding landscape that possessed a strange, primordial beauty.

NELSON (V.O.)

...as soon as we realized what we
were looking at, we knew why they'd
do anything to keep us quiet.

The BODY-CAM turns away from the horizon, toward the Helijet's passenger: DR. JOSEPH MILLER, scientist, early 30's, prematurely balding, still rubbing the sleep from his eyes and from his irritable demeanor - he's not exactly a morning person:

DR. MILLER

You dragged me out here before I
could even grab some coffee.

The pilot, and body-cam wearer, HOPE STEPHENS, unlike MILLER, she can barely contain her excitement:

STEPHENS (O.S.)

Your caffeine fix can wait. Trust
me.

DR. MILLER

Coffee is non-negotiable, and I
have to file a report, has to be
time stamped by oh-nine hundred or
I'll hear about it in my next
performance review.

EXT. RAINFOREST - LUYTEN - DAWN

Pre-nuclear winter. Primeval. Lush. Beneath the tree line and suddenly it's very dark. The tree-top canopy is so dense that it prevents almost any light from reaching the surface.

The air is thick with a heavy fog. Dark brackish water covers the surface, interrupted by an occasional stretch of dry land and the gnarled roots of towering, majestic trees that reach skyward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLER and STEPHENS walk through the rain forest, the helijet visible in the b.g.

STEPHENS (O.S.)
I'm up for a promotion next
quarter, make sure you put in a
good word for me with my boss.

MILLER all but ignores the request and instead replies with:

DR. MILLER
Yeah, yeah, my top priority. You
still haven't told me what we're
doing out here, or what 'it' is.

STEPHENS moves farther into the fog, DR. MILLER reluctantly keeping pace; despite the minimal visibility they make their way through the vegetation, struggling through the heavy, wet underbrush.

STEPHENS parts a thicket of tall grass, revealing:

A work site literally carved out of the rainforest: a collection of pre-fab buildings, bulldozers, and drilling equipment all bearing the 'Geo Energy' name and logo.

As they walk through the empty site, STEPHENS notices: Dining tables, plates with half-eaten dinners on them, steam rising from hot cups of coffee - but not a soul in sight.

STEPHENS (O.S.)
Where is everybody?

They move between the bulldozers, finally reaching a:

EXT. CRASH SITE - DAWN

A series of floodlights ring the clearing, to illuminate the darkened rainforest floor.

As they reach the perimeter, DR. MILLER sees what the floodlights are focused on: In the center of a large clearing is a large craft, rising fifty feet out of mist covered forest floor.

The wreckage of a gold-colored ship. A Rover. It's half buried in the ground.

The rainforest is well on the way to claiming the ship. Although partially covered by vegetation and moss, large chunks of golden colored metal erupt menacingly from the mist enshrouded ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Despite the passage of time, its lost none of its power to terrify. It is atavistic -- striking an almost primal fear in DR. MILLER. He opens his mouth to speak, but is stunned silent.

Once the initial terror subsides, he regains the ability to form words and can only utter:

DR. MILLER
My God.

MILLER'S lizard brain fear is eventually over-taken by his scientific curiosity and he takes a couple cautious steps towards it.

DR. MILLER (CONT'D)
This is... incredible.
(taps an EarPod)
This is Miller. Send my team to these coordinates... now... and by now I mean right fucking now. Full mobile lab: carbon dating, the works.

As they move closer to the craft, the line goes dead.

DR. MILLER (CONT'D)
Hello? Hello? Damn things. Comms are down.

He clicks off the comm device. STEPHENS looks around the empty site, filled with a growing unease.

DR. MILLER (CONT'D)
Let's have a look while we wait.

Part of the fuselage has been blasted or rotted away. They step into the:

INT. FUSELAGE - ROVER - DAWN

The ceiling is open to the sky, letting the mist seep into the front section of the craft. It's still very dark and foggy. STEPHENS produces two flashlights, and hands one to DR. MILLER.

They make their way through the fuselage toward the rear of the craft, as their beams crisscross the interior, they marvel at what remains of the strange alien design.

They keep moving, clearing hanging vines as they go, moving through an opening in the wall, into the:

INT. REPAIR STATION - ROVER - CONTINUOUS

It is even more claustrophobic here. STEPHENS scans the walls. There are no chairs. Only banks of equipment, clearly not designed for a human crew.

STEPHENS (O.S.)
We should wait. I'd feel better if
there was someone close by, just in
case...

DR. MILLER
Relax. My team will be here in
twenty minutes.

The 'repair station' ends in an iris door, made out of the same metal, and one the few areas of the entire ship still completely intact.

There is the SCREECHING of metal grinding metal, as the iris slowly starts to open..

STEPHENS tenses.

DR. MILLER (CONT'D)
Relax. We must've tripped a sensor.

DR. MILLER and STEPHENS don't notice that the NOISES from the animals in the rainforest, the birds in the trees, have stopped. In an instant, it is eerily quiet.

The iris door finally slides completely open, filling the repair station with a blast of icy air.

Once the cloud clears, MILLER steps across the threshold of the iris, followed reluctantly by STEPHENS and into:

INT. REFRIGERATION UNIT - ROVER - CONTINUOUS

The interior resembles a meat-locker; ignoring the sudden drop in temperature, they're focused on the metal sarcophagus -- standing in the middle of the room.

From somewhere deep inside the ship, sounds of more machinery coming to life:

There is a WHIR of servos - as the sarcophagus slowly turns around, revealing a seam closed with an elaborate lock.

A beat. There is a bizarre, ominous, discordant HUMMING, coming from inside the sarcophagus itself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHENS (O.S.)

Doc...

The HUMMING grows LOUDER still. They back away, mere feet from the iris door.

The lock on the sarcophagus turns. The doors slowly slide open.

There's a BURST of brilliant ORANGE LIGHT. Everything sears to orange:

END BODY-CAM FOOTAGE.

SCHIFF has leaned in, listening to NELSON with rapt attention and in partial disbelief.

NELSON

Geo Energy found a non-human technology on Luyten. And I knew about it, which bought me a one-way ticket to Gliese Prime.

SCHIFF pauses for a moment, then a strange expression crosses his face.

SCHIFF

That's the second time this week I've heard a story like that... someone at the array you should talk to.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - SHUTTLE DOCK - NIGHT

SCHIFF and NELSON turn a corner, and move down a corridor that ends in a large red sign: SHUTTLE DOCK

A heavy double door opens with a HISS. They cross the threshold.

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - NIGHT

NELSON slides into the pilot seat, which surprises SCHIFF.

SCHIFF

Make yourself at home... I guess.

NELSON

I trained in one of these, like riding a bike. Plot a course for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF settles into the co-pilot seat and punches a course into the navigational computer.

EXT. GLIESE PRIME - NIGHT

A fierce storm rages; fierce winds create curtains of ice and snow that dance across the surface.

The Eastern Sun flies into a huge storm cloud, disappearing into the swirling white mass of snow and ice...

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - LEVEL ONE - NIGHT

As HOMAN tracks the ship on his monitor, silently watching it vanish in a cloud of white.

EXT. SURFACE - NIGHT

The shuttle hovers above a landing pad next to the array. The landing gear extends and the shuttle touches down.

A segmented tunnel extends from the array, and secures itself to the shuttle's airlock.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - ANTENNA ARRAY - NIGHT

Smaller than the command center in the main hub. The walls are lined with a series of monitors, all of which are being ignored by the two TECHNICIANS on duty:

DR. ALBERT GADDIS JR., a pencil thin, clean-cut prodigy, in his early 20s. PATRICK "SULLY" SULLIVAN, enlisted man. Blue collar, scraggly beard and tattoos, early 30s.

Their attention is focused on their weekly Texas Hold 'Em game or at least SULLY'S is - GADDIS is trying to interest him in astrophysics:

GADDIS
...it's called a Kardashev scale.
Invented by this Russian
astrophysicist, mid-twentieth
century.

SULLY doesn't respond, still fixated on his cards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GADDIS (CONT'D)

A Type One civilization, uses the resources on its own planet to survive. A Type Two is like ours, can travel off world, use the resources from an entire solar system...

Nothing. GADDIS continues, undeterred by SULLY'S complete lack of interest:

GADDIS (CONT'D)

And what is a Type Three you ask?

SULLY

I didn't.

GADDIS

A civilization that operates at a galactic level. Imagine that.

SULLY

What's that got to do you with this hand? Junior...you got nothing, a pair of sevens at best.

This forces GADDIS to pay attention to the game. He looks at his cards:

GADDIS

How many times do I have to tell you, don't call me Junior.

He considers bluffing, then throws down his cards in disgust. SULLY gleefully collects the pot of chips, looks at GADDIS' device:

SULLY

If you actually paid attention you might win a hand every once in awhile.

They each look up as NELSON and SCHIFF enter.

SCHIFF

Hey, folks. New arrival, Nelson Weeks.

He points to the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF (CONT'D)
This is Dr. Gaddis, Systems, and
that's Sully, Engineering. Where is
she?

INT. GYM - NIGHT

An exercise room, with weight-lifting equipment, and a boxing ring. SGT. EDLOW, 40s, crew-cut, fit and muscular -- bitter that he's still not an officer. He spars with a FEMALE BOXER, 30s, lean and wiry. Her back is to them, so they can't see her face.

EDLOW
(a bit garbled - through
mouthpiece)
Don't hold back cause I'm not going
to.

She doesn't answer, instead we see from her:

POV: A digital readout, mapping stress points on EDLOW'S body.

The FEMALE BOXER steps up her intensity, EDLOW only barely wards off her blows. Just before a certain T.K.O.:

EDLOW (CONT'D)
(to FEMALE BOXER)
Let's take five.
(to SCHIFF)
I didn't see a flight plan from
you.

SCHIFF
(apologetic)
Sort of an impromptu trip sir.

SCHIFF lowers his head, he knows what's coming next, it's a familiar argument.

EDLOW
You know the regs. Every flight has
to be scheduled.

SCHIFF nods in acknowledgment, insincerely apologetic:

SCHIFF
I know, I know, sorry, sir, won't
happen again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDLOW
Corporal, your disregard for
procedure is simply unacceptable.

SCHIFF ignores the reprimand and points to the FEMALE BOXER:

SCHIFF
This is the other 'new recruit'.
Came out of stasis just before you
did. This is...

The FEMALE BOXER in the corner - turns around - we instantly
recognize her: CHIKA SHIMIZU. Sweat pours down features
twisted into a scowl.

CHIKA
Mister Weeks.

SCHIFF
Oh you two know each other?

Before NELSON can answer, EDLOW climbs out of the ring and
heads for the door, and shoots a dirty look at SCHIFF while
muttering:

EDLOW
Thanks to you the log's screwed up.
Sick of cleaning up your messes.

CHIKA climbs out of the ring, and directs them to a couple
chairs at ringside. She glares at NELSON.

SCHIFF
I thought we should compare notes.

She towels off, then takes a long sip of water.

NELSON
Safe to talk here?

SCHIFF
I deactivated the listening devices
on the way here, just to be safe.
I'll tell Homan they
malfunctioned...

NELSON nods.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)
Lins and I came across a classified
file... 'bout an industrial
accident on Luyten.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

...so the only two survivors of the
op... and some analysts...

(looking at SCHIFF)

...that stumbled across some
related intel were...

SCHIFF offers an awkward pun:

SCHIFF

...put on ice.

CHIKA

All of us being here at the same
time, is definitely not a
coincidence. At least not a good
one.

INT. CHIKA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The size of a sleeper car on a train. NELSON and CHIKA enter.
She immediately goes to the small mini-fridge, and produces a
bottle of vodka, and two glasses.

CHIKA

Drink, Mister Weeks?

NELSON

Yes, thank you, Missus Weeks.

Despite the tension coming off of CHIKA in waves, there's
still a profound intimacy between them:

CHIKA

I thought I'd lost you.

She tries to hit him. Once. Twice. He blocks both blows, and
firmly but gently holds her by the wrists.

He smiles, hoping to diffuse the tension:

NELSON

You think I'd let O.S.P. keep me
from you?

She struggles until the anger subsides. She relaxes, and he
pulls her in close.

CHIKA

Don't ever do that again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

I won't.

He releases her, she paces the small space, to exhaust her residual anxiety.

CHIKA

You want a drink? I need a drink.

She hands him a glass with a healthy pour. He takes a long drink.

NELSON

Are you trying to get me drunk?

CHIKA

Yes, then I'm going to have my way with you.

He sets the glass down next to the bed, then she moves forward and slips her arms around his waist. He places his hands tenderly on either side of her face. She leans forward, and they kiss.

They kiss tenderly, which soon gives way to hunger. He holds back for just a second, then let's go.

She undresses him frantically, lifting his t-shirt over his outstretched arms, then unsnapping his pants.

He begins to remove her workout gear, her t-shirt...sports bra...she helps him, hurrying him...her panties. Soon, they're both naked.

They kiss passionately falling back onto the bed.

INT. CHIKA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

They're in bed, sharing what's left of the vodka, listening to the WIND howl outside the window.

They embrace one another, they've dropped their guard - yet each of them is lost in their own thoughts. Finally CHIKA breaks out of her reverie.

CHIKA

You just had to go to the bathroom, didn't you?

She slaps him playfully.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

It's a long flight to Meridian.

Then she kisses him, her tone serious:

CHIKA

When I woke up here, I thought I was never going to see you again.

NELSON

We're still alive, and we're still together. We got lucky.

INT. ALL TERRAIN VEHICLE - NIGHT

CHIKA guides the vehicle across the snowy, craggy, windswept terrain, NELSON in the passenger seat.

NELSON

You were right, about all of us being here. It's definitely not a coincidence.

(beat)

I don't know what they're planning but I suggest we don't stick around long enough to find out.

CHIKA

What'd you have in mind?

NELSON

Proxima City. Fourteen light years away, thirty million people. Easy to get lost. Start over.

(beat)

Maybe start a family.

She smiles at the suggestion.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Anything that can get us off-world?

CHIKA

It's in dry-dock on Lalande. There's a supply ship that comes by once a month.

NELSON

Are they due anytime soon?

CHIKA

Schiff would know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

You know the personnel here.
Anyone else we can trust?

CHIKA

Need to convince Schiff and Lins,
if we can get them on board, Huang,
Diaz and Sully will follow their
lead. Ragsdale's a piece of shit,
but he could be convinced.

(a beat while she
considers)

Edlow? Gaddis? We read them in only
if we have to.

NELSON

Good. The fewer people we have to
convince the better, because I
don't think we have much time.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

RAGSDALE'S tired, at the end of a long shift, dreamily
scrolling through pictures of naked models, when a console to
his right PINGS. It takes him a moment to respond.

He studies the screen: INCOMING TRANSMISSION. FR: GEN. KEN
WOLF. CENCOM. TO: HOMAN - EYES ONLY.

RAGSDALE

(taps an EarPod)

Commander. Incoming transmission.
Cencom. Eyes only.

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

HOMAN stares at the screens. Something is weighing heavily on
his mind. A beat before he responds to RAGSDALE.

HOMAN

(over EarPod)

Send it through.

He looks down at this screen: The first screen requires a
passcode.

HOMAN taps a code into a keypad.

The screen reads: URBAN PACIFICATION TEST. THREAT LEVEL
ORANGE. 03:00. ROUTE LIVE FEED TO CENCOM.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN presses another sequence on the panel, his expression registers a confirmation of his worst fears.

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - LEVEL ONE - NIGHT

Dark and cold. Breath visible in the air. DR. DIAZ, RAGSDALE, HUANG, NELSON, CHIKA, LINDSAY, and SCHIFF stand huddled together - outside of the range of the surveillance cameras.

A very irritated RAGSDALE rubs his hands together for warmth.

RAGSDALE
It's freezing in here.

DIAZ
(to SCHIFF)
What's going on?

NELSON
I asked him to get everybody together. You don't know me, and you've got no reason to trust me, but we've got a common problem.

RAGSDALE
Besides freezing our asses off for no reason?

NELSON
I was in O.S.P. with Chika. They shipped us, Schiff and Lindsay out here...to keep us quiet...
(beat)
...permanently.

RAGSDALE
Sorry to hear that man, but that sounds like a 'You' problem.

CHIKA
Whatever they use to silence us, will probably end up killing the rest of you as well.

A beat as RAGSDALE, HUANG and DIAZ grapple with this. SCHIFF then buttresses the argument:

SCHIFF
Everybody on this base disobeyed an order and got shipped out here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDSAY
I saw classified documents.

Hearing LINDSAY confess, prompts DIAZ to open up as well:

DIAZ
I refused an order to sterilize
asylum seekers.

RAGSDALE reluctantly offers:

RAGSDALE
I was under investigation for a
violation of the espionage act.
Woman I was seeing was an enemy
agent.

LINDSAY
That I can believe.

By way of explanation:

RAGSDALE
I didn't know, but it didn't
matter.

HUANG doesn't speak, but lowers his head, which is in itself
a kind of confession.

NELSON
So to Cencom, O.S.P, we're all
expendable.
(a beat)
I underestimated O.S.P. before, I'm
not going to do it again. You
shouldn't either.
(a beat)
What I'm proposing is getting off-
world before whatever they're
planning actually happens.

DIAZ
What'd you have in mind?

NELSON
(to SCHIFF)
Isn't there a supply ship that
comes out here?

SCHIFF
The Demeter. They're due...
(consults his pad)
...tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAGSDALE
(incredulous)
You want to hijack a freighter?

NELSON
(ignoring him - to SCHIFF)
What's the crew?

SCHIFF
Three.

NELSON
Armed?

SCHIFF
The pilot and copilot will be
carrying standard sidearms. That's
it.

RAGSDALE
So even if we somehow manage to
pull this off, where are we going?
I mean we'll be A.W.O.L., they'll
come after us. We get caught,
that's a fucking court martial.

NELSON
I'd rather take my chances out
there than sitting here waiting to
get killed.
(to RAGSDALE)
So? You staying here to see what
they've got planned?

All eyes turn toward RAGSDALE. He reluctantly shakes his head
'No'.

NELSON (CONT'D)
(to DIAZ)
Doc?

Normally cordial, DIAZ is now bitterly amused:

DIAZ
When you put it like that...what
choice do we have?

INT. MESS HALL - LEVEL ONE - NIGHT

An impromptu going away party, handmade decorations, half-
eaten rations, and half-empty whiskey bottles.

Gathered around one of the tables, the MARINES we glimpsed

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

earlier:

ENRIQUE SOTO, late 30s, scarred, battle hardened. BRAD BEYER, early 20s, eager to see some action. The phrase 'Young, dumb and full of cum' was tailor made for him.

And the guest of honor: PETRA MORALES, late 30s, Latina, fiercely protective of her fellow Marines.

They're all tipsy, but the mood is melancholy rather than festive.

SOTO

Demeter's taking you back to 'the world'. We're gonna miss you.

They clink glasses.

BEYER

Place isn't gonna be the same.

MORALES

I'm gonna miss you clowns too...but
I've done my time here and...

(sadness creeps into her
voice)

I gotta go home.

She's a little drunk, slurring her words, waving her glass around, accidentally spilling whiskey on the table.

MORALES (CONT'D)

My family got out of Caracas just
before it fell, applied for
asylum...

SOTO'S heard this story. He shakes his head in disgust, before taking another drink, and responding:

SOTO

...and got rejected.

MORALES

I immigrated to the US as a kid,
spent most of my life fighting for
this country, and when the rest of
my family tried to go, they said
"Hell No." They did this to my
people. My people.

She takes a long drink, emptying the glass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORALES (CONT'D)
Sucks to love something that
doesn't love you back.

To lighten the mood, SOTO turns to BEYER:

SOTO
Yeah, what's that like?

BEYER
(playing dumb)
What are you talking about?

SOTO
Diaz.

MORALES sets her hand on BEYER'S shoulders to console him.

MORALES
Yeah, buddy, that's not going to
happen.

They laugh at his expense, before he finally joins in.

EXT. GLIESE PRIME - DAY

The Demeter, a small freighter, no running lights, glides into the foreground. Small guide engines fire, steering it towards Gliese.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - DAY

HUANG is at his terminal, when a message suddenly flashes across a bank of surveillance monitors: VIDEO FEED RE-ROUTED. CENCOM.

HUANG
Station's surveillance was just
redirected to Cencom. Do either of
you know anything about that?

ABBOTT puts down a plastic tray of pasta and checks his monitors. Before he can answer, LINDSAY'S monitor starts BEEPING:

LINDSAY
Heads up... looks like...

On her display: The Demeter approaches the planet's orbit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
We've got the Demeter on approach.

LINDSAY, RAGSDALE and HUANG exchange knowing looks.

RAGSDALE
(taps EarPod)
Demeter this is Rim Command.
(no response)
I repeat... Demeter... this is Rim
Command. Over.

Again silence. RAGSDALE, LINDSAY and NELSON exchange nervous glances. As if reading their minds, HOMAN'S voice comes over the speakers:

HOMAN
(over speaker)
Problem?

LINDSAY
Demeter's on approach.

RAGSDALE
Can't raise them.

HOMAN
(strangely nervous)
Probably just a problem with their
comms.

EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE - CONTINUOUS

The Demeter dives into a huge storm cloud, disappearing into the swirling gray mass.

EXT. LANDING PAD - DAY

Alarms SOUND, flood lights snap on, and yellow alert lights strobe.

The Demeter descends, the landing gear extending as the freighter touches down.

INT. MAIN AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Waiting at the airlock: DIAZ, SCHIFF, and NELSON.

INT. CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - DAY

CHIKA in full body armor, weapon raised and ready to move.

INT. MAIN AIRLOCK - DAY

DIAZ and SCHIFF are visibly nervous. NELSON takes in the scene. They're alone. He's ready to move when...

...The MARINES arrive; MORALES carrying a duffel, escorted by SOTO and BEYER. All three of them look hungover, and generally worse for wear.

NELSON
(taps EarPod)
Everybody, stand down. Got some
surprise guests.

BEYER sidles up next to NELSON, DIAZ and SCHIFF.

BEYER
(too enthusiastically)
Hey, Doc.

She greets him with the same enthusiasm she would a root canal:

DIAZ
Brad.

MORALES and SOTO watch this exchange and barely stifle a laugh.

There's a large CLUNK as the freighter docks with the base, followed by a warning SIREN. There's a WHOOSH of air as the airlock depressurizes.

A flashing red light eventually switches to green and the airlock doors HISS open: revealing a long dark corridor.

No signs of activity.

NELSON
Where's the crew?

A switch flips in the MARINES, they shrug off their respective hangovers and slip into combat mode.

MORALES unslings her weapon. They flip on night vision lenses in their helmets and move in, followed by NELSON, SCHIFF and DIAZ.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They cautiously step across the threshold into:

INT. CORRIDOR - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

Quiet as a tomb. Where there should be signs of a busy crew, there is darkness and silence:

DIAZ
Looks completely deserted.

NELSON
Let's have a look around. Schiff
and I'll take the bridge.

MORALES
We'll check the engine room and
medical.

DIAZ and the MARINES head down branching corridors. SCHIFF and NELSON continue toward the front of the craft -

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

SCHIFF and NELSON walk cautiously down the corridor. At the end of the hall they find a large metal door.

SCHIFF punches an entry code, and the door slowly CREAKS open. They step through into:

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

The front of the ship, covered with floor to ceiling windows, reveals the icy landscape beyond.

The bridge is dark. The flickering lights of the navigational computer and silvery glow of moonlight provide the only illumination. Six flight and workstations.

They settle into the forward stations. SCHIFF connects his portable pad to the main console.

Seconds later, the Demeter's computer comes to life. He studies the data.

SCHIFF
Hmmm.

SCHIFF works the touchpad and begins to download the contents from one computer to the other. He turns to NELSON:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF (CONT'D)
I think we should have a look at
the hold.

INT. HIBERNATION CHAMBER - DEMETER - DAY

Part storage chamber and part laboratory - one wall is lined with steel stasis tubes, the others with various computers monitoring bio-functions.

DR. DIAZ moves to a console next to the row of steel capsules and presses a series of pads.

The top half of the capsule rises into the ceiling, while the bottom half slides into a compartment in the floor.

A column of orange hydrogen sulfide gas which slowly evaporates revealing: Empty stasis tubes.

DIAZ
They're not in stasis.
(beat)
Let's check the infirmary.

INT. INFIRMARY - DEMETER - DAY

DR. DIAZ is seated at a computer station, entering commands into the console. On the display: Medical records of the crew.

BEYER
(lasciviously)
Maybe while we're up here, you
could give me a quick physical?

DIAZ
My god, you're like a walking hard
on.

BEYER bumps the corner of a table - causing a beaker to fall to the ground and SHATTER. DIAZ jumps at the sound.

DIAZ (CONT'D)
Could you please not do that?

BEYER
Sorry, Doc.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIAZ

Stop thinking about your dick for a few minutes and keep your eyes peeled?

Chastened, BEYER focuses on keeping watch.

INT. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - DAY

The cargo hold is lined with row upon row of metal racks filled with large shipping containers, each about ten feet in diameter.

No signs of life. The beam from NELSON'S flashlight sweeps over the shipping containers.

SCHIFF

No one at home.

NELSON

Strange.

SCHIFF

(into EarPod)

Major, there's no sign of the crew.

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Dark, even during the middle of the day. ABBOTT, LINDSAY, SCHIFF, DIAZ, HUANG, RAGSDALE and NELSON are gathered around HOMAN'S desk.

LINDSAY

I didn't manage to pull that much from the logs. From what I can tell, the Demeter left Lalande on schedule...

HOMAN

Unscheduled stops?

LINDSAY

That's the strange thing. The last log entry is after they've come out of stasis. It's pretty routine. Doesn't seem like they encountered anything unusual.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF

Main systems, life support,
propulsion, auto-pilot, all
functioning normally.

LINDSAY

If the flight was routine, then
where the hell are they?

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - DAY

CHIKA, in combat gear, paces the small space - when NELSON
comes in.

CHIKA

What happened?

NELSON

We went onboard but there was no
one there.

CHIKA

What do you mean?

NELSON

Just what I said. The entire crew
was missing.

(a beat as he processes)

I mean they were GONE. Lins checked
the logs. They didn't report
anything unusual, but between the
time they came out of stasis and
landed here, something happened to
them... and until we figure out
what it was, I don't want to get
into orbit and have the same thing
happen to us. Whatever it was, I
think this is how they try to get
rid of us.

They're joined by SCHIFF and LINDSAY.

LINDSAY

Well, I'm sure as shit not taking
off in a damn ghost ship, so what's
Plan B?

SCHIFF

The Major'll have Lieutenant Abbott
put together a detail to go over
that ship with a fine tooth comb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON pauses a beat, considering.

NELSON

So we go on the detail, examine the ship, if it looks safe, then we proceed as planned.

(surveying the group)

Agreed?

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - DAY

Most of the senior staff are assembled, along with the three MARINES. ABBOTT addresses them:

ABBOTT

Lindsay, log into the Demeter's mainframe, examine their database...closely.

(to SCHIFF)

Go over those flight logs until you've got something to show me.

He turns to DIAZ:

ABBOTT (CONT'D)

Doctor. Medical logs, see if we're dealing with some kind of outbreak.

(to NELSON)

Get a copy of the manifest and go over everything in the hold.

(to HUANG)

Check out their drive.

(to MORALES)

You need to delay your departure until we figure this out.

MORALES

Understood, sir.

ABBOTT

You escort the detail. We'll debrief at sixteen hundred.

Dismissed.

With their orders, they file out.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

The detail, flanked by the MARINES, moves down a corridor toward the airlock.

INT. AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - DAY

At the door. The indicator light changes from red, to yellow, then green.

The door slides open. The MARINES are tensed, weapons pointed at the door. They move in unison across the threshold:

INT. CORRIDOR - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

Weapons still raised, they scan the corridor.

MORALES
(into EarPod)
Corridor clear.

The rest of the group moves in behind them.

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - LEVEL ONE - DAY

HOMAN watching them on monitors.

HOMAN
(into EarPod)
Stay sharp, keep your eyes open.

INT. CORRIDOR - DEMETER - DAY

Where SCHIFF is waiting anxiously.

SCHIFF
(into EarPod)
Acknowledged. Over.

They split up, each accompanied by a single MARINE escort.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DEMETER - DAY

Filled with the steady HUM of the propulsion system. HUANG is hunched over a monitor.

BEYER, weapon leveled, scans the cavernous room nervously. There are a lot of dark corners.

BEYER
I do not like this; feel like a
sitting duck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUANG

Relax. There's nothing in here
except us and the engine.

BEYER

You sure about that?

HUANG'S expression suggests he isn't.

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

SCHIFF and RAGSDALE, squeezed into the forward stations.
Their eyes fixed on the nav-computer and the communications
console respectively.

There is a strange, eerie HUMMING noise that fills the
bridge.

SCHIFF

(taps EarPod)

Huang, is that the engine?

HUANG

(over EarPod)

I hear it. It's not coming from in
here.

INT. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - DAY

With a computer pad in hand, NELSON goes over the manifest,
while walking along a row of massive floating, anti-grav
shipping containers.

NELSON

(into EarPod)

I heard it too. It wasn't one of
us.

He stops in front of a container marked: 459. He consults his
pad: The sequence of numbers jumps from 458 to 460.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - DAY

The base's entire staff is gathered around a large monitor.
SCHIFF addresses the group.

SCHIFF

I've collated the information from
the detail. They left Lalande on
schedule.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIAZ

Then they went into stasis. Nothing unusual.

SCHIFF

This is their last log entry.

LINDSAY taps her console. The screen comes to life: The CAPTAIN of the Demeter, gruff, unshaven and a bit disheveled.

CAPTAIN

Flight log, day six. We've just come out of stasis, usual side effects, ready to decelerate, should be arriving at Rim on schedule.

The screen goes black, replaced by lines of text from computer records.

LINDSAY

That's it. I did find sumthin' a lil' unusual. The computer keeps a log of all the activity... diagnostics, repairs. While the crew was in stasis, there was activity in the cargo hold, info downloaded and movement throughout the ship.

HOMAN

Movement of what?

LINDSAY

Couldn't say. The activity suddenly stops. The crew comes out of stasis, and that's literally the last we hear from them.

NELSON

Something was in the cargo hold, and it was waiting for them when they woke up.

The group exchange nervous glances.

RAGSDALE

Ooohh spooky. Come on, people. I'm sure there's a simple explanation for this.

HOMAN wears a smug expression, his voice dripping with sarcasm:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN
Enlighten us.

RAGSDALE
Probably just an accidental
depressurization, maybe a bug in
the log that didn't record it. It's
happened before.

LINDSAY
Bless your heart.
(beat)
You think a depressurization sucked
the whole crew into space before
anyone could re-establish
atmosphere, then set the auto-
pilot?

NELSON
Could I have a look?

LINDSAY pulls up the commands. NELSON studies the screen for
a moment, and finds what he's looking for.

HOMAN
Do you have something to
contribute?

NELSON
Not really.

HOMAN regards him for a beat.

HOMAN
Alright, that's all for now.
Continue analyzing the data, if
anything unusual turns up - let me
know.
(to NELSON)
Weeks...a word.

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - LEVEL ONE - DAY

HOMAN stands behind his desk, trying (and failing) to stare
NELSON down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN

In section 45, subsection 1, paragraph 18 of your contract, it states that you are obligated to share any and all 'mission critical' information with your superiors, in this case, me.

NELSON smiles, regards him coolly:

NELSON

You're not my superior officer.

HOMAN

According to this I am. If there's some new or relevant information you've uncovered, you are obligated to share it with me.

(beat)

So I'll ask again, anything you want to tell me?

NELSON

No, there isn't.

HOMAN senses he's still holding something back, and tries one last gambit. HOMAN calls up a disciplinary form on one of the screens.

HOMAN

I'm documenting your refusal to follow protocol.

NELSON doesn't even bother to answer, just turns and heads out into the corridor.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

SCHIFF moves to LINDSAY'S console. Sits down next her and leans in close.

SCHIFF

(barely above a whisper)

I need you to check something for me. Dig up everything you can in the database about container four fifty-nine, it was a shipping container they picked up on Lalande, find out what was inside... let me know... and just me, okay?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She nods. He kisses her cheek.

INT. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - NIGHT

The stillness in the cargo hold is interrupted, by a dance of lights as a computer keypad suddenly comes to life. A key code sequence is being entered electronically.

INT. CORRIDOR - CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - NIGHT

Dimly lit. The engine thumping like a heartbeat in the b.g. MORALES, alert and ready, stands guard outside the cargo hold. Bored, she taps her EarPod.

MORALES
(into EarPod)
Anything happening up there?

INT. INFIRMARY - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

Awash in the pale blue glow of computer monitors. Quiet. SOTO is making his rounds.

SOTO
(into EarPod)
Not a damn thing, which is how I like it.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile BEYER anxiously surveys the cavernous space. There is a lot of machinery here, lots of places to hide.

BEYER
(into EarPod)
Yeah, well, I'll trade places with you. This place gives me the creeps.

MORALES
(over EarPod)
Oh poor baby, you scared up there by yourself? Want Mama to come up there and hold your hand?

BEYER
No thanks, but if you want to send the Doc...

INT. CORRIDOR - CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

MORALES laughs before responding:

MORALES
(into EarPod)
I can't decide if you're too stupid
or too stubborn to give up.

SOTO
(over EarPod)
Why not both?

INT. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - NIGHT

The keypad on one of the floating shipping containers begins to light up.

As the room is suddenly filled with a strange HUMMING noise.

The container door slowly slides open, accompanied by the sound of GRINDING metal.

INT. CORRIDOR - CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - NIGHT

MORALES hears the strange HUMMING coming from the cargo hold.

She looks down toward her feet and sees: a strobing reddish orange light coming from under the door.

MORALES
(into EarPod)
Hold on a sec, something going on
in the cargo hold.

SOTO
(over EarPod)
On the way.

MORALES doesn't wait. She punches the entry code into the door. It slides open with a HISS.

She steps across the threshold. The door closes and re-locks behind her.

INT. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

Strange lights, their source unknown, flash o.s., bathing MORALES' face in orange.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She is motionless, as waves of sound and orange-reddish light envelope her. We don't see what she sees, but from her expression - she's grappling to process it.

MORALES

Wha...

The HUM grows louder. It becomes a discordant eardrum-breaking SCREECH. The orange-reddish light gets BRIGHTER and closer. Her expression changes from profound confusion to profound fear.

She fights through it, raises her semi-auto - squeezes the trigger and doesn't let up, unleashing a storm on FIRE on the far end of the cargo hold.

Half-crazed with fear and adrenalin - she fires indiscriminately, hitting cooling pipes, fire containment units.

Jets of thick, milky Halon gas burst into the air.

INT. INFIRMARY - DEMETER - NIGHT

SOTO is already in motion. Weapon at the ready.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DEMETER - NIGHT

So is BEYER. The REPORT from MORALES' weapon fills the air. There's a brief pause, as she reloads. Then more GUNFIRE.

INT. CORRIDOR - CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - NIGHT

Both MARINES arrive at the end of the corridor, the GUNFIRE abruptly stops, then a blood-curdling SCREAM echoing down the corridor.

They pick up the pace, and reach the door. Hurriedly punch in the entry code. The door opens:

Int. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

A cloud of thick, acrid smoke and Halon gas greets them. Peering through the gas and smoke, they scan the room, but it's empty.

SOTO

Morales! Morales!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No response. They walk the length of the room, the walls are peppered with holes from small arms fire, but they're alone.

SOTO (CONT'D)
(wiping his brow)
Hot as balls in here.

They turn back toward the door, but fail to notice that container number 459 - is open.

BEYER
(into EarPod)
Major. We've got a problem in the hold.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

ABBOTT confers with SCHIFF. LINDSAY peers into a monitor, studying the screen: Essential Systems, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Thorpe Organization.

BEYER'S alert comes through.

ABBOTT
(into EarPod)
Sit rep.

BEYER
(over EarPod - staticky)
Sir. Something's happened to Morales. She's gone.

Concern creeps into ABBOTT'S voice.

ABBOTT
Meet me in the hold.

INT. CARGO HOLD - DEMETER - NIGHT

BEYER and SOTO stand guard outside the cargo hold, when ABBOTT arrives with SCHIFF in tow.

ABBOTT
Walk me through it.

BEYER
(rapid fire)
We were each at our posts sir.
Morales was down here, I was in the engine room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOTO
I was in the infirmary.

BEYER
(still excited - rapid-
fire)
We were on comms...

ABBOTT sets his hands on BEYER'S shoulders to calm him.

ABBOTT
Slow down, son.

BEYER
Sorry sir.
(takes a beat to collect
himself)
We were at our posts. Petra...
er... Morales said she heard
something in the cargo hold, and
was going in to check it out. We
headed down to back her up. We were
just down the hall when we heard a
scream.

SOTO
By the time we reached the hold...
(beat)
...she was gone.

INT. MAJOR HOMAN'S OFFICE - LEVEL ONE - DAY

The entire crew, including EDLOW, GADDIS and SULLY from the array are assembled. Their attention focused on HOMAN standing in front of his desk, in an attempt to look authoritative.

HOMAN
We are going to search every inch
of this facility and that ship
until we find Morales. Is that
understood?

GROUP
(in unison)
Yes sir!

HOMAN
Corporal, Mister Weeks, Ms.
Shimizu, I want you on level one,
check every room, every
compartment.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN (CONT'D)
(to LINDSAY & ABBOTT)
Check the camera logs. One of them
had to have picked up something.
(to DIAZ, RAGSDALE &
HUANG)
You three on Level Two.
(to EDLOW)
The array. Everyone has their
orders, let's move.

They file out in groups of three.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

SCHIFF and CHIKA cautiously down the hall, speaking in
hushed, low tones.

SCHIFF
Said that they were only a second
away from the cargo hold. They
walked in and she was just gone.

CHIKA
What could do that, and not leave a
trace?

SCHIFF'S reaction indicates that's a question he'd rather not
contemplate.

INT. MESS HALL - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Without speaking, they move through the mess hall, but
there's no sign of MORALES.

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - LEVEL ONE - DAY

SCHIFF, NELSON and CHIKA huddle out of camera range, and
compare notes.

SCHIFF
I had Lindsay look at that
container.

NELSON
What'd she find out?

SCHIFF
Nothing that's going to put your
mind at ease...
(a beat)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF (CONT'D)

...cargo belongs to a shell
company: Essential Systems.

CHIKA

O.S.P. front. Did she find out
anything about the container?

SCHIFF

It was labelled 'Caracas Urban
Pacification Test', but wasn't on
the official manifest.

NELSON

'Urban Pacification' sounds fairly
ominous.

SCHIFF

That's not even the best part.
Ragsdale said that yesterday Homan
got an encrypted transmission from
Cencom, just before the Demeter
arrived. Didn't think anything of
it at the time, but now it all
makes sense.

CHIKA

It's always frightened old men,
terrified of losing power, trying
to control people.

(beat)

They're conducting some sort of
experiment, field testing something
to control protestors and refugees
in Caracas, then the U.S.

(beat)

Homan is administering it...

NELSON

...and we're the guinea pigs.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

Lit only by blue running lights, RAGSDALE, DIAZ, and HUANG
move calmly through the upper level, blissfully unaware of
what awaits them.

DIAZ

I don't understand how she could
just vanish like that.

RAGSDALE

Has to be an explanation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUANG abruptly stops in his tracks, DIAZ and HUANG almost run into him.

RAGSDALE (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

HUANG motions for silence.

HUANG
Shhh. I heard something.
(into EarPod)
Lindsay, see anything on the
monitors?

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

HOMAN enters to find LINDSAY and ABBOTT focused on a bank of surveillance monitors - displaying all the activity on the second level: RAGSDALE, HUANG and DIAZ looking around them.

LINDSAY
(into EarPod)
No, sugar. I got you three, no sign
of...

The images on the monitors are replaced by white noise.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Hold on a sec, just lost two
corridors...

In their EarPods, LINDSAY and start picking up a strange HUMMING noise.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
(into EarPod)
Do you hear that?

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

They stand motionless in the semi-darkness. The steady, pulsating HUM is growing LOUDER and CLOSER.

DIAZ
Yes, we hear it.

RAGSDALE is still desperately searching for a 'rational' explanation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAGSDALE
Demeter powering up?

HUANG
No. I don't know what that is.

As the sentence leaves his mouth, the source of the noise is now just on the other side of the L-shaped corridor. HUANG and DIAZ instinctively start moving in the opposite direction.

The HUM is getting CLOSER. As it grows closer, the sound also becomes more distinct, it's actually layers of SOUND, the HUM and a series of GARBLED, WARPED sounds that could almost be mistaken for language.

RAGSDALE stops, analyzing the sound, certain that he can come up with a suitable explanation:

RAGSDALE
Not propulsion, we're not near the servers.

When he fails to do that, he reaches for his sidearm - pointing it at the wall of sound bearing down on him.

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

HUANG and DIAZ have turned the corner, around the L, moving have toward a door at the end of the corridor, when they realize that RAGSDALE is not with them.

DIAZ
Gary?
(into EarPod)
Lins! Whatever this thing is, it's coming our way, and I think we lost Ragsdale!

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

LINDSAY and ABBOTT scan all the monitors around them but there's nothing but white noise. An edge creeps into ABBOTT'S normally genial tone:

ABBOTT
(into EarPod)
We're blind up here.

HOMAN is gradually losing his customary calm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN
(into EarPod)
Private! Do you copy?! Do you copy?

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

Before they can reach the end of the corridor, DIAZ stops and turns to HUANG.

DIAZ
(pleading)
Ragsdale's an ass, but we can't
just leave him.

Realizing she's right, HUANG swears.

HUANG
Damn it. Alright.

HUANG doubles back, but starts to slow down as he hears a strange NOISE emanating from around the corner.

He reaches the end of the corridor and cautiously peers around the corner: RAGSDALE stands still, as the NOISE is close, REVERBERATING down the corridor - almost on top of him.

HUANG (CONT'D)
(loud, urgent)
Ragsdale. Come on. Get the fuck out
of there.

RAGSDALE doesn't respond. HUANG can't bring himself to walk around the corner and forcibly bring him back.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

As it grows closer to RAGSDALE, the HUMMING becomes a SCREECHING sound, almost as if the SCREECHING is designed to strike terror in the intended victim - like an evolutionary feature in a predator.

RAGSDALE clamps his hands over his ears to mute the horrible noise. He takes his hands away and looks down: There are drops of blood where his palms touched his ears.

The SCREECHING grows LOUDER, overwhelming and effectively hypnotizing RAGSDALE. He stands glued to the spot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN
(over EarPod)
Do you copy?!

RAGSDALE'S face and body are awash in an undulating reddish orange light - his expression, a mixture of confusion and abject terror.

He manages to raise his sidearm and FIRE.

INT. ALTERNATE CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

HUANG is still pressed against the wall. The REPORT from RAGSDALE'S weapon fills the air. Round after round are FIRED. There's a brief pause, followed by even more GUNFIRE.

HUANG squeezes his eyes shut, hoping it's all a nightmare, at the same time knowing it's not something he's going to wake up from.

He takes a moment to steady his nerves, then still sticking to the wall, slowly slides back down the corridor, away from RAGSDALE, before finally turning and breaking into a run.

The GUNFIRE stops, this time followed by a loud WHOOSH and RAGSDALE'S SCREAMS. The SCREAMS, mixed with the high-pitched SCREECHING, ECHO down the corridor...

RAGSDALE (O.S.)
NOOO!

The SCREAMS end suddenly. There is a short CRACKLING sound, then silence.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

They hear his SCREAM end abruptly. HOMAN is the first to react. His composure now slipping away:

HOMAN
(into EarPod)
Ragsdale. Ragsdale.

The only response is the strange discordant HUMMING and bursts of WARPED, GARBLED 'language', at first coming through the EarPod - then audible in the corridor outside.

LINDSAY
That's right outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMAN hears the approaching HUM, now just outside the door, he doesn't move, paralyzed by fear.

LINDSAY is momentarily transfixed by HOMAN'S fearful paralysis. The edge in ABBOTT'S voice is now giving way to full blown panic. He grabs her arm:

ABBOTT
Fuck! Lindsay! Go!

LINDSAY stops fighting him and nods in assent, then they leave through the side door.

Moments after they've left, HOMAN is alone, trying to pull up images on the surveillance cameras, but the screens are just full of white noise.

HOMAN
What's happening?!! They told me
I'd be safe!!

The main entrance to the COMMAND CENTER slides open with a HISS. He turns the around:

HOMAN is bathed in the strange orange light - his face, clearly unable to comprehend what he's seeing.

HOMAN (CONT'D)
(barely above a whisper)
They told me I'd be safe...

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - NIGHT

The door to the command center closes shut behind them, with a pneumatic HISS. LINDSAY and ABBOTT are in a full sprint when:

HOMAN
(over EarPods)
No. No. NOOOO!

An unearthly SCREECHING, a loud WHOOSH sound, followed by HOMAN'S dying SCREAMS fill the corridor, a soft CRACKLE - then complete silence. LINDSAY stops, turns for a second.

ABBOTT
There's nothing you can do for him.

Her sense of self-preservation wins out as ABBOTT forces her to keep moving away from the strange noises behind them. While they're on the move:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBOTT (CONT'D)
(into EarPod - panicking)
We're being attacked! Get to the
Demeter! We've got to get the fuck
out of here!

They resume their sprint, rounding a corner:

INT. THIRD CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - CONTINUOUS

Adrenalin pumping, LINDSAY and ABBOTT run down the passageway on Level Two. The lights are out and the corridor is completely dark - and terrifying.

There is no more than three or four feet of visibility. They reach the T-shaped end of the corridor.

ABBOTT takes a minute to catch his breath, then peers around one corner: Only an inky blackness.

ABBOTT
(breathing heavy)
Shit! I can't see a thing! Close
the door.

LINDSAY punches the keypad next to the door, which slides into place and locks with a heavy THUD. She takes a moment to get her bearings:

LINDSAY
(pointing up ahead)
This is N-Three. The elevator
should be round the corner to the
right.

They take a few steps forward when ABBOTT abruptly stops in his tracks. He holds up his hands for her to be quiet.

ABBOTT
(whispers)
Listen.

They listen. There's a noise - a HUM (o.s.) nearby.

LINDSAY
It's close by.

ABBOTT
Yeah, but where?

The HUM, o.s. - gets louder...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBOTT (CONT'D)
I think it's to the right...

LINDSAY
Yeah? Well, let's be sure. I sure
as hell don't want to keep going
this way and run into...whatever it
is.

ABBOTT doesn't wait, and turns down a corridor to the left.
LINDSAY steps around to the end of the corridor to the right
and peers into the darkness: Nothing.

She double checks to be certain.

Suddenly, there's a HUM just to her left, o.s. - the same
direction that ABBOTT just went.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Lieutenant.

She presses herself into a recess in the wall and as deep
into the shadows as she can.

The HUM grow louder and louder, coming closer and closer.

She shrinks deeper into the recess, doesn't dare breathe.

Then the HUM recedes. After a moment, it's gone.

LINDSAY finally exhales. She steps all the way around the
corner to the left:

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
I think it's gone...

She can't see ABBOTT in the darkness. She steps forward.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Lieutenant. It's gone...

As her eyes adjusts to the low light, she can finally make
out ABBOTT'S outline in the darkness.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Pardon my French, but let's get the
fuck out of here, find the
others...

He starts to move towards her, something's odd...when he's
only a few feet away - we see that there are two blackened,
still-smoking holes where ABBOTT'S eyes should be.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBOTT
Bo, bo, bor... Border... W-wa...
War...

LINDSAY SCREAMS. She backs away from him for a few steps before finally turning and RUNNING full speed down the corridor:

INT. FOURTH CORRIDOR - LEVEL TWO - CONTINUOUS

That dead ends in the elevator. She hears FOOTSTEPS behind her, spins turns around - only to find DIAZ and HUANG.

DIAZ
(re: LINDSAY'S frightened
expression)
Whoa. It's just us.

HUANG
Where's Homan? The Lieutenant?

LINDSAY
(almost hysterical)
It got Homan, then Abbott. I left
them...
(starts sobbing)
...I'm sorry. I panicked. I didn't
know what to do. I just left them.

DIAZ puts her arms around LINDSAY to comfort her.

DIAZ
Shh. It's okay. It's okay.

HUANG
We seriously need to get out of
here.

They stab at the controls to call the elevator. Then they turn around, expecting the HUMMING and LIGHTS to appear at the end of the corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - NIGHT

NELSON, CHIKA and SCHIFF have almost reached the airlock - when they're joined by LINDSAY, DIAZ and HUANG.

LINDSAY
(spotting SCHIFF)
Oh, thank goodness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They embrace. DIAZ and HUANG prod them along. CHIKA moves behind them, semi-automatic rifle raised to cover their exit.

They talk as they move:

SCHIFF

Once we're on board. How long
before we're out of here?

NELSON

With any luck a few minutes for pre-
flight, then we'll be in orbit a
couple minutes after that.

CHIKA

We have to stop at the array for
Edlow, Sully and Gaddis.

NELSON

Let them know we're coming. Tell
them to be ready to move when we
get there.

CHIKA

(into EarPod)

This is Chika. Sergeant, prepare
for emergency evac. We should be
there in ten.

INT. AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - NIGHT

They reach the inner airlock, and notice BOTH sets of doors
are open.

DIAZ is the first to notice the HUM issuing from deep inside
the Demeter.

DIAZ

(softly)

No. That's impossible.

(then louder, more urgent)

It was on level two, now it's back
on the Demeter!!

The mixture of the otherworldly pulsating HUM and human
SCREAMING fill the small space.

BEYER runs across the threshold, weapon in hand, screaming
like a madman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEYER
(pointing in the opposite
direction)
Go! Go! Go!

Now the HUM gets louder, and the glow from a strange ORANGE LIGHT is visible from around the corner.

Adrenalin flowing, BEYER spins and FIRES wildly into the space behind him. The air is filled with the BOOM, BOOM, BOOM of his weapon spitting explosive projectiles.

NELSON pauses for a split second, long enough for him to plot their next move.

NELSON
(to SCHIFF)
The shuttle!

They turn and launch themselves into the darkness.

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - SHUTTLE DOCK - CONTINUOUS

The group, with CHIKA now on point, run like they're being chased by all the devils in hell - turning a corner toward the familiar double door marked: SHUTTLE DOCK

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLE CRAFT - CONTINUOUS

NELSON is already strapped in and punching in the launch sequence, his hands flying effortlessly over the controls. SCHIFF slides in beside him.

Behind him, CHIKA helps the others slide into their seats in the cabin.

NELSON checks the monitors, then front view-screen.

NELSON
Everyone strapped in?

SCHIFF looks back at the cabin, then gives NELSON the thumbs up.

SCHIFF
We're good.

The shuttle is filled with the ROAR of its engines.

EXT. LANDING PAD - BASE - NIGHT

The vertical jets fire, slowly lifting the shuttle craft slowly off the pad. Then the main propulsion jets ignite. Sending the shuttle racing across:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - NIGHT

The shuttle flies through the stormy night sky, buffeted by high winds.

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLE CRAFT - NIGHT

The crew's strapped into their seats. As the adrenalin starts to dissipate, SCHIFF collects himself and asks the obvious question:

SCHIFF

What now?

NELSON

The array. We don't have a lot of options.

SCHIFF

And then?

NELSON

When I come up with something you'll be the first to know, but right now I just want to put as much distance between us and that thing as possible.

SCHIFF

Can't really argue with your logic there.

SCHIFF unstraps himself, then heads back into:

INT. CABIN - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

CHIKA is checking HUANG'S safety belt. DIAZ and LINDSAY are still too stunned to respond.

SCHIFF

Everybody alright?

(to LINDSAY)

The Major?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDSAY
(shakes her head)
Homan got a message from CenCom,
just before the Demeter landed. I
think he knew what was coming.

HUANG isn't feeling particularly charitable.

HUANG
If he knew this was coming, then he
got what he deserved.

LINDSAY
(to BEYER)
Did you get a good look at it?

BEYER
(pausing to collect
himself)
No. I just opened fire. Bullets
didn't do much, so I just bailed.

A deep bass BOOM ECHOES through the cabin, clearly unsettling
NELSON, CHIKA, SCHIFF, LINDSAY, DIAZ and HUANG.

SCHIFF turns back to the cabin.

NELSON
(from cockpit o.s.)
Schiff! I need you up here!

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

SCHIFF quickly settles into the copilot seat, then consults
the radar: A rapidly approaching object, behind them.

SCHIFF
You've got to be kidding me!

NELSON
How far?

SCHIFF
Twenty kilometers and gaining.

NELSON pushes the throttle. The SHUTTLE lurches forward.

NELSON
(studying monitor)
It's still gaining.
(shouting back into the
cabin)
Everyone suit up!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He presses a series of buttons on the console. The monitor reads: COURSE SET. AUTO-PILOT ACTIVATED.

They unstrap themselves, and remove EVA suits from the rear locker.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - NIGHT

In the distance is a vaguely humanoid ORANGE CYBERNETIC ORGANISM. It's a few meters in height, but its exact shape, details of its appearance, are frustratingly obscured by a swirling veil of snow and ice.

It LUMBERS over the surface like a tank, but slowly gaining ground on the shuttle. A huge FIREBALL shoots from its hands, accompanied by a THUNDEROUS BOOM. THE FIREBALL reaches:

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

NELSON is making the final adjustments to his suit when an EXPLOSION rocks the ship.

INT. CABIN - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

The BLAST TEARS away a section of the hull - opens it like an aluminum can. Before BEYER can strap himself back into his seat - part of the fuselage disappears and he's pulled out through the breach like he'd been yanked out by an enormous elastic band.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - CONTINUOUS

The aft section of the shuttle BURSTS into an orange ball of flame and goes into free-fall...

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Arcs of electricity fry the instrumentation. NELSON struggles bravely with the controls as the ship plummets out of control.

INT. CABIN - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

The cabin is depressurized. Alarms sound, red alert lights strobe. CHIKA grabs a handhold, and grips it for dear life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The ship is ROCKED by another EXPLOSION. CHIKA grips the handhold tighter, but DIAZ isn't so lucky; the explosion sends her FLYING toward the cabin breach.

DIAZ manages to grab onto a headrest at the last possible second.

Absolute terror crosses her face as she feels herself being sucked out of the ship.

DIAZ
(screaming over EarPod)
I don't want to die out here!

CHIKA leans out to her.

CHIKA
Hold on, Carmen!

Incredibly, CHIKA moves her hand over the safety belt's release. It hovers there for an instant.

CHIKA studies the scene around her, making a series of quick calculations.

POV - CHIKA: A stream of data on her digital readout, feeding her windspeed, g-force, and knots.

CHIKA releases the safety. The gravity and decompression immediately grab her, threatening to pull her out of the craft - but with an almost balletic grace, she leaps into the air, compensating for the air pressure, expertly navigating the chaos.

Just as it appears she's going to be sucked out of the cabin, with lightning reflexes, she reaches out - grabbing the seat next to DIAZ.

CHIKA (CONT'D)
Almost there.

She double-checks her own grip, then reaches out with one hand to grab DIAZ.

CHIKA (CONT'D)
Hold on. I've almost got you.

She's just about reached DIAZ'S outstretched hand, just as DIAZ'S other hand loses purchase.

DIAZ
No. No. No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her gloved hands scratch uselessly against the cabin floor as she's sucked out of the cabin - into the storm and certain death.

CHIKA can only look on in horror.

INT. COCKPIT - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - NIGHT

Red warning lights flash on every console as NELSON fights to remain in control of the disintegrating craft.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - NIGHT

The Eastern Sun crashes onto the surface. The ORANGE CYBERNETIC ORGANISM stops, the wind subsides and for a brief moment - we get a true sense of its shape...

Although any detail is obscured by the snow - we can see it is easily 2-3 meters in height, and almost as wide. Beneath its brightly colored metallic surface, there is light, activity, and sound.

It stands still amidst the buffeting winds, near the wreckage, surveying the scene - coming to a decision.

It lumbers away, disappearing in a cloud of snow and ice.

INT. CABIN - 'EASTERN SUN' SHUTTLECRAFT - NIGHT

A smoldering heap of twisted metal and plastic. NELSON climbs through the wreckage, the winds and heavy suit make it slow going. He looks behind them, mindful they're being pursued. He finds CHIKA between two rows of seats, struggling to get to her feet.

NELSON
(through EarPod)
You okay?

She just watched BEYER and DR. DIAZ die, but she's seen death before - so she pushes down the grief and responds:

CHIKA
(through EarPod)
Not one of your better landings.

NELSON
You know the saying 'any landing
you can walk away from'.
(then serious)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (CONT'D)

Let's move, that thing might be
still behind us.

LINDSAY and the others are slowly rising to their feet.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Everyone else okay?

LINDSAY

I think so.

NELSON

What about the marine, the doc?

CHIKA

Didn't make it.

NELSON returns their conversation to their unseen pursuer.

NELSON

Any sign of that thing?

Through SCHIFF'S helmet display: A sensor overlay, in the
display.

SCHIFF

Not so far. I've got good news and
bad news. Which do you want first?

NELSON

The bad.

SCHIFF

Besides the obvious?

(beat)

We have to walk the rest of the way
to the array.

NELSON

And what's the good news?

SCHIFF

It's 'only' a couple of kilometers,
over that ridge.

CHIKA

I won't be able to reach the array
with interference from this
storm...but once we get a bit
closer - I can call in - have them
give us a ride.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON
Which way?

SCHIFF consults a topographical map in his headset display.

SCHIFF
Follow me.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - NIGHT

The driving wind, sleet and cumbersome EVA suits make it nearly impossible to move quickly. That doesn't stop them from trying. NELSON and SCHIFF are in the lead, the others follow close behind.

NELSON
(into EarPod)
We're too exposed out here.

Again SCHIFF consults the map, showing a canyon ahead of them.

SCHIFF
(into EarPod)
There's a passage, hundred meters
in that direction through here that
should provide some cover.

NELSON turns back to the group and signals that they're changing direction.

NELSON
(through EarPod)
We're taking a passage, this way.
Should be at the ridge in an hour.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CANYON - NIGHT

Claustrophobic. A narrow canyon with walls of ice and snow rising twelve feet high on both sides. They move through the narrow passage single file.

NELSON
(into EarPod)
Any sign of it?

On CHIKA'S helmet display: Nothing on the sensor behind them but miles of snow and ice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIKA
(over EarPod)
No. We're still good.

They reach the end of the canyon passage:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLACIER - NIGHT

Still caught in biting wind, curtains of white still obscuring their vision. This area isn't as narrow, so they fan out as they move forward.

HUANG
(over EarPod)
We get off this rock, I'm going
somewhere it doesn't snow, no
somewhere it's NEVER snowed. Ever.
From now on I spend my days lying
on a beach, drink in my hand.

CHIKA
You know, I think that's the most
I've heard you say since I've met
you.

LINDSAY
Yeah, you're just a regular Chatty
Cathy now, ain't cha?

And for the first time in at least a week he laughs, which sounds strange in their helmets.

NELSON
How much longer?

SCHIFF
I'm guessing half hour.

LINDSAY
We should be okay, these suits were
made to withstand this environment
for up to twenty four hours.

HUANG
(still fantasizing about
the beach)
Mai-Tai's, all day, every day...

HUANG takes a step forward, not even feeling the ground beneath his feet start to collapse. He looks down in confusion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUANG (CONT'D)
What the?

The ground gives way completely. HUANG drops.

HUANG (CONT'D)
Aaaaahhhh!

They hear his cries in the headsets. SCHIFF turns and reaches out to grab him - but it's too late.

As he falls HUANG watches the surface above him grow smaller and more distant.

SCREAMING as he plummets through the dark, his arms flailing.

HUANG (CONT'D)
Noooo!!!!

CHIKA is about to lose her balance when NELSON grabs her. He looks down and sees fissures appearing along the shelf.

NELSON
Run!!!

They move as fast as the suits will allow. Just reaching safety and the foot of a nearby ridge, seconds before the chasm opens behind them.

From the foot of the ridge, NELSON, panting heavily, looks down at the chasm that opened behind them and they were seconds away from falling into.

NELSON (CONT'D)
(to LINDSAY)
Fuck. When you said "least hospitable planet you'd ever heard of", you weren't kidding.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - RIDGE - NIGHT

The team makes its way up a large ridge, struggling through the heavy snow and ice.

NELSON and SCHIFF are in the lead, followed by LINDSAY - with CHIKA in the rear, occasionally glancing over her to shoulder to make sure they haven't been followed.

SCHIFF
It should be over this ridge...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As they crest the hill, NELSON sighs with relief: Through the gusts of winds, the array is visible in the distance.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLACIER - NIGHT

Having just lost DIAZ, BEYER and HUANG moments ago - the mood is understandably somber. The group slowly fans out as they make their way toward the array.

NELSON
(to SCHIFF)
Are we in range yet?

SCHIFF
Should be, but the storm isn't helping. Won't be a clear signal.

NELSON
(to CHIKA)
See if they can keep an eye on our six, and we could use a ride.

CHIKA
(into EarPod)
Sarge, Sully, Gaddis...Come in. Over.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - ARRAY - NIGHT

SGT. EDLOW, SULLY and GADDIS are huddled around a console, packed and ready to evacuate - when the console PINGS - signaling an incoming call. SGT. EDLOW taps the console.

EDLOW
Shimizu?

CHIKA
(over speaker)
Yeah...(static)...

EDLOW
(impatient - frustrated)
We're ready for evac. You on the way?

CHIKA
(over speaker)
We're ...(static)... array...
(static)... not leaving...
(static)... Major... gone...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIKA (CONT'D)
(static)... situation here.
...(static) ...need... ride.

Hearing this SULLY and GADDIS exchange incredulous looks.

EDLOW
Let me get a fix on your position
and Sully will pick you up in the
ATV.

CHIKA
(over speaker)
...(static)... need you.... eye on
the sensors,... (static)... weird
heat signatures... (static)... know
right away.

Again, GADDIS and SULLY exchange looks - more confused than
disbelieving.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLACIER - NIGHT

They momentarily slow their pace - but keep moving forward.

NELSON
With any luck it should be smooth
sailing, so to speak.

LINDSAY
I really hope you didn't just jinx
us.

Moments after the words have left her mouth, the lights of
the ATV are visible in the distance.

NELSON
Not this time.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - ARRAY - NIGHT

The crash survivors BURST into the room, removing their suits
as they do. They throw them around haphazardly, moving
straight for the control panel.

NELSON
Lins, Chika, can you get on the
consoles? Scan the area.

CHIKA
We're on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They move SGT. EDLOW and GADDIS out of the way, and settle into their stations. EDLOW doesn't appreciate having his authority usurped, his frustration clearly mounting.

EDLOW
(mainly at SCHIFF)
Corporal I shouldn't need to remind
you this is a military base... that
I outrank you...so would you like
to explain to me EXACTLY what the
FUCK is going on?

They exchange glances when the very straight-laced EDLOW uses profanity.

SCHIFF
What would you say if I told you
there is a hostile, non-human
technology on the base?

Without missing a beat:

SULLY
I'd say, now we know who's got the
good weed.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - ARRAY - NIGHT

NELSON, CHIKA and SCHIFF have done their best to bring the Array's crew up to speed. As a scientist, GADDIS is curious:

GADDIS
(excited by the prospect)
What is it?

CHIKA, NELSON, SCHIFF and LINDSAY exchange somber looks.

NELSON
We don't know much. None of us has
actually seen it.

LINDSAY
I only 'heard' it, a terrible
screeching... like nothin' I ever
heard before.

There is a deafening silence as the surviving crew contemplate her words. Finally EDLOW breaks the silence:

EDLOW
(to NELSON)
You said they're testing it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

On us.

A beat.

LINDSAY

(remembering - voice heavy
with guilt)

The Lieutenant was still alive the
last time I saw him, but I just
left him there...

CHIKA

We escaped on the shuttle, but it
came after us, took down the ship,
but we must've lost it in the
storm.

EDLOW

Where is it now?

NELSON

We don't know, but safe to assume
it's still out there.

SULLY

You can't be serious.

Delivered in her typical homespun manner, but deadly earnest:

LINDSAY

As a second heart attack, darlin'.

EDLOW

What about weapons?

CHIKA

From what we've heard, our weapons
don't do much, slow it down a
little, at best.

NELSON

We don't know what it is, so we
haven't been able to figure out how
to fight it.

NELSON pauses before continuing, uncertain whether to reveal
the next piece of information. CHIKA saves him the trouble:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIKA

We tried to warn you O.S.P. might
try and keep us quiet, we just
didn't know it was going to be
whatever 'this' is.

EDLOW

Well you sure as shit didn't try
hard enough!

EDLOW jumps to his feet, balls up his fists, and takes a
menacing step toward CHIKA; when he's just within arm's
reach:

EDLOW (CONT'D)

I'm going to do what I should've
done in the ring, and teach this
little bitch a lesson.

(to NELSON)

You try and stop me, you'll get
some too.

NELSON makes no move to get between them. He looks at EDLOW,
genuinely confused:

NELSON

My wife's augmented. You know that
right?

EDLOW ignores him, takes an ill-advised swing at CHIKA. She
leans back centimeters, just enough to miss his punch.

While EDLOW is trying to figure out how he missed her - CHIKA
crouches down into a fighting stance, preparing for another
attack.

NELSON sighs, then to his wife:

NELSON (CONT'D)

Hon, don't break anything. If we
have to carry him, it'll really
slow us down.

She winks. EDLOW ignores the comment. He squares off and
raises his fists - fully prepared to inflict some pain:

EDLOW

(to CHIKA)

Don't hold back on my account.

She simply smiles. Instead of heeding this red flag, EDLOW
tries a right cross -- slow and clumsy, it finds nothing but
air; followed by a left, which also misses badly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Frustrated, he lunges forward and succeeds in grabbing CHIKA by the collar, and using brute strength to throw her across the room.

She SLAMS into a console, bounces off - but instead of falling on her face, lands on both feet, gracefully, like a cat.

She moves forward with surprising speed, guard down, practically inviting EDLOW to throw a punch. He obliges, throwing another combination - which CHIKA expertly avoids, while simultaneously ducking down into a crouch at his front leg.

EDLOW looks down confused. Before he's figured out what's happened - CHIKA has grabbed his front leg and pulled it out - forcing him into an anatomically uncomfortable split.

As EDLOW tries to simultaneously ignore the pain in his groin and find his balance - CHIKA rolls onto her back, her right foot shooting up in little more than a blur, connecting solidly with the side of EDLOW'S face - with a loud CRUNCH.

EDLOW'S eyes roll back in his head and he falls to the ground unconscious.

CHIKA springs back to her feet, towering over EDLOW'S supine form, before glancing over at a mildly disapproving NELSON:

CHIKA
What? You said don't break
anything.

EXT. ARRAY - NIGHT

The weather has cleared a bit, and the structure is more clearly visible on the hilltop.

INT. GARAGE - ARRAY - NIGHT

NELSON and CHIKA are standing next to the A.T.V. NELSON climbs in, and starts examining the interior.

SCHIFF walks in, but gives CHIKA a wide berth, he is now officially a little afraid of her.

SCHIFF
Edlow's got a black eye, mild
concussion, but nothing's broken.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIKA
(to NELSON)
Told you.

He smiles in acknowledgment, then turns to SCHIFF.

NELSON
What's the top speed on these
things?

SCHIFF
Forty, fifty kilometers an hour.

NELSON
Would everyone fit in this?

CHIKA
We could probably make it work.
What'd you have in mind?

INT. MESS HALL - ARRAY - NIGHT

The survivors (including EDLOW with an icepack) are seated around a table strewn with half-empty whiskey bottles, glasses, ashtrays. A large monitor is set up in the middle of the table.

NELSON
(mainly aimed at EDLOW)
Now that everyone's calm, we should
talk about how we're going to get
out of here.

EDLOW lowers the ice pack, revealing a black eye. He's angry - but keeps his frustration in check.

EDLOW
You said that this thing was on the
base?

EXT. ARRAY - NIGHT

Gears WHINE as the three massive antennae turn, and the dishes realign.

INT. MESS HALL - ARRAY - NIGHT

Before NELSON can answer EDLOW, there are a series of ALARMS from the bank of monitors. There's a moment of tense silence. LINDSAY checks the monitors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDSAY

(off a monitor)

No big heat signatures, but it's downloading a crap tonna data, star charts, and the antennae have changed positions. It's sending a message.

This catches GADDIS' attention.

GADDIS

To who?

The question hangs in the air, unanswered. NELSON attempts to refocus the group's attention.

NELSON

If it's in Command, that means - it's not on the Demeter; so that's still our best option to get out of here.

LINDSAY

It sent a message. Then shut down the Comm network.

EDLOW

(scoffs)

You're crazy. All of you. I'll take my chances here. Wait for a rescue.

Although EDLOW has dug into his position, SCHIFF tries to reason with him.

SCHIFF

If it finds a way inside this place, which it will, you're as good as dead.

LINDSAY

Or you end up like the Lieutenant and just wish you were.

SULLY

So how do we board the Demeter and get off this fucking rock?

NELSON activates the large terminal in the middle of the table. The monitor displaying: A schematic of the base.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON
Misdirection.
(off their uncomprehending
looks)
It seems to be able to track us,
anticipate our behavior, cut off
escape...

GADDIS
It's maneuvered us into one place,
cut off communications. It can
formulate complex strategies,
execute them.

NELSON is patient with GADDIS and his line of questioning,
much like he would with a small child.

NELSON
Looks that way.

GADDIS
We're dealing with an extremely
advanced A.I., a technology that
for all intents and purposes is
sentient.
(beat)
A technology from a 'Type Three
Civilization'.

NELSON ignores GADDIS' explanation:

NELSON
(to LINDSAY)
Can you get into the mainframe
remotely?

LINDSAY
Sure.

NELSON
(to SCHIFF)
Where's the Demeter?

SCHIFF
Pad three.

NELSON
We take the A.T.V. back to the
base. On the way Lindsay patches
into the base's mainframe and opens
an airlock near pad one...
(points to the pad on the
monitor)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (CONT'D)

...then a series of doors in that sector, enough to create the illusion that someone's trying to access that part of the base.

CHIKA

(pointing to the far side of the base)

While it's looking for us on One, we'll be at Three, in the Demeter, lifting off.

SCHIFF

But that might not be enough, it could come after the Demeter like it did the shuttle.

NELSON

Right, so we're going to cover our escape, by destroying the base.

LINDSAY

Overloading the fusion reactor in the power plant should do the trick.

NELSON

Can you do that remotely?

GADDIS listens with increasing dismay. He is about to interrupt, then decides against it.

LINDSAY

No. Has to be done on-site.

(beat - as she thinks)

Ten minutes to execute the protocol, another couple minutes to get over to pad three.

NELSON

So we get on the base, Lins and Schiff... head to the power plant, initiate the overload protocol. I'll start the pre-flight.

CHIKA

While you're doing pre-flight, we'll do a quick search of the ship, make sure it's not onboard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF

So from the time we arrive on the base, we have fifteen minutes to start the overload, then get off the base.

NELSON

No margin for error.

GADDIS can't contain himself any longer and blurts out:

GADDIS

It's not going to be that easy.

(beat)

You said O.S.P. wanted to use this thing for 'Urban Pacification', control protestors in Caracas, try to stop the flow of refugees North.

NELSON

Sounds appropriately heartless.

GADDIS

But maybe O.S.P. isn't the only one with a plan here. Maybe it's got a plan too.

SULLY, EDLOW scoff at the idea. GADDIS is a bit defensive, but determined:

GADDIS (CONT'D)

How did O.S.P. send it here?

NELSON

Cargo ship.

GADDIS

This is a very advanced, sentient alien technology, that can think, strategize, defend itself.

(beat)

So how did O.S.P. manage to put it on the cargo ship? They couldn't force it, so maybe this thing 'allowed' itself to be transported here, because it's carrying out its own agenda.

SULLY

(laughing)

What agenda could it have, way the fuck out here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GADDIS

Look at this from the alien's perspective. I'm speculating, wildly, here - but hear me out...

(beat)

... imagine you're a Type Three civilization, curious about what's happening across the galaxy. You send out these drones, to study different species, and if they discover one that's potentially dangerous, these drones prevent them from traveling too far outside their own solar system, keep the threat contained, so to speak.

NELSON picks up on GADDIS' train of thought, takes it to its conclusion.

NELSON

It's studying us, making that determination, right now. O.S.P. thought it was manipulating this thing, but it was really the other way around.

(beat - to GADDIS)

What if this alien civilization determines humans are dangerous, but can't be contained?

A beat, as GADDIS considers, before:

GADDIS

They destroy us.

INT. CHIKA'S QUARTERS - DAWN

The first rays of the sun filter through the windows. She rolls over in bed, NELSON lies with his back to her:

CHIKA

(looking over NELSON'S shoulder)

Hey. You awake?

He rolls over onto his side, to face her.

CHIKA (CONT'D)

I was just thinking about training, back home. You were such a cocky sonuvabitch. I almost didn't go out with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON
But I'm glad you did.

CHIKA
So am I.

They hold each quietly for a moment.

NELSON
Gaddis had a point back there...
this escape is still very risky...
(off her nodding)
There's a good chance that all of
us won't make it. I might not make
it.

CHIKA
Don't talk like that. We're going
to Proxima City, you and me.
(a beat, as she remembers)
To make sure nothing happens to
you...

She reaches into a drawer at her bedside and pulls out the
omamori. She hands it to NELSON, who takes it and studies it.

NELSON
Your omamori.

CHIKA
My mother gave it to me, before I
left home... now I'm giving it to
you.
(a beat)
Don't open it up, all the good luck
will run out.

He pulls her close. In each others arms they watch as:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - DAY

The sun rises over the horizon, a pale white light
illuminating the tundra.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE GARAGE - ARRAY - DAY

The group makes its way down toward the garage, making the
final adjustments to their EVA suits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON
(to CHIKA, SCHIFF, GADDIS)
Everyone got their assignments?

They nod. Everyone except SULLY.

SULLY
I don't really have a 'job', but if
this thing is as scary as you say
it is, I guess I'm just going to
try not to shit myself.

NELSON
I think I speak for everyone when I
say we'd really appreciate that.

They come to the door for the garage. CHIKA opens the door,
and they step into the:

INT. GARAGE - ARRAY - CONTINUOUS

Gathered around the A.T.V., everyone is now completely suited
up, except for their helmets.

EDLOW
What's the contingency plan if we
run into that thing on the way?
Whadda we do?

LINDSAY
Like I said, we'll be dead or wish
we were.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLACIER - DAY

The vehicle plows through the ice, snow, and driving winds -
across the rugged terrain.

INT. ALL TERRAIN VEHICLE - DAY

It's a bumpy ride and given LINDSAY'S comment before leaving
the array, the mood isn't exactly upbeat.

NELSON
We must be getting close.

SULLY
(to NELSON)
Hey, Weeks, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Yeah?

SULLY

You seem like an okay guy.

NELSON

(not sure how to take
that)

Thanks?

SULLY

And don't take this the wrong way,
but if we make it to Lalande alive,
I'm going to hop on the first
transport that comes through and
pray to God I never see your ass
again.

NELSON

(slight smile)

That's fair.

CHIKA consults the dashboard G.P.S.

CHIKA

We should be coming up on the base
any minute.

NELSON

Gaddis?

GADDIS

(checking his hand-held)

I'm getting some strange readings
on sub-level two.

SCHIFF

(nervously)

That's kind of close.

NELSON

Lins?

LINDSAY works the onboard computer. On her monitor: MAIN
ACCESS SCREEN

LINDSAY

I'm in.

NELSON

On my mark.

EXT. BASE - LANDING PAD THREE - DAY

The A.T.V. comes to a stop just beyond the landing pad, snow and ice swirling around it.

INT. A.T.V. - DAY

The group members, in EVA suits, move into position at the door, tensed and ready to disembark at a moment's notice.

NELSON

Mark.

INT. BASE CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Empty. Dark. Halon gas clouds, smoke and fire damage. Burned away sections of the wall reveal exposed wires that spark in the darkness.

Wandering through this maze of smoke and fire damage is ABBOTT. He's still alive. No eyes. His clothes are dirty and tattered. He says aloud, to no one in particular:

ABBOTT

Border War three-four-seven report.
Organic life. Warden. Proximity.
Stop.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - DAY

Relatively undamaged. What catches our attention is that the ORANGE CYBERNETIC ORGANISM - THE WARDEN is plugged into LINDSAY'S main console. Streams of data cascade down the monitors.

This is the first time we've really seen it in all its 'glory':

Made of a deep orange, alien, alloy. Squat, stocky - like a power-lifter. Cybernetic arms. The digits on each hand are fitted with flame-thrower like nozzles.

A slit of a mouth that serves as a speaker, and 'eyes' that double as ventilation units. Flames and steam pour out of them.

Orange. Cybernetic. Demonic. It is two and a half meters of pure menace. Homicidal intent, given form.

INT. AIRLOCK - LANDING PAD ONE - DAY

A yellow alarm light strobes. The outer door opens.

INT. ALL TERRAIN VEHICLE - DAY

NELSON scans the sensors for signs of the WARDEN, then signals to LINDSAY.

NELSON

Open it.

INT. AIRLOCK - LANDING PAD TWO - DAY

The door opens, and the group spills into the airlock. Once the room depressurizes, the group strip off their suits quickly. NELSON, weapon at the ready, keys the pad next to the door and tenses as the airlock door opens with a loud HISS, revealing:

INT. BASE CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

The aftermath of a pitched battle. The charred walls are pitted with small arms fire. Live wires dangle from charred and exposed sections of wall. The air is thick with dissipating Halon gas and smoke.

They step into the corridor. The stench from the smoke instinctively makes SULLY stop in his tracks and sniff at the air.

SULLY

What the hell is that?

CHIKA does the same. She recognizes the smell.

CHIKA

Do you really want to know?

SULLY considers this.

SULLY

No. Probably not.

LINDSAY and SCHIFF split off to the right. The rest of the group starts to move left.

NELSON

(to LINDSAY and SCHIFF)

Hard out in fifteen minutes.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LEVEL TWO - DAY

On a monitor: A schematic of the base -- red heat dots mark the two groups of base personnel moving toward the Landing Bay and Power Plant.

The WARDEN studies the monitor, before disconnecting from the console and stepping into the center of the room, where it begins to HUM and GLOW.

From beneath its orange endoskeleton, it emits sound and blood orange light, like a miniature star; unlike a star it's not designed for giving light or life, but wholesale slaughter.

The warm orange light within THE WARDEN grows brighter - heat rising off of it in waves.

It begins SHAKING, then speeds up until it is little more than a blur; then it slowly splits in two, like a single-cell organism undergoing mitosis.

The two WARDENS, exchange a short burst of language, then LUMBER away in different directions.

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

In contrast to the Command Center, the damage here is fairly extensive. This corridor is filled with more smoke and sections of the walls burned away. The overhead lights flickering on and off.

NELSON is on point, eyes moving and alert - although the visibility is poor. Just behind him, GADDIS consults the hand-held sensor. EDLOW, SULLY are behind them - with CHIKA bringing up the rear.

EDLOW

(taking in the damage)

Whatever this thing is, it's
barbecued the base.

NELSON

Gaddis. How we doing? Any weird
heat signatures?

GADDIS

(checking the screen)

So far, so good.

INT. THIRD CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

Occasionally choking on the flame retardant gas in the air, LINDSAY and SCHIFF jog down the corridor, toward the power plant.

SCHIFF slows his pace, and looks down: A trail of blackened ash foot prints extend in front of them, then abruptly stop midway down the corridor.

LINDSAY

What is it?

SCHIFF points at the disappearing footprints. LINDSAY looks down - then wishes she hadn't.

They pick up the pace, careful to avoid stepping in the ash footprints.

INT. JUNCTION - LEVEL ONE - DAY

NELSON is still on point, but has momentarily lost his bearings.

NELSON

Where are we headed?

SULLY

We take a left, then a right.

NELSON makes the left, running right into: ABBOTT, clothes torn and dirty, blackened empty eye sockets - ambles toward them, unsteady on his legs - rambling:

ABBOTT

Border War report. Organic life.
Seven systems. Twenty light years.
On going migration. Stop.

NELSON is startled, but quickly regains his composure and moves to help him. He grabs ABBOTT by the shoulders and examines him closely. There is no trace of the genial, affable man he met a couple of days ago.

NELSON

Abbott? Abbott?

EDLOW

What happened to him?

EDLOW moves closer. Looks him up and down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDLOW (CONT'D)
Lieutenant? Sir?
(no response)
The lights are on, but no one's
home.

SULLY
He's like a fucking zombie.

GADDIS
Thank you 'doctor'. Let me have a
look at him.

SULLY
Be my guest, Junior...

Despite the circumstances, SULLY'S nickname still irks him:

GADDIS moves forward to examine him. He uses a second
handheld device to do a quick medical scan. He studies the
handheld readout:

GADDIS
This is fascinating.

EDLOW
You want to share with the rest of
the class?

GADDIS
Well, he's conscious. He's got full
motor control, but his encounter
with 'it' has done some strange
things to his nervous system...

Almost as if on cue:

ABBOTT
Border War three-four-seven report.
Organic life. Warden. Proximity.
Stop.

They're not listening to the words themselves, just focused
on ABBOTT'S bizarre delivery, unsettling SULLY and EDLOW even
more.

SULLY
So what do we do with crazy cakes
here?

NELSON
(to EDLOW)
We're not leaving anyone behind.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (CONT'D)
(to GADDIS)
Left up here, then another right?

The group turns a corner, disappearing from sight.

INT. CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE POWER PLANT - DAY

SCHIFF, also with a hand-held sensor stands guard, checking the corridor. He checks the display: All clear.

He also looks up and down the corridor: peering through the dissipating clouds of white gas. There are dark, large holes in the walls - but it's empty.

But from his reaction, he isn't exactly relieved. He steps back into the:

INT. POWER PLANT - CONTINUOUS

The room is dominated by a large cylindrical fusion reactor. LINDSAY is seated at a nearby control panel. She works frantically, beads of sweat forming on her brow - but her hands fly gracefully over the controls.

She hears SCHIFF re-enter the room, but doesn't look up. Her attention focused on the monitor: INITIATE MANUAL OVERRIDE.

LINDSAY
What's my time, darlin'?

SCHIFF checks his chronograph.

SCHIFF
Six minutes.

LINDSAY'S face a sweaty mask of concentration. A bead of sweat slides down her forehead, off her face.

LINDSAY
Almost there.

He wipes the sweat from her brow. Kisses her forehead for encouragement. Without looking up:

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Thanks, hon.

There is the sound of faint HUM, growing LOUDER, rising above the sound of the power plant.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Do you hear something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCHIFF
It's the reactor.

LINDSAY
No, it's like a hum.

This catches SCHIFF'S attention. He checks the sensor again:
A bright red heat pattern, moving toward them.

SCHIFF
(into EarPod)
Nelson. Almost through down here,
but I think we're about to have
company.

INT. ALTERNATE JUNCTION - LEVEL ONE - DAY

NELSON has slowed down a bit to talk to SCHIFF. The rest of
the group slows down as well. GADDIS, several steps away at
the rear, stops momentarily to check his hand-held.

NELSON
(into EarPod)
Copy that. Finish up and get the
hell out there.

There's a PING from a handheld. GADDIS looks down at his
display and meanders, not paying attention to where he's
going: His device displays the heat patterns as well.

GADDIS
Schiff said it's on his level, but
I've got some strange readings
here.

ABBOTT
Border War three-four-seven report.
Urgent. Organic life. Warden.
Proximity. Stop.

His eyes still glued to the hand-held computer, GADDIS -
followed by ABBOTT - several steps behind, takes an ill-
advised step around the corner into:

INT. JUNCTION - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

Where the WARDEN is looming ominously in the middle of the
corridor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GADDIS
(transfixed)
Incredible.

The WARDEN turns its head and suddenly its blazing eyes are focused on him.

The WARDEN moves closer, it fills the small junction with a series of DEAFENING SCREECHING NOISES, wailing like a banshee.

GADDIS. Rivulets of blood stream from his ears, and he remains glued to the spot, transfixed and unable to move.

ABBOTT, standing meters behind him, is calm, unaffected by the SCREECHING.

GADDIS' face contorts in pain as the light and sound grow louder.

GADDIS (CONT'D)
Ahhhhhhh! Nooooooooo!

He drops the hand-held tablet. It falls to the ground and SHATTERS as...

Geysers of flame shoot out of the WARDEN, racing towards GADDIS like attack dogs let off the leash. The flames engulf him.

He dies screaming.

GADDIS (CONT'D)
Aiiiiiiiiii!

Moments later there is nothing left of him but a human-sized column of ash and smoke.

The walls have caught fire, and extinguishers in the ceiling immediately shoot powerful jets of Halon gas to douse the flames.

NELSON rounds the corner, only to find the WARDEN emerging from a cloud of Halon gas. He grabs ABBOTT with one arm and uses the other to raise his semi-auto and FIRE.

The rifle muzzle strobes as it launches dozens of explosive projectiles.

Catching the WARDEN in a maelstrom of EXPLOSIONS.

NELSON keeps firing until the rifle CLICKS empty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The WARDEN'S damaged, one arm dangles uselessly at its side, hanging on by a few wires.

NELSON reloads and resumes FIRING -- the projectiles EXPLODE across the WARDEN'S midsection. The resulting explosions sever the arm from the body. It falls to the ground with a loud CLANG.

NELSON smiles triumphantly. He reloads a second time, prepared to inflict more damage when he looks down at the ground and notices:

Nano-machines race from the arm, and begin to build an entirely new WARDEN.

Now there are two of them.

NELSON, CHIKA and SULLY stare in awe and terror in equal measure. NELSON is first to snap out of the reverie and pushes the others in the opposite direction.

NELSON
Go! Go! Go!

Without argument, they turn and run:

INT. FIFTH CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

They sprint toward the airlock.

NELSON
(into EarPod - as he runs)
Guys, you need to get out of there,
right now.

INT. POWER PLANT - DAY

LINDSAY frantically works the controls, while SCHIFF tries to suppress his escalating terror:

SCHIFF
Sweetie?!

LINDSAY
(looking down at her
panel)
I'm done. Let's git.

SCHIFF helps her to her feet, gently moves her towards the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They hurriedly step out into:

INT. CORRIDOR - SUB-BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

SCHIFF and LINDSAY take a careful step away from the door, then turn and run back down the hall towards the elevator. Behind them, the corridor is filled with the sound of unnatural HUMMING.

SCHIFF and LINDSAY reach the elevator, relieved to find it open. They rush in and SCHIFF...

INT. ELEVATOR - SUB-BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

...stabs at the 'level one' button then the CLOSE DOOR button. For what seems an eternity, the doors remain stubbornly open as the HUMMING sound grows closer. Finally, just as the sound reaches the end of the corridor, the doors slide shut.

The elevator ride is brief. The car stops, and they step out into:

INT. CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

SCHIFF is out first, LINDSAY is just behind him. They turn a corner:

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

SCHIFF looks down at his chronograph.

SCHIFF

We've got...

It happens quickly. Thick ORANGE digits appear in the door seam. The air fills with the SCREAM of metal, as the heavy elevator door behind them is rent in two.

The corridor is suddenly filled with the deeply unnerving HUM and orange pulsating light.

They turn around only to find the WARDEN - lumbering menacingly down the corridor behind them - SCREECHING as it sets upon them.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)

RUN!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With some difficulty, they manage to turn and break into a sprint. LINDSAY only makes it a few strides when the WARDEN unleashes a river of fire:

SCHIFF slows down when he hears her SCREAM. He turns and watches the person he loves most in the world die horribly:

Only LINDSAY'S face and hands are visible - the flesh burning away. Her mouth locked in a horrific scream, and her hands clutch desperately at the air, grabbing at nothing, instinctively trying to pull her away from certain death.

Her grasping hands disappear inside the cloud of flame - as she's incinerated.

SCHIFF'S delay proves to be costly - as the WARDEN moves towards him with surprising speed. The SCREECHING growing LOUDER as it approaches and UNLEASHES A TORRENT OF FLAME.

His sidearm barely clears his holster before...

The light of the flames is the last thing SCHIFF sees.

SCHIFF (CONT'D)

NOOO!

INT. SIXTH CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - DAY

The remaining survivors: CHIKA, NELSON, EDLOW, SULLY and ABBOTT are in full flight, running down the corridor. They hear the SCREAMS and it stops them in their tracks.

SCHIFF

(over EarPod)

Noooo!

NELSON

Schiff!

(into EarPod)

Schiff. Lins. Come in.

Silence. Desperate, NELSON tries to reach them again.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Schiff. Lins. Come in. I repeat.

Come in.

Again, silence. It sends EDLOW over the edge:

EDLOW

To hell with this!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He drops ABBOTT to the ground, and runs past them, around a corner:

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

EDLOW, breathing hard, stops for a moment to catch his breath. He says to himself:

EDLOW
Get to the A.T.V., head back to the
array, wait for a rescue.

With his new plan, he feels energized, and moves forward, down the corridor. He takes a turn to his right:

INT. FIRST CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

Which he knows will lead him toward the A.T.V., but today it will also lead him straight to: the WARDEN.

The WARDEN fixes its fiery gaze on EDLOW. Its speakermouth emits that terrible, unearthly noise:

EDLOW is rooted to the spot. The SCREECHING NOISE grows louder, deafening, unbearable.

Tears of blood stream from the corners of EDLOW'S eyes AND ears.

The WARDEN STOMPS across the length of the corridor in the blink of an eye, SCREECHING as it does so.

It happens so quickly, EDLOW doesn't have time to do much more than scream:

EDLOW
GOOODDDDD! NOOO!

It unleashes a jet of fire, the force of which lifts him off the ground, searing flesh and bone as it does.

A pair of burning hands, reaching out imploringly from the cloud of flame, are the last we see of SGT. EDLOW.

INT. SIXTH CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

Where NELSON, SULLY, CHIKA and ABBOTT can hear EDLOW SCREAMING. They turn, and run into:

INT. SEVENTH CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

CHIKA stops for a moment to consult a map on a wall-mounted monitor.

CHIKA

We'll have to go the long way.

They keep pick up the pace. SULLY helps ABBOTT along, but it slows him down. A gap starts to open up between them, and CHIKA and NELSON up ahead.

SULLY

Hey, slow down. I can't keep up.

NELSON drops back to help with ABBOTT. He throws one of ABBOTT'S arms over his shoulders and half carries him forward.

NELSON

(to CHIKA)

Keep going.

INT. EIGHTH CORRIDOR - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

They pause for a moment, so NELSON can catch his breath.

CHIKA

You okay?

NELSON leans ABBOTT against the wall.

NELSON

One sec. How much farther?

CHIKA

Two more turns and we're there.

NELSON

How we doing on time?

SULLY checks his chronograph.

SULLY

We've got five minutes.

NELSON

Okay break's over, let's go.

He throws ABBOTT'S arm over his shoulder and they move forward.

INT. NINTH CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - DAY

The Demeter and safety - are in sight. NELSON breathes a sigh of relief.

NELSON
(handing ABBOTT over to
SULLY)
Take him. I'm going to start the
pre-flight.

SULLY
Isn't that going to attract some
attention?

CHIKA
Possibly. I'll stand watch, give
you a shout if I hear it.

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

NELSON settles into the pilot seat, activates the ship's
systems. The consoles come to life.

SULLY sits ABBOTT into one of the seats behind the pilot, and
straps him in.

ABBOTT
Border War three-four-seven report.
Warden. Organic life. Proximity.
Stop.

SULLY
(humoring him)
Yeah, yeah 'Border War Report', we
got it, buddy.

ABBOTT smiles at SULLY'S apparent comprehension.

SULLY (CONT'D)
Okay, you just sit tight, we're
going to go for a ride.
(to NELSON)
How you doing up there?

NELSON
Just about finished.

SULLY
For awhile there, it didn't look
like we were going to pull this
off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Don't pop the champagne. We're not
out of here yet.

NELSON climbs out of the pilot's seat and heads back into:

INT. CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - DAY

NELSON finds CHIKA surveying the area, weapon drawn.

NELSON

How we doing?

CHIKA

Good. No sign of it.

NELSON

Come on.

He puts his arm around her. They turn and start toward the door when the corridor is suddenly alive with the HUMMING and GARBLED ALIEN LANGUAGE.

NELSON (CONT'D)

No.

They turn and are about to break into a run; just as they've reached the inner airlock, CHIKA stops - seems to make a decision.

CHIKA

Nelson.

NELSON stops and turns. Inexplicably she moves toward him, slides her arms over his shoulders, leans in and kisses him deeply, passionately.

INT. AIRLOCK - DEMETER - DAY

SULLY hears the strange unearthly HUMMING, and emerges in the airlock, only to be greeted by the improbable sight of NELSON and CHIKA locked in a passionate embrace.

SULLY

People! We do NOT have time for
this!

CHIKA breaks the kiss. Pauses a moment to savor it - then pushes NELSON away, her implant generated strength sends him stumbling backward across the threshold, into the:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INT. AIRLOCK - DEMETER - CONTINUOUS

Once he's inside - she calmly walks over to the door control on the other side - punches in a sequence - and the door slides down between with a heavy THUNK.

CHIKA stares at NELSON through the small observation window in the door.

CHIKA
(louder, as the corridor
is filled with the
HUMMING)
I'm going to buy you some time.

NELSON
(pleading)
Please open the door. Don't do
this!

The light from the WARDENS is just visible just around the corner. She smiles:

CHIKA
Remember...don't open the omamori,
all the luck will run out.

INT. AIRLOCK - DEMETER - DAY

NELSON grips the handle next to the airlock...watching the light from the WARDENS grow brighter and closer.

CHIKA
(into EarPod)
I love you, Mister Weeks.

Before he can answer he can hear the HUM growing louder, the strange WARPED noises drowning out everything else.

Behind him, SULLY checks his wrist chronograph: 02:53, 02:52, 02:51...

SULLY grabs him forcefully by the arms and drags NELSON into the Demeter.

NELSON
CHIKA!

The door closes behind them.

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

As they strap themselves into the acceleration chairs, NELSON tries to re-focus on the task at hand. He finishes the pre-flight. The engines ROAR to life.

SULLY checks the time again: 00:58, 00:57, 00:56...

SULLY

Hurry up or we're not getting out
of here.

INT. CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - DAY

CHIKA stares down the trio of WARDENS, now standing menacingly at the end of the corridor. The air is filled with the strange alien HUMMING sound.

CHIKA taps an implant button, behind her ear.

POV - CHIKA: A heads up display of the WARDENS. A 'Mute' icon appears in the upper left-hand corner, as everything goes quiet.

She stands facing them, a huge grin plastered on her face.

The WARDENS takes a menacing step towards her. She unslings a large, powerful rifle and FIRES. The shells explode against their endoskeletons.

CHIKA switches from 'semi-auto' to 'full-auto'.

She fires at them again. The rifle spits out explosive shells almost faster than the eye can see: RAINING FIRE and DESTRUCTION on THE WARDENS.

The SECOND WARDEN is decapitated. Nano-machines emerge from its neck, where it builds a new head. On the ground behind it, the decapitated head, builds a new body beneath it.

Now there are four.

She slings her weapon. Instead of trying to elude them, she charges them.

The first WARDEN, starts to glow, preparing to belch fire at her - but she's closed the distance too quickly.

She leaps into the air, delivering a CRUNCHING kick to its head. The kick would've killed most humans, instead it barely dents the WARDEN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She bounces off, but lands gracefully between the two WARDENS.

She spins, turning her attention to the SECOND WARDEN, raining punishing blows on its midsection. The devastating punches barely dent it.

The FIRST WARDEN, now charged - turns and sprays fire, but CHIKA is ready. She leaps over the stream of fire, like a Olympic runner clearing a hurdle. Instead of vaporizing CHIKA, the flames decimate the SECOND WARDEN.

Smoke rises from the endoskeleton of the WARDENS, caught in the cross-fire; badly damaged but still functional.

CHIKA lands on her feet, just behind them. As soon as her feet hit the ground, she's already in motion, turning a corner into:

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

CHIKA sprints down the corridor, looking over her shoulder.

CHIKA

Come on you orange motherfuckers...

Finally, the remaining WARDENS appear at the far end of the corridor. She purposefully slows, so they can close the distance between them. She rounds the corner into:

INT. THIRD CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - CONTINUOUS

She closes the door at the end of the corridor, then shoots the keypad next to the door.

CHIKA

That should keep you busy for a couple.

Moments later there is a loud BANGING on the door. The door itself begins to buckle.

CHIKA backs away, midway down the corridor she stops to consult the stopwatch on her display: It reads -00:15

She reaches the end of the corridor, then turns around. The door caves in and THE WARDENS step through the breach.

This is going to be her last stand. She raises her weapon and FIRES:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unleashing the full explosive power of the weaponry on the WARDENS.

The corridor is illuminated by the FLASH of projectiles EXPLODING, slicing through the endoskeletons of the WARDENS.

The leg of the THIRD WARDEN is badly damaged, preventing it from advancing. The other two are damaged, but bear down on her.

CHIKA'S gun finally runs out of ammunition and clicks empty. She throws her gun CLATTERING to the ground and steels herself.

Each of the remaining WARDENS begins to power up and the corridor is filled with HUMMING. As the HUMMING grows louder, their bodies begin to glow red and orange.

She stares them down. Her face is a mask of defiance, but in her MIND'S EYE - she replays images from their life together:

CHIKA and NELSON getting married.
Cooking dinner together in their first home.
Walking arm-in-arm down a street in the South End.
Being re-united at the base.
NELSON'S face through the observation window.

She smiles, closes her eyes and waits for the flames to consume her.

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

Fighting through his emotions, NELSON pulls back on the stick, and the ship lifts off the ground.

EXT. LANDING PAD THREE - DAY

The large freighter rises over the station, and into the night sky.

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

NELSON hits the throttle, and they're both pushed back into their seats by the g-force.

SULLY checks his chronograph once more: -00:12, 00:11, 00:10

INT. THIRD CORRIDOR - OFF AIRLOCK - LEVEL ONE - DAY

CHIKA'S face is suddenly bathed in the bluish light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POV - CHIKA: Her readout quickly analyzing something else that's appeared in the corridor in front of her.

Despite the approaching flames, her expression is more curious than frightened.

When the flames reach the space CHIKA was standing in, she's gone.

Again, there's no sign of her. A lone, still-blinking EarPod, lies on the ground - untouched by the flames.

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

NELSON tries to focus on piloting the ship into space, certain that the love of his life is about to die.

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - GLIESE - DAY

The station EXPLODES, covering the surface in a blanket of nuclear fire, followed by a flash of bright blue light that sears to white...

INT. BRIDGE - DEMETER - DAY

NELSON and SULLY focus their attention on the ship's in-flight systems; NELSON still struggling with his anger and grief.

SULLY punches in coordinates to the navigational computer, then tries to lighten the mood (in his own inimitable way):

SULLY

As soon as we land I'm going to
find a Four Seasons and get a
hooker... or two...

ABBOTT secured in the seat behind them in his own world.
NELSON doesn't so much as crack a smile.

SULLY (CONT'D)

Too soon?

Too tired and grief-stricken to laugh at his attempts at humor, NELSON instead punches in the coordinates:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

The people that set that thing
loose on us, always avoid
accountability by saying no person
made the decision, so no one's ever
responsible.

NELSON reaches into a pocket on his EVA suit and removes:
The omamori, the prayer book, still encased in its plastic
sleeve.

He turns it over his hand, careful not to open it.

NELSON (CONT'D)

We're going back, and I'm going to
track down anyone that had anything
to do with this. I don't care if
they go to prison or they die
horribly.

NELSON closes his fist around the omamori.

NELSON (CONT'D)

One way or another they're all
going to pay. Every single one of
them.

SULLY

Before we go back to Earth on a
whole murder, revenge spree,
something's been bugging me...

(beat)

You said Geo Energy tried to
destroy that thing on Luyten, they
set off a nuke, trying... but it
was still functional enough to make
its way to Rim.

NELSON considers, then finishes SULLY'S thought.

NELSON

Maybe the explosion at the base
didn't destroy it either.

As he considers the implications.

NELSON (CONT'D)

If Gaddis was right, and it's from
a...

SULLY

'Type Three Civilization'.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Off NELSON'S surprised reaction:

SULLY (CONT'D)
Yeah, don't look so shocked, I was
paying attention... these type
three aliens decide they can't
confine humanity, and they want to
wipe us out, where do they go next?

ABBOTT pipes up behind them:

ABBOTT
Border War three-four-seven report.
Organic life. Seven systems. Twenty
light years. On going migration.
(a beat - then something
new)
One hundred seventy nine degrees,
fifty six hours, thirty nine point
four minutes. Zero degrees, twenty
hours, forty-six point two minutes.
Stop.

NELSON
(listening more intently)
Sounded like coordinates.

He types a sequence into the navigational computer.

NELSON (CONT'D)
Let's see...

He studies the result, then looks up from the display, as if
he's seen a ghost:

NELSON (CONT'D)
Oh no.

EXT. GLIESE PRIME - DAY

A drift on the snowy, windswept surface.

SULLY (V.O.)
Where's 'it' going?

A single orange cybernetic hand BURSTS through the surface of
a snowdrift.

A second cybernetic hand follows it. The two hands find
purchase, and one of THE WARDENS pulls itself up out of a
huge crater.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Miraculously one of them has survived. It's damaged, but still functional.

The WARDEN turns its head from side to side, damaged servos WHINING in protest. Sensors survey the damage from the nuclear detonation.

POV - WARDEN: The air is again filled with snowflakes and ash. Internal displays indicate extremely high levels of radiation.

Cold and calculating, it continues its survey - before being interrupted by the THUNDEROUS ROAR of engines.

Looking up, it sees: A ROVER. A gargantuan golden warship of non-human manufacture.

This one isn't half-buried in a Luyten rainforest. It is functional, space-worthy, bristling with weaponry and terrifying to behold.

Landing struts extended, it descends on glowing columns of light -- briefly illuminating the darkened landscape.

The warship sets down, CRUSHING rocks and burnt soil beneath its struts. The hull searchlights play across the terrain, searching for non-existent survivors.

With a HISS of pneumatics, a door slides open.

The WARDEN trudges through the blasted landscape. Climbing through the open door.

The door closes behind it with a HISS. The powerful engines of the ship ROAR to life. Ascending on beams of light, the ROVER lift-offs from the planet surface.

INT. BRIDGE - ROVER - CONTINUOUS

THE WARDEN settles into a console, connects to the on-board computer.

A high-res 3-D image of our solar system appears.

It taps out a sequence on the console. A computer model predicts migration patterns:

On the 3-D model seven lines arc out from Earth to nearby star systems. On each planet, icons appear, representing HUMANS. The icons multiply rapidly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then from those seven planets, another set of arrows arc out - to 14 more systems...

The WARDEN examines the rapidly expanding HUMAN ICONS and network of lines. It's seen enough. It taps the console and the 3-D model disappears.

It works the console again, bringing up a navigational chart.

A course, displayed as a dotted orange line, is plotted:

The dotted orange line leads directly to Earth.

EXT. SPACE - SAME

The superluminal engines of the ROVER ignite, like twin suns.

The stars warp and bend, as the ship streaks away - disappearing against the backdrop of stars - and into the endless night.

FADE TO BLACK.

The End