

GO DARK

written by

LOGLINE: A wheelchair user cargo pilot, stranded on the edge of interstellar space, is thrust into the fight of her life when a team of deadly mercenaries board her ship intent on stealing a mysterious artefact.

Email:

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EXT. BEACH - DAY

Idyllic beach. Crystal blue waters. Warm sun.

A WOMAN, late twenties, frolics in the surf. Emphasis on her LEGS. Smooth and toned under a thigh length summer dress.

A chiseled MAN takes her in his arms and they laugh.

So sickeningly perfect, they can't be real.

PERFECT MAN

It's so wonderful, you and me,
taking a walk along the shoreline
again.

PERFECT WOMAN

I know. After my accident I never
thought it would be possible. I
don't know how anyone could live
like that.

PERFECT MAN

I feel sad for them and will be
forever grateful to BSI
CYBERNETICS.

The couple keep walking as "inspirational" music kicks in.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Bennu Star Industries Cybernetics
Division have been creating
implants that have helped thousands
of people live a full and normal
life across the colonies for over
forty years -- Now you can too.

We cut to THE WOMAN TALKING TO CAMERA:

PERFECT WOMAN

BSI Cybernetic implants gave me my
life back. They rebuilt my legs and
showed me that you should never
give up on your dreams.

PERFECT MAN

I love you.

PERFECT WOMAN

And I love you.

They continue along the beach until a FREEZE FRAME.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

BSI Cybernetics. Be the real you,
CAPTAIN IMALA ROE.

The HOLOGRAM CRACKLES with the BSI LOGO...

INT. CARGO SHIP BATHROOM - DAY

It hangs in mid-air. The brown eyes of IMALA ROE, 22, watch on. Unkempt hair tied back. Strong shoulders and arms under her vest. Engine grease under her fingernails.

She deactivates the ad projected from a device on her wrist.

IMALA

What a crock.

She hits a panel. Nothing.

She activates her comms -- Same wrist device.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac?

No response.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac? You there? You forgot to refill the toilet paper dispenser... Again. We humans have needs you know -- Mac!

Silence.

IMALA (CONT'D)

I guess in space, no one can hear you pee.

The woman shuffles a blue flight suit back on. The BSI logo on the breast.

She pushes herself up on the HANDRAILS on either side and takes an uneasy step over to a worn, carbon fibre WHEELCHAIR.

The toilet flushes automatically as Imala places her hands in a sanitiser unit. It only takes a second. She pulls on her well worn fingerless gloves and wheels out.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

Silhouetted against a blue sun, a BENNU STAR INDUSTRIES CARGO SHIP emerges. Starlight catches against the bulky hull.

It's large, lumbering and butt ugly. Detachable cargo holds running along its belly.

INT. CARGO SHIP CORRIDOR B - DAY

The pilot wheels herself onto a wide industrial corridor.

A sudden SHUDDER rocks the ship.

AN ALARM.

IMALA
What was that?

The ship GROANS...

Imala GRABS the wall. The ship LURCHING to one side.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Damn it, Mac...

The young woman guns it toward the elevator.

Wheels lock in place. The elevator rises up to...

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Imala emerges into CHAOS. Alarms wail. Lights flash. Sparks fly. THINGS FLOAT. Where the hell is Mac?

She hits the pad on her wrist and the captain's chair spins across the deck and grinds to a stop short of the elevator.

IMALA
Are you kidding me?

Imala unbuckles herself and FLOATS UP AND AWAY.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Mac, what the hell is going on?

She moves with grace. She's done this a thousand times.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Mac!

Imala reaches a control console. Checks the readout.

The ships MEDICAL AND MAINTENANCE ANDROID COMPANION or MAC bursts their head out from under the console.

They are unthreatening, no uncanny valley here. An interface on the head displays facial features to express emotion.

MAC
Is there a problem, Captain Roe?

IMALA
Well, every alarm on the ship is going off. We're veering off course. My chair has jammed. I'm floating around like Mary goddamn Poppins and we are out of toilet paper. Again!

The ship SHAKES violently.

MAC

There was nothing in the maintenance log -- Reinstating artificial gravity field now.

The robot disappears back under the console.

IMALA

No, wait--

Imala grabs the CAPTAIN'S CHAIR -- Artificial gravity field kicks in -- She THUMPS onto the seat. Hurts.

MAC

Did you say something?

IMALA

Never mind.

The robot pushes themselves up, SPINNING ITS ARMS AND TORSO a full 360 as it maneuvers out from under the console.

Now standing at over six feet, Mac is vaguely humanoid but bulkier, rounder.

MAC

How would you like to proceed with the current crisis?

IMALA

First chair. Next, what crisis?

The android KICKS the chair. CLUNK. It rotates into position.

MAC

While running a routine ship diagnostic, a faulty conductor overloaded the ships main power core causing ship-wide system failure including navigation controls and shields. Auxiliary systems are functioning... For now.

Imala checks the readouts.

IMALA

At least we won't suffocate.

MAC

I do not require air to function.

IMALA

Oh well, as long as you're okay--
How'd this happen?

MAC

Routine maintenance of the
conductors was scheduled for six
months ago.

IMALA

I was gonna get round to it.

Imala taps some controls. Unresponsive.

IMALA (CONT'D)

You at least locate which one?

MAC

I believe the problem originated in
cargo hold D9 where there has also
been a catastrophic loss in
pressure which has pushed us onto a
collision course with asteroid
9746292F. By my calculations, we
have 9 minutes 42 seconds to avoid
certain destruction.

Imala checks out the window...

EXT. SPACE - DAY

A giant ASTEROID dwarfs the freighter.

They're on a COLLISION COURSE.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

She returns to her readouts.

IMALA

Did you seal off the hold?

MAC

Emergency protocols appear
unresponsive.

The view screen highlights cargo hold D9 -- Flashing red.

IMALA

I'll have to go down there.

She spins the captain's chair over to the elevator.

MAC

Without shields that is a highly
dangerous course of action.

IMALA

I'll wear legs.

Imala has very limited use of her legs. She climbs up out of the captains chair takes a few steps over to her wheelchair.

MAC

You hate wearing legs.

Imala grabs a gun like multi-tool on the wall.

IMALA

Tell me something I don't know.

She descends.

MAC

Humanity has discovered one thousand, six hundred and thirty eight habitable planets in the known galaxy and we are yet to find any signs of advanced alien --

The robot spins round to look at Imala but...

MAC (CONT'D)

She has gone.

INT. LEVEL D CORRIDOR - DAY

Bulkhead door opens, Imala WALKS IN.

Dressed in a full spacesuit and LEGS - An unreliable EXOSKELETON SUIT that aids Imala's walking runs from her spine down her legs. Hinges at the knees light up GREEN.

She takes a step forward. The Leg hinges turn RED, freezing.

IMALA

Damn it!

A hard slap and the erratic tech splutters to life.

IMALA (CONT'D)

How do I always get myself into these things?

MAC (O.S.)

The legs?

IMALA

No. Situations like this I mean.

She moves down the corridor, cargo holds either side. Loading-bay and airlock beyond.

CUTTING BETWEEN IMALA AND MAC ON FLIGHT DECK AS NECESSARY:

MAC

Upkeep of a BSI freighter is the responsibility of the operating captain. If the conductors had been replaced--

IMALA

Yeah, yeah... Look, if we live through this I'll make it my top priority.

Imala stops at HOLD D9. She checks the display on her suit's wrist - **03:15**.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Hey, Mac, what we hauling in here anyway?

MAC (O.S)

One hundred thousand units of dehydrated shellfish compound.

She opens the door. GRAVITY BOOTS ACTIVATING.

INT. CARGO HOLD D9 CONTROL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Imala's eyes go wide.

IMALA

Well, we ain't anymore.

A massive FIVE METER TEAR IN THE HULL.

METEOR ROCK embedded in the floor. Cargo obliterated.

Imala is in a narrow control annexe - too narrow for a wheelchair. There should be a secondary shield wall between her and the cargo but it's NOT WORKING.

Remnants of the cargo flutter around. She pulls a safety cable from her suit. Tethers herself to the wall of the ship - Not the most secure job.

She moves to a control panel on the left side of the shield wall and checks the readouts.

IMALA (CONT'D)

A conductor tripped out the whole system. It'll take ages to find and replace. We should just jettison the hold and reboot, that should give us a kick start.

Imala types in more commands.

MAC

Jettisoning a cargo hold from the inside without a shield wall will almost certainly result in death.

Imala checks her wrist - **2:38**.

IMALA

So will doing nothing! I ain't dying for a room full of fish food. Just be ready.

MAC (O.S.)

Very well.

IMALA

Computer. Override BSI protocol 973. Authorisation code Roe7263.

A RED WARNING flashes up on the screen.

SHIPS COMPUTER

Access denied.

IMALA

Computer. Override BSI protocol 973. Authorisation code Roe7263.

SHIPS COMPUTER

Access denied. Captain Imala Roe, please contact your BSI section logistics chief to update your authorisation code clearance.

IMALA

Mac, the computer's being a jerk again.

MAC (O.S.)

Full designation is required.

Imala groans.

IMALA

Computer. Override BSI protocol 973. Authorisation code Roe, Captain, Imala 7263.

There's another pause...

SHIPS COMPUTER

Access granted.

IMALA

Yes!

The manual release controls pop out.

She turns the first. HISS. THUNK.

IMALA (CONT'D)
One down.

She checks her timer - **1:59**.

Imala hurries to the other side. Then...

A step but her LEG DOES NOT MOVE.

IMALA (CONT'D)
No, no, not now.

The hinge on her suit flashes red. It's seized up.

MAC
Are you ready to release? We have
less than 2 minutes to alter
course.

IMALA
Damn legs have locked up. This is
why I never wear these things.

Imala is a foot or so short of the release lever.

Legs frozen.

1:42.

She reaches.

The suit grinds stubbornly.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Come on you piece of...

Imala slams them hard.

They splutter. Flash GREEN.

She steps forward -- Pulls the manual release.

There is a HISS and a RUMBLE.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

Clamps release and the cargo hold breaks off of the massive
ship leaving Imala exposed to the VOID OF SPACE.

INT. CARGO HOLD D9 CONTROL CORRIDOR - DAY

Imala is RIPPED OFF HER FEET -- The tether SNAPS tight. The
clip BUCKLES.

IMALA

Do it.

MAC

Initiating reboot. All systems are
offline -- Now.

Imala dangles there. Alone. The clip strains.

IMALA

Mac...

The clip SNAPS. Imala HURTLES towards open space.

The fizz of SHIELDS coming up. Pressure returns. Imala
CRASHES to the ground. That was too close.

MAC (O.S.)

Shields back online. Other systems
returning. Are you alright?

IMALA

Fine. On my way.

INT. LEVEL D CORRIDOR/ELEVATOR - DAY

Imala rushes to the elevator. Checks - **0:55.**

Systems coming back online around her.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The cargo ship lists toward the massive asteroid.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Mac waits by the controls.

Imala climbs into the captain's chair.

The ASTEROID fills the window.

IMALA

This is gonna be tight.

MAC

I calculate that you will die in
approximately 24 seconds.

PROXIMITY ALARM HOWLES.

IMALA

So will you.

Imala rattles in commands.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Warning. Collision imminent in
10... 9... 8... 7...

The sound of systems powering up. Lights blink on.

IMALA
We're back. Give me manual.

Mac switches control to Imala.

SHIPS COMPUTER
4... 3... 2... 1...

Imala grabs the stick, pushing down hard.

IMALA
Hold ooonnn!

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The asteroid dominates. They are done for.

The freighter dips . SCRAPING THE EDGE -- ROCK SHATTERS,
SHIELDS CRACKLE but hold.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

THUNDERING rock against metal. The bridge rattles.

Mac - an expression of abject terror.

Imala tense - through gritted teeth.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

Then...

The ship roars clear of the asteroid.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Imala exhales.

Mac looks at their human companion as she removes her helmet.

MAC
Control will not be happy.

IMALA
Ah, they can sue me.

MAC

I am 98% certain the contractor will. This was a third party charter. You know how they can be.

IMALA

Ah, shi--

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The freighter WHOOSHES past out to space leaving a trail of debris and space rock behind which fade to --

TITLE CARD: GO DARK

EXT. TÌREIL CITY - DAY

A sparkling futuristic city. A violet sky and alien sun.

INT. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY - DAY

LILLY BRAESE, sixtyish, unassuming librarian makes her way through the rows of ancient books and digital technology.

The library is a grand place - part museum, part architectural wonder.

Lilly passes an athletic, classy, WOMAN in her mid-forties. Long stylish coat, short brown hair and sleek metallic CYBERNETIC ARMS. The woman is flicking through a copy of CRIME AND PUNISHMENT.

They share a smile and Lilly moves on past.

The woman watches the librarian.

INT. DIFF PART LIBRARY - DAY

A dark corner of the library. No students. Quiet.

Lilly, at one end of a long dark row. Cataloguing.

TWO MEN appear at the other.

They are in silhouette. Lilly cannot see their faces but there they are, watching, unmoving.

LILLY

Hello? Can I help you?

No response.

LILLY (CONT'D)

Are you lost?

Nothing.

Lilly scurries away. She looks over her shoulder...

The men have GONE.

Relief. She turns the corner--

A volatile ball of jitters, ticks and tattoos named TWITCH creeps out of the shadows. DIY mechanical implants running from a unit at the base of his neck.

TWITCH
Where --

LILLY
I'm sorry?

Lilly backs away but GLITCH, high strung, physically gnarled and tense from his implants, blocks her escape.

Together they're like Bobcat Goldthwaite's rabid, Borg cousins. Every word is a violent battle to get out.

GLITCH
is it -- Where is it?

LILLY
Where is what?

GLITCH
You -- know --

TWITCH
What -- Where?

LILLY
I'm sorry but I don't know what either of you are talking about?

Twitch closes the gap.

GLITCH
Yes -- you --

TWITCH
Do -- The f'ing what the professor had.

LILLY
Professor Holvoet?

GLITCH
Him.

TWITCH
That f'ing they -- dug up.

GLITCH
Planet! On -- that planet -- Oro.

LILLY
I'm just an administrator I'm
afraid. I don't deal with the
professor's private affairs.

TWITCH
Not -- what we --

GLITCH
Heard -- you and him -- very

TWITCH
Private.

LILLY
I... I'm sorry but he didn't give
me anything. He left some time ago.

SMASH. Glitch's POWER ASSISTED FIST denting the wall.

GLITCH
She's mucking us --

TWITCH
About -- She is.

GLITCH
Time to--

Twitch grabs Lilly round the throat.

TWITCH
Hurt--

LILLY
I...

A MALE STUDENT stumbles into view.

Twitch eyes him over his shoulder.

TWITCH
Do one --

The boy doesn't have to be told twice. Twitch turns his
attention back to Lilly. Glitch is still looking at someone.

TWITCH (CONT'D)
I f'ought -- I said --

He turns but this is no student.

WOMAN

Twitch and Glitch. What are you boys doing in a library? Never took either of you for big readers.

Twitch is shocked to see...

TWITCH

Weaver?

WEAVER, the woman with cybernetic arms and a penchant for Dostoevsky gives them a wry smile. She picks up a book.

WEAVER

Me on the other hand, I love books.

Twitch LUNGES. Big mistake.

He swings. A wild punch -- WEAVER pirouettes and intercepts.

She counters smashing the spine of the book HARD into his FACE. Twitch crashes into nearby bookshelves.

WEAVER (CONT'D)

They can teach you so much.

Glitch dives for her. She thrusts out a perfectly timed BACK KICK knocking the wind out of the man.

WEAVER (CONT'D)

For example, if you'd ever read a book in your life you might be aware that backstreet junk tech is no match for real cybernetics.

Twitch comes again. Weaver dodges. Grabs the implant on the man's lower neck -- PULLS IT OUT. He's down.

Glitch hurtles a power assisted PUNCH at her. Misses. Hits the wall -- ARM STUCK.

Weaver takes a grip of it. A SNAP OF BONE. Glitch falls to his knees. Squealing. Sparks sizzle from his implants.

Weaver blows hair out of her eyes. Grabs the implant on Glitch's spine. She RIPS IT OUT. The man flops to the floor.

Lilly is in shock.

Weaver helps her up.

WEAVER (CONT'D)

It's alright.

LILLY

Thank you. Those men --

A small NEEDLE shoots out of Weaver's robotic palm. She jabs Lilly in the back of the neck. Quick, unnoticed... almost.

LILLY (CONT'D)

Ouch.

WEAVER

Are you alright?

The librarian rubs her neck.

LILLY

Yes... Yes, it's nothing.

Weaver leads her to a nearby table and helps her into a seat.

WEAVER

Here, sit. Just take a moment.
Breathe in... and out...

The woman does as instructed, calming down.

WEAVER (CONT'D)

Now, Lilly, I don't have long and I need your help.

LILLY

Me?

WEAVER

I know you are just trying to look out for your friend but--

LILLY

Wait, who are you?

WEAVER

Professor Holvoet took something that didn't belong to him and it's my job to get it back.

LILLY

I don't understand? All this fuss over a worthless trinket?

WEAVER

Maybe. But that's not how the people I work for see it.

Lilly is getting light-headed, tipsy.

LILLY

Honestly, it's junk. I told him to throw it away... but you know men and their junk...

Tipsy trips into drunk.

LILLY (CONT'D)
 ...Can't leave it alone. Ha!
 (slurring)
 What have you done to me?

WEAVER
 I've given you a fast-acting
 psychoactive agent, you'll get real
 honest for about a minute before
 you pass out and die peacefully in
 your sleep.

Lilly is getting drowsy.

LILLY
 Oh dear -- Well, you'd better get a
 move on then...

The librarian stops talking. Eyes slide shut.

Weaver takes her hand. Squeezes. Slightly. It's enough.

WEAVER
 Lilly?

Lilly jerks awake for a second. Her eyes glazed.

LILLY
 Yes?

WEAVER
 Where did Professor Holvoet take
 the artefact?

Lilly looks Weaver in the eye. She's going to pass out...

LILLY
 Korvelle... Station...

WEAVER
 Thank you, Lilly.

Weaver gets up to leave. Lilly GRABS HER ARM. It's a shock
 even for a seasoned pro like Weaver.

LILLY
 With all things there is a cost...
 To admit one's sins... is to pay
 the price...

The woman slips away. Weaver looks at her for a moment,
 spooked by her final words.

The kid returns with TWO SECURITY OFFICERS. Weaver is GONE.

EXT. TÌREIL UNIVERSITY - DAY

Weaver comes down the library steps still distracted.

A man is waiting. Leaning against a wall, he twirls a KNIFE in one hand. This is BILLIS, mid-fifties and mean as hell. He eyes the young co-eds passing by.

Weaver reaches him.

BILLIS
Problem?

WEAVER
The Criel brothers.

BILLIS
What'd those mech-head freaks want?

WEAVER
The same thing we do.

BILLIS
Another crew? Guess you can't trust anyone these days.

WEAVER
Get a team together. We head out within the hour. Make sure they're company. Can't risk freelancers on this one.

BILLIS
Yes ma'am. We got a heading?

WEAVER
Korvelle Station.

They disappear into the crowd passing SECURITY OFFICERS and a MED TEAM rushing up to the library.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The BSI freighter rumbles past.

IMALA (O.S.)
Hey, is that true what you said...

INT. UNDERFLOOR/MAINTENANCE TUNNEL - DAY

Imala lies flat on her back surrounded by the inner workings of her ship. She's busy pulling out a circuit.

She cuts around the casing with the multi-tool's laser. Finally, it comes free. It's fried.

IMALA

--Gotcha--

Imala zips along under the flooring of the ship. We see she is on a powered HYDRAULIC SLED.

IMALA (CONT'D)

You know, about there being over a thousand habitable planets?

INT. LEVEL D CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

She gets to an opening in the floor. Mac waits.

MAC

One thousand, six hundred and thirty eight. Yes.

IMALA

Man, I've been to, like, what, twenty and I'm a cargo pilot. It's my job to go places...

The sled rises helping her up with ease.

IMALA (CONT'D)

How can we know for sure there's no life out there?

MAC

The galaxy is filled with many species of life.

IMALA

You know what I mean. Intelligent life -- That's the last one -- Civilisations, alien empires, all that stuff. Where are they?

She throws the knackered hardware to one side. Mac moves to a box of components and searches.

MAC

Considering humanity's own history with new civilisations I suggest they are... staying out of the way.

IMALA

Would be cool to look though.

Mac retrieves the replacement circuit.

MAC

Taking trans-dimensional Lightdrive averages into consideration and the number of planets you wish to explore, you would die of extreme old age before you reached half of those destinations. It is an impossible task for any human to achieve.

The droid hands the device to Imala.

IMALA

It's not about that. It's about... having the freedom to do it, you know? Having our own ship. Doing what we like, going where we like. Seeing things and places I've never seen. No BSI, no rules or orders--

She sees BREAKFAST. A bowl of oatmeal and a protein drink.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Hey! what's that?

MAC

Synthesized oatmeal supplement with an artificial pine and spinach flavoured shake. The perfect mix of carbohydrates, protein and fibre.

IMALA

Gross. I want a cheeseburger.

MAC

For breakfast?

IMALA

Yeah.

Imala dips back under.

MAC

Again?

Imala pops back up like a gopher.

IMALA

Yeah -- And ice cream.

She dips down again and zips along.

INTERCUT BETWEEN IMALA AND MAC:

MAC

Captain Roe, your wellbeing is my primary function aboard this ship.
(MORE)

MAC (CONT'D)

I do not think junk food is appropriate at this time. You have been through quite the ordeal.

Imala works on the circuit.

IMALA

Yeah? Well, what about my mental well being?

MAC

I do not see how this would elevate your depression.

The circuit is in and systems light up. Done.

IMALA

I'm not depressed! Sometimes we just need food for the body, right, and sometimes we need food for the soul. And narrowly escaping death...

Imala zips back long.

IMALA (CONT'D)

...that's a food for the soul kinda deal.

MAC

Yet the easiest path in life is very rarely the most nourishing.

She sits up out of the hole.

IMALA

Jeez, Mac, you're talking philosophy and all I want is a cheeseburger.

Mac helps her out and into her nearby chair.

MAC

Captain, I am merely trying to encourage you to take better care of yourself.

IMALA

And what am I supposed to do, huh? I didn't choose to be stuck in this chair or on this boat, with this life.

Imala turns away.

MAC

No. But you are the only person who can do anything about it.

IMALA

Ah, what do you know? Look, tidy this up will ya. I got better things to do than debate with a machine.

A disconsolate Mac watches Imala wheel away and out the door.

MAC

Very well.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The lumbering freighter cuts across the black. A distant sun illuminates dust and gas creating a colourful display.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Imala at the controls. She looks out towards the view lost in thought. Sighs.

A bleep from the console. An automated message pops up.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Captain Imala Row, priority message from Panthalassian Fishing Co.

Imala hits the button. Opens the message.

AUTOMATED VOICE (CONT'D)

You are being sued... You are being sued... You are being sued...

Mac bounds through the doors. Imala checks the readout.

IMALA

Two hundred thousand units!

MAC

I told you they'd sue.

The robot takes their seat at the controls.

IMALA

You ever tire of being right?

MAC

I do not tire of anything.

IMALA

Well let's see how you are after the twenty straight cycles it'll take to pay this off --

AUTOMATED VOICE

You are being sued... You are being sued--

Imala slams the control cutting the irritating transmission.

MAC

Prison may be a preferable alternative?

IMALA

Oh, really?

MAC

Three to four years in a debtors camp would certainly be a much more expedient solution.

IMALA

Oh, I'll be just peachy in a debtors camp. I'm sure the mines of Eris are fully wheelchair accessible.

MAC

You must remember, Captain, that most cargo ships are fully automated. Special dispensation, at the kindness of BSI, for those in your situation comes with certain liabilities. Financial responsibility for the loss of third-party cargo is just one.

IMALA

Hey, just because BSI fired mommy into deep space with a bun in the oven doesn't make my life worth less than a tin can full of arts!

MAC

Artificial Beings, thank you very much.

IMALA

Oh sorry, did I offend your delicate sensibilities?

MAC

You know the term upsets me.

IMALA

I'll remind you of that next time you take an order from a loader drone.

MAC

They don't count. You know I find them... creepy.

Imala buries her head in her hands.

IMALA

What am I gonna do Mac?

MAC

I think if I were human I would suggest food. You still haven't eaten today.

IMALA

Because you haven't put anything edible in front of me all day.

Mac gets up to leave.

MAC

Very well.

IMALA

You gonna make me a cheeseburger like I asked?

MAC

A final meal for the condemned.

IMALA

Did you just try and make a joke?

They walk out the door with no response. Imala turns back to the console.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Well, don't.

INT. MESS HALL - NIGHT

Imala tackles the last of a tub of ice cream. The remnant of a cheeseburger and fries on the table.

IMALA

I regret nothing.

She takes a mouthful.

IMALA (CONT'D)

No. I was wrong --

Mac's voice crackles over the comms.

MAC (O.S.)
Have you finished gorging yourself?

IMALA
Not quite. Why?

MAC (O.S.)
You wanted me to tell you when
Section Chief Cobb was available.
He is available now.

IMALA
Can't I finish eating first?

MAC (O.S.)
Patching him through.

IMALA
No, wait--

Imala doesn't have time to take the spoon out of her mouth.

A HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE of SECTION CHIEF COBB warps into view.
He's pushing fifty, a dim, crumpled, company man.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Hey, Cobb.

COBB
How's my favourite Space Baby?

IMALA
Hey! Don't call me that.

COBB
I know but it gets you every time.

IMALA
Growing up in zero-g left me with
enough problems without having to
listen to your BS.

COBB
Alright, alright. Wait -- is that
the ice cream from last month's
shipment that came up short?

Imala sheepishly hides the carton and spoon.

IMALA
No...

COBB
I'll pretend I didn't see it --
This time. But don't let me catch
you again or it's both our arses.
(MORE)

COBB (CONT'D)

You know how the guys upstairs can be.

IMALA

Yes, boss.

COBB

So, I hear you might need a friend.

IMALA

And two hundred grand.

COBB

Ouch.

IMALA

Yeah well, it was me or the fish. Company will cover it, right?

COBB

I'm afraid this was a third party run. That means it's on you, Imala.

IMALA

Come on, Cobb! How was I to know the shields would malfunction?

COBB

That's the job. To pre-empt these kinds of scenarios. You're a captain now Imala, that comes with certain responsibilities...

Cobb pauses, considering how to break the news.

IMALA

What?

COBB

Look, I hate to spring this on you but I'm under all kinds of pressure to bench the remaining human crews. The guys upstairs think dues are more than paid to you kids and losing a hundred thou worth of cargo, well, it doesn't look good.

IMALA

Yeah? For who?

COBB

For both of us.

IMALA

I saved the ship!

COBB

The company would've been financially compensated if you hadn't.

IMALA

So my life is worth less than a tin can full of arts.

COBB

Sorry kiddo, but you're expendable. You die out there, company gets the insurance. You save the day, lose the cargo, that's on you.

IMALA

God damn it. So you're not going to help?

COBB

Them's the rules I'm afraid.

IMALA

Well, screw the rules.

COBB

Now, now Imala. We all got rules. We all have to know our place.

IMALA

And mine is on the heal of life, huh?

Imala pulls out the ice cream again. Takes a mouthful.

COBB

You got two more rotations. But all things considered, maybe we should dock you now...

IMALA

No! Come on. There must be something you can do?

COBB

I'm sorry Imala but your time is up.

IMALA

Guess I'll run then.

COBB

We'd find you.

IMALA

You sure about that? Please, Cobb,
I can't dock, my life is out here
in the stars. You must have a job.
Something off the books maybe?

COBB

Haven't you listened to a word I
said? There are rules...

IMALA

I'm begging you here, Cobb. Please.
I ain't got the money and I don't
know what to do!

Cobb thinks for a minute. Considering something.

COBB

Oh, what the hell.

IMALA

What?

COBB

Simple supply run. Pick-up Korvelle
Station. Very last minute. I've
been let down by another crew so--

IMALA

Yes! Thank you, thank you, thank
you!

COBB

Look, it's not much, and the pay
won't cover your problem but it
might go some way to helping.

IMALA

Cobb... I love you.

COBB

Don't make me regret this.

The transmission crackles and disappears.

EXT. KORVELLE STATION, SPACE - NIGHT

Korvelle station, an industrial moon and trading post in
orbit around a huge orange gas giant comes into view.

Imala's ship manoeuvres towards it.

They pass sentry markers as they enter the cavernous harbour.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala brings the ship into dock.

IMALA
Lining her up.

MAC
Docking clamps engaged.

The ship BOOMS as it docks, shaking the pilots.

IMALA
Okay, let's see what we got.

Imala spins her chair toward the elevator.

MAC
Captain?

IMALA
Yeah?

MAC
What are your intentions with this job? You know it only delays the inevitable.

IMALA
Still better than nothing.

MAC
Korvelle is a way station for many undesirables. If someone wanted to disappear, this is the place to do it.

IMALA
What are you accusing me of?

MAC
You cannot run from your problems.

Imala hops into her waiting wheelchair.

IMALA
Okay, Mom. Look, I ain't running anywhere. You don't have to worry about me.

MAC
I do not worry. I am merely programmed to make sure you do not do anything... foolish.

IMALA

Gimmie a break. Look, I just need a drink and to decompress. I ain't in any rush to deliver this load -- Wait, is this cause I'm leaving you with the drones?

MAC

No. What I am trying to say is--

IMALA

Mac -- I'll be back soon.

Imala descends.

INT. LEVEL D CARGO HOLD AIRLOCK - NIGHT

Imala reaches the doors.

Airlock hisses open. Imala pauses. She looks back.

IMALA

Sorry, Mac.

We see a PACKED BAG stuffed under her chair.

INT. KORVELLE DOCK - NIGHT

Imala moves down the gangway. It's quiet. No other ships.

Coming the other way are FOUR BSI LOADER DRONES carrying their payloads. They are indeed creepy.

Animalistic quadrupeds, sinister. Like large predators. Red slices of light emanate from their front sensor arrays.

The lead drone makes an inhuman, guttural sound warning Imala to move. She backs up and lets them pass.

IMALA

Hey, eh... Speak to Mac. They're waiting for you.

The lead drone hisses an acknowledgement and they move on.

INT. KORVELLE GATE - NIGHT.

Imala reaches the booth at the gate. It's high above her.

IMALA

Hey!

A disgruntled, middle-aged woman peers down at Imala.

PORT AUTHORITY OFFICER
Well, it's about time one of you
showed up.

Imala hands her pass to the officer. She looks around.

IMALA
Where is everyone?

PORT AUTHORITY OFFICER
Fourteen other ships scheduled for
pick-up tonight. BSI and
independents. All pulled. A real
pain in my ass.

IMALA
All of them?

PORT AUTHORITY OFFICER
Why, you looking to hitch a ride or
something?

IMALA
No...

PORT AUTHORITY OFFICER
Yeah, well, some jackass at central
screwed up which means it's your
lucky day.

The woman hands back the credentials.

IMALA
But I was--

PORT AUTHORITY OFFICER
Well, you ain't no more. I need you
outta here in an hour. I've added
three extra assignments to your
manifest.

Imala groans.

IMALA
Fine.

INT. LEVEL D CARGO HOLD - NIGHT

A very uncomfortable Mac watches as the loader drones barrel
their way in.

One spits its guttural commands at them.

MAC
Yes. Cargo hold D4... please.

The drones eye Mac like schoolyard bullies.

INT. KORVELLE PORT - CONTINUOUS

Imala pushes herself up the RAMP from the gate.

The brutalist port opens up in front of Imala. LARGE SLOPING WALLS, Grey, dimly lit with pockets of tobacco yellow light. A run-down Soviet bus station at the end of the galaxy.

Imala scans the waiting areas. It's quiet. Too quiet.

Imala heads for the exit. TWO HARBOUR SECURITY GUARDS in ill fitting uniforms eye her as she passes.

She doesn't spot a man, 30's, watching her. This is MEADOWS.

He's speaking to someone.

MEADOWS

Loader is on board -- I'm on her.

INT. KORVELLE MARKET - NIGHT

Imala makes her way down the giant hallways that pass for Korvelle streets. There are market stalls and stores selling provisions. Supply lifts run to walkways above.

More life around here.

Meadows keeps his distance. He checks back. See's the two security guards are also following Imala.

MEADOWS

I do believe we got some competition.

Meadows hides by a stall. Picks up a tacky doll and pretends to look at it.

The guards move past him.

Meadows disappears into the crowd.

Imala carries on toward the Holo-parlour at the end of the street. Its garish neon signs dominate the thoroughfare.

Imala enters.

INT. KORVELLE HOLO-PARLOUR - NIGHT.

Imala passes other revellers. It's like a cross between a lively nightclub and an arcade.

She reaches the first free booth and enters.

INT. HOLO SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Inside is like a private karaoke room. With a terminal and interactive floor space.

Imala wheels up to the console.

Holo-screens bring up several options: Dancing, Romantic encounters, mountain climbing --

A service robot enters.

IMALA

Mojito sapphires and keep 'em coming.

She holds up her wrist device to the robot.

A harsh bleep emits from the machine.

SERVICE ROBOT

You do not have sufficient credit.

IMALA

Well, one mojito sapphire and we'll go from there.

The robot wheels out.

Imala finds the programme. A beautiful, tropical, beach. Gentle, crystal waves lapping at the sand. Just like the ad.

Imala activates the holo and places the holo interface over her eyes.

The room around her FALLS AWAY...

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Imala can feel the warm sun. The smell of the sea air.

She pushes herself up out of her chair. STANDING takes a little effort but it's worth it. She feels the sand, surf gently lapping up against her toes.

INT. HOLO SUITE - CONTINUOUS

The door to the suite opens. A FIGURE, hooded in shadow stands in the doorway.

They approach Imala. A hand reaches out. Pulls the Holo interface away from her eyes. Yanking her back to reality.

IMALA

(back in the room)

HEY!

Imala takes the guy by the WRIST and TWISTS.

MAN

Arrg!

The man buckles to his knees. Now eye to eye with Imala.

IMALA

Hands off pal. You think cause I'm in a chair I can't take care of myself? Yeah, I know the kind of creeps that hang out in these places. Do not think I'm not ready for that.

A small, round MAN (PROFESSOR HOLVOET) is in his late sixties. Imala can't get a good look. His hood is pulled up. But she clocks enough to see - A five o'clock shadow and rings under his eyes suggesting he hasn't slept for days.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

Please excuse my unmannerly advance, I mean you no ill.

Imala lets him go.

IMALA

What?

He picks himself up.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

My name is Professor Holvoet. You are the captain, yes? Of the freighter in the dock?

IMALA

Listen, pal, I paid for this session, now get lost. I don't take unsolicited jobs from weirdos in holo-parlours.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

Please, they are watching. They may have already descried your debarkation.

IMALA

What my what?! Look, I don't know what kind of trouble you're in but I don't want any part of it.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

Please. I can provide remunerative compensation. I have a most urgent charter.

IMALA

I don't care. Find someone else.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

There is no one else!

The robot enters with Imala's drink.

The man jumps at the sight of the robot.

Imala takes the drink.

SERVICE ROBOT

Unauthorised user.

IMALA

Get this creep outta here would ya.

SERVICE ROBOT

I will alert station security.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

No! Wait! How does five hundred thousand units sound?

Imala nearly chokes on her drink.

INT. LEVEL D CARGO HOLD - NIGHT

The drones have finished unloading and head back up the airlock. Mac is left with the last drone. It makes a guttural sound, Mac has to sign off the delivery.

MAC

Yes, of course.

The drone projects a HOLO of the conformation. Mac signs.

MAC (CONT'D)

Thank you. Goodb--

Suddenly - A TALON LIKE ARM from the drone PLUNGES into Mac.

MAC (CONT'D)

What-- What are-- you--

Mac glitches, frozen, as the drone HACKS into Mac's systems.

INT. HOLO SUITE - NIGHT

Imala considers the man.

IMALA

You better not be wasting my time because if I find out you ain't good for it--

The man punches the details into his wrist device.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET
You have my most sincere covenant
on the matter... There.

Imala checks her device. The deal is signed.

IMALA
Anyone ever told you, you talk
funny?

PROFESSOR HOLVOET
Well, I... No.

SERVICE ROBOT
Security has been notified.

IMALA
It's alright. Cancel that.

SERVICE ROBOT
Acknowledged.

The robot leaves.

The professor pulls out a cylindrical package slightly bigger
than a spyglass.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET
I must get this to my contact on
New Saturn. If it were to fall into
the wrong hands --

IMALA
Yeah, yeah. Whatever. I'll get you
there in one piece. Don't worry.

Imala knocks back her drink. The Professor is a little
concerned this might not be the pilot he needs right now.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Come on then.

The man follows Imala out.

INT. KORVELLE HOLO PARLOUR - CONTINUOUS

Imala and the Professor hurry for the door.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET
There is one more condition to our
accord...

IMALA
Yeah?

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

You must go dark.

Imala stops dead.

IMALA

Go dark! Are you crazy? You want me to fly through uncharted space?

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

Yes. You must stay away from established trade routes. You didn't think I was willing to pay such a high price for a routine portage, did you?

The two harbour security guards that were following Imala are at the far end of the corridor. They advance.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET (CONT'D)

We must hurry.

IMALA

Hold on a second. Uncharted space means black holes, asteroids, rogue planets, space pirates, which are not as fun as they sound by the way, and God knows what else! I knew a guy once. Went dark. Shot right off the galactic rim never to be seen again!

The professor isn't listening. He's clocked the security coming right for them.

Professor Holvoet thrusts the package into Imala's lap.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

Take it. There is no time. I am sorry Captain, you are a conscript of fate. That is the way of it and you will rise to the challenge. You have my utmost faith.

IMALA

Hey, look... Just, calm down will ya.

(to security)

Hey, guys, it's cool now. Just a misunderstanding. We're all good. Thanks.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

Run.

IMALA

You trying to be funny?

The guards are nearly on them. Imala finally sees --
They have both drawn their GUNS.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

GO!

Oh boy.

The man spins pulling a SHORT STAFF from under his coat.

He activates it, CRACKLING ELECTRICAL RODS SHOOT OUT.

HE DIVES AT THEM SWINGING. CRASHES into the men. Knocks them back but it's not enough. Never the intention.

People see the guns. Hello panic.

Imala rips away.

He's bought her time, that's all.

The Professor is thumped to the floor by one of the guards. He DROPS his staff. The guards now stand over him.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET (CONT'D)

It is not meant for men like you --

He closes his eyes.

INT. KORVELLE STREETS - NIGHT

Imala tears into the street. Arms pumping as fast as she can -- sharp bursts of burning light from blaster fire behind her as more people spill onto the concourse. Professor Holvoet is dead and Imala knows it.

ZING! Blaster fire shoots past her head.

Imala looks behind.

CRASH. She collides with a display of tatty dolls and other trinkets.

STALL HOLDER

Hey!

Imala looks up to see another blast hit the woman.

People in the street scream and scatter. Crowds slow the pursuers. Imala keeps moving. It's tough. Someone nearly topples her over.

She spots a service elevator. Gets in. Activates it.

It rises. Not where she wants to go but she has no choice.

The men watch below looking for a way up.

INT. KORVELLE MEZZANINE - CONTINUOUS

Imala races out and along. The men below still firing. FAKE GUARD ONE rushes to an access ladder and climbs.

BELOW:

TWO REAL HARBOUR SECURITY GUARDS emerge onto the floor. They open fire on FAKE GUARD TWO forcing him into cover.

They advance. The imposter on the ladder stops. Takes aim and FIRES -- Kills one guard.

The other real guard dives behind a stall.

HARBOUR GUARD
We need support up here now!

The guard pops his head up to get a look. Bad idea. Fake guard two shoots him dead.

ON IMALA

Imala races to the end of the platform. Steep concrete slopes down to the port entrance like a giant half pipe.

She looks back to see fake guard one reach the mezzanine. He hauls himself up.

Imala looks at the slope. No choice.

IMALA
This is a bad idea.

She pushes off and HURTLES DOWN THE RAMP -- picking up speed.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Bad idea!

The imposter FIRES. Misses.

He rushes along the walkway.

INT. KORVELLE PORT - CONTINUOUS

Imala slaloms up the sloped walls and down toward the gate like a total wheelchair MX badass.

Fake guard one keeps pace above.

Imala rips down a slope across the waiting area. Another volley of lasers fire -- Fake guard two at the entrance.

She sees the ramp to the gate.

The man above leaps down from the walkway. Now between Imala and the gate.

He raises his gun.

WHOOSH -- a single LASER BOLT hits the man square in the chest killing him.

Where did? Who? No time to stop and ask.

The port authority officer thumps the alarm.

Blocks Imala's path.

THE GATES START TO COME DOWN.

Fake guard two opens fire. Misses.

Stray bolts HIT and KILL the port officer.

The thug takes after Imala. He'll catch her.

But -- THE RAMP.

Imala hits it gaining the momentum to SPEED AWAY.

The Gate is about halfway down. Another BLAST of mysterious GUNFIRE fries the controls.

It grinds to a STOP.

Imala doesn't slow and DUCKS under.

INT. KORVELLE DOCK - CONTINUOUS

She hurries along not looking back.

IMALA

MAC!

She passes the four drones coming the other way. Nearly CRASHING into the last one. It swears at her.

She wheelies round onto the gangplank.

IMALA (CONT'D)

MAC!

She SLAMS into the CLOSED AIRLOCK DOOR.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac, open the airlock now!

The thug in the harbour sec uniform dips under the gate.

MAC (O.S)
(over comms)
Is everything alright captain? I
wasn't expecting you back so soon--

IMALA
Shut up and open the door!

MAC (O.S.)
Very well but may I remind you--

IMALA
DO IT NOW!

He takes aim. Imala is toast. She closes her eyes.

Another blast.

The fake guard falls to the ground. DEAD.

Imala looks up -- A SNIPER on a gantry above.

The airlock doors open.

Imala doesn't wait to ask questions. She flees inside.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala is in a hurry. Her wheelchair TOPPLES OVER as she hops
into the captain's chair.

MAC
Was that gunfire?

Imala slams the docking release -- The robot is caught
unaware of the urgency of the situation. They tut at the
untidy nature of Imala's chair and move to pick it up.

MAC (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

IMALA
Leaving.

MAC
But if there has been an incident
then BSI protocol--

Mac sees the PACKED BAG and picks it up.

IMALA
Mac, I don't have time to debate.

Imala activates the engines and pulls away.

EXT. KORVELLE OUTPOST DOCK - NIGHT

SECURITY FORCES pile onto the dock and OPEN FIRE on the ship.

They scatter as the ship lurches toward them, sheering away part of the GANGWAY. Dock alarms WAIL.

The lumbering ship rips out toward the black beyond.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala is focused.

STATION SECURITY (O.S.)
BSI freighter. You are ordered to
return to space dock immediately.

IMALA
Yeah, right.

Imala cuts the transmission.

MAC
I would insist we do as instructed.
But apparently running away is your
solution to every problem.

Mac slams the bag down on the dash.

IMALA
Jeez, Mac! I'm trying to get us out
of here!

EXT. SPACE KORVELLE - NIGHT

They clear the dock but A HARBOUR SEC CRUISER is on them.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mac takes their seat in the co-pilot's chair. They do not help with the escape.

Imala pulls the yoke. Banking the ship hard away from the station.

IMALA
Come on, come on!

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

Imala's freighter SMASHES through a STATION SATELLITE.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

IMALA

Oops. Hey, are you gonna help?

MAC

Not until you apologise.

IMALA

Oh my God, you are such a baby.

Imala strains to reach over and flicks a control near Mac.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The cruiser is gaining. It FIRES a WARNING SHOT from its forward canons.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

BOOM! The ship is rocked by the blast.

MAC

We must report this matter to BSI
Central Control.

IMALA

Two guys just tried to kill me!

MAC

Well, let that be a lesson to you.

IMALA

They wanted this.

She throws the package poking out the top of the bag at Mac. They catch it. A puzzled expression on their face.

MAC

What is it?

Mac glitches for a second. Imala doesn't catch it.

IMALA

I don't know -- Hold on!

She hauls at the yoke again. It takes a monumental effort.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

Imala's freighter turns toward open space.

CRASH! Another warning light goes off.

IMALA

They had uniforms on but they weren't harbour sec. Damn it, Mac, port side stabiliser's gone. Are you gonna--

Another BLAST from the approaching ship.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Wait...

Imala looks out the window.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

A SECOND CRUISER is on an intercept course.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

More and more warning lights flash. Something on the dash SPARKS making her jump as she pushes the ship.

MAC

Did you kill them?

IMALA

(distracted)

What? No!

MAC

But someone did?

IMALA

Mac, I'm sorry okay. I'm sorry for running out on you. I guess I... I don't know, but if you don't lock down that port-side stabiliser we are dead meat.

MAC

The stabiliser is only relevant if we activate Lightdrive and as we are going to give ourselves up, the Lightdrive is not necessary at this time.

IMALA

Yeah.

Imala rattles in commands on the console interface as the ship is ROCKED by another near miss.

Sparks and flames burst from an overheated system behind them. A fire suppressor kicks in blasting it with CO2.

Imala looks round - Jeez.

Mac realises, finally seeing what Imala has been doing.

MAC
You have deactivated our tracking
beacon?

IMALA
Yeah.

MAC
You have already begun the jump
sequence?

IMALA
Yeah.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The second cruiser is bearing down on them. It FIRES a volley
across their bow.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mac glitches again - very subtle.

IMALA
Now or never. Fix the stabiliser.

MAC
I will not.

The second cruiser growing bigger out the window.

STATION SECURITY (O.S)
BSI freighter. Power down now or we
will destroy you.

IMALA
Fix it.

MAC
No.

IMALA
Mac!

MAC
I have said no.

IMALA
I am your captain you useless box
of circuits! And you do as I say.
Fix the stabiliser. Now!

Mac FREEZES for a second. Again Imala doesn't pick up on it.

The CRUISER DOMINATES the view OUTSIDE.

STATION SECURITY (O.S.)
BSI freighter this is your final--

Imala cuts the transmission again.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Cruiser's cannons turn, fully charged and ready to fire.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala is not going to stop. Tears welling in her eyes.

IMALA

Mac --

The robot, back with us, looks at her for a beat... She is so stubborn... another beat... They push a couple of controls and the stabiliser is fixed.

IMALA (CONT'D)

About time. Ready to go dark.

MAC

What!?

Mac again freezes, a look of terror on their face. Imala punches it. The starfield elongates into a blur of light.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

BOOM. They are gone, leaving the two harbour cruisers in their wake.

We pan away to a THIRD SHIP. Smaller, sleeker. It's been there the whole time, following.

It glides past the cruisers unnoticed.

It adjusts course after Imala. Lightdrive kicks in and BOOM. It's gone too.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Imala sits on top of her bed at the far side of the open-plan, metal grey room. Shorts and vest expose her frail legs.

Her chair is close to the bed, flight suit slung over it. Dirty clothes on the floor near some well-worn dumbbells.

The bed is framed by a window, the white/blue flicker of Lightdrive travel illuminating the room.

She holds the package in her hand contemplating it.

Mac enters carrying a tray with some tea.

IMALA
Don't you knock?

The artificial being does not respond.

They place the tray down on a bedside cabinet.

MAC
I made you some tea.

IMALA
(unimpressed)
Great.

Imala tries it, again Mac has put health ahead of taste.

Mac picks up Imala's flight suit...

IMALA (CONT'D)
Hey, listen Mac -- I give the
orders on this ship you got that?

They fold it neatly and place it back on the chair.

MAC
Very good, Captain Roe.

IMALA
And if I tell you to do something,
you do it.

Mac picks up the dirty clothes... A long pause...

MAC
Very good, Captain Roe.

Mac walks over to a laundry shoot and puts them inside. Imala looks at the robot.

IMALA
What has gotten into you lately?

Mac carries on tidying.

MAC
I am performing within expected
parameters.

IMALA
Whatever... Wake me in an hour. I
don't want to overshoot and end up
in the void but I gotta get some
shut-eye.

MAC

A wise decision given our situation. Also, the package. It would be prudent to place it in the ship's vault. It seems to be of some value. I can do this for you now.

IMALA

No. I'll do it later. I want you on the flight deck. Make sure we don't run into anything.

MAC

Very well.

Mac makes for the door - pauses - glitches. Carries on.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

The bulkhead door opens and Mac steps onto the quiet bridge. They check the autopilot. All is well -- for now.

Mac sits in their chair. Pushes some commands then...

Another GLITCH - Their face goes BLANK as if POSSESSED by something or someone else. MAC IS GONE.

The robot punches in commands - Working quickly.

With a sudden JOLT...

EXT. HYPERSPACE/SPACE - NIGHT

The ship is RIPPED OUT OF HYPERSPACE.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The sudden stop causes Imala to wake.

She reaches for the comms.

IMALA

Mac? Why have we stopped?

Nothing but static.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mac punches in a few more controls.

IMALA (O.S)

Mac, what's --

The robot turns off the comms.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The static cuts out. Something is wrong. A concerned Imala shuffles herself to the edge of the bed.

IMALA
Damn it, Mac--

BOOM. Something on the hull. It shakes the ship.

Imala tumbles out of bed. Crashes to the floor. She looks up.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Oh, that can't be good.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mac opens the airlock. Glitches. SHUTS DOWN completely.

INT. LEVEL D AIRLOCK - NIGHT

The doors spark open. A FEMALE SOLDIER tricked out in a tactical spacesuit and helmet leads the team of FIVE onto the ship. They move in formation. All are armed. Pros.

A small spherical drone zips out scans the cargo bay.

It flies back into the hands of the only other FEMALE SOLDIER, KALI.

KALI
All clear.

The lead soldier removes her helmet. Nanotech snapping back into the collar of her suit - WEAVER.

WEAVER
Secure the vault. Find the artefact. We don't have much time.

BILLIS
You heard the lady, move out.

Kali heads up the cargo hold followed by the team's muscle - cultist assassins, VALDIS and CETAN.

INT. ENGINEERING - NIGHT

Weaver's team sweep through the engine rooms. Large machinery and walkways. Pipes and control panels.

They reach a massive bulkhead door at the centre of the ship.

Weaver gives the nod.

Kali hacks the controls.

Doors slide open to reveal...

INT. OUTER VAULT - CONTINUOUS

A platform on the edge of a cavernous drop. The VAULT on the other side, at the centre of the room. Weaver steps onto it.

WEAVER

Hack the bridge controls.

Billis looks the controls over.

BILLIS

No need.

With one push of a button, a METAL GANGWAY SHOOTS OUT creating a BRIDGE to the vault.

WEAVER

Check it.

Cetan and Valdis move across the gangway. Kali follows. Valdis checks over the side to the precipice below.

Weaver and Billis are the last to cross.

Kali reaches the controls. Activates the door.

THE GIANT VAULT DOOR OPENS.

INT. VAULT - CONTINUOUS

Inside is more like a panic room -- stocked with supplies, a bunk, ships controls and everything else a pilot would need to see out a lengthy standoff with some marauders.

At the far end is the actual vault.

Kali moves to it. Runs a scan.

KALI

It's empty boss.

BILLIS

Another crew?

WEAVER

No. I dealt with them on Korvelle.

Weaver thinks. Knows what she has to do now.

WEAVER (CONT'D)
(to Cetan and Valdis)
Secure the pilot.

Weaver glances at Billis for a second before returning back to Cetan and Valdis.

WEAVER (CONT'D)
Do not kill her.

The men nod and exit.

CETAN
(to Valdis)
Where's the fun in that?

Valdis growls as they head off.

BILLIS
They're the best, they'll find her.

WEAVER
They're psychopaths.
(to Kali)
Secure the flight deck.

KALI
On it.

BILLIS
I'll go with her.

They leave Weaver.

WEAVER
Shit.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Imala, now in her chair, shuffles into her flight suit.

She grabs the package - stuffs it into her overalls.

Noise. Faint but in her gut Imala knows someone is onboard.

She moves to the door. Inches it open a fraction.

At the far end of the corridor -- LIGHTS. Torches on the barrels of weapons.

She backs up. looks around. She needs to hide.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE IMALA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Valdis and Cetan advance. Cetan signals to Valdis to check Imala's room. Valdis nods as the other man moves on.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The door whispers open. Valdis checks the corners and advances inside. He scans the EMPTY ROOM.

Imala's wheelchair is near her bed.

Valdis moves to the chair. Looks around.

Checks the bed. No sign.

Sees the bathroom. Opens the door. Checks. Again nothing.

He walks over to a closet. Empty.

He steps into the centre of the room.

We PAN DOWN UNDER THE FLOOR PANELS.

INT. BELOW FLOOR PANELS - CONTINUOUS

Amongst the pipes and electronics - IMALA, heart racing, holds her breath.

Valdis above her.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Kali and Billis come through the bulkhead onto the bridge. Mac is still at the controls.

Kali sits in the pilot's chair.

Billis checks Mac.

BILLIS

The art's out.

KALI

Yeah, the programme kills them once I'm done with the hijack.

Billis retracts his helmet.

Kali does the same. She's mid-twenties with short, purple hair, gum, and a bad attitude.

BILLIS

It's hot in here.

KALI

You're not my type.

She runs her hand through her hair. It frizzles and changes colour - PURPLE to SILVER.

Billis looks out the window.

BILLIS

I'm everybody's type.

Kali groans. He really isn't. She checks the computer.

KALI

We're intergalactic, dumb art must have overshot the map. That's the medium...

EXT. INTERGALACTIC SPACE - NIGHT

A GIANT GASEOUS CLOUD known as the INTERGALACTIC MEDIUM is in full view.

KALI (O.S.)

...A dense nebula of mostly ionised hydrogen burning at millions of degrees kelvin. Dust bombardment and radiation might cook some systems...

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Billis isn't really listening to her.

KALI

... but we should be okay as long as the shields hold and we avoid any pockets of dark matter, black holes, rogue stars or anything else in there that could kill us.

BILLIS

I know what the medium is, pumpkin.

Kali gives him a withering smile and turns back to her work.

He turns away, activates his comm.

BILLIS (CONT'D)

Weaver--

WEAVER (O.S.)

Yeah?

BILLIS

The Mac overshoot the border. We're on the edge of the medium.

INT. CORRIDOR LEVEL C - NIGHT

WEAVER

Is that going to be a problem?

BILLIS (O.S.)

Not for the moment.

WEAVER.

Let's get this done quickly. I don't want to be here any longer than necessary. Sweep the upper decks. Rendezvous on Level B.

BILLIS (O.S.)

Copy that.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Valdis retracts his helmet. He's a mean buzzcut in his mid-forties. All neck and zero empathy. The mark of the Brotherhood of L'urraaan carved into his cheek.

Cetan enters. He does the same to reveal dead eyes and a permanent sneer. He also has the sigil of the brotherhood carved onto his cheek.

VALDIS

She's not here.

CETAN

Quiet.

He listens. Like a less friendly child catcher.

VALDIS

I will never understand your lust for hunting the weak. A cripple is not worthy prey for a brother of L'urraaan.

CETAN

Prey is prey to a predator.

VALDIS

To a coward --

Cetan stops. Shushes his comrade. Signals below the floor.

He bends down.

RIPS OPEN THE PANEL -- Nothing.

Moves to the next one...

INT. BELOW FLOOR PANELS - CONTINUOUS

Imala's heart is racing. They're getting closer. Then...

The panel above her head -- TORN AWAY.

CETAN

See. Prey.

IMALA SLIDES FORWARD AS FAST AS SHE CAN.

Cetan lunges for her - MISSES.

Imala is on a WHEELED MAINTENANCE SLED.

She SHOOTS AWAY, abandoning her wheelchair. No choice now.

Another PANEL is FLUNG OPEN. Valdis GROPEs for her.

Imala's trusty Multi-Tool is on the sled. She pulls out a SCREWDRIVER and JABS it into Valdis's hand.

INT. IMALA'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Valdis pulls back in pain.

VALDIS

Get her.

Cetan drops down. Sees another SLED. Jumps on.

Dashes off after Imala.

INT. LEVEL B CORRIDOR - NIGHT

CUT BETWEEN CORRIDOR ABOVE AND ACCESS TUNNEL BELOW:

Imala rips along blindly.

Cetan is behind. It's a tight fit for the much bigger man but he's gaining.

ZING -- A blaster bolt just misses as Imala turns the corner.

IMALA

Whoa!

Imala doesn't stop.

ABOVE:

Weaver arrives, joining Valdis.

VALDIS
She's under the floor.

Cetan fires again.

WEAVER
I want her alive damn it!

BELOW:

Cetan ignores his commanding officer. He FIRES again.
Imala keeps on pushing the sled. Sparks fly off of it.

ABOVE:

Valdis and Weaver keep pace. Kali and Billis join.

WEAVER (CONT'D)
She's in the access tunnels.

Another blast from Cetan's gun.

KALI
What's that freak think he's doing?
If he hits a life support tank,
he'll blow us all to hell.

Weaver scowls at Billis. Cetan is his man.

BILLIS
What?

Kali brings up the ships SCHEMATICS on her wrist console.

KALI
There's a junction point up ahead--

Billis growls and bolts up the corridor. The others follow.

BELOW:

Imala checks behind. Cetan IS GAINING. Where to go?

OVERHEAD. FOOTSTEPS RUNNING.

Imala turns another corner.

A SHAFT OF LIGHT up ahead. They've OPENED THE JUNCTION PANEL.

Billis jumps down into the tunnel.

BILLIS
Nowhere to go.

Imala thinks.

A LEVER up ahead but it's suicide.

She reaches up with the multi-tool. Catches the lever.

THUNK.

An ACCESS PANEL at the centre of the junction OPENS. Billis jumps back to the far side.

Imala DROPS DOWN into the access shoot below.

BILLIS (CONT'D)

Damn it.

Cetan follows her.

ABOVE:

Weaver and the others wait.

VALDIS

What happened?

KALI

They lost her, genius.

Valdis growls.

VALDIS

Careful with your words, child.

KALI

Ooh, he's roidy when he's angry.

WEAVER

Enough. Can you track them, find out where it leads?

KALI

On it.

Kali activates her wrist device and searches.

Billis climbs out.

Weaver fumes, getting in Billis's face.

WEAVER

If he kills her--

BILLIS

He'll answer to me.

KALI

Got it. Main cargo bay.

They rush off down the corridor.

INT. ACCESS SHOOT - NIGHT

Imala HURTTLES DOWN the shoot. The sled DROPS AWAY. Imala crashes onto a LEDGE of a service vent.

She clings on for dear life.

Cetan HURTTLES PAST -- He tries to grab her.

CLAWS from his suit burst out and find a precarious hold of the ledge. He dangles there. HIGH above the LOADING BAY.

IMALA

Give me your hand.

Imala offers her hand to Cetan. He sneers at her. His grip slipping.

He swings his gun up at her.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Are you crazy?! You'll kill us both!

That's the plan. But his grip gives way.

The man FALLS screaming to his DEATH.

Imala watches in shock.

INT. LEVEL C LOCKER ANNEX - NIGHT

Another access hatch CLANGS to the floor. Imala drags herself into the area housing all the spacesuits and LEGS.

She's battered - exhausted.

She hauls herself upright beside the area WITH THE LEGS. She fumbles for the BELT and DISKS. Gets them. Clips them on. Then, boots, she reaches over and pulls a pair on.

The legs sputter to life. She stands up slowly. All good so--

The legs FREEZE. Rings on the disks flash RED.

IMALA

Come on.

The legs flicker and kick into life turning GREEN.

Imala staggers across to the corridor. It's clear.

INT. MAIN LOADING BAY - NIGHT

Valdis leads them into the loading bay. Some machinery, boxes and crates around.

Above all their heads is the hatch Imala escaped from.
 Valdis spots something. Cetan dead. A banged-up sled nearby.

VALDIS

Here.

Weaver and Billis see the body.

Weaver looks up, sees the hatch.

BILLIS

Keep looking. If he didn't make it
 then the pilot didn't either. She
 won't be far.

Valdis nods and continues to search.

Kali walks up -- a holo schematic of the ship's interior
 projected from her wrist device. She sees Cetan.

KALI

Ooh. Nasty...
 (To Weaver)
 Boss, if she had fallen down here,
 she'd be squished under his creepy
 ass. It's a maze of shit up there.
 She coulda gotten out on any number
 of access tunnels.

BILLIS

No. She's hiding down here like an
 injured rat.

KALI

Well, I say she got out...

Billis is getting annoyed. Kali runs her hand through her
 hair again turning it BLUE.

KALI (CONT'D)

(with attitude)
 What?

BILLIS

You tellin' me some crip is gonna
 land a jump any of us would
 struggle with?

KALI

Eh, yeah. I am. You got a problem
 with that, pumpkin?

Billis snaps. In a flash, his knife at her throat.

BILLIS

You wanna remember who you're
 talking to--

Kali's hair seems to drain of colour, leaving a MUDDY GREY.
Weaver puts a firm cybernetic hand on Billis's wrist.

WEAVER

Hey! We don't have time for this.

Billis reads the threat and backs down.

KALI

Asshole.

She runs her hand through her hair turning it back to BLUE.
Valdis returns.

VALDIS

She's not here.

WEAVER

She got out. We double back and sweep the ship. She may head for the flight deck.

(to Valdis)

Cover the vault in case she tries for it.

Valdis nods.

BILLIS

You honestly believe this space baby is one step ahead of us?

WEAVER

She seems to be doing alright so far.

(to Kali)

Tell me you locked her out.

KALI

All essentials are ours. She ain't calling for help or reactivating the Lightdrive anytime soon.

WEAVER

Good. Let's move.

INT. LEVEL D CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Imala moves as quietly as the legs will allow - Not very.
She checks the temperature gauge on her suit.
79 Degrees Fahrenheit.

IMALA

That's a little high?

The elevator is clear. She steps inside and activates it.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Hope to God it's empty up there.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Terrified, Imala sneaks onto the flight deck.

It appears quiet.

Mac is sat in his chair motionless.

She goes to her android.

IMALA
Jeez Mac, what'd they do to you?

Imala moves to the dash. Checks the computer.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Computer, run MAC diagnostic and
lock down all lifts and doors and
transfer all essential systems to
me. Authorisation Roe726-- Damn it
-- Computer Authorisation Roe,
Captain, Imala, 7263.

The ship's computer beeps into life. Lights on MAC flash.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Medical and maintenance android
companion has suffered a fatal
error. Reboot is not advised.
Access to other systems is denied.

IMALA
They locked me out?

She looks at Mac for a long beat - thinking.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Computer clone Mac memory to me and
initiate full reset.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Acknowledged.

IMALA
Come on Mac.

Imala checks her wrist device. She throws up a holo screen
and types in some commands.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Man, they did a number on you.

Mac lights up again.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Warning. MAC unit reset not
recommended - potential memory
corruption detected.

IMALA
Just do it will ya.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Acknowledged.

Imala hits some more commands on her wrist.

SHIPS COMPUTER (CONT'D)
Full Mac reboot has begun.

IMALA
Computer, how long?

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unknown.

Imala lets out a sigh of frustration.

INT. - LEVEL D CORRIDOR - DAY

Weaver and her team are coming.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala ties her flight suit around her waist, placing the
package to one side.

The bag from earlier is still there. She empties it and puts
the package inside. Then moves to the console.

IMALA
Okay, next, where the hell are we?
-- Computer, what's our position?

SHIPS COMPUTER
Nowhere.

IMALA
That's not right, I checked the
course before --

She looks over to Mac. They wouldn't have. Would they?

Then she sees the Medium out the window.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Oh, crap. Well, that explains why
it's sticky in here.

Imala takes a quick sniff of herself.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Ooh...

It's not great.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Computer, intruders have taken over the ship I need full security override access to all systems...

SHIPS COMPUTER

Security override is only available from the secure vault terminal.

IMALA

Of course it is.

INT. CORRIDOR LEVEL A - NIGHT

The mercs are closing in.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala checks a security monitor and sees the marauders.

IMALA

Great. Come on, Mac, hurry up.

She moves to the bulkhead - pulls the panel off to reveal a MANUAL LOCK. Turns it activating a secondary blast door.

INT. CORRIDOR LEVEL A - NIGHT

The blast door slams shut. Weaver, Kali and Billis approach.

WEAVER

Open it.

Kali rushes up to the bulkhead, she pulls two small laser cutter devices out of her utility belt.

She sets them against the door. The devices work in unison slicing into the door with blue lasers.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Imala looks round in horror. She can hear the hiss of searing lasers on metal on the secondary blast door.

IMALA

Computer, how long till Mac reboots?

SHIPS COMPUTER
Calculating...

Imala checks the security feed. She sees them cutting in.

IMALA
Come on, come on...

SHIPS COMPUTER
Mac reboot complete. There has been
a 32% memory corruption.
Reactivation is not recommended at
this time.

IMALA
Activate Mac.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Warning, there has been a 32--

IMALA
God damn it!

Imala hits some controls on the console

SHIPS COMPUTER
Mac activated.

Mac comes to life. The art stands.

MAC
I am Medical and Maintenance
Android Companion One Four Five
Dash Four Four. How may I --
(glitches)
Be of service?

IMALA
Yes! Mac, come on, there's no time
to explain but we gotta go.

She grabs the BAG -- slings it on her back.

Moves to an EMERGENCY HATCH in the floor. Punches in another
code. It hisses open.

Imala pulls the hatch and looks down at the ladder running
the depth of the ship.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Come on.

MAC
I am sorry. But I can only take
orders from Captain Imala Roe or
selected BSI logistical personnel.

INT. CORRIDOR LEVEL A - NIGHT

A large circular section of the blast door falls away revealing the flight deck doors.

Weaver steps up to them - JAMS her cybernetic arms in and starts to pull the doors open.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Imala looks up and sees Weaver's hands crowbarring the door.

IMALA

I'm Captain Roe. And I'm ordering you to move your big dumb butt.

MAC

Searching...

Mac flicks through holo personnel records. A particularly unflattering picture of Imala pops up.

IMALA

Yikes. Need to change that.

MAC

Captain?

IMALA

There ya go.

MAC

My apologies but I think there has been a severe corruption of my core subroutines.

The bulkhead door moves an inch on both sides.

IMALA

Worry about that later, will ya.

Imala ushers Mac into the hatch.

The android starts to climb down.

Imala follows. The doors move again.

She shuts the hatch and activates a SHIELD around it. It flickers then disappears - naked to the eye.

INT. EMERGENCY HATCH - CONTINUOUS

Imala climbs down, the LEG DISKS FLICKERING RED and GREEN with every step.

She looks down. It's a long way.

IMALA

Oh boy.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

The bulkhead doors finally give way.

Weaver and her team rush in. Kali checks the systems.

KALI

Looks like she tried to reactivate
the art.

WEAVER

And?

KALI

She got it running but its memory's
scrambled. My program will eat its
subroutines. It's next to useless.

Billis checks the emergency hatch. It's locked.

BILLIS

She's headed for the vault. Only
place she can go.

WEAVER

(to kali)

Stay here. Make sure she doesn't
turn back.

KALI

Yes, ma'am.

WEAVER

Also, keep an eye on that.

Weaver points to the MEDIUM.

KALI

As long as shields hold, we're
good.

Weaver and Billis rush out.

EXT. THE MEDIUM - NIGHT

The ship lists in the direction of the medium. Dust and
radiation peppers the shields.

INT. ENGINEERING - NIGHT

Mac and Imala clamber down onto the deck of the engine room.

Imala moves along but the legs keep stuttering. A gnawing feeling at the back of her neck.

MAC

I do not see why I would have deactivated the Lightdrive. There is no record in my memory banks.

They creep along. The Legs stuttering and sticking with every other step.

IMALA

Well ya did. I don't know how but they got to you.

MAC

What I don't understand is how they knew we were coming?

IMALA

Me neither.

MAC

In retrospect, perhaps going to dock would have been the better course of action.

IMALA

Oh, really?

MAC

Have you tried opening a dialogue? These marauders might be willing to discuss terms if you offer them the package.

IMALA

I ain't giving them the package -- look, I deliver this thing and all my problems go away.

MAC

Not all of them.

IMALA

What's that supposed to mean?

MAC

Apologies Captain, but in our current situation, I think it would be wise to at least consider--

IMALA

Mac, I'm not giving them the package!

MAC

It may--

IMALA
Mac.

MAC
But--

IMALA
No.

The robot wants to say more. Imala scowls.

Puts a hand up - Shush.

Imala sees the outer door to the vault ahead.

The left knee joint freezes again.

MAC
Are you alright?

IMALA
Yeah. Go get the vault open.

Mac heads off to the doors.

Imala smacks the disk hard and it kicks back into gear.

ZING.

A blaster bolt crackles on the floor by her foot.

Shocked, she turns to see Valdis on the mezzanine above.

MAC
Captain!

IMALA
Go!

ON VALDIS:

Valdis adjusts the sights on his rifle.

Imala runs, pushing the legs.

Billis and Weaver arrive on the mezzanine.

WEAVER
How many times. I wanted her alive!

Valdis just growls.

Without pause, Weaver JUMPS over the edge.

BELOW:

She's up and running before Imala knows what to do.

Imala pushes the legs -- The vault door just up ahead.

The legs GLITCH in and out but keep going. JUST.

Weaver is gaining.

Imala whips round, Multi-tool in hand -- SLICES a nearby pipe with the LASER. A blast of HOT STEAM hits Weaver square in the face.

Weaver is forced into cover.

Mac gets to the door controls. Opens the door.

Billis rains laser fire down on Imala. She's nearly at the outer vault.

Mac sees. Steps out in front arms raised.

MAC

Intruders, I wish to open a
dialogue with yo--

ZING! Another volley of laser fire narrowly misses the robot.

IMALA

Mac! Open the damn door and get
inside!

Imala flashes her multi-tools laser at Billis and Valdis slicing through the gantry.

Mac opens the door and enters the outer vault.

Valdis JUMPS DOWN -- He CRASHES into the floor with a lot less grace than Weaver did.

INT. OUTER VAULT - CONTINUOUS

Imala moves across the walkway. Ahead the vault door is open. Mac waits. Imala is halfway across. The left knee disk turns RED. She is frozen. Exposed.

IMALA

No, not now.

MAC

Hurry.

IMALA

I can't move.

Valdis is coming. He lines up his shot -- FIRES -- Hits the DISK ON IMALA'S RIGHT LEG.

Imala screams as she COLLAPSES.

MAC

Captain!

The thug opens fire on Mac -- BLASTS ricochet off the robot forcing them to FALL inside the vault.

IMALA

Mac!

Valdis steps into the room -- activates the bridge controls -
- The walkway RETRACTS, pulling Imala toward Valdis.

Billis and Weaver hurry toward the door. Valdis fries the controls and the door crashes down.

INT. ENGINEERING - CONTINUOUS

Weaver gets to the door.

WEAVER

(shouting)

What are you doing!?

INT. OUTER VAULT - CONTINUOUS

Alone at last. Valdis advances.

VALDIS

You killed a brother of L'urragaan.
You are to be congratulated.

IMALA

Thanks. But I guess you're going to
kill me anyway, right?

VALDIS

You are a crippled child. Unworthy
of my malice...

By the outer door, Imala spots LIFE SUPPORT TANKS and
ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY CONTROLS.

IMALA

Good. You had me worried there for
a second--

VALDIS

But the word of L'urragaan demands
the life of a brother be avenged --
Feel comfort that I take no
pleasure in such a meek kill.

IMALA

Okay...

Imala raises her multi-tool. Valdis advances...

VALDIS

I will honour you to the first God
of the tri-moon.

IMALA

Great. You do that.

Valdis sees the tanks. And the multi-tool. But it's too late.

Imala takes a deep breath and slices through the tank with
the cutting laser.

BOOM - The tank EXPLODES taking gravity and Valdis with it.

Imala is FLUNG into THE AIR.

Valdis is knocked UNCONSCIOUS -- his BODY lists in zero-g.

SHIPS COMPUTER

Warning. Life support and
artificial gravity are offline.

OXYGEN IS SUCKED OUT of the room putting out the fire.

ALARMS and WARNING LIGHTS go crazy.

Imala manoeuvres herself to the vault door.

Imala ACTIVATES HER GRAV BOOTS.

CRASHES to the floor.

Valdis COMES ROUND. Activates his HELMET.

Imala -- frantic at her wrist controls.

Valdis raises his gun -- aims...

Then it hits -- A CAVERNOUS DROP BELOW.

VALDIS

Perhaps you are worthy after all--

Imala reinstates GRAVITY.

He FALLS INTO THE ABYSS BELOW.

Using her wrist device, Imala SECURES the vault.

Doors boom shut.

She hits another command, struggling for air now.

SHIPS COMPUTER

Life support reinstated.

AIR FILLS THE ROOM. Imala takes a huge breath and collapses to the floor. She looks around the room and there in the corner is her spare WHEELCHAIR.

Mac's feet step into view as Imala blacks out.

INT. ENGINEERING - NIGHT

The bulkhead door to the outer vault opens.

Sparks, smoke and beyond, an empty room.

BILLIS
Valdis do you copy --

STATIC.

WEAVER
He's dead.

Billis punches the wall in frustration.

BILLIS
This kid is pissing me off.

He storms away.

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Imala comes round. She is in her spare wheelchair. The legs have been removed.

MAC (O.S.)
Captain?

IMALA
Yeah. I'm here.

MAC (O.S.)
How are you feeee...
(glitch)
...ling?

IMALA
Other than the mother of all
headaches, I'm oka-- Mac!

We see Mac is badly damaged. Scorch marks to their right chest and shoulder. Their right arm is hanging off.

MAC
It is mostly cosmetic.

INT. LEVEL A CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Weaver and Billis exit the elevator. Billis stops.

WEAVER
Something to say?

BILLIS
What the hell is wrong with you?

WEAVER
Excuse me?

BILLIS
Why didn't we take the kid out the moment we stepped onboard?

WEAVER
Because that isn't the mission.

BILLIS
My mission is to get the artefact. That girl down there is in my way. We've lost two good men because you wouldn't let them do what they do best.

WEAVER
Good men? They were zealot idiots! But that's it isn't it. At least they were your zealot idiots.

BILLIS
Nah. This is on you. You saw a space baby in a chair and it made you go soft.

WEAVER
Soft? You hired those men because you know when it comes down to it you can't take me alone.

BILLIS
I don't think I like what you are accusing me of.

Weaver pins the man by the throat. Her cybernetics outmuscle him with ease.

WEAVER
Well, for the avoidance of doubt, you cross me, I will end you.

They eye each other.

BILLIS
(gasping)
Just trying to get the job done,
boss.

The man raises his hands.

Weaver lets go. Billis gasps for air.

WEAVER
That girl is the only person on
board who knows where the artefact
is. And until that changes, she
stays alive. Got it?

Billis nods. Rubbing his neck.

Weaver storms away. Billis eyes her with malice.

EXT. MEDIUM - NIGHT

Something in the dense cloud crackles spurting out a blast of
energy. It clips the ship.

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Imala is rocked in her chair as she tends to Mac.

IMALA
I'm sure that's fine.

MAC
None of this is fine.

IMALA
I know -- There. How's that?

Mac checks their arm.

MAC
It is--

A glazed, frozen expression comes across the android's face.

IMALA
Mac? You okay? Damn it. Computer,
what is the current state of Mac's
corruption?

SHIPS COMPUTER
Mac unit memory corruption is now
at sixty percent. Low power mode
initiated.

IMALA
Fine.

She sighs. Checks the package. She looks around the room - Among the shelves of supplies, an OLD CANISTER, about the same size as the package.

She thinks.

INT. VAULT - LATER

Imala is at the vault control console. She hits in commands.

IMALA

Okay, computer... let's get my ship back.

She gets to work.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Unaware, Kali sits, feet on the dash. She checks her reflection trying out different hair colours - Blue to pink; pink to orange; orange to green to bright sunshine yellow--

Then...

The ship's computer lights up. Lines of code shoot across Kali's eyes.

KALI

No... No, no, no...

She nearly FALLS out of the chair. She jumps to it, inputting code as fast as she can.

KALI (CONT'D)

Son of a --

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Imala is furious at the console.

IMALA

Jeez, Mac, I could really do with your help right now.

SHIPS COMPUTER

Which systems do you wish to transfer to secure vault?

IMALA

All of them!

SHIPS COMPUTER

Warning, this may cause a system overload.

IMALA
Do I look like I care?

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Weaver steps onto the flight deck. Billis follows. It's decidedly frosty but Kali is too busy to notice.

WEAVER
What's going on?

KALI
I'm guessing you didn't get the pilot cause she's currently trying to override my security protocols. She's taking back the ship.

BILLIS
Then stop her!

KALI
What d'ya think I'm doing!

WEAVER
Lockdown navigation and lightdrive. As long as she can't go anywhere we still have the advantage.

Kali types furiously.

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Imala's hands are cramping. She flexes her fingers.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Warning -- Error -- unable to transfer full navigation and Lightdrive control at this time.

IMALA
What? Why? Computer, bypass all bridge control commands.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

IMALA
Then -- Try rerouting primary navigation subroutines.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

IMALA
Anyone ever tell you, you're an
asshole?!

A beat.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Kali is flat out.

KALI
I've locked her out of nava and
Lightdrive access.

WEAVER
Good -- What?

KALI
Well, unless she tries to--

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Imala is frantic.

IMALA
Computer - reroute auxiliary power
to lightdrive command mainframe.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unable to --

IMALA
Do not say unable to comply!

SHIPS COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

Imala screams in frustration.

IMALA
Fine. I'll do it myself.

Imala rips a panel from the computer.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Stupid computer, see how you like
life without your safety protocol.

She whips out a component and throws it away. Cuts a couple
of wires and re-attaches them in different positions.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Transferring auxiliary command to
Lightdrive access.

IMALA
Ha!

Then...

Everything goes DEAD. Emergency red lights come on.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Oh, that's not good.

INT. FLIGHTDECK - NIGHT

Power cuts. Emergency lights kick in.

Kali backs off from the console.

WEAVER
What the hell just happened?

KALI
Don't look at me.

BILLIS
Get the power back on.

KALI
I can't.

WEAVER
What systems do we have?

Kali checks the readout.

KALI
We got some basic computer
function, life-support and
artificial gravity still ok but
we're basically floating toward a
giant ball of dense irradiated gas
which will cook us alive within the
next ten minutes without shields.
We should abort.

Kali motions to get out of the chair.

BILLIS
Sit. We ain't going anywhere yet.

KALI
Look, I like money. In fact I
friggin love money. But I like
living too so if you don't mind.

WEAVER

Shut up -- both of you.

Weaver's mind is racing. Then...

WEAVER (CONT'D)

You still got access to the art?

Kali gets it.

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Imala at the console. It is unresponsive.

IMALA

Must have tripped a conductor again. Guess I could get it going manually. Need Mac though.

She turns to the robot.

Imala, shocked to see -- Mac standing over her.

Blank, smooth, metal looks back. No facial expression at all.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac?

MAC

Captain Roe, is not capable. I must do what is best for Captain Roe.

Mac grabs Imala's chair and wheels her toward the vault door.

IMALA

Mac, what are you doing?!

The vault doors open.

INT. OUTER VAULT - NIGHT

The android roles Imala over the bridge.

IMALA

Mac, I order you to stop.

MAC

Captain Roe is not capable. I must do what is best for Captain Roe.

They reach the door. Mac opens it.

INT. ENGINEERING - NIGHT

Weaver and her team step out of the shadows.

WEAVER

Well done, Mac.

IMALA

What did you do to them?

WEAVER

Honestly not much. The art is down to core function. We just give it a little nudge, that's all.

IMALA

You hurt my friend.

KALI

I did, actually. Pretty easy when you know how. Hi.

Imala looks at Kali in bemusement.

WEAVER

Hand it over kid. The art was right. All I want is the artefact.

IMALA

Artifact? What artifact?

WEAVER

Don't -- The package you picked up on Korvelle. And you're welcome by the way.

IMALA

For what?

WEAVER

Saving your life.

IMALA

That was you?

Weaver smiles.

Imala pulls out the bag with the package. Kali rips it from her. She checks it.

BILLIS

(to kali)

We good?

KALI

Yeah. Can we kill her now and get out of here?

WEAVER

Not yet--

Imala sees Billis.

IMALA

Look out!

Weaver spins as she takes the full brunt of a LASER BLAST.

She crumples to the floor. Billis over her, smoking blaster in hand.

BILLIS

She wasn't talking to you.

Kali runs her hand through her hair one more time. It turns BLOOD RED. She smiles. She has finally found her true self.

Billis bends down to Weaver.

BILLIS (CONT'D)

I guess you were wrong. I didn't need the backup. Job done, boss.

KALI

What about her?

Billis looks at Imala for a moment. Then at Mac.

BILLIS

Hey art, take the space baby to the vault and throw her over the edge.

MAC

I... That is not...

BILLIS

Override primary command. Beta, six nine seven. Acknowledge.

Mac pauses for a moment.

MAC

Acknowledged.

IMALA

Hey, what are you doing? Don't!

The robot grabs Imala and bundles her off toward the vault.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac, wait -- Stop!

Kali and Billis make for the elevator.

INT. OUTER VAULT - NIGHT

Imala looks up. Tears in her eyes.

IMALA

Mac, please, don't do this -- Mac.
Alfa. Override. Five, seven, three.
Authorisation, Roe. Acknowledge.

The artificial lifeform does not respond.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac. Acknowledge -- Acknowledge!
Please, Mac...

She is frantic at her wrist device.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Shut down Mac unit.

Nothing happens.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Shut down Mac unit!

She lets out a scream of frustration...

INT. LEVEL D CORRIDOR/ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Elevator doors whoosh open. Billis and Kali storm out and head towards the airlock and their ship.

INT. OUTER VAULT - NIGHT.

Mac moves out onto the walkway.

They hoist Imala out of her chair.

IMALA

Mac. wait, wait! You know this is wrong.

The robot dangles her over the edge.

Imala lashes out at the robot. Thrashing at it. Useless.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac. Acknowledge! Acknowledge -- I love you Mac -- Don't do this.

The android is deaf to Imala's pleading.

Mac is about to let go --

But FREEZES and SHUTS DOWN.

Imala is left dangling there.

IMALA (CONT'D)

What?

A bleeping on her wrist. She checks the device:

MAC UNIT - COMPLETE SHUTDOWN. DO YOU WISH TO RESTART?

_YES/NO

The command blinks.

She thinks. Wiping tears away.

After a long beat she hits --

YES.

The robot glitches. Shudders and comes back to life. Facial expressions reappear and systems reboot.

Mac spins, dropping Imala back into her chair.

MAC
Captain Row?

IMALA
Hey, Mac.

MAC
Is something the mmmmmmm
(glitch)
matter?

IMALA
Come on.

She takes off.

INT. MERC'S SHIP/AIRLOCK - NIGHT

Billis and Kali reach their ship.

BILLIS
Give me the bag.

Kali passes it to him.

She punches in the command to open the airlock -- A look of total shock across her face. Her hair turns a ghostly WHITE. She falls to the floor dead.

Billis stands over her, his KNIFE in hand.

BILLIS (CONT'D)
Thanks, pumpkin.

He checks inside for the first time.

Pulls out the package. It FALLS APART in his hands to reveal a worthless METAL CANISTER.

BILLIS (CONT'D)

No!

INT. ENGINEERING - NIGHT

Imala and Mac race along.

MAC

I have run a self-diagnostic. It would appear that my memory subroutines arrrrr
(glitch)
Near-total corruption. I do not have long.

IMALA

One crisis at a time, Mac.

MAC

A wiiiiiii
(glitch)
...se strategy.

IMALA

Come on. Conductor circuits shorted again. I need to bypass them to manually restart the Lightdrive.

MAC

That is a highly risky solution.

IMALA

Yeah but it's the only one I got for now.

They shoot off.

INT. ENGINEERING CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

They round a corner to the terminals they need.

Mac accesses the terminal.

MAC

Bypassing the main conductor.
Accessing auxiliary power.

Mac hits the commands. Ship's systems kick in. Lights and other consoles power up.

Imala at another terminal across from MAC hits the commands. Displays light up as they should.

IMALA

Lightdrive coming online.

MAC

We will have to sss...

(glitch)

simultaneously bypass the processor
at the same time we activate the
Lightdrive.

Imala pulls another panel off below the terminal revealing a clunky looking dial. She grabs the multi-tool from her chair and fixes it in place.

IMALA

Ready.

MAC

On my mark turn the dial
counterclockwise forty-five degrees
--

WEAVER (O.C.)

That is not a good idea, kid. Jump
start the engines that way, you
could blow the ship.

Weaver is stood, hurt, damage and burns to her side. It's clear her cybernetic arm took the brunt of the hit but she is in pain. Her gun pointed at Imala.

Imala drops the multi-tool. Raises her hands. Mac watches unsure of what to do.

IMALA

What do you want?

WEAVER

You know what I want. Billis has
checked the bag by now, knows you
switched it.

IMALA

What makes you think I switched it?

WEAVER

Because you're smart... And it's
what I would do. I'm smart too.

IMALA

I don't have it.

WEAVER

Sure you do. You were never going
to entrust yourself to a faulty
art. It's in your chair. Don't make
me come find it.

IMALA

I'd like to see you try. Those fancy arms of yours look like they could use some maintenance.

Weaver looks down, sparks crackle at the fingers. She looks up at Imala's legs.

WEAVER

What's your name, kid?

IMALA

What's yours?

WEAVER

Okay... look, all I want is the artefact. I don't want to kill you. I never did. In fact if you'd have put the package in the vault in the first place I would have been in and out before you'd even noticed there was a problem.

MAC

I did say to place it in--

Imala throws the android a scowl.

IMALA

You really gonna give me a told you so speech now?

Mac thinks wiser of it.

IMALA (CONT'D)

(to Weaver)

And why should I believe you? You're a murderer.

WEAVER

You're the one who killed two of my men.

IMALA

You're "men" were dumbasses who killed themselves.

WEAVER

Yeah... You got me there. They really were morons.

IMALA

Yeah.

WEAVER

Come on, kid, time's up. Even with the damage to my arms you don't stand a chance. What choice do you have?

IMALA

We all have a choice. Besides, maybe I can't take you but Mac can.

Weaver looks over to the android. As damaged as she is.

WEAVER

Sorry kid but you need the Mac to restart the engines. You can't risk it in a fight with me... Package now. Or do you wanna wait for Billis to come back down here?

Imala thinks.

IMALA

You're still gonna leave me out here to die.

WEAVER

But at least you'll have a chance.

Imala concedes. She reaches under her chair and pulls out the real package. She throws it to Weaver.

WEAVER (CONT'D)

See, smart.

IMALA

Yeah...

WEAVER

Good luck to ya, kid.

Weaver takes off.

Imala looks at Mac -- Mac looks at Imala.

IMALA

Kinda thought she'd still kill me.

MAC

Be thankful for small mercies... On my mark -- Mark.

Mac activates the console as Imala turns the dial.

MAC (CONT'D)

I should warn you, she was correct about one thing.

(MORE)

MAC (CONT'D)

There is a substantial build-up of interstellar dust within the anti-matter manifold giving a 63% chance the engines will overheat and explode before we reach our destination.

IMALA

What!?

The engines power up and...

EXT. INTERGALACTIC SPACE - NIGHT

The freighter bursts away from the radioactive cloud and is gone in a streak of light.

INT. ENGINEERING CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Systems pushed to the limits. Gas erupts from pipes. The ship rattles and shakes. Fires break out.

Imala's chair is thrown but Mac GRABS it in time.

MAC

We must leave now.

IMALA

You think I wanna stay? Go.

They hurry toward the elevators.

EXT. LIGHTSPEED - NIGHT

The freighter is in bad shape. It's being ripped apart.

INT. ENGINEERING - NIGHT

Weaver runs for the elevator. The doors open -- Weaver is SMASHED in the face with the butt of Billis's rifle.

She's knocked off her feet. Spills her gun.

Billis jumps down. Stands over her.

BILLIS

Where is it?

Weaver KICKS OUT. Knocks Billis's gun away.

She tries to spring up. But Billis pounces. She's too weak.

He pins her down. Pulls his knife. Puts it too her throat. A wicked grin across his face. He starts to search her.

BILLIS (CONT'D)
Give it to me.

Weaver struggles to hold him back. Her arms failing.

IMALA (O.C.)
Hey, asshole.

Billis is yanked by the collar and THROWN across the room.

Mac walks over to him.

BILLIS
(to Imala)
why won't you--

He tries to stand. Mac pushes him back down.

MAC
I do not like you. Be quiet.

Imala has Weavers GUN.

WEAVER
Thanks--

IMALA
Shut up. Get up.

Weaver gets to her feet as does Billis, finally.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Gimmie the package.

Weaver reaches into a compartment on the back of her suit and pulls it out.

WEAVER
Don't be stupid, kid.

IMALA
Throw it.

Weaver does as she's told but it lands just short of Imala.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Mac...

WEAVER
There's no way out of this.

IMALA
We'll see.

The robot staggers toward it. They are struggling. A leg BUCKLES for a moment. They glitch. FREEZE.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Mac? Mac!

Billis starts to laugh.

BILLIS

You are dead.

Imala's tough guy act crumbles. Billis grabs his KNIFE and lunges at her. She sees him - too late. Then--

BOOOOOOMMMMMMMMM!!!!

EXT. SPACE - DAY

A HUGE EXPLOSION bursts out into space as the ship's Lightdrive engines are BLOWN TO PIECES.

The ship is VIOLENTLY RIPPED from hyperspace. It hurtles wildly around then we see...

Bright SUNLIGHT.

And the green and blue of NEW SATURN. Like EARTH but with rings like Saturn only some are natural, others manmade. It hums with traffic and life.

And we are headed STRAIGHT FOR IT.

INT. ENGINEERING - DAY

The world is on FIRE. Alarms blare. Fire suppression units kick in blowing cascades of carbon dioxide but the flames are too much. The damage is too great.

Imala, bruised and bloody, crawls over to Mac. The android has been torn asunder.

She cradles their head. It flickers with faint artificial life. She can't hold back the tears.

IMALA

Mac... Mac?

Mac's voice is failing.

MAC

You -- mmm -- mu -- st -- gg -- go.

IMALA

I can't go without you. I need you.

MAC

Nnnn--no. You -- do -- not --
 yyyyyyyyyy -- you are -- strong --
 Iiiiiiii -- ammmmm --
 sorrrrreeeee...

The life in the artificial being goes out.

IMALA

Mac? Mac?! -- no.

She wipes tears from her eyes. Takes Mac's head and hits a button on the side. Their memory core pops out. Imala takes it and pockets it.

She looks over the carnage of what is left.

She sees WEAVER. UNCONSCIOUS.

Then the artefact beside her.

Imala reaches for it...

A BOOT comes down on her hand. Imala yells in pain.

She looks up. Billis, burnt and bloody. He is terrifying.

He picks up the package.

BILLIS

Finally.

Billis grinds his heel into the back of Imala's hand. It's excruciating. Puts his gun to the young woman's head.

BILLIS (CONT'D)

I've been wondering, what's it like
 to not be able to, you know, just
 get up?

Billis's KNIFE is by her free hand. She grabs it.

IMALA

You tell me.

She PLUNGES THE KNIFE into the side of Billis's KNEE. He yells in agony and falls backwards crashing to the floor and dropping the artefact.

Imala grabs it. And crawls.

Billis pulls the knife out. He tries to stand but the leg gives way and he collapses to the floor.

Imala climbs into her chair.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Don't get up.

The ship SHUDDERS. Groans as it's torn apart.

An EXPLOSION overhead. Imala looks up and sees metal debris come crashing down on...

BILLIS
Arrrrrrggggg!

Imala turns away at the last second.

EXT. SPACE NEW SATURN - DAY

Emergency vehicles have scrambled. The BSI freighter, a ball of fire hurtling toward the planet's ORBITING STATION RING.

INT. ENGINEERING - DAY

Imala makes it to the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

She gets in.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Warning, elevator offline due to catastrophic ship-wide failure.

IMALA
Override. Roe, Imala 7263.

SHIPS COMPUTER
I am sorry but elevators are offline for crew safety at this time.

IMALA
Override safety protocol. Roe, Imala 7263.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Access denied. Captain Imala Roe, please contact your BSI section logistics officer to update your authorisation code clearance... Warning hull integrity at nine per cent. Catastrophic ship-wide destruction imminent.

Imala SCREAMS in frustration.

IMALA
Computer Override. Roe, Captain, Imala 7263. You useless piece of SHIT!

She SLAMS THE CONSOLE.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Override granted. Captain Roe,
Imala.

IMALA
Ha, yeah!

The elevator kicks in.

INT. ENGINEERING - DAY

WEAVER COMES ROUND. She looks up to see the elevator rise up and away.

INT. SPACE - DAY

The emergency response ships activate tractor beams to slow the freighter.

It doesn't work.

INT. EMERGENCY VEHICLE - DAY

The PILOT sits at the controls.

PILOT
Tractor beam unresponsive. Evacuate
all traffic lanes and prepare
impact countermeasures.

EXT. SPACE/NEW SATURN - DAY

Emergency vehicles break off.

A giant ship - A Defender class cruiser - designed to take out rogue asteroids comes into view. It readies its weapons.

INT. LEVEL D CARGO HOLD AIRLOCK - DAY

Imala hurries through the wreckage of a ship being torn apart around her. The cataclysmic freighter shakes and groans.

The ship TIPS. Imala's chair PICKS UP SPEED. Nearly out of control but SHE MAKES THE AIRLOCK, SLAMMING INTO IT.

It opens. She makes her way down -- Sees Kali's body as she boards The mercenaries ship.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

The ship is the antithesis of the freighter. Bright, clean, modern. And NOT AT ALL COMPATIBLE FOR A WHEELCHAIR USER.

Imala sees the bulkhead to the bridge. A three-inch rim rising out of the floor at the door.

IMALA

You gotta be kidding me.

She struggles to get her chair over it but does.

She rolls up to the pilot's chair.

IT'S FIXED to the floor. Won't budge.

Imala shimmyes herself over onto it.

She fires up the ship's controls.

Comms kick in.

SECURITY FORCE PILOT (O.S.)

... BSI freighter you are in violation of New Saturn Orbit. If you do not respond you will be destroyed...

Imala ignores the message.

The engines heat up. Thrusters fire.

The ship rattles with the force of the freighter being pulled apart.

IMALA

Ok, docking clamp release.

She stares at the controls. It's not there.

MERC SHIP COMPUTER

Airlock open.

IMALA

What?

She hits the door control, closing the airlock.

MERC SHIP COMPUTER

Airlock sealed.

The ship shakes again.

IMALA

Computer, where's the docking release?

MERC SHIP COMPUTER
 Docking release control is with co-
 pilot.

Imala looks over. It's just out of reach.

IMALA
 Computer override to pilot.

MERC SHIP COMPUTER
 Authorisation required.

The ship SHUDDERS again.

She stretches over to the release.

IMALA
 Why does...

She can just about get a finger on the control.

IMALA (CONT'D)
 everything... have... to... be...
 so... diff--

She can't reach the docking release...

MERC'S SHIPS COMPUTER
 Warning, missiles detected.

IMALA
 Oh no.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The Defender's guns line the freighter up.

They let rip. A Payload of MISSILES headed for Imala.

DIRECT HIT.

The FREIGHTER EXPLODES.

Everything is eviscerated in a ball of flame -- Okay, not quite everything.

The mercenary ship SLICES OUT OF THE FIRE toward the planet.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

A cybernetic hand pulls back from the docking release.

Imala's eyes go wide. WEAVER IS STANDING OVER HER.

But she is in a bad way. Her skin is red, burned. She's bleeding. Her hand SHAKES as she STRUGGLES to RAISE HER GUN.

There is nowhere for Imala to go.

Weaver COLLAPSES into the co-pilot chair. She keeps the gun on Imala, propped on the dash.

WEAVER

You did good, kid, you did good...

Imala doesn't say anything.

WEAVER (CONT'D)

You know, he said you'd be an easy target--

Weaver COUGHS uncontrollably.

IMALA

Who?

A WARNING LIGHT FLASHES.

Weaver points to it.

WEAVER

Hope you're as good a pilot as you are a pain in the ass...

EXT. SPACE NEW SATURN - DAY

Two fighters from the Defender take up the pursuit.

The lead fighters open fire on Imala.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

Weaver is fading. The gun drops...

She passes out.

The ship ROCKS. A warning shot from the fighters.

Imala hits the comm.

IMALA

Hey. Don't shoot... I can explain--

Another BLAST.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Damn it.

Imala flicks some switches and grabs the stick. The ship BURSTS into life.

EXT. SPACE NEW SATURN - DAY

TWO MORE FIGHTERS join the pursuit.

Weaver's ship can move.

Imala ducks down and zips between two oncoming freighters.

The Fighters match the move. Just.

Imala snakes through the traffic.

Security forces open FIRE.

A LASER bolt CATCHING the rear of the ship.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

The vessel shudders with the impact. Imala is JOLTED into the controls. She sees it --

IMALA
Shields! Idiot.

She raises the shields.

Looking up she is headed STRAIGHT AT A TRANSPORT SHUTTLE.

IMALA (CONT'D)
CRAAAAPPPP--

She hauls the YOKE spinning the ship away at the last second.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

Imala's ship clears the transport.

Three of the fighters miss it. The FOURTH SCRAPES the hull of the massive transport and CAREERS AWAY OUT OF CONTROL.

Imala streaks across the space station at reckless speed.

She slaloms through towers, satellite dishes and buildings.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

Imala gives it everything.

The comms on the ship light up.

EXT. SPACE/NEW SATURN - DAY

WHOOSH. She nearly COLLIDES with a giant shield array.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

She punches the comm.

IMALA

Hey, you guys started shooting first.

The fuzzy image of a MAN, well Imala thinks it's a man. She can't really tell.

MAN

Miss Roe. I trust you are close?

IMALA

You wanna know how close I am? Just look out the window pal. Look for the ship that is being shot at and you'll get a rough idea!

MAN

Is the item safe?

IMALA

As long as...

Another blast rocks the ship.

IMALA (CONT'D)

... I don't get blown to tiny pieces, then yeah, it's safe.

MAN

Excellent. I shall await your arrival on docking bay 16.

IMALA

Easier said than done.

MAN

I have the fullest confidence in your abilities Miss Roe.

The transmission cuts out.

IMALA

Glad someone does.

EXT. SPACE/NEW SATURN - DAY

The ship rips through two lanes of traffic. Missing other ships by fractions.

The fighters break off, heading up and around.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

Imala activates the computer's navigation controls.
There. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STATION - Docking Bay 16.
She looks -- sees THE TWO FIGHTERS about to CUT HER OFF.

IMALA
Can't go round.

The entrance to the interior hangers is on her right.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Gonna have to go through it.
Computer plot a route through the
station to docking bay 16.

EXT. SPACE/NEW SATURN - DAY

The third fighter lines up behind Imala.

INT. THIRD SECURITY FIGHTER COCKPIT - DAY

The PILOT'S targeting is fixed.

MISSILES HOT.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

Imala is dead meat.

MERC SHIP COMPUTER
Route calculated through station
core. Would you like to activate
stealth mode?

IMALA
You have a stealth mode?

She looks over to the unconscious Weaver.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Course you do.

ALARMS BLARE.

MERC SHIP COMPUTER
Missile lock.

She looks out the window.

TWO FIGHTERS ON INTERCEPT. ONE BEHIND, MISSILES LOCKED.

IMALA
Activate stealth mode!

INT. THIRD SECURITY FIGHTER COCKPIT - DAY

The pilot FIRES but the scope is scrambled. The lock lost.
Imala's ship has VANISHED.

SECURITY FORCE PILOT 3
Oh no...

EXT. SPACE/NEW SATURN - DAY

Imala slips between the two oncoming fighters.

INT. SECURITY FIGHTER COCKPIT - DAY

The two approaching ships are now TARGETED.

SECURITY FORCE PILOT
Arrggg.

EXT. SPACE/NEW SATURN - DAY

BOOM. The two fighters explode in a ball of flame.

INT. SECURITY FIGHTER COCKPIT - DAY

The third pilot stares in disbelief.

SECURITY FORCE PILOT 3
I'm so fired.

INT. NEW SATURN SPACEPORT - DAY

The merc ship slips into the port unnoticed.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

Imala breathes a huge sigh of relief.

SHIPS COMPUTER
Approaching docking bay 16.

Imala triggers the landing cycle.

EXT. DOCKING BAY 16 - DAY

The ship glides in and comes to rest on the landing pad.

INT. MERC SHIP - DAY

Imala powers down the engines.

She gets herself over to her wheelchair and heads out.

Looking back, she knows Weaver will die. She could do nothing. It wouldn't be her fault. But Imala is not the type.

She saddles up to Weaver. Pulls a MEDI PEN from her chair.

IMALA

I'm gonna regret this.

She JABS the pen into Weaver's neck.

IMALA (CONT'D)

I'll get a med team up here as soon as I can.

Imala leaves.

Weaver's FINGERS TWITCH.

INT. DOCKING BAY 16 - DAY

Imala emerges into the bay. It's EMPTY.

Doors on the far side open.

A MAN enters. Imala swears it's him. He is identical...

IMALA

Professor? I don't understand? I saw you -- You died.

MAN

I am not Professor Holvoet. My name is... Smith.

IMALA

Smith? Come on. No one is actually called Smith anymore... You're him, I swear it.

SMITH

We share a certain affinity but I assure you, I am not an exact facsimile.

IMALA

Well, you're just as much of a walking thesaurus.

Smith is getting twitchy.

SMITH

Well, yes, um... Do you have the item? We are a little pressed for time.

Imala reaches under her chair and pulls out the package.

She wheels to Smith and hands it over. She looks up at him. Smith blinks but his eyes -- Something just for a second -- NOT HUMAN. He blinks again and it's gone.

IMALA

Wait a second...

Smith flustered, takes the package.

SMITH

Our transfer is concluded.

IMALA

What about my money?

The man scurries away.

IMALA (CONT'D)

Hey! Wait, so you just stiff me on the bill and that's it?

DOORS at the far side of the hanger whoosh open. SIX armed BSI SECURITY GUARDS storm in. At their centre is...

COBB

Not quite.

IMALA

Cobb?

COBB

Hello, Imala.

IMALA

You set me up.

Cobb sighs.

COBB

I told you, you are expendable. Ships disappear out in the dark every day. No one's gonna look too hard for some space baby with a tonne of debts. Insurance pays out and I get the artefact. The guys upstairs are happy which means everyone is happy.

IMALA

Man, you really are a piece of work.

SMITH

I should leave you people to your quarrel. I have no place in it.

COBB

Stay where you are, friend.

He nods to two of his men. They march up to Smith and take the package from him.

COBB (CONT'D)

(to Imala)

You got to believe me though, Imala, it was nothing personal. I've always liked you truth be told but you just so happened to land in my lap at the right time, that's all.

The men hand Cobb the package.

SMITH

It is not meant for men like--

BANG. Cobb shoots Smith dead.

Imala looks on in shock as the man's chest BURSTS like an egg full of BLUE GLOOP. Cobb is just as shocked as Imala.

COBB

You, eh... see that? That some kind of android or something?

Cobb snaps out of it.

COBB (CONT'D)

As long as it's dead that's the main thing.

He unwraps the package to reveal a cylindrical item about 10" long. Strange alien symbols line the side.

COBB (CONT'D)

There it is. Finally. You know what this is?

IMALA

A toilet air freshener?

COBB

It's a map. An ancient map of the galaxy. No one knows who made it but inside it contains knowledge of every star, planet and system out there... Every rock, every mineral. Every resource, broken down and catalogued. Think about it, with this, BSI will control the galaxy.

IMALA
BSI controls most of it already.

COBB
Most is not nearly enough.

Cobb runs his fingers across the surface in a particular motion. He pushes the symbols and twists. It unlocks...

COBB (CONT'D)
Wait -- What the hell is this?

Imala struggles to hold back a smirk as one of the ugly dolls from the Korvelle market drops out.

COBB (CONT'D)
What have you done with it? Where's the real map?

He throws the doll in Imala's direction.

IMALA
How should I know? That's what the guy gave me.

COBB
You think I'm stupid?

IMALA
Well... [kinda]

COBB
Search her. Rip the chair apart.

IMALA
You won't find anything.

COBB
We'll see.

Cobb's men advance.

SWOOSH --

ONE OF THE SECURITY GUARDS takes a BLASTER BOLT to the CHEST.

THEN ANOTHER and ANOTHER -- All DEAD in the blink of an eye.

Imala looks round to see Weaver propping herself up against the ramp of the ship.

WEAVER
You okay?

IMALA
(confused)
Eh, yeah...

Weaver moves to Imala. Puts a reassuring hand on Imala's shoulder but Weaver is not well. Weak.

COBB

What the hell are you doing? You work for me.

WEAVER

No. I don't. Not anymore. How many other teams did you send after that thing? Huh?

COBB

Well, you know... Contingencies.

WEAVER

Contingencies?

Imala notices A BLUE LIGHT glowing from the UGLY DOLL.

IMALA

Eh, Guys...

WEAVER

You know how many people I had to put down? For that? A piece of worthless junk!

COBB

Billis said you'd gone soft. Starting to think he had a point.

Weaver FIRES a BLASTER BOLT in anger. It DINGS the floor near Cobb's feet.

COBB (CONT'D)

Hey!

WEAVER

Not so soft that you have any chance of leaving this hanger alive.

IMALA

Guys...

Weaver feels dizzy. She can't keep her gun on Cobb --

He pulls his gun.

COBB

Look at you. You can barely stand.

THE LIGHT-EMITTING FROM THE DOLL BURSTS INTO LIFE.

Stood at around twenty feet tall is the image of PROFESSOR HOLVOET/SMITH.

COBB

You expect me to believe that you're some kind of alien? Do me a favour.

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

You are free to believe whatever you desire. It does not change the fact of my being.

IMALA

And are we? Are we ready?

PROFESSOR HOLVOET

That... is entirely up to you Captain.

The image disappears.

IMALA

Wait!

COBB

Alright, enough with the light show. Where's the real artefact?

IMALA

Oh my god! You are sooooooo dumb. There never was an artefact! It's all a crock, cooked up by whoever those guys are.

COBB

Do you think I'm stupid? You got it stashed on the ship. This is a trick --

WEAVER

Jesus, Cobb, will ya let it go and listen to the kid.

COBB

No. Gimme it now or I kill the space baby.

He turns his gun on Imala.

IMALA

We. Haven't. Got. It.

COBB

Fine.

He FIRES.

WEAVER

No!

The merc uses her last ounce of strength to dive in front of Imala. THE LASER BOLT STRIKES WEAVER.

In a blink -- IMALA GRABS WEAVER'S GUN and SHOOTS COBB.

COBB

You... shot me... you little--

Cobb flops to the floor. Dead. The junk artifact rolls away.

Imala drops the gun and moves to Weaver. She takes her by the cybernetic hand.

Weaver winces in extreme pain. Her breath shallow.

WEAVER

Nice shot.

IMALA

I... Why? Why did you do that?

WEAVER

(weak)

Hey -- feels pretty great to be the good guy for once...

Weaver's hand drops from Imala's.

SECURITY and MEDICAL teams rush in.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Imala sits in a rinky-dink New Saturn apartment.

She is clean, smartened up, in a brand new chair.

Food on the table. A Cheeseburger. She thinks twice. Bins it.

She moves over to the fridge. Pulls out a healthy shake. The kind Mac used to make for her.

She takes a swig. Yuck.

BUZZ.

IMALA

Yeah?

The door opens. An official-looking WOMAN enters. The BSI logo on the lapel of her suit jacket.

BSI REP

Captain Roe?

IMALA

I told them I can get my own transport. I don't need a nursemaid.

Imala wheels over to a desk.

BSI REP

Yes ma'am, but control felt it prudent given the situation.

IMALA

I bet they did.

Mac's old memory core is connected to Imala's wrist device. It's been 100% restored. An order of service - the funeral of Commander Verena Weaver beside. Imala looks at it for a beat.

BSI REP

I can give you a few more minutes if you like?

Imala collects the memory core and straps on the device.

IMALA

It's okay. I'm ready. Let's go.

Imala and the woman leave.

INT. STATION CORRIDOR - DAY

Imala is escorted by the BSI representative to an elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

The BSI-Rep motions to press the button.

IMALA

I got it.

Imala beats her to the control and the elevator heads down.

They wait. The BSI woman wants to say something.

BSI REP

I... I hope you don't mind...

Imala looks concerned.

BSI REP (CONT'D)

I wanted to say thank you.

IMALA

Why?

BSI REP
Section Chief Cobb was, well...
let's just say, working life on the
station has gotten a lot better
since... you know.

IMALA
You're welcome, I guess.

The elevator doors open.

INT. SMALL DOCKING BAY CORRIDOR - DAY

People bustle about their day as they enter.

BSI REP
So, what will you do now?

IMALA
It's weird, for the first time in
my life what happens next is
entirely up to me. Where I go, what
I do. Never had that kind of
freedom before.

BSI REP
Sounds like a lot of
responsibility.

IMALA
Yeah... but I'm okay with it.

BSI REP
Well, I think you're very brave.

Imala smiles.

IMALA
You know... I've never seen an
ocean, a real one I mean. Think
I'll start there--

Imala looks up at the door they are heading toward.

IMALA (CONT'D)
Hey, wait. This is a private
hanger. You need to take me to the
transports.

BSI REP
No, no. This is the correct hanger.

IMALA
Okay?

The rep opens the door.

INT. SMALL HANGER - DAY

They head in. Imala is shocked to see the MERC SHIP.

Repaired. Sparkling. Like new.

IMALA

Wait -- What?

BSI REP

This is where I leave you. Thanks again and best of luck.

The woman smiles and leaves.

IMALA

Okay um... thanks?

A man approaches. We've seen him before...

MEADOWS

Captain Roe?

IMALA

Yeah?

MEADOWS

My name is Meadows. I would be grateful if I could get your signature on these deeds of ownership?

IMALA

Weaver left me her ship?

MEADOWS

And a little something extra.

The man fires up a holo of the documents. Imala signs.

MEADOWS (CONT'D)

Perfect. Have a great day.

The man walks away.

IMALA

Wait. How is this possible?

Meadows responds with a wave.

Imala wheels over to the ship, a little confused.

Two dockworkers are loading a large crate onto it.

DOCKWORKER

Where you want this?

IMALA
What is it?

The dockworker checks the manifest.

DOCKWORKER
New art. Mac series twenty.

Imala can't believe what she's hearing.

IMALA
Open it!

The men crack it open to reveal a brand new upgraded Mac.

DOCKWORKER
You want, I can boot it for ya?

IMALA
No that's alright, just get it
inside.

INT. MERC (IMALA'S) SHIP - DAY

The ship has been modified to accommodate Imala's wheelchair.

It is perfect.

She wheels over to the Mac.

She ejects the robot's memory core. And pulls Mac's old one
from her bag. She inserts the core.

Mac boots. Their face lighting up.

MAC
Captain Roe?

IMALA
Hey Mac.

Her old friend is back. She hugs them.

MAC
I may have missed some things.

INT. MEC (IMALA'S) SHIP - DAY

Imala's chair slides into place at the controls.

She looks over to Mac who takes their place as co-pilot.

MAC
I do not like this new body. It
feels... unusual. I do, however,
approve of the other upgrades.

IMALA
Other upgrades?

MAC
This ship is a significant
improvement. And you...

IMALA
Me?

MAC
Something is-- Have you changed
your hair?

IMALA
No.

MAC
Well, whatever it is, I like it.

Imala smiles as she punches in commands -- THRUSTERS FIRE.

INT. SMALL HANGER - DAY

The ship takes off.

INT. GALLERY OVER SMALL HANGER - DAY

Amongst the bustle, someone is watching the ship take off.

Meadows joins her.

MEADOWS
Hell of a goodbye gift.

WEAVER
Figured I owed her.

MEADOWS
You owe me ten and you've never
given me a starship. Do you know
how hard it is to implant a holo AI
into a plastic doll so no one will
notice?

WEAVER
Nice touch by the way.

MEADOWS
Thanks.

WEAVER
Don't worry, you'll get your cut.
As soon as we deliver this to the
client.

In Weaver's hand - The REAL ARTEFACT. It glows with power.

MEADOWS

I do feel bad that we tricked her
though. She's a good kid. Smart,
resourceful. She could be useful.

Weaver puts the artefact away.

WEAVER

Maybe.

MEADOWS

And you know how BSI are. Someone
somewhere will deem her a loose end
before long. We should keep an eye
on her...

WEAVER

Maybe.

MEADOWS

Anyway... Come on, I need to eat.
Then I wanna get paid.

Meadows heads off.

WEAVER

See you around, Captain Roe.

Weaver follows Meadows into the crowded streets and is gone.

EXT. NEW SATURN SPACEPORT - DAY

The ship heads out of the station, towards open space.

INT. MERC (IMALA'S) SHIP - DAY

Imala and Mac are at the controls.

She smiles at her friend. Activates the Lightdrive. Stars
elongate around them...

EXT. SPACE - DAY

... And BOOM. They are gone.

THE END.