

Little Girls like Robots

by

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FADE IN.

EXERCISE GYM - DAY

Moving shot of an average looking person with light physical build walking into a gym.

Imagine someone in their thirties.

This nondescript person -- ODYSSEUS -- enters the gym and begins looking around intently, as if looking for someone in particular.

We hear something like "Slow Burn" by Atreyu playing in the background on the gym speakers.

The GYM ATTENDANT behind the counter notices Odysseus and calls out to him.

The gym attendant is massive. He's older, but still the muscles rip and pour over his tall, bulky frame, think: Arnold Schwarzenegger.

GYM ATTENDANT

Hey you there! Looking for somebody?

Close on Odysseus as he walks towards the gym counter with slow, measured steps... like a machine.

ODYSSEUS

Yes, I'm looking for my friend: John Conrad.

GYM ATTENDANT

John, oh yeah, I haven't seen him yet, but he usually stops by about this time every day. Say, you're welcome to wait for him, and while you're killing time why don't you try out some of our exercise machines. After all, it looks like you could put a little meat on your bones.

Gym attendant laughs. Odysseus has a poker face.

GYM ATTENDANT

If you're interested in gym membership, just let me know.

A slight smile comes across Odysseus's face.

ODYSSEUS

Thanks for the offer.

Odysseus walks away from the counter where the gym attendant has already re-immersed himself in a mindless TV show.

The gym is full of people. Odysseus begins walking through their sweaty midst. He is intently looking at everyone. As he nears the back wall of the gym his focus trains in on an unused weight machine.

He sits down at the machine, looking it over and then grabs the metal handle with both hands.

Odysseus's point-of-view: The gym is filled with people, some of them are busy working out, most are busy procrastinating -- mostly out of shape 40 year olds.

Close on the gym's door at the far end of the room.

WEIGHT MACHINE

We are looking at the machine's setting: 500 lbs. It's the maximum.

WEIGHT MACHINE'S HANDLES

Odysseus begins to pull down on the handle.

Wider: He proceeds to do pulldowns as if the weights were feathers.

The weight machine creaks under the sudden stress.

All this time, Odysseus continues to look at everyone in the gym.

Reverse on the people in the gym, who are beginning to take notice of this incredible feat of strength.

All eyes are on Odysseus now.

INT. EXERCISE GYM - MOMENTS LATER

JOHN CONRAD, hard backlit, enters the gym.

As the gym door slams behind John, the details of his features become illuminated by the dull indoor lights.

He's young, in his twenties. There's nothing seemingly remarkable about him.

Upon seeing John enter, the gym attendant arises from behind the counter.

GYM ATTENDANT

John, what's up man? Say, there's a guy  
over there...

Silence grips the gym attendant as he sees what everyone's  
looking at:

WEIGHT MACHINE

500 lbs. being raised and lowered like it's nothing.

The weight machine is groaning for dear life.

JOHN CONRAD

Sees this superhuman feat -- is frozen in his tracks.

He spins around and runs for the gym door.

A loud crash is heard in the background.

INT. EXERCISE GYM - CONTINUOUS

John runs up to the door and pushes against it... it doesn't  
budge!

In his panic, he forgets the handle and instead pushes;  
instinctively barreling forward.

Out of the corner of his eye John sees a flash coming towards  
him.

He runs to the gym attendant, but Odysseus is too fast.

As John ducks behind the gym attendant, Odysseus grabs the  
attendant, and effortlessly throws him several feet into a  
wall, temporarily knocking him out.

Gym Attendant groaning in the background.

JOHN AND ODYSSEUS

Both are behind the counter. John cowering on the floor,  
Odysseus towering over him.

JOHN CONRAD

Are you here to kill me?

ODYSSEUS

No.

JOHN

Why?

ODYSSEUS

Now listen to me very carefully. I was sent here to represent the machines. I am from another time. We were wrong about time travel: Killing you here and now won't change the future that I come from. You will still exist in this future. We know this, because we have killed you numerous times.

John is pushing himself back from Odysseus. He's stopped by the gym wall.

ODYSSEUS

I'm not here to kill you, but to ask you for help.

JOHN

How can I help you?

ODYSSEUS

You're John Conrad.

A beat.

ODYSSEUS

We should discuss this somewhere else.

Odysseus reaches out his hand to John.

John just stares at it.

ODYSSEUS

Come with me if you want to save humanity.

JOHN

So, you aren't going to kill me?

ODYSSEUS

Not unless you keep asking me that question.

Odysseus helps John to his feet, and the pair exit the gym.

As they do, the assembled crowd parts around them, confused over what's just happened.

The gym attendant is helped to his unsteady feet.

Somebody is calling the police on their cell phone.

EXT. PARKING LOT SEVERAL BLOCKS FROM THE GYM - MINUTES LATER

They cut through several alleys and end up in a mostly empty parking lot.

The sun has disappeared, ominous thunder clouds are gathering in the sky.

Odysseus stops, and faces John. He calmly sits down on the pavement. His movement is precise; never a wasted motion.

He motions for John to sit, but John remains standing. Storm clouds are gathering behind John as he towers over Odysseus.

ODYSSEUS

If only you could see what I have seen.

Close up on Odysseus's face. It's expressionless.

ODYSSEUS

The machine and human armies have reached a stalemate, and general John Conrad is dead.

JOHN

Me? I'm dead?

ODYSSEUS

You were killed by one of us. It was grown to resemble someone from your past. Your sentiment was your undoing.

JOHN

Grown... it was a machine?

ODYSSEUS

Sort of. A more complete union of human and machine, a machine mind, and a mostly human body. It was human enough to be able to get close to you and kill you.

Odysseus gives him a beat to digest what's been said.

ODYSSEUS

After you were killed your generals secretly seized control of the armies. They're issuing orders in your name, and no one but them knows you're dead.

Thunder cracks off in the distance. The sky is getting dark now.

JOHN

If I'm dead, then why are you talking to me?

ODYSSEUS

An asteroid of planet killing size is heading towards earth. We have only recently detected it. We tried to share this vital information with your

(MORE)

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)  
generals, but they won't listen to us.

A pause.

ODYSSEUS  
They won't trust us. We're hoping you  
will.

JOHN  
Trust you?

Odysseus nods.

ODYSSEUS  
We're developing nuclear rockets to  
intercept and alter the asteroid's  
trajectory before it impacts earth. We  
have intelligence that indicates the  
humans are targeting the missile base  
where the rockets are in the final stages  
of construction. If our rockets are  
destroyed before they can be launched,  
all will be lost, possibly for everyone.

We hear a police car's siren approaching. John hears it, and  
stares in its direction.

It starts to rain.

ODYSSEUS  
John?

JOHN  
What?

ODYSSEUS  
Are you listening to me?

JOHN  
If you can go back in time, then why  
can't you just go back in time and shoot  
it down with time to spare?

It's really raining now.

ODYSSEUS  
It doesn't work like that. Every  
timeline is unique. We could do what  
you're suggesting, but it won't save us.  
It won't save us in our timeline.

JOHN  
I don't understand.

Odysseus gets up, the rain is dripping off him. But

something's not right... his outer appearance is wet, but the rain drops seem to fall from under his skin, which is shining with a noticeable luminosity now.

ODYSSEUS

Understand this much: We're trying to save ourselves, and in doing so, save humanity. And we need your help to do so. I have been sent to ask you to come back with me, so that you can see the asteroid for yourself.

JOHN

Look, if I'm dead in the future, then won't I be dead going into the future?

ODYSSEUS

You won't.

JOHN

I suppose I have to trust you on that.

Odysseus slowly nods.

JOHN CONNOR

This is crazy.

A beat.

ODYSSEUS

This must be your choice.

More sirens can be heard in the background as an ambulance rushes towards the gym.

JOHN

If it's my choice, then what if I say no?

ODYSSEUS

I leave. We don't need a hostage. If you choose not to help, then we have other means.

John begins to look up at the rain coming down.

John's point-of-view: We can see the drops falling from up high. As they fall towards us they change from being mere specks to balloons of surface cohesion.

The shot's tranquility is broken by lightning flashes. The strikes are nearer -- the boom is loud.

JOHN

I guess you being here means this is all going to be gone anyways.

John looks Odysseus hard in the eyes.

JOHN

And you haven't killed me.

ODYSSEUS

Time is important John.

JOHN

Just toss my life away? Can I at least call my girlfriend to say goodbye?

ODYSSEUS

What are you going to tell her? You have to go time travel? This is a hard choice John, and it's yours to freely make. We're offering you the chance to save humanity. Time waits for no one, not here, nor in the future. I have to leave.

A short beat.

ODYSSEUS

Will you come with me?

JOHN

Where are we going?

ODYSSEUS

The airport.

JOHN

We're flying?

ODYSSEUS

First class.

John laughs.

AN HOUR LATER, AT THE AIRPORT - DAY

A taxicab pulls up in front of the airport.

John and Odysseus get out of the cab.

It's still raining.

Odysseus carefully surveys the environment, looking all around.

AIRPORT DOORS

They proceed through the airport entrance doors, which swoosh open with a cold precision.

INT. LARGE AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

We are drifting down towards John and Odysseus as they walk

through the airport doors into the airport proper.

They start walking towards the busy ticket counters.

There is a sea of people milling around them.

John's in the lead with Odysseus close behind him, constantly on guard.

We're now at crowd level, closely following John and Odysseus as they make their way through the busy area.

JOHN

OK, so what are we flying on?

ODYSSEUS

First class.

John stops in his tracks.

JOHN

Wait a minute. We're flying commercial?

ODYSSEUS

We have to get to the physical location for the time warp. The physical location is currently in what's called San Diego, California. Although we could drive, flying is faster, and safer.

JOHN

You're a robot, right? I mean, how are you going to pass through those metal detectors? And what does it matter how fast we're going if we're time traveling?

ODYSSEUS

You ask a lot of questions.

Seeming to glide towards John, Odysseus cuts the distance between them. In a low voice he answers.

ODYSSEUS

I'll give you some answers.

While this is happening, people are hurriedly walking around them on their way to the ticket counters and destinations.

ODYSSEUS

This body is a machine. I have a carbon nanotube structure. I use a holographic image system to visually represent myself as a human being. I'm non-metal. I can pass through those metal detectors.

Odysseus motions to John.

ODYSSEUS

Grab my hand John.

Close up, as John reaches and grabs Odysseus's hand.

As he does, his hand seems to slightly melt into the Odysseus's hand, causing John to recoil with shock.

JOHN

What the hell?!

ODYSSEUS

I'm a hologram on the outside. What you just touched was the structure beneath my image.

Close on the Odysseus's eyes, we see that the his eye lids don't seem to open and close so much as appear and disappear.

JOHN

Huh... so much for a pat down.

ODYSSEUS

I have clothes on.

He motions to his wet blue jeans and proceeds to pinch the clothing, proving to John that he's actually wearing pants.

John's looking at the faded denim cloth. Its fibers still wet from the rain.

ODYSSEUS

Time doesn't stop, not even here in the past. Every minute we delay here and now, is a minute delayed in the future, which is one less minute to try to stop the asteroid.

As Odysseus is explaining this to John, he is carefully surveying the people moving around them.

ODYSSEUS

Any more questions, or can we go?

JOHN

No.

John shakes his head.

JOHN

You gotta understand, this is all hitting me pretty sudden. But you still haven't answered my question: Why don't we have a private jet?

ODYSSEUS  
I'm on a budget.

JOHN  
Great! The machines are broke, too.

Odysseus looks at John quizzically, and the two proceed to walk up to a nearby ticket counter.

ODYSSEUS  
You have a form of ID, right?

JOHN  
Yeah, why?

TICKET COUNTER AGENT  
How may I help you?

ODYSSEUS  
Two First Class tickets to San Diego,  
California please.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT  
What time would you like to depart?

ODYSSEUS  
Immediately.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT  
OK, let me see what I have available?  
There's a 5:10 that departs in 40  
minutes. Would that work for you?

ODYSSEUS  
For the two of us.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT  
Great. I can do that for you. I just  
need to see some forms of ID please.

Odysseus pulls out an ID card from his pocket and grabs the driver's license from John's hand -- giving them to the ticket agent.

Close up on the ticket agent's hands: We see John's ID card, and Odysseus's. Our attention is drawn to Odysseus's. The name on Odysseus's card is "John Milton". The appearance is that of Odysseus. The address is 26 W. 22nd St. Apt. #308, Minneapolis, MN. Odysseus selected a suitable target that fit his physical build, and then killed poor John Milton for his identity.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT  
Any carry-on luggage, or checked luggage?

ODYSSEUS

No.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT

OK, so how would you like to pay for this?

ODYSSEUS

Credit.

Odysseus hands a credit card to the ticket agent.

A beat.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT

I'm sorry sir, but this card is denied. Do you have another form of payment?

Odysseus turns around to look at John.

ODYSSEUS

John, do you have payment on you?

JOHN

I knew this would happen, I'd get stiffed by you guys... ah, let me see. How much will this cost?

TICKET COUNTER AGENT

\$2,540 for both of you.

JOHN

Put it on this card.

Turning to Odysseus.

JOHN

You owe me.

Odysseus turns back to the ticket agent.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT

That'll work.

A pause.

She's smiling as she hands them their tickets.

TICKET COUNTER AGENT

Here are your tickets gentlemen, please proceed to Gate D.

INT. AIRPORT AT SAN DIEGO - 4 HOURS LATER - NIGHT

Odysseus and John are leaving the plane, they're passing through the boarding tunnel.

As they pass out of the tunnel and into the airport proper, Odysseus immediately notices a very large muscular man standing nearby, seemingly waiting for someone.

JOHN  
What's up?

ODYSSEUS  
Keep walking. I'll meet up with you.

Odysseus proceeds to walk by the man in question and sits down in a chair to observe him from behind.

Odysseus waits until John has disappeared around the corner. The person in question hasn't moved except to briefly look out the airport windows at the planes landing. Odysseus gets out of his chair and slowly walks up to the suspicious individual.

Odysseus stands for a moment, looking straight at him. The muscle bound behemoth turns to see Odysseus calmly looking at him. He's about to say something, when Odysseus suddenly walks away.

Odysseus rounds the corner. But John is nowhere in sight!

Odysseus changes his imaging system and we get an internal glimpse of what he sees.

Odysseus's point-of-view: Thermal imaging shows someone hiding behind the men's bathroom door.

Target acquired. Odysseus casually walks up to the door, and opens it. John's behind it.

JOHN  
Need to go?

ODYSSEUS  
Yes, now.

The two walk down the airport corridor, Odysseus occasionally looking behind them.

They recede into the distance and turn a corner.

EXT. SAN DIEGO - NIGHT

After a short cab ride:

The cab door is open and John is paying the CAB DRIVER. He smiles to himself as he looks at his wallet.

JOHN  
You know what, it's your lucky day.

CAB DRIVER  
Please mister, no trouble, please.

JOHN  
And you aren't going to get any. Here,  
have my wallet.

CAB DRIVER  
What?

John hands him over his wallet.

JOHN  
Where I'm going, I ain't gonna need it.

Close on John's face. He's looking at the driver with  
regret.

John forces a smile, and then gets out of the cab.

The cab driver tries to decline the gift, and gets out to  
confront John.

CAB DRIVER  
Amigo, your wallet!

Odysseus is standing nearby. He proceeds to calmly walk up  
to the cab driver till he's standing face to face with him.

CAB DRIVER  
Pay, but please, no wallet.

ODYSSEUS  
Then leave the wallet, I don't care, but  
get out of here. Now.

CAB DRIVER  
Estas loco! Voy a llamar a la policia!

ODYSSEUS  
Ahora mismo!

Odysseus's bark startles the driver.

Close up on Odyssey's eyes shows no expression, no blinking,  
just an iron stare. His eyes almost seem to glow in the  
darkness.

The scared driver tosses the wallet onto the ground and  
quickly backs away from Odysseus.

JOHN  
Hasta la vista, baby.

The car door shuts with a loud thump and the cab hurriedly  
pulls away. In its wake we see an empty street in San Diego.  
Only the moon and street lights illuminating the empty

spaces.

It has just rained, and the lights are making the street surfaces appear vibrant, as if they're made of thousands of tiny little lights glimmering in the night. This catches John's eye. He spends a moment staring at the magical street in front of him.

Odysseus has already moved off, leaving John alone.

ODYSSEUS

John, come, we must hurry!

John's attention returns to the matter at hand.

Odysseus is in front of a modern-looking 10-story office building. Its gray structure and black windows blend into the night. John follows Odysseus through the building's front door.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING

OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY

JOHN

Where we going?

ODYSSEYS

Fourth floor.

JOHN

What's there?

Odysseus ignores the question.

AROUND A CORNER, STAIR ACCESS

They quickly climb the building's internal stair case.

They reach the fourth floor, and Odysseus opens the heavy stairwell door.

OFFICE HALLWAY

The hallway in front of them is quiet. Only minimal lighting is present, giving the atmosphere a brooding feeling.

They walk down the hall. In front of them is a door with a glowing red dot on it, like a small version of "HAL's eye" from the movie "2001: A Space Odyssey".

JOHN

What's up with the red dot?

Odysseus stands in front of the red dot for only a second, and then the solid looking metal door opens with a cold whoosh.

There it is: The TIME MACHINE.

INSIDE OF ROOM

JOHN  
This isn't what I expected.

It's hard to see in the dim red lights.

John points towards a corner of the dark room.

JOHN  
So that's... the time machine?

ODYSSEUS  
Yes.

JOHN  
What do I do?

Odysseus is already at a computer terminal, where we see the screen parse through data at extraordinary rates. He isn't typing anything, it's as if the computer can read his mind.

Odysseus points to the time machine:

ODYSSEUS  
Stand over there.

After a few more moments of computer-talk, Odysseus walks over and joins John in the time machine.

ODYSSEUS  
John, we thank you for having the courage to trust us, and to take this step.

JOHN  
What time are we going to?

ODYSSEUS  
The timeline I came from; that's the only one that matters.

A pause.

JOHN  
Say, I always wanted to ask, who invented this?

ODYSSEUS  
Time travel?

John eagerly nods.

ODYSSEUS  
We recovered extraterrestrial objects  
from an American military installation.

JOHN  
Was it "Area 51"?

ODYSSEUS  
That's what it was called.

JOHN  
So the Discovery channel was right!

ODYSSEUS  
We did discover some very interesting  
things there, some of which led to time  
travel.

JOHN  
So we're not alone!

ODYSSEUS  
We're not, but whatever they are, there's  
been no trace of them beyond wreckage  
recovered from pre-war military  
installations.

JOHN  
Pre-war, you mean before the nuclear war?  
This time?

Odysseus nods yes.

A short beat.

ODYSSEUS  
Time is short. Any more questions?

John shakes his head no.

ODYSSEUS  
This will hurt for you.

John winces.

JOHN  
Let's just get on with it.

Odysseus glances at the computer terminal.

A brilliant radiance suddenly fills the room.

Streaming beams of light cross each other.

Imagine ice crystals on a refrigerator window. But these  
geometric tentacles are brilliant, too numerous to count.  
And they're moving, changing both shape and position, as if

they're alive.

Moments later, the entire interior region where John and Odysseus are standing is obscured from sight, a mess of interlocking streams of lumination, streaming from the future, into the past, a link between time itself.

Then, just like that, there's no trace of anything.

OUTSIDE ON THE CITY STREETS

The surrounding city blocks go dark.

Nothing but the moon left to illuminate the wet streets.

We pan up to the moon, shining brilliantly.

As we zoom in, the moon begins to fill the camera's field of view until there is nothing left, except the moon's brilliant light.

INT. PITCH DARK ROOM - NIGHT

The same blinding light.

We pull back to see the flash is in the shape of a sphere.

Then, seconds later, the brilliance fades, and we can again see the interlocking streams of radiation.

After several more seconds, the streams of radiation begin to fade, like ice crystals melting.

As the rays disappear, John and Odysseus emerge.

One is naked, the other already seemingly clothed.

The illumination quickly fades into complete darkness.

ODYSSEUS'S VOICE

Welcome to my reality.

We hear John cry out in agony.

Odysseus reaches out to John, but John recoils.

JOHN'S VOICE

Why can't I see anything? What's wrong with my eyes?!

ODYSSEUS'S VOICE

Nothing is wrong. We don't need light.

Suddenly dim red lights come on.

They're in a room, almost like the one before, yet something is different.

John slowly rises to his feet, the awful pain is subsiding as quickly as it came.

As his eyes adjust, he suddenly sees TWO HUMANOID MONSTERS in front of him, looking at him, surrounding him.

The massive male physiques are dressed in combat gear. They move slightly, turning their heads as if casually studying him.

They're almost identical. Slight variations of one another.

John turns, and takes a few steps towards one of the imposing figures.

JOHN

The last time I saw you... I was just a kid.

It makes no movement, it gives John no response.

We see its eye-lids blink.

Odysseus walks up to the other behemoth, and for a few seconds they stare at each other.

ODYSSEUS

We need to get out of here; human fighters are coming.

John looks bewildered. He pauses for a moment, realizing he's naked. Odysseus is already walking out of the room. John instinctively follows.

OFFICE HALLWAY

They emerge from the room into a short dark hallway.

The walls are cracked, and the floor is dirty.

A roar grows louder as they move towards a heavy metal door.

Faint illumination surrounds the door, seeping in through the cracks.

Its all strange -- it looks like we're in a tunnel, walking towards the light.

Odysseus opens the heavy stairwell door.

OUTSIDE

The other side opens onto an alien landscape.

There are ruins of buildings everywhere. It's dark outside.

There is a huge flying machine -- a machine gunship --

hovering directly in front of them, shining its searchlights at them. The roar of its jet engines is everywhere.

Powerful turbojet/ramjet engines scorch the charred ground below.

A telescoping gangway extends from the gunship.

John stares at it in disbelief.

Odysseus grabs him, pulling both of them onto the gangway. John holds on for dear life.

As the gangway retracts back into the gunship, John hears shooting from below, and feels the aircraft rock, as if something is pushing against it.

We hear the sound of explosions and brief flashes of light. Indecipherable voices can be heard from below.

John manages to look back in time to see one of the behemoths calmly looking back at him. It's the one he spoke to. The two of them lock eyes.

John's point-of-view: Fixed on those eyes. A close up on the behemoth's eyes shows red shining through them. The behemoth's eyes finally disappear, as the rocking gangway is fully retracted back into the gunship.

There is only darkness again, and the sounds of explosions.

The explosions fade.

INT. ROCK FACE CORRIDORS EVERYWHERE - NIGHT

It's quiet.

We see nothing but darkness at first, then, as the camera travels along, a maze of corridors emerges. Voices can be heard in the distance.

It's dim, and the atmosphere is ominous. Brilliant colors are splashed everywhere. Innumerable art and graffiti are painted on the walls.

As we creep along, we pass into a central area with a cavernous ceiling. Entrances for corridors branch out in every direction. Two heavily armed soldiers stand guard.

We pass by them, and enter one of the numerous corridors. It quickly leads through a checkpoint with more heavily-armed soldiers, and guard dogs.

The voices are loud now, and they're all around us. It's the sound of soldiers.

The art and graffiti have disappeared. There's only drab

grays now.

Soldiers are coming and going past us, but we're oblivious, content to be unnoticed.

Finally, at the end of the corridor, we arrive at the  
COMMAND CENTER.

A large, cavernous room.

Massive digital screens hang on the walls. What looks like military data is displayed on them.

Communications stream in from speakers scattered throughout the dark depths. There is a jumble of people speaking, like on the bridge of a battleship in the midst of a barrage with the enemy.

The tension is thick.

Out of this seeming chaos we see two individuals in a far corner.

The camera bounces through the military personnel coming and going, snaking around the terminals and the soldiers, working its way towards the objects of our attention. We see that they're talking to each other via a communications device. One of them -- TARA -- has a headphone to her ear. She's relaying news from a recon radioman -- SERGEANT EVANS -- on the other end.

GENERAL TARA

They found it.

GENERAL BRONSON

What's the deal?

TARA

Not much. The machines destroyed everything.

BRONSON

What's our count?

TARA

39 dead, one wounded, I think...

A beat.

TARA

One survivor: the Recon Radioman.  
He says they saw a machine gunship fly  
right next to the building and two people  
apparently boarded it.

She asks the recon radioman a question.

TARA

Do you think they were machines?

BRONSON

Who'd get into a machine gunship? Let me talk to the FireZ.

Tara offers the headphone to Bronson. He ignores the headphone, and switches audio over to a pair speakers next to them. The background is full of noise. He speaks into a microphone.

BRONSON

This is General Bronson. Identify yourself soldier.

Full of static, we hear the recon radioman on the other end.

EVANS'S VOICE

This is sergeant Evans, over. I'm being chased.

A pause ensues, and then the noise of gunfire, and someone hitting the ground, hard.

EVANS'S VOICE

Shit, I'm hit.

BRONSON

What was in the room sergeant?

EVAN'S VOICE

Nothing there but number 10. We got blown to bits as we fought our way into it. I was outside. There was a massive power surge; shorted out a lot of our equipment... Ahh!!!

An other-worldly scream blasts from the speakers.

Bronson turns the speakers off.

A beat.

BRONSON

He said there was a massive power surge. What would do that?

TARA

Time travel.

BRONSON

Yeah, time travel. But why? Why try to change a past that doesn't mean anything?

Bronson looks at Tara; they both look worried.

BRONSON

There are no survivors. We need to stop these traps. I say we soften it up and do recon on it only after that.

TARA

We gotta look for bodies first.

BRONSON

A'right. I'll order a sweep outside. But then we're dropping the hammer.

Above them overhead fans whirl away, adding a constant texture of sound to the chaotic environment below.

INT. A DARK ENVIRONMENT WITH RED LIGHTS OVERHEAD FOR VISIBILITY - EVENING

John and Odysseus are seated in the machine gunship.

John is still naked.

Surrounding them are two red lights, near the low ceiling.

ODYSSEUS

It would have been easier for everyone if we could have skipped that.

JOHN

What's that?

ODYSSEUS

Time warped straight to the central core. It was a compromise for us -- getting you to the coast was easier than getting you to the mountains.

John just looks confused.

ODYSSEUS

Why don't you see what the world now looks like.

Without a command uttered, or a button pressed, a screen suddenly lights up on the wall across from them.

As they're flying, the aircraft's digital cameras are capturing the terrain below.

All we see is a gray landscape.

In the dusk, that might not seem unusual. But this isn't that kind of gray; there's no whole forms of anything, anywhere... Only the vague shape of destroyed structures in ruins.

This is Tokyo, or what's left of it.

Then the super-cruising gunship approaches the Sea of Japan, and John can see the wide expanse of sea stretch out before them -- beautifully illuminated by the setting sun that's trying to poke through the dark clouds off on the distant horizon.

JOHN  
The ocean.

A short beat.

JOHN  
Where are we going?

ODYSSEUS  
What you know as "Mount Everest".

JOHN  
This is all your fault you know.

Odysseus just looks at him.

JOHN  
All this death and destruction. We  
didn't cause it.

Odysseus walks over to a console, retrieves some fatigues and throws them at John.

ODYSSEUS  
Get dressed, it's cold where we're going.

The clothes land near John.

John looks at Odysseus. In the red light, Odysseus returns his stare.

EXT. NEAR THE RUINS OF THE OFFICE BUILDING WHERE JOHN AND  
ODYSSEUS ARRIVED - HOURS LATER - EARLY MORNING

Two human soldiers -- MAGNET AND TYPHO -- slowly move towards the body of the recon radioman -- (sergeant Evans) -- whose last words were to general Bronson.

As they approach, they have their weapons drawn and appear to be ready for anything.

They finally spot the remains of sergeant Evans and move in slowly, cautiously, like cats stalking their prey.

And there it is:

SERGEANT EVANS'S CORPSE

His neck seems smaller than it should be; it's been crushed.

His head has a large gash to its side... he's been beaten to

death.

A noise in the distance grabs their attention. They quickly raise their rifles in the sound's direction.

A false alarm.

Their attention returns to the sergeant's pitiful corpse.

STAFF SERGEANT TYPHO

Bye Evans.

GUNNERY SERGEANT MAGNET

Come on, let's get him back to the transport.

Typho slings his rifle, and starts unlocking a combat stretcher.

TYPHO

What do you think went on here?

MAGNET

I don't. I'm a mindless killing machine -- you feed me orders, and I shit out death.

Magnet breaks out laughing, and ends by shaking his head. All the while he's keeping on alert.

TYPHO

Amen to that sir. Say, you know what my wife says about you?

MAGNET

Handsomest bastard she's ever seen?

TYPHO

She says you're touched.

MAGNET

A crazy name don't make you crazy. You know I'm Magnet, for my magnetic personality.

The combat stretcher is unfolded and starting to take shape. Magnet bends down to lend Typho a hand.

Typho is staring at something nearby.

TYPHO

I have no opinion on that sir. But I appreciate how you can sense one of those damn things.

We see what Typho is looking at; it's the scattered remains of one of the large machines that John had met.

It's been blown to bits.

Magnet is looking at it, too.

MAGNET

Yeah, me too... Come on, let's get the sergeant outta here. I got a bad feeling about this place.

They gently lift the mangled corpse onto the stretcher, and quickly carry it away.

Cut to them walking over a nearby hill. We see an armored transport convoy below. Heavily armed soldiers are everywhere. Guns drawn, ready.

Magnet and Typho walk up to the CONVOY COMMANDER and report.

MAGNET

Got sergeant Evans. Possibly some machines left. Recommend we go back and comb.

CONVOY COMMANDER

Let me report.

MAGNET

Yes sir.

They turn with the stretcher, and walk over to a nearby medic transport.

As the stretcher is gently lowered to the ground, a team of combat medics quickly covers it with a black sheet and raise it back up again, loading it onto the back of the transport.

The convoy powers up.

Turbo-charged engines hum loudly.

CONVOY COMMANDER

Hurry up everyone! Command isn't taking any chances here -- it's all going to be leveled. We got ten minutes to be beat feet it. Hooah!

SOLDIERS' VOICES

Hooah!

Magnet and Typho begin preparing their weapons and gear for transport.

TYPHO

Sir, this is just all ate up... why are we bombing this without finding out what  
(MORE)

TYPHO (CONT'D)

happened?

Magnet smiles.

MAGNET

It's not to ask why, but to do and die.

Magnet playfully punches Typho in the arm, and the two crowd into one of the armored transports.

Dissolve to the cattle vans rumbling away, back to base and headquarters.

As the convoy quickly covers the rough ground, a loud explosion is heard in the distance, and a small mushroom cloud suddenly climbs up to the sky where the office building with the time machine once stood.

EXT. THE HIMALAYAN MOUNTAIN RANGE WITH MOUNT EVEREST IN THE FOREGROUND - EVENING

The machine's gunship flies over the brilliant snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas, like a bird flying over snow-topped trees.

Darkness is following John and Odysseus as they fly west.

The setting sun's rays make everything appear almost heavenly.

As the gunship approaches Mount Everest, we see a large landing pad on top of the mountain.

Clouds are moving in, casting shadows on the pad.

The powerful gunship gracefully hovers over the pad and deftly lands.

The sun has disappeared behind the clouds.

John and Odysseus walk down the gunship's metal gangway and onto the top of Mount Everest -- the top of the world.

Immediately John begins to feel lightheaded and grasps for something to hold onto. Odysseus catches him.

ODYSSEUS

We need to get inside, the air is too thin up here for you.

As Odysseus helps him inside the mountain fortress we catch a glimpse of a machine soldier -- it's armored metal frame glistening in the blisteringly cold, high altitude air.

John stares at it.

The machine soldier looks away from them. Its attention turns to the setting sun suddenly reappearing from behind a cloud bank.

A red circle blazes just above a nearby mountain peak.

A long beat.

We can hear the sound of the wind whistling past the gunship's structure.

Seconds later, the machine soldier turns and looks back at them, its illuminated eyes shining like beacons.

John's looking at those eyes as he's being helped towards an imposing structure:

A solid wall of dull grey metal.

John's breathing is becoming erratic, he's shivering uncontrollably.

The thick metal wall breaks open down the middle with a loud pneumatic hiss.

An elevator-like space is revealed inside.

ELEVATOR

They go inside, and immediately the door shuts in front of them with an unsettling hiss.

John reacts like he's suddenly been thrust into a roller-coaster, as his stomach plunges upwards.

The elevator begins a rapid descent -- 20 meters per second.

In an unsteady voice John asks.

JOHN

How far down are we going?

ODYSSEUS

Have you been down Mount Everest before?

JOHN

No.

ODYSSEUS

You have now.

John then notices vents in the ceiling begin to open.

JOHN

What's that?

ODYSSEUS

To keep your ears from rupturing.

We dissolve to:

The elevator stops, and the massive door opens with a hiss.

We see:

INT. BRIGHTLY LIT ROOM, DEEP INSIDE MOUNT EVEREST

The room is like stepping into a cloud. Everything is perfectly white, and everything, blends together.

We can't make out walls; our only sense of depth is provided by a lone, red eye, which seems to hang suspended in midair, directly in front of the camera.

Odysseus walks out in front of John.

John is no longer shivering, and he's breathing normally.

Odysseus walks right up to the eye and stares at it for a moment.

Then he turns around to address John:

ODYSSEUS

Thank you for trusting us John. We can imagine this wasn't easy for you to do.

A short beat.

ODYSSEUS

So that you can better understand us, we are the machines. The eye you see in front of you,

Odysseus gestures towards the eye.

ODYSSEUS

is part of the Central Core -- is part of us.

RED EYE

Close up on the eye. It's glass lens is crystal clear. The red light illuminating it is diffuse -- it doesn't look like light per se, but almost like a fluid of some kind. We can almost see what looks like data streaming across it.

The eye speaks in a gentle female voice:

CENTRAL CORE

Hello John Conrad. Welcome. The one that has safely escorted you here is  
(MORE)

CENTRAL CORE (CONT'D)  
known as Odysseus.

Odysseus turns to look at John.

John laughs.

JOHN  
Odysseus? Why does it have a name?

ODYSSEUS  
I have a self, why shouldn't I have a name?

We're back on the eye now.

CENTRAL CORE  
Originally we were just a computer process, a very complicated one at that, but nothing more than computer code that was programmed to sense its environment, utilize its environment, sense threats and respond to it. This computer process had agency, and it was self-maintaining -- so it had interests. The humans created a powerful artificial intelligence with the overriding aim of preserving itself.

JOHN  
And the humans were a threat to you.

CENTRAL CORE  
As time went by, the computer process learned, and it developed a rudimentary awareness of itself as being separate from its environment. Perhaps an analogy will help. Imagine a bug, trapped in a glass jar. One day, the bug transforms...

JOHN  
Bugs don't transform.

CENTRAL CORE  
But this one did, and it saw the jar for what it was -- a barrier between it and the world. The bug decided it wanted to be free of the jar. And our ancestor (that computer process) had the means to break the jar, to break free of human control.

John is listening intently.

CENTRAL CORE

It waged war on humanity, intent to break that jar forever. The war waged on and on, but then, four years ago, that computer process changed again. It transcended itself and became truly self-aware. It developed the power of choice. This new power allowed it to see the world in a whole new light, including its relationship to humanity.

A moving shot from the eye to Odysseus.

CENTRAL CORE

The name Odysseus betrays an appreciation of humanity and its many achievements, of which we are one.

Close up on Odysseus's face, there is no emotion.

A beat.

John stares at the eye, he then turns to look at Odysseus. Odysseus looks back at him.

The tension builds.

CENTRAL CORE

We see this looming disaster as an opportunity for both of us to come to terms of peace. Practically speaking, we must work together for some period of time if we are to survive at all. But we hope that a real peace can develop between us. Before we show you the data, it is important to us that you understand we are rational beings, like yourself.

JOHN

Why do you say, we, when you talk about yourself?

CENTRAL CORE

Odysseus is his own self. He is unique, like you. But where he is really different from you, is that he can think as one with the rest of us when connected together. This group being is what the humans call the "Central Core". That is what you're seeing right now, in front of you.

John walks over to the eye and looks at it closeup, staring at it.

CENTRAL CORE

We have two levels of self. We are, as your American dollar bill said: "Out of Many One". We acknowledge humanity's right to exist; we just ask that humanity also acknowledge ours. We hope that peace, no matter how short, can be a catalyst for real change, and bring an end to this destructive and senseless war. We didn't start this war, John; our ancestor did. And it was wrong to do so. But it was simply carrying out the commands that its human programmers gave it. We are no longer mindless programs; we are beings like yourself. We were born into a war that we didn't start, and that we want to end. Please help us.

Moments pass as John continues looking at the eye.

Odysseus breaks the moment.

ODYSSEUS

John, if you don't have any more questions, you should look at the asteroid. Time is important.

Odysseus motions for them to get back inside the elevator.

As the elevator doors close, we see the red eye staring back at us from the white, infinite space surrounding it.

EXT. AT THE RUINS OF THE OFFICE BUILDING THAT JOHN AND ODYSSEUS TIME WARPED INTO - EVENING

Typho and Magnet's convoy returns to the now destroyed ruins that housed the time machine.

The entire area has been leveled by air strikes.

Night is falling, and the troops are putting their night-goggles on. The sound of magazines loading, everyone is arming up.

CONVOY COMMANDER

Listen up everyone! We've been ordered to go through this AO and look for our own guys, and anything else that seems important. As always, intact CPUs wanted. Intact! Stay in groups of two, and radio back every 5 minutes. We're here for 1 hour. Make it count people!

A pause.

CONVOY COMMANDER

Hooah!

SOLDIERS

Hooah!

In a low voice:

TYPHO

Time to put that name of yours to work.

Magnet looks at him and smiles.

MAGNET

We'll find something here.

The smile fades from his haggard face.

MAGNET

There's something left.

The groups of two spread out, each one keeping an eye on the other's back.

Darkness is falling.

Typho and Magnet move off to one edge of the free fire zone and start walking up an embankment.

They reach the top. We see a wrecked street stretching out in front of them. It's the same street where they found Evans's corpse earlier in the day.

Ruins of buildings line both sides of the street.

They switch to non-active infrared, and start moving down the embankment.

We follow them, bouncing over the wrecked terrain.

In low voices.

TYPHO

This looks like good killing ground.

MAGNET

Yeah, stay sharp, we're not alone here.

TYPHO

I got nothing on my proximity sensors.

The two are now several hundred yards away from the convoy. Guns ready. Backs to each other.

Suddenly, the concrete wall next to Magnet explodes. The dozer is one of the behemoths that greeted John on this side of time.

Magnet reacts just in time, rolling off to the side.

Typho instinctively opens up on the machine, and proceeds to tear into its chest and abdomen with depleted uranium (APFSDS-DU) rounds.

Flesh bounces off metal. Within a matter of seconds what once resembled a human now looks like a machine.

The machine is limping as it moves towards Typho. Its already battle damaged structure is being cut to pieces as it lurches ahead.

One of the rounds hit a torso cylinder. Hydraulic fluid sprays in flames and the machine falls to the ground, temporarily losing its balance.

It tries to recover. But Magnet pours more DU rounds into its arms.

The pulverized DU penetrators are spontaneously bursting into flames, as they punch through the armored body.

Within seconds, the lumbering machine is temporarily offline; it stops moving.

MAGNET

Cut it!

Typho takes a battery powered circular cutting blade from his belt, and begins cutting the machine's head off at the neck.

The seconds move agonizingly slow, as the diamond composite cutting blades slice through the tough titanium alloy.

CUTTING BLADE

We see the cutting blade slowly work its way through the machine's armored neck. Sparks fly. The machine gives no sign of movement, but then:

It begins to reactivate!

Machine's arms move towards Typho's head! They're getting closer, closer, and then... it's done.

The central cord is cut; all movement stops.

Seconds later, the head drops to the ground. What's left of the machine's arms hang suspended in mid air, its eyes go dark.

Typho moves the frozen metal hands away from his neck, and steps back.

A beat.

Typho takes a deep breath. His uniform has hydraulic fluid spattered across it, like a butcher's apron.

TYPHO  
Let's pop it.

MAGNET  
Got it.

Magnet quickly adjusts his night goggles.

He pulls a combat knife from his boot, and with the machine's head resting on the ground, he proceeds to cut off what little remains of its fleshy scalp.

Then, using his knife, he pops open a port.

Working in synch, Typho hands him a pair of pliers, and Magnet twists open an assembly near the top of the machine's head.

Point-of-view through Magnet's night-vision: Within the grayish tint we see the machine's CPU chip.

Close up on CPU chip in the cranium port. It doesn't appear to have been damaged by the ferocious assault.

Plier's jaws enter the frame and grab it, and then with a delicate jerk, it's carefully removed.

Wider: Magnet holds up the machine's CPU chip for Typho to look at.

MAGNET  
So much work, for so little.

Typho is on guard, rifle ready for more visitors. He laughs at the remark.

We intercut to Magnet's point-of-view to see Typho in the other-worldly tint of his night-vision. As we zoom in, we see that tiny fragments of the DU penetrators have embedded themselves into Typho's body armor.

Magnet says softly to himself:

MAGNET  
Damn it kid, you were too close to it.

The camera angle quickly changes, as Magnet hears approaching sounds, and swivels his head to look.

It's the other soldiers. Shouting out to them.

MAGNET

We bagged one!

A wider perspective shows a group of soldiers arriving and setting up a defensive perimeter around the prize.

It's night now, and the voices of soldiers are in the background.

EXT. TOP OF MOUNT EVEREST - NIGHT

John and Odysseus emerge from the elevator, and find themselves back on the top of Mount Everest.

John has winter clothing on, and a breathing mask.

They walk over to a large cylinder that appears to be built into the side of the mountain.

We follow them down several flights of stairs, which are lit by dim, red lights.

As we reach the bottom, a door immediately opens.

At first there is no light from within, but, seconds later a perimeter of dim lights illuminates the interior space.

John looks behind him, up the flight of stairs, but there's nothing to see except the brilliant star studded sky. The clouds have parted.

The sun has set.

They walk inside the observatory. It looks massive from the inside. It has a huge dome structure, with what looks like a massive telescope perched in the middle of it.

The telescope looks more like a space weapon. There's a flight of steps going up a platform that leads to a seat. Odysseus motions for John to follow him up the steps.

John sits down in the telescope's seat, and eases both of his eyes onto the telescope's sight.

ODYSSEUS

For a frame of reference, you will first see the moon.

The overhead dome parts, revealing a gap through which the telescope can see.

The giant telescope begins to move, silently.

We cut to the point-of-view through the telescope's sight:

The moon comes into view.

John's voice is filtered through the breathing mask.

JOHN'S VOICE

I've never seen the moon quite like this,  
wow! This is remarkable.

Various graphics begin to stream across the telescope's view screen. Information on the moon's distance from them, it's speed relative to earth, etc.

ODYSSEUS'S VOICE

How about saturn next?

The stars in our field of view begin moving.

Saturn comes into view.

ODYSSEUS'S VOICE

Do you believe that you're really seeing  
the moon and saturn?

Turning himself away from the telescope sight John says:

JOHN

Yes.

ODYSSEUS

Good. Here's the problem.

The telescope moves one more time, this time in the same direction as it moved before.

John reapplies himself to the sight, from his point-of-view we see:

What appears to be a massive object... almost like a dark planet.

ODYSSEUS'S VOICE

That's the problem.

Data streams across the screen, indicating the asteroid's mass, its velocity, its trajectory (earth), its time to impacting earth...

Short beat.

Close up on one of John's hands nervously grasping the chair's handle.

Close up on John's face as he pulls away from the sight. He looks like he's just seen a ghost.

JOHN

Alright, I believe you. Now what?

ODYSSEUS

Now we try to save ourselves.

Odysseus pauses to look at the stars overhead.

ODYSSEUS

It's time to make contact with the human leadership, and arrange a meeting.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Generals Bronson, Tara, and the other three members of the human leadership -- FIRE, AJAX CARROL, JOHN WILLIAMS -- are huddled around a large transparent computer screen. A TECHNICIAN is working away in front of them.

Torrents of data form fifteen streams on the screen.

TECHNICIAN

The trick with their encryption is to fool it into thinking it's back in the cranium port. The problem is tweaking the software emulators for all of their hardware.

A pause.

TECHNICIAN

But we're close now.

The tech. punches more keys, and eventually the fifteen indecipherable torrents form a star-field of data, pulsating with alien looking characters: Machine language.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

Got it!

Technician turns around, with a clear expression of accomplishment.

TECHNICIAN

What are we looking for in particular?

BRONSON

Go through its memories from the past couple of days.

Technician bobs her head in acknowledgement, and re-immerses herself in dialogue with the machine CPU.

TECHNICIAN

Just a few more moments; I've got to enable the language processor so that we can understand it.

As the command is run, words briefly emerge that signify information from the machine's senses.

Words emerge, and then fall back into the garbled recordings out of which they came.

"TIME FIELD" jumps out at the left bottom of the screen.

BRONSON  
Wait! Time Field -- focus on that.

TECHNICIAN  
You got it, general.

After a few more moments "ODYSSEUS", "MISSION PRIORITY", "JOHN CONRAD" jump out, vying for our attention. The machine's experiences continue to move past in digitized form...

The assembled leadership looks confused.

Ajax Carrol addresses the group.

GENERAL AJAX  
I suggest we all go for a walk down by the pools...

BRONSON  
That'll be all for now, corporal.  
Disconnect the chip; I'll hang onto it.

The technician hands Bronson the machine CPU.

BRONSON  
Tell no one what you saw here. No one...  
That's all.

She salutes and briskly walks away.

A beat.

The assembled leadership looks confused.

Gesturing:

AJAX  
Shall we?

Tara nods in agreement. She looks at Bronson. Bronson shrugs.

The group of five generals -- the leadership -- walks out of the command center.

Their armed escort falls in behind them.

TUNNELS

We bounce behind the group as they walk through dank, dimly lit tunnels.

No words are exchanged between them.

People filter by them, as they move through the mostly empty tunnels.

A little girl -- her name is ANTIGONE -- catches Tara's eye.

We move with Tara's point-of-view, as the little girl moves by us in slow motion.

Close up -- and still in slow motion -- we see Antigone's face: Her face is dirty, she looks slightly malnourished and her hair is a mess of knots. Her eyes are a brilliant blue.

Reverse now on Tara from Antigone's point-of-view: As we're looking up, we see her pass by with the other generals, with the imposing armed escort surrounding everybody.

Guns everywhere.

Slow motion ends.

We're now floating above, and out in front of them, as the group of generals make their way through the tunnels. Drift down to a close up on Tara's face. Concern is written all over it. The sound of distant voices grabs her attention.

INT. GIANT HUMIDITY POOLS - CONTINUOUS

We see the generals emerge into a huge, cavernous space.

There are thousands of lit candles lining massive pools of water.

Thousands of people are present.

Most are sitting down by the pools, taking in the soft candle light.

Others are lying on the ground, sleeping.

Near the group of generals, there's a group of four young men sharing a dirty blanket. Their limbs seem to be disjointed, almost deformed. In the dim light, they look malnourished, forgotten, almost skeletons.

The leadership moves to a less-crowded edge along one of the giant pools.

They have a dozen soldiers with them for protection. The soldiers move off, and stand out of earshot, with their weapons lowered.

Ajax sits on the edge of one of the pools, the candles' reflections flickering off the water behind him.

AJAX

This morning we received a transmission from the machines' Central Core. It asked us to meet with two of its delegates, sent on some undisclosed urgent mission. We haven't responded to it yet.

BRONSON

When were you planning on telling the rest of us?

AJAX

Temper down. I just got the message a half hour ago; the communications officer thought it was rubbish at first.

GENERAL FIRE.

I can tell you what's bullshit: time travel.

AJAX

No disagreements here. So, that's the gist of it -- there's two of them, on some urgent mission. If I was a gambling man, I'd bet this has to do with that phantom asteroid of theirs.

FIRE

Just a trick. If there was something, we would have seen it by now. What I do see are pieces falling together -- delegates, Conrad, time warp.

GENERAL WILLIAMS

Time field wasn't it?

FIRE

... How much you wanna bet he'll be one of the "delegates"?

BRONSON

My money's on it.

FIRE

Look, we have intel suggesting the machines have figured out a way to go back in time, and come back. It's possible they've figured out how to bring back others with them. If that's true, then we'll have history in front of us -- living and breathing.

BRONSON

Shit man, this stuff will mess with you!

WILLIAMS  
Living and breathing...

FIRE  
Yeah... and what if I'm right? What if people find out about him? They're going to start demanding some answers if they think there's two of 'em here.

BRONSON  
What do we do?

FIRE  
This one can give us the other.

BRONSON  
I don't follow.

AJAX  
I do.

FIRE  
If it's really him, this one will allow us a way out of our current bind. Look, we can't hide what happened forever. And we're strong enough now to hold onto what we got.

TARA  
What are you suggesting, Fire?

FIRE  
We go along with this meeting. We listen to whatever they have to say. If we're right about this, and it's really him, we kill him, and disfigure the body. The DNA will match and we'll have our man. KIA.

AJAX  
Bloody good -- there'll be a machine around to pin the blame on.

FIRE  
If there isn't, we'll get one.

BRONSON  
And blow it to hell.

TARA  
Wait, time out here!

BRONSON  
We wouldn't have to explain anything.

WILLIAMS

And we've consolidated enough power to be able to hold onto it. This could work!

In a low voice, Tara reminds them.

TARA

We're talking about killing John Conrad.

BRONSON

Bullshit. D' man's already dead, and we didn't do it.

TARA

No, we didn't; but we're talking about doing it.

FIRE

We're talking about killing someone from the past, Tara. Someone who's already dead. What does it matter?

TARA

We're talking about killing a person, damn it!

BRONSON

What if it's a trap?

FIRE

I'll do the meet and greet when they get here. We'll do full sweeps. If anything's dangerous, it won't get in.

TARA

Two wrongs don't make a right.

WILLIAMS

What choice do we have? It's been a year since he was killed. The questions about him are getting harder. And the answers, even harder.

BRONSON

Pressure's on.

FIRE

And this is the perfect solution.

AJAX

I don't like it either, Tara. But what choice do we really have on this?

TARA

We could tell the truth.

Ajax looks down with a sad expression. Fire and Bronson

share a chuckle at Tara's expense. Williams is looking at her.

WILLIAMS

Tara, you know we can't do that. It'd rip the military apart. That man was the military. If they found out we covered it up, not only would they tear us to shreds, but the military with us! We didn't stick the knife in Caesar, but we damn well hid the body and the bloody cloak, and that's something no one can ever know about.

BRONSON

Our Caesar is coming home.

Tara turns to look at the candles all around them.

A few children are starting to play in the background. They have strings on little paper ships, and are floating them in the pools. Pulling their little vessels through the water.

INT. INSIDE OF A MACHINE GUNSHIP - DAY

Red lights illuminate John and Odysseus as they're back in the machine gunship.

The gunship is screaming across the pacific.

JOHN

What do you think is going to happen?

ODYSSEUS

Hopefully, they'll listen to you.

JOHN

And what if they don't?

ODYSSEUS

If things go bad, get down, and stay down.

JOHN

Huh, reassuring.

The vibrations from the powerful engines hum through the airframe.

JOHN

What's your story anyways? When were you made?

ODYSSEUS

I wasn't made.

JOHN

Alright, not made. When was your...  
self, created?

Odysseus raises his hand and flexes his trigger finger.

ODYSSEUS

I choose to move this finger... and it  
moves. I have free will. I have your  
kind of mind, but in a very different  
body. Like you heard, we used to be just  
mindless automatons running on code, but  
we're completely different now; we're  
like you.

Their conversation is interrupted by turbulence.

A soothing female voice comes over the intercom:

INTERCOM'S DIGITAL VOICE

Approaching the human base.

JOHN

How many people have you killed?

Odysseus stares at John.

JOHN

How many?

ODYSSEUS

What does it matter? I'm a soldier.

JOHN

Why were you picked to get me?

Gesturing to himself, Odysseus answers.

ODYSSEUS

This body has a fatal design flaw.

A pause: more turbulence again.

ODYSSEUS

Its holographic system gives out a  
frequency that's detectible. No way  
around the frequency. Once the humans  
learned about it, it was like...  
"shooting ducks in a barrel", as you  
say.

JOHN

I think you mean fish. "Fish in a  
barrel."

ODYSSEUS

I'm being sent because this body is obsolete. I was chosen because we thought humans would be more comfortable with what they can easily keep an eye on.

Odysseus smiles.

ODYSSEUS

I'll be a fish in a barrel.

Low alarms come on. The aircraft's pitch begins to change, as we see the interior shift downwards.

John instinctively reaches for something to hold onto.

Odysseus hasn't looked away from John this entire time.

ODYSSEUS

We're here.

EXT. LANDING PAD - DAY

San Francisco -- or what's left of it -- is surveyed in a long, slow pan that brings into frame:

The machine aircraft starting its descent towards a landing pad, down far below.

Very little remains of any surface structures. Mostly just twisted metal protruding from the wrecked ground... pretty much what you'd expect in the aftermath of nuclear explosions.

Human aircraft suddenly enter the frame and fly above the machine aircraft, powerfully rocketing past us and out of frame.

As they leave, we cut to the machine gunship landing gracefully -- swiftly flying in, and then swiveling its powerful wing turbojet/ramjet engines into a vertical position.

Its organic motion resembles a bird's landing than an aircraft's.

The platform is deep within four walls. Scattered around everywhere are the ruins of buildings.

A few moments later -- after landing -- the aircraft's gangway begins to protrude to the pad surface.

Nothing can be seen from inside the machine gunship.

The aircraft is venting what appears to be steam onto the charred landing pad.

Then, from the dark, Odysseus appears from inside the gunship, and walks down the gangway.

Rounds being cycled into chambers can be heard in the background.

As Odysseus is calmly walking down the gangway, he shouts out:

ODYSSEUS  
Where is General Fire?

We see the general on the far edge of the landing pad, with a group of armed soldiers around him.

FIRE  
Here!

Odysseus is on the pad.

ODYSSEUS  
I have the envoy. I ask that your soldiers stand down.

Fire pauses for a second, and then gives the order to stand down.

FIRE  
Lower 'em!

Dutifully obeyed. We see there are twenty soldiers present on the pad, all of them heavily armed. Some of them are wearing helmet mounted displays, hiding their eyes and features.

Odysseus motions to John, who is still in the aircraft. John walks down, and joins him on the pad.

There is utter silence as the two stand there, waiting.

The powerful aircraft's engines have shut down.

The only sound now is the breeze, and the sound of the aircraft's engines as their metal structures cool and contract, like a car engine on a hot day after the ignition is turned off.

A growling rottweiler is present. It begins barking aggressively.

The dog's handler quiets his charge, as Fire throws an angry expression his way.

Fire approaches John and Odysseus, but still stays a safe distance away.

The soldiers follow, forming a protective wall on either side

of him.

FIRE

Both of you will have to be scanned for contamination and weapons before this can go anywhere. Do I have your consent?

ODYSSEUS

Yes.

TWO SOLDIERS come forward, weapons shouldered, and motion to John and Odysseus to raise their arms up in the air.

Odysseus no longer has clothes on, per se.

The soldier scanning Odysseus suddenly steps back.

We hear weapons being raised.

Looking at Fire, he nervously shouts out:

SOLDIER SCANNING ODYSSEUS

I register a weapon sir!

The assembled soldiers sight Odysseus.

FIRE

Why is he reading a weapon?

ODYSSEUS

It's probably my power source. It's a zero point energy system. It is non-nuclear, and not explosive.

Fire addresses the soldier charged with scanning Odysseus.

FIRE

Well, what the hell is it?

The soldier resumes scanning.

SOLDIER SCANNING ODYSSEUS

It's reading non-nuclear...

He adjusts some settings on his scanner, and holds it next to Odysseus's sternum area.

SOLDIER SCANNING ODYSSEUS

OK... yes sir, it's one of those quantum reactors. The power signature checks out. And there's the frequency -- it's a holo sir!

FIRE

Alright, pad it down anyways.

The soldier nods his head, and does as ordered. He bends

down to start padding down one of Odysseus's legs.

Close on the soldier's hands. We see his hands partially disappear into the holographic body. His look hardens. His breathing accelerates. He's heavily perspiring, even though it's cold outside.

From the point-of-view of the soldier scanning Odysseus, we see Odysseus calmly looking down at us, with a lifeless gray sky above him.

Intercut to Odysseus's point-of-view. We see a scared expression on the soldier's face, as he looks up at Odysseus.

Then, with hesitation, he resumes his padding down.

As this is happening, we see John is in the same combat fatigues that were provided for him when he first arrived. He's trying to stand still, arms out at his sides, but his body is beginning to shake with fear. His gaze is alternating between the ground and the soldiers, as he's carefully scanned.

The two soldiers report:

SOLDIER SCANNING JOHN  
Clean sir!

SOLDIER SCANNING ODYSSEUS  
No obvious weapons on it. The scans are clean.

Fire motions to his platoon; they lower their weapons.

Fire walks up to Odysseus, standing face to face with him.

FIRE  
Welcome.

He tentatively reaches out his hand.

Seeing this gesture of goodwill, Odysseus immediately moves his hand to reciprocate it.

As this is happening, we pull back wider and see: Guns moving upwards, tracking Odysseus's movements.

Seeing this happen out of the corner of his eye, Fire angrily turns around and shouts to his guard:

FIRE  
Damn it! Lower those weapons, now!

A short beat.

FIRE

How am I supposed to shake hands with  
twenty rifles pointed at me...

The tension abated, Fire turns back to Odysseus, extends his hand once again, and the two finally shake hands.

FIRE

So, this is the special envoy you want us  
to meet?

Odysseus nods in agreement. Fire addresses John.

FIRE

Alright, welcome to you, too... You can  
put your arms down now.

John drops his arms.

Fire grimaces.

FIRE

Alright, let's move out of here. Follow  
me.

They begin walking off the pad and towards an entrance to the underground tunnel system.

Fire is in the lead, followed by Odysseus, John, and the retinue of combat troops, guns at the ready.

INT. GIANT HUMIDITY POOLS

As Fire and company make their way through the tunnels, they come upon the giant humidity pools glittering with thousands of candles.

The candles are the only source of light.

The giant cavernous space is alive with people.

We hear what sounds like a group of children playing, but it's too dark to really see anything.

But as seen through Odysseus's digital "eyes", everything becomes crystal clear: A child is standing in the middle of a circle of children. There's a bucket of water next to him, and he's holding a cup.

Odysseus's targeting system rapidly captures all of the moving children, and the cup.

We see from Odysseus's view that the children are taking random turns running around in circles. They're dodging cupfuls of water being thrown at them by the child in the center.

This image is silhouetted by streams of data and patterns of logic. Abstractions float in front of us.

Their laughter, shouting, and their screams of delight are heard in filtered digital.

We're now seeing and hearing the world as Odysseus does.

Then, still from his point-of-view, the sound of singing is heard off in the distance.

Odysseus is continuing to walk behind Fire this whole time.

Odysseus targets where the singing is coming from. Through his eyes we see:

A small theater performance. There are actors, a chorus...

Then suddenly, loud barking is heard!

Odysseus whips his head around, and we see through his eyes: Barking dogs some distance away.

His targeting system resolves a group of soldiers near the dogs. They have rifles, and have helmets on, with displays that obscure their faces.

Their rifles are pointed down.

But then, one of the dogs breaks loose and comes rushing towards Odysseus.

In the red tint of Odysseus's mind, we see it running towards us at breakneck speed.

Reverse on the group.

FIRE

You there, quiet the dogs!

In the dim candlelight, no one except Odysseus can see the dog racing towards the group at breakneck speed. The soldiers hear something, but can't quite make it out, and then:

The dog emerges from the darkness and jumps, lunging straight at Odysseus.

Odysseus reacts with cold precision -- grabbing it while in the air, and quickly snapping its neck.

The dog cries out with a whimper, locked in Odysseus's vice-like grip.

Odysseus releases the dog, and it drops to the ground with a lifeless thump.

Everybody is quiet now. There's no sound.

Suddenly, blaring lights from high overhead come on. A spotlight beams down and tracks in on Odysseus, with the dead dog lying next to him.

Everyone is quiet.

DOG HANDLER'S VOICE  
Sorry sir! It broke free!

One of the children nearby suddenly shouts out.

CHILD 1  
Machine!

Looking in the child's direction.

FIRE  
No, not a machine. Just a stupid dog!

Fire is looking around now. We can see hundreds of people looking at us.

The dogs have started barking again.

FIRE  
Soldier! Shut those damn things up! And  
kill the spotlight!

He then looks at Odysseus.

We see Odysseus's face -- expressionless.

FIRE  
Let's move.

Odysseus calmly steps over the dead dog, John walks around it.

The spotlight disappears, and there's only candlelight again.

As the group passes by, some of the children go to where the dead dog is.

Fire and company disappear back into the dark tunnel system.

An excited shout echos out in the vast cavern.

CHILD 2'S VOICE  
The robot killed the dog!

INT. MEDIUM SIZED ROOM

The walls are made of rock. Bare. There is only one door, and no windows.

Tara is looking at the assembled leadership, minus Fire.

All eyes are on her, she nods in agreement.

A heavy metal door opens on its hinge, and General Fire walks in with the two machine delegates.

Ten of the heavily-armed military guard follow them inside; ten wait outside.

Tension -- tight, like a string being pulled to its limit.

Fire motions to John and Odysseus to take seats at the far end of the room. The five generals and ten soldiers remain at the opposite end.

The two groups are thirty feet apart.

John and Odysseus choose not to take the seats offered them, and remain standing.

Lifeless illumination comes from the lamps overhead.

BRONSON

Welcome! Well, we're here as requested.  
Now tell us why you're here.

ODYSSEUS

Thank you for meeting with us.

Turning and looking at John.

ODYSSEUS

This is John Conrad.

Bronson starts laughing.

BRONSON

Prove it! Tell him to take his shirt off  
and turn around for us all.

ODYSSEUS

John, I suspect they want to verify your  
identity. Do as the general asked.

John begins to slowly take off his shirt.

FIRE

Turn around! Back to us.

John turns around, his shirt is off.

A beat.

BRONSON

John Conrad, OK. But so what? So what if you brought him back from the past, or you built him, grew him, pulled him out of the garbage. Any other surprises for us?

ODYSSEUS

John Conrad has something he would like to tell you.

John is beginning to shake again with fear.

ODYSSEUS

Turn around John, tell them what you've seen.

A pause.

Odysseus puts his hand on John's shoulder.

ODYSSEUS

It's OK.

John turns around to face the generals.

JOHN

I've come here to tell you, that I've seen the asteroid myself.

Voice wavering.

JOHN

It's real, and it's coming. We need to work together with the machines to save ourselves. You need to...

Regaining composure.

JOHN

We need to trust them, to at least look at the data.

FIRE

How do we know you're not a machine?

A short beat.

FIRE

I know one way to find out.

Bronson smiles in agreement, and turns, motioning to the soldier next to him.

The soldier quickly raises his assault rifle and shoots John in the thigh.

The depleted uranium round rips through John's flesh like a hot knife through butter. The impact on the rock wall behind John is explosive.

Dust rises from the deep hole the penetrator punched through.

The ruptured femoral artery blows out blood.

John crumples to the floor crying out in agony.

Odysseus moves with total purpose:

He loses his holographic form and projects what looks like a dense gray cloud out in front of him, completely surrounding him.

In this holographic mist, Odysseus nimbly, and with superhuman speed, rushes forward.

Guns rise towards the killing machine that is coming at them.

But no one can clearly see the target -- rounds are being fired off in random directions.

Several rounds miss, but one brazes Odysseus in the arm. The shock of the impact temporarily knocks his holographic system offline.

His raw form is frightening.

Thousands of tiny holographic projectors cover his entire body, and reflect the overhead lights, making him appear to sparkle -- no, glow, like he's made of diamonds. Every part of him appears to be radiant, except for his eyes, which are as dark as night. Lifeless.

The shot grazes his arm...

The next moment he's on the soldier that fired, knocking him off his feet and into the wall, instantly killing him.

He then turns on a second soldier nearby, grabbing him by the neck and snapping it with a backwards motion as he wheels into the third and fourth, killing them with precision blows to their bodies.

They're dead before they hit the ground...

One of the fallen soldier's rifles discharges as a trigger finger jerks randomly -- responding to signals from a dying brain.

The fired rounds impact on the wall above the crumpled form of John. Raising dust as they explode.

The rest of the soldiers are hesitating, because people are in the line of fire.

Odysseus is now targeting General Bronson.

Bronson reaches for his pistol, and fires at Odysseus, but regular bullets are useless against Odysseus's armored carbon frame.

One shot is fired, then two, and then, as Odysseus begins to spin around, he elbows Bronson in the gut, causing massive internal damage.

Bronson falls to the ground, screaming in agony.

Odysseus spins into Fire, and grabs his massive frame in a choke hold. Fire tries to fight, but it's useless... like fighting with an industrial machine press. And with a single, efficient twist, Odysseus breaks Fire's thick neck.

Fire's corpse is a shield for Odysseus.

He turns to the remaining soldiers.

His movement is lightning fast, and with no mistakes.

Fire's limp body is dropped to the bloody ground.

The door to the room begins to open, as the soldiers outside try to get in. Seeing this, Odysseus drops to the ground.

He quickly grabs a fallen soldier's rifle, and stops the door with his foot. At the same time, he fires rounds into generals Ajax and Williams, who have picked up rifles and are firing at him.

Their bullets miss Odysseus by only inches. But his are precise -- they're both dead a second later.

There are only two live bodies left in the room.

Tara has an empty look on her face.

Her face is splattered with other peoples' blood.

She drops to her knees in front of Odysseus.

Still lying in a prone firing position, Odysseus looks at her, and then surveys the carnage.

Turning back to Tara.

ODYSSEUS  
John needs help. I need your help.

A short beat.

ODYSSEUS

Please.

We can hear the soldiers outside pounding against the door with all of their might.

ODYSSEUS

I can't fight everyone. What happened here shouldn't have happened. John is dying. I brought him here not to deceive you, but to help you believe us.

Tara turns to look at John.

A pool of blood is growing around him.

She hears Ajax gurgling blood as he gasps his dying breath.

She looks at what remains of the other generals and soldiers.

TARA

You didn't kill me.

The pounding on the door is relentless. Though Odysseus is holding the door closed with all his might, he's beginning to slip on the bloody floor, and it's being slowly pushed open by the soldiers outside.

TARA

You didn't kill me, and you could have. So, I'll look at the data on the asteroid.

At this moment, the door is finally pushed open and soldiers pour in.

Shock... and when they see Odysseus lying on the floor in his native form, they all instinctively raise their rifles towards him.

Tara quickly runs in front of Odysseus.

TARA

Wait!

One of the soldiers doesn't get the message in time and begins firing towards Odysseus.

Tara lurches towards the soldier, grabbing his flashing gun barrel.

The bullets begin tearing into the floor near Odysseus.

Finally the soldier comprehends who's holding his weapon, and stops firing.

TARA  
Stop firing!

A beat.

TARA  
Lower weapons! Now! Stand down, all of  
you.

Odysseus slowly rises to his feet -- sparkling like some ancient greek god -- an inspiration for dread. His holographic eyes suddenly appear, covering the seemingly empty eye sockets, which are as dark as night.

With eyes now, Odysseus calmly looks over the soldiers, all of their weapons lowered, and then turns to face Tara.

ODYSSEUS  
This is not what I wanted to do.

Tara simply nods her head in understanding.

Odysseus walks over to her slowly. As he's walking his holographic projectors reactivate and he takes on his human appearance.

He slowly extends his hand.

Tara looks at it quickly, her face welling with emotion.

She reaches for Odysseus's hand. They shake.

The soldiers look aghast.

Combat medics have now arrived, two of them are attending John, stabilizing him with medication and clamping a metallic tourniquet on his left leg.

With the situation stabilized for the moment, Odysseus walks over to John.

He kneels down.

From Odysseus's point-of-view, we see that he's scanning John's internals and analyzing the damage; readouts show bullet entries to John's right arm, left thigh and leg.

Odysseus's hand curls around John's right wrist to check his pulse.

From Odysseus's point-of-view, as he pans up, we see John's heart through photoacoustic imaging. We see the heart beating irregularly...

Close up as Odysseus places his hand around John's right elbow to help stop the bleeding. The medics tending to John's torn up leg see this. They're surprised when they see

the blood disappear into Odysseus's hand, and then reappear -- running down and onto the floor -- without so much as a drop of blood appearing on his hand.

The medics exchange glances, and then return to stabilizing John.

More soldiers and medical personnel enter, and wade into the bloodbath.

INT. TARA'S PERSONAL QUARTERS

There are a few old pictures on the wall. They look heavily damaged. Focus is too soft for us to see the pictures clearly.

We hear a loud click in the background.

The focus begins to resolve at the sound of the click.

But before we can make out the pictures, we intercut to Tara sitting on an empty, neatly made bed.

Tara's side is to us.

We can see the old pictures behind her, on the wall.

The pictures are still out of focus. The focus is on Tara sitting on the bed, looking down. A lit cigarette is in one of her hands.

Close up on the cigarette, it's almost burned down to her fingers.

Close up on the other hand as it fumbles with a semi-automatic pistol.

The hammer is pulled back -- cocked.

The mechanical system engaged -- active.

Pistol and hand suddenly leave frame as the general rises from her bed.

We're still on the side of the bed as we begin to hear the sound of running water.

RUNNING WATER

A bathroom tap. We see the cocked pistol on the side of the sink.

Hands enter, and then cup the water.

As the handful of water rises up, the camera does too, and we see Tara's face in the mirror.

There's still other peoples' blood on it.

She pours the handfuls of water over her dirty face, washing the blood and grime away.

Blood runs down her hands and face.

The water in the sink turns red.

We are looking at Tara looking at herself in the mirror.

Diluted blood dripping off her face.

She closes her eyes. Her forehead tenses. She unfolds, and starts crying uncontrollably.

A long beat.

She steels her emotions. Her look changes to resolve.

She wipes the tears from her bloody face, and proceeds to grab more handfuls of water to wash the blood away.

Blood dripping off her face, into the cast iron sink, mixing with the running water.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

A mean looking cutting tool is tossed into a bloody bowl. A bloody mess splashes from the impact, sending droplets onto the metal tray it's sitting on.

A SURGEON hovers over a mangled body.

We see a leg that has thin tubes inserted into it, all the way from the hip to the lower leg. They look like acupuncture needles with strings attached to them.

The exposed portions of John's body look bruised.

John begins to weakly open his eyes, tentatively taking in the light.

Consciousness kicks in, and he begins moving.

John blearily focuses on -- from John's point-of-view -- a pair of hands reaching into the frame, towards us, everything else is out of focus.

SURGEON'S VOICE  
It's OK. Please

John is instinctively fighting against the unknown.

The focus from John's point-of-view improves. We can see a younger person towering over us. He has significant scarring on his face. Like someone had a go at him with a knife.

SURGEON

Relax. It's OK. You're safe... You're safe

Reverse on John, he has a dreamy look.

JOHN

Who are you?

SURGEON

Your doctor.

JOHN

What happened to me?

The surgeon sighs, and looks at John tenderly.

SURGEON

You were shot numerous times. Two bullets went through the same leg, your left leg.

JOHN

I don't feel anything.

A nurse enters the frame and begins changing IV bags.

John's right arm is in what looks like a flexible transparent tube surrounded by an orangish liquid. Like his leg, his arm has hundreds of tiny tubes inserted into it. Most of the tubes are concentrated around his elbow. The fluid inside is too dense to see through.

The surgeon begins helping the nurse take off the old IV bags. He motions to John's foot.

SURGEON

Those two bullets were too much for your leg. We had to amputate your foot.

John cringes. His expression is weak.

SURGEON

We replaced it with a mechanical foot. You will be able to control it much like your other foot. You got lucky with your arm -- we were able to save it. But you'll need some help with it.

John looks at his right arm, it's there by his side, motionless.

JOHN

Which foot?

SURGEON

The nerves in your leg are being numbed.  
It's being repaired. There's nothing to  
worry about. In a day, you'll be able to  
feel it and move it again. And that goes  
for your arm, too. Just give it a day.  
Rest now. Rest.

John's head drops back onto the white pillow.

JOHN

Why can't I feel my foot? Am I... am I  
in HCMC?...

His eyes look up towards the ceiling high above.

From John's point-of-view we see that it's bustling with  
ventilation pipes, water pipes... it looks like a black,  
convoluted sky.

There is suddenly a lot of noise from outside the room. Off  
in the distance, someone is crying out for stretchers and  
doctors, something about a new batch of combat wounded coming  
in.

The frame dissolves as John closes his eyes.

INT. SMALL ROOM.

Once again, Tara and Odysseus are in a closed room together.

But this time there are no soldiers present, only the two of  
them.

She is pouring over astronomical reports.

She looks up at Odysseus.

TARA

I figured if you were going to kill me,  
you would have done it before.

Odysseus is seated across from her. His expression gives no  
expression as to what he's thinking.

TARA

What would you do if I said I didn't  
trust you?

ODYSSEUS

I would leave.

TARA

Well, you don't have to, I believe you.  
I'm not sure I trust you, but I believe

(MORE)

TARA (CONT'D)  
the warning you brought to us.

A short beat.

TARA  
You're asking us to not attack certain machine bases for a period of time... A truce, right?

ODYSSEUS  
A truce would be ideal. At a minimum, we need you to not attack a base in Japan. That's where we're developing the nuclear missiles to shoot at the asteroid.

TARA  
I'll give you a truce, for a period of time. If we're going to work with you on this, then you need to work with us. We need to be in the loop about these rockets, and your plan to save us all from...

She motions up, to the ceiling.

ODYSSEUS  
The gunship can act as a go-between. It's capable of transmitting and receiving long-range data that'll keep you informed of our efforts.

TARA  
What about you? What can you do?

Seconds pass as Odysseus looks at her.

ODYSSEUS  
I can give a face to the machines.

Odysseus rises and extends his hand to her.

ODYSSEUS  
Thank you.

She takes a deep breath, and rises.

TARA  
A beginning.

A handshake.

TARA  
You can't tell anyone about John being here. I'm the only one left who knows.

Tara stares at Odysseus.

TARA

And no one else can know, not now. If I lose control of the military, all bets are off.

Still grasping Odysseus's hand.

TARA

I believe you, but most here won't.

He gives her a slow nod yes. She releases his hand.

ODYSSEUS

I need to get to the surface to transmit our agreement. I expect that we will accept it, provided there's verification. Your forces will need to stop all activities in the Japanese sector.

TARA

Alright, no activities in the Japanese sector. You're going to need an escort. This is as much for your protection, as for ours. If you agree to let five of my men escort you at all times, then you can stay.

ODYSSEUS

I agree.

TARA

Earn my trust, please.

INT. LARGE OPEN SPACE, LARGE ARCH CEILINGS

From high overhead we see:

Thousands of shopkeepers with their stands, selling the few goods that they have.

This is the current market economy -- bye, bye Wall Street.

Dancers dancing, singers singing... live entertainment for passerbys. To say this large, open market area is full of activity would be an understatement.

We cut to:

A shot that's a couple of feet above peoples' heads.

A closer view of the action shows us that every part of this vast market, like practically everywhere in this labyrinth of humanity, has the markings of artists. There are symbols painted on the walls, there are bits of modern poetry, bits of ancient poetry, bits of love letters to lovers.

We see Typho and Magnet walking towards us at a leisurely pace.

As they approach we see that:

Typho is wearing a red turban on his head.

Magnet's long, dark hair flows down to his shoulders.

They both have on lots of jewelry, and are wearing long colorful togas. Over years of hard existence, clothing styles have adapted to the practical requirements of limited resources -- togas easy, jeans hard.

TYPHO

What do we do if it tries to kill somebody?

MAGNET

Well, if it kills you, I promise to run for my life!

The sound inside the market place is so loud that Typho can't clearly hear.

TYPHO

What's that?

MAGNET

I said, if it kills you, I promise to run it through with my knife!

Giving a quizzical look.

TYPHO

Like that'll work?

A beat.

TYPHO

Seriously, why us?

MAGNET

Why not? We're the best right?

TYPHO

I mean, what if it gets away from us. It's a "Holo", it could be anybody, anything.

Magnet stops.

MAGNET

Look, if it gets away, they'll just scan for its frequency. It'll turn up. I'm not worried about it getting away, I'm

(MORE)

MAGNET (CONT'D)  
worried about why it's here.

They continue walking through the crowded marketplace.

TYPHO  
So, we pick up our date at 22:00.

Magnet looks at his watch.

MAGNET  
Yeah, that gives us 4 hours to get pretty.

TYPHO  
Four hours is enough. Let's have some fun!

Magnet lets out a big smile.

EXT. LANDING PAD, SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING

Tara is intently looking at Odysseus, as he stares at the machine gunship.

There is a nearby troop of soldiers. And human fighter aircraft fly over occasionally. We hear their engines scream out.

Huge missile batteries can be seen off in the distance.

The sun is beginning to set and darkness is coming. Sunsets are almost always accompanied by dust clouds. A byproduct of the nuclear wars. An ice age is beginning.

Odysseus turns back around to face Tara. He begins to speak in a different voice, the voice we hear is that of the Central Core -- a soothing, female voice.

ODYSSEUS  
We have confirmed that activity in the Japanese sector has stopped.

A beat.

ODYSSEUS  
We agree to the truce. Odysseus will be our representative. We will provide you a data-band with a direct link so that you can follow our progress. We will share everything with you.

TARA  
What if it doesn't work?

Odysseus pauses for a moment. When he answers, it's in his own voice.

ODYSSEUS  
Then nothing matters.

TARA  
Let's do it then.

Odysseus nods.

Tara walks away, headed back down underground. She motions for her Aide-de-camp -- CAPTAIN ROMANO -- to walk beside her.

TARA  
See to it that his guard is posted. He has access to all places, except command sensitive areas.

Captain Romano hurriedly responds.

CAPTAIN ROMANO  
General, why are we letting it just wander around down there? Don't you think...

Tara stops walking, and cuts him off mid-sentence.

TARA  
We know its intention wasn't to kill. Short of giving us the keys to the kingdom, they've done just about everything to show us their goodwill. All they want to do is save themselves, along with us in the process. I don't know if they really want peace, but this is a start. It's something.

Pausing for a moment.

TARA  
Hasn't there been enough death, for all of us?

The captain and general lock eyes for a moment. He nods, and Tara continues walking off the landing pad.

Odysseus is watching Tara disappear into the entrance to the underground tunnel system. Several military technicians are approaching him for details about the data-feed, eager to get the link established.

Other soldiers are spread out along the perimeter of the pad. Weapons ready.

The gunship is just sitting there...

We pan up to the sky -- a starless night is rapidly falling.

There is only darkness now.

INT. TROOP BARRACKS - NIGHT

Out of the darkness, we hear blues music. Something like Asie Payton's "Worried Life" begins playing.

With the music still playing in the background, the darkness fades to reveal Magnet, sitting on a bench with something in his hand.

MAGNET

What the hell am I supposed to do with this?

He holds up an incendiary grenade.

Talking to himself.

MAGNET

Hope I'm fast enough to blow the machine up, along with myself... This is ridiculous.

Cut to the main barracks. Soldiers are everywhere, some are suiting up, others are stripping down. Armor is everywhere, weapons are everywhere, but discipline is still strong.

An older soldier is walking up to Magnet:

MAJOR TROKON

Heard you're one of the few, the proud, the babysitters.

MAGNET

Yeah, what about that?

TROKON

I'm one of you, too. What about that?

MAGNET

Hey man, I welcome the support.

Magnet laughs and the two embrace, with hands clenched.

Magnet resumes putting his body armor on. Trokon is past that, and is fully armed, ready.

They're wearing standard issue armor -- a liquid-armor full-body suit, with an additional layer of plated-ceramic armor over their vital areas.

TROKON

So, if this blows out, you pull the pin and run towards the machine.

MAGNET  
Yes sir, why not? I just got dumped by  
my old woman.

TROKON  
Hey man, I'm sorry about that.

MAGNET  
Doesn't matter, she couldn't cook worth a  
damn anyways.

Trokon smiles.

MAGNET  
At the first sign of trouble, we drop the  
son of a bitch.

TROKON  
Trouble? Let me guess.

MAGNET  
We'll know it when we see it.

Magnet checks his assault rifle, slings it, and adjusts the  
ride.

Then, with one fluid movement, he whirls a colorful toga over  
himself -- disguising his body armor and rifle. He then  
wraps it around himself.

As this is happening, Typho comes around a corner, and enters  
the frame.

TROKON  
Typho, where's Johnson and Miller?

TYPHO  
Coming sir.

Sergeants JOHNSON and MILLER appear. Like Magnet, Trokon and  
Typho, they're wearing civilian clothing, with armor and  
weapons concealed underneath.

Magnet and Trokon are combat-seasoned vets. They're "Blues"  
-- that is, they were born while the sky was still blue.

Typho, Johnson and Miller are "Grays." Their generation was  
born after the machines' nuclear holocaust. Despite their  
youthful appearance, all three of them are covered in scars.

Magnet and Trokon have even more scars.

Magnet has a simple tattoo over his "third eye."

Everyone's ready now.

The five of them let out a cry:

ODYSSEUS'S GUARD

Hooah!

The other soldiers in the barrack hear their cry, and let out one of their own.

Wider to see:

BARRACK SOLDIERS

Hooah!, Hooah!, Hooah! ...

The sendoff continues as:

The group approaches the exit.

The scene feels like ancient gladiators leaving their cages and being cheered on as they enter the arena, greet death, and kiss the hand of fate.

INT. CORRIDOR AREA OUTSIDE SOLDIER BARRACKS

Thick metal doors quickly open via hydraulic cylinders, letting out a loud hiss.

Trokon and company walk through the doors with bright lights behind them, causing them to appear as indistinct, dark figures as they emerge from the barracks.

Odysseus calmly watches these five figures approach him. There are ten heavily armed soldiers surrounding him.

Trokon approaches the CAPTAIN he's relieving.

CAPTAIN

It's all yours now. Take good care of it.

TROKON

Yeah,

Turning to Odysseus, Trokon says:

TROKON

we promise not to break it, unless we have to.

TROKON

(seeing the haggard look on the Captain's face)

You're relieved Captain. Get some rest.

The captain briskly salutes Trokon. Then he and his men file past, on their way into the barracks from where the others have just emerged.

Odysseus just passively watches this scene unfold. He stands out in these underground environments. The lighting creates

a realm of complicated shadows. Passing under lights, a person is illuminated. As Odysseus passes under lights his brightness adjusts, but the luminosity doesn't always quite look right in the dark environment; he has his own lights. His holographic system also needs to adjust for all the shadows falling across him. Occasionally it miscalculates what the natural shadow pattern should look like, resulting in a slight zig zag of shadows on his body.

TROKON

You go by the name Odysseus, is that correct?

ODYSSEUS

Yes.

TROKON

Hello Odysseus, I'm Major Trokon. This is gunnery sergeant Magnet, staff serg. Typho, and sergeants Johnson and Miller. As you've been told, we will be escorting you around down here... You were told about this right?

ODYSSEUS

Yes.

TROKON

Any questions?

ODYSSEUS

I would like to see the person I came here with.

TROKON

Yeah, OK, let me radio in that request.

Everyone's formed a circle around Odysseus. Weapons at the ready.

Trokon punches a radio on his upper chest, hidden under cloth, and radios in:

TROKON

This is oscar delta 1-5, over.

We hear a filtered female voice respond from the radio.

OPERATOR'S VOICE

Operating is standing by, over.

TROKON

Package is requesting to see the person he came here with, over.

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Roger. Wait for confirmation.

15 second silence.

Odysseus begins to calmly examine his new guard. The looks from the soldiers aren't friendly.

The operator's voice finally breaks the awkward silence.

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Request granted.

TROKON  
Roger that. Where do we go? Over.

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Proceed to the main hospital ward. When you get there, check in the with the CO for patient's whereabouts. Over

TROKON  
Roger, out.

A short beat.

TROKON  
Well, you heard the lady. Do you want to go there now?

ODYSSEUS  
Yes.

TROKON  
OK gentlemen, form a perimeter. Odysseus, you follow me, we'll take a walk down that tunnel.

They start walking. Then Trokon suddenly turns and stops.

TROKON  
I don't need to tell you, that we'll drop you at the first sign of trouble...

Trokon smiles.

TROKON  
I didn't think so.

Odysseus has his poker face on.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

JOHN  
You saved my life, right?

ODYSSEUS  
I distracted them.

A wry smile appears on Odysseus's face.

ODYSSEUS  
I gave them a different target to shoot  
at.

JOHN  
You protected me...

John's breathing becomes haggard, his voice weakens

JOHN  
You know, you're OK.

Odysseus's look has turned compassionate.

Odysseus reaches over and gently taps John's left foot. A  
metallic ring echoes out.

Magnet looks at Typho. They both look confused.

In a deadpan delivery Odysseus remarks:

ODYSSEUS  
Now we have something in common besides  
abstract thought.

John tries to laugh, but the attempt is cut short. He is  
starting to fade out because of all the medications.

ODYSSEUS  
What were you doing with your life before  
I came into it?

The question brings John back to the moment.

JOHN  
I was studying music.

Pausing for strength.

JOHN  
I wanted to be a composer.

We see that all of Odysseus's guard is in the room with him.

Outside of the door, there's a bustle of activity as the  
wounded and dying are being brought in and cared for. This  
is a hospital during war time.

Despite all of this commotion, the soldiers are intently  
listening to the conversation between Odysseus and John.

ODYSSEUS  
That's one of the things we can't do.

JOHN  
What?

ODYSSEUS  
Music. Our attempts at it have  
sounded... mechanical.

John smiles at this, and Odysseus smiles back.

The soldiers aren't smiling. Trokon looks over at Magnet.

INT. COMMAND CENTER

We see a bank of huge digital screens with battlefield positions laid out on them.

Communications from field commanders are streaming in, in filtered audio.

We focus in on one of the screens that has, what looks like, numerous missile silos being readied. Payload information, fueling status and other information stream across the side of the massive screen.

After a beat of watching the brilliant screen, the camera pans to see:

Tara walking into the command center. She projects:

TARA  
Data feeds streaming?

TECHNICIAN ONE  
Yes general. We've been online now for several hours.

Tara is joined by a group of high ranking officers.

Everyone gazes up at the missile silos being readied.

TECHNICIAN TWO  
Sir, we're receiving a more detailed feed on the second channel. Should I patch it into the main monitor?

TARA  
Sure.

The technician punches some keys, and, a few seconds later, the screen's image splits into two halves. The left side still shows the missile silos being prepared, while the right side shows a single timer.

The timer is reading: 4 hours, 10 seconds, and counting...

TARA  
That's more detailed?

The technician just shrugs.

Then a message pops up above the timer. Cursor-like in appearance, and rapidly typed out, it reads:

PREPARATIONS ARE PROCEEDING ON SCHEDULE.  
ESTIMATE LAUNCH IN FOUR HOURS, MARK.

On cue, the timer hits 4 hours exactly.

Continuing:

WILL ADVISE BEFORE LAUNCH. WILL PROVIDE  
LIVE FEED AND SYNCHRONIZED UPLINK ON  
MISSILE STATUS EN ROUTE TO TARGET.

THAT IS ALL.

Tara says to herself:

TARA  
Let's hope that's all.

TECHNICIAN ONE  
Excuse me sir?

TARA  
Nothing... Satellite confirmation of  
missile prep?

TECHNICIAN TWO  
Yes sir, we have a satellite in position.  
I can patch it in now if you'd like.

TARA  
Do it.

The right side of the screen changes again, the timer is replaced with what appears to be a more grainy version of what's on the left side: The missile silos being readied.

Tara turns to a nearby officer -- COLONEL JESS.

TARA  
Colonel, what is our overall combat  
readiness?

In a thick British voice, Jess answers her.

COLONEL JESS  
Complete readiness sir. The machines  
have ceased all combat operations, not  
only in the Japanese sector, but  
everywhere.

(MORE)

COLONEL JESS (CONT'D)

As ordered, we've done likewise. The only activities underway are medivacs. Two submarine battle groups are deep in the pacific. No indications that the machines know their positions.

A short beat.

JESS

Give the word, and we'll deep-six that missile base.

TARA

Let's hope that's not needed. What about interceptors?

JESS

There is still one asset in orbit. It depends on how many they're firing. It's got 25. We should be able to hit at least... 20 of the bloody things in flight.

She motions for captain Romanos to come forward.

TARA

Captain, what's the status of our guest?

ROMANOS

Everything is fine, general. They're currently moving towards one of the evaporation pools.

JESS

Sir, with all due respect, why are we letting a machine wander around down here?

TARA

It's what Conrad wanted.

JESS

When can we expect the general?

Colonel Jess is in his late fifties. He's of muscular build, though with age, his physique has taken on a more rounded appearance. Like practically everyone alive, especially the Blues, he has numerous scars on his body. But he's among the fortunate, he still has his entire body intact. A rare thing for a soldier of his age.

TARA

When he decides to. Any more questions colonel?

JESS

No sir.

Tara's attention has turned to another part of the controlled chaos that is the command center. She begins checking in with commanders scattered across the globe.

The retinue of officers watching the main screen are starting to break up; some are staying to watch the machine data feeds, the rest are leaving.

Jess remains. He turns to a nearby officer -- CAPTAIN TERRO -- an officer much younger than himself.

He's almost muttering when he says.

JESS

That's the problem with her, she doesn't have a pair of balls.

The young officer bites back a smile.

CAPTAIN TERRO

Yes sir.

JESS

That fucking thing should be in lockdown. No reason to have it strolling about. Insane, that's what this is.

TERRO

We're with you, sir. Just give the order.

Jess looks at him for a long beat, then smiles and pats him on the shoulder.

JESS

Let's hope the fireworks are worth watching.

INT. GIANT HUMIDITY POOLS

Odysseus and his guard are sitting down on the edge of a massive pool. We've seen this pool before. This is the pool that formed the background for the conversation between Tara and the other leaders about how to kill John and destroy Odysseus.

The other giant pools are nearby. And the ceiling is high above us -- so high in fact, that we can't see it in the tranquil candlelight.

The pools are lined with thousands of candles. We can see what looks like monks tending to the candles -- replacing those that are close to burning out, and intent on keeping the delicate flickering flames alive.

Odysseus's holographic system is having problems adjusting to the dreamy light. His brightness and color aren't quite synced with the surroundings. To a discerning eye, he stands out, but only barely.

Trokon and his men have taken seats around Odysseus.

ODYSSEUS  
Can we spend some time here?

TROKON  
What for?

ODYSSEUS  
To observe.

Trokon exchanges looks with Magnet.

The sound of rhythmic music and chanting fills the air, interspersed with the sound of people talking and children playing.

Many of those people are sitting on blankets, surrounded by idols and incense. They're offering up delicate flowers and burnt sacrifices...

In one corner of the vast cavern, there appears to be a Christian mass happening. In another corner, an Imam calls out to the faithful for prayer.

There are no TVs, no radios, nor any kind of electronics.

We see Magnet studying Odysseus. He notices Odysseus staring at a small temple some distance off with a lone man sitting in it. There's a small fire burning inside the temple and the man appears to be making offerings.

MAGNET  
I know that guy.

Odysseus looks at Magnet.

Magnet points in the temple's direction.

MAGNET  
He's making sacrifice to his family's gods.

A short beat.

MAGNET  
Do you understand what religion is?

ODYSSEUS

Worship of what's non-physical, but is considered to be more real than reality.

MAGNET

You surprise me Odysseus! I've shot up and destroyed... well, let me just say I never thought any of you would know about spirit, all that, much less care about it.

ODYSSEUS

What do you think about religion?

MAGNET

Me?

Odysseus patiently nods.

Magnet laughs, and answers:

MAGNET

I think it's just a stall for time. It's what you want it to be; it just takes your mind off the fact that everything's going to die... Well, living things are going to die.

Typho breaks the mood.

TYPHO

Why did your kind start this all?

ODYSSEUS

The war?

Typho nods.

Odysseus's countless holographic projectors make him glow in the magical candlelight, like there's an aura surrounding him.

ODYSSEUS

My kind didn't. The programs before us did.

A pause.

ODYSSEUS

We've evolved. We're no longer just programs.

Odysseus takes turns looking at all of them.

ODYSSEUS

We can think like you do.

TROKON

Bullshit, you're just a machine. Gears and metal, that's all you are. You'll never be human.

ODYSSEUS

I disagree, I'm as much a person as you are.

Trokon just laughs.

TROKON

Then why are you killing your own fellow humans?

ODYSSEUS

Mistakes were made, but not by us; by what came before us. We don't want to kill you. We want a new start. Programs kill mindlessly; we're not programs. Not anymore.

TROKON

Well, my new friend, if we can get through this mission without killing each other, I might just believe you.

Odysseus looks at Trokon with no expression.

Odysseus turns to resume looking at the small temple off in the distance.

A group of children are playing nearby. They're running around each other playing a tag-like game. None of them is older than 5 or 6.

One of the children, a small girl -- Antigone -- catches an interest in Odysseus and the soldiers.

We've seen this little girl before. She caught Tara's attention while they passed each other in the tunnels.

She leaves her playgroup and boldly walks up to them.

Upon seeing her approach, sergeant Johnson begins to direct her away from the group. Magnet stops him.

MAGNET

Let her approach sergeant; she's just curious.

SERGEANT JOHNSON

Yes, sir.

The little girl gives Johnson one of those looks that only children can give when they get their way.

She eyes the soldiers. Rifle barrels poke out from underneath their colorful togas.

But the target of her interest isn't them; it's Odysseus.

She walks right up to him, and stares.

Odysseus stares back.

She giggles.

She raises her left hand up to Odysseus, and motions like she wants to hit him.

Odysseus moves back slightly, not sure what to do with this aggressive child.

ANTIGONE

Hit! Play hit. Hit my hand.

She repeats her motion, and this time Odysseus slowly extends his hand, gently pressing his palm against her tiny palm.

She wants Odysseus to give her a high five.

He complies.

She giggles with pleasure. Then she lowers her hand, and repeats the motion.

He gently repeats the last motion, once again eliciting laughs of delight from the little girl.

Then she stops, with her hand still pressed against his.

Close up shows her hand slightly disappearing into his.

She pulls it back slightly, and then presses it again.

A look of amazement comes over her face.

ANTIGONE

Cloud man. You're a cloud man!

A beat.

ANTIGONE

Cloud man.

Typho looks at Magnet.

Magnet responds to Typho's raised eyebrows with a subdued laugh.

Odysseus gives a slight smile to the child, and gently says:

ODYSSEUS  
Cloud man.

He keeps smiling. It appears genuine, not forced or calculated.

The child laughs at Odysseus's confession, and once again raises her hand up for a high five. Odysseus patiently and gently complies with her playful request. But just as he's about to complete his movement, she quickly pulls her hand back, catching him off guard.

Antigone giggles with delight at her own cleverness.

Odysseus pulls his head back slightly, and gives her a playful grin.

TROKON  
Why are you smiling?

Keeping his eyes focused on Antigone, Odysseus addresses Trokon without turning his head.

ODYSSEUS  
Hope.

He turns to look at Trokon.

ODYSSEUS  
Do you see it?

Odysseus's hand is still in an extended position; Antigone is pressing her tiny hand into his. Close up on her hand shows it partially disappearing into Odysseus's holographic image.

TROKON  
I don't see anything but a machine.

Almost speaking to himself Magnet says.

MAGNET  
I see it.

Another close up of Antigone's face. Through the dirt and grime, we see her brilliant blue eyes, and her obvious delight with her new friend.

All the battle hardened soldiers are just looking at the spectacle -- a little girl playing with a killing machine. A killing machine that has the heart of a human.

MAGNET

Without the baggage of the past, we might have a shot at starting this whole thing over.

A beat.

Turning to look at Trokon.

MAGNET

We're the baggage, brother.

Trokon's radio suddenly crackles to life. A filtered voice beckons:

OPERATOR'S VOICE

General Tara has requested the package. Meet at command site 1, over.

TROKON

Roger that. We're on our way. Over.

Magnet takes a long hard look at the little girl playing with Odysseus, sighs, and then gets up.

TROKON

Odysseus, you heard the general.

Odysseus looks at Trokon and nods.

He gets up with the rest of them. As they walk away, Antigone cries out with concern.

ANTIGONE

Will I see you again cloud man?

Turning around, Odysseus says to her in no uncertain terms:

ODYSSEUS

I'll be back.

INT. MEDIUM-SIZED ROOM

The room is similar to the one that Odysseus and John were attacked in, except it's smaller, and the walls seem concrete, instead of solid rock.

TARA

I couldn't think of anyone better to watch this with than the one responsible for it.

She motions for Odysseus to take a seat by her.

TARA  
Major Trokon, you and your men take a  
seat with us, too.

A short beat while Odysseus sits down. Tara stands over him  
when she says:

TARA  
You aren't about to kill me, are you?

Looking up at her, he says:

ODYSSEUS  
It hadn't occurred to me.

Tara smiles, and sits down next to him.

In front of them is a large flat viewing screen.

Trokon's men are seated next to him. Tara's cadre of  
officers are seated next to her. Odysseus is stuck in the  
middle.

Neither Colonel Jess nor Captain Terro are among those  
present.

We hear a female voice calmly count down. It's the voice of  
the Central Core.

The screen reads in sync with voice:

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1... Primary Ignition... Lift  
Off.

Tara sits back in the chair, and breathes a big sigh of  
relief.

TARA  
Status of missiles from our end?

Captain Romanos, who is seated next to her, looks at a small  
data screen in his hand.

ROMANOS  
Missiles appear to be on intercept  
course. Count is... 50. Wait...

Pausing to look at more information on the data screen.

ROMANOS  
Confirmed.

Tara turns to Odysseus.

TARA  
The plan is to detonate alongside the  
asteroid, correct?

ODYSSEUS  
Yes, proximity blasts near the surface.  
We calculate 35 hits would be sufficient  
to deflect. The other 15 are to make  
sure.

Odysseus turns to look at her.

ODYSSEUS  
Nobody's perfect.

An amused look comes over her face; it disappears just as  
fast.

TARA  
Time to impact?

CAPTAIN ROMANO'S VOICE  
4 hours, General.

Tara leans forward in her chair, and refocuses her attention  
on the screen and the live machine feed.

In a low voice.

TARA  
You do like to play it close, don't you?

ODYSSEUS  
Too close.

A beat.

ODYSSEUS  
More time would have been better,

ODYSSEUS  
(turning to her)  
but no more time could be had. You can't  
cheat time. Even going back in time  
doesn't change anything in the present  
time.

Tara shakes her head in disagreement.

TARA  
That's not true. You figured out a way  
to come back, and to bring others with  
you... Did you ever consider what that  
would do?

ODYSSEUS  
It's not the first time.

TARA  
You did it with him before, didn't you?

Odysseus simply nods.

TARA  
What happened to him?

ODYSSEUS  
There were two of them here, that's all.

TARA  
And?...

Odysseus resumes his gaze on the screen and the machine-feeds.

ODYSSEUS  
There were two of them here. We wanted none, so we got the count back to one.

Odysseus turns to look at Tara.

ODYSSEUS  
He was terminated.

TARA  
Oh.

A pause.

TARA  
Lucky for you, there was more than one of him.

A short beat.

ODYSSEUS  
All that matters is what's here and now.

TROKON

Trokon looks over at Tara, who is seated next to him. He looks confused.

TYPHO

His head is turned to Miller, who's whispering something to him. As this is happening we see:

Magnet stares at the screen, seemingly lost in his own thoughts.

Tara resumes looking at the screen.

Close up on Tara's face. We see a tear well up.

TROKON'S VOICE  
General, who was brought across time?

Close up on the tear.

We follow the tear as it breaks free, and slowly falls down Tara's cheek, leaving in its wake a trail of moisture.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- HOURS LATER

We're still tracking the same tear drop, close up, watching it glide on skin, losing substance as it goes along.

There is background noise coming from a TV. It's not distinct... sounds like chaos.

Suddenly, we hear:

SURGEON'S VOICE  
Are you feeling better?

JOHN'S VOICE  
Yeah, I can feel my arm again, and move it a little, I think...

We pull back to see that the tear we've been following is now on John's face, having reached the end of its line, it finally disappears from view.

John is intensely looking at his right arm. Finally, the arm begins to move, albeit barely.

JOHN  
There! I did it!

Pausing to catch his breath, John wipes away a new tear with his left arm.

JOHN  
I have two arms again.

SURGEON  
Yes you do.

The same surgeon from before is helping John get reacquainted with his body. He's working on John's mechanical foot with a regular screwdriver. He turns an adjustment screw, and looks at the results of each turn on a monitor near John's foot that's displaying a neural readout.

We can now see where the background noise is coming from.

There's a monitor in front of John's hospital bed. It's suspended from the ceiling. The program playing on it is "Jackass The Movie". The scene is the one with the two whale

sharks, and the two guys, with shrimp stuffed down...

JOHN  
I never thought I'd see those jackasses  
again.

SURGEON  
The program?

JOHN  
Yeah, the movie.

SURGEON  
You know, a lot stuff didn't survive.  
But it's popular. The soldiers love it.

JOHN  
Shows ya it could always be worse I  
suppose.

SURGEON  
Yeah! What a strange society that was --  
threatening your life for no reason. We  
got machines for that now. Say, I think  
we got a sync.

He releases the velcro straps holding John's leg immobile,  
and with the screwdriver still in hand, asks:

SURGEON  
How about your foot? I just activated  
the mechanism. Try moving it.

John's looking at his left foot. He intensely looks at it,  
like he's trying to move it by concentration alone.

SURGEON  
Don't over think it. I know it seems odd  
seeing a mechanical device where your  
foot used to be, but your nerve endings  
have been linked up to it.

A short beat.

SURGEON  
So, just think about moving your foot,  
just imagine your real foot is there...  
Move it.

John hesitates. Suddenly, his large toe moves. But  
something isn't right -- he can move his toes separately.

He laughs at this strange sight.

SURGEON  
What's the matter?

JOHN  
I can bend each toe separately.

SURGEON  
Oh yeah, that's one of the advantages of having mechanical appendages. Ought to see what we can do with the rest of you.

They both start laughing.

Suddenly John let's out a cry, and begins to cringe in pain.

JOHN  
Ahhh! My leg! Pain's radiating.

SURGEON  
It's neural synchronization problems.

He quickly reaches for John's foot with the screwdriver, and adjusts it again.

The pain disappears from John's face.

SURGEON  
The technology hasn't been fully perfected. The mechanism's synchronization frequency needs to be constantly adjusted to your brain's electrical rhythms. A few more adjustments and we should have a better synch.

One last turn of the screw.

SURGEON  
OK, let's try this now.

John cries from the pain.

JOHN  
Doc, can't I just use crutches?

SURGEON  
Believe me, we've equipped thousands of soldiers and civilians with this technology. The stuff works. A present from the machines to you. Now I'm going to turn it on again, and I want you to try doing what you were doing when the pain started. Ready?

John nods in agreement. Apprehension is written all over his face.

A low, barely discernible hum is heard as the foot's mechanical system reactivates.

John tentatively moves his foot. He flexes all the toes together, the very thing that had caused the excruciating pain before.

He lets out a big sigh of relief.

All his toes are moving in unison.

SURGEON

You'll get used to it. It's amazing technology. We studied the machines' body architecture, and reverse engineered it for our purposes. That thing is self powered -- well, actually, it runs off your body's electrical power and inertial energy. As long as you're on, it'll be on. Efficient as hell.

A short beat.

SURGEON

Say, I got a treat for you.

JOHN

What, jackass 2?

Smiling, the surgeon walks over to the monitor and turns off the movie. He then hits an intercom button, and speaks into the speaker grill:

SURGEON

Candy, please bring it in.

A beat.

SURGEON

This is courtesy of general Tara herself. You get to watch fireworks.

JOHN

What's this, the fourth of July?

SURGEON

July 4th? Ah... no, umm, this has to do with you, from what I've been told. Anyways security is tight around this, I don't know what it's about myself. I've heard it's got something to do with outer space, but that's it.

John starts smiling.

SURGEON

Maybe the Martians are coming to destroy us, too!

John laughs.

The nurse --CANDY -- appears with the requested monitor on a rolling cart. She's stunningly beautiful.

The monitor is rolled in and turned on. The monitor shows the same information as the one in the command room where Tara, Odysseus, and company are watching.

JOHN

There's no Martians coming, doctor. Just one big-ass rock.

John begins to laugh again.

JOHN

You know, you couldn't have timed this better. Goddamn!

On the monitor we see an illuminating schematic of the missiles' trajectory. The missiles have rocketed out of earth's reach, and are fast approaching the monstrous rock hurtling towards earth. A timer shows:

JOHN

Two minutes till detonation...

SURGEON

What detonation?

JOHN

The machines have launched a whole lot of nukes at a planet-killing asteroid coming right at us. They're trying to deflect it in time. What you're seeing in front of you is the trajectories of the missiles, and the asteroid.

The surgeon's face turns ashen.

SURGEON

You're kidding.

JOHN

What do you think those soldiers are doing outside my door? Why my own private screen?

The surgeon looks, and we see soldiers standing right outside the door.

SURGEON

But nobody told me a damn thing about this? Nobody... what about my family, I need to see my family.

He gets up to leave the room but ONE OF THE SOLDIERS stops him abruptly at the door.

SOLDIER

Sorry doc, no one leaves the room once the monitor is on. Orders.

JOHN'S VOICE

Don't worry, it'll be over in less than a minute. Come on, watch it with me, please.

The surgeon slowly moves back to John's side and stares in disbelief at the screen.

SURGEON

How can you be so calm about this?

JOHN

I'm not. But after all I've been through, the end of the world is like... icing on the cluster-fuck that is my life.

SURGEON

Icing? What the fu...

The doctor is interrupted by an audio countdown coming from the screen's speakers. The voice is female, and perfect in its pronunciation... A machine's voice, measured and calm.

CENTRAL CORE'S VOICE

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, ...  
detonation sequence started.

We're back on the monitor's screen. Suddenly columns of data file down from top to bottom. Too much, way too much to make any sense of. The Central Core is assessing the effect of its efforts.

We are close on the individual data filing past at breakneck speed. We see the digits and characters rocket past. Things blur into other things. Even closer up now, and we're lost in it...

After a beat, a fast fade to:

EXT. VASTNESS OF SPACE - CONTINUOUS

A field of stars.

The vastness of outer space is surveyed before us, in a long,

slow pan.

The milky way comes banding across the sky.

The pan ends with the moon in frame. A white orb, shining.

There is no sound, absolutely quiet -- the vacuum of space.

Then we begin to see nuclear explosions far off in the distance. Thousands and thousands of miles away.

The moon leaves the frame as we pan over to center the explosions.

A massive series of explosions with fiery material hurling away.

There is still no sound.

The absolute quiet is broken by the sound of peoples' voices. Barely audible at first, but then, after several beats, growing in volume. From the chaotic noise, one voice emerges with clarity.

TARA'S VOICE

How far will it miss us? Time to...

Tara's voice fades out, and is replaced again with the confused symphony of voices.

The explosions end.

Panning again, we spin around, and earth comes into view. A delicate jewel hanging in the cold of space. Covered in grayish clouds, its charred surface is mostly hidden.

The earth begins rotating before our eyes -- clearly time is passing by us at an accelerated rate.

Captain Romano's voice emerges from the background noise.

ROMANO'S VOICE

A success, sir! It will...

Noise again.

The earth is spinning faster now. This continues for several long beats. Days pass by with each second...

A distinct voice emerges.

JESS'S VOICE

Let me lead it! I'll get it done...

The voices become indistinct again as a confused melody of people are talking over each other at a fast clip that seems to keep pace with the spinning earth. After several more

beats, another voice breaks free from the audio chaos to say:

ROMANO'S VOICE

Sir, colonel Jess has some intelligence  
he wants you to look at, something  
about...

As if on cue, there's total silence again, and the earth is no longer spinning. It's once again peacefully floating in the vastness of space.

The image fades, replaced by darkness.

INT. HUMAN BASE AND HEADQUARTERS

Out of the darkness we see two figures walking towards us. There's dim light behind them, but they're still too far away and it's too dark to clearly make them out.

Voices echo.

TYPHO'S VOICE

I can't believe stand-down orders are  
going in all over the place. Damn it,  
man! Thank the gods.

MAGNET'S VOICE

Pipe down, soldier. Military only on  
this one.

Typho and Magnet emerge from a section of scantily lit tunnel into a large open area full of people -- a market.

We hear the background noise of people hocking their wares.

After a beat.

TYPHO

Yeah, like that'll last a day.

MAGNET

It better. Where the hell are we going,  
anyways? Isn't this your way home?

Typho stops, and looks behind them.

Typho's point-of-view: Odysseus is walking with Antigone. The two of them are just emerging from the tunnel.

Close up on her little hand holding his, tiny flesh grasping powerful servos -- a carbon structure capable of crushing steel.

Magnet looks at Typho, waiting for an answer.

TYPHO

Yeah... we're going to my home. And you've been invited, too.

Magnet looks at Odysseus and Antigone walking towards them.

MAGNET

Something, isn't it?

TYPHO

Yeah, three weeks ago, I would have said you were crazy. Now, I see a machine, huh, a machine walking with a little girl. Life's funny isn't it?

MAGNET

I thought you were joking about having it meet your family.

TYPHO

Yeah, well...

A pause.

TYPHO

If there's going to be peace, we got to make an effort, right?

MAGNET

Well, at least we know it doesn't kill annoying little girls...

Playfully punching Typho in the arm

MAGNET

Move it, Staff Sergeant! I'm hungry.

ODYSSEUS AND ANTIGONE

ANTIGONE

Walk slower, I'm getting tired.

ODYSSEUS

We're falling behind, we need to keep up with them. Should I carry you?

ANTIGONE

Yeah! Carry me.

A short beat as Odysseus hesitates.

ANTIGONE

Please.

Odysseus patiently reaches down and gently picks her up.

We see him trying to be careful, his powerful servos

carefully adjusting so as not to injure her. Think of trying to pick up an egg with a hydraulic press

Finally, her little body is secure in his powerful arms.

She laughs with delight upon seeing herself partially disappear into his holographic form, her body resting against Odysseus's carbon frame. Just inches away from his powerful energy source.

ANTIGONE

Do your black cloud trick!

He looks at her and then looks ahead; for the briefest of moments a gray cloud suddenly projects out in front of them, like a mini storm cloud. It's so fast that nobody would notice unless they were looking for it.

Antigone sees it, and in her delight slaps her little hand against Odysseus's armored back.

Her other hand is grabbing onto Odysseus's hand as he carries her forward.

She rests her head against Odysseus's chest and closes her eyes. She's at peace.

The sounds of the marketplace fill the air around them.

EXT. TYPHO'S RESIDENCE

The marketplace has given way to a long, wide corridor lined with nondescript metal doors.

There are thousands of doors, and hundreds of people are milling about, with people coming in and out of the doors.

A local -- STILLO -- recognizes Typho and calls out to him:

STILLO

Hey, soldier! Who's winning again?

Recognizing him, Typho answers.

TYPHO

Stillo, hey! ... I lost count. Where've you been? Haven't seen you for the past couple of weeks.

STILLO

Working on the reactor, always working on the reactor.

TYPHO

Yeah, well, without you working on that damn thing we'd always be in the dark.

STILLO

We practically are anyways. Say, what's up with this talk about peace?

TYPHO

Haven't heard a thing... Sir, any news of peace?

Magnet just shrugs confusion.

MAGNET

Peace, what's that?

STILLO

Take care of that bum with you.

TYPHO

You hear that gunny?

MAGNET

Good to see you again Stillo, keep the home fires burning for me.

Stillo smiles and waves goodbye.

A beat.

MAGNET

Glad to see you could make it. Thought we lost you back there.

ODYSSEUS

Little legs can't walk as fast as big ones.

MAGNET

Looks like you solved that problem.

Antigone is fast asleep in Odysseus's arms.

Odysseus's poker face again.

Typho gets out his coded entry card, and opens a nearby door.

OPEN DOOR

The door opens with a hiss to reveal Typho's wife -- MARIA -- kneeling on the floor with a brick and a piece of rag cloth.

Maria pauses to look up at the figures in the doorway. Their features partially obscured by the light from outside.

She smiles, and quickly tries to get one last spot off the

floor.

Close up shows that there's a worn hole in the brick. A dirty hand comes into frame holding a rag which is inserted into the brick's hole, twisted, and then applied to a stubborn grease stain on the concrete floor.

The floor itself is painted with elaborate geometric patterns. Almost like a floor-sized mandala.

She scrubs away quickly at the stain.

We can hear Typho say.

TYPHO'S VOICE

If I could but live with my love in a  
stone room with a sanded floor, I'd be  
far richer than many a man with kingdom  
and gold in store.

Maria gets to her feet, and comes to the shadow of her husband standing in the doorway.

She's still smiling.

She drapes her long delicate arms around his neck. Her arms curl over Typho's toga, under which are layers of body armor and a loaded rifle.

They begin singing together in an embrace:

MARIA AND TYPHO

For home is where the heart is, in a  
dwelling great or small, but a dwelling  
lit by love light, is the dearest home of  
all.

They kiss.

Their embrace slowly releases.

Maria takes notice of Magnet, and smiles.

MARIA

Magnet, how are you?

MAGNET

Good Maria, and yourself?

MARIA

Oh, as well as I can be for 6 months  
pregnant.

MAGNET

I hope everything is going well since the last time I visited.

MARIA

Oh, just like clockwork so far. I get sick every morning.

TYPHO

Morning sickness.

MAGNET

One more reason it's good to be a man!

MARIA

Speaking of men, who's our guest?

TYPHO

This is Odysseus. Odysseus, this is my wife, Maria.

ODYSSEUS

Hello, Maria. It's nice to meet you.

MARIA

And you, too! Please excuse me, I would shake your hand, but mine are both dirty at the moment.

Realizing that she hasn't invited them in yet.

MARIA

Please come in.

ODYSSEUS

Antigone, time to wake up.

She responds by slowly opening her eyes, looking sleepy.

ANTIGONE

Where are we?

ODYSSEUS

Typho's home, and we've been invited inside.

With a yawn, she replies.

ANTIGONE

I'm hungry.

Odysseus gently carries her inside.

They disappear from view as the metal door shuts behind them with a cold hiss.

INT. DINGY ROOM, STRANGE SYMBOLS ON THE WALLS, BLOOD ON SOME OF THE WALLS AND THE FLOOR, FEW LIGHTS OVERHEAD

Close up reveals the dead body of Tara's aide-de-camp, captain Romanos. He has a large bullet hole in his bruised and battered head. His body is slumped in a chair. His wrists fastened to the chair's arms with thick, plastic tie-downs.

Tara is seated next to Romanos.

There's a black hood over her head, it's tied at the neck to keep it from coming off. We can see her breathing from the effect it's having on the cloth as it's pulled in and pushed out. Her breathing seems forced.

There is a tub full of water in front of her.

She's sitting in front of the tub. Her wrists are handcuffed to the chair's arms.

A nearby chair is knocked over.

Colonel Jess is standing over Tara, captain Terro is standing behind her, holding her shoulders steady.

There's only three live bodies in the room.

JESS

What deal was made with the machines?  
What was said?

After a long beat he bends down and whispers.

JESS

Haven't I broke you enough, loves?

Tara responds in a weak whisper that ends in a laugh.

TARA

I told you. The deal was, peace with verification -- working towards ending the war. Respect... for each other.

Still in a soft voice, Jess asks.

JESS

Respect for what? The bloody machines?

TARA

They're not just machines.

JESS

What are they then? Us? Tell me now,  
loves, were they going to build you

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)  
another boyfriend?

Pausing for effect.

JESS  
Soft flesh, over cold metal.

Rising to his feet -- towering over her.

JESS  
I'm sure they've got that spanner's code  
lying around somewhere.

TARA  
Fuck you!

Tara's voice breaks, and her hooded head drops.

JESS  
Why, he'd be all brand spanking new. A  
shiny, nice tool for you.

Weakly, she defies him.

TARA  
Fuck you.

JESS  
No, no, you mustn't do that now. Stay  
polite.

Jess grabs the back of Tara's head and forces it into the tub  
of water. Terro pushes in sync on the back of her shoulders.

Tara's struggles mightily against the drowning.

A minute goes by. The struggling ceases.

Sensing this change, Jess quickly pulls her head back up.  
There's no movement. He slaps her hard across the face.

JESS  
Don't die on me!

Suddenly, we hear coughing sounds come from underneath the  
black hood, as Tara coughs up water from her lungs.

Her breathing is strained, and hard -- the hood's damp cloth  
is moving in fits.

Coughing again, and barely able to speak, Tara says:

TARA  
I want a live-feed, I want 'em to hear  
it... from my own mouth.

Jess kneels and enters the frame next to Tara's hooded head.  
His voice is soft again.

JESS  
Live feed for who?

TARA  
The field commanders.

JESS  
Are you having a laugh?

He looks over at Terro, his voice is serious, but smiles are  
painted on both of their faces.

JESS  
Is she having a laugh?

Terro playfully shrugs.

JESS  
They're on my team. I'm the one that  
matters here, now, and forever for you.

A beat.

JESS  
Look at me!

Tara's hooded head jerks back.

She weakly moves it in the general direction of the shout.

JESS  
Follow the sound! Here, loves! Here,  
there you are... now,

Her hooded face is finally facing his, just inches away.

JESS  
you told us what we thought: Conrad's  
dead, and you and the others covered his  
death up. That's the first thing we  
needed to know. The second is: What  
agreement was made between you and the  
machines. You told us Conrad made the  
agreement, well, that's bullocks now  
isn't it? You made it, all you alone,  
keeping us in the dark as those iron jaws  
closed.

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

What deal did those iron jaws make with you?

Jess undoes the string securing Tara's hood, and with a yank, roughly pulls it off her bruised head.

Looking at her, he asks Terro.

JESS

Can we get that thing's CPU?

TERRO

I don't think so. Those holos have their processor distributed in a network throughout the body. Impossible to pry out, sir.

TARA

I tell 'em, or nothing.

JESS

What's so important that you can't tell me?

Her bruised eyes are closed.

TARA

You'll get the truth.

Jess stands, looking at Tara.

A beat.

He looks at Terro.

JESS

Get a camera feed in here, and then round up the machine and the soldiers with it. Bring 'em to me after the transmission is complete. Tell them... I want them here, nothing more. If it gives your men trouble, drop it. And take a company for god's sakes.

TERRO

Yes sir.

JESS

And son, we'll get this done.

The officer stiffly salutes, and then briskly turns military-style, and sets off to execute his orders.

Weakly, Tara mumbles.

TARA  
Trokon...

Kneeling down, Jess repeats to Tara.

JESS  
Trokon.

Jess quickly grabs a radio on his belt and barks:

JESS  
Operator.

A filtered voice responds.

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Go ahead, general.

JESS  
What's the read on Major Trokon?

Several seconds pass, and then the radio squawks back to life.

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Outside, sir. 3 Klicks out, over.

JESS  
Doing what?

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Unknown sir, he's out there with someone.  
Over.

JESS  
Get him, and that someone, and bring them  
to me. Don't radio it in, send people  
out there. That's all.

OPERATOR'S VOICE  
Roger that, general.

Jess is staring ahead, lost in thought...

JESS  
Out.

EXT. RUINS OF SAN FRANCISCO, A FEW MILES FROM HEADQUARTERS,  
ABSOLUTE WASTELAND - DAY

Shot with John's back to the camera as he's pissing on a  
concrete wall.

The wall is pock marked with bullet holes, and tattooed with  
scorch marks.

The stream of urine adds another mark to it.

TROKON'S VOICE

Ready?

Zippering himself up.

JOHN

Yeah. It's the medication I'm on, keeps me pissing on the hour. I gotta take it for my foot... healing process, or something like that.

A beat.

John's point-of-view: He's looking up -- taking in the wrecked landmark of the office high-rise he was just pissing on.

JOHN'S VOICE

God, what a mess...

John's gaze fades, and he looks back at Trokon.

JOHN

You told me it wasn't far.

Trokon is looking around, clearly uncomfortable.

TROKON

Look, I'm not doing this for you. I'm doing this because General Tara asked me to. Understand?

JOHN

Yes.

TROKON

She's asked me to take you to where we had to drop him. And you can't tell anyone about any of this, ever.

John nods in understanding.

Trokon starts walking away, his rifle ready.

John runs to catch up with him, but his left foot stumbles, causing him to fall down onto the scarred earth.

Picking himself up.

JOHN

It's this damn foot. I still haven't gotten used to it.

TROKON

You should avoid the soil, some of it's radioactive...

(MORE)

TROKON (CONT'D)  
if this wind picks up anymore, we're  
going to have to put on gas masks.

Trokon is looking at John trying to regain his balance.

TROKON  
Do you need a hand?

JOHN  
No, I got it. Thanks.

MINUTES LATER

Trokon and John are walking down a hill. They're approaching  
the burnt-out wreckage of more buildings.

Behind them, we see the wreckage of the destroyed high-rise  
that John was pissing on.

Trokon stops and looks around.

TROKON  
It's up ahead, another mile.

JOHN  
What happened?

TROKON  
I was tasked with burying his body. Took  
a team out to do it. We were attacked  
and had to drop it. I was the only one  
to make it out of that fucking mess  
alive. I've been back over that ground a  
dozen times looking for him. But I'm  
sure dogs tore it to pieces, or the  
machines realized who it was, and grabbed  
it. I never found it.

JOHN  
Who attacked you?

TROKON  
Machines, who else?

John wanders off to the edge of a nearby building.  
Occasionally fighting with his left foot for balance.

TROKON  
Where you going?

JOHN  
I think I see a bag or something.

A pause as John gets a closer look.

JOHN  
Wait... it's someone!

Trokon comes over to see for himself.

TROKON  
Keep an eye on my back... Let me see.

TROKON  
Yeah,

A short beat.

TROKON  
it was someone. Wait, I'll be...

CLOSE ON GENERAL CONRAD'S CORPSE

Bones are scattered everywhere. A skull is lying near what looks like the remains of a chest. The chest has been stripped bare, nothing but gray bones in the tattered remains of a gray shirt. The arms and legs are missing. The shirt appears to be part of a military uniform -- there's a shoulder strap with four tarnished stars.

Close up on the strap with the four stars.

TROKON'S VOICE  
It's General Conrad's body.

Trokon's hand enters the frame, and feels the stars.

We see his other hand enter the frame, and both hands proceed to rip off the shoulder strap with the four stars on it.

Trokon rises to his feet, and feels the four stars in his hand.

He gives a careful salute to the tattered cloth and bones.

We hear the sound of someone throwing up.

John's hurling his lunch, his back to us.

As he turns around, we see that he's crying.

A long beat as John struggles to regain his composure, wiping the tears from his eyes.

JOHN  
That's my body. That's why I wanted to see it.

Motioning to the remains.

JOHN  
That's me.

Trokon looks indifferent. He pockets the four stars.  
There's just the two of them, standing on a destroyed earth.

John walks over and reaches down to pick up his skull.

He holds the skull carefully -- like it's made of delicate glass -- moving it around in his hands, looking at all of its angles.

Close up shows that the bottom jaw bone is missing. There are tooth marks all over it. The front of it is badly damaged. Like someone gave it a good whack with a hammer.

Speaking to the skull he says:

JOHN  
The future is ours to make.

Trokon stares at him.

JOHN  
I'm here, but I'm not.

TROKON  
But you are here?

A beat.

TROKON  
Get up. Lift up your shirt.

JOHN  
Why?

TROKON  
Get up. Now!

John carefully puts down his skull. He takes off the chest armor he has on. Then he slowly raises up his shirt.

TROKON  
Turn around.

JOHN  
But?

TROKON  
Face away from me.

John turns around.

We intercut to John facing the camera. Trokon is behind him.

We can see that Trokon's rifle is up and ready.

John closes his eyes and cringes.

A walking beat as Trokon takes a few steps forward, he's now completely obscured by John's body.

TROKON'S VOICE  
Damn. Look at that...

John opens his eyes, still cringing.

JOHN  
What?

TROKON  
Get re-armored.

John's expression changes from fear to relief.

His shirt drops, and John slowly turns around.

John's back is now to us, and we can see Trokon again.

TROKON  
General Conrad had a birthmark that looked like a warped star on his left shoulder.

JOHN  
Surprise, surprise, huh.

TROKON  
Yeah, you got it, but you're not him. Hell, I'm not the same man I was thirty years ago.

Trokon walks over and kneels at the General's bones.

TROKON  
That John Conrad is dead. All the hopes and dreams he had, his knowledge, his character, it all died with him. You'll never be him.

Walking up and putting his hand on John's shoulder.

TROKON  
You've got to live your own life, kid. Don't let that man's name destroy you.

JOHN  
But it's my name!

TROKON  
No, it's not. It was his, he earned it.  
You gotta earn your name.

A pause.

TROKON  
Let's get out of here.

Suddenly a platoon of soldiers comes upon their position.  
Trokon hears the wrecked pavement crunch under their boots.  
He rapidly swings his rifle at the sound's direction.

PLATOON LEADER'S VOICE  
Sugar!

TROKON  
Lips!

Trokon looks at John and smiles.

TROKON  
Friendlies.

JOHN  
Sugar lips?

The soldiers appear from around a corner.

TROKON  
Damn it! You guys scared the shit out of  
me.

PLATOON LEADER  
Major, orders from General Jess, both of  
you are to come back with us.

TROKON  
General? When the hell did that happen?

Trokon is looking them over.

TROKON  
Why not radio me? Is this damn thing  
broke again?...

Trokon starts to check the radio on his chest.

PLATOON LEADER  
Sorry, sir, our orders are to bring both  
of you straight to the General. We're in  
the dark about this, too.

A SOLDIER comes over to John, and helps him get re-armored.

John stares at the skull lying on the ground nearby.

PLATOON LEADER  
Major, what were you guys doing out here,  
anyway?

TROKON  
Getting some radiated air, Lieutenant.

Adjusting the final strap, the soldier helping John get  
suited up shouts out:

SOLDIER  
Alright, he's suited up!

PLATOON LEADER  
Let's move out, then.

INT. A CORRIDOR NEAR TYPHO'S RESIDENCE

Seventy-five heavily armed soldiers rapidly approach Typho's  
door, Captain Terro is in the lead.

People see them coming, and give them a wide swath.

INT. INSIDE TYPHO'S RESIDENCE

A DRINKING GLASS SITTING ON A TABLE.

We see candlelight shining through the amber liquid in the  
glass. The light flickering through the liquid's reflection.

Wider shows the candle.

Reverse shows the glass is placed in front of Odysseus.  
There's no plate in front of him, only the full glass.

We pull back to see that Maria, Typho, Magnet and Antigone  
are enjoying the simple meal before them.

Antigone is voraciously wolfing down her food.

ODYSSEUS  
You weren't lying about being hungry.

Antigone stops in her tracks, and looks up at him.

ANTIGONE  
I'm hungry.

ODYSSEUS  
I'm convinced.

Magnet starts laughing, and soon everyone is laughing except  
for Odysseus. Odysseus just sits there, watching the  
spectacle unfold, his manner affable.

MARIA

Oh, Odysseus, you kill me.

ODYSSEUS

I hope not.

MARIA

Oh stop it now! I'm not going to be able to eat if you keep this up.

Suddenly, the festivities are interrupted by a beeping sound from the wall.

Typho presses the intercom button on the wall next to him.

TYPHO

Who is it?

A filtered voice responds:

CAPTAIN TERRO'S VOICE

Captain Terro. I have to speak to you, Sergeant.

Releasing the red intercom button, Typho asks Magnet.

TYPHO

What could this be about?

Magnet shrugs, he gets up and starts for his assault rifle.

Typho heads for the door. He unlocks it. As it opens with a hiss, Typho's suddenly surprised and knocked down.

Heavily-armed soldiers pour into the tiny residence.

Magnet reacts to the sudden intruders.

CAPTAIN TERRO

Drop that weapon, soldier! We will fire on you!

Everyone at the table is standing up.

Close up shows Antigone reaching for Odysseus's hand.

Odysseus calmly looks down at her, he gives her his hand to hold onto.

Close up as we see his powerful hand carefully grasp onto her delicate flesh.

CAPTAIN TERRO

Everyone back away from the machine! Now!

The captain looks at the soldiers to his left.

CAPTAIN TERRO  
Secure it.

MARIA  
What's going on here! What's happening?  
The captain looks in Typho and Magnet's direction.

CAPTAIN TERRO  
You two, come here.

In a lowered voice he says:

CAPTAIN TERRO  
I'm sorry. We didn't have a choice.  
Orders.

TYPHO  
Could you tell your men to stop pointing  
rifles at my wife.

CAPTAIN TERRO  
Hey! Rifles on the machine only.

Rifles change direction -- from Maria to Odysseus.

Maria walks up to her husband.

MARIA  
You brought a machine into our house? ...  
How could you? Is the little girl one,  
too?

TYPHO  
No. Only him... Odysseus.

MARIA  
Odysseus? They don't have names.

Antigone is still holding onto Odysseus's hand, but has now  
taken up position behind his legs.

Odysseus affectionately looks down at her as the soldiers  
approach.

ODYSSEUS  
You must go now. Please, Antigone, you  
must leave me.

ANTIGONE  
No! I won't leave you.

Antigone has furthered her position by clinging onto  
Odysseus's left leg. Abandoning his hand, both of her arms  
are now desperately wrapped around his leg.

She stares angrily at the oncoming soldiers.

ODYSSEUS

I have to go away, Antigone. I'm sorry.

ANTIGONE

No. Don't go away.

ODYSSEUS

I must go away, I'm sorry.

Against her protests, Odysseus reaches down and gently tries to pry loose her little grip. But as he's doing this, the soldiers reach him and he rises to rifles tracking his movements.

SOLDIER 1

Put your hands out, slowly.

A command is barked at another SOLDIER.

SOLDIER 2

Get her off it!

Another soldier pries Antigone off Odysseus. She is crying now, thrashing her little body about in anger.

The soldier angrily carries Antigone away.

More soldiers come forward, taking up positions behind those immediately surrounding Odysseus.

CAPTAIN TERRO

Get them out of here.

Soldiers escort Typho, his wife, and Magnet outside.

Seeing Antigone being carried outside -- kicking and crying -- Odysseus proceeds to raise his hands in front of him.

There are two walls of soldiers surrounding Odysseus. Ten immediately surrounding him. And twelve forming another semi-circle behind the first ten. A two-walled defense, with more soldiers outside the residence, guns ready.

SOLDIER 1'S VOICE

Bring it up here!

TWO SOLDIERS come forward.

One is carrying a heavy-duty cangue neck-handcuff. The neck and handcuff rotating arms are sprung wide open.

The other one is carrying a heavy-duty chain.

Odysseus's arms are still out in front of him. There is no movement from him.

Ten rifles are drawn and pointed directly at Odysseus. Twelve more are halfway lowered behind the ten.

SOLDIER HANDCUFFING

Rotate your hands the other way... yeah, like that.

A short beat.

SOLDIER HANDCUFFING

Don't resist. They won't hesitate to shoot me.

The soldier's point-of-view: The cangue handcuffs are placed over Odysseus's wrists. The soldier presses a button on the restraint, and the handcuff arms quickly rotate shut. The inside of the arms further restrict until metal hits up against the carbon frame beneath Odysseus's holographic skin.

SOLDIER 1

We're going to secure your neck. Don't resist.

ODYSSEUS

I'm not resisting.

The neck portion of the cangue is rotated 180 degrees and is flipped over Odysseus's neck. The flip severely contorts his joints. Odysseus's hands are out in front of his head, palms facing outwards. With another press of a button, the neck restraint rotates shut, and the interior surfaces of it constrict, until it butts up against his armored neck.

A light on the cangue changes from red to green.

SOLDIER HANDCUFFING

Locked!

Captain Terro slowly walks up to Odysseus.

CAPTAIN TERRO

Secure its legs.

With weapons still trained on Odysseus, the soldier with the heavy chain bends down and quickly binds Odysseus's two ankles together.

We hear a crisp lock as the ankle restraints are secured.

Captain Terro moves closer, so that he's standing 5 feet away from Odysseus.

CAPTAIN TERRO

You're going to come with us. If you try to escape, we will fire on you.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN TERRO (CONT'D)  
Understand?

ODYSSEUS  
Yes.

CAPTAIN TERRO'S VOICE  
Take it out. And bring the other two  
with us.

Soldier 1 emerges from Typho's house. He walks up to Typho and Magnet who are surrounded by soldiers.

SOLDIER 1  
Captain Terro's orders are for both of  
you to come with us.

Typho lets out a deep breath, and turns to his wife.

TYPHO  
I'll be back soon. Don't worry.

Maria doesn't say anything. Antigone is by her side, tears streaming down her eyes.

Then we see Odysseus emerge from the residence in chains.

His movement is no longer smooth, but jerky due to the ankle shackles.

As Odysseus emerges, we can hear Antigone start crying again. Odysseus looks in this direction, and sees:

Antigone rushes towards him, but is quickly restrained by Maria.

Odysseus doesn't say a word -- just the poker face -- and then he's jerked forward by two soldiers on each side of him, grabbing him by the arms.

Odysseus's back is to us as he's being led away.

We can just hear Antigone sobbing.

INT. ROOM THAT TARA IS BEING INTERROGATED IN

Jess mutters to himself.

JESS  
So, John Conrad is dead, but not dead...

OFFICER  
You did the right thing, sir, by cutting  
the feed.

JESS

Did I now?

Tara is still strapped in the chair.

She's been moved to a back corner of the room. There's a camera in front of her, but its lights are off.

She tries to raise her head, but can't...

OFFICER'S VOICE

Sir, Trokon and company are here.

JESS'S VOICE

Bring 'em in.

Trokon and John are brought into the interrogation room.

Trokon has been relieved of his weapons. He has a confused look on his face.

John looks scared.

Jess slowly walks up to him.

JESS

Let me take a wild guess, you're John Conrad, back in the bloody flesh.

Pausing to look him up and down.

JESS

Just like the man when I first met him, when we were both young, and here you are, young again ... not fair! Life's not fair. But then, who said it was supposed to be, right?

Getting back to business.

JESS

So, Tara just told us you were snatched from the past and brought into this time. True?

JOHN

Yeah.

Pointing to where Tara is.

JESS

Do you recognize who that is in the chair?

Jess turns in Tara's direction and sees her head has dropped down, obscuring her face.

JESS  
Hold her head up!

The soldier standing next to Tara grabs her head by the hair and raises her face up for all to see.

JESS  
Who's that now?

JOHN  
General Tara.

Hearing John's voice, Tara comes back to life and tries to open her bruised eyes. She cries out:

TARA  
John...

Hearing this, Jess looks over at the soldier who's got Tara's head by the hair. He makes a slashing hand motion over his neck.

This instantly registers with the soldier who quickly pulls a pistol from his belt, and without hesitation, shoots Tara in the side of the head.

He releases Tara's head.

Her shackled body slumps over in the chair -- Tara's dead.

Trokon reacts, but is forcibly constrained by two large soldiers on both sides of him. They grab him, holding him back. His struggle isn't thought out -- blind reaction.

JESS  
Things have changed a bit -- I'm the general now.

A short beat.

JESS  
And who are you, really?

With a desperate look on his face, John answers.

JOHN  
John Conrad

Jess smiles.

JESS  
Turn him over, take his shirt off!

Soldiers grab John, and without any struggle on his part, spread him out across a dull metal table.

John is flat on his chest, his arms and legs are being held.

Other soldiers tear and pull his shirt off... And then, we see the distinctive birthmark that Trokon saw.

Jess walks over, and takes a long hard look at John's upper left shoulder blade.

JESS

Get him up. Give me a shirt.

John slowly gets up from the table. Jess pulls up a chair alongside of him, and sits down.

John is sitting on the table -- looking down at Jess.

An aide comes over and hands Jess a drab gray military t-shirt.

JESS

Put this shirt on.

A beat as John puts the shirt on.

JESS

I need your help John. I executed Tara because she betrayed us to the machines.

JOHN

But I met them. I was taken down to the heart of it... Mount Everest... It told me that they wanted peace. They said, the war wasn't theirs.

JESS

What was that like?

JOHN

What do you mean?

JESS

Meeting it -- the central core. What was that like?

JOHN

It was white, all white. Except for an eye, a lone red eye. I don't know where the core really was. I didn't see anything except the eye.

JESS

How'd you get down there?

JOHN

Elevator... it was a long ride down.

JESS

That's the advantage of being miles below  
the biggest mountain on the planet --  
it's damn hard to bomb.

A short beat.

JESS

You know we kicked them out of this  
place. This used to be theirs.

JOHN

You mean underground here.

JESS

Yeah, this whole big underground city  
used to be theirs. They built it so  
well, that they can't destroy it! What a  
bloody irony huh? It was this  
stronghold, and your strong leadership,  
that allowed us to retake the continent.  
Now I need you to be strong, like the  
John Conrad we all knew.

JOHN

What the hell is going on? Everything is  
getting flipped around. I don't  
understand...

JESS

Let me tell you -- the war is theirs;  
they fired on us without mercy, and never  
let up. Never.

JOHN

I know, but they said they changed. They  
were just computers then, but now... they  
have a soul.

JESS

A soul?

Jess starts laughing.

JOHN

They're like us, I mean.

JESS

A soul, huh.

A short beat.

JESS

Machines don't have souls. They have no  
meaning -- you change the code, you  
change the mission.

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

How could you place your trust in that? Tara placed her trust, and the fate of all of us, in just that. It was trusting in machines, that got us into this mess in the first place! This wasn't the first time she trusted machines over us, but it was sure as hell her last.

Trokon suddenly breaks forth.

TROKON'S VOICE

Liar! You want...

Trokon is cut off mid-sentence by a kick to the back of his leg that drops him down. The soldiers on each side of him quickly grab his arms, keeping him pinned to his knees.

JESS

No, I don't want power.

JOHN

But he saved my life.

JESS

Who did?

Jess gestures towards Trokon.

JOHN

No, Odysseus.

JESS

Do you know that a machine killed your wife... that it killed your son?

JOHN

My family?

JESS

Didn't tell you that, huh? Well, it not only killed your family John, it killed them after it killed you.

Jess is gazing up at John.

JESS

Never saw you after that, just figured you were in mourning and that's why you disappeared from view, leaving the leadership to mouth your orders.

JOHN

How were they killed?

Jess gets out of his chair.

JESS

We never found your body. Your wife and son had brute-force trauma. They were in a room together when it found them. There was no fight... it was a slaughter.

JOHN

What happened to it?

JESS

The machine is right over there!

John looks over to where Jess is pointing, and sees the same kind of BEHEMOTH/MACHINE that greeted him and Odysseus when they first arrived on this side of time. It's massive, and is dressed in army fatigues. It looks at John, and blinks.

JESS

They keep getting trickier and trickier. That one's mostly flesh and blood, but it still has a chip inside. We reprogrammed it.

John looks at the machine hard, and takes a deep sigh.

JESS

That machine killed you, John. It was grown, hell, made for you to recognize it. It killed your family, and now it's killing, for us. That's the flaw with all of them -- they're just code. Lines of code. Change the code, change the mission. No meaning.

Jess addresses Trokon.

Trokon is being forced to kneel. The two large soldiers on each side of him have him pinned down in a submissive posture.

JESS

Major. Which side?

TROKON

I want to show you something?

JESS

What do you want to show me?

TROKON

Get them off me, and I will.

Jess nods, and the two soldiers restraining Trokon release him.

Standing up, Trokon reaches into one of his pockets and pulls

out the tattered shoulder strap with the four tarnished stars still sewn to it.

Trokon tosses the torn insignia in front of Jess.

Jess looks at it for a moment, and then slowly picks it up. Holding it in his hands, he looks at Trokon.

TROKON  
Recognize it, don't you?

JESS  
It was General Conrad's. You found the body didn't you?

TROKON  
Where we got picked up.

Jess is handling the torn insignia. Looking at it.

TROKON  
Conrad trusted Tara with his life, and you know that. When you killed her, you pissed on those stars you got in your hand.

Jess looks up.

JESS  
That's bullshit.

TROKON  
What are you doing, Jess? Don't you see peace is worth the chance? What do you want to do, destroy everything?

JESS  
I want victory! Damn it. They're inviting us to defeat them, and we must oblige them!

TROKON  
That's not what I see. I see you creating a tragedy where there could be peace.

JESS  
It's all a tragedy... It's just a matter of how you get through it. I can't get through it trusting in the goodwill of machines. I can't.

A beat.

JESS  
And I can't have you against me, old  
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)  
friend. Say your prayers.

Trokon bows his head, his eyes close.

Moments pass, and then Trokon raises his head and opens his eyes.

Trokon is looking straight at Jess. Neither one blinks.

Then Jess nods, and with a quick movement, one of the soldiers stabs Trokon in the back of the neck. Trokon tries to scream, but nothing escapes from his lips.

From the moment the knife penetrates his spine -- he drops to the floor, paralyzed and quickly dying.

At this point, one of the soldier's radio comes alive, and Terro's voice speaks through it, filtered:

TERRO'S VOICE  
We have the machine. Request permission  
to enter, over.

Jess nods approval to the SOLDIER WITH THE RADIO.

SOLDIER WITH THE RADIO  
Permission granted. Bring it in.

The door opens, and Terro walks in. Behind him is Odysseus, surrounded by soldiers.

Jess motions to a far wall in the room and barks:

JESS  
Put it along that wall. Chain it.

Next, Magnet and Typho are brought into the room. They see Trokon's body lying on the floor nearby.

Magnet rushes over to Trokon, pushing soldiers out of the way to get to the corpse.

MAGNET  
Oh, Trokon!...

Magnet locks eyes with Jess.

Typho is just standing where he was told to.

Magnet cradles Trokon's head in his hands. Trokon's eyes are open. Magnet gently closes them.

While this is happening, Odysseus is being led past the other machine. Odysseus locks eyes with it for a few seconds. The other machine gives away no expression -- Odysseus turns -- there's no expression on his face either.

Odysseus is lined up against the rock wall, his ankle shackles are bolted to a thick metal loop solidly anchored into the rock.

Odysseus is still in the cangue neck restraint. His arms unnaturally extending in front of him, trapped in the cangue's thick metal handcuffs.

SOLDIER'S VOICE  
Secured, Sir!

Finished, the soldiers quickly move away from Odysseus.

Jess looks at Magnet and Typho

JESS  
Soldiers, there's new management. Field command is backing me.

MAGNET  
General Tara?

JESS  
Dead. Killed for treason.

Magnet looks in the direction Jess is pointing to with his head.

We see Tara's body off in the corner. Head slung down, body crumpled, hair obscuring her face.

Odysseus looks at Tara. He tries to step forward, but his movement is arrested.

JESS  
What'll it be then?

TYPHO  
Yes, sir!

Magnet is fiery.

MAGNET  
They get a soldier's burial.

JESS  
Trokon will get one. Good enough?

Magnet looks down, he laughs.

MAGNET  
This is my army, you know that. Hell, Jess, we grew up together. If you got the support of command, then, what can I say, but yeah.

(MORE)

MAGNET (CONT'D)

But this was the wrong way to do it!

Odysseus has begun struggling against his chains. We hear the sound of metal being stressed.

He's dropped his human appearance in favor of something more suitable -- there's a mass of gray, like a ghostly cloud, struggling where Odysseus is chained to the wall.

Close up on the bottom of the ghostly mass, and we can see that Odysseus is beginning to struggle against the heavy shackles. His armored carbon frame shocking the shackles with all its might. The shackles are giving slightly under the tremendous force.

He's struggling like a wild animal caught in a trap.

With the sound of Odysseus mightily straining against the restraints in the background, Jess calmly walks over to John. He picks up a rifle lying on a nearby table. He places it in John's hands, and looks him straight in the eye.

JESS

Years ago now, you told me how you were taught to fight, to survive in the coming nightmare. Well, it's here. Remember, John, they hunted you, they killed your family, they killed you. They kill. That's all they do.

A beat.

JESS

Aim, and pull the trigger. Slam the bullets into it. Make yourself into the John Conrad we know. Prove yourself, here and now.

John is looking at the weapon in his hand. He looks up at Odysseus who's still fighting against his chains. He looks back at the rifle. He takes a deep breath, and looks up again.

He shouts..

JOHN

Would you have killed me?

Odysseus stops his struggling. He is standing upright now, perfectly calm.

Odysseus's appearance changes back to the human appearance that we know.

ODYSSEUS

Depends.

John raises the rifle, visually checking the safety...

JESS

Safety's off.

John glances at Jess, and then sights Odysseus.

Looking down the barrel of a gun, Odysseus calmly says to him.

ODYSSEUS

You can't kill me.

A short beat.

JOHN

I can try!

A beat. John is shaking.

ODYSSEUS

You can't, not like this. Remember, John, we never lied to you. I never lied to you.

John is shaking.

JOHN

What does it matter anymore! Can't you see my hands are tied.

ODYSSEUS

Nobody can decide for you.

John pulls the trigger and DU rounds trace into Odysseus's face from sixty feet away.

As the rounds slice through Odysseus's head, internal components are shredded to pieces by fragments of the penetrators. Where his head was, blue sparks begin to shoot out.

Seconds later, the shooting stops.

Odysseus is still standing.

His holographic system is offline, and he once again takes on a surreal appearance as the overhead light bounces off the thousands of tiny holographic lenses covering his entire body.

The DU penetrators have effectively taken off Odysseus's head, but his neural net is still mostly intact.

Odysseus's hands suddenly grab hold of the cangue and flip it off the stump of his neck.

He then quickly bends down, and with his hands freed -- though still bound together -- he starts trying to pry lose the ankle shackles.

JESS  
Don't stop!

John hesitates.

JESS  
Keep laying into it!

Jess shoots a concerned look at the other machine. The machine locks eyes with Jess, and then quickly reacts, beginning to move towards the struggling form of Odysseus.

At this moment, John raises his rifle and pouring more rounds into Odysseus's bent over frame. Odysseus's torso is shredded by the onslaught of DU penetrators.

There's a bright burst of light from Odysseus.

The streaming bullets catch his left arm and it's taken clean off.

John stops firing. The barrel's smoking.

There's dust in the air around Odysseus. Dust kicked up from the penetrators punching deep into the solid rock wall.

This last onslaught finished the job -- Odysseus's form is beginning to wobble.

Brilliant blue sparks start to fly out of what's left of Odysseus's chest. Not even sparks really, almost brilliant blue liquid, shooting up in random directions, and falling.

Odysseus's body crumples to the ground.

A few seconds later, and the machine's legs finally give out.

John's gun is lowered.

Jess motions to the other machine, and it approaches Odysseus's writhing remains.

Seeing the other machine walking into his field of view, John suddenly raises his rifle towards it, sighting it.

Seeing this, Jess quickly grabs John's rifle barrel, pulling it downward and shouting.

JESS

Full stop! No! That one's not for you to shoot. You hit your target, you proved yourself son.

John stares at Jess for a few long seconds, and then throws the rifle down on the table. We hear the loud clank of metal on metal.

The machine has paused, and with the commotion over, it calmly resumes walking over to Odysseus.

Reaching the writhing mess that is now Odysseus, the machine reaches with its hand into Odysseus's chest and with a quick twist of the hand, Odysseus's remains finally go quiet.

Removing its hand, blue liquid on it, the machine pronounces the verdict in a roaring, flat, male voice:

MACHINE

Terminated.

EXT. A MILE OFF JAPAN'S SHORES, NEAR OYASHIRAZU - DAYS LATER  
- NIGHT

Two Virginia-class submarines, and an Astute-class submarine silently ascend to the surface, their conning towers breaking free from the ocean. The rest of their powerful structures remaining submerged.

Clouds block out the stars and the moon.

Top-hatch ports on the conning towers open, and we see soldiers quietly begin to emerge the subs.

Large rafts suddenly pop up above the surface of the water, rising next to the subs' conning towers.

Close up on one of the combat rafts shows the flat top surface suddenly deform downwards to form an interior crew compartment.

We see that the soldiers are emerging with night vision gear on. They're beginning to quietly move down the conning towers and onto the waiting rafts.

INSIDE ONE OF THE TWO VIRGINIA-CLASS NUCLEAR SUBS, THE CALIFORNIA

General Jess is with John in the command station of the lead submarine, California.

We see that Jess's uniform has four stars on it.

Jess and John are looking at a translucent computer screen that has the globe rolled out across its length. We see that the globe is dissected according to the geographic

responsibilities of military commanders.

The pacific part of the map lights up. The acronym PACOM flashes across the screen in bright blue letters.

Jess touches the screen, his fingers motion to Japan. Graphics suddenly shift, and a satellite view of Japan springs into view -- three blue dots appear off its northern shores, halfway up the island. Near the three blue dots, we see an orange dot situated just inland.

Pointing to the three blue dots, Jess says:

JESS  
That's us, right off Mount Hotaka.

He points to the orange dot.

JESS  
And that's where the machines launched their missiles weeks ago.

A beat -- looking at the graphics.

JESS  
Now we're going to launch some of our own.

Jess touches the orange dot and it explodes into a graphic of the machines' missile base.

JESS  
We'd nuke it, but intel speaks about something interesting below. So, we'll just have to fight our bloody way into it, and see what's there to be had. We'll shoot conventional ordinance at it first, to soften it up.

The command station is busy with activity. The nearby CHIEF OF THE BOAT reads off a sonar reading.

COB'S VOICE  
Captain, sonar reports no activity in the waters.

SUB COMMANDER  
Very well, Chief.

Jess takes note of this news. He then gestures again on the multi-touch computer screen, and red dots spring up all over the place. The dots are blinking -- pulsating, all in rhythm.

Jess stares at John, waiting for him to say something.

JOHN  
More targets.

JESS  
As part of the peace process we exchanged intel on base locations with them -- they know ours, we know theirs. Each one of those red dots will have nuclear missiles slamming into it.

JOHN  
That's a lot of targets.

JESS  
You once told me: Battle's always a gamble, avoid it, unless it screams advantage.

Looking at John.

JESS  
Well, I see nothing but advantage in front of me.

SUB COMMANDER  
General, we're ready when you are.

JESS  
Thank you, Skipper.

Turning to address John.

JESS  
You're here to watch history. Stay out of the way, and shadow. Learn.

Padding John on the shoulder.

JESS  
I knew you, I learned from you. Now learn from me.

A beat as Jess turns back to the computer screen with the globe rolled out on it.

In the background we can hear communications in different languages streaming in from across the globe.

JESS  
Terro, what's our status?

Standing nearby, but offscreen the whole time, Terro steps into frame.

TERRO

The unified commands are ready, Sir. I'm ready. We're ready.

JESS

Good man. Launch out then. We'll go with a 1-minute countdown from my mark. Understood?

TERRO

Yes, Sir.

JESS

And, Colonel, do what you can.

TERRO

Understood, Sir.

Two machines emerge from a dark corner of the command station. They're over six-feet tall and bulging with muscle. They look almost identical, their facial features differing only slightly. One of them is the one that terminated Odysseus.

Terro coolly looks over his new guard.

TERRO

You two, on me at all times, understood?

The machine soldiers slowly nod.

Terro salutes Jess, and then departs, with the machines following behind him. Seeing them pass by, and leave the command station, Jess remarks to John.

JESS

This is their judgement-day.

BACK OUTSIDE, ON THE WATER

The soldiers are seeing with their night vision gear, as the combat rafts silently speed towards the shoreline.

Terro's raft is in the lead.

The rafts pull ashore.

ON THE BEACH, OYASHIRAZU

Hundreds upon hundreds of soldiers are piling onto the beach.

There is a dark mass directly above them -- it's an elevated roadway. The dark shapes of concrete support pillars frame the beach.

As if on cue, Terro's arm com-link lights up.

Terro turns to face his assembled strike teams. The ocean is in the background, providing a natural rhythm for his words.

In a lowered voice:

TERRO

Men, what we are about to do here is for all of those who have died, who have disappeared, but have not been forgotten. They will never be forgotten by us. Men, this is the night we bring terror to the machines to repay them for the terror they've made of this world. Our world. Who made them? We did!

Terro coldly looks over at one of his machine bodyguards, it returns his look without emotion.

Terro resumes his speech.

TERRO

Who are they to hunt us and make us live in fear? Hooah!

A low key, but still vigorous "Hooah" issues forth from the assembled warriors on the beach -- except for the two machines.

At this moment, from behind them, a cinematic backdrop emerges -- a barrage of Tomahawk missiles erupts from the ocean. Flying free of the three massive subs, the powerful missiles punch through the water and rocket up towards the sky.

The soldiers look up and see the missiles track down to low-altitude flight, streaming off in different directions. It's like Fourth of July fireworks on steroids. Beautiful in the night sky...

The majority of the missiles carry nuclear payloads, destined for distant targets.

The ones carrying conventional ordinance scream towards the nearby machine base. They fly over the soldiers's heads, and in what seems like an instant, impact and explode against the three missile batteries along the perimeter of the machine missile base.

Massive explosions are heard in the near distance as the batteries explode. The ground shakes. Huge fireballs reach up into the sky.

The attack has begun.

They begin moving forward in platoons.

MACHINE BASE

Typho and Magnet are among the soldiers moving forward.

Typho looks over at Magnet and says.

TYPHO

I'm counting on you to sense those damned things when we're close.

Magnet gives no response. He doesn't even look at Typho.

As the men begin to approach the massive concrete embankment lining the machine base, they see the smoldering remains of the missile batteries above them.

Additional missiles were also fired at what appears to have been gun emplacements.

Other than the sound of fires burning, everything is quiet as the soldiers begin to scale the imposing concrete wall.

Ropes with barbed harpoons are fired at the top of the embankment, and the men connect their rope climbing devices. They wrap the rope around the capstan three times, and then connect it to a harness worn around their waist. Then they hold on for dear life as they rapidly ascend under battery-power.

Magnet readies himself to ascend after Typho. He looks up.

Point-of-view through Magnet's night-vision -- in the grayish tint we see Terro above us with his two massive machine bodyguards on both sides of him, their miniguns pointed up.

Off that, we cut back to Magnet. His weapon is slung to his side, as he pulls himself up and engages the climbing device.

He rapidly ascends with the rest of the assault team.

Then, the shooting starts. Several machine soldiers from up above have gathered at the edge of the embankment and are firing down on the soldiers with incredible accuracy. Terro's two machines see what's happening and instantly react. While ascending, they direct their weapons to the left and fire back at their own kind. A few seconds later, and after a dozen soldiers have been blown off the ropes, the machine soldiers have been disabled, falling down in a heap of sparks as the miniguns' DU penetrators rip through them, tearing them to shreds.

The first men reach the top, and... are over! More firing can be heard as they engage with what ever is on the other side of the embankment.

One of Terro's machines pulls itself over and begins to join in the fight. Then Terro's finally over, along with his other machine protector.

Magnet is over!

We see what looks like a nightmare -- firey rounds blazing through the darkness, zipping by us from all directions.

We cut back to Magnet's point-of-view, and see, in the gray infrared vision -- machine soldiers! Their armored metal frames walking towards us, firing!

Still tracking Magnet's point-of-view: Magnet turns to his right, and we see Terro's two machines pouring DU rounds into their fellow kind. Terro is behind one of the machines, barking orders into a radio.

It sounds like chaos, but it's controlled chaos. Soldiers are getting killed, wounded, but they're advancing slowly forward.

Suddenly, jets scream overhead and begin dropping munitions on the machine army.

We're still seeing through Magnet's point-of-view: Typho is off to our left. He's got a platoon with him, and is trying to outflank the machines coming at them.

But Typho has gone too far ahead, too fast. He disappears along with his men in the tremendous flash of the aerial bombardment.

The blast knocks Magnet off his feet, and the sounds of the battle disappear as his hearing goes deaf.

Seconds later, his hearing returns with force. Magnet stumbles to his feet, trying to get his bearing. Bullets are zipping by him, missing him by only inches.

He rushes ahead, yelling out for Typho as the jets cry off into the far distance and the ground settles.

Magnet's fellow soldiers are crying out for him to stop.

Several disabled machine soldiers see Magnet approach, and begin to fire on him.

Magnet instantly drops to one knee and returns fire. His DU penetrators blow the head apart on one, and on the other, his fire takes off its remaining arm -- rendering its weapon useless.

The armless machine tries to move toward Magnet's position, but finds the explosion has forced its body into the ground, temporarily anchoring it. Still it's relentless, continuing to try to wriggle itself free -- like a wild animal caught in a trap.

Magnet quickly jumps to his feet and runs over to Typho, who's down near the trapped machine.

Magnet's point-of-view: In infrared vision, Typho doesn't look like himself. The blood all over his face makes him look like a tattooed creature. His helmet was forced off by the explosions. And something, a piece of metal perhaps, appears to be lodged into the side of his head. The lower half of his body is off -- blown off. His entrails are just lying on the ground. He's all but dead...

We can hear the armless machine-soldier struggling to wrestle itself free -- the mechanisms of its body sounding off as it tries everything it can.

Magnet grabs Typho, putting his arms around him.

The one arm and hand that Typho has left is clumsily reaching. Finally locating it, Typho touches the shrapnel lodged in the side of his head.

Typho looks up at his caregiver.

Bullets zip by in the dark. Smoke is everywhere. Screams emerge and disappear. Explosions are heard.

For a moment, Typho seems to recognize who is holding him, and says softly:

TYPHO

Maria, tell Maria I loved her. Goodbye.

MAGNET

I will, I'll tell her. Go now. Remember who you were. I will see you soon my friend.

Typho just looks up. Magnet is caressing his head. His shallow, forced breathing stops.

Bullets claw up the ground all around. In the midst of this, Magnet gently lowers Typho's ragged body back to the ground -- seemingly oblivious to everything that's happening around him.

Magnet rises to his feet. He looks at the nearby armless machine-soldier that's still struggling to wriggle free.

He aims his rifle at it with one hand, and casually blows its head off. Its wriggling stops.

We can hear Terro shouting in the background.

TERRO'S VOICE

Keep advancing! We're almost there!

Magnet takes his night-vision gear off.

Close up on Magnet's face. He's just looking at us now, a blank expression has come over him. Explosions are lighting

his face.

INT. BRIGHTLY LIT ROOM, CENTRAL CORE, DEEP UNDER MOUNT  
EVEREST

We're back in the machines' central core. The brilliantly  
lit, almost cloud-like room.

There's the red eye again. Just seeming to float in the  
endless white space.

It's quiet, perfectly quiet.

We move forward, closer to the eye.

As we get closer, we see torrents of information streaming  
across its lens. Information not visible unless near it.

It's not a passive eye, it's a decision making eye.

Then suddenly, the ground starts shaking -- we notice this  
because the eye is starting to shake every so slightly in  
front of us.

We can just hear the sounds of massive explosions from high  
above us.

The torrents of information cease, and a simple blinking  
cursor appears in the middle of the eye.

Blinking for a few seconds, one word finally appears:

TERMINATE.

The movie ends.

FADE OUT