

MACROSS: SATELLITE

Written by

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FADE IN:

BLACK

TROY (V.O.)
I remember when the sky went dark...

EXT. ALBERTSON'S GROCERY STORE - HENDERSON, NEVADA - DAY

TONYA WILSON (Black, 30) pushes a food-laden grocery cart towards the parking lot. Her children, LATISHA (15) and TROY (11) trail her.

It's snowing in the parking lot. Caught off-guard, Tonya's eyes shoot skyward. Dark clouds eclipse the sun.

AT THE CAR - Tonya scoops residue off the roof. She cups it as Troy searches her face for meaning.

TROY (V.O.)
Ash fell from the sky...

EXT. FARM FIELDS - DAY

Wilted corn crops rot in the field. Another field is awash with dead cattle.

TROY (V.O.)
Without the sun, food grew scarce.
Millions starved...

NEWS VIDEO MONTAGE

Civil unrest. Mob looting. Mass riots. Armed combat.

TROY (V.O.)
Around the world, desperate people
organized. A new United Nations was
formed. A true one-world government.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - DAY

Crumbled ruins. The NEW YORK-NEW YORK HOTEL and a bullet-riddled MGM GRAND MARQUEE identify the Las Vegas skyline, blanketed in crushed concrete and exposed rebar.

THROUGH A SNIPER SCOPE - A battle-scarred ABRAMS TANK lumbers into an intersection. Two APF infantry squads, scramble for cover in the rubble behind it.

A SOLDIER, caught in the open, drops from a sniper shot. The tank halts. The turret traverses, hunting for enemy. Sniper fire, single shots, ricochet off the dusty turret.

TROY (V.O.)
American citizens joined a global
revolution to resist socialism...

CLUNK, a transmission shift. The tank speeds backward. SHHHHEEEWW...! A JAVELIN MISSILE streaks in, detonating over the tank turret. A huge explosion and --

INT. APARTMENT / BASEMENT - DAY

The distant rumble shakes dust from the basement ceiling. The dust falls around a dimly lit group. Twelve civilian fighters, including Tonya Wilson surround a small table and map as they're briefed by a MILITIA COMMANDER (40s).

MILITIA COMMANDER
...pill boxes are set in depth. With our interlocking M-G fire, the R-P-G teams should have plenty opportunity to stop the A-P-F armor. Questions?

It's a shitty plan and he knows it. But these amateur fighters don't. If only he had more veterans. The fighters naively trade confident nods.

MILITIA COMMANDER
Comms check in twenty-mikes. Stations.

The group breaks up. Single file up the stairs. Tonya heaves a wooden ammo crate onto the table.

LATISHA (O.S.)
Troy...

Tonya does a double-take at the stairs. Troy peers back at her just as LaTisha catches him.

TONYA
Come here, you two.

A few minutes later, Tonya has them bundled together on a cot under the stairs. Troy shines an Army flashlight.

TONYA
You shoulda been on that truck with those other families, like I said... But you're here, now. Y'all be safe as long as you stay down here.

(MORE)

TONYA (CONT'D)

I'll be right upstairs, but don't be coming out 'til I come get you. Now, go to sleep. Mama's got work to do.

BOTH KIDS

Yes, mama...

LATER - Another earth shaking rumble wakens Troy. LaTisha is already awake, studying the blinking light bulb swaying from the ceiling.

LATISHA

Let's get out of here.

I/E. APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM / CITY STREET - DAY

Troy and 'Tisha crawl from the basement door into the hallway. Blaring machinegun fire cause the kids to plug their ears. They peer around the corner.

Tonya is the soldier rocking the M60 MACHINE GUN from a fortified living room window. Her ASSISTANT GUNNER (male, 30s) lays dead beside her.

TROY

Mama...

Tonya spins, a savage look in her eye...

OUTSIDE - a DIY bunker of cars and sand bags conceals a ZU-23-2 ANTI-AIRCRAFT CANNON and crew. They blast shells at APF dismounts and vehicles up the street.

TONYA scolds her kids.

TONYA

Take your asses downstairs, now.

RADIO SPEAKER

Contact, tanks...

Two explosions outside throw Tonya across the floor.

THE KIDS

Mama...!

Tonya slowly picks herself up.

RADIO SPEAKER

Gun two is hit. Gun two is hit. Band-aid, Band-aid, move up to extract casualties. Golf-Three, I need covering fire for Band-aid.

Tonya scoops the radio hand-mic.

TONYA
 Golf-Three, WILCO.

She slaps the feed tray cover down over a fresh ammo belt and drapes the M60 sling across her armor vest.

Troy and LaTisha watch in horrified awe as their Mama grabs two more ammo cans. Tonya crouches at the front door, gathering herself.

TONYA
 'Tisha, take Troy out the back and get to the evac point. Do this now. Hear me?

LATISHA
 Yes, mama.

TONYA
 No matter what happens, never let anyone take your freedom. Hear me? Don't never stop fighting for freedom.

She wrenches the door open and charges...

OUTSIDE - The DIY bunker is gone, ripped open by tank shells. RESISTANCE MEDICS run into the smoky ruin.

Tonya runs in front of the bunker to set up the M60. APF soldiers are already set up across the street. She drops the ammo cans and begins firing from the hip.

A machinegun burst answers. She's hit, chest and head, and dropped like a sack. She turns to the apartment.

Troy and LaTisha look on from the open door, crying.

TONYA
 Run... RUN...!

A BRADLEY FIGHTING VEHICLE stops over Tonya's body, sending 25MM cannon fire after the retreating medics. Tonya detonates the suicide vest she was wearing, blowing the Bradley's track and engine compartment.

The concussion blows Troy and LaTisha on their backs.

RADIO SPEAKER
 Incoming... Incoming. Take cover.

A massive artillery strike "walks-in," each round landing closer and closer: CRUNCH... CRUNCH...!

LaTisha grabs Troy, forcing him down the hall, pushing him towards the sliding glass door. *CRUNCH!* The CEILING COLLAPSES, burying her and --

EXT. BURNING NEIGHBORHOOD RUINS / HENDERSON, NEVADA - DAY

MRS. LOPEZ (50s), a Native American woman in long warrior braids, flees the battle on foot with a REFUGEE GROUP. Her face weathered by years of hardship, she pauses behind cover when something catches her eye.

Troy wanders alone, coated in grey soot. His shirt burnt away, a head wound bleeds down his body.

Mrs. Lopez scrambles to him, making a quick assessment.

MRS. LOPEZ

Hi... It's okay. You're okay...

Troy's uncontrollable sniveling and body tremors tell her he's in trouble. Mrs. Lopez searches for help, but her group is already gone.

MRS. LOPEZ

I got you. Come with me...

She rushes Troy from the battlefield in her arms.

EXT. HIGHWAY-11 / HENDERSON, NEVADA - MOVING - DUSK

Troy and Mrs. Lopez watch their civilization burn from the bed of a PICKUP TRUCK, part of a massive refugee exodus.

A destroyed billboard: "LAS VEGAS, NEVADA. DEAD AHEAD."

Orange flames and black smoke make an ominous sunset over the distant Las Vegas skyline. Helicopters buzz the city, like flies over a burning corpse.

Mrs. Lopez hugs Troy to her. His bandaged head no longer bleeds. But the haunted look in his eyes...

FADE TO:

EIGHT YEARS LATER...

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

A JACK RABBIT sits erect, chewing dry grass. Quiet. A soft breeze sifts through Creosote bushes.

A hunter's eye aims a cheek-drawn bolt, the rough shaft, knocked and steady. A LOCUST balances atop the primitive stone arrowhead. The hunter's tunic, a mish-mash of animal skins and ragged western clothes.

TROY WILSON (now, 19), devolved, given away by the scar at his hairline. His primal state, the long, ratty locks, his scraggly beard, a testament to what he has endured. His gaunt cheeks exhale slowly...

The locust launches from the arrow with a *CLICK!* The rabbit spooks, skittering away. Troy charges after it.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / ABANDONED HIGHWAY - DAY

Tumble weeds. Rusted car hulks. The rabbit darts across what was once a major highway. Troy hesitates at the edge of the bush. With wild eyes, he clears his coast, then sprints after his prey.

The rabbit bounds over a hilltop. Troy scrambles after it, but on the reverse slope, AN ABRAMS TANK. *Shit!*

Troy bellies down. The rabbit bolts under the tank. Troy takes another look. Black fire scars. Melted track. Gun and turret off-kilter. It's a war relic.

The rabbit, paused in the shady far-side. Troy slowly emerges behind, bow string to cheek, and... *THWANK -- !*

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S ROOM - DAY

Lining the walls near the ceiling, framed diplomas pinned with martial arts belts: WHITE, YELLOW, ORANGE, BLUE, and BLACK.

MOVING PAST PHOTOS ON A DRESSER - A mini-moto bike rounds a curve, an obvious CHILD RIDER. YOUNG SORA (Japanese, 8-10), racing leathers and a trophy. Young Sora, in Kendo gear, poses with another large trophy.

IN A MIRROR - SORA TANAKA (17) finishes her eye makeup. She poses for herself, trying a glamorous expression, but calls her own bluff. She winks at her reflection, throws up a peace sign, and makes a raspberry.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / YARD - DAY

Sora strolls from THE WORKSHOP to the GATE. DR. TANAKA (Japanese, 60s), Sora's grandfather, a bio-mechanical engineer who likely sleeps in his lab coat, chases her past piles of scrap metal and car hulks.

DR. TANAKA

Sora, it's too late to go into town.

He's getting on her nerves. She's practically an adult.

SORA

I won't be long, Ojiisan. A-P-F curfew isn't for a couple hours.

They arrive at the gate as an APF CONVOY thunders by, a long column of armored trucks filled with soldiers.

DR. TANAKA

Sora...

SORA

Will you ever trust me?

A soldier cat-calls her from a passing truck.

SOLDIER (O.S.)

Gyatt-dayum...!

Dr. Tanaka locks eyes with her. *See...?*

Shrugging, Sora starts down the dirt track toward NEW BARSTOW, a walled city erupting from the distant desert.

EXT. APF CARGO TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Part of the convoy, an open-top, 5-ton truck is filled with a squad of (9) APF SOLDIERS, face out, guns out. The BRASH SOLDIER (20s) who cat-called Sora, to the squad:

BRASH SOLDIER

You see that fine ass shit? 'Murica, goddammit! Hey, Captain Rokker... You see that shit, sir?

CAPTAIN STEVEN ROKKER (30s) mans a .50 caliber machinegun mounted to the truck cab. A chiseled-looking officer, his piercing eyes hint at a history of violence you wouldn't dare unleash. He smiles widely at his soldier's bravado.

CPT. ROKKER

You gotta watch it with these native girls. Here, they'll literally stab you in the back, soon as break your heart.

BRASH SOLDIER

Shit, sir, her ass would be too worn out from my rod to lift a finger.

Well, there is that. The squad erupts in laughter. CPT Rokker adjusts his helmet microphone.

CPT. ROKKER

Blue-One, Dealer-Six.

BLUE-1 (FILTERED)

Blue-One.

CPT. ROKKER

Roger, once we get to the V-D-O, I want you to sweep the Lower Quarter no earlier than twenty-one-hundred. I'll meet you at the site in my other ride.

BLUE-1

Roger that.

I/E. ABRAMS TANK / TURRET - NIGHT

Half-consumed by a sand drift, the turret is blown off-center. The gun tube droops over the left side.

Troy drops into the turret, exploring the darkness by a headlamp. The optical and computer systems are still present. He tries to shake one loose. It's hard-mounted.

TROY

You wanna scavenge for state credits, Troy, but you ain't got proper tools.

He examines it closer. There's a rubber cover marked, DATA PORT.

TROY

... Or a hard drive.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT CAMP - NIGHT

Troy flops under the tank turret overhang. A weak fire snaps under the spit-roasted rabbit carcass. Amber firelight flickers. Troy gazes skyward.

TROY

I'm still here, Mama. I'm still here...

A CLOUDLESS NIGHT SKY - So many stars. A meteor streaks across the star field. Then another and another. Each burning out as they skip across the atmosphere.

TROY

I see you, mama...

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE / METEOR SHOWER - NIGHT

Inside the meteor shower turbulence, a large rock tumbles, red hot. Its crusted, outer coating burns away, revealing a metallic surface with distinct design lines.

The *ship's* tumbling stops. Engines ignite. Camouflaged by the surrounding space dust, the ship drops to Earth. *That ain't fucking mama.*

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT CAMP - NIGHT

Troy inspects a primitive, obsidian knife blade, flames flicker through its translucent, black, glass.

Creosote bushes bow to a violent wind, drawing Troy's attention. A deep rumble under the breeze. Troy jumps into action. Dousing the fire with sand and donning his arrow quiver, he clambers up the depression.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / DESERTED HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A military convoy roars up the highway. Two cargo trucks and two smaller gun trucks. The convoy turns onto a dirt trail leading to a remote area already lit like a night construction site.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / MASS GRAVE - NIGHT

Trucks squeak to a halt. Tailgates drop. Men shout, forcing people off. Stumbling feet. Billowing dust.

Thirty civilians, forced into a LARGE TRENCH. SORA is among them.

A man, MAYOR (50s), is dragged, kicking and screaming, before being tossed in the pit. He dusts off his suit.

MAYOR

Who the hell is in charge, here?

He makes to climb back out. Soldiers rush forward, cocking their weapons.

MAYOR

Wait a minute, wait a minute...

CPT Rokker struts into the vehicle light.

CPT. ROKKER

Evening.

MAYOR

And you are?

CPT. ROKKER

Captain Steven Rokker, the mother fucker in charge, here.

MAYOR

A political appointee, no doubt. Unlike you, young Captain, I was elected to my position by the people.

CPT. ROKKER

Oh, a former official?

MAYOR

Damn right. Mayor of Provo.

CPT. ROKKER

Utah's a long way from here, sir.

MAYOR

It was a long war. Wars against tyranny, for independence, usually are.

Mayor reads Rokker's face. He's not going to give.

MAYOR

Hostilities ended last year, Captain. Is this the socialist utopia the Unified Earth Government promised?

CPT. ROKKER

We're not quite there yet.

MAYOR

No shit, asshole. What's all this, then? Winning hearts and minds?

CPT. ROKKER

Orders, Mister Mayor. Orders...

CPT. Rokker draws his side arm. Mayor panics.

MAYOR

This is still the U-S-of-A, goddamn it, despite your U-N overlords. Aren't you the American People's Forces, now?

CPT. ROKKER

That's right. We are the A-P-F.

POP! Right in the top of Mayor's head. He crumples. A woman shrieks. The rest, already in denial, quietly back away from the body.

Sora slips to the back of the group.

CPT. Rokker reads from a letter.

CPT. ROKKER

By order of the A-P-F Supreme Commander... All Resistance to A-P-F forces shall be liquidated on sight. All persons living outside Federal Control Zones shall be considered Resistance, yadda-yadda... Signed, Robert F. Hines, General, A-P-F, Commanding.

He raises his arm. The crowd becomes restless.

Sora closes her eyes.

CPT. Rokker drops his arm. His troops open fire. Refugees fall like corn under a combine.

CPT. ROKKER

Cease fire... Check your work.

Sora opens her eyes. She's surrounded, covered with bodies. She struggles to wiggle free of the dead as weapons are reloaded. She makes eye contact with a DYING WOMAN (30s) who takes her last breath.

Troops enter the pit to finish off survivors. POP! They're on the far side. POP...!

Sora pulls free, scaling a dark corner of the trench. A spotlight catches her pale, bare legs.

TROOP #1

Halt!

CPT. ROKKER

Get her back...!

Troops leap into their gun trucks. CPT. Rokker hurries into the night. Turbine engines ignite.

CPT. ROKKER (FILTERED)
 Okay, boys, Dealer-six. Let's get white
 light on the far side of the pit.

Something big and jet-powered lifts off, dusting the
 entire site in billowing sand.

Headlights and spotlights pierce the dark as gun trucks
 clumsily avoid the pit.

SORA - runs for her life. Suddenly, she checks herself.
 Too late. She teeters, arms flailing and --

Gun trucks fishtail after her.

Sora searches for options and -- *WHUMP...!*

AERIAL - THERMAL-VISION - WHITE HOT

High contrast, green video. Everything hot reads white.
 Gun trucks creep forward through the bush.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / DRY RIVER BED - NIGHT

Troy's hand covers Sora's mouth. They crouch against the
 8-foot high river bank. Sora, scared shitless by this
 creep in the furs and--

Troy motions, *SHHHHH...!* He points to his eyes, then up
 the bank, indicating the APF. She nods. He releases her,
 then motions, *follow me.*

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / APF SKIRMISH LINE - NIGHT

The APF skirmish line creeps through the tall Creosote,
 washing the bush in blazing white, Xenon spotlights.

The flank gun truck rides the edge of the cliff, breaking
 off chunks of the embankment.

INT. MOJAVE DESERT / DRY RIVER BED / CAVE - NIGHT

Pieces of bed rock collapse onto Sora and Troy, laying
 side-by-side in a dark, shallow cave. Even worse...

Debris falls on a RATTLE SNAKE, unnoticed at Sora's feet.
 The snake uncoils with a hiss.

Spotlights paint the river bed. Jet turbines thunder
 overhead, causing more falling debris.

(CPT. ROKKER)
I'll bound up to the next I-V line.

The rattle snake slithers up Sora's leg. She's frozen. The snake rattles, coiling to strike. Sora lets slip a fearful whine.

AERIAL - THERMAL-VISION - WHITE HOT

Banking high over a hill past the skirmish line and --

INT. MOJAVE DESERT / DRY RIVER BED / CAVE - NIGHT

Troy hears Sora's whine as the turbines fade. He claps his hand over her mouth, then notices her state, trembling, eyes locked... *on the fucking snake--!*

WHAP! A lightning strike and Troy has the rattler's neck. It wraps around his arm. Sora's all eyes and--

Troy snaps its neck. Situation over. He motions her, *Hush!* Then again, *follow me.*

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / DRY RIVER BED - NIGHT

Troy and Sora slip from the cave. Masked by idling truck engines above, he leads her back the way they came.

AERIAL - THERMAL-VISION - WHITE HOT

Slow circles over the empty desert.

(CPT. ROKKER)
Blue-One, stand down. This far out, the desert will get her. I'm R-T-B.

(BLUE-1)
Roger.

Miles away, a massive HANGAR COMPLEX blisters the horizon like Godzilla-sized grubs. Jet turbos ramp up.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY / SLASH-X SALOON - DAY

A round-faced, bearded BIKER #1 (30s) oozes resentment through clenched teeth. Another, BIKER #2 (30s) scowls his contempt. Two more, BIKER #3 and BIKER #4 (20s), bald and bearded, finger knives on their belts.

A pair of large APF gun trucks are set in cordon across a dirt parking lot, opposite twenty motorcycles backed up to the two-story saloon.

Nestled against arid hills, the Slash-X stands like an Old West relic. It was the go-to watering hole for dirt bike and off-road racers before the Unification War. Today, it's for outlaw biker gangs like the *Scorpions*.

The first APF truck DRIVER (20s) eyes the bikers from his open door, his rifle across his lap.

DRIVER

What's their problem?

MACHINE GUNNER

They're ignorant. Word is, the Scorpions are Resistance affiliated.

DRIVER

Those are the Scorpions? But the C-0 went in there alone.

MACHINE GUNNER

Yeah, so don't make any sudden moves.

INT. SLASH-X SALOON - DAY

Your typical country restaurant layout, a central walkway to the bar. Wagon-wheel chandeliers. Second story doors and balcony surround the open parlor below.

Busy WAITRESSES scramble between rowdy, biker-filled tables and booths, all supervised by the bar tender, ANA (Hispanic, 40s). She wipes her hands on her apron revealing...

CPT. Rokker - drinking alone at the far end of a bar.

EXT. DESERT MOUNTAIN CLIFF - DAY

A desperate JAPANESE WOMAN (30s), reaches through an open car window as it slips off a tall cliff. The horror on her face as the car rolls over and --

INT. SLASH-X SALOON - DAY

CPT. Rokker blinks away the memory. His watery eyes seek clarity. He pours himself a shot.

A large, stubble-faced TOUGH GUY (30s), purposely knocks the bar stool next to Rokker into the bar.

TOUGH GUY
Hey, soldier boy, ain't you got the word?
Y'all ain't welcome out here.

Rokker scoffs. He slams the shot and pours another.

CPT. ROKKER
That your old lady?

Tough Guy glances sideways at a table where his dusty WIFE (30s) anxiously watches.

TOUGH GUY
What of it?

Rokker tears into action. UPPER CUT to the balls. KNEE to the nose. PIE-FACE to the back of his head, slams him right into the bar. Tough Guy bounces off with a shattered nose, crashing headlong into a nearby table.

The Scorpions leap to their feet. Rokker whips out his service pistol. It's a stand-off. The Wife sobs.

CPT. ROKKER
(to the entire room)
A man's responsibility to his family is
to always be ready. Weakness begets war.

Rokker raises the shot glass.

CPT. ROKKER
To the American People's Forces...

He slams it. Pours another.

CPT. ROKKER
To the new United Nations...

Slams it back.

PATRON VOICE (O.S.)
Fuck you, Commie...

He pours another.

CPT. ROKKER
And to all y'all deplorables... Y'all can
go to hell.

He knocks it back, slams the glass on the bar. He drops a fistful of coin and bills next to it.

Rokker backs out the front-door. Cat calls and curses from the Scorpions as they follow him out.

I/E. SLASH-X SALOON / GUN TRUCKS - DAY

CPT. Rokker mounts up under cover of his machine guns, now oriented directly at the Slash-X.

The bikers start throwing beer bottles at the trucks.

CPT. Rokker grabs his hand-mic.

CPT. ROKKER

Hold your fire, men. Let's move out.

The trucks fire up and roll onto the road as more beer bottles sail after them. The bikers break into laughter, slowly drifting back inside.

INT. SLASH-X SALOON - DAY

Behind the bar, Ana rolls away an ice maker concealing a trap door. It lifts and slides away revealing a weather worn Troy and Sora. They look worried.

ANA

All clear, you two.

TROY

What the hell's that guy's problem?

Troy climbs out.

ANA

It's okay, mija. The asshole's gone.

Ana offers her hand.

ANA

C'mon...

Sora climbs out. Troy's never seen anyone so exotic, so rough-and-tumble. He cracks an awkward smile.

Ana's seen that smile before. She slaps the bar.

ANA

Hey!

Troy's torn from his spell.

ANA

You know who this is?

Troy shrugs.

ANA

Troy, Sora. Sora, Troy. You want to earn a cool fifty credits? Get her back to New Barstow.

TROY

Nah, I can't, Ana. I gotta get some tools and get back to the --

ANA

Last time I looked, you were about starved to death, alone, and with no tribe. Everyone needs people, Troy.

TROY

I don't need nobody.

ANA

I'll throw in another fifty. A hundred credits, Troy. Take it or leave it.

Troy knows an opportunity he can't pass up.

TROY

Yeah, okay. You got a ride I could borrow?

ANA

Oh, you need me...? My scrambler's outside, on the left.

TROY

You ever been on a moto before?

Sora gives a coy nod before she shuffles around the far end of the bar.

TROY

Uh, the fee?

ANA

Hell, no!

She drops keys and two coins on the bar.

ANA

You're a scavenger and a thief. Twenty, now, eighty when you bring my bike back.

(MORE)

ANA (CONT'D)

But she calls me, Troy. She tells me she's safe.

He begrudgingly swipes the two coins from the bar.

JUICE (O.S.)

Oye... What do we have here?

SORA - Blocked by the leader of the Scorpions, "JUICE" GONZALES (50s, Latino), a muscular, tatted O-G. He's flanked by an entourage of (6) TOUGH BIKERS (30s).

JUICE

(heavy Spanish accent)

Buenos tardes, niña... Are you the little girl the big bad army man was looking for? Now, I understand why, eh...?

The bikers erupt in gruff laughter.

JUICE

Look at you... She make a wonderful addition to the who'e stable, eh?

More laughter.

TROY (O.S.)

Let her go, Juice.

JUICE

Who the hell?

Troy steps into the semi-circle, shielding Sora.

TROY

She's with me.

Juice grimly stares at him, then explodes in laughter. The other bikers join in.

JUICE

Oh, Little Negrito... You so funny. You come, steal a little this, sell a little that...

(to Sora)

You know who his mother was? She was a hero, a hero during the wars. She die protecting her pueblo from the A-P-F. But this one... pinche pequeño ladrón negro... He never do nothing to help his people... You come with me, girl. I take good care of you...

TROY - Eye locks with Juice. Juice lunges for Sora.

Three moves. Zip-zip-zip! Troy slices Juice with his knife. Juice's clothes and wounds gape open.

Sora's jaw drops as Juice falls like a bag of rocks, leaving the rest of the gang glaring at Troy and...

Troy leaps into action, literally, up onto the bar. He reaches for Sora.

TROY

C'mon!

He yanks her up with him. Troy leads them across the bar. Glasses and ashtrays fly. The biker gang awkwardly gives chase through the packed restaurant.

Troy does a baseball slide off the bar, into BIKER #1 (30s). Feet in chest - *OOOF!* Two more bikers catch up to them, but they ain't ready --

Sora leaps from the bar, using her momentum to cartwheel across Troy's back. Her legs flail, delivering a one-two kick to BIKERS #3 AND #4, pounding them to the floor.

The path to the door clear, Sora leaps over their bodies causing a double-take from Troy.

EXT. SLASH-X - DAY

Unaware, BIKER #2 chills with a smoke, feet up on his bike. The fight spills violently onto the patio.

He's on his feet just as Sora lets fly a spinning kick from a full run, launching him into the bikes. They tumble like dominos.

Troy stops cold at the crash.

SORA

What? I'm Japanese, fool!

TROY

It's this way, c'mon!

They sprint around the corner while the bike gang fumbles from the door after them. They see their dumped bikes and work to pull them up to pursue.

Sora hops on as Troy works the starter.

TROY

Come on...

SORA
You're in gear.

Troy grabs the clutch, tries again. The bike suddenly roars to life. *Embarrassing...* He quickly works the foot shifter to first.

TROY
Which way to town?

SORA
Should be left. Head north.

Troy peels out, across the dirt.

Biker #1 sees them fly across the parking lot.

BIKER #1
For Juice!

BIKERS
JUICE...!

They roar after them.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Troy weaves the cyberpunk scrambler through road debris.

TROY
Hold on!

They hop a car door in the road. Behind them, SIX BIKERS thunder after them.

SORA
Why the hell'd you cut that guy?

TROY
He made a move. I ain't lettin' nothing happen to you.

SORA
Whaddya call this...?

ABOVE THE RACE - the Scorpions gain on them as the highway draws closer to the city.

EXT. NEW BARSTOW / LOWER QUARTER - DAY

They speed into the Lower Quarter, the old city outside the walls, a shanty-town sprawl of condemned buildings, extending miles before the new city. Foot traffic, mule trains, and bicyclists pack the mishmash streets of western-cyber-steampunk meets Middle East.

Troy slows.

TROY

Move...! Watch out...!

A lumbering STREET SWEEPER TRUCK blocks their path.

TROY

Grab onto me.

He pivots the bike from behind the market area, to a narrow alley. *Bad choice. Hanging laundry and trash.*

From the alley, Sora eyes the LEAD BIKER, running parallel on the main street.

SORA

They're catching up.

TROY

Oh, yeah...?

He swerves left, back out to the street. Now slightly behind the Lead Biker, he punches it to catch up.

TROY

Kick him!

Sora does. Lead Biker goes down. They continue speeding toward an intersection.

SORA

Take the right.

TROY

Lean with me.

They lean into a deep right turn. The Biker Gang is not ready. Some lose their lines, crashing into the median.

Three remaining bikers chase them from town, along a wide water canal, their engines echo through the dead city.

TROY

Where to?

SORA

We need to cross the canal.

Troy takes an on-ramp. At the top, he skids to a stop.

They're confronted by traffic barriers, and worse...

SORA

The bridge is gone.

The gap spans the canal below. The road continues beyond.

SORA

Now what?

TROY

Can you swim?

SORA

Hilarious...

Troy power slides the bike around just as the biker gang pulls up in front of them. It's a face off.

TWO BIKERS start to turn and burn, smoking their back tires while completing a 360.

SORA

I can swim.

Troy does a turn and burn, too, but with Sora onboard. She coughs in the smoke.

BIKER #1

You did us a favor, ladrón. It was O-G's time. Me? I just wanna tap that ass --

Troy revs his engine, drowning the vulgarities. Then, a second turn and burn. But when the bike faces the bridge gap, he releases the brake.

Troy and Sora rocket toward the missing bridge, crashing through the barriers, out into space.

TROY

Jump...!

Troy and Sora sail through the air, hitting the water half-way across the canal. The bike hits the far side, pin-wheeling violently until it explodes.

Troy and Sora swim-drift to the far-side. CHEERS from the Bikers on the overpass.

BIKER #1

You are one pinche puta madre, man!

Sora flips him off as Troy helps her from the water.

EXT. NEW BARSTOW / CEMETERY - SUNSET

Sora and Troy, still damp, hike through a field of gravestones. Ever-blowing sand makes for epic sunsets over the city. Tonight is no exception.

SORA

What's "ladrón?" Why'd they keep calling you that.

TROY

Spanish for, thief. I scavenged during the war. Military stuff, mostly. My contribution to the effort.

SORA

You didn't fight?

TROY

Pointless. Flies on an elephant's ass.

SORA

Did your mom really save your pueblo?

TROY

No. She died trying.

They collapse on a stone bench. Sora fingers her PENDANT as she considers Troy. She pivots to two gravestones.

SORA

Mom, Dad... This is Troy. Troy, these are my parents...

The gravestones: JACK TANAKA, 1970-2006. MIRIAM TANAKA, 1976-2006.

TROY

You just drop bombs, don't you?

SORA

What?

TROY

This how you get all the dudes?

Sora blushes. Troy sees what he did.

SORA

No... The look on your face when I kicked that guy... My dad. He gave me Karate and moto lessons. I can ride...

TROY

That explains your manly arms.

She punches his arm. He subtly shifts his arm. *Oww...*

SORA

He was Old Army, before the A-P-F. He wanted me ready.

TROY

For what?

SORA

Days like these, I guess.

He sees a fierceness in her. He observes the gravestones.

TROY

They died the same year.

SORA

Car crash just before the war.
(dismissing the impact)
I'm over it.

Troy - *Yeah, right.*

SORA

What about you? Where's your home?

TROY

Where ever I'm at. Never in one place for too long.

SORA

A real nomad, huh? Why not stay in the city?

Troy doesn't know what "nomad" means.

TROY

The city's more dangerous than the bush. People stab you in your sleep.

SORA

Listen... Come meet the rest of my family. Get a hot meal. Maybe we can figure out what to do with you. Y'know, figure out your next step.

TROY

Okay but, please call Ana. She's already gonna kill me for losing her bike.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / GATE - NIGHT

A lonely street lamp sheds light on the cheaply painted NEW BARSTOW JUNK WORKS marquee. Troy and Sora emerge from the night.

SECURITY CAM VIDEO - She waves at a security camera.

SORA

Wave, huh? Like this...

Troy does his best. It's lame.

SORA

Ojiisan... I'm back.

(to Troy)

Don't be afraid, huh. With exposure comes understanding.

TROY

Huh?

The gate is unlocked. A heavy chain drags. Something wrenched with a grinding squeal. The gate opens just wide enough - for an AK-47 BARREL to thrust out.

JASON (O.S.)

Hands up. Move towards my voice, slowly...

Troy complies.

SORA

Jason, what the hell, man?

The gate continues to widen, letting Troy in. Suddenly he's forced to eat dirt as his hands are zip-tied behind his back. Troy resists as a bag is draped over his head.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

They call it a workshop, but it's really an ancient auto care garage-turned-living quarters with kitchen, dining, recreation, and bedrooms.

Troy's strapped to a chair, the bag still on his head.

SORA (O.S.)
Can I take it off him now?

DR. TANAKA (O.S.)
You may.

The mask is ripped off, revealing Sora wearing a concerned face.

SORA
I'm sorry, Troy. Sorry.

She retreats to the corner of a pool table, all at once, revealing his captors.

SAM "BUBBA" POLK (Black, early-30s), a tall, burly, Harley rider-type, chomping a cigar butt. His handlebar moustache and sweat stained bandana look useless against the desert heat.

Next to him, the AK-47 across his lap, JASON STERLING (mid-20s), a thin-fit, Emo teen idol-type, with longish hair that's never completely out of his eyes. He fingers the rifle trigger, glaring at Troy.

Troy lunges at him. Jason scoffs.

DR. TANAKA
Now, now...

Dr. Tanaka, his lab coat hiding Bermuda shorts, a Hawaiian shirt, and sandals, waddles in with a clipboard, wheeling a shop stool. He plants himself directly in front of Troy, and --

DR. TANAKA
Who the fuck are you?

Jason and Bubba snicker.

SORA
Ojiisan, really? I'm so sorry, Troy.

DR. TANAKA
Take your time.

TROY
Troy Wilson. I was hired to bring...

SORA
Sora --

TROY

-- Sora, back home safely. The A-P-F was after her for some reason. Now, I've done that, and lost everything I own in the process. This, here, is total bullshit.

JASON

Watch your mouth, kid.

DR. TANAKA

Where you coming from?

BUBBA

And what's with the skins?

TROY

Henderson, Nevada. But I'm in the desert, going on six-years, now.

DR. TANAKA

You said you were hired?

TROY

The barkeep at the Slash-X.

DR. TANAKA

Ana? Why you?

TROY

Good. You know her.

DR. TANAKA

We know of her. But why you?

TROY

I know the desert. I know the A-P-F, their patrol routes.

JASON

How now?

TROY

Man, y'all ask a lot of bullshit.

SORA

Because he steals military equipment.

Tanaka cocks an eyebrow.

TROY

Not really *stealing*... Reappropriation?

SORA

He's a thief, a Resistance thief.

TROY
I got it, Sora, thanks.

DR. TANAKA
Ever pilfer software?

Troy senses opportunity.

TROY
My specialty.

DR. TANAKA
I'm talking comms, tactical internet, bio-mechanical linkage.

TROY
Yeah, all that. I just need remote power and storage to download it.

Dr. Tanaka rubs his chin stubble.

TROY
You name it, I can get it. I know just the spot, too, if we hurry. But it'll cost you.

JASON
Aw, c'mon Doc, the kid's full of crap. He'll take our shit and roll out like that tumbleweed he's got on his head --

DR. TANAKA
Stop... Name your price.

TROY
Another bike, preferably a scrambler, to replace the one I lost... Travel bags, a proper tent, sleeping bag, cook set --

DR. TANAKA
All doable on my end. Bubba, cut him loose. Sora... Make sure he bathes.

Troy coyly tries to sniff his arm pit. Sora and Bubba free him. Jason approaches Tanaka for a sidebar.

JASON
Doc... The kid's gonna double-cross us.

DR. TANAKA
That's why you and Bubba are going with.

Troy finds an old, dead, upright video game consol.

TROY

Oh, man, y'all got Moto-Robo? That was my jam back in the day.

SORA

C'mon, nasty...

INT. JUNK WORKS / BATHROOM SHOWER - NIGHT

Sora leads Troy, now shaved and hair cut, to a dingy SHOWER CUBICLE and turns on the water. He catches his waist towel, apprehensive about the shower.

SORA

Soap. Washcloth... What, are you scared?

Sora drops the nice girl pretense, and in one move, shoves him under the water and strips away the towel.

TROY

HOOOOO...!

INT. JUNK WORKS / HALL - DAY

Sora closes the bathroom door, but not before sneaking another peek at Troy's bod'.

Dr. Tanaka sees Sora peeking. He swiftly grabs her arm and ushers her into...

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S ROOM - DAY

Sora studies her toes.

DR. TANAKA

He's not some stray puppy, girl. He's practically a man who, by your account, kills with his bare hands.

SORA

It's not like that, Sofu.

DR. TANAKA

He's certainly not to be trusted.

SORA

Certainly not by you.

She storms from the room.

DR. TANAKA

Where are you going, girl?

SORA

Will you trust me enough to get your prisoner some clothes?

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Troy surveys the room of all the previously described photos and awards, including the JAPANESE MAN, in U.S. Army uniform, a U.S. FLAG, his official Department of the Army photograph.

A KNOCK. Sora slips in, her arms full of clothes.

SORA

Sorry. My parents' room. My dad's shrine to his baby girl... Me.

She fills a drawer with Troy's new clothes.

SORA

Sofu says you're about my dad's size, so these should fit.

TROY

Thanks... Uh, Sofu? Who's that?

SORA

Oh. My Ojiisan... Grandpa.

TROY

Ahh... Okay.

She grips her dad's photo.

SORA

He can really piss me off sometimes.

She turns to leave, but they make eye contact. Her eyes are suddenly glossy, but she smiles through it.

SORA

G'night.

I/E. JUNK WORKS / HALL / WORKSHOP / YARD - INTERCUT - NIGHT

Tanaka streams data on a monitor. He seems to be reading it, but looks frustrated. He keys a (WALKIE-TALKIE).

DR. TANAKA
Something's not right.

(BUBBA)
It's not making the link, Doc.

DR. TANAKA
Kill it. We'll try again tomorrow.
Hopefully, the boy's successful.

(BUBBA)
Roger.

Across the yard, thick, four-inch diameter CABLES run the ground from the workshop to a massive steel, double-door on tracks, 50-feet high, affixed to the mountainside.

A man-sized DOOR opens at the center. Jason and Bubba emerge, trudging back to the workshop.

JASON
The code's not grafting?

BUBBA
It's his best guess. Doc ain't done this
in a long time --
(noticing Jason's face)
What is it?

JASON
Sora.

BUBBA
What, the kid? At least she ain't dead.

JASON
Don't be an asshole.

BUBBA
How can she know when her own grandfather
won't tell her what's up?

JASON
Not knowing will keep her safe.

BUBBA
Ain't no one safe from the A-P-F, Jase.
You know that.

TROY - heard it all. He backs deeper into the hall.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / GATE - NIGHT

A beat up Dodge Ram Dually pickup rattles from the gate. Tanaka and Sora secure the gate behind them.

INT. DODGE CAB - NIGHT

Bubba drives. Jason, shotgun. Troy straddles the back bench. He studies the men.

TROY

So, you guys were A-P-F, huh?

Jason and Bubba eye each other, alarmed and guilty.

JASON

Keep your pie-hole shut.

TROY

Hah! *Nailed it.*

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Tanaka mans a radio array. Jason breaks squelch.

JASON (FILTERED)

Doc, this is uh, Scavenger-one, I guess.

DR. TANAKA

Go ahead, Scavenger.

JASON

Looks like we're too late.

DR. TANAKA

Say again?

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / DESERTED HIGHWAY - NIGHT

From a nearby hill, Troy and Jason overwatch an APF recovery operation of the dead tank Troy discovered. The tank is chained to a huge HETT, a military "lowboy" tractor trailer.

Two "Hercules" tank recovery vehicles, armored and tracked, are being chained to their own respective HETTs. Light security is maintained by roving gun trucks and a pair of motorcycles.

TROY

Wait. The computer components with the software should still be inside the tank.

JASON

Stand-by...
(to Troy)
The tank is leaving.

TROY

I need twenty-minutes on that trailer.

Jason weighs Troy's words.

AT THE HETT - a SERGEANT (female, late 20s), slams the tractor door shut and inspects the length of her rig, checking the load chains. Once past, Troy climbs out from under the tank hull with a small backpack.

With the tank cannon now over the back deck, Troy lithely swings from the front slope to the turret. He crawls on his belly to the loader's hatch, conscious of the vehicle lights. He finds the hatch locked by a thick padlock.

JASON - Observes Troy through a thermal-scoped rifle. He keys his radio.

JASON

Scavenger-two, I got eyes. Go ahead and take care of that thing.

BUBBA (FILTERED)

Roger. Moving...

TROY - Cuts the lock with mini bolt cutters and waits for an opportunity. Just then, the motorcycle team burns by, kicking up dust.

He closes himself inside the turret, wrenching the hatch handle locked, and clicks on a headlamp. The turret electrical components are gone.

TROY

Ffff -- !

Outside, the 700 horsepower, turbocharged diesel HETT engine roars to life. Troy scrambles to see from the tank commander periscopes.

JASON'S THERMAL POV - Behind the tank, the Sergeant supervises a MOTORCYCLE SOLDIER (male, 20s) as he secures his bike to the trailer with ratchet straps. He stows his body armor in the bike's travel bags.

A gun truck lines up behind the HETT. It's gunner loads a .50 caliber machine gun in the turret. Hercules crews work quickly, ratcheting chains to secure their vehicles.

JASON pulls back from his rifle sight.

JASON

And, Scavenger-two, SITREP.

BUBBA (FILTERED)

Enroute back, time now.

At the Vehicle Drop-Off (VDO), Bubba circles the Dually to pick up Jason. He hops in the cab.

JASON

They're still tying down. We got a good, forty-minutes to get in position.

BUBBA

Where's Troy?

JASON

Man, don't get me started...

INSIDE THE TANK - Troy panics, especially when he feels a jolt under his feet. They're on the move.

TROY

Oh, shit. Oh, shit. Oh, shit...

Outside, the convoy begins to move their heavy cargo down the highway. Five vehicles, two gun trucks, front and back, and three Heavy Equipment Tractor Trailers (HETTs). Long, heavy, and spaced at a 50-meter interval.

Inside the tank, Troy peers through the hatch periscopes, but all he sees is murky dust illuminated by the HETT lights. Suddenly, electronic squelch catches Troy by surprise. He adjusts his headset.

TROY

Oh, shit. My radio... Hello. Hello...!

(static)

Jas -- Scavenger, come in.

JASON (FILTERED)

-- Zero-three, this is, Actual.

TROY

I read you! Thank God. I read you.

JASON (FILTERED)
 You can thank Him when this is over.
 Listen very carefully. We're going to
 blow up the convoy. Do you understand?

Troy - Shock.

JASON (FILTERED)
 Zero-three, acknowledge.

TROY
 I... I heard you.

JASON (FILTERED)
 You got about ten-miles to the choke
 point. You need to be off that trailer
 with the package by then. Acknowledge.

The package? Shit, he'd forgotten all about that. But
 now's not the time.

TROY
 Acknowledged, over.

JASON (FILTERED)
 Roger, out.

Troy swipes the headset off.

TROY
 SHIT...!

He thrusts his face into the cupola trying to see
 outside. Nothing but billowing sand.

TROY
 Nothing. I got NOTHING!

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / AMBUSH SITE - NIGHT

Jason sets up the sniper rifle. Bubba double checks a
 remote detonator.

JASON
 Don't hurt 'em too bad. I'll take a
 couple at the lead, get their heads down
 for rollover. You hit 'em between the
 truck and trailer so they jack knife.

BUBBA
 Hold on to them hats and glasses. This
 here's the wildest ride in the
 wilderness.

JASON
 (scoffs)
 You're datin' yourself, bro...

I/E. MOJAVE DESERT / MOVING CONVOY / M1 TANK - NIGHT

Troy takes a deep breath before wrenching open the loader's hatch. He loses his grip and it slams, a heavy *CLANG*, bouncing with the HETT movement. Troy braces, grabs the hatch and throws it backwards. It locks open.

The sound draws the attention of the Motorcycle Soldier, pulling security from the hatch of the HETT cab. He sees Troy climb from the turret and draws his sidearm.

His back to the MC Soldier, Troy tries to stand, but a violent bump in the road dumps Troy on his ass. The same bump causes the MC Soldier to lose his sidearm. The gun slides off the HETT roof. Gone baby gone.

Troy picks himself up, smarting, but keeps to his knees. Suddenly, a noise. He spins. The MC Soldier stands over him with a large BAYONET.

TROY
 Huh.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / AMBUSH SITE - NIGHT

Jason sights down the highway. The convoy approaches. Bubba spots for him with night-vision binoculars.

JASON
 Contact, lead truck.

BUBBA
 Range, thirteen-hundred.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / MOVING CONVOY / M1 TANK - NIGHT

Troy and the MC Soldier have each other's knife hand captured as they struggle atop the tank. Troy tries a low blow, but gets a knee instead, sending him over the turret hatches, onto the back deck.

The MC Soldier leaps after him, slashing with his knife. Troy gets behind him, pinning his arm and stripping him of his knife, but Troy's off balance, allowing a crushing counter punch to nearly send him off the back deck. Troy is saved by the gun tube, allowing him to hang on.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / AMBUSH SITE - NIGHT

The convoy's closer.

BUBBA
Range, eight-hundred.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / MOVING CONVOY / M1 TANK - NIGHT

Troy hangs onto the gun tube, face down, over the exhaust grill. He's had his bell rung, but it's not over. What he sees gives him hope. MC Soldier smugly flips Troy onto his back. Troy cracks a bloody smirk.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / AMBUSH SITE - NIGHT

The convoy barrels up the highway. Jason flips off his rifle safety, *CLICK*.

JASON
Going hot.

BUBBA
Range, three-hundred. Send it.

JASON
On the way.

Jason engages the lead gun truck, placing fire in the bullet proof windshield and run-flat tires.

The GUNNER drops into the swerving truck as the DRIVER loses control.

BUBBA
Fire in the hole.

BAH-WOOM...! The road explodes underneath the HETT, separating the tractor from the tank as the entire package vaults 20-feet in the air. The wreck lands across the highway, blocking the APF convoy.

JASON
When you take care of a thing...

BUBBA
Yup.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Tanaka monitors the radio with Sora.

JASON (FILTERED)

Mission's a wash. No Joy. Repeat, no joy,
and... we took a casualty. One K-I-A...
Looks like the kid didn't make it.

Sora stares blankly as tears well.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / YARD - NIGHT

Bubba parks the Dually. Dr. Tanaka and Sora watch them unload the truck bed. A rifle hard case, a hardened travel box, all military grade equipment.

Finally, Jason goes to Sora. Troy was his responsibility. But ain't war hell? He respectfully hugs her.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAWN

Beams of golden morning light fire into the living area, caught by griddle smoke from the kitchen. Still processing last night's events, Bubba stares off, ignoring the sizzling bacon and over-easies.

Jason stares into the yard from a DJ setup. Headphones hang around his neck, emitting a four-four beat.

Sora studies the wood grain pattern of a pool table leg from her blanket cocoon on the couch.

Suddenly, metal clanging alerts the trio.

SORA

The gate?

They leap into action. Sora races to the security monitor. Bubba drops the spatula and kills the heat. Jason rips off his headphones on the way to the door.

At the security monitor, Sora finds Troy waving lamely, like that first night.

SORA

It's him. It's Troy. Oh, my god...

All three sprint to the --

EXT. JUNK WORKS / GATE - DAY

Jason and Bubba work the gate open, revealing an exhausted, dusty, and bloodied Troy - and he's leaning on one of those APF scrambler motorcycles. He scoffs --

TROY

She died last night. Been pushing her ever since. She don't look it, but she's heavy as --

He tries to pushing the bike forward, but he slips. Jason catches him. Bubba catches the bike. Sora and Jason limp Troy inside. Bubba follows with the bike.

TROY

Can you call Ana, now, please...

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S ROOM - DAY

Troy's tucked in bed, his fight wounds bandaged. Sora fawns over him despite his exhaustion.

TROY

He thought he had me...

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT / MOVING CONVOY / M1 TANK - NIGHT

MC Soldier stands over Troy with that bayonet. Troy smirks. MC Soldier reaches for Troy, only to get a two-legged kick in his chest, sending him off the side of the tank.

Troy uses the gun tube to swing off the back deck to the trailer bed. He misjudges the distance and hangs over the churning road, below. He swing-leaps from the gun tube to the trailer bed - *Whew! That was close...*

He scoops up his obsidian knife and climbs on the waiting motorcycle.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S ROOM - DAY

Sora listens with rapt attention.

TROY

I had no time so, I cut the tie-downs and drove off the side. Talk about a wipe out...

SORA

Shhh... Time to rest. Close your eyes...

He does. Sora rests her hand on his chest.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVERN LAB - DAY

A giant, steel CARGO LIFT reaches some 100-feet up the side of the cavern. Near the bottom landing, another communications array. In the dark cave recesses, a large tarp-covered mass, chained to a truck trailer.

Bubba finishes hosing off the bike. Tanaka circles it.

DR. TANAKA

They finished it. Incredible.

JASON

What?

DR. TANAKA

The Satellite Module.

BUBBA

This?

DR. TANAKA

Yes. Small frame, all-terrain tires, bags, like an adventure bike, but armored. An emergency evac vehicle.

BUBBA

So, if a mecha pilot's shot down --

JASON

They can bug out in this...

Bubba pulls a helmet and boots from the travel bags.

DR. TANAKA

Or get back in the fight. Bubba, see if it'll take the data cable.

Bubba drags a thick cable over from Tanaka's electronics cluster. It snaps into the Satellite's data port. The Satellite's panel shows...

BUBBA

It's charging!

DR. TANAKA

We're close, gentlemen. Let it charge. Then we'll -- Damn... That boy.

JASON

Thinking long-range, Doc. Troy could be a good alternate. We should let him in.

Tanaka climbs onto the lift to start the ride up.

DR. TANAKA

No. Once he sees the missing Satellite, he'll start asking questions, maybe tell his Resistance contacts about the Fifty-One. We're not ready yet. No, bring it back up once it's charged. And do not attempt a start. I need to disable its homing beacon. It's a damn miracle he didn't lead the A-P-F right to us.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAY

Outside, Jason and Bubba work the BULLDOZER and MAGNETRON CLAW, crushing cars. The Satellite rests inside. A cable leads to Tanaka's computer array.

ON TANAKA'S MONITOR:

...PAIRING...

A couple key strokes by Tanaka and:

...DOWNLOADING SATELLITE OS...

Dr. Tanaka smiles to himself. He winks at Sora.

On the monitor, rapidly scrolling code.

DR. TANAKA

Hah! Unbelievable.

SORA

What is it, Sofu?

DR. TANAKA

It's Jack's code, baby. This is your father's writing...

Troy opens a travel bag. It contains large armored boots. He examines one, then sets it back in the crate. Swinging a leg over, he leans onto the controls, like he's riding. The engine STARTS TO CRANK.

DR. TANAKA

No...

Dr. Tanaka slides across the floor, whacking Troy with his cane. The Satellite sputters out.

TROY

Sorry.

DR. TANAKA

Okay, you two, out. Thank you.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP / HALLWAY - NIGHT

Troy fiddles with the controls of the dead, Moto-Robo game console. He plops on the couch where old Bugs Bunny cartoons play on TV.

BUGS BUNNY

Say, uh... What's up, Doc?

At the pool table, Jason, Bubba, and Dr. Tanaka whisper.

DR. TANAKA

I think we've successfully --
(TV click)

Shhh.

Troy makes a face at Tanaka's overt secrecy. In the hallway, though, he stops to listen.

Tanaka leans in to the others.

DR. TANAKA

I modified a copy of the Satellite code.
It should make the Satellite's O-S
compatible with the Fifty-one's hardware.

JASON

You're shitting me.

DR. TANAKA

Let's meet down stairs in an hour.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / YARD - NIGHT

Crickets chirp in the shadowy yard of dead cars. Troy presses his ear to the man-door. He tries quietly opening it. *Locked*. Suddenly, a rumbling TREMOR under foot. He stumbles back.

Gravel shifts across the yard. Troy drops to feel the ground. Then it's gone.

TROY

Tell me you felt that, Sora.

He tries the man-door again. This time it opens... because Jason is coming out.

JASON
Woops... Excuse me.

TROY
You feel that shaking?

JASON
Nope.

TROY
Really, bruh? What's in there?

JASON
It's just an old mine, man. It's locked
for safety. Rotten timbers and stuff.

TROY
Why you in there, then?

JASON
You're a good kid, Troy. Brave,
surprisingly strong... I like you. Sora
likes you. But, right now, I want you to
never mind that shit, and go to bed.

It's a stare-off. Jason steps up to him.

JASON
Go. To bed.

Troy sucks his teeth, but shuffles away. Jason's scowl
cracks into an amused smirk.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP / HALL - MORNING

A pounding EDM TRACK fills the space. Bubba pokes bacon
and eggs, on the griddle, bopping to the beat.

Jason, in headphones, adjusts audio pots on the DJ mixer.

IN THE HALL - Troy stops Sora on her way to shower. She
barely has an eye open.

TROY
You feel that shaking last night?

SORA
Another earthquake?

TROY

No, *not* an earthquake. Then, Jason comes out the mine or whatever, and gets stupid. They doing something down there. Probably illegal.

SORA

No, you're doing something.

TROY

What am I doing?

SORA

Coffee. Stat.

She bops his nose with her finger, then wearily closes herself in the bathroom.

Troy resentfully considers this latest snub. *This shit ain't working.* He scans the common area.

Bubba and Jason's backs are turned. The workshop door is open. Beyond that, the front gate is open. And just inside the workshop, the Satellite.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / GATE - DAY

Troy slides the Satellite to a stop outside the gate. He wears the Satellite kit over his jeans and T-shirt.

MUSIC CUE: "HERE I GO AGAIN" by WHITESNAKE

Troy looks left...

Here I go again on my own...

New Edwards Base. Nope.

Going down the only road I've ever known...

Looks right...

Like a drifter, I was born to walk alone...

A ROAD leading to open desert.

Well, I've made up my mind...

Jason and Bubba sprint and shout after him.

I ain't wastin' no more time...

Troy punches it. The ELECTRIC WHINE accentuates the speed.

Here I go again... Here I GO-OHH...!

INT. USS BIDEN / D-TROOP CO'S OFFICE - DAY

Rokker studies a photo of the woman that went over the cliff. A ring tone chimes.

CPT. ROKKER
Delta Troop, Captain Rokker.

(SPEAKER)
Sir, G-Six, here. We received a tracking ping from the missing Satellite module.

CPT. ROKKER
Location?

(SPEAKER)
New Barstow, sir, moving east.

CPT. ROKKER
I'll be right down.

He locks the photo in his desk, pulls a jacket from a wall locker, and slams the door - revealing a window overlooking PLANET EARTH.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

The Satellite, at first a speck, rockets toward us on a scar-like road, slicing through a barren, rocky plain.

TROY (FILTERED)
So, I risk my life to save her ass, and everyone freaks. They hog-tie me, force me to risk my life again, while they dis' me behind my back. But she's like, "Oh no, Troy, we love you." Can't trust nobody, man. *Nobody* --

DR. TANAKA (FILTERED)
Eh-hem... Satellite-Zero-One, this is base. Your mic is hot.

(TROY)
Good. I hope everybody hears... So, what up, Doc? See how I do that?

(DR. TANAKA)

Yes, very funny. The Satellite hasn't been fully tested. Return to base immediately, over.

AERIAL SURVEILLANCE POV - THERMAL VISION - WIDE

PUNCH IN. The Satellite zooms down the highway. TARGET DATA SCROLLS on both sides of the screen and --

FLASHING GRAPHIC:

CONTACT.
STOLEN SATELLITE MODULE CONFIRMED.

BACK TO SCENE

The wide rear tire as the bike dips into a deep turn.

(TROY)

It rides good, Doc, for being so small.

(JASON)

That's not all it's about, and you ain't ready, kid. Return to base, now.

Troy's alert eyes scan through the visor.

PERIPHERAL DISPLAYS: A live GPS MAP, instrument cluster including groundspeed and --

FLASHING GRAPHIC:

LOW CHARGE.

(TROY)

Nah. I stayed too long. Ana's gonna have my ass. Besides, the battery's almost dead.

(DR. TANAKA)

Sensors indicate a Charge Stop ahead. Power up and head back.

MAP ZOOMS OUT. An icon labelled, "CHARGE STOP," slowly moves to center map.

(TROY)

Nope. You can haggle Ana for it after I turn it over. The Scorpions are more of a threat than you and your A-P-F has-beens will ever be.

EXT. ABANDONED CHARGE STOP - DAY

Troy pulls into the deserted CHARGE STOP, a relic of a by-gone era. EMPTY PYLONS where charging cables once hung.

Troy dismounts. He peers through a dingey window. He tries the door. It opens.

AERIAL SURVEILLANCE POV / THERMAL / CHARGE STOP

Target data scrolls as Troy enters the building.

FLASHING GRAPHIC:

OBSERVING 211 IN PROGRESS.

INT. ABANDONED CHARGE STOP - DAY

Troy forces his way inside. Flipped, vandalized, and empty shelves. He props his helmet back on his head.

AERIAL SURVEILLANCE POV / THERMAL / CHARGE STOP

Flying toward the gas station. Nape of the earth.

FLASHING GRAPHIC:

MISSION:
RECOVER SATELLITE MODULE.
DESTRUCTION AUTHORIZED.

INT. ABANDONED CHARGE STOP

At the counter, Troy beats the dead register.

TROY
No luck, Doc. No power. No charge ports.

A low rumble grows. Counter tops begin to shake.

TROY
What the --

He pulls the helmet back down, shuts the visor.

THROUGH THE VISOR - HUD MAP - ZOOM-IN

FOUR ICONS labelled: UNIT, CHARGE STOP, SELF, (and approaching rapidly), UNKNOWN OBJECT.

(DR. TANAKA)
 Satellite, sensors indicate a large
 object approaching from the south.

EXT. ABANDONED CHARGE STOP

Troy charges from the station into a thick dust storm.
 The rumble, now a deafening roar. Troy jumps on. The
 Satellite fires up.

HUD:

SATELLITE READY.
 LOW CHARGE.

The rear tire shrieks as Troy rips from the station. He
 punches a hole through the dust as he exits the cloud.
 Behind him, the station is swallowed by churning sand.

AERIAL SURVEILLANCE POV - THERMAL VISION

PUNCH IN. Troy tears away from the dust cloud.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY

Inside the dust cloud, several FLASHING LIGHTS.

HUD:

LOW CHARGE.
 MISSILE LAUNCH DETECTED.

(TROY)

The hell?

SIX MISSILES streak toward Troy.

(DR. TANAKA)

Sensors detect --

(TROY)

I know, I know!

Troy downshifts and punches it.

REARVIEW MIRROR - The missile cluster approaches. Troy
 pulls close to the shoulder.

HUD:

LOW CHARGE.
 IMPACT IN 5...4...3...2...

Troy yanks the bike from the shoulder. The missiles explode into the dirt berm lining the highway.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP

Cheers erupt. Everyone's gathered around the radio array.

DR. TANAKA

Sensors still indicate something at the Charge Stop.

(TROY)

Yeah, a dust devil.

DR. TANAKA

Sensors do not indicate --

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY

Troy skids to a stop. He touches the side of his helmet.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP

SCRATCHY VIDEO of the storm surrounding the gas station.

JASON

That's no storm. That's jet wash.

DR. TANAKA

Troy, get out of there, now!

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY

A GIANT MACHINE emerges from the dust cloud. *The ALIEN MECHA from the meteor shower.* A humanoid shape, chest, arms, and legs bristle with missile and rocket launchers. Its head, a sensor array.

(TROY)

Oh, shit --

Asphalt chunks when it lands heavily on the highway.

Troy whips the bike around, popping a wheelie in haste.

The Alien Mecha fires a laser gatling gun. The road around Troy turns to Swiss cheese.

HUD:

LOW CHARGE.
CHARGE BATTERY NOW.

(TROY)
A little help, Doc!

(DR. TANAKA)
Change to combat configuration.

(TROY)
You want me to fight that thing?

(BUBBA)
Zero-One, this is Niner.

(TROY)
Bubba, go!

(BUBBA)
Doc is launching Jason in the Fifty-One.

(TROY)
I don't know what that is.

Troy rockets down the highway, the Alien Mecha in hot pursuit, laser guns blasting.

REAR-VIEW MIRROR - Mecha gaining. An alarm chimes.

HUD:

BATTERY LIFE 5%.
CHARGE BATTERY NOW.

(TROY)
DOC...!

(DR. TANAKA)
Select combat configuration.

(TROY)
How!

(DR. TANAKA)
My God -- How fast are you going?

Exploding asphalt. Troy banks through it.

(TROY)
Pretty fuckin' fast...!

(DR. TANAKA)
When you hit eighty, press the left boost button.

Speedometer numbers climb. RPM gauge climbs. Electric whine sputters. The road explodes and --

(TROY)

C'MON...!

HUD:

80 MPH

Troy mashes the left thumb button and --

HUD:

REFLEX POWER OVERRIDE.

BRACE.

The Satellite launches into the air.

(TROY)

Whaa--!

The bike frame folds, wrapping Troy between the tank and fairing. The top fairing seals him in armor. The swingarm covers link his armored boots at the knees and hips. The tires and engine tuck behind his back, becoming a directional jet pack. The bike is an armored power suit - an A.P.S.

HUD:

SATELLITE APS ONLINE.
REFLEX POWER ENABLED.
WEAPONS ENABLED.
THUMB CONTROL ENABLED.

(TROY)

Hell, yeah...!

HUD:

DANGER.
MISSILE LAUNCH DETECTED.
IMPACT IN 5...4...

(TROY)

How do you work this thing?

He finds a HANDLEBAR GRIP near each hand. He grabs the right one and twists. Troy accelerates and climbs.

Missiles still follow.

(TROY)

Wait. This is Moto-Robo!

He points the toes of his boots. Directional jets fire from the wheels on his back, rocketing him skyward, away from the missiles.

(DR. TANAKA)

The helmet tracks your eye movement. Use your eyes like a computer mouse. Weapon icons at the bottom of your--

(TROY)

Got it.

(DR. TANAKA)

Blink to select.

Scrolling thumbnails slide left. Troy centers his eyes on a machine gun. He blinks.

HUD:

MG SELECTED.
LOADING...

Troy's RIGHT ARM jerks back. Forearm armor locks to his hip, loading an ammo belt. A machine gun now pokes from the forearm armor.

HUD crosshairs follow his arm movement, laying onto oncoming missiles.

The Alien Mecha scans the sky from the road. Explosions as missiles impact in mid-air.

AERIAL SURVEILLANCE POV / THERMAL VISION

The view locks on. Smoke and debris, then a flash of light. PUNCH IN. The Satellite rockets from the smoke.

BACK TO SCENE

The Alien Mecha launches after Satellite. Troy heads straight for him, machine gun blazing. The Alien Mecha deflects rounds with an arm shield, returning fire.

Troy is a tiny target. The Alien Mecha chases Troy across the desert, but can't lock on.

Troy's machine gun quits and retracts.

(TROY)

Shit...

HUD. Troy scrolls the thumbnail list.

(DR. TANAKA)

You're too close for rockets to arm.

(TROY)

There...

The Alien Mecha lays down LASER-CANNON FIRE, pursuing Troy through a tight canyon, leading back to the highway.

Troy vanishes in the fury of alien fire. The Alien Mecha sets down, conducting a perimeter scan.

Troy jumps onto its back from the cliff above. He plunges twin PLASMA BLADES into the Alien Mecha's arm pit and yanks up. Its arms sever off at the shoulders.

Troy flips to the front of the Alien Mecha, like a WWF wrestler. He's gonna gut the thing, but --

The Alien Mecha blasts Troy with an EMP. The electromagnetic pulse instantly disables the Satellite.

TROY

GAHHH...!

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAY

Tanaka's Satellite sensors go dead. He uses his headset.

DR. TANAKA

Jason, we've lost the Satellite feed.

(JASON)

Almost there...

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Troy crashes a few meters from the Alien Mecha. Trapped in the APS, he struggles, like a dying turtle.

The Alien Mecha stomps toward Troy.

(TROY)

C'mon! What're you waiting for?

Suddenly, cannon fire. Huge holes punch into the Alien Mecha as a NEW MECHA descends out of the sun. Turbines scream as it drops, crushing the Alien Mecha like a cockroach. An immense explosion, billowing dirt and fire.

Troy shields himself from the debris.

The New Mecha vectors toward Troy on jet thrusters. It's some kind of futuristic tank or jet, a sleek combination of both. Wings, arms, legs, a cockpit...

The New Mecha settles on the road, swirling dust as turbines wind down.

Troy peels off his helmet, his mind officially blown.

The mecha pilot emerges from the dust with a rifle and a conventional, military flight suit - It's CPT Rokker.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY / HILLTOP - DAY

Jason sets a small, hand-held camera on a sandy knoll, crawling away on his stomach.

JASON
Sending mobile feed.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

CPT Rokker regards Troy, still on his back before him.

CPT. ROKKER
Your dying cockroach act ain't half as impressive as the fight I just saw.

Rokker strikes a plate in the center of Troy's chest, opening the Satellite armor like a race car seat belt. Troy awkwardly climbs free.

CPT. ROKKER
Who trained you?

TROY
You think if I had training, I be lying here on my ass?

CPT. ROKKER
Okay, I'll take that. I'm Captain Steven Rokker. Call sign, Death Dealer Six.

TROY
Death Dealer?

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAY

Dr. Tanaka, Sora, and Bubba eaves drop the radio feed.

(CPT. ROKKER)
 Dealer-Six. I command Delta Troop, First
 Mecha Recon Squadron.

Tanaka turns from them, concealing his angry recognition.

EXT. DESERT HILLTOP - DAY

Jason monitors from his position.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Troy holds his hands up in surrender.

CPT. ROKKER
 Where'd you get the Satellite module?

TROY
 Found it.

CPT. ROKKER
 Right.

CPT. Rokker slings the rifle over his shoulder, motioning
 Troy to drop his hands.

CPT. ROKKER
 Let's get some shade.

They move under the shadow of Rokker's mecha. Troy
 marvels at it. Rokker opens a LEG PANEL to grab a couple
 water bottles.

CPT. ROKKER
 Frankly, I don't give a shit how you got
 a Satellite. All these new V-Fs got 'em.

TROY
 V-F?

CPT. ROKKER
 Variable fighter, but hold on. Let's
 start with your name.

TROY
 Troy.

CPT. ROKKER
 I'd be well within my rights to shoot
 you, Troy. But I'm gonna take a chance.

TROY

A chance?

CPT. ROKKER

On the chance you value freedom.

TROY

Freedom? That's what you call this?

Rokker backs from the shade to take in the beauty of his fighter, the leg stenciled, "MARINES."

CPT. ROKKER

This is the V-F-Zero-S, an experimental, new mecha.

TROY

Mecha...?

CPT. ROKKER

Mechanism. Machine...

Rokker locks eyes with Troy.

CPT. ROKKER

Sounds alien, right? Because it is. Were you at the siege?

EXT. BATTLE FOR NEW BARSTOW - DAY

The walled city-fortress unleashes hellish firepower on an APF ground division arrayed before it.

A formation of tanks and Bradleys move on the city. The ground erupts around them with artillery strikes.

One crater becomes a sink hole, then a huge fissure, collapsing into a MILE-LONG GAP in the Earth's crust.

Tanks tumble into the chasm, but most stop in time.

CPT. ROKKER (V.O.)

They found something buried a couple hundred feet below the surface...

BACK TO SCENE

Rokker swigs some water.

CPT. ROKKER

A giant vessel... Our top minds believed it was related to the South Ataria Island impact ten-years ago. You would've been pretty young.

TROY

When the sky went black...

CPT. ROKKER

You remember... Buried for thousands of years, they said. They built New Edwards on top of it, to keep it secret.

TROY

You're saying, there's an alien ship buried under the air base?

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAY

Sora plops to the floor. Dr. Tanaka studies her, his jaw clenched. *It's out, now.* Bubba reflects on the yard.

EXT. DESERT HILLTOP - DAY

JASON. *Here we go...*

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

CPT. ROKKER

Ever wonder why the war ended so suddenly?

TROY. *This is all new, bruh.*

CPT. ROKKER

The impact in the Pacific wasn't an asteroid, Troy. World governments lied. It was an alien star ship. A wreck.

Troy laughs out loud. This is too much. Rokker turns to the Alien Mecha wreck.

CPT. ROKKER

You still find it hard to believe after today? Anyway, they're rebuilding the thing. Calling it, Macross, or some shit.

TROY

Why'd they lie about something like that?

CPT. ROKKER

People would lose their minds. Remember what happened. The ash, the mini-ice age. Food shortages. Over a billion dead. Now, imagine the very fabric of society, I'm talking, how we see our place in the universe, suddenly shattered on top of all that.

TROY

But without the truth, people saw their freedoms being taken away. They caused the war. They caused more death.

CPT. ROKKER

There wasn't a choice. Keep it secret or this whole thing... is gone. We have to concentrate effort, under an expanded United Nations, to deal with the global threat. Secrecy is a must.

TROY

Why tell me, then?

CPT. Rokker casually grabs his rifle.

CPT. ROKKER

I've done lots of killing, Troy, keeping this secret safe --

Troy misinterprets. He rushes Rokker, grabbing the rifle, forcing it out of the way. The rifle goes off, a five-round burst. Rokker gut-butts Troy to the ground.

CPT. ROKKER

Are you out of your goddamn mind! I don't want to kill you. If I wanted to kill you... I need you. I need your skills... In one of these.

(thumbs at his Valkyrie)

Join the A-P-F.

TROY

Everyone I knew died fighting the A-P-F. Why the hell, would I join it?

CPT. ROKKER

Just imagine if the original owners come back for their ship, what it would mean for the planet. What does that alien mecha mean?

TROY

Wait, that's not A-P-F mecha?

CPT. ROKKER

This *Valkyrie* is the only family of variable fighters we have. I don't know what the hell that thing is... This is first contact, son.

Rokker sees it sinking into Troy's psyche, the immediacy, the danger to --

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAY

SORA - Eaves drops with the others and...

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY

CPT. ROKKER (CONT'D)

I command mecha pilots, Troy. I've never seen anyone operate like you. Imagine if you were actually trained. I mean, from what I just witnessed back there... If you value freedom, you belong in a *Valkyrie* cockpit.

TROY. *The impact. The irony...*

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - DAY

Sora knows what's about to go down. She openly weeps. Bubba storms outside and kicks over a steel mop bucket. He immediately grabs for his foot.

MUSIC CUE: "FREE BIRD" by Lynyrd Skynyrd

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY / VF-0S COCKPIT / BLACK HAWK - DAY

Troy, strapped-in to a Black Hawk helicopter, resigns to his choice. The bird lifts off...

Bye-bye, baby, it's been sweet, love...

A cargo helicopter follows, underslung with a cargo net containing the Alien Mecha wreck.

CPT. Rokker dons his helmet. Fighter turbines fire up.

Though this feeling, I can't change...

INT. SPACE SHUTTLE TRANSPORT - DAY

A military, mass-transport shuttle. Lots of empty seats. Troy straps in. A violent take off - Troy screams into his space helmet.

Please don't take it so badly...

EXT. NEW EDWARDS BASE

The shuttle transport blasts off.

INT. SHUTTLE TRANSPORT / EARTH ORBIT - DAY

Troy squints out a portal. Approaching the USS BIDEN spacecraft carrier, hovering among the stars.

'Cause Lord knows, I'm to blame...

INT. USS BIDEN / BARRACKS - DAY

Troy's braids are gone, now a high skin fade. His thin body swims in his new APF UNIFORM. He enters the large dorm-style barracks, a duffle bag over his shoulder.

Other RECRUITS (20s) barely notice him.

INT. USS BIDEN / HANGAR - DAY

Hundreds of VARIABLE FIGHTERS parked in the distance, or slung to the ceiling.

But if I stay here with you, girl...

A Troop Formation before a shrouded fighter. Troy salutes sharply with the rest of the troops.

CPT. ROKKER

We're officially redesignated as U.N.
Marines...

The shroud is pulled away by troops, revealing new badging on a delta-winged VF-0C. Troy studies the new fighter, while behind him, other troops murmur disagreeably.

INT. FLIGHT SIMULATOR - DAY

Troy struggles with the flight controls as the 360-degree view spins out of control. Finally it stops. Troy drops the controls.

Things just couldn't be the same...

INT. USS BIDEN / HANGAR / VF-0C COCKPIT - DAY

Troy discusses flight controls with two INSTRUCTOR/TECHNICIANS (30s) armed with huge, three-ring binders.

INT. FLIGHT SIMULATOR - DAY

Troy calmly banks the simulator through a tight canyon.

'Cause I'm as free as a bird, now...

INT. USS BIDEN / HANGAR - NIGHT

The beautiful VF-0C. Delta wing. Twin stabilizers. Troy rubs the fuselage with his gloved hand. Love...

*And this bird you cannot change...
Oh-oh-oh-oh...*

INT. USS BIDEN / VIEWING LOUNGE - NIGHT

Troy gathers determination in front of a giant observation window overlooking the Earth. He confidently strides away.

CPT. Rokker studies Troy from an upper deck.

*And the bird you cannot change...
And this bird you cannot change...*

EXT. NEW EDWARDS BASE / TARMAC - DAY

A VF-0B, twin seat trainer, taxis onto the runway. Hot engine wash distorts the final flaps check. Muted control tower radio traffic.

Lord knows, I can't change...

I/E. NEW EDWARDS BASE / TARMAC / VF-0B

Troy seals his oxygen mask and helmet. Eye of the Tiger.

FLIGHT EVALUATOR (30s) adjusts herself behind Troy.

Troy nudges the throttle forward. Engines roar. Landing gear wheels begin to roll...

*Lord help me, I can't change...
Lord, I can't change...*

Speeding landing gear lifts off, retracting.

Won't you fly high, free bird, yeah...

Troy slams the throttle forward and yanks back on the stick. The fighter jerks, nose up, going vertical.

INT. NEW EDWARDS BASE / CONTROL TOWER - DAY

CPT. Rokker lets a slight smile slip as Troy's ballistic maneuver reflects in his polarized sunglasses.

EXT. NEW EDWARDS BASE / AIRSPACE - DAY

Troy performs a series of incredible aerobatics backed by the blistering *Free Bird* guitar solo. The onboard radio protests strongly, as does his Flight Evaluator. Regardless, Troy's talent is clearly on display.

INT. NEW EDWARDS BASE / COMMANDING GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Troy, at attention before a stern-looking 2-STAR GENERAL (50s). CPT. Rokker, a steel rail behind Troy. With a sharp salute, Troy about-faces, and marches out. The general coyly smirks at Rokker, who smirks back.

I/E. USS BIDEN / HANGAR / BARRACKS / FLIGHT SIMS - INTERCUT

A TROOP FORMATION - Rokker pins flight wings on Troy.

DRUNKEN BARRACKS PARTY - Troy, mobbed by other trainees (20s), clamp their wings in their teeth as they mosh to the Skynyrd rhythm. Spraying beer and champagne.

PT FORMATION - Troy runs with other trainees.

COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATION - Enemy mecha all over Troy, but he can't lock-on. He climbs from the flight simulator, sweaty and frustrated. Two other pilots, STODDARD and CRAIG (20s) wait sympathetically for him at the bottom of the platform.

SPACE COMBAT SIMULATION - Enemy targets marked by tracking boxes. Troy thumb-flicks the red joystick safety, mashes the button beneath. Missiles burst from a VF-0C. All targets destroyed.

URBAN ASSAULT SIMULATION - A line of mecha bound through a destroyed city towards enemy fortifications. One VF zooms past the front line, alone, using its leg thrusters like roller blades. It's Troy. He glides effortlessly over and around city obstacles.

Enemy fire misses. He's too fast. Troy leaps over the enemy, unleashing hell while inverted. He slides to a stop beyond the enemy line, facing the huge resulting explosions from his fire.

ALL ENEMY DESTROYED. Cheers over the radio.

Troy climbs from the simulator, sweaty but introspective. Stoddard and Craig, also sweaty but smiling, rush up to him, clapping him on the back. Troy grins with them.

Behind them, CPT Rokker leans stoically against the wall. Eye contact with Troy, an approving nod.

END MUSIC QUE.

INT. USS BIDEN / CPT ROKKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Troy, Stoddard, and Craig stand at attention. CPT Rokker studies them.

CPT ROKKER

You've all earned the highest performance scores of your class. Yours, Mr. Wilson, are the highest I've seen in almost five years. I'm making you Section Chief. These two Bozos and all your ground crews will now be your responsibility.

Troy soaks it all in. *His own tribe.*

EXT. NEW BARSTOW / LOWER QUARTER BAZAAR - DAY

Troy, in UNIFORM, browses the vendor stands, Stoddard and Craig in tow. He sifts through a fruit stand.

SORA (O.S.)
So, you're alive after all.

Troy spins. Sora, in a sun dress and flats. Her hair longer, now, she looks more mature. She counts her toes, self-conscious.

TROY
Wow, you're... You look --

DR. TANAKA
-- Troy-san...!

Tanaka peeks from behind Sora with a full grocery bag.

TROY
How you doing, Doc?

Stoddard and Craig trade glances.

DR. TANAKA
You're looking fit, 'ey, Sora?

Troy tries to lock eyes, but Sora evades.

SORA
He's different. You're different.

DR. TANAKA
Sora... Officer's rank doesn't come easy.
It requires a great deal of training.

TROY
Two years worth.

SORA
You hated the A-P-F.

TROY
With exposure comes understanding.

DR. TANAKA
And your commander? What does he understand?

TROY
Captain Rokker is... mission focused.

DR. TANAKA
Steven Rokker?

TROY
He's definitely one of a kind.

DR. TANAKA

We should talk. In private. Say, dinner, tonight? Sora...?

SORA

Whatever.

DR. TANAKA

That settles it, then. Seven, sharp.

Dr. Tanaka pushes Sora past Troy and his men. Sora finally locks her fierce eyes with Troy as they pass. Once they're gone...

STODDARD

Gyatt...!

CRAIG

(hands Stoddard some cash)

Dang boss. I always thought you was gay. Not that there's anything wrong with that...

EXT. JUNK WORKS / YARD - NIGHT

Sora has Troy cornered behind some heavy equipment. She glares at him accusingly.

TROY

There was no coming back here. My bridges were burned. Can you honestly say I would've been welcome back? Hell no.

A tear shoots down her cheek as fiercely as her stare.

TROY

Remember that O-G at the Slash-X? He said, I never did anything to help my people. At the Junk Works, I hoped you guys would become my people. Truth is, the A-P-F have proved to be more of a family than I ever had.

But after fighting that thing in the desert, after knowing the truth, I realized the only person I want to protect is you. I ain't letting nothing happen to you, Sora. Even if that means joining the A-P-F.

She throws her arms around him, face buried in his chest.

SORA

Don't call me by my first name.

He hugs her back, snickering. Sora pulls back and slugs him in the chest, hard. *Oof!*

DR. TANAKA (O.S.)

Troy-san?

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Troy joins Dr. Tanaka, still massaging his chest.

DR. TANAKA

Please sit. They went over Mecha Project history?

TROY

Extensively. You were mentioned by name after the second ship was discovered.

DR. TANAKA

Because of my time with the Macross Initiative... I was brought onboard to lead a new team, here, including Sora's parents, to discover a link, if any, between the two ships.

INT. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE - DAY

A large group of explorers in oxygen masks, including DR. TANAKA, JACK and MIRIAM TANAKA, and head of security, STEVEN ROKKER, use powerful flashlights to explore the immense, dark interior.

DR. TANAKA (V.O.)

As our research evolved from ideation to utilization, security became more concerned with insider espionage.

Rokker studies the group, not the ship.

DR. TANAKA (V.O.)

It became increasingly clear, the U-N intended to use the war to test a new crop of weapons based on the alien Over Technology.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Jack and Dr. Tanaka yell passionately at each other. Young Sora (6), secretly observes from the doorway.

DR. TANAKA (V.O.)

My son, Jack, threatened to go public...

JACK TANAKA

Because, Dad, you have to get involved in order to change things...!

I/E. DESERT HIGHWAY / MOVING CARS - DAY

A high-speed car chase. Jack and Miriam turn off-road to evade a relentless black sedan in hot pursuit.

DR. TANAKA (V.O.)

I don't believe the car accident that killed Sora's parents was an accident...

SHOTS FIRED. Jack is hit in the back and slumps over. Miriam grabs the wheel. The car spins out of control into a guard rail, teetering over...

I/E. DESERT HIGHWAY / CLIFF / CAR WRECK - DAY

Rokker approaches the wreck, a government spook in sunglasses with a silenced pistol. He's unpleasantly surprised... He pulls off his sunglasses.

CPT. ROKKER

Where is she, Miri? Tell me who has her!

MIRIAM - Her teary, pleading eyes, remains silent.

CPT. ROKKER

How many times...? I begged you to stay away from him. Now, it's too late.

Rokker kicks the car hard. Miriam tries to climb from the driver's window, but to her horror, the car breaks free of the guard rail, rolling sideways off the cliff.

He dons his sunglasses, watching the explosive finale.

INT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Troy listens pensively.

DR. TANAKA

Your beloved, Steven Rokker, was head of security. I couldn't prove it was murder, but for my part, I was done. I quit, went underground.

TROY

The C-0 seems pretty straight with us.

DR. TANAKA

The Rokker I know is a maniac. Not sure how he went from intelligence spook to Marine officer... Eyes open, Lieutenant.

INT. NEW EDWARDS / HANGAR / READY-ROOM - DAY

Troy makes final flight suit adjustments and shuts his locker as he walks away. CPT Rokker is waiting for him in the hangar.

CPT. ROKKER

Lieutenant Wilson...

TROY

Hey, sir, good morning. You coming up?

CPT. ROKKER

Training meeting. Coordination for new equipment training.

TROY

Ohhh...?

CPT. ROKKER

They're going to debut the Macross and Robotechnology on Armistice Day. I know it's been frustrating, training on fighters in space for OPSEC reasons, when they're not even space rated.

TROY

You're saying those days are over?

CPT. ROKKER

V-F-Ones, here we comes. Expect reorganization, too. We won't be Marines much longer.

TROY

Air-space operational fighters... You think they'll put us out there permanently?

CPT. ROKKER
Worried about your girl, huh.

TROY
Me, sir? Nah...

CPT. ROKKER
I've heard the scuttlebutt, Troy. Believe me, I know how Asian women are.

TROY
Whoa, hey, sir...

CPT. ROKKER
Just be careful. You gotta protect yourself with these locals. We get sent up for six-months, she may not be here when you get back. And heaven forbid, you get her pregnant.

Troy doesn't know how to react.

CPT. ROKKER
Anyway, good luck, today.

TROY
Yessir.

I/E. MECHA PATROL AIRSPACE / 3X VF-0C / 1X VF-0S / TROY / ROKKER / STODDARD / CRAIG - INTERCUT - DAY

Troy leads a flight of three variable fighters in tight formation. We hear their (filtered) radio chatter.

CRAIG
Okay, I got one... What do you call a gluten free noodle?

STODDARD
What?

CRAIG
An im-pasta.

TROY
Dude, just stop...

Laughter from the other guys as a VF-0S fighter slips behind their formation.

CPT. ROKKER
'Ello, 'ello...

TROY

Dealer-six, sir, you made it. We didn't pick you up on radar.

CPT. ROKKER

Yeah, helping the tech guys with this new stealth module. Seems like it's working. How goes the first patrol? Anything?

STODDARD

Maintaining forty-thousand at a one-four-six. Negative contact.

CPT. ROKKER

Pray it stays that way.

CRAIG

Sucks, I joined too late.

CPT. ROKKER

Violence scars the mind, Three-B. Close air support can get very up-close and personal. One minute you're at forty thousand, the next, you're in the blood and guts with the grunts.

ATC

Dealer-Six, New Edwards A-T-C.

CPT. ROKKER

Dealer-Six.

ATC

Roger, Q-R-F requested, vicinity Nellis Air Field, Nevada. Their ammo holding area is under attack.

STODDARD

Las Vegas--?

CPT. ROKKER

Un-key, please. Can I get the grid, New Edwards?

ATC

Roger, eleven-sierra 6-3-2-niner-5-5.

TROY

Got it.

CPT. ROKKER

Good copy, New Edwards. Two V-F-Zero-Charlies, en route.

CRAIG

Two? Sir, you're not coming?

CPT. ROKKER

Nope. You neither. You got this, Green-three. Take Three-Alpha and be careful. We'll mind the store while you're gone.

TROY

Okay, Alpha, slight left turn and pick up a heading of three-two-two.

Troy and Stoddard break formation.

CPT. ROKKER

Go get 'em, boys...

**I/E. NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE / AMMO BUNKER COMPLEX / MECHA
/ TROY / STODDARD / BUBBA / JASON / TRUCK - INTERCUT**

The Valkyries drop into Nellis airspace. The battle is in full pitch, communications are (filtered) via radio.

TROY

Contact, smoke, east of the airstrip.

STODDARD

I got eyes.

TROY

Follow me in.

Troy rolls into a dive. Stoddard follows.

TROY

Ground commander, this is Death Dealer Green-three with two, fully loaded V-F-ZERO-CHARLIES, at your service.

SMART-5

Dealer, this is Smart-five. We got fifteen to twenty resistance dismounts in and around the munitions bunkers. They have small arms and --

A STINGER MISSILE rockets skyward at the fighters.

STODDARD

Contact, missile launch. Counter-measures...

Stoddard's VF head-unit drops, locks on target, and blows the missile from the sky with his laser cannon.

STODDARD

Shit...

SMART-5 (CONT'D)

Shoulder-fired rockets, and some sort of fire support mecha on the east flank.

TROY

Sir.

STODDARD

Identified. Designating...

Troy glances at his monitor: Video of the unknown mecha blasting APF troops.

TROY

What the hell?

STODDARD

Is that Ground mode?

TROY

I don't know what that is.

SMART-5

Dealer, I need a gun run, southeast to northwest to take out that mecha.

TROY

Dealer, WILCO.

(to Stoddard)

Let's flip a bitch and lock-on.

The fighters roll left. As they come around...

The 40-FOOT MECHA strafes APF troops with 35-MM GUNS.

STODDARD

They're getting annihilated.

TROY

Roger. And, Smart-five, Dealer. We have target lock. Permission to fire.

SMART-5

Negative, negative... Check fire.

TROY

Say again?

SMART-5

Reflex fuel, the same fusion material in your mecha. The bunkers are full of it.

(MORE)

SMART-5 (CONT'D)

You miss, or any shrapnel goes flying, we all go, ka-blooney. Guns only.

TROY

Shit. Roger that.

STODDARD

Ground mode?

TROY

And, Roger.

ON THE GROUND - Deafening mecha fire as Resistance Fighters defend their fork-lift operation, loading reflex fuel pallets onto cargo trucks.

A forklift drops its last load in a truck. FORKLIFT OP (30s) waves to the truck driver he's done. The truck driver is BUBBA, his massive head squeezed into a COMMS HELMET.

BUBBA

Yo, Jase, I'm loaded, man. Rolling out.

JASON (FILTERED)

Roger. See you at the tunnel.

BUBBA

You tracking the A-P-F fast movers?

JASON (FILTERED)

They won't fire down here with the nukes. Get that big ass on outta here.

Bubba wheels the truck between two bunkers. He sees the fighters making like dive bombers.

BUBBA

They're coming in hot, east side.

Resistance dismounts on the ground fire missiles at the incoming fighters and --

STODDARD

Incoming!

TROY

Break!

Flare blossoms erupt from both fighters as they split up. The missiles detonate.

TROY

Battroid.

STODDARD

Right behind you.

In an instant, both fighters unfold into 45-foot, humanoid robots called BATTROIDS.

Troy hits the ground heavily, but is instantly on the move. He uses his foot afterburners like roller blades, skating towards the enemy line, his underslung, 35mm gatling-gun pod is now a rifle.

STODDARD

You gotta teach me that, boss...

Stoddard's Battroid runs forward, way slower than Troy.

TROY

Take care of the light work while I deal with Big Bertha on the far side.

STODDARD

Here goes the paint job...

Troy pushes the throttle. His Battroid leaps over the Resistance defense line.

Stoddard follows, but drives his Battroid into a GROUND SLIDE, directly into the enemy defenses, crushing everyone and everything in his path.

When he gains his feet, the Battroid is covered in BLOOD.

TROY lands with an Aikido roll, back up on his feet. He sneaks between two bunkers like an infantryman.

TROY

Going north to flank him.

In the far distance, a dust cloud. Bubba hauls ass to the perimeter fence. He checks his rear view mirror.

TROY - Ready to ambush the enemy mecha around the corner.

BUBBA

A-P-F Battroid, behind you!

JASON pivots in his cockpit, surrounded by 360-degree monitors - HE IS THE ENEMY MECHA PILOT.

Jason instantly rockets skyward, folding into a fighter plane before disappearing in the sun.

Troy is also surrounded by monitors, an armored cocoon.

TROY

Three-A, he bugged out. You see him?

STODDARD

Not on scopes.

Bubba's rear view mirror. The APF Battroid centers on him.

BUBBA

Uh...

Troy's monitor, focuses on the speeding truck. PUNCH IN. The truck is packed with REFLEX FUEL.

TROY

A loaded truck's, getting away. Gonna check it out.

STODDARD

Roger. Switching to Smart's net.

Bubba keeps eyes on his rear view. His eyes go wide when the Battroid collapses, becoming half-Battroid, half-Fighter (Ground Mode), and rockets toward him.

BUBBA

Sheeiiit... Jason, this asshole is coming straight for me.

JASON

Where are you?

BUBBA

North exit, but dude's got next-gen thermals. We're sitting ducks.

JASON

On the way.

Troy rockets toward Bubba, rapidly closing.

FORKLIFT OP

There's the fence.

BUBBA

Yo, Jase. Keep him distracted 'til we hit the tunnel. Then break station.

JASON

Cool.

Jason dives straight down. His monitor shows Troy gaining on Bubba's truck. He opens up on Troy with GATLING GUNS.

TROY - Evasive maneuvers.

Bubba crashes the truck through the twenty-foot high chain-link fence.

BUBBA

Boo-ya!

Now, in a SLOT CANYON, Bubba focuses on driving.

Jason's Battroid hovers at the fence line, a menacing obstacle. Troy powers right for him.

Jason fires multiple rockets. Troy's evasive maneuvers have the rockets impacting the ground as he zooms inside their range. Jason drifts backward, drawing Troy away from Bubba.

As Troy pursues Jason, he rips one of the twenty-foot fence poles from the ground. Jason isn't ready. Troy gives him a martial arts pummeling.

I/E. SLOT CANYON / TUNNEL / TRUCK - INTERCUT

Bubba pulls into a tunnel with more Resistance personnel. He quickly parks, then hustles to the entrance with binoculars and a hand-held radio.

BUBBA

We're clear.

I/E. NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE / AMMO BUNKER COMPLEX / 2X VF-0C / SV-51 / TROY / STODDARD / BUBBA / JASON / TRUCK / CAVE - INTERCUT

JASON

Breaking contact.

Jason vaults over Troy, escaping to open desert.

TROY

Oh, hell no...

Troy launches the fence pole, like an spear. The pole pierces Jason's Battroid, center mass, punching through Jason's body, beneath his neck.

TROY

Scratch one bogie...

Bubba sees Jason's mecha take the mid-air strike. He hears Jason choking over the headset.

BUBBA

Jase, status...? Jason!

Jason's mecha hovers over the slot canyon, the jutting pole surrounded by surging, blue veins of electricity. Its engines sputter out, and suddenly, it drops.

BUBBA - THE TUNNEL ENTRANCE. He runs for his life. Jason's mecha crashes outside the cave entrance. Bubba flies backward. His heart-broken, eyes, already watery.

TROY - Pivots from the wreck, back to the ammo complex.

Stoddard's bloody Battroid stands guard as fire and rescue trucks deal with the aftermath on the ground.

STODDARD

And, Smart-Five, sir. All enemy clear.

SMART-5

Outstanding.

STODDARD

You think I can get some fire truck love? My boss is gonna ream my ass for this.

TROY

I'll be standing by, up here.

Troy raises his visor. A somber moment to reflect.

I/E. NELLIS AIRSPACE / HENDERSON STREET BATTLE / DESERT HIGHWAY - INTERCUT

Enemy Mecha fires at Troy.

TONYA WILSON is hit, chest and head, and dropped like a sack. She detonates the suicide vest, blowing the Bradley's track and engine --

Alien Mecha takes fire. Huge holes punch into --

Tonya is hit, chest and head, and dropped like a sack.

Enemy Mecha crashes in the slot canyon.

YOUNG TROY AND LATISHA

Mama...!

TONYA

Run... RUN...!

BACK TO SCENE

Troy, emotionally exhausted, checks his instruments.

The scrolling MAP MONITOR indicates he's approaching a quarantined, off-limits area: HENDERSON.

Troy sees an opportunity.

EXT. HENDERSON, NEVADA / QUARANTINE ZONE - DAY

Troy's fighter approaches the once tranquil suburb, now captive by a giant, earthen berm and barbed wire field. Warning signs surround:

RESTRICTED AREA KEEP OUT.

I/E. HENDERSON / VF-0C / TROY - INTERCUT

Under the fuselage, the VF HEAD UNIT drops and scans. Troy checks his THERMAL MONITOR. The bombed-out city passes beneath. Monitor readout: NO LIFE FORMS

Troy decides to go for it.

The Fighter descends, unfolding it's legs and arms into Ground Mode. It slows to a powerful hover over a main street intersection, then lowers to the street. Engines power down at ground contact. Troy opens his canopy, removing his helmet to survey the scene.

Henderson, like post-World War II Dresden, fire-gutted buildings held together by ash. Troy plops down in his seat, devastated.

STODDARD (FILTERED)

Boss, I'm about done. You find anything?

Troy fires up the turbines, refits his helmet.

TROY

Nah. There's nothing for me, here.

The Valkyrie blasts off.

EXT. JUNK WORKS GATE - DAWN

Dr. Tanaka yanks open the steel door. Troy, despondently raises his eyes. A combat vet, now, things have changed.

TROY
You said it was urgent.

DR. TANAKA
Yes.

Dr. Tanaka takes Troy quickly to the KONG DOORS. Troy's Spidey sense is up as he's led through the man-door.

TROY
Oh, am I ready now?

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVERN LAB - DAY

Troy studies Dr. Tanaka's grim face as he pulls the lift gate down. The elevator lowers. Troy peers over the railing. A military flatbed truck carrying an immense, tarp-covered cargo.

Bubba waits, angrily chomping on a cigar.

TROY
Bubba... What's up?

Back at the man-door, Sora quietly lets herself in.

Dr. Tanaka let's Troy off the elevator.

TROY
Where's Jason?

Bubba glares at Troy through cigar smoke. Tanaka nods at Bubba. Bubba unties the tarp ropes. Dr. Tanaka wearily slumps into his chair at the computer array.

SORA eves drops the echoing voices.

DR. TANAKA (O.S.)
Jason's dead, Troy.

Sora's jaw drops. She claps her hands over her mouth.

DR. TANAKA (O.S.)
This happened two weeks ago. Show him.

Bubba noisily pulls the tarp off the cargo. Troy spins. It's the destroyed Resistance mecha. Troy staggers.

TROY
What is this?

SORA'S tears soak her hand as she grips her mouth shut.

DR. TANAKA

Bubba, thank you. Go on, get some air.

BUBBA

Stinks down here, anyway.

Bubba lumbers to the elevator and heads up.

Sora scrambles out the man-door.

Troy's eyes beg for clarity. Tanaka paces, mumbling.

DR. TANAKA

Impossible to see this coming. Sora brings you in. Jason saw your potential, something wild from your time in the desert... Then you were gone.

TROY

Y'all out of your goddamn minds? This tech is restricted. Y'all could be shot. Who are you people? Resistance...? Does Sora--? Is she Resistance, too?

DR. TANAKA

She knows nothing of this. And I beg you--

TROY

Are you fucking Resistance?

DR. TANAKA

No... I use the Resistance for my own ends. For Jack's ends.

TROY

Sora's father?

DR. TANAKA

My son! It was *Rokker*. He was head of Mecha Project security. If he didn't do it himself, he gave the order.

TROY

You're wrong. He's a good man --

DR. TANAKA

-- Is he!

Eyes locked. Tanaka eases off. He continues to pace.

DR. TANAKA

After Jack's funeral, I wanted revenge. I used my own Mecha Project research, along with partners in the Pacific, to build this S-V-Fifty-One prototype. But it was useless without Jack's software, the software you provided with the Satellite.

TROY

You were gonna use this, how?

DR. TANAKA

To go public. To show what the government was hiding from the people. To keep people questioning authority.

TROY

I should've known what was going on down here a long time ago.

DR. TANAKA

That was my call. Jason wanted you onboard. I chose to keep it from you and Sora. Also my call to send Jason in the Fifty-One... My responsibility.

Troy studies him, his own horror-stricken expression, looks like distain. A futuristic RING TONE. Troy pulls his cell phone.

TROY

Lieutenant Wilson... On the way.
(to Tanaka)
Where's Sora?

Tanaka stares, lost in his own misery.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S ROOM - DAY

Sora's clutches a photo of her dead parents.

TROY

Hey... You been crying? Hey...

Finally, eye contact. He gathers her to his chest.

TROY

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry about Jason. I know you loved him.

SORA

He was visiting family in Hawaii, they said. Why am I hearing this for the first time? And why from you, not my Sofu?

TROY

He wants to protect you. Like we all do.

SORA

He refuses to trust me. The two years you were away, no details on his big plan, no clue. I was there. I heard all their secret shit. And so what, I'm just supposed to pretend I never did? I'm almost nineteen, now.

TROY

I've seen you in action, honey. I know you're tough, that you can handle it, but I've seen and done things that... I wouldn't want your mind scarred anymore than it already is.

(beat)

Bunny... My unit just went on full alert.

SORA

What? No, you can't...

TROY

Believe me, I don't want to. This business, this constant war and violence, it's got to stop. And this U-N Space Navy is the best chance I have to stop it.

SORA

You belong here. We're your people, now. Don't you see that?

TROY

I doubt Doc and Bubba would agree once they learn --

She locks her teary eyes with his. She wants to tell him.

SORA

I, I -- !

TROY

I belong in the cockpit right now. For you. For Jason...

Troy makes for the door. Sora follows.

SORA
Troy...

EXT. JUNK WORKS / YARD - DAY

Troy - Determined. Onward to the gate.

SORA
TROY...

She stoops for a rock and hucks it, hitting Troy in the back. He finally spins.

She runs to him, a final embrace.

SORA
Kick their ass.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SORA'S ROOM - DAY

Sora throws a backpack on the bed and starts packing. Dr. Tanaka throws open the door.

DR. TANAKA
What are you doing, girl?

SORA
I can't stay anymore. Not here. Not with you. Not after Jason. Not after everything. I'm going with Troy. Maybe I can catch him at the base.

DR. TANAKA
You're not thinking straight.

She checks the PENDANT around her neck.

SORA
Sofu... I can't fake how I feel. Right now, I can't be near you or this place. All I see are the lies. The lies that killed Jason, the lies that kept me in the dark... And now I'm losing Troy?

DR. TANAKA
Sora...

With her backpack, she marches up to Tanaka, who blocks the door. She gives him the fiercest warrior eyes he's ever seen. Finally, he lets her pass. He shuffles to the bed. His world crumbling, he openly weeps.

INT. JUNK WORKS / HALL

Bubba turns away from Sora's bedroom and Tanaka's sobs.

INT. USS BIDEN / HANGAR BAY - NIGHT

D-Troop is in formation before a tarp-covered Valkyrie.

CPT. ROKKER

Our training is complete. We have the latest Valkyries our government can muster. With these new reflex engines, not only are our new Valkyries smaller and faster, but we are no longer restricted to Earth's atmosphere. We are truly, tip of the spear, able to fight from sea to space.

With that in mind, we have been presented with new insignia, representing the evolution from the A-P-F to the global, U-N Space Navy, U-N Spacy. Ladies and gentlemen, your new ride, the V-F-One Super Valkyrie. Gentleman...

FOUR MECHANICS pull away the tarp revealing the Valkyrie. Gone is the U.S. Flag, replaced with a subdued, white spearhead over a circular red field. The underslung gatling gun is badged, U.N. SPACY.

Stoddard and Craig whisper behind Troy.

CRAIG

What the hell? That thing's tiny.

STODDARD

That ain't even us. We're in the armored Valkyries. Wait'll you see those giants.

TROY

At ease...

A RUNNER darts across the formation, handing Rokker a note. He reads it then addresses the formation.

CPT. ROKKER

Looks like this is the big one. Get your troops fed and put down. Could be anytime. Troop, atten...TION! Flight leaders, take charge.

INT. USS BIDEN / CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Troy checks the coast is clear outside the D-TROOP Headquarters. The corridor is empty. He makes quick work of the lock.

INT. D-TROOP / ORDERLY ROOM

Troy quickly locks himself inside, then picks his way through the dark.

INT. D-TROOP / CO'S OFFICE

Troy slides into Rokker's chair. He tries the drawers. The top right opens. On top, the photo of Miriam Tanaka. Only, it's not just a photo. It's a VIDEO SLIDE SHOW:

Miriam opens a small gift box over her pregnant belly. It's SORA'S PENDANT. Rokker leans down to help her don it. He pauses for a kiss. They look happy.

IN A VIDEO BOOTH, Rokker kisses Miriam's baby bump. They smile together and make funny faces at the camera. Miriam wears the pendant. They're obviously in love.

TROY

My god...

Suddenly, the ship's KLAXON sounds. *Red alert...!*

I/E. NEW EDWARDS BASE / HANGAR - NIGHT

Sora enters a side door. All is dark. Down a steel staircase, across a massive gantry, spanning an immense chasm. The gantry leads to...

INT. ALIEN SHIP - NIGHT

Sora is lost. She slows, noticing the quiet.

SORA

Aren't these the barracks? HELLO...!

Her echo booms. She immediately regrets going loud.

SORA

Shit...

She continues forward. Her pendant begins to glow blue, at first like a reflection, but soon, Sora gleams the light's coming from *within* the pendant.

SORA

Uh... Okay.

A huge, muffled, mechanical THUMP. Then deep, cyclical throbbing reverberates throughout the ship.

SORA

Just go home, dumb-ass. Go home.

But she continues forward. She only sees to the edge of the pendant light, *but we can go...*

WIDER - She's on the edge of a massive deck. She catches the reflection of the pendant in the distance.

SORA

Is that glass...?

Throbbing pulse intensity grows rapid, sustaining a high tempo. It conflates into a single, deep tone.

SORA

I am so gonna die right now.

She rounds a corner as MASSIVE LIGHTS snap on, like office building fluorescents.

Sora is on a massive platform, the ship's bridge, built to a massive scale, as if giants crewed the ship. *For scale, Sora's head, at 5-feet, aligns just below seat cushion height. Equate that to just below a human knee.*

She's surrounded by remnants of human research. Ladders and bucket-lift platforms, light stands, generators, scaffolding, all like miniatures in the alien setting.

SORA

This is not the barracks.

The ship shudders. Equipment fall over, crashing.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT / U.N. SPACY FORCES PERIMETER - NIGHT

A blast of reflex engines as a flight of three ARMORED VF-1A BATTROIDS, move into sector. They join hundreds of thousands of mecha units arrayed in depth, Earth's wall of defense, against...

THE ALIEN MOTHERSHIP - a bump-covered Devil's Tower in space, continues a slow, ominous drift toward Earth.

DELTA TROOP is set in their orbital defense. Chatter is filtered, through HELMET COMMUNICATIONS.

CPT. ROKKER

Alright, Death Dealers, this is Dealer-Six. Intel briefed that Macross City was destroyed after a massive energy beam impacted South Ataria Island. Conflicting reports, off-world targets were hit...

Rokker continues to brief, but Troy's flight chats over internal comms.

CRAIG

That's the other side of the planet. What about this fricken thing?

TROY

Wait 'til the old man's finished.

STODDARD

Looks friggin' huge...

CPT. ROKKER (CONT'D)

...that the SDF-1 was destroyed. G-2 confirms that the space fortress has vanished taking half the island with it.

TROY

Holy shit.

STODDARD

That's a lot of people.

CRAIG

Maybe they just folded. I was reading in Robotech PM Monthly, they're working on some new travel technique to jump through space without actually moving. I don't know. It'd suck to be trapped in space, that's for sure.

INT. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE - NIGHT

Sora picks herself up. Items slide across the floor due to the vibration. When she gains her feet, she sees...

A wrap around window perhaps, one hundred-feet high.

SORA

A windshield...? Holy crap.

Suddenly, it dawns on her. She pulls out her CELL PHONE and dials.

DR. TANAKA (FILTERED)

Sora? Where are you?

SORA

Sofu, I think I'm on the alien ship.

DR. TANAKA

What? Of all the --

SORA

I thought it was the barracks.

DR. TANAKA

You feel the earthquake?

SORA

It feels like the ship's engines are on.

DR. TANAKA

Mother of God...

**I/E. SPACE / TROY / ROKKER / CRAIG / STODDARD / 3X
ARMORED VF-1A / VF-0S - INTERCUT**

CPT. ROKKER, on an open mic:

CPT. ROKKER

So, what I'm saying is, you can't let these civilians screw with you, because they will try. Blue-two, you remember that guy?

BLUE-2

Sir?

CPT ROKKER

What was it, two years ago? That guy...

BLUE-2

The Mayor, sir?

CPT ROKKER

Yeah, Mister Mayor... So, months after the war, we're still conducting Resistance mop up.

(MORE)

CPT ROKKER (CONT'D)

We off-load a new group, about to take care of them, and this guy gets uppity, claiming to be the Mayor of Provo, Utah. I mean, who would claim that, right? Someone running from the consequences of their actions. I took care of him on the spot.

TROY - Realization.

THE ORB in the center of the mothership begins to glow a deep amber.

TROY

Dealer-six, Green-three. Mothership activity.

CPT ROKKER

Acknowledged.

TROY

Hey, sir, where was this at, this, Utah group?

CPT ROKKER

No, not Utah. This was about twenty-five miles outside of town.

TROY

Sounds like a fond memory.

CPT ROKKER

Say again, Green-three?

TROY

Well, sir, the way you tell it... You enjoyed murdering that man.

MOTHERSHIP - The, now, bluish-white glow is blinding. Suddenly, an energy beam fires from the orb. First, into the front line of mecha, instantly vaporizing them. The BEAM continues past, to the planet surface...

EXT. NEW EDWARDS BASE / NEW BARSTOW / LOWER QUARTER - NIGHT

The powerful beam strikes New Edwards Base, turning the night sky white. Then it moves, like a lumbering tornado, eating everything in its path, like a nuclear blast wave.

CRAIG (O.S.)

If that orb is fifty miles across, then that beam is like--

TROY (O.S.)
Ten miles in diameter.

The beam plows a path, from New Edwards to the city.

EXT. JUNK WORKS / WORKSHOP / YARD / SECRET CAVE - NIGHT

Bubba fights to keep the man-door open as Dr. Tanaka struggles against the beam's vacuum, to reach the cave.

BUBBA
Hurry...!

Behind Tanaka, the workshop roof rips off the building. Bubba finally darts out to grab him. In the distance, the beam burns through the city, churning ash and dust.

INT. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE - NIGHT

Sora slides across the floor. Regaining her feet, the cavern walls outside are blasted in white light. The cavern, outside, breaks away. Huge chunks of earth, float skyward, into the light. Sora shrieks as she's thrown to her knees. This time, because the ship moved. She grabs her phone as it slides past.

OUTSIDE, the ship rises.

SORA
Sofu...! Sofu, the ship is taking off!

EXT. NEW EDWARDS BASE - NIGHT

The alien ship tears free from three hundred feet of planet crust. Any remaining hangars and base infrastructure are destroyed.

The alien ship is monstrous, angular, twice the size of an aircraft carrier. Huge slabs of crust fall away, crushing sections of Lower Quarter and New Barstow.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVE - NIGHT

Dr. Tanaka keeps an eye on falling cave debris as Bubba arc welds on the '51. Tanaka wears a radio headset.

DR. TANAKA
Sora, you're breaking up. Come in...

EXT. SPACE / MOTHERSHIP

The energy beam fades out.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVE

Tanaka dials in his staticky radios. Sora comes in clear.

SORA

It's taking off! It's taking off, Sofu!

DR. TANAKA

Tell me your location on the ship?

SORA

Someplace high. There's a huge window.

DR. TANAKA

The bridge. Look for a small closet towards the back. We built it. It's packed with emergency equipment.

EXT. SPACE / MOTHERSHIP

Thousands of alien mecha launch from the surface of the mothership. They were the bumps on the surface.

CPT. ROKKER

This is Dealer-Six. Kill them all.

I/E. SPACE / TROY / ROKKER / STODDARD / CRAIG / 3X ARMORED VF-1A / VF-0S - INTERCUT

Thousands of fighters and Battroids break formation to defend their sectors.

CPT. ROKKER

Keep your sections tight. Green-three. Come at me, direct.

Troy clicks a button.

TROY

Green-three.

CPT. ROKKER

What the hell were you saying?

Troy stops his Battroid. The others halt, their auto-stabilization thrusters fire to maintain position.

TROY

That you live to kill. Don't you. Makes you a big man.

CPT. Rokker vectors toward Troy's section from above.

CPT. ROKKER

You don't know me.

TROY

I was there, asshole. I watched you murder that man, along with the rest of those refugees. I just didn't know it was you until now.

All three of Troy's armored Battroids face the raging battle some miles away.

TROY

Back-to-back, Green.

Their Battroids pivot outward, maintaining 360-security.

CPT. Rokker's HUD has them marked in blue diamond icons.

CPT. ROKKER

Then you watched us take care of them. All of them, like I said.

TROY

Is everything you say, a lie?

CPT ROKKER thumbs the target lock button on his joystick.

ALL THREE HUDs/SPLIT SCREEN:

DANGER. TARGET LOCK.

TROY

Break!

They instantly jettison their armor, folding into Fighters, to escape.

STODDARD

The hell was that?

Troy finds CPT. Rokker's icon on scopes.

TROY

Guys, get back in your armor. Hold this sector. I think the C-0's got a maintenance problem. I'm gonna make sure he gets back to the carrier.

Stoddard watches Troy's Fighter blast off after Rokker.

CRAIG

Alpha... Dude, did you just get locked?

I/E. SPACE / TROY / ROKKER / VF-1A / VF-0S - INTERCUT

Troy goes to Battroid. His instruments scan. Nothing.

TROY

You activated stealth.

The SUN peeks from the right side of Earth. A LIGHT GLINT. Troy magnifies.

CPT. Rokker's Battroid, a silhouette against the planet, hides amongst the floating battle debris. ROCKETS FIRE at Troy before Rokker blasts to the surface in Fighter.

Troy destroys the incoming missiles with his own. He folds into Fighter, chasing after Rokker. He follows him through the atmosphere. Their Fighters glow red.

TROY

We trusted you. Admired you. But, in the end, you're just a common thug.

CPT. ROKKER

Stone cold killer, you mean. You need to grow up, boy.

Once through the atmosphere, it's...

AN AERIAL DOG FIGHT - They trade small arms and missile fire, changing form as needed to avoid being hit. Soon they're flying nape of the earth, through desert canyons. Fire and maneuver, 35-Millimeter gatling guns blazing.

TROY

My people know you, who you are.

CPT. ROKKER

Yeah, how's that?

TROY

You were Project Mecha security.

CPT. ROKKER

Whatever my country asked, I did. I earned my way, boy. Nothing's free.

TROY

Yeah, you proved that, didn't you. You sold your soul, even lost your woman.

CPT. ROKKER

I learned early. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

I/E. LOWER QUARTER / TROY / ROKKER / VF-1A /VF-0S - INTERCUT

Troy goes to GROUND MODE, power-skating through the ruins, sometimes backwards, firing at Rokker, who's in hot pursuit. Distances are too close to lock.

TROY

I thought I gained new people with you. You told me I belonged.

CPT. ROKKER

So, your pussy hurt, now? That it?

TROY

I didn't want to believe what they said about you.

CPT. ROKKER

Because you're weak. Needy.

Between buildings. Shattering glass. Crumbling walls. Troy's Battroid catches a breather in the battle debris.

TROY

Your code, "Be Ready," bonded us, gave me purpose, the confidence to trust my brothers and sisters. But it was all bullshit. Just cover for your war crimes.

CPT. Rokker tracks Troy's Battroid from the cover of a fire-gutted building. Rokker's HUD range indicator counts down as he vectors closer. Rokker fires, CLICK!

HUD DISPLAY:

RELOAD AMMUNITION.

Rokker charges Troy instead, crashing through the wall and taking Troy to the ground. It's a giant Battroid MMA ground match as they wrestle for Troy's gun pod.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE

Insanity. Mecha on alien mecha. Missiles and guns versus lasers. Blurred lines. Shattered debris. Floating bodies.

The Alien Mothership dominates all.

I/E. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE - NIGHT

The alien ship continues to ascend. Sora wears a SPACE SUIT, now, her pendant around her neck.

SORA

I found the closet... Sofu, come in.

DR. TANAKA

We read you, Sora.

Sora shrieks as she floats off the platform.

SORA

There's no gravity!

DR. TANAKA

You're leaving the atmosphere...

I/E. LOWER QUARTER / TROY / ROKKER / VF-1A / VF-0S - INTERCUT

Troy swings his gun pod at Rokker, who quickly slashes the gun pod hand away with a plasma knife.

CPT. ROKKER

Weren't ready for that. How's about this.

He plunges the plasma knife into the Battroid's abdomen, carving upward until he rips away the chest plate, exposing Troy, strapped into his cockpit.

Rokker's Battroid sits upright over Troy. It's chest opens, revealing Rokker's cockpit.

TROY

Were you ready when you found Miriam in the car with Jack Tanaka? Why her? You loved her.

CPT. ROKKER

We had a baby for Christ's sake. Jack was the target, not her. I had no choice.

TROY

There's always a choice.

CPT. ROKKER

And she chose him! I execute my orders for the greater good and get betrayed for my loyalty. The only way to survive is through strength demonstrated upon the weak. Because weakness begets war.

Rokker's Battroid secures Troy's gun pod and checks it.

TROY

War? We're still at war, you idiot!
Another goddamn war...

CPT. Rokker power-hovers over Troy in his Battroid.

CPT. ROKKER

And Marines like me exist to win them. Do not come between me and victory again. You won't survive it.

Rokker blasts off, going ballistic in Fighter.

Troy unbuckles, crawling from his mangled Battroid. Behind the cockpit, he opens a panel, hits a button.

A 4-foot square crate ejects, tumbling a short distance from the wreck. A large stencil on the side:

U.N. SPACY SATELLITE MODULE

EXT. JUNK WORKS GATE - RAINING - DAY

Troy rolls up to the Junk Works Gate on the new Satellite, a more refined design. He flips up his visor.

The Junk Works is in ruins. Troy idles through a large hole in the wall to the...

EXT. JUNK WORKS / YARD

The workshop, destroyed. Metal recyclables scattered. On the ground, Sora's photos, soaked in rain and mud.

TROY

Doc... Doc, you here?

The man-door opens. Tanaka and Bubba wave Troy over.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVE - DAY

They descend on the elevator with the Satellite.

TROY

You were right, Doc, about Rokker.

DR. TANAKA

Yes, that's fine, but right now --

They wheel the Satellite to the COMPUTER/COMMS ARRAY.

TROY

I didn't see Sora. She okay?

DR. TANAKA

She's in trouble and needs your help.
Are you injured?

Troy shakes his head.

TROY

In town somewhere? Lemme go get her --

DR. TANAKA

She's trapped on the alien spaceship.

BUBBA

It self-activated and took off.

TROY

Took off, where?

DR. TANAKA

We think to the, uh, mothership.

Troy sinks onto a shop stool, defeated.

TROY

I can't go back to space. He's up there.

BUBBA

Who?

DR. TANAKA

Rokker... Troy, Sora needs you.

TROY

My fighter's destroyed.

DR. TANAKA

Take the Fifty-One.

Bubba cuts on the LAUNCH LIGHTS. Troy sits up on the stool. He peers into the dark where --

The SV-51 stands ready, the Fighter affixed vertically to a rail launcher, aimed up the cavernous ceiling heights.

BUBBA

It's REDCON-1, fully fueled and armed to the teeth.

TROY

You don't understand... I was the A-P-F pilot. I killed Jason. And I was too big of a coward to admit it. You were right not to trust me.

DR. TANAKA

I'm a scientist, Troy, not a mecha pilot. I can't go up there. Please, I need you to use all your skills to bring my granddaughter back home.

TROY

Doc, what if Sora isn't --

DR. TANAKA

My granddaughter? I suspected as much, but I never asked. Nor would I ever tell her. Jack loved Miriam. He loved Sora. Miriam's child is as much a part of my family as she was... As Jason was. As Bubba... And, as you are.

Sora loves you. Don't you know that? You are all my family. Is that clear? You all belong here.

Troy fights to keep his tears and a straight face.

TROY

What about Jason? What I did?

BUBBA

Jason was my friend, my brother in arms, a true hero... But he would be the first to say, you're the best chance Sora's got.

Troy rises from the stool, eyeing them directly.

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVE / SV-51 COCKPIT

Tanaka and Bubba strap Troy in, Apollo-11 style, from bucket lifts alongside the fighter.

DR. TANAKA

Controls are pretty much the same.
Biggest difference is weight, until you
clear the atmosphere.

BUBBA

The Fifty-One's wider in Ground Mode and
slightly slower between modes.

DR. TANAKA

But her engines are upgraded to my most
powerful design, utilizing Reflex fuel.

TROY

This thing's nuclear?

DR. TANAKA

And she's fast. Bubba, ready for launch.

Bubba nods, then booms his bucket down.

DR. TANAKA

Fire it up.

I/E. JUNK WORKS / YARD / SV-51 / AERIAL - INTERCUT - DUSK

Outside the cave doors, the ground shakes with a deep
rumble. Large steel vents around the yard expel hot jet
wash from the cave.

The SV-51 Fighter explodes from the hilltop. Wings
unfold. Afterburners fire. Its contrail arcs through the
breaking monsoon clouds toward space. BOOM! Through the
sound barrier...

**I/E. SPACE BATTLE / SECRET CAVE LAB / ALIEN SHIP / TROY /
ROKKER / SORA / TANAKA / CRAIG / STODDARD / 2X VF-0A / VF-
0S / SV-51 - INTERCUT**

Troy exits the atmosphere to lasers and explosions. Talk
via radio, (FILTERED) through space helmets. Troy orients
the '51 and...

DR. TANAKA

I've sent guidance data to the '51's GPS.
Your HUD should show --

A NEW ICON pops up on the '51's HUD.

TROY

Got it. Alien vessel, dead ahead.

CPT. ROKKER
Well, well, well...

CPT Rokker falls in, behind Troy, gaining on him.

TROY
Lead, follow, or get out of my way,
Steve.

ANOTHER ALIEN MECHA! It fires. Troy and Rokker dodge.
Troy blasts the alien in stride.

Rokker's caught in the explosion but pulls through.

CPT. ROKKER
Hah. Nice try.

TROY
You mean, when I saved your ass just now?

The derelict ALIEN SHIP enters view.

Troy. Click! *Frequency change.*

TROY
Doc. Got a visual on the ship. Tell Sora
to grab hold of something. I'll have to
crack the hull to get inside. Don't want
her sucked out to space.

DR. TANAKA
If you start in the back, emergency air
locks will close, sequentially. You can
bound forward to her, if you're fast.

TROY
Ryokai!

DR. TANAKA
I'm uploading the ship's schematics to
the '51.

The '51 steers to the rear of the long and sleek Alien
Ship. Its engine array makes it look muscular.

TROY
That is one fat ass...

As the '51 closes, Troy's HUD creates a DIGITAL OUTLINE
of the ship, labeling GUN EMPLACEMENTS, hundreds of them.

TROY
Damn. I hope that thing don't --

The ship starts firing, all guns focused on him and --

CPT. ROKKER
What the hell are you doing?

Sora watches from the bridge.

SORA
Sofu, the ship is weaponized. It's firing
at something...

DR. TANAKA
It's Troy. Try disabling it.

SORA
YOU try disabling it...!

Tanaka nods to himself as he types furiously.

The SV-51 HUD locks-on several Alien Ship gun turrets.

TROY
Eat this...

'51 fires rockets, then goes to Battroid to check work.

Rokker fires at Troy. Troy counter-fires, blowing the
missiles up.

CPT. ROKKER
You're interfering with the mission.

The '51 goes back to Fighter, resuming course.

TROY
You run your mission, I'll run mine.
(click)
Doc, I cut a hole in her defenses, but
it's still hairy.

DR. TANAKA
Set scopes for Object Avoidance. Let the
A-I do the work.

TROY
(sotto)
Got it, Doc. Been nice to know that.

Troy flies straight into the defensive hole he made. The
'51 instinctively avoids the laser fire.

TROY
It works!

The '51 HUD outlines a SURFACE HATCH.

TROY

Found the air lock. Going in.

The '51 launches more missiles, striking the hatch, blowing a hole in the hull. Troy goes Battroid, entering the ship feet first.

THE BRIDGE - A virtual monitor appears. It visualizes the hull breach, and indicates where air lock hatches will close, and also enemy icons - in this case, TROY.

SORA

Troy, I see you.

The '51, dwarfed by Alien corridors. Troy's immediately bombarded by everything not tied down, as air pressure vents into space.

TROY

Ugh... Where's the bridge, Doc?

DR. TANAKA

Set auto-nav to ship's diagram to find the bridge.

SORA

The ship still sees you.

GUN TURRETS fold out of the walls, firing on Troy.

TROY

Whoa, Nelly...

He blasts back at the gun turrets.

SORA

Troy, behind you...!

Rokker's Battroid battles the vacuum as he enters the breach. It immediately fires at Troy.

What follows is an insane MECHA CHASE, Rokker after Troy, corridor after corridor, toward the bridge. Troy only has so many seconds to get to the next compartment before another massive bulk head door slams shut.

CPT. Rokker blows each consecutive door open to continue after Troy. Both are subject to pressurized, flying debris and gun turret fire.

Troy also evades Rokker's fire. Both Battroids are damaged during the relentless pursuit. Eventually, they work together, shooting gun turrets until...

DR. TANAKA

I got it...!

The gun turrets retract.

But, Rokker is close enough to grab Troy's LEG.

The '51 HUD:

PROXIMITY WARNING.

TROY

Get off me!

Troy uses Judo with the '51 to take Rokker down with an ARM BAR, only Rokker struggles, and his Battroid's arm tears off.

Rokker pulls a plasma dagger, swiping-off the '51's right leg, mid-knee. Troy bounces through the final bulk head, into the bridge. Rokker is caught behind the blast door.

Sora is caught by surprise without a hand hold. Sudden depressurization sucks her toward open space, while scaffolding and power lifts float away.

SORA

Troy...!

The '51's auto-thrusters stop him in mid-flight. He goes to Ground Mode. Troy opens his canopy and launches himself from the cockpit, connected by a thin UMBILICAL LIFE LINE. He captures Sora in his arms, floating in the massive void between the bridge and window.

TROY

Gotcha...

Sora and Troy. Eye contact. Emotion.

TROY

Hey, babe.

SORA

Hey...

NO TIME! Squeaky, metallic grinding at the hatch. CPT Rokker breaks through, evaluating the scene.

PUNCH IN. The '51s open cockpit, an umbilical to Troy, floating with a...

CPT. ROKKER
This is all been for a *woman*?

TROY
For my family, sir... This is, *Sora*.

CPT ROKKER - Stunned again.

CPT. ROKKER
Sora...?

I/E. SPACE BATTLE / MOTHER SHIP / BLUE-2 / RED-3A / CRAIG / STODDARD - INTERCUT

The battle rages. The Mothership is danger close. The scale of the thing is evident, now. Huge.

BLUE-2, RED-3A, CRAIG and STODDARD fight hard against the aliens, but BLUE-2 and RED-3A are killed in action.

I/E. SPACE BATTLE / SECRET CAVE LAB / ALIEN SHIP / TROY / ROKKER / SORA / TANAKA / SV-51 / VF-0S - INTERCUT

Troy draws on a TOUCH PAD embedded in his sleeve to remotely pilot the '51's THRUSTERS, gently nudging himself and Sora to the COMMAND DECK.

TROY
Sir, there's a plan.

SORA
There's a plan?

CPT. ROKKER
What plan?

Troy uses his boot nozzles to vector himself and Sora around the Command Deck, searching ELECTRIC PANELS.

TROY
I'm gonna activate and overload the ship's shields... Once I'm inside the mothership.

SORA - *What!*

CPT. ROKKER

Trojan Horse... Excellent. Except, if there was a shield system, we wouldn't have made it onboard.

TROY

It's deactivated.

CPT. ROKKER

And you know this, how?

SORA

My Sofu was Chief Engineer. If he came up with it, you can bet your ass it'll work.

Rokker's Battroid floats close to the Command Deck.

CPT. ROKKER

Your grandfather is Doctor Kisho Tanaka?

TROY - Rokker's made the connection...

Suddenly, Rokker's Battroid snatches Sora from mid-air. She screams. The Battroid folds into Ground Mode.

TROY

What the hell are you doing?

Rokker's canopy opens. The Fighter's arm moves her close to the cockpit for close examination, for eye contact.

CPT. ROKKER

Who are you?

Then Rokker sees it, floating around her neck. The glowing pendant, the size of a hand, intricate gold etchings on both sides. Rokker yanks the pendant from Sora's neck.

TROY

No!

CPT. ROKKER

Get back in your mecha, boy.

TROY

Sora...!

CPT. ROKKER

Now, goddamn it.

Rokker closes his canopy and vectors Sora closer to the OBSERVATION WINDOW, aiming his mecha head unit at it.

TROY

Okay, okay...

Troy's umbilical retracts him back to the '51. He closes himself inside, unfolding into Battroid.

CPT. ROKKER

You know how to use that escape suit, girl?

SORA

Yes, you bastard.

CPT. ROKKER

And then some. Troy...?

His head unit lasers cut a hole in the observation window. The strong vacuum sucks everything into space.

TROY

Don't you dare, Rokker.

Rokker faces the '51, putting Sora closer to the venting hole. She screams.

Eye contact between Troy and Rokker.

CPT. ROKKER

Are you ready?

TROY

I have tons of damage and only one engine...!

CPT. ROKKER

You must be strong for your family.

TROY

Why are you doing this!

Rokker releases Sora. The vacuum sucks her into space.

TROY

Sora...!

Troy rockets after her.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE / TROY / SORA / SV-51 - INTERCUT

Outside, Sora's escape suit backpack launches a thin membrane around her, immediately hardening into a pressurized cocoon, an emergency, portable, escape pod.

INT. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE

Rokker unfolds his VF-0S to Battroid and vectors it into the window hole, stopping the vacuum. A fuselage panel folds up, revealing his canopy. It jettisons away.

With pendant in hand, Rokker launches himself to the command deck, using vector nozzles in his boots.

CPT. ROKKER
Kisho... You on this net?

DR. TANAKA
I'm here.

CPT. ROKKER
They wouldn't have made it in time.
Should've seen 'em fumbling about.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE / TROY / SORA / SV-51 - INTERCUT

Sora's POD tumbles out of control. No thrusters. No way to stop except --

TROY - Rockets through battle debris after her.

TROY
I see you, baby. Hang on.

SORA
I'm gonna fricken yack.

INT. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE

CPT. Rokker pulls himself in front of a large, slide-out panel. There's an EMPTY SLOT. Rokker places the pendant in the slot.

CPT. ROKKER
Who would've thought this little thing
was a simple fuse?

The bridge activates. Panels slide closed. Cables glow.

CPT. ROKKER
We have full activation. Tell me you have
the code to activate the shield system.

DR. TANAKA
I wouldn't be Chief Engineer if I didn't.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE / TROY / SORA / SV-51 - INTERCUT

The '51 slips and slides after Sora's pod.

INT. ALIEN SHIP / BRIDGE

Mothership's space dock opens before the derelict ship, drawing it in.

CPT. ROKKER

You know why we named her Sora, Doc...?
It's the name of the ship... What brought
us together. So-ra... It means, Sky, in
Japanese. Did you know that?

DR. TANAKA

Baka! I know what Sora means.

CPT. ROKKER

Entering mothership space dock. Begin
shield overload cycle...

EXT. SPACE BATTLE / TROY / SORA / SV-51 - INTERCUT

Troy closes, but Sora is still out of reach. All around
the war rages and --

EXT. MOTHERSHIP / SPACE DOCK

The shield begins to overload. Alien Ship glows, a ball
of light builds. Nuclear lightning surges around the
ship, igniting and - DETONATION!

EXT. SPACE BATTLE / TROY / SORA / SV-51 - INTERCUT

THE EXPLOSION, like nothing we've ever seen. Troy splays
the Battroid's limbs out, like a free-fall parachutist,
to protect Sora from the blast wave. This allows him to
ease up and catch her.

Sora is passed out in her pod.

TROY

Sora...? Sora!

She comes to, but sounds weak.

SORA

Hey, you...

TROY

Hey...

They can see each other through their SMALL PORTALS.

Alien mechas, suddenly shut off like light switches, continue on their last trajectories, powered only by gravity. They burn-in, like the opening meteor shower.

SORA

Now what?

TROY

Hold on...

Troy scans his radio frequencies. CLICK... CLICK. CLICK.

STODDARD

It's over! They're all dead.

CRAIG

They quit fighting after the detonation...

CLICK. Radio off.

TROY

Looks like we won this round.

Battle debris shoots by. Their free fall grows turbulent.

SORA

What's happening?

TROY

We're entering the atmosphere. It'll probably get a little warm pretty soon.

SORA

This pod can't make re-entry.

TROY

Don't worry, I got you.

He rolls the Battroid onto its back.

SORA

I need to tell you something.

TROY

Better make it quick.

The shuddering Battroid begins to glow red-hot.

SORA

I've never known such a strong boy --
man... person like you.

TROY

Uh-huh...

SORA

You're the most tenacious go-getter, the
most fearless, stand-up guy I've ever
known...

High turbulence, now. The '51's armor breaks away. Sparks
as the Battroid disintegrates.

TROY

(suffering, now)

You noticed, huh...? I think you're the --
Well, you're the *only* girl I know,
actually --

Sora guffaws with him, but we hear her sniffles.

TROY

You are a force of nature... You can do
anything you put your mind to. I trust
and respect you...

INT. JUNK WORKS / SECRET CAVE

Dr. Tanaka stops typing to listen.

(TROY)

You're the most... capable... young
woman... I'm sure... I know, Doc thinks
so, too.

BACK TO SCENE

They're burning-in hot. The '51's amputated leg trails
black smoke from a fire. Its entire backside cooks, but
it holds Sora's pod tightly, keeping her safe.

SORA

Troy? Troy...?

TROY

Stop calling me by my first name.

SORA

I love you, Troy. Stay with me, now.

TROY
 (delirious)
 Always forever...?

Troy's head lolls back in his cockpit, unconscious.

SORA
 Troy.

DR. TANAKA
 Troy. Doc, here. I need you to release
 Sora's pod... Release Sora's pod, Troy.
 I have control.

Troy weakly raises his head to see Sora.

TROY
 I wish I could go with you, baby. I do
 love you. Goodbye...

Troy releases Sora. Sora watches his Battroid tumble,
 like a corpse, toward Earth.

SORA
 TROY...!

EXT. AIRSPACE - DAY

The crippled Battroid plummets, trailing black smoke.

I/E. TROY / SV-51 - AERIAL - DAY

Troy barely holds onto consciousness as the computer
 counts down the altitude. He passes out.

Suddenly, automatic safeties kick in. Bolts blow.
 Parachutes deploy. Emergency thrusters fire.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

The heavily scarred Battroid soft-lands. An escape hatch
 blows. Troy drops to the desert floor like a space turd.

He chokes, struggling to remove his sealed helmet. He
 fishes his uniform. Finding his obsidian knife, he cuts
 the material around his neck, freeing the helmet. He
 breathes deeply, opening his eyes to the sky above.

TROY
 I'm still here, Mama. I'm still here.

A JACK RABBIT stares at him, nibbling grass. Troy scoffs, wearily rolling out from under the '51.

A blinking light on the fuselage. Troy pushes it. A 4-foot square, hardened crate ejects, stenciled:

U.N. SPACY SATELLITE MODULE

EXT. DESERT WILDERNESS - MOVING - DUSK

Troy rides the Satellite into the setting sun.

Bubba, Doc, and Sora, race to his rescue in the Dually.

TROY

My people...!

When they link up, Troy's met by Dr. Tanaka's scowl. The scowl breaks into a wide smile of pride and affirmation.

Sora runs at Troy, leaping into his arms and planting a huge kiss on him. It's their first, and it's a doozy. She slides from Troy's arms with a guilty smile.

Bubba grabs Troy and Sora in a huge bear hug.

BUBBA

Jason was right. You're where you belong.

Troy chokes back tears. Tanaka clears his throat.

DR. TANAKA

Reports are, the Macross conducted a space fold from South Ataria and took half the island with it.

TROY

Is that what it was...?

Troy mounts the Satellite, his brow suddenly heavy. Tanaka studies him.

DR. TANAKA

You ready?

TROY

I *am* ready.

DR. TANAKA

Then, fire it up...

FADE OUT.