

**FIRMAMENTS YONDER
- STIRRING ON THE RED**

BY

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FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE HALL - NIGHT

UNIFORMED MILITARY OFFICIALS stand in front of a glass wall staring into the dark.

TWO DEVICES resembling SUCTION CUPS land on the glass wall.

COMMANDER WICKS laughs loudly.

COMMANDER WICKS
Is that all?

He glances around the room.

COMMANDER WICKS
Is that all they have?

BEEP! BEEP! BANG! BANG!

The glass wall shatters!

All fall to the floor. Particles fly around.

The Commander rises and looks up - blood dripping down his face.

A MULTITUDE of devices resembling suction cups fly at him.

CUT TO:

BLACK

CHARLIE (V.O.)
A while ago, things were a lot
different.

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING - ARIES SKYLINE - DAY

TALL, MASSIVELY BROAD, METALIC STRUCTURES line the horizon.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)
When my great grandfather was a
child, life on other planets was
fiction. I was born in ARIES.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

BURSTLING sidewalks of BURSTLING streets.

Crowds commute.

Merchants deal.

Drug dealers deal.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)

My great grandfather was among the first migrants from Earth...a member of the military detail when Aries was formed.

EXT. HUMAN EXCLUSION ZONE - DAY

Sand and desolation abound outside Aries.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)

On any planet they arrived, they'd set up a HHZ - a Human Habitable Zone. On Mars, that Zone is Aries.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

A little boy stumbles over a glowing rock and falls to the ground.

His mother runs to his aid. They stare at the rock in awe.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)

In time, they'd do what they do best - PLUNDER! They'd plunder the planet's resources, and Mars was not the first.

EXT. HUMAN EXCLUSION ZONE - NIGHT

Through burrows and in caves, glowing rocks aplenty.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)

But the wealth of these lands were far from grasp...far out in The Human Exclusion Zone, or the HEZ as we would often call it.

INT. LABORATORY

Scientists work.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

Out here, they found something different from what they'd originally expected to find - LIFE! Our planet wasn't the first they found life on, but this was different.

A scientist puts a small rock under a microscope and observes it through the microscope.

INT. DEVELOPMENT HALL

A large hall littered with coffin-looking chambers.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

Simple organisms, some of them microscopic. They complexized them using Earth Origin DNA, EODs as we call them. Yes, Mars was the first to have complex life as a direct result of human interference.

EXT. FOREST AREA - DAY

LARGE FOUR-LEGGED CREATURE eats a LONG LUMINOUS PLANT.

THREE_LEGGED CREATURE flies overhead.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

They built a unique ecosystem.

INT. DEVELOPMENT HALL

A large pool of COLORED water.

Submerged pods with humanoid creatures in them.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

They went further. Why risk humans in Martian mines? Some organisms were complexised using Human DNA. They called us CEPGENIANS, and we had one purpose and one purpose alone - to toil the mines day and

(CONT'D)
night, AS SLAVES!

FADE TO BLACK:

CHARLIE (V.O.)
We're not humans...at least not by
law.

FADE IN:

INT. VAUGHN RESIDENCE - MORNING

CHARLIE'S INSOUCIANT face drops into the fully inhabited
bowl before her.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)
Yes, I'm half human...technically
speaking. But by law, you're either
a hundred percent or none.

KATE, Charlie's CEPGENIAN mother, walks into the dining
room.

KATE
You're not eating Charlie!

CHARLIE
I'm not hungry mother.

Leaning on the counter, Kate turns to GREG, Charlie's kid
brother.

KATE
You okay?

He nods.

GREG
Is dad coming to see us this week?

CHARLIE
Oh boy, not again.

She gets off her chair and grabs her school bag.

CHARLIE
We're not his family. We just
happened between he and mum.

KATE
Stop it Charlie!

Charlie walks out holding her bag.

CHARLIE

He comes around for mum, not for us. It's not even called an affair.

INT. BUS - MORNING

By the window, Charlie stares down into the GROUND PLANE.

She spots Cepgenians filing into a train destined for the HEZ.

A Cepgenian looks up to her in disdain.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Things are a bit different for us Conflates. We even go to school. Some Ceps see us differently for that, humans don't.

A BULLY and GOONS stand before Charlie.

BULLY

Hey crypt, your seat. Get up!

Charlie glances around.

No interest!

She gets up and stands.

The bully takes her seat.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

JEFF, MAYA and Charlie meet up by their lockers around the same area.

MAYA

That slut Finney called me crypt today again!

JEFF

I live with it. You should too.

MAYA

Oh I will...if I got rid of my balls. Unfortunately, I never had balls.

KIDA makes out with her human boyfriend across the hallway.

MAYA

Oh that's great, rub it in.

A FLYER in Charlie's locker.

An INVITATION to a "Special Event."

The other two find the same flyer in their locker.

JEFF

What's this? How did it get in here?

MAYA

'Special Event'? 'Come Alone'? Must be really special to want us alone.

Charlie looks around.

CHARLIE

'Special'? None of the cool guys are holding this.

MAYA

Whatever you say, I'm going there so don't try to talk me out.

Maya slams her locker shut and departs.

Charlie turns to Jeff.

CHARLIE

You want to go, for the party?

JEFF

No one said it's a party. But no, not if you don't want to come.

CHARLIE

In other words I have to go.

JEFF

You don't have to if you don't want to. Unless you're scared of other girls getting some of this.

CHARLIE

Ha ha! Funny! I'm just a bit suspicious, that's all.

JEFF

So you're going as my body guard then.

CHARLIE

I'm going as the only person who
isn't your mother who'll even
bother if anything goes wrong.

He chuckles, then slams his locker shut.

JEFF

You know, sooner or later you'll
have to start living, and not
trying to avoid getting hurt.

He departs.

Charlie picks up the flyer and stares hard at it.

EXT. ALLEY - EVENING

Into a BRIGHTLY-LIT DEAD END ALLEY, Charlie walks.

Maya, Jeff and Kida are among others already waiting in
suspense.

MAYA

Oh this is just lovely.

JEFF

Wait a minute! Is it just me or are
we all Conflates?

DARK FIGURES jump down into the alley.

SCAMPERS!

The figures shoot at the crowd rapidly dispersing.

Charlie fights her way through avoiding the flying electric
bolts.

GOOD SHOT!

Charlie slumps to the ground.

A FAINT IMAGE of a figure as Charlie shuts her eyes.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

MOVING TRAIN packed with BOUND Conflates.

Charlie wakes. She turns to Maya.

CHARLIE

What's happening?

SILENCE!

Charlie glances at one of her wrists.

EMPTY!

She turns to Maya again

CHARLIE
Where's my Communicator?

MAYA
(whispering)
Sh! They took it. They took
everyone's Communicator. No way to
tell anyone where we are, no way
to track us.

A NERVOUS GASP!

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Train pulls in.

INT. TRAIN

Train pulls to a stop!

DANKHA, SHILON and TERPT -Cepgenians- walk toward the exit.

DANKHA
Everybody get up and follow me!

They stand.

Dankha walks to the entrance.

DOOR SLIDES OPEN!

JANDHA, a Cepgenian standing outside, raises his head,
glances through the inside of the train, then leaves.

CEPGENIAN GOONS immediately rush in and force out the bound
occupants of the train.

Charlie bangs her head in the scrap and falls unconscious -
again.

INT. HEZ CAVE - NIGHT

WHISPERS!

Dankha wakes Charlie up.

DANKHA
Hey, is it true you're Colonel
Vaughn's daughter?

He unbinds her.

DANKHA
Charlie, right? You have to leave
now.

CHARLIE
What's going on?

DANKHA
War!

CHARLIE
What?

DANKHA
Among Ceps, there're those who
want to get rid of humans and
there're those who want to be
equals with humans.

CHARLIE
You are?

DANKHA
I was sent to infiltrate this cell
over an orbit ago. They kidnap
Connies, bring them here, where the
police won't go after them, and
brainwash them into joining their
army. I'm in charge of the first
assault on Aries.

CHARLIE
You're joking, right?

DANKHA
You should leave! I'll create a
chance. Go to a bar in Geigh in
the LUNTZ DISTRICT. The bar's name
is Tarve. Ask for Rebeo. Tell him
Dankha sent you.

He shoves a chip and a small piece of paper into her hand.

DANKHA
Give him this.

CHARLIE

Or I can just go to my father.

DANKHA

No, not now - there's still a lot to be done.

CHARLIE

How do I go?

DANKHA

The train, but you'll have to leave now.

CHARLIE

I came here with three friends. I'm not leaving without them.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Charlie shakes Maya, Kida and Jeff awake.

FRIGHTENED NUMBNESS!

Maya stares at Dankha.

CHARLIE

Look, it's a long story. Short story - we were kidnapped to join Ceps planning to attack Aries. He's a spy and he's on our side. He'll help us out.

Dankha unbinds the mute trio engulfed in fright.

DANKHA

We have to leave. Follow me.

EXT. DESERT SAND DUNE - NIGHT

Charlie and her friends, accompanied by Dankha, raise their faces above the dune and into the brightly-lit valley made barely visible by the sand storm.

DANKHA

There it is.

A SIREN is faintly audible from the distance.

RADIO COMES TO LIFE.

JANDHA
(Radio)

Some of the new tools are missing.
Make sure they never get to the
train. Make sure they never return
to Aries.

Dankha holds his COMMUNICATOR - A LUMINOUS DEVICE STRAPPED
AROUND HIS WRIST LIKE A WATCH - close to his lips.

DANKHA

I'm close to the train. I'll go
after them.

EXT. DESERT

Terpt and Shilon sit in company of two other Cepgenians.

JANDHA
(Radio)

I repeat, make sure they don't
make it back to Aries.

They all get up and jump on their LANDGLIDERS.

Terpt shoves his Communicator into the front of his mouth.

TERPT

My men and I are close to the
train station. We're on our way
there.

They zoom off into the darkness.

EXT. DESERT SAND DUNE

Dankha holds his Communicator close to his lips.

DANKHA

I'm close to the train station
too. I'm on my way.

He turns his face to Charlie.

DANKHA

I should not be seen with you.
Remember - Rebeo in Tarve, in
Geigh, in the Luntz District. Tell
him I sent you, then give him the
chip. Goodluck!

Dankha gets up, turns around and vanishes into the storm.

MAYA
What was that about?

KIDA
Yeah! Geigh? Isn't that the
notoriously gross ghetto I've been
hearing of?

Maya glares at her.

CHARLIE
Can we just focus on getting home
tonight?

JEFF
I'm with you on that.

MAYA
How do we get there?

CHARLIE
We run in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, go!

They all make for the valley.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Shadows creep through the dimly-lit regions of the train station.

The train slowly begins its journey to Aries.

Terpt, Shilon and a handful of other Cepgenians arrive, then spread out.

Charlie and her friends hoist themselves onto the last compartment of the train, one at a time.

Shilon sights them from hiding and readies a shot.

TERPT IS FASTER! He blasts the brains out of Shilon using his BOLTBLASTER, himself also concealed.

Charlie gets on the train last.

She spots the flash of light from Terpt's Boltblaster as she gets on and begins looking in the direction of the flash from the train.

The train increases momentum.

Terpt reveals himself, standing and staring at Charlie.

Charlie in turn stares at him wrapped in apprehension.

The others stay hidden.

The train belts through the sand-soaked darkness.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

A LOUD THUD! Charlie jumps into consciousness! She looks around.

CHARLIE

Wake up guys! I think we're back in Aries.

Sleepy eyes drift into view from hiding.

Kida stares through the filth of the train.

KIDA

Is this where we slept?

EXT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

She jumps off the train itching.

The others alight warily.

KIDA

I can't wait to get in a germ picker.

LOOKS OF SURPRISE as Kida, Jeff and Charlie jerk their faces back to find Maya gazing up in the air.

They also gaze up into the CITIES THAT FORM THE UPPER PLANES.

KIDA

Where are we?

MAYA

Is this Aries?

CHARLIE

Yes, this is Aries. We're looking at it from the GROUND PLANES. This is the VIAN DISTRICT. I go through this route to school every morning.

JEFF

Wow!

Charlie jerks her face through their faces in a glance.

CHARLIE

Wait...you guys have never been to the ground planes before now?

Kida looks at her.

KIDA

I've never even walked on ground before last night. Anyway, good story to tell my kids. I'll be on my way home now.

CHARLIE

No, no, we can't go home yet.

The others turn to her.

CHARLIE

Look, our parents probably called the police. So what? We'll just lead them to Ceps who plan on invading Aries? You think they'll see us any different? The 'Connie' tag exists only when we're dealing with actual Ceps, like last night. To humans, we're all Ceps. Aren't we hated enough already?

MAYA

Yeah! I know exactly what she's talking about. The humans...they can turn on us...all of us.

JEFF

So what's your plan?

CHARLIE

Humans have to know - there're good and bad Ceps.

MAYA

How?

CHARLIE

He gave me a chip for this guy in the Luntz District. I think the chip contains what he gathered.

JEFF

Can I see it?

She tosses him the chip.

MAYA

Can you get whatever is in it?

JEFF

No! I've heard of this. This is some very high-tech device.

He tosses it back.

CHARLIE

I'd bet the guy in Luntz can.

She pulls a glance through their faces.

CHARLIE

Are we doing this together?

MAYA

Danger, uncertainty and ill-bred Ceps? Were you thinking I'll let you have all that fun alone?

JEFF

For a want of any kind of excitement, I'm in.

Kida's face is suspended midair.

KIDA

I at least get cleaned up, even if it's in a public germ picker.

Sighs everywhere.

EXT. GEIGH - NIGHT

STREETS BURSTLING WITH VICE AND CRIMINAL-LOOKING CEPGENIANS.

The quartet squeeze their way through the hustle.

Charlie stops in front of a bar, glancing to the signpost above the entrance into the bar.

It reads 'THE TARVE.'

CHARLIE

We're here!

They enter.

INT. THE TARVE

FREEZE!

UTTER SILENCE!

All eyes on the quartet!

Awkward gaits help them along to the counter.

The barman glowers lifelessly.

BARMAN
No drink! Too young!

CHARLIE
I'm here to meet Rebeo. Dankha sent
us to him with a package.

His countenance is swiftly altered.

BARMAN
Dankha? Let me see the package.

CHARLIE
Are you Rebeo? If not you're
wasting my time.

The barman glares at her for a moment.

BARMAN
Wait here.

He gestures a colleague, then vanishes from the counter.

The quartet glance around soaked in attention.

The barman reappears shortly after.

He opens up an entry to the space behind the counter.

BARMAN
Get in and follow me.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL - NIGHT

COLONEL VAUGHN, Charlie's father, addresses THE ARIES CIVIL INTELIGENCE UNIT he is a part of, Chaired by Commander Wicks.

COLONEL VAUGHN
Commander, we're very close to war
with a rebel group of Ceps.

COMMANDER WICKS
How So?

COLONEL VAUGHN
We have intel that an army is being prepared outside Aries with the sole purpose of attacking Aries. They're led by a figure named Seth whom no one has ever seen.

COMMANDER WICKS
Why would Ceps want to attack us?

COLONEL VAUGHN
Some Ceps think they're better off without us.

COMMANDER WICKS
Hmm. So attacking Aries would be a way to emancipate their kind?

COLONEL VAUGHN
Yes, sir! I think that's the thought process.

COMMANDER WICKS
This intel of yours, how reliable is it?

COLONEL VAUGHN
We have successfully infiltrated this terror cell that has its base in the HEZ.

MAJOR COLLIER inconspicuously revels himself on the fringes of the hall.

The Colonel notices his presence.

EXT. ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE - NIGHT

The Colonel and the Major weave through the surrounding buzz on foot.

COLONEL VAUGHN
She escaped last night?

MAJOR COLLIER
Yes sir!

COLONEL VAUGHN
Any word on her whereabouts at the moment?

MAJOR COLLIER
No sir, but we believe she probably
found her way back to Aries.

They Stop!

Kate's teary eyes are fixed on the duo.

The Colonel walks up to her and wraps her up in a warm hug.

COLONEL VAUGHN
We'll find her.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM AT THE TARVE - NIGHT

BEEPING LIGHTS! ADVANCED COMPUTER GADGETS!

Charlie, Maya, Jeff and Kida are led by the barman into a
room akin to a SPACECRAFT.

BARMAN
Wait here.

The barman departs leaving them alone. They drift around.

JEFF
Wow! I didn't even know you could
find tech like this on ground
plane, let alone a place like this.

REBEO (O.C.)
You can't. These are all property
of The ACIU.

REBEO emerges from the shadows.

REBEO
Which one of you is Charlie?

CHARLIE
I am.

REBEO
I hear you have a message for me.

Charlie pulls out the chip and hands it to Rebeo.

KIDA
Wait a second. What does ACIU stand
for?

REBEO
Aries Civil Intelligence Unit.

Rebeo sits on the ARMCHAIR WITH CONTROLS and slots the chip in a PANEL ON THE CONTROL.

UNINTELLIGIBLE FILES on the large HOLOGRAPHIC SCREEN.

REBEO
A minor glitch.

POWER SUDDENLY GOES OFF!

SCREEN GOES BLACK!

INT. ACIU CONTROL ROOM

All HOLOGRAPHIC SCREENS go BLACK! POWER GOES OUT!

EXT. ARIES

POWER GOES OUT in a section of Aries!

INT. ACIU CONTROL ROOM

POWER RETURNS! SCREEN STAYS BLACK!

EXT. ARIES

POWER RETURNS to the section of Aries!

INT. ARIES CENTRAL DEFENCE HALLWAY

POWER RETURNS! Colonel Vaughn and Major Collier glance at one another, then rush up the hallway.

INT. ACIU CONTROL ROOM

Colonel Vaughn and Major Collier rush in.

COLONEL VAUGHN
John, what just happened?

LIEUTENANT FELDERS turns to the duo.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS
We just got hacked. Whatever it was is now in the network.

MAJOR COLLIER
What? How?

COLONEL VAUGHN
There's no way they'd even gain entry into our server.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

Unless we let them in. We
registered unusual activity in
Luntz before the hack.

The Colonel takes a deep breath and exhales.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM AT THE TARVE

POWER STILL OUT.

SILENCE!

SUDDEN INTERRUPTION! SCREAMS AND YELLS FROM OUTSIDE.

Everyone jerks their head in the direction of the
commotion.

JEFF

What was that?

REBEO

Wait here!

Rebeo walks out.

He rushes in moments later - panic written across his face.

He locks the steel door amid pounding resistance.

REBEO

You should leave now.

In a rush, he dives into the chair and ejects the chip,
then gives it back to Charlie.

KIDA

What's going on?

REBEO

Not enough time. I think whatever
is on that chip should be revealed
- to prove we're not all murderous.

POUNDING SEIZES!

LOUD PIERCING NOISE!

SPARKS FLARE! A RED-HOT LINE expands on the door's surface.

Kida screams!

REBEO

Take it to Bhojka in Revili.
There's a shelter by a tavern
called Vurd. Leave now.

He leads them to a backroom, takes aside the carpet on a section of the floor and pulls up the floor to reveal a secrete passage.

REBEO

It'll lead you out. Hurry!

They jump in the hole one at a time. Charlie leaves last.

REBEO

Stay safe.

He lays the carpet and returns to the main room.

Charlie raises her face and sneaks a peak.

BANG!

The steel door bullets through the air.

Armed men rush in spraying electric bolts around.

Rebeo is hit and slumps to the floor lifelessly.

She drops her face in.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN GEIGH - NIGHT

Kida, Maya, Charlie and Jeff sit on the sidewalk.

MAYA

What next?

JEFF

I don't think we understood what
went wrong back there to start
with.

KIDA

Guys, can we go home now?

Charlie gets on her feet.

CHARLIE

You heard Rebeo - we have to reveal
whatever is on that chip, so let's
go.

She gets on her way.

Jeff rises to his feet and turns to her.

JEFF

To Revili? Do you even know where that is?

She pauses and turns to Jeff.

CHARLIE

It's in this same district. It's 20 minutes by bus.

She turns and continues her walk.

KIDA

A bus? A ground plane bus? You want me on a ground plane bus? That's so disgusting!

Jeff chases after Charlie.

Maya gets on her feet and turns to Kida.

MAYA

Good luck walking around here. I hope you'd give freely to guys around here, like you would your human boyfriends.

She hurries away to join the others.

Kida stares around, jumps to her feet and chases after the others.

INT. ACIU CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Holographic screens are up.

Lieutenant Felders walks to Colonel Vaughn and Major Collier.

COLONEL VAUGHN

We're back in control?

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

Yes we are, but there's a problem. They got into the Defense Network through ACIU's servers. At that point, our server became redundant.

MAJOR COLLIER

Essentially, we didn't regain control. It was handed back to us after...say after they got what they wanted.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Exactly what did they want?

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

Right now, I can't say. We're still working on it though.

MAJOR COLLIER

This is too sophisticated for Ceps.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Whoever's in charge could be human or Conflate.

MAJOR COLLIER

A Human will have nothing to gain.

INT. ENCLOSURE IN HEZ CAVE - NIGHT

HOLOGRAPHIC computers! HIGH-TECH GIZMO! CONTRAPTIONS!

A pair of Cepgenians churn in and out information.

Another pulls out a piece of paper from one of the machines and hands it over to Jandha, who promptly steps out into the open.

INT. OPEN AREA IN HEZ CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Jandha steps onto the cliff overlooking the valley packed with Cepgenians.

JANDHA

It is done! We strike before daybreak! By the coming of The Sun, no human will be left on Mars!

The large crowd burst into screams and applause of solidarity.

EXT. STREETS IN REVILI - NIGHT

DARK ALLEYS!

FLICKERING LIGHTS!

RUNDOWN STREET LITTERED WITH WASTE AND TRASH!

Charlie, Kida, Maya and Jeff make their way with the help of lights from the UPPER PLANES.

Past the boozers and hookers on the corner, there is a building with a corroded metal signpost dangling down its entrance with the word "V RB" faintly inscribed on it.

A fenced compound shrouded in tranquility lies opposite the building.

Maya bangs her fist on the gate.

A man's face appears through a hole.

MAN

Stop it! You'll wake everyone up.
You know what time it is?

MAYA

Yes, it's 14 clicks to sunrise! We need to talk to someone.

(turning to Charlie)

What's his name again?

CHARLIE

Sir, sorry for the disturbance.
We're here to see Bhojka! Rebeo sent us to him some hours ago.

Eyes askant - the hole vanishes.

The gate opens.

EXT. SHELTER COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

They enter. The man shuts the gate.

MAN

Wait here!

He disappears from sight.

People creep up behind them.

BLACKOUT!

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

LARGE LAMP shines blinding lights upon Charlie's face!

SHE AWAKES!

She tries to wriggle free from the straps binding her to the chair.

BHOJKA (O.C.)
Who are you? Who sent you?

CHARLIE
I'm Charlie Vaughn. Rebeo sent us.
Are you Bhojka?

BHOJKA
Vaughn?

Light goes out.

Ceiling lights come on.

Bhojka walks to Charlie.

BHOJKA
You Colonel Vaughn's daughter?

CHARLIE
Yes!

BHOJKA
We've been searching for you. Yes,
I'm Bhojka.

INT. ROOM IN SHELTER - NIGHT

Charlie and her friends sit on a bed wrapped up in blankets whilst sipping something hot from ceramic mugs.

Bhojka stands before them.

BHOJKA
They're sending people here for
you. All of you.

CHARLIE
Thank you. Are you the one in
charge here?

BHOJKA
Yes. I'm the second highest ranking
Cep in the ACIU, probably even the
military. That's a fact we're
trying to change.

JEFF
Who's ranked higher?

BHOJKA

I believe you all survived him, out there, in the HEZ.

CHARLIE

Why did you welcome us the way you did?

BHOJKA

Something happened at Rebeo's last night. We got hacked. Very sensitive security files were accessed and possibly altered.

MAYA

We were at Rebeo's place last night.

BHOJKA

That's the thing. At first we thought Rebeo had gone rogue. Then we heard Rebeo was killed.

KIDA

What? They killed him?

BHOJKA

Who? Who did you see?

KIDA

No one!

MAYA

He snuck us out before they got in.

Heavy sigh!

BHOJKA

Anyway, when Rebeo turned up dead, it became obvious he wasn't the hacker. Then you showed up here claiming Rebeo sent you to see me a few hours ago. No one around here knows my name, very few have ever even seen me. Plus, everyone who saw Rebeo alive a few hours ago should either be dead or in the infirmary.

CHARLIE

We were among the last to see Rebeo alive.

BHOJKA

And so I thought you guys were the hackers. You killed him, hacked into the Defense Network, then came this way to complete whatever your tasks are.

JEFF

Wait, wait, they hacked into Defense? That's bad, that's really bad.

MAYA

This 'they' we keep talking about, are 'they' the rebels?

BHOJKA

I'd hate to call them that. Or else, we're all rebelling against the system then. They're just going about it the wrong way.

JEFF

Wait a second. To pull off a hack like that you'll need a lot of power to run the access point, at least.

BHOJKA

Yes. Your point is?

JEFF

When we left Geigh, at least half the District was out of power.

BHOJKA

Really? Did the power go out while you were there?

MAYA

Yes. It went out shortly after Rebeo plugged in this chip we got when we escaped from the HEZ.

BHOJKA

So, technically, you were the hackers.

JEFF

With Rebeo's assistance. I don't think any of us even knew what was really on that chip.

BHOJKA

Then how did you get the chip?

CHARLIE

Dankha. He helped us escape last night.

BHOJKA

Dankha is one of us. He was sent to infiltrate that cell and give us intel on their leader whom no one's ever seen.

CHARLIE

He told me that. He also said something about being put in charge of an impending attack on Aries.

BHOJKA

Maybe he had some intel he felt he had to share. Maybe someone around him found out and switched chips.

JEFF

Maybe that person just had an identical chip with pulse designed to compromise Aries Defense Systems lying around somewhere...waiting for your man to gather intel into a chip that looks just like it.

Silence!

Bhojka wears confusion.

BHOJKA

Get some rest. You'll be home soon.

MAYA

About that - what if we don't want to go home?

BHOJKA

What?

JEFF

We want to stay and help.

KIDA

They want to stay and help. I just haven't thought of a better place to go to.

The others turn to her wearing disdain.

INT. ROOM IN SHELTER - NIGHT

Charlie awakes to Bhojka's whispers.

BHOJKA (O.C.)
Right now, we have good reason to
believe they'll attack before
dawn.

She looks toward the door slightly ajar, then creeps closer
to hear better.

BHOJKA (O.C.)
We still don't know who Seth is,
or what he wants.

CLOSE ENOUGH!

She stops and tries to steal a glance between the edges.

BHOJKA (O.C.)
We'll send some of ours to the
gate as reinforcements.

INTERRUPTION! THE FLOOR BOARD CREAKS!

Charlie looks back.

Maya stares at her.

MAYA
(whispering)
What're you doing?

CHARLIE
(whispering)
Sh!

BHOJKA (O.C.)
Yes, they're here. We'll keep them
safe until they're evacuated.

Maya gets closer.

MAYA
(whispering)
What's he saying?

CHARLIE
(whispering)
An attack before dawn.

INTERRUPTION, YET AGAIN!

JEFF
Guys!

MAYA
(whispering)
Sh!

JEFF
(whispering)
Tell me you turned on whatever it
is that's beeping on that device
we got from the rebels.

Charlie and Maya share a glance.

CHARLIE
(whispering)
Turned on what?

The pair creep back to where the others are and the trio
converge around the chip making beeping sounds and flashing
a red light.

The beeps suddenly intensify.

JEFF
Run!

They scamper towards the exit.

Maya shakes Kida awake.

MAYA
Wake up or you'll die!

KIDA
Run! Run!

They too make for the exit.

Three cans drop.

BANG!

SMOKE FILLS THE AIR!

They start feeling woozy.

BLACKOUT!

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

A LOUD NOISE awakens the quartet with their arms bound behind them.

They are surrounded by a handful of armed men. Terpt is one amongst them.

CHARLIE
(whispering)
Where're we?

JEFF
(whispering)
I think we're on our way out of Aries!

MAYA
(whispering)
What about Bhojka?

CHARLIE
(whispering)
It's a safe guess he probably doesn't like wherever he is.

INT. ACIU CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Military personnel man the control systems.

Some scamper this way and that.

Colonel Vaughn and Major Collier walk in. Lieutenant Felders meets with them. Together, they make their way further inward.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS
Colonel, the first wave of attacks have already began. We're expecting them at the gate of Aries in a short while. I sent some regiment to guard the gate. We'll need some to guard Central Defense, just in case.

MAJOR COLLIER
Just in case what Lieutenant?

They halt to a stop.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS
Well sir, I just have a hunch.

MAJOR COLLIER

Not if we hold them off at the gate.

COLONEL VAUGHN

He has a point. Survivors at the gate will launch an attack here, and I think we all know why.

(pause)

Okay Felders, make it happen.

The Lieutenant nods, then he turns and leaves.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Felders!

The Lieutenant stops and turns.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

Sir!

COLONEL VAUGHN

Any word on Bhojka?

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

No sir!

COLONEL VAUGHN

What about my daughter and her friends?

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

No word sir!

A sigh from the Colonel.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Bhojka walks into a field.

A HUGE MASS of Cepgenians stand battle ready under dimly-lit lights.

TENAE, a Cepgenian, walks to him.

TENAE

These are they I could gather at short notice.

BHOJKA

Do they know they may never return to their families?

TENAE
They've already said their
goodbyes.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

The train slowly pulls to a stop.

The men cover the heads of Charlie and her friends with bags.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

A LARGE ROOM filled with MECHINES for BRAINWASHING.

BAGS OFF HEADS!

Jandha, Terpt and a handful of men surround them.

The men force Charlie and Maya unto a pair of chairs and bind their limbs in straps.

CHARLIE
What're you doing?

MAYA
What's going on?

Jeff and Kida are carted away by a pair, amid screams and chaos -

JEFF
Where're we going? Where're you
taking us?!!

KIDA
HELP! HELP!!

Maya and Charlie watch helplessly.

CHARLIE
(to Jandha)
Where're you taking them?

Silence screams.

Kida screams even more frantically.

MAYA
Calm down Kida, everything will be
fine.

JEFF

Charlie, Charlie, help!

CHARLIE

Jeff! Jeff! Stay safe, we'll get you out. I promise.

Jeff and Kida vanish out of sight. Their screams soon fade out.

CHARLIE

If you touch one hair on them, my father and his men will rain great suffering upon you.

Jandha chuckles.

JANDHA

Your father and his men will soon become a part of the brutal, soon-to-be-forgotten history of this gracious planet, and you will be a part of making it happen.

He pulls close a button panel and prepares to punch a button on it.

The room is suddenly FOGGY.

Everyone falls unconscious. Charlie slowly shuts her eyes.

INT. ROOM IN CAVE - NIGHT

A GAS MASK catches Charlie's sight as she snaps out of consciousness.

Terpt, wearing the mask, jolts her back to consciousness using an ELECTRIC PRICK.

TERPT

You must leave now, both of you, before they regain consciousness.

He unbinds them.

Charlie jumps to her feet and picks up a loose metal, taking a defensive posture.

Maya takes cover behind her.

TERPT

I know you probably have a problem trusting whatever I say to you, but right now your options are limited. When Dankha started acting suspicious, I was the one your father sent in.

Charlie stands firm.

Maya looks around for a way out.

TERPT

If I wanted you hurt, I won't have killed one of my men to save your lives from certain death the last time you were in the HEZ.

Charlie slowly lowers her hand.

He points toward the exit.

TERPT

Out there you'll see a glider. Get on it, turn due right of the direction it's facing and go. Don't worry about your friends, I'll keep them safe.

Maya makes for the exit.

Charlie pauses in hesitant suspicion.

Maya pauses in wait at the exit.

CHARLIE

Where are we going?

TERPT

Have you ever heard of the Jungle? Keep going in the direction I gave, you'll get there.

AMAZMENT gleams across Maya's face. She comes closer and stands close to Charlie.

MAYA

The Jungle? That place actually exist?

He rips the necklace off his neck, then begins to take out THE PENDANT on it.

CHARLIE

Wait a minute! A place with plants, trees and wild animals made up predominantly of DNA discovered on this planet. Such a place actually exists?

TERPT

That's where I'm directing you to. I won't be directing you to a place that doesn't exist. Take this.

He hands Charlie The Pendant.

RELUCTANCE glows through her eyes.

TERPT

It's not a bomb, or a hacker tool. You don't even need to take it with you. Just remember the symbol. When you get to the jungle, follow it.

She takes The Pendant hesitantly, then stares at it for a short while.

He searches around frantically for something.

TERPT

The symbol will lead you to the Jade Host.

Charlie's jaw drops.

CHARLIE

Oh my...

Maya glances at them.

MAYA

The Jade Host? What is that?

TERPT

You probably know them as The Vorci Army.

Maya too stares wide mouthed.

CHARLIE

That's supposed to be a myth.

MAYA

More like a conspiracy theory. The Vorci Army, humanity's last defense against Cepgenians?

Charlie stares dead at Terpt.

CHARLIE

Why do you think Humanity needs a last defense? Do you think Aries will fall?

Terpt mutely mumbles - his search uninterrupted.

MAYA

Aries can't fall. The Military is too strong.

TERPT

There!

He picks out a sheet resembling a filmstrip, then hands it to Charlie.

TERPT

Take this!

Charlie glances at the strip, sticking her face out and tossing a serious look at Terpt.

CHARLIE

Listen to me. Aries won't fall because the Military can handle this, right?

He sticks his face out and returns the gesture.

TERPT

You listen to me. The Military is outnumbered at least seven hundred to one by the very same individuals that helped build most of the weapons the Military use. If we can't find alternatives, they're screwed.

Charlie receives the filmstrip hesitantly, wearing confusion as she gazes at it.

TERPT

When you get to the jungle, be on the lookout for signs of civilization.

(CONT'D)

When you find the Jade Host, tell them who you are, then give that to number one. His name's Herod.

Slowly, she raises her face to him.

CHARLIE

What will happen if Aries falls?
What will they do to Aries if they conquer it?

GASP from Terpt!

TERPT

They'll go to Central and destroy the Oxygen Synthesizer. Initially we thought it was the Gravity Arch, but now I know it's not.

Maya turns to Charlie.

MAYA

What's an "Oxygen Synthesizer"?

CHARLIE

It's the machine that turns Carbon to Oxygen for Aries, the same way a plant from Earth would.

Maya covers her mouth with her palms turning to Terpt.

MAYA

Oh no!

Charlie glances at her.

CHARLIE

Yeah! Without Oxygen, humans will die.

TERPT

The rebels outnumber each human in Aries by the hundreds. They are that many who can neither think nor feel, that many programmed for one purpose. You asked me why I thought humanity needed a last stand. This is it.

Charlie drops her face wearing despair. She jerks her face back up, donning determination.

CHARLIE

How will we know the Jade Host when we see them? I mean, are they Human, Cep or what?

TERPT

Neither! When you see them, you'll know them. Be careful in there. Every flesh-eating creature will be after you, but I wouldn't send you in there if I thought you couldn't survive.

MAYA

Then come with us.

TERPT

What becomes of your friends? Besides, my job here isn't quite done. Go, go now!

The duo leaves.

TERPT

Remember, be careful!

EXT. HEZ CAVE

Charlie and Maya run to a parked landglider.

Charlie jumps into the driver's seat, Maya jumps in behind her.

MAYA

Please tell me you've driven one of these before!

CHARLIE

No, never!

She turns on the engine and zooms off.

EXT. GATE OF ARIES - NIGHT

A LARGE ARMY OF HUMANS AND CEPGENIANS stand behind a GATE.

ALL RAIN TRACKS coming into Aries go through the gate.

The humans are armed with Boltblasters and wear METAL BEAR SUITS - A WEAPONIZED METALLIC ARMOUR LEAVING ONLY THE FACE VISIBLE THROUGH GLASS.

BRIGHT MOVING LIGHTS emerge over the horizon.

A TRAIN BELTS DOWN A TRACK TOWARD THE CITY.

CAPTAIN VOKES signals some soldiers. They respond by preparing a KING-SIZED BLASTER weapon.

CAPTAIN
Shut the gate!

A huge slab of concrete wall makes its way across the tracks behind them, from one end to the other.

The train bolts on.

CAPTAIN
Whatever happens, that train must
never reach the city!

The Captain clutches on to a device through which he monitors the movement of the train.

CAPTAIN
Ready! Steady!

The train crosses a line on the device in his hand.

The Captain looks up.

CAPTAIN
Let em have it!

THUNDEROUS EXPLOSIONS! SPARKS IGNITE! BOLTS FLY!

The train is peppered and battered until it derails.

Engulfed in flames, it rams toward the gate disintegrating.

It slowly breaks in the sand right in front of the soldiers.

Captain Vokes creeps up to the burning train.

From a distance, he glances around.

NO SIGN OF LIFE!

CAPTAIN
(whispering)
No one on the train?

He turns to the others.

CAPTAIN
There was no one on the train!

EXT. HEZ

LIGHTS COME ON! ENGINES COME ON!

EXT. GATE

The Captain hastens back into position.

CAPTAIN
Get into position!

From the thick, dense darkness of the HEZ, A MULTITUDE of REBEL LANDGLIDERS converges on the troops at the gate hastily.

Both sides exchange shots, bolts and punches.

EXT. HEZ DESERT - NIGHT

Maya and Charlie continue on their way in search of The Jungle.

Their glider starts shutting down.

MAYA
What's going on?

CHARLIE
Power's out. I think the battery's dead.

The glider comes to a stop.

The lights go out.

PITCH DARKNESS!

THEIR BRACELETS GLOW BRIGHTLY!

SHAKING NOISES!

Charlie gets off the landglider and looks around.

Maya tries to start the landglider - over and over again.

NOT HAPPENING!

She gets off the glider and walks around aimlessly.

Charlie returns to lean her back on the glider.

MAYA

Help! Is anyone out there?

CHARLIE

We're in the middle of the Martian Desert, towards a direction not known for life. Do you really think you'll get a response?

Maya stops and turns to her.

MAYA

Oh what's your smart idea genius?

CHARLIE

We have to keep going.

MAYA

How do you suggest we do that?

Charlie glances at her feet.

CHARLIE

We have legs, remember?

MAYA

What? Three days ago I could count how many times I had walked on ground using fingers on one of my arms, and we have the same limbs as humans. Now you want me to walk through all this sand for a distance no one can tell, to a place that doesn't even exist?

Charlie gets off the glider and walks past Maya.

She pauses and turns to Maya.

CHARLIE

I don't want you to do anything you don't want to do. I'm walking. If I find help willing to come back for you, good. If not, so be it. It was nice knowing you.

She continues walking.

Maya gasps, then goes after her.

MAYA

Slow down! Please!

EXT. HEZ DESERT - NIGHT

Charlie and Maya walk over desert dunes.

Charlie and Maya walk across the barren horizon dimly lit by the faint glows of the night's stars.

Charlie forces her way through a raging sandstorm, carrying Maya by her arm over her shoulder.

Charlie and Maya walk down a dune. Maya falls and rolls down the dune. Charlie goes after her.

EXT. HEZ DESERT - DAYBREAK

Charlie walks exhausted. She drags Maya through the desert clinching Maya's arm wrapped around her shoulder.

She can take no more! She slumps to the ground pulling Maya down with her.

They lay on the desert sands staring at each other.

MAYA

Is this how we'll die? Here, where
no one will find us?

CHARLIE

No, not here. Not today. Not like
this. We'll die when we're old and
we've seen all our bodies can
take.

MAYA

I'm so thirsty.

CHARLIE

We're evolved to survive here.
There is no water here.

LOUD ANIMAL GROWL!

ROARS follow!

They jerk their faces to one another.

MAYA

What was that?

ANOTHER GROWL!

FLUTERS, like bird wings, soon follow.

CHARLIE
Be right back.

Charlie rises.

Maya grabs her by the shoulder wearing fright across her face.

CHARLIE
I'll be back. Okay?

She pushes her arm off her shoulder and crawls toward the horizon.

She approaches the edge of a cliff.

At the edge, she attempts a peak into the valley.

A flock of HUGE CREATURES WITH WINGS thrust up from the valley, almost blinding her.

A pair land by Maya behind.

The pair seems curious and stare harmlessly at Maya.

MAYA
Shu!

She thrusts her leg out toward them.

Charlie rushes back to Maya to fend off the creatures.

The creatures step back, then take off and join the flock.

Charlie returns to the edge of the cliff for that peak into the valley.

CHARLIE
Wow!

For as far as the eye can see, the valley is a thick forest made up of plants with colors as diverse as the rainbow.

Maya joins her on the edge.

MAYA
Wo!

They stare, wrapped in amazement.

MAYA
Water! Water! I see water!

Charlie looks to the foot of the cliff.

A river runs along the foot of the cliff.

MAYA

How do we get down there?

Charlie looks hard at the wall of the cliff.

CHARLIE

Look.

The winged creatures are hanging off the wall of the cliff, apparently taking in the sunrise.

Charlie picks up an idle rock and lets it drop.

It hits some of the creatures on its way down prompting them to respond by flying upward.

She turns to Maya.

CHARLIE

You ready?

MAYA

For what?

CHARLIE

Grab a leg Maya.

She snatches a foot.

The creature loses balance.

Maya snatches the other.

The creature goes into freefall.

It crash lands in the valley.

No one is hurt!

The creature picks itself up and takes flight, again.

Maya runs to the streaming water and gulps in as much water as she can.

Charlie glances around, then stares at Maya.

CHARLIE

Water? That's really water?

Maya pays no mind to her.

CHARLIE

It means there's oxygen here,
enough of it to form water.

Maya has her fill and turns to Charlie.

Charlie departs from the foot of the cliff.

EXT. ARIES GATE - DAY

CEPGENIAN HEADS, HUMAN LIMBS, BLOOD, GORE AND BRAINMATTER
litter the plain within sight.

A PAIR OF CEPGENIANS clinching boltblasters stand behind a
pair of Human soldiers on their knees with their hands on
their heads.

They blast the brains out of the humans.

A large number of VOLCANGLIDERS pull to a stop in the midst
of the gory mess.

The sides of a Volcanglider opens to reveal Cepgenians
strapped tightly to their seats, tossing dead gazes into
the emptiness before them.

JEFF AND KIDA ARE AMONGST THE BRAINWASHED HORDE in the
Volcanglider.

Jandha and Terpt alight from the hovering machine.

Dankha meets with them and turns to Jandha.

DANKHA

The highest ranking officer is a
Captain. He still lives...barely.
Do the honors.

JANDHA

A Captain you say? They yet refuse
to take us seriously. Such is
their nature. Where is he?

DANKHA

This way!

Dankha leads the pair to Captain Vokes, slouched in a pool
of his own blood with his back on a heap of metal - an arm
blown off.

The Captain is visibly panting.

JANDHA
 So you're the one they sent to
 stop us? How has that worked?

CAPTAIN
 (panting)
 You'll never reach Central. You'll
 never get through the gate.

JANDHA
 You forget we built this gate.

The Captain starts laughing.

CAPTAIN
 How does it feel being number 2?
 We're coming for Seth, and we'll
 make an example of him.

Jandha wears rage.

He grabs the Captain by the neck.

JANDHA
 "We"? There is no "we." You're
 about to die!

He smashes the glass covering the Captain's face with a few
 punches, then lets go of him.

The Captain jerks violently on the ground, gasping for air.

Jandha rises to his feet.

THE GATE OPENS!

Bhojka and a mass of rebel Cepgenians stand on the other
 side of the gate.

Behind them are even more human and Cepgenian corpses.

Both wearing smiles, Bhojka and Jandha walk up to one
 another and collide in a warm embrace.

JANDHA
 Brother!

BHOJKA
 Brother!

Jandha turns to Dankha.

JANDHA
Get everyone ready! We attack
Central at dusk!

DANKHA
Why not now? We're full of
confidence. Now's the best time.

JANDHA
The night favors us better.
Besides, now they're ready for us.
By dawn, they'd be guessing.

DANKHA
What if more come while we wait?

THE PLAIN BEFORE THE GATE, LITTERED WITH HUMAN REMAINS.

JANDHA
Then they will see all of this,
and we may yet get even more
confidence to fuel our hunger.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Charlie and Maya walk through a THICK, DENSE FOREST of
SPECTACULARLY STRANGE TREES AND PLANTS.

Charlie pulls up The Pendant before her face and glances
around.

MAYA
I think we've been going around in
circles.

CHARLIE
No we haven't.

They walk past a tree.

MAYA
I'm pretty sure we've past that
tree at least twice now.

CHARLIE
Yeah, right, you know the
difference.

MAYA
Look, we've been going right since
we got here. Maybe we should take
the next left turn.

CHARLIE
Okay.

They walk to a large piece of rock.

MAYA
See? Tell me this is the first
time we're crossing that same
rock.

Charlie pauses, seeming a bit confused.

CHARLIE
Okay, next left turn then.

They cross over the rock and keep walking.

A PAIR OF MONSTEROUS EYES APPEAR ON THE SIDES OF THE ROCK.

THE ROCK BEGINS TO RISE OFF THE GROUND.

THE FULL FIGURE of a MONSTEROUS FOUR-LEGGED CREATURE WITH
HUGE TEETH emerges from the forest bed.

Charlie and Maya slowly look back.

The creature ROARS LOUDLY at them.

MAYA
Charlie!

CHARLIE
Run!

The pair take off as fast as they can.

The creature is hot on their heels.

The creature is so large behind them that it occupies the
entire path and falls trees that stand in its way.

CHARLIE
Left Maya!

They turn left.

The creature follows.

They run into an open field.

The creature is right behind them.

As they run, they hear an even LOUDER ROAR.

The roar is so loud that they pause and turn.

AN EVEN LARGER FOUR-LEGGED MONSTROUSITY rushes out of the bushes and head butts the creature after them to the ground.

The larger creature goes for the kill with a clasp of its jaw over the jugular.

The pair stand and watch a while as the creature after them breathes its last.

The killer instantly goes in for lunch.

Slowly they move backwards, trying to avoid detection.

A HUGE WINGED ANIMAL flies to the kill and attempts to partake in the feast.

The killer is having none of it - he violently sends the winged animal scampering into the air for its life.

The winged animal flies over the duo as it escapes, attracting the trailing glare of the killer to them.

MAYA
Oh my...

The killer abandons its downed prey and makes for them.

MAYA
Run!

A LOUD SQUAWK!

As they turn to run, they come face to belly with another huge winged animal.

They look around and quickly realize an entire flock.

The killer still charges toward them.

The winged creatures attack the killer in a swarm.

They fight over who gets the carcass.

The killer is soon outnumbered and retreats in defeat.

The winged creatures converge over the carcass.

They fight for a short while, then return to the feast.

Some are left out as they can't get a space around the carcass.

One of the exiles turns to Charlie and Maya.

Charlie and Maya take off running.

An exile takes to flight after them.

Two others join it in the air.

The pair continues running.

AN UNDERGROUND OPENING BY A SMALL HILL!

Charlie spots the opening and dives into it clutching Maya.

They hide further in.

SOUNDS OF BATING WINGS!

SILENCE!

A SUDDEN BURST OF SOUND!

One of the creatures sticks its head in the mouth of the opening but can't fit in any further.

It bites the air in an attempt to lay hold on one of them.

IN SHOCK, Charlie and Maya fall backwards down a steep slope and into a dark abyss of apparent nothingness.

IN FREE FALL, they scream.

INT. SUBTERRENEAN CAVE

SPLASH! They land in a river of flowing luminous liquid.

They stand and notice the liquid is a bit tacky.

MAYA

Yuck! What's this?

They notice some HUGE RODENT-LOOKING CREATURES on the bank.

They appear to be feeding on the luminous liquid from the bank.

A HUGE MOUTH WITH MONSTER TEETH rises from the liquid, then returns into it clinching one of the rodent creatures.

Charlie and Maya glance at each other, then jostle through the liquid to the bank.

They sit on the bank, but as far from the river as possible.

PANTS!

Maya looks up and spots a luminous cave graffiti bearing the symbol on The Pendant Terpt gave Charlie.

MAYA
Charlie, look!

Charlie looks up to it.

There appears to be an arrow pointing in a direction by the graffiti.

She pulls out The Pendant and holds it before her face for confirmation.

She gets up and begins walking in the direction of the arrow.

CHARLIE
Come on, let's go!

They walk up the bank until they hit light resembling daylight.

They soon find themselves on the edge of a cliff, staring into a VALLEY OF JUNGLE PARADISE plush with AESTHETIC AND EXOTIC VEGETATION.

CHARLIE
Wo!

MAYA
Wow!

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE - DAY

A MULTITUDE OF MILITARY OFFICERS gather around a Conference Table.

Some of them are seated.

Commander Wicks walks in.

Everyone stands at attention.

COMMANDER WICKS

At ease.

The Commander takes a seat on the chair at the end of the table.

The officials that were sitting when he came in return to their seats.

COMMANDER WICKS

I just got word that the gates have been breached...by your men Colonel.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Sadly sir, that is true. But we have more serious news. We've got word on what their prime target in Aries is.

COMMANDER WICKS

What is it? Spit it out!

COLONEL VAUGHN

Here sir! Central Defense is their prime target. They want to destroy the Oxygen Synthesizer.

They all glance at one another.

COMMANDER WICKS

Get every soldier we have here right now. I don't care if they're sick or in mourning, if they can bear arms, I want them here.

They glance at themselves yet again.

The Commander pounds his fist on the table and gets on his feet wearing rage.

COMMANDER WICKS

Does anyone here understand what I just said?

Some officials DISPERSE HASTILY.

COMMANDER WICKS

Vaughn, assemble all the heads of Ground Patrol and Ultra Force, immediately!

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Charlie and Maya walk between the trees.

Maya runs her finger through some vegetation while they walk.

Unknown to her, she upsets swarms of tiny glowing insects which hover around behind them.

The insects soon form a SUPER SWARM and gather around the duo.

The pair admire the swarm.

Charlie soon notices a carving of the symbol on The Pendant edged onto the trunk of a tree.

She takes a closer look.

THE TREE MOVES!

Charlie stands back in shock.

Maya notices her move and turns her attention from the insects to her friend.

MAYA

What? What happened?

CHARLIE

Did you see that?

MAYA

See what?

CHARLIE

That tree has the Pendant symbol.
Did the symbol just move, or was
it the tree?

Maya moves her eyes and catches a glimpse of the symbol.

Just then, THE TREE MOVES AGAIN!

Maya steps back in shock.

A swarm of glowing insects move away from the tree.

Charlie trails the swarm with her eyes.

DANGER!

She drops her eyes to a HUGE CREATURE RESEMBLING A VELOCIRAPTOR!

She gasps in shock.

The creature growls loudly!

ALL THE TREES AROUND THEM BEGIN TO RUN in one direction - away from the creature.

Charlie and Maya join them, trailing behind.

The creature comes after them.

The trees suddenly stop and huddle together, appearing to make a stand.

Charlie and Maya find themselves between the trees and the huge creature galloping towards them.

They jump out of the way and run into the part of the forest not moving.

They slow down, looking back to witness the impending battle about to unfold.

The trees stand firm.

The creature stops and tries to intimidate them.

NO SUCCESS!

The beast turns and spots the fleeing duo.

It flings into motion in hot pursuit.

It gains ground on the pair quickly.

Charlie and Maya hit dead end - a large rock.

They turn to the fast-approaching beast with their backs on the rock.

The creature closes in with its mouth wide open.

SUDDENLY, IT STOPS!

It starts backing up, then, it stands.

GARTIA, a VORCI -HUMANOID- emerges from the bushes and stands behind the beast.

She's so tall, she's almost the height of the beast.

Gartia stares intently at Charlie and Maya.

Charlie steps forward.

CHARLIE

Hello! I'm Charlie Vaughn. I'm here to see Herod.

She holds her stare, only less intently now.

Charlie pulls out The Pendant and shows her.

She approaches them warily, her eyes firmly fixed on The Pendant.

Not yet close enough, she stretches and touches The Pendant, feeling the contours on its surface.

She snatches it from Charlie.

Charlie goes on the offensive -

CHARLIE

Hey! That's not meant for you!
Give it back!

She back away from Charlie.

Charlie prepares to spring upon her.

A MALICIOUS GROWL!

The Beast too prepares to spring into action whilst tossing a mean glare at Charlie.

Charlie calms herself down.

Gartia glances at their faces, then whistles as she turns to the beast.

The beast bows.

She mounts it.

The beast rises.

TWO OTHER CREATURES OF OTHER SPECIES emerge from the bushes.

They bow before Charlie and Maya.

Gartia gestures to them to get on the creatures with a nod.

Slowly, and with great hesitance, the duo mount the animals.

The beast leads the way, the other creatures follow.

The three creatures gallop through the forest floor like a rampaging herd, and every movable on their path takes cover.

They arrive at a location densely populated by structures closely resembling HILLS - albeit artificial.

They alight in front of an entrance through the southern fence bordering the collection of caves.

The creatures scramble back into the forest as quickly as they came.

They make their way in through the entrance.

EXT. VORCINI

Gartia leads the pair though the VILLAGE.

As they walk into the Village, crowds begin to gather around them.

Curious Vorcis stare at them as they make their way through the Village.

NOT A SINGLE WORD IS SPOKEN!

Charlie and Maya seem scared of the attention.

They arrive at a unique-looking hill, with steps by the side and a hut made of strange leave-like plants atop.

Gartia leads the pair up the steps.

At the top, they meet HEROD, an EXCEPTIONALLY TALLER and SLIGHTLY HUGER Vorci.

Gartia hands The Pendant to him.

MAYA
Is this he? Hello! You don't
speak?

Herod examines The Pendant a while.

The pair stare curiously at him.

MAYA

I'm Maya. This is Charlie, Charlie Vaughn. She's Colonel Vaughn's daughter. I don't know if you've ever heard of Colonel Vaughn, but we're supposed to meet a guy named Herod.

He gasps, glancing at the faces of the duo.

HEROD

So, it's that time already?

CHARLIE

What?

MAYA

What did you say?

He glances at the pair.

HEROD

Come with me!

He turns and begins descending the hill from another stairway.

Charlie and Maya follow.

EXT. VORCINI - DAY

Charlie, Maya and Herod walk through a FARMING FIELD with Vorcis FARMING on it.

HEROD

It's been so long, I don't know where to begin. You know, your great grandfather foresaw this.

The pair stare at him as they walk.

MAYA

My great grandfather?

HEROD

No, hers. Yes! Robert William Vaughn, the First.

Charlie stops and stares at him as he and Maya walk a few yards ahead.

CHARLIE

You knew my great grandfather?

They stop and stare at each other.

HEROD

That was his name, I believe. I'm not sure though. These days, I can't count on my memory as I once could.

Charlie holds her stare a while longer, then walks up to meet them.

They continue walking.

HEROD

When humans first came to this planet, the human population was comprised of seven very wealthy families, including a human Military escort. As time went by more and more humans arrived, some with their own Military escorts. Soon, there arose a need to form a City. They called it Aries. After that, the flood gates were opened.

MAYA

I'm sorry, why are you telling us all this?

Herod and Maya share a glance.

Herod holds up a warm smile.

HEROD

To know what lies ahead, one must first know what came before.

They walk into an area with tree-like vegetation.

HEROD

(CONT'D)

You see, the original Seven Families wanted the human Settlement on Mars to be free. They strongly opposed any form of enslavement of any type. However, most of this Settlement found no fault in the thought of enslavement.

Herod nods a smile to a group of Vorcis working up a tree.

HEROD
(CONT'D)

When the topic of having indigenous lifeforms to mine the planet arose, the voices of the Seven Families were drowned out by the others. Robert was soon convinced that one day a rebellion would erupt between Slave and Master, and that such a rebellion would prove more fatal to the Masters than to the Slaves. He was also convinced that a rebellion, once started, will spread across the Star Area as a contagious disease often does.

He stops and turns to the duo.

They also stop and turn to him.

HEROD
(CONT'D)

Upon his advice, the Seven Families made plans of their own - an Ecosystem to rival your Ecosystem. In this rival Ecosystem, the Organisms that would be complexized using Human DNA would be in charge, free from interference. More importantly, free from enslavement. In exchange, if ever the humans needed our assistance, we would answer the call. A Treaty was thus forged between my kind and the Humans. To mark this Treaty was a sign forged from a metal called Gold. You see, the Seven Families knew that the only way they could abide by their end of the agreement was to ensure that true knowledge of our existence was made available only to a select few, all of whom were linked, in some way, to the Seven Families and their Military escort. If ever news of our existence got outside that Circle, it would be reduced to nothing more than Myth.

(CONT'D)

I'd say they did a fine job.

CHARLIE

So, where does Terpt fit into all you just said? How come he knows the truth about your people? How come he has The Pendant?

HEROD

Terpt is a descendant of the Seven Families. You are a descendant of their Military Escort.

With that, he waves aside leafy plants, seemingly serving the purpose of a curtain.

A MASSIVE DIMLY-LIT CAVE!

HEROD

Welcome to Roighi, home of The Jade Host.

INT. ROIGHI

The pair walk in.

Herod follows.

NOTHING BUT A LARGE EMPTY SPACE.

Charlie and Maya glance at one another in curiosity.

Herod WHISTLES A SHORT TUNE.

A NUNU - GIGANTIC BIRD-LIKE CREATURES WITH FLAMING EYES - DESCEND INTO VIEW!

The pair jump back in SHEER FRIGHT!

Herod chuckles a short while.

HEROD

I'm sure you were expecting the fabled Jade Host to possess an armory stacked with weapons. Unfortunately, that too is far from the truth.

He walks to one of the creatures and runs his hands across its body.

HEROD
(CON'T)

The only weapon we possess is the Jungle, and that's the only weapon we need. Every living life form on this side of Mars is subject to us.

He smiles at them.

HEROD
Come! He won't hurt you, I'm here.

They stand before the creature and hesitantly run their hands around its body.

He turns and heads toward a short corridor opening out into a garden.

HEROD
This way.

They walk into the light.

EXT. ROIGHI

PARADISE!

BEAUTIFUL VEGETATION!

WATERFALLS!

FANTASTIC CREATURES!

MAYA
Oh my...

CHARLIE
Wow!

A handful of Vorcis greet them with a hand gesture.

The pair returns the gesture.

Charlie turns to Herod.

CHARLIE
They don't speak very much, do they?

HEROD
They don't speak at all. I'm the only one with the gift of speech.

Charlie and Maya glance at each other curiously.

CHARLIE

How do you communicate?

Herod taps his temple.

HEROD

With this.

He touches his mouth.

HEROD

Not this.

He drops his hand.

HEROD

(CONT'D)

We communicate with one another using our brain. With our mouth we communicate with the Jungle and its Creatures, sometimes.

CHARLIE

Oh!

HEROD

(CONT'D)

You came here. What do you need the Jade for?

MAYA

You already said it. The Humans need your help.

HEROD

How? In what way exactly?

CHARLIE

A rebel faction is currently on their way to Central Defense. In Central Defense is the source of Oxygen in the Human Habitable Zone. They're going to destroy it. All Humans on Mars will die.

HEROD

So, we're to halt them on their way to Central Defense? Where's this Central Defense? You have a map?

Charlie sighs.

CHARLIE

No.

MAYA

Wait. That strip Terpt gave you.
He said we should give it to him.
Are you sure you don't want to?

CHARLIE

Oh yeah.

Charlie pulls out the filmstrip and hands it to Herod.

Herod holds it out in front of his face.

HEROD

It does look like a map. We must
read it properly.

He walks.

The pair follows.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE - NIGHT

THE COMMANDER, THE COLONEL and SOME UNIFORMED MILITARY
OFFICIALS gather around a table.

HUMAN VOICES are audible through a RADIO DEVICE on the
table.

COMMANDER WICKS

Wong, any news?

SERGEANT WONG

(Radio)

None yet sir!

EXT. ARIES TAQUE SQUARE

SERGEANT WONG, along with several HEAVILY KITTED and ARMED
MILITARY OFFICIALS walk through deserted streets.

SERGEANT WONG

(speaking into radio)

We're currently at Taque Square
and everyone has been evacuated,
as requested Commander.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

COMMANDER WICKS

Ultra 3, what's your location and
what's going on around you?

EXT. AMBON

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS walks kitted with his Metal Bear Suit,
without the glass covering his face, and armed with a
Boltblaster.

Surrounded by him are three similarly kitted and armed
soldiers.

They all walk ahead of a MASSIVE ARMOURED MILITARY LAND
SURFACE MOBILITY MECHINE.

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS

We're at Ambon, Commander. It's a
neighborhood 12 Miles from the
City Gate. Nothing to report for
now, sir!

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

COMMANDER WICKS

Patrol, what's your location like?

SILENCE RESPONDS!

COMMANDER WICKS

Patrol? Moreno?

Still, NO RESPONSE!

COMMANDER WICKS

Briggs, how far are you from
Moreno's last known location?

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS

(Radio)

The last we heard from Sergeant
Moreno, they were in the
Eastlands.

EXT. AMBON

Briggs halts to a stop.

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS

That's less than 10 Miles from
Central Defense, sir!

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

The Commander sighs, then wags his face around.

COMMANDER WICKS
Jim!

MAJOR JIM MZIKIANI turns to him.

MAJOR JIM
Commander!

COMMANDER WICKS
I want every street within a two-mile radius of this facility evacuated and placed on lockdown, especially the upper planes. If they'll come, we'll restrict them to the ground planes.

MAJOR JIM
Yes sir!

Jim takes his leave.

COMMANDER WICKS
Briggs, have some of your guys check on Moreno.

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS
(Radio)
Yes sir.

EXT. ROIGHI - NIGHT

Herod, Charlie and Maya stand surrounding a THREE DIMENSIONAL HOLOGRAPHIC MAP IMPRESSION.

HEROD
How genius of him - he gave us access to a live feed.

CHARLIE
Really?

HEROD
They're already in the City. These rebels you speak of don't know about our existence, and they don't seem to have any plans for us.

MAYA

Why'd you say that?

HEROD

We have aerial capabilities. What I see before me doesn't factor that.

MAYA

Are you saying we go by air? The HHZ airspace is impenetrable. Nothing known to us can penetrate that Force Field. You know - the thing that keeps all that oxygen in and everything else out.

CHARLIE

She's right.

HEROD

Of course she is, but who said anything about trying to break through the Force Field?

The pair exchanges curious glances at each other.

HEROD

Unlike what most of you have been taught, the Force Field doesn't stretch up vertically to twenty thousand feet. It's an arch, and Central Defense is right beneath the middle of the Arch. We can do twenty-five thousand feet, conveniently.

MAYA

So, what're you suggesting?

He nods, apparently lost in his thoughts.

HEROD

You know, it's possible to create a Holding Area.

MAYA

What's that?

CHARLIE

I once heard of that.

Maya turns to her.

MAYA
What is it?

CHARLIE
It's this thing the Military does to transport heavy facilities quicker. You evacuate an area all the way to the ground plane, or at least you get rid of all exclusive oxygen breathers, then you modify the Force Field so that the Area on the ground is bordered on every side by the Field. When everything is in place, you return the Force Field to what it used to be.

HEROD
It's like that ancient human story of the parting of the seas.

Charlie glances at Herod.

CHARLIE
Yeah, but I still don't know what a sea looks like.

HEROD
If we're successful at this, they won't see us coming until we're right there.

Maya raises her face to Herod.

MAYA
One question - can your people breath oxygen as well?

He glances at the pair.

HEROD
Like your kind, we also have two lungs - one for oxygen, one for carbon. You need not be afraid for us. Even though we will not set out to kill, you should be afraid for your kind.

Maya gives off a chuckle.

MAYA
Even I am trembling in fear from all these highly sophisticated weapons I've seen in your armory.

Herod laughs loudly.

HEROD

Don't take this personally, but we were built specifically for war. Your kind were built to dig caves and mine them. When warriors come up against miners, it's the miners you should be afraid for.

CHARLIE

All right, all right already. It doesn't matter who was built for what. Saving the humans from extinction, that's why we're here, right?

HEROD

Yes. Again, we shall not spill blood unless we absolutely must. That condition is irrevocable.

MAYA

How will we even pull that off? Terpt is the only one we can trust in there right now. I doubt he can pull that off, even if we can reach him.

Charlie ponders on her thoughts for a short while.

CHARLIE

We have someone else in there - someone who can pull that off. He's pulled it off many times before.

Charlie and Maya stare at each other.

MAYA

Your father? No! How're we even going to reach him?

CHARLIE

Leave that to me. We just need to pick a place and a time.

EXT. EASTLANDS - NIGHT

A TITAN SHELL - MASSIVE TYRELESS ANTI GRAVITY ARMOURED MILITARY VEHICLE - is stationed DEAD on a street corner.

Through the glass on the side of The Shell, a Soldier can be seen on the driver's seat, sat as though waiting for his colleagues.

Soldiers close in on The Shell cautiously, armed with boltblasters and wrapped up in Metal Bear Suits revealing their faces to the oxidized air.

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS

(to the radio)

We've just arrived at Moreno's Shell. There's no one in sight, but there seems to be an individual in the driver's seat.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS

(Radio)

We're going in for a closer look.

COMMANDER WICKS

Be careful!

EXT. EASTLANDS

LIEUTENANT BRIGGS (O.C.)

God! This place is eerily calm. It drives the chills right up my spine.

Briggs gestures to DON BRAGDAN.

Bragdan breaks the perimeter and gets closer to The Shell, weapon drawn.

BRAGDAN

Hey Lewy!

He stops by the driver's door, crouching whilst nervously glancing around.

He attempts to gain access into the driver's side.

NO SUCCESS!

BRAGDAN

Lewy! Lewy, it's Baggie. Talk to me Lewy, or I'll have to blow up the door.

NO RESPONSE!

Bragdan gestures to Briggs.

Briggs gestures back.

He runs a foamy substance over the edge of the driver's door, then steps back.

BANG!

The smoke fades.

The door is left ajar.

He peeks in.

He checks the man in the driver's seat for a pulse.

NONE! HE'S A CORPSE!

As he withdraws himself from within, he spots a device with beeping lights.

He holds still for a better look.

The lights go out - a bar after the other.

FINAL BAR!

RAPID BEEPING SOUNDS!

BANG!!!

The entire area LIGHTS UP!

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

The explosion can be heard loudly over the radio.

COMMANDER WICKS
Briggs! Briggs!

The sound of the explosion is soon followed by thundering noises of boltblasters shrouding screams.

All that noise gradually comes to a halt.

COMMANDER WICKS
Briggs! Briggs!

JANDHA
(Radio)
No, not Briggs.

The air becomes chilly.

COMMANDER WICKS
Who're you? What do you want?

JANDHA
(Radio)
To you I'm death, here to ferry
your kind off this planet.

COMMANDER WICKS
If that's what you want, I'm here
to tell you - you won't get it.
However, we can negotiate more
achievable goals.

EXT. EASTLANDS

Jandha holds Briggs' HELMET severed from the rest of the
Suit close to his lips as he walks through the ruins of
battle.

He halts and looks up to Dankha and Bhojka.

JANDHA
Okay. What about freedom? Is that
on the table?

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

A GREAT PAUSE in the air!

COMMANDER WICKS
How do you define 'Freedom'?

EXT. EASTLANDS

JANDHA
Equality! We won't be shoveling
shit in the mines to the rhythm of
a whip anymore. So we can afford
you all the luxuries you'll never
work for, and still get treated
like property. We want rights, all
the rights you currently enjoy,
including the right to enjoy the
proceeds of my own fucking labor.

SILENCE!

Seconds roll by.

COMMANDER WICKS

(Radio)

If that's what you call 'Freedom,' then the answer is NO! There shall be no equality between a god and his creation.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

COMMANDER WICKS

(CONT'D)

Besides, what's next after that? We're a single Colony. What do you think the Imperial Authority will do to us when they find out we treat your kind as equals? They'll fear an impending rebellion and losing this Colony to your kind. Then what? WAR! War will follow. You don't understand the factors at play here, I do. Equality is not negotiable. Do you understand?

EXT. EASTLANDS

JANDHA

If the gods won't elevate the creation, then perhaps the creation should pull down the gods.

He drops the Helmet.

He and the others vanish into smoke from the burning wreckage.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

COMMANDER WICKS

Can you hear me? Is anyone there?

SILENCE!

COMMANDER WICKS

Jim!

Jim emerges from the multitude.

MAJOR JIM

Commander!

COMMANDER WICKS

Get everyone back. I want everyone back. Have them form a perimeter around this facility. All soldiers, all shells - everything.

MAJOR JIM

Yes Commander.

Jim takes his leave.

EXT. GATE OF ARIES - NIGHT

LARGE BIRD-LIKE CREATURES ascend over the Gate - their wings making LOUD BATING SOUNDS.

Charlie's feet land close to the head of Captain Vokes.

She stands still, surveying what is left of the carnage that took place there.

Maya joins her where she stands.

MAYA

Oh goodness!!

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE - NIGHT

A LINE OF SOLDIERS, SHELLS and OTHER MILITARY MECHINERY form a perimeter about a hundred meters from the Central Defense building.

Behind the building, but attached to it, stands the OXYGEN SYNTHESISER - A VERY LARGE TUBE-LIKE STRUCTURE STRETCHING FROM THE GROUND TO THE SKY AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.

Standing independently behind the Oxygen Synthesizer is the GRAVITY ARCH - A MASSIVE GLOWING ARCH STRECTHING FROM A POINT ON THE GROUND TO A FEW HUNDRED FEET INTO THE AIR, CURVING, THEN RETURNING TO ANOTHER POINT ON THE GROUND.

A MASS OF CEPGENIANS almost ten times the population forming the perimeter approach.

Jim emerges from among the Soldiers at the front of the line.

He seals his face behind his Helmet's glass.

The Soldiers prepare for physical confrontation.

The Cepgenians halt on a line a few meters from Jim.

Jim speaks through his suit's sound system -

JIM

You can go no further from here.
Turn around and return to your
Primary Places of Abode, or we'll
be forced to use deadly force.

NO RESPONSE!

JIM

Did you hear what I said? Time is
running out. I'm trying to help
you.

Still, NO RESPONSE!

Both sides stand numb for a short while.

Suddenly, the Cepgenians CHARGE!

Bolts go off! Explosions follow!

Blood and guts spill here and there.

EXT. GATE OF ARIES - NIGHT

Charlie leans her back on the carcass of a burnt-out
vehicle.

She holds a helmet ripped from a suit close to her ear.

She pulls it away from her ear and into her line of sight,
and then she punches some buttons on it.

She pulls it to her ear again, and then begins the process
all over.

MAYA

What're you doing?

CHARLIE

My father taught me Morse Code.
It's an ancient secret human sign
language. The humans used it in
ancient times to say things to
people they didn't want anyone
else to understand.

MAYA

This is very helpful right now,
because we're trying to
communicate with ancient humans.

CHARLIE

I'm doing this over my father's frequency. If the person receiving this isn't him, it'll be dismissed as a random radio wave. If he's the one on the other end, he'll understand what I'm saying and get back to me.

MAYA

Okay...

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE BUILDING

Colonel Vaughn leads some soldiers unleashing mayhem on the advancing Cepgenian rebels from a vantage point on a rooftop.

He spots Bhojka and two Cepgenians slither through bodies and into the building.

He prepares to leave the rooftop after them.

He hears Charlie's Morse Code signal faintly and stops for a closer listen.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Pebbles! Is that you?

EXT. GATE OF ARIES

CHARLIE

Yes Dad, it's me. I'm fine!

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE

COLONEL VAUGHN

Where've you been?

EXT. GATE OF ARIES

CHARLIE

I don't have time to explain dad, I'm fine. I met a mutually friendly race, out in the Jungle. I thought that place and people were a myth before today, but something tells me you didn't.

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE

The Colonel sighs.

CHARLIE
(radio)

They want to help dad, but they
need your help to help.

He exhales heavily, then begins moving away from the others.

Jandha spots the Colonel leaving the rooftop from the ground.

He puts on a fierce scowl.

COLONEL VAUGHN
What do they need?

EXT. GATE OF ARIES - NIGHT

Charlie turns to Maya with a nod, then drops the helmet to the ground.

Maya exhales.

MAYA
How do we get out of here?

Charlie spots a landglider a short distance away, seemingly untouched by the wreckage.

She turns to Maya wearing a look of mischief.

Maya sighs.

MAYA
Again?

Charlie walks up to the landglider and hits the switch.

The engine responds with a roar.

She gets on it.

Maya gets in behind her.

They zoom off into the city.

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE - NIGHT

More and more Cepgenians power through the human barricade.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE - NIGHT

Soldiers in uniform stand in front of a glass wall staring into the dark.

TWO DEVICES resembling SUCTION CUPS land on the glass wall.

Commander Wicks laughs loudly.

COMMANDER WICKS
Is that all?

He glances around the room.

COMMANDER WICKS
Is that all they have?

BEEP! BEEP! BANG! BANG!

The glass wall shatters!

All fall to the floor. Particles fly around.

The Commander rises and looks up - blood dripping down his face.

A MULTITUDE of devices resembling suction cups fly at him.

EXT. CONFERENCE HALL, ARIES CENTRAL DEFENSE

The entire floor of the Conference Room is OBLITERATED with MASSIVE EXPLOSIONS!

EXT. ROOFTOP

Colonel Vaughn turns around and catches a glimpse of the inferno.

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE

Soldiers fall aside.

Surviving soldiers fall closer and closer to the building to join the line of soldiers making a final stand.

More Cepgenians breach the perimeter.

Cepgenians find their way into the building where they wreck more mayhem.

EXT. ROOFTOP

Colonel Vaughn stands behind a FOUR-WHEELED MACHINE holding a button.

He is fully kitted with his helmet glass protecting his face.

He punches the button and a red light begins to flash.

Just as he readies to punch another button, Jandha tackles him to the ground.

They both rise to their feet - fists clenched ready for battle.

COLONEL VAUGHN

I understand what you want. You want equality. I want that as well. The Commander is dead. We can work something out.

JANDHA

The others want equality. I want to get rid of you. We play well together, when our interests meet.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Do you even know what will happen to your kind if you're successful? The Imperial Authority will shove cans of hell up your asses.

Jandha charges at him, engaging him in a fierce fight.

EXT. CENTRAL DEFENSE - NIGHT

Charlie and Maya zoom into the scene of fierce fighting.

They get off the landglider.

Maya spots Jeff and Kida among the rebel fighters.

Charlie spots Dankha jostling his way into the building.

Maya draws Charlie's attention to their friends -

MAYA

Charlie, look!

Charlie glances at Maya and prepares to jump after Kida and Jeff.

Terpt emerges behind Kida and Jeff and jolts them with electricity from a device in his hand.

They fall numb to the ground.

Terpt nods to Charlie and Maya.

Charlie nods back.

She and Maya take off into the building after Dankha.

Terpt follows at a slower pace.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Jandha and the Colonel continue their fight.

The Colonel soon gets the upper hand.

He pins Jandha to the ground.

COLONEL VAUGHN

We can be friends. We can be allies. We can work together. The Commander is dead, and I'm willing to work with you. It doesn't have to end like this.

Jandha struggles and reaches behind the Colonel's suit.

He grabs a handful of wires and pipes and jerks forcefully.

GAS escapes from the loose pipe.

The Colonel falls back suffocating.

He punches buttons on his suit - NOTHING WORKS!

He falls to the ground.

As he falls, he hits the button on the four-wheeled machine.

THE FLASHING RED LIGHT IS REPLACED BY A STATIC GREEN LIGHT.

The Colonel attempts to forcefully yank off the helmet - NO SUCCESS!

Jandha pushes his face closer to the Colonel's, wearing a grin.

JANDHA

We can't work together. You won't
be here that long.

The Colonel gradually becomes numb.

A SUDDEN LOUD STRANGE ANIMAL CRY breaks through the air!

NOISES OF FLAPPING WINGS!!

A Nunu lands on the rooftop, then grabs Jandha between its
mouth and takes off with him screaming.

The Nunu releases Jandha at a higher altitude.

Jandha screams as he plummets to his death.

A Nunu lands close to the Colonel.

Herod alights and rushes to the Colonel.

He raises the Colonel's numb body and forcefully rips the
glass face guard off.

The Colonel begins gasping.

He slowly opens his eyes.

Herod's blurry face slowly becomes clearer.

HEROD

It's nice to see you again old
friend. It's even nicer that you
too can see me again.

The Colonel smiles, then looks around.

Vorcis arriving on their Nunus - far outnumbering the
rebels - break apart the rebellion.

The Colonel looks up to Herod in a grin.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Old friend, I have an issue to
handle.

INT. OXYGEN SYNTHESIZER CORE - NIGHT

Charlie and Maya emerge from a thin, unlit hallway leading
into a dark ATRIUM lit up only by THE CORE - a MASSIVE,
BRIGHT BLUE LUMINOUS TUBE stretching from the ground to the
sky in the middle of the atrium.

They find themselves on a passageway hundreds of feet above the ground.

The passageway has a steel floor and railings, and it connects the hallway leading to the atrium to the Core in the middle of the atrium.

A balcony with steel floor and railings runs by the wall round the atrium, connecting the other three steel passageways.

A floor above each passageway is an identical passageway.

On the outer wall of the Core is an EXPLOSIVE DEVICE fastened to it with a small red light beeping on it.

It has a timer counting down, with just over fourteen minutes left.

Charlie gets closer to the Core.

Maya reluctantly follows.

BHOJKA (O.C.)
Any closer and it goes off!

They halt jerking their faces over their right shoulder.

Bhojka emerges from the hallway to their right onto the balcony.

BHOJKA
You're not my enemy. None of you are. You can still be a part of this.

He begins walking toward them on the balcony.

CHARLIE
This isn't just about your enemies - this is about your friends as well. Not all of them are our enemies. Some of them care as much about our rights as you do.

He walks unto their passageway and halts to a stop right in front of them.

BHOJKA
Besides your father, who are these "friends"? Even the man in charge of this City said it himself - a creature will never be equals with

(CON'T)

its creator. There's nothing we can do to persuade these people.

MAYA

Seriously, Bhojka, how do you stop that timer from counting down?

BHOJKA

Weren't you listening to anything I just said?

Charlie and Maya glance at each other, then Charlie slowly walks up to Bhojka.

She tackles him to the ground.

Maya rushes in, and with her help, Charlie retrieves a REMOTE DEVICE from him.

She taps a button on it, rushing towards the core.

The timer goes faster.

She taps another button on it.

The timer stops at just under ten minutes.

She and Maya rush to the core and try to figure out how to get the Explosive Device off it.

Bhojka rises to his feet wearing RAGE!

He rushes to Charlie and Maya.

They engage in a fight.

For a while the girls seem to have numbers on their side.

Bhojka soon begins to hand the girls a thorough beating.

The remote device soon falls on the passageway.

He flips them both over the railing.

Charlie hangs on to the railing with a hand and grabs Maya with the other.

Bhojka walks to the remote device and picks it up.

He hits a button on it.

Timer continues countdown!

He walks up to Charlie and Maya, then presses his foot on Charlie's fingers.

Charlie begins to lose her grip.

BHOJKA

For a long time we've all had to watch your kind get preferential treatment from humans. No one else would've offered you a chance to join the movement. I did. This is what I get in return.

He presses down further.

Charlie groans in pain.

A THUNDEROUS PUNCH!

Bhojka falls to the ground dazed and confused.

The Colonel helps Charlie and Maya up.

COLONEL VAUGHN

You two okay?

Maya nods rubbing her palms down her clothing.

Charlie jumps on him in a hug.

Grabbing the remote device, Bhojka gradually gets up to his feet laughing loudly.

BHOJKA

Boss! For your sake, I hope you have all the oxygen you'll even need in that suit. Pretty soon that'll be the only oxygen you can get.

Dankha emerges from behind the Colonel, pointing a boltblaster at the trio.

Dankha walks pass the trio and joins Bhojka between the Core and the trio, all the while pointing the boltblaster at the trio.

COLONEL VAUGHN

I'm on your side, remember? I've always been on your side. I'll always be on your side.

(CONT'D)

I don't like the way your kind are treated any less than you. We can work together. We can unite against the Imperial Authority.

The timer edges closer to zero.

BHOJKA

We were there when the Commander told Jandha equality was not on the table. He calls the shots in Aries, not you.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Not anymore. The Commander is dead. Right now, right here, I call the shots. These are the words of the shot caller, calling the shots.

Bhojka and Dankha glance at each other.

Bhojka gestures to Dankha.

Dankha lowers his weapon.

Bhojka turns off the timer using the remote device.

Two BOLTS GO OFF!

Dankha's head bursts into heavy bleeding.

Bhojka's right arm bursts into heavy bleeding.

Dankha falls lifeless.

Bhojka falls severely injured, groaning in pain.

Bhojka loses the remote device.

He begins to crawl away from Dankha's corpse, still groaning.

FELDERS jumps off the passageway above them and lands on the passageway they are on.

He is encased in an ALPHA 9 SUIT - A SUIT SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER, HEAVIER, MORE WEAPONIZED, AND CONTAINING THICKER AMOUR THAN THE METAL BEAR SUIT.

COLONEL VAUGHN

John! What's going on?

Felders sighs.

He picks up the remote device and punches a button on it to continue the countdown, then he tosses the remote device down into the levels unknown.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

They had a simple job to do. They didn't just lose interest in the job, they decided to jeopardize it.

Bhojka reaches for the boltblaster Dankha dropped when he fell to his death.

He falls on his back and opens fire on Felders.

NO HARM DONE!

Felders turns to Bhojka on the floor and chuckles.

He raises his right hand towards him. A bolt EXPLODES out of his wrist and damages Bhojka's other hand.

Bhojka loses the boltblaster, rolling on the floor, screaming even louder.

Charlie rushes to Bhojka's side on the floor and tries to stop the bleeding.

Felders turns to the others.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

As you can see, I'm all ready for my trip to the Governor in orbit - as the lone human survivor of what happened here today. I've already disabled all the other orbital pods. I just came to make sure the deed was done, so I don't look like an absolute buffoon when I report to the Governor that a rebellion took out the human population in this wretched city. But what's this? I come here and realize that the deed won't be done after all. What a bummer!

The Colonel and Maya stare at him for a short while.

MAYA

Goodness! He's Seth?

CHARLIE

You sent us on that train ride. Then you got Dankha to get us to hack the system, so it could never be tracked to you by the Governor when he sends people down here to investigate.

Felders stares at her in a short chuckle.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

And took care of all the witnesses who weren't in on it.

MAYA

Rebeo!

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

You had a choice. You could've just gone home. But no, you just had to get involved. It's a good thing I was counting on that.

He turns to the Colonel.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

I'm sorry old friend. This wasn't a part of the plan. Well, actually it was, you just weren't meant to know it, nobody was. You were meant to be dead by now, and I was meant to give a report to the Imperial Governor in charge of Mars that this all began with your daughter hacking into Central Defense with the assistance of these over-zealous fools.

COLONEL VAUGHN

Why John? Why?

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

I was a child in the Southern Lands when they came. After the Nuclear War, survivors were scattered into self-governing communities. The Akaesan Empire rose in the North, largely leftovers of a once-formidable military. They were ruthless when they came. They forced me to watch. We've all gotten so carried

(CONT'D)

away by the label 'human' that we forget who the real enemy is. Now we fight for the enemy, because they've graciously bestowed upon us the exalted status of 'human.' We've all forgotten the hatred we all once shared for the Empire, except you Colonel - you never shared that hate because you're a product of the Empire. Well, if humans won't fight the Empire, nonhumans will. They have the numbers, the strength and the intelligence. They just don't know what they're capable of. They're naïve and need to be emboldened. They need a purpose. If a nonhuman rebellion brings down a city of the Empire, nonhumans will suddenly know what they're capable of. To guide this plan to fruition, I must stay alive, and stay hidden. That's why I have to be the only human survivor of Aries. Do you now understand why Colonel?

COLONEL VAUGHN

I can't let you do this John.

Felders chuckles.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

Bobbie, what're going to do?

The Colonel steps forward.

Felders hits him to the ground.

The Colonel gets back on his feet and charges at Felders.

A fight between the Colonel and Felders follows.

With his huge robotic exterior, Felders hands the Colonel a thorough beating, sending him to the brink of unconsciousness.

The Colonel lies on the passageway coughing out blood.

The timer on the explosive device begins to beep, breezing through each of the last 20 seconds of countdown per beep.

Felders raises the Colonel's face as high up into the air as he can.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS
 You'll be the first casualty.
 You'll have a front-row view.
 Consider this my last act of
 respect.

The timer on the explosive device approaches zero.

Maya and Charlie shut their eyes.

The Colonel shuts his eyes in despair.

The timer stops on two.

NOTHING FOLLOWS!!

They all turn to the Core.

TERPT (O.C.)
 There'll be no explosions in here
 today.

Terpt emerges onto the passageway.

Felders drops the Colonel's head and turns to Terpt.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS
 Who the hell are you?

TERPT
 The guy that designed that bomb,
 along with the remote.

Terpt flashes another remote device in his hand.

He too tosses the device down to ground level.

TERPT
 (CONT'D)
 Without the remote, nothing
 happens.

Felders smiles staring at him.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS
 Seriously, who the heck are you?

TERPT
 I'm the guy the Colonel sends in
 when he can't trust anyone else.

(CONT'D)

He couldn't trust Dankha, so he sent me. No one had to know.

Felders raises his wrist to Terpt.

He sighs.

LIEUTENANT FELDERS

Goodbye, nameless intruder!

NOTHING HAPPENS!

Felders looks at his wrist curiously.

TERPT

I've been on to you for a while now - your schemes and plots. I got to know about this suit - how you hacked into its systems and changed things.

Terpt pulls out a little flat WIRELESS CONTROL BOARD WITH A TOUCH SCREEN.

TERPT

(CONT'D)

The thing with breaking in is you can't lock the door behind you, so you leave a huge hole gaping behind you. Anyone else can get in.

Terpt punches a few buttons on the control board.

Felders' wrist drops to his side.

CRACKLING NOISES emanate from the suit.

The entire front of the suit - head trunk and limbs - open and eject Felders.

Felders begins panting, obviously overwhelmed by fear.

He glances around - terror written across his face.

Terpt rushes to Bhojka's side.

Charlie and Maya rush to the Colonel's side.

Terpt tries to stop Bhojka's bleeding.

Charlie cries holding her father's head close to her chest.

The Colonel's breathing gradually stabilizes.

COLONEL VAUGHN
I'm fine Pebbles!

Charlie looks at his face wearing joy.

Bhojka turns to Terpt.

BHOJKA
Is it done?

Terpt nods to him.

Charlie glances at both.

CHARLIE
Is what done?

Terpt exhales.

TERPT
Your friends, they weren't really brainwashed. A low-frequency chip was planted in their brains that shut down certain parts of their brains. I was late to this party because I was frying chips.

Bhojka chuckles, then groans.

Charlie glances at both again.

CHARLIE
You two were in on this?

BHOJKA
I'd never put my people in the line of fire without a backup plan, especially if I've never met the person giving the orders. Jandha had his plans, but so did we. Somewhere in the middle our interests overlapped.

The Colonel slowly sits up.

COLONEL VAUGHN
Really? Somewhere in the middle you all decided to kill all humans?

BHOJKA

No no, just the Commander. That was Terpt's job. My job was to play along until I was sure the Commander was out of the equation.

Felders slowly creeps to the boltblaster discarded by Bhojka.

Maya spots him, and in a swift move she runs to the boltblaster and kicks it to Terpt.

Terpt leaves Bhojka's side and picks up the boltblaster. He then points it at Felders.

The Colonel gets on his feet and walks to Felders lying on the floor.

COLONEL VAUGHN

You'll be locked up for a very long time John, a very long time.

He binds Felders' arms behind his back using a HOLOGRAPHIC RESTRAINER.

Bhojka's breathing becomes heavier.

They all turn to him.

BHOJKA

Victory! Victory! We have victory, finally!

Bhojka takes his last breath.

The air is cold and heavy.

FADE TO:

EXT. MARTIAN MOUNTAIN RANGE - TWILIGHT

Aries glows from a Mountain Top overlooking the City.

CHARLIE (O.C.)

Make no mistake, we're still not humans - not to anyone outside Aries at least.

EXT. GATE OF ARIES - DAY

Humans and Cepgenians work to repair the gate.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
(CONT'D)

Since my father took charge of
Aries, we've learnt to work with
one another.

EXT. ARIES - NIGHT

An item drops from the bag of a human woman.

A nearby Cepgenian picks it up and hands it to her.

She refuses to collect it from him and walks away as though
he has a contagious disease.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
(CONT'D)

Well, for the most part.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

Jeff and Kida wave to Charlie from a distance.

Charlie waves back wearing a smile.

Jeff and Kida turn around and navigate through the crowd
hand in hand.

Charlie heaves a sigh.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(CONT'D)

As for us - we're still adjusting.

Maya shuts her locker door.

She and Charlie also navigate through the crowded hallway.

EXT. MARTIAN MOUNTAIN RANGE - TWILIGHT

Charlie stares at Aries.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

One thing we know for sure is that
the Empire will come to take back
the city. They'll come to take us
back to a time we refuse to return
to. With our newly-found union,
and our allies, WE'LL BE READY!

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END