

**THE COLONY**

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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN

BEN TEMPESTA speaks to us.

BEN (V.O.)  
Funny how change happens suddenly.

EXT. SPACE

Planet Earth.

A sleek, futuristic space shuttle breaks the atmosphere.

BEN (V.O.)  
We suddenly advanced space travel.

The shuttle circles Mars.

PLANET EARTH-MONTAGE

Overpopulation. Starvation. Rioting.

BEN (V.O.)  
Suddenly there were too many people.

EXT. SPACE

A space freighter.

INT. COMMAND CENTER

A Captain fires the engines.

EXT. FREIGHTER

The engines ignite and, out of nowhere, tear open a worm hole.

BEN (V.O.)  
Suddenly we had a solution.

INT. WORM HOLE

A science ship flies through the worm hole and, on the other side, comes upon several small planets, THE COLONY.

INT. PLANETS-MONTAGE

Raw tiny planets.

BEN (V.O.)

The eggheads thought it would take about 200 years going the speed of light to get there. The worm hole cut that to nothing. That's what they do. Connect two locations very far apart. Don't ask me any more.

A quick montage of industry and structures as they pop up.

BEN (V.O.)

Suddenly, 150 years later and everything was fine.

EXT. EARTH

BEN (V.O.)

And then suddenly it all changed.

Strange and sleek fighters swoop down on Earth. They tear a holy hell across its surface.

EXT. COLONIES

INT. BAR-INT. RESTAURANT-EXT. SQUARE-DAY/NIGHT

Patrons and the public watch snippets of the horror of the attack on monitors.

NARRATOR

Nobody knows where they came from!  
They've almost destroyed Europe!  
Millions are dead!

And then one quick clip as a terrified correspondent tries to report on the devastation.

An ALIEN appears and strikes him down with a blade. Massive and muscular. And mean as shit. Another moment and the feed cuts out.

EXT. EARTH

Dozens of alien fighters streak away from a burning Earth.

EXT. CRUISER-SPACE

A cruiser docks beside the worm hole.

INT. CRUISER

A FIRST MATE approaches a CAPTAIN.

FIRST MATE

Captain, the fighters are approaching.  
We have about 20 minutes. They'll  
slaughter the colonists.

CAPTAIN

There's only one thing we can do.

EXT. CRUISER

The cruiser enters the worm hole. The fighters close behind.

INT. CRUISER

FIRST MATE

Are you sure, sir?

CAPTAIN

We have 90 million people to protect.

FIRST MATE

Yes, sir.

INT. WORM HOLE

Then the massive cruiser rips apart in a blinding explosion.

EXT. WORM HOLE-COLONY

The worm hole spits out some flames and then closes up. Like  
it was never there.

BEN

And suddenly we were alone. We didn't  
know who the aliens were. We didn't  
know if they'd open the worm hole  
tomorrow---next week--or never. That  
was three years ago. So we went on.  
Well, I use that term loosely.

EXT. SPACE-SHUTTLE

A non-descript little ship hangs in space.

INT. SHUTTLE

Looks like a small, lived-in mobile home. A man, BEN TEMPESTA, 30s, lies on a cot.

Ben turns around in the bed. Disheveled and weary.

A monitor goes off and signals: RECHARGE COMPLETE. Ben sighs and slowly stands before he crosses to the console. Flicks on the ship and fires the engine.

EXT. SPACE

The shuttle approaches one of the planets of the colony.

INSERT: PLANET 2

INT. SHUTTLE-DAY

Ben maneuvers through the clouds.

Below lays a vast and ugly city.

Buildings of all shapes and very big sizes as if hastily thrown into a box. Other flying vehicles bunch around in the distance.

BEN (V.O.)

Ugh. New Angeles.

Ben hits a few buttons on his console and a screen appears with the face of JACKSON BENNET, 40s, in a police uniform.

JACKSON

Ben. About time.

BEN

I had to recharge in flight.

JACKSON

When're you gonna show?

BEN

I have to dock and then make it through your lovely city. About an hour. What's the hurry?

JACKSON

Not on the airwaves. Just to be safe.  
Need a ride?

BEN

I'll get there. See you in an hour.

EXT. CITY-DAY

Ben's shuttle circles the endless maze of traffic and congestion. Eventually docks his ship on a huge tree-like station with other ships of every size, shape and condition.

INT. DOCK

Ben rides the cramped elevator down.

EXT. STREET

Ben exits to the bustling street. Shops, vehicles, deliveries, etc. Occasionally someone has a strange creature in tow as a pet.

A boy about 12, ASH, eyes him from across the street.

Ben begins to walk and then stops at a liquor store. Opens the outside cooler and takes out a soda. Pulls out his wallet and removes some odd plastic strips. They look like money.

An old photo in the wallet catches his attention: a woman about 30, AMANDA, and a little girl about 8, SASHA.

A credit-card-size picture. He switches to several different photos on the same card. Then a short film on the same card. Family pictures.

Within the short movie, Sasha says "Hi Daddy."

Shuts it off and then pays the clerk.

An overhead television, sound off, gives a newscast: PLANET 4 SECESSION BID.

Ben walks on.

Suddenly Ash appears beside Ben with another strip of plastic.

ASH

Hey, mister. Can you break a fifty?

BEN

A store is over there.

Ash stops him.

ASH

That guy's an asshole. He wants me to buy something first. I just want to make a donation to my local church.

Ben wary as he takes out his wallet.

BEN

Shouldn't you be in school?

ASH

Waste of time. The aliens will show up sooner or later. And they won't care if I went to school.

With that, the kid catches this man off-guard, snatches his wallet and takes off in a run. Ben hesitates for a moment, sighs and then gives chase.

They snake through the commotion of the street and the webbing of city blocks, alleys and buildings.

Once or twice the kid narrowly escapes death as he leaps out of the way or climbs through an opening in a truck.

Ash gets the lead and loses Ben. He gulps in breaths.

Then Ben appears down the street. The kid's eyes widen and he takes off.

ASH

loses the cop once again.

He shimmies down a pole to a courtyard and opens the wallet with a smile. Loses the good cheer when he sees Ben's ID-- SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR-COLONY POLICE.

A breath later a hand clamps down on his neck.

He whips around and faces Ben who scoops the wallet out of his hand.

BEN

I'm not much for exercise. So I'm not too happy right now.

ASH

Look, I'm sorry. I wouldn't have done it if I knew who you were.

BEN

But no problem if I'm a regular Joe, though?

THUG #1 (O.C.)

Hey!

Ben turns his head and sees 3 THUGS behind. Two of them have pipes in their hands.

THUG #2

Whatta you doin' with that kid? You a pervert?

BEN

Not all the time.

THUG #3

How 'bout you give us that wallet and we'll call it even.

The man hesitates and smiles. Ash's neck slips out of his hand as he turns to the bad guys.

BEN

Look, I don't want any trouble.

He dwells again and then slips the wallet into his pocket.

BEN

It's all yours. Just come and get it.

The three glance at each other---"Is this guy crazy?"---and go on the attack.

Sure enough, Ben side-steps a flurry of sloppy punches and kicks as he counters with much more vicious accuracy as the thugs meet the wall, his fists and his boots.

Ash watches in awe.

Thug #1---out! Thug #2---gone!

Thug #3 stops in his tracks, thinks for a moment---and then runs for the hills!

Ben turns and an empty space where the kid was.

He looks back to the two on the ground and curses to himself.

EXT. POLICE STATION-DAY

This building sits stuck in the armpit of the city.

INT. POLICE STATION-MORGUE

A strange, rat-like creature runs across the corner and into a hole.

Filth prevalent but the place looks modern.

Jackson stands to the side by a desk. A sandwich lays on some paper on the desk. But the meat a brilliant green.

Ben removes a necklace around his neck, a variation of a crucifix.

BEN

Thank you for coming and sorry about the dead thing.

Ben stands before a row of a dozen or so corpses laid out before him. They also have a similar crucifix around their necks.

BEN

(summarily)

But may God release you from the binds of life and welcome you into the cradle of Heaven. Happy trails.

Ben does a quick move of the hands and puts the crucifix back on. He puts his thumb print on an electronic clipboard as Jackson steps up.

JACKSON

Well thanks. These New Station types like their kickoff. And the last priest got himself killed in a knife fight.

BEN

Glad I could help.

JACKSON

How long have you been a man of the cloth?

BEN

Eight years. Thought it could help when I was at a post at the time. Get close to the people. It's easier than the traditional disciplines. More forgiving. I'll probably need that in the end.

Jackson nods his head.

JACKSON

Never really had a use for any of it. To me, when you're dead, you're dead.

Ben glances at him.

BEN

I hope not. But you'll never know 'til then, I guess.

JACKSON

If you think about it, it may be the cause of all our problems right now. Sure, Earth is gone but we're still here. But people fight more since then. It's like they have nothing to lose.

Pause.

Then a gurney hits the door and breaks the silence. A body under a sheet gets rolled in by the coroner, BETHANY, 40s with a white coat sprinkled with blood.

JACKSON

Here's our boy.

Jackson pulls off the sheet. Sure enough, a dead body that looks frozen. And a very clear burn mark.

JACKSON

Curtis Westmore. Age 44. He's an accountant supervisor at MarCorp's headquarters here. He was shot in the Blue District.

BEN

Not a good area?

JACKSON

You can say that. Not that we would have thought twice about it. Some guy gettin' his gears lubed. But several witnesses said he was running around like a maniac, yelling "six days, six days" before someone shot him dead. And then Bethany here found this.

Bethany raises the discolored hand, the fingers a bright yellow. Ben's eyes widen.

BEN

Branium burn?

BETHANY

Yes. How'd you know?

BEN

I had a case some years back. A terrorist group. But it's been reigned for a while.

JACKSON

I'm at a loss. We got so many assholes jockeying for power now. Maybe it's one of these Governors trying to take it all. Maybe it's the worker groups trying to wrench the corporations' power away. Who the hell knows? But if they got Branium, they can build a bomb. A bomb that will turn our beautiful city to dust. That's why I didn't want to tell you about it over the communicator. If this gets out, the people'd have a shit-fit. Probably think it's the work of those damn aliens.

Ben studies the body before him, more than an idle curiosity in his gaze.

BEN

Whatta we know about him?

JACKSON

Staff accountant at MarCorp's office here. No family. Like many others they were killed on Earth. Neighbors saw nothing out of the ordinary. But nobody really pays attention to each other anyway. No spikes in his bank account. Nothing at his apartment.

Ben picks up the dead yellow hand.

BEN

He must have noticed this. Did he see a doctor?

BETHANY

The company doctor didn't see him recently. But Branium burns are not toxic or painful.

JACKSON

Maybe he just noticed that day and didn't get around to seeing the anybody about it.

Ben puts down the hand.

BEN

Maybe he knew exactly what it was. He gets into something, thinking it's something else. But no. He has a hand in smuggling Branium here. If he goes to the doctor then he's basically saying he knows what it is. So he investigates himself and finds that it's a bomb. But then the bad guys find him.

(pause)

Six days. When was he killed?

JACKSON

Two days ago.

BEN

Then whatever it is will be in four days. If it's even here on 2.

JACKSON

Will you be quiet about this? I can't trust anybody but you, Ben.

Ben removes a slick tiny computer from his belt and hands it to Jackson.

BEN

I'm going to need a copy of the file.

EXT. BUILDING-DAY

A non-descript building probably 50 stories high.

Ben exits the elevator at 48 and steps out to the walkway, a wind as he opens it and looks down, down, down to the street far below. Occasionally a flying truck and car go by.

He hesitates and stares down. Far all right!

He snaps out of it and walks to door 4812. A keycard lets him in.

INT. APARTMENT

Ben closes the door and enters the sparse apartment.

One bedroom. A television screen on the wall. Desk, chairs, kitchen table, etc.

Ben hesitates and listens to the dull humm of the city through the walls.

BEN

Talk to me.

A photo on the wall has Curtis with an older couple. Probably parents. Some now dead flowers in pots on the counter.

The 'fridge opens. Ben studies the contents. A half-eaten sandwich in a clear container, the meat also a brilliant green. Ben takes a soda out and closes the door.

BEN

Lisa, access the Curtis Westmore file.

The computer, LISA, on his belt lights up. Ben begins to look around. Her voice cannot be described as colorful. Very feminine, but not without a strong tinge of dry humor.

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

WE RUSH into Ben's ear and see that he has a microscopic receiver attached to the side of his earlobe.

BEN

Read it.

ANOTHER ZOOM and we also see a transmitter attached to the inside top of his mouth.

LISA (V.O.)

Done.

BEN

How long has he lived on 2?

LISA (V.O.)

Six years. He came here from MarCorp's office on Earth. North Dakota. He left behind his parents Katie and David in Tangiers, Wyoming.

Ben glances at the picture on the wall again.

BEN

Any issues on his record? Even a jay walking ticket?

LISA (V.O.)

No Ben. Nothing.

BEN

Any information of a wife? Relationship?

LISA (V.O.)

No.

BEN

None here either. Any vacations?

LISA (V.O.)

No.

BEN

Any patterns you can see?

LISA (V.O.)

Nothing but patterns, Ben. He had the same thing for lunch every day in the company cafeteria. He would go to work and return on the tram every day at almost the same time. His grocery bills and items were consistent every month. He would take the tram every Tuesday and Saturday to and from the West End station at the same time every week.

Ben's eyes widen.

BEN  
Wait a minute. West End?

LISA (V.O.)  
Yes, Ben.

BEN  
What time?

LISA (V.O.)  
He'd arrive at the West End station at  
about 15 minutes to 7pm every time.  
Very punctual, I must say.

BEN  
What kind of area is that?

LISA (V.O.)  
One moment.  
(pause)  
Industrial for the most part, Ben.

BEN  
Today is Monday. What would a guy like  
that be doing down there?

LISA (V.O.)  
I don't know, Ben. That's your job.

BEN  
Thank you for reminding me, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)  
You're welcome, Ben.

EXT. CITY-NIGHT

The bustle of the city.

Even though night, people still work here and there. All  
very confusing.

Ben steps off a tram, duffel bag on his side and joins the  
madness.

INT. BLUE DAISY MOTEL

Ben comes off the street and enters the basic and sparse surroundings.

He hits the bell and, after a moment, NINA SASH, 30s, appears, her hair in a ponytail.

She hesitates at the curtain and looks at the new guest, perplexed. Then she enters with a pleasant smile.

NINA

Hello.

Ben looks at her for a long moment.

BEN

Hi. I need a room.

NINA

Just you?

Ben pulls out a plastic card and hands it to her.

BEN

Just me.

NINA

It'll be a moment, Ben.

She then looks at the card and hits the computer.

NINA

Are you visiting?

BEN

Business.

NINA

What kind of business?

BEN

Police business.

She glances up.

NINA

Oh. Interesting.

Just then Ash, the 12-year-old boy from the street, enters

from another room with a bluster. As soon as he lays eyes on Ben, he hesitates. The two stare each other down for a moment.

NINA

Ash, where have you been?

ASH

Out, mom. But now I'm home.

He glances at the cop who gives him a sarcastic smile. The kid confused. Why isn't this guy doing anything?

NINA

Well, go have some dinner. I want to talk to you.

Ash nods and slowly disappears through another door.

NINA

Sorry, Ben. You know how kids are.

BEN

Yes. What is he? 13?

NINA

I shutter to think but it's close. He's 12.

BEN

I'm sure he's a good kid.

NINA

I wonder sometimes, though.

She finishes her entries.

NINA

Well, that's it.

She hands his card back with a card key.

NINA

Room 1423. Unfortunately we only have water showers. We were never upgraded to sonic. That was suppose to happen but then---you know. The attack.

BEN

I like water.

NINA

How long are you going to be staying with us?

BEN

Not sure.

NINA

Big case, huh?

BEN

I hope not.

She nods. An uncomfortable silence.

NINA

Well, we're glad to have you.

Ben begins to step away from the desk. He hesitates and turns.

BEN

I feel the same way you do.

NINA

Excuse me?

BEN

That catch-22 when you see someone after so long. You don't want to bring it up thinking they won't recognize you. Or not recognizing them. It's Nina, right? William Clinton High School in Oregon?

Nina smiles.

NINA

Yes. I wasn't sure you'd remember me. How are you?

BEN

Okay. How 'bout yourself?

NINA

Except for my little terror?

Ben gives her a faint smile.

NINA

Fine, thanks.

Another uncomfortable silence.

BEN

Well, I need a shower. And I haven't  
had a water shower in a long time.  
It's so retro. I can't wait.

Ben nods and slowly turns and crosses to the elevator. Nina lingers on him for a moment before she turns away.

INT. ROOM 1423-NIGHT

Ben enters the plain room and tosses the bag on the bed. The window overlooks a plain part of the still bustling city.

He unclips Lisa from his belt and props it up on the table.

INT. BATHROOM

Ben showers.

INT. ROOM 1423

The cop lays on the bed in his towel and stares at the ceiling.

BEN

Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

BEN

Show me the observation camera again.

LISA (V.O.)

What point?

BEN

30 seconds before he's killed.

Ben props up as Lisa projects a square image of a busy street. The angle shows it from above. Another busy street.

BEN

Lisa, 3D the image. And extrapolate to  
street level.

Suddenly the image splashes out and around Ben. Surrounds him, the electronic people walk around like ghosts. There

expect for the occasional pixilation.

Then Curtis appears and walks into view. He has a wary look about him.

BEN

He knew something was wrong. He knew about the bomb.

LISA (V.O.)

It seems that way, Ben. His facial signatures match stress and anxiety.

Suddenly a hole explodes in Curtis' leg and he goes to his knee. People scatter as another two shots strike his chest.

BEN

Whoever did him is good. Very good. Probably had a compact gun and shot from the hip. And he knew about all the cameras.

LISA (V.O.)

Observation cameras are common, though, Ben.

BEN

But he knew exactly where they were. Put himself out of their eye.

Ben lingers on the face of the dying man.

BEN

Lisa, turn off the tape.

The image gets sucked back into Lisa's innards.

EXT. CHUNG'S CHOW-NIGHT

A Chinese fast food joint.

INT. CHUNG'S CHOW

Ben studies the hi-tech (but low rent) menu that projects garish 3-D images of people who eat the delicious food, much of it with the green meat.

An OLD CHINESE GUY walks up.

CHINESE GUY

What would you like?

BEN

Got anything with chicken?

The old guy gives him a raised eyebrow.

CHINESE GUY

You crawl out from a rock or something?  
Chickens don't survive here. Or cows.  
They die.

Ben smiles.

BEN

I know. I just ask to relish that one  
moment of hope.

The old guy doesn't get it. Then he holds up a ladle with  
yellow sauce mixed with the green meat.

CHINESE GUY

You want grog curry? Very yummy.

Ben hesitates.

BEN

Sure.

EXT. STREET-NIGHT

Ben appears on the same street as in the video where Curtis  
was shot. He eats the curry out of a container as he studies  
the area.

The spot where Curtis died. Still a smattering of blood  
stains on the concrete. Ben absently rubs one with his foot.

Various cameras positioned around the area can be seen by  
the cop.

BEN IMAGINES

a FACELESS MAN in the crowd. The man has a very small and  
slick-looking gun. The man fires from his hip, the  
pedestrians oblivious to it all.

BEN

walks over to the hypothetical space as he finishes his dinner. The package into a small basket on a tube. The basket summarily crushes it to a pebble and sucks it into the tube.

Ben studies the area that he thinks the killer did the job in. He stands and holds an imaginary gun. He fires it and IMAGINES Curtis being shot.

BEN

Yes. He's very good.

PROSTITUTE (O.C.)

Whatcha doin' there?

Ben turns to face a buxom PROSTITUTE.

BEN

Trying to figure something out.

PROSTITUTE

Are you a cop? About that murder?

BEN

Yes. Did you see it?

PROSTITUTE

No. I came when the other cops were here. That happens a lot around here, though.

BEN

Why do you think?

The woman's eyes widen and she looks at him quizzically.

PROSTITUTE

I don't know---maybe they just want to hurt each other.

Then, with a sheepish smile, she idles up to him.

PROSTITUTE

If there isn't anything else---

BEN

---actually there is.

PROSTITUTE

Really? What might that be?

BEN

Swan.

She falls back into the quizzical look.

INT. BEN'S MOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Ben lays on the bed, a vial in his hand with a tiny swan logo on it.

BEN

Lisa?

She sits on the dresser.

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

BEN

If someone comes to the door, zap me.  
Otherwise, zap me at 8am.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben?

BEN

Yes, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

I find this to be a very unwise decision.

BEN

You say that every time.

LISA (V.O.)

I mean it every time, Ben.

With that, Ben slowly pulls the bottle to his nose and sniffs heartily. Obviously, the bottle drugs and Ben quickly and visibly falls under its spell.

The container falls out of his hand to the floor.

FROM BEN'S POV

he opens his eyes and everything becomes a different color.

Ben slowly rises from the bed. Then he takes a few hearty steps and leaps through the window.

EXT. MOTEL

Ben falls, head first.

Then he twists in mid-air and lands on his feet, no harm, no foul. He smiles wickedly.

He starts to run. Faster. Faster! Comical, like The Flash or The Road Runner. The terrain goes by in a swirl. Ben seems elated.

Then the dull thud of artillery.

He suddenly stops on a bluff and looks down to another city in flames. The alien ships tear it apart.

BEN'S POV

zooms forward and he sees Amanda and Sasha on a hill as they cringe at the devastation around them.

Ben rushes forward and he becomes The Road Runner again. Beep, beep! Several aliens get in his way and Ben summarily pummels them.

He rushes forward again and scoops up Amanda and Sasha as he runs. Everything turns to a swirl before---

---a flash of light---

EXT. HILLSIDE-DAY (CONTINUOUS DREAM)

Calm blue skies. Birds chirp.

Ben raises his head to see a vast green and empty field. Sasha plays in a patch of sunflowers with a small puppy.

A woman's hand touches his shoulder and he looks up to Amanda in a beautiful sun dress who crouches down behind him.

Then a harsh buzz in the distance. Quickly grows closer.

BEN

Oh no.

The sound deafens and washes over them.

Everything begins to crack from the shards of grass to his wife and daughter themselves. Ben covers his ears.

The whole scene cracks around him and dumps him back into---

INT. MOTEL ROOM-DAY

The morning sun splashes through the window. Ben sits on the floor as he clutches his ears.

BEN

Lisa, I'm awake.

And the sound ceases.

Ben sighs and opens his eyes. A light blue. He rubs them.

EXT. BUILDING-DAY

A sparkling office building.

INT. BUILDING

A vast and beautiful floor. A complete home.

INT. BEDROOM

Same as the rest. Exquisite linen and furniture.

Suddenly a man, 50s, awakens with a gasp.

He looks around, dazed. But on closer examination his eyes not right. Not real. Close, but creepy at the same time.

Then he smiles with an insane glint in his eyes. Meet HARRIS MAR.

MAR

It's true.

INT. BEN'S ROOM-DAY

Ben washes his face and then puts drops in his eyes. The blue quickly fades away.

INT. HALLWAY

He opens his door and hesitates. Ash stands there as the kid leans against the wall. The two look at each other for a long moment.

BEN

Good morning.

Ben steps out and closes the door.

ASH

Good morning.

Another pause. The man raises an eyebrow.

BEN

Anything I can do for you?

ASH

Are you going to tell my mom?

Ben nods and begins to walk off. Ash follows.

BEN

I think she has a good idea what you're doing. Probably better than you.

ASH

I don't do it a lot.

The man reaches the elevator and pushes the button.

BEN

Why do it at all?

The kid puzzled for a moment.

ASH

I want money.

BEN

We all want more money. Where's your dad.

ASH

He was on Earth when---he and my mom didn't get along.

Ben looks at the kid for a moment.

The elevator arrives. The man steps onto the car.

BEN

Stealin' people's money won't fix all that.

Ash hesitates then jumps on the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR

Silence for a moment.

ASH  
Did you have anybody on Earth?

BEN  
A lot of people did.

Another pause.

ASH  
How'd you learn to fight like that?  
With those guys in the alley?

The elevator arrives.

INT. LOBBY

Ben steps off.

BEN  
That wasn't fighting.

ASH  
Then what was it?

BEN  
I---don't know.

The man steps out the front door.

ASH  
Where you going?

Ben hesitates and looks back at the kid.

BEN  
Breakfast?

Ash nods and waves absently.

ASH  
Okay. See you later.

Ben nods and disappears. After a beat, Ash walks off, too.

EXT. MAR-CORP BUILDING-DAY

A stunner of a structure.

INT. MARCORP-LOBBY-DAY

Ben waits as he sips his coffee in the vast marble lobby. A beautiful receptionist sits behind the counter.

"Click, click, click" of shoes of a man's approach.

Then JOHN HAMMET, 30s, appears. Clean-cut to the bone.

HAMMET

Detective Tempesta?

Ben stands and shakes hands.

BEN

Yes.

HAMMET

Please follow me and I'll show you  
Curtis' workspace.

INT. HALLWAY

A long carpeted corridor. Occasionally Hammet and Ben pass a desk or work area or the various employees.

HAMMET

This is just terrible what happened to  
Curtis.

BEN

Did you know him?

HAMMET

Oh yes. We were good friends... well,  
here at work. You know how it is with  
interaction at work. It's not easily  
transferred to your private life. But  
I had no idea he was like that.

BEN

Like what?

HAMMET

Prone to going down there. To that area.

BEN

How do you know he was down there for something sleazy?

HAMMET

Well, I guess I don't.

BEN

Are you?

HAMMET

Am I what?

BEN

Prone to going down there?

HAMMET

Absolutely not, detective.

Hammet stops in his tracks.

HAMMET

I am very normal, let me tell you.

The man shrugs.

HAMMET

Maybe too normal. I would have no business being at some place like that.

BEN

Well, I'm sorry for suggesting.

Hammet shrugs again and leads him on.

HAMMET

Very well.

INT. OFFICE

He brings Ben into a cramped office with four desks.

HAMMET

Well, this is...was...his desk. Will you be all right alone?

BEN

Yes, thank you.

Hammet nods and exits. Ben takes a moment and circles the

desk. He takes Lisa off his belt, puts it on the counter and sits.

BEN

Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

BEN

Can you access his computer?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben. The general files. Many are encrypted, though.

BEN

Read them, please.

LISA (V.O.)

One moment.

Pause. Ben picks over the belongings of a man who likely wasn't very interesting.

LISA (V.O.)

I'm finished, Ben.

BEN

Anything I need to know?

LISA (V.O.)

Not that I can see.

Then CINDY, late 20s, enters and hesitates. Flashy and haphazard.

CINDY

Hello.

BEN

Hello.

She puts her purse on her desk.

CINDY

Are you a cop? About Curtis?

BEN

Yes. Can you tell me anything about him?

CINDY

Not really. Nice guy. Considering he lost his folks in the invasion. But who didn't lose someone?

BEN

No secrets he might have had? Suspicious you might have had?

She thinks.

CINDY

No. I thought he liked me for a while. Most guys like him do. But he never did anything about it.

Ben nods.

Then CLIFF HALFORD, 40s, appears at the doorway, big with a steel gaze in his eyes. He eyes the two for a moment and then steps away.

BEN

Who was that?

CINDY

Security for the boss. Maybe even the head of security, I don't know. This is a big company.

Ben smiles.

CINDY

I gotta get to work.

BEN

Don't let me stop you.

She turns away.

BEN

Did you get him, Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

INT. CHANG'S CHOW-DAY

Ben sits and eats more grog curry with Lisa propped onto the table. The Chinese guy hovers around behind his counter.

LISA (V.O.)

Cliff Halford. 42. Ex-Special Forces on Earth. Head of Security for MarCorp. No children. Ex-wife that was on Earth during the attack.

BEN

Then we're onto something. Why would he look in on me if this wasn't something?

LISA (V.O.)

I don't know, Ben.

NINA (O.C.)

Ben?

Ben turns and sees Nina with a bowl of food.

NINA

Are you busy? Can I join you?

Ben hesitates for a second or two. Then he smiles.

BEN

Please.

She sits across from him as Ben closes up Lisa.

NINA

I come in here all the time. It's the best crappy food on 2.

He smiles.

BEN

The only kind I can eat.

NINA

So. It's been a while. You became a cop.

Nods. Notices the thin necklace around his neck that holds the crucifix that's under his shirt.

NINA

And a priest?

Ben's eyes widen. Takes out the crucifix.

BEN

Yes. How'd you know?

NINA

The Trelles chain. It's the law, right?  
Or your law. New Station, right?

BEN

Yes. But it's more a tradition than a  
law. But most Station followers don't  
know that.

NINA

I guess I'm a student of the human  
condition. And what a condition we're  
in right now, huh? But you people  
believe in life after death, right?

BEN

Hope is probably a better word.

Nina nods and looks out to the passing crowds.

NINA

Everybody feels so helpless. Any moment,  
any day the bad guys will burst through  
the worm hold and slice us all into  
sushi. Maybe what they're missing is  
we're always helpless, that we use and  
need each other. Every day your life  
can go in many different directions and  
those are directly affected by others.

Ben intrigued by this lady and it shows in his  
attentiveness.

NINA

But I'm pontificating. How 'bout you?  
Do you have a family?

BEN

Not anymore.

Nina hesitates.

NINA

How stupid of me. Just charging into  
a question like that. I'm sorry.

BEN

It's all right. Not like I'm alone.

NINA

That's the truth. My ex-husband and Ash's father was on Earth at the time. It's hard on him, not having a father.

BEN

And not on you?

NINA

He wasn't a good man. Not much of a good father. Try selling that to a 12-year-old. But we have to move on, make the best of it. Not like I don't care. I do very much. It's a road I didn't choose. But that's each of our jobs. To travel the roads we are given or try to find new ones. All in all, make the best of what you have. Isn't that what your religion says?

BEN

In a way. It says to be yourself and make the best of that. Too many lives are led in the interest of forging a mark or wanting to be remembered. Even if it's for a good cause, and many times it isn't, then you shouldn't do it if that doesn't bring you happiness.

NINA

That sounds like it can be interpreted in many different ways.

Ben smiles.

BEN

I suppose. You haven't changed a bit.

Nina fidgets and smiles nervously.

NINA

Really? You paid enough attention to have a point of comparison?

BEN

I remember a smart girl who liked to write poetry and essays for the school paper. Someone who was the class Vice President. Someone who laughed a lot, too. But that was a time when young mens' fancy turned to thoughts of nice hair, long legs and empty brains. And I was no better than those aimless boys.

She takes a moment.

NINA

Did you just call me ugly?

He smiles, followed by Nina.

EXT. STREET-DAY

The two walk through the hustle and bustle of the street as they continue their conversation.

NINA

I think that my head just went in so many directions I couldn't actually decide on just one career. So fast forward and I have a kid from an exciting man that had no substance. I run away to the Colonies to reassess my life. Then blam, Earth is gone.

She looks to Ben who just lightly smiles.

NINA

You haven't said much of anything.

BEN

I'm not a good conversationalist. I more react to what others do. What should I say?

NINA

I don't know. I'm surprised you're a cop, much less a priest. I would have guessed that you'd be CHASED by cops the way you were.

Ben smiles.

BEN

I was a few times, I guess. It would have been fun in the short term but not any good in the long. Funny how many things work out like that.

NINA

It must be exciting to catch bad guys.

BEN

Not really. It reminds you of how flawed we all really are. And that can be depressing.

They reach the train station.

NINA

Well, this is where you catch the train back to the motel. Are you going back?

BEN

No. I have some more work to do.

She nods. And uncomfortable silence as a train slides into place. The doors part. A few people file in.

NINA

Well, I guess I'll see you later. Since we live in the same place. Well, sort of---

Ben nods and Nina steps onto the train.

BEN

Nina?

She turns back.

BEN

I liked talking. To you.

She smiles.

NINA

Maybe you'll actually talk more next time.

He smiles.

BEN

Maybe.

Slowly they turn again as the doors close.

Nina smiles to herself as Ben hesitates again and glances back as the train leaves.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben?

BEN

Yes, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

She seemed like a nice person. Or that her voice patterns and facial signature denotes a kind person.

BEN

Yes, she is. And Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

BEN

Mind your own business.

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

EXT. TRAM-NIGHT

A large tram car (that looks like a futuristic New York subway) quietly streaks by.

INT. TRAM

Ben rides alone. A few other bedraggled passengers scatter about.

In his hand he looks again at the photo card of his wife and child. After a moment he shuts it off and hesitates. Slips it in his pocket.

METALLIC VOICE

West End Station, next stop.

EXT. WEST END STATION

Ben and a couple others step off. The train then speeds away and disappears around a corner. He glances around the ill-lit area.

Industrial all right. Plain and dirty buildings. The occasional utility vehicle parked on the street.

EXT. STREET

Ben steps out of the station and into the neighborhood.

The sound of the distant traffic. A HOMELESS MAN crosses into the glow of a streetlight.

Ben steps into the shadows of the bulky buildings.

BEN

Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes Ben.

BEN

Have you checked leases and ownership of all these buildings?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes Ben.

BELL

Anything out of the ordinary? Anything related to MarCorp?

LISA (V.O.)

No Ben. All the uses are industrial. One is a potato chip packaging plant. One is a shipping house for pornography. One is---

BEN

---that's okay. Any police reports filed.

LISA (V.O.)

Three dead bodies in the past year. All ruled natural deaths.

BEN

Homeless people.

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben. That's what they say. And five breaks-ins. Still open cases. There is a restaurant six blocks over that had a health violation. And there were three motor vehicle accidents in the past year in the area.

BEN

Were the vehicles registered to the businesses in the area.

LISA (V.O.)

Out of six vehicles, five were.

BEN

How 'bout the sixth?

LISA (V.O.)

Registered to Apex Lighting and Sound. That was four months ago.

BEN

Who are they?

LISA (V.O.)

High end company. Very expensive.

Ben hesitates.

BEN

Where did it happen?

LISA (V.O.)

1215 Bastille.

The cop glances up at the street corner as he approaches.

THROUGH THE TINY PIN/CAMERA on his lapel, Lisa can see what he sees.

LISA (V.O.)

Two blocks up 5<sup>th</sup> and take a right.

EXT. 1215 BASTILLE

Ben approaches the address. Nothing around except for the buzz of the faint, overhead street lights.

BEN

What is it?

LISA (V.O.)

They make lifters for flying trucks.

Then he hears a faint "hiss". Follows the sound around the corner.

LISA (V.O.)

I believe it came from this door, Ben.

A thick and new metal door with a key-card entry. Nobody around. The address reads 1132.

Lisa sees it, too, through the camera.

BEN

Lisa, check the utility company computer.  
Is the power on inside?

LISA (V.O.)

One moment.

(pause)

Yes Ben. It's to levels that are consistent  
with any business during the day.

BEN

So they're home.

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

EXT. BUILDING-ROOF

Ben comes out to the roof of the adjacent building. Looks over to the target roof. Glances around but nothing that can help him.

With a shrug he backs up.

BEN

I'm going to jump the roof, Lisa. Make  
sure you have your buffers on.

LISA (V.O.)

If you don't make it, shall I alert the  
paramedics?

BEN

If I don't make it, alert the coroner.

With that, Ben runs toward the edge, leaps off and sails across the chasm. After a moment, he tumbles safely to the other side.

LISA (V.O.)

Were we successful, Ben?

BEN

Yes, Lisa.

INT. BUILDING

Ben enters and silently comes down the stairs. Dark and dusty seems to be the color of the day.

INT. HALL

From a vantage point above, he surveys the large hall.

Several dozen individuals sit on mats lined up in front of a podium. All in a state of meditation.

Soothing decorations adorn the area: holographic trees, animals, a babbling brook. A mild pulse emits from the speakers around the room, like a tiny heartbeat and the slow purr of a cat mixed together.

BEN

I don't immediately recognize it.

LISA (V.O.)

I don't either, Ben. Seems to be derivative of 22<sup>nd</sup> century Buddhism.

BEN

That's an oldie.

SEBASTIAN,

late 20's, impeccably dressed and very muscular, stands in the back of the hall. He looks over the crowd with a wary eye. Occasionally his head twitches absently. Somethin' not right with this boy.

His eyes then settle on a woman in the row of disciples. Very attractive and Sebastian slowly makes his way around the perimeter to get a better look at her.

His eyes caress her large breasts and long blonde hair. Wets his lips as his eyes grow like saucers.

HALFORD,

as he meditates, eyes this lascivious kid. Stands and begins to cross to Sebastian.

BEN,

on closer examination, sees a man to the side the one that makes the noises over the sound system. In a meditative state, too. The man, CREMENTAL, in his 50s, and very peaceful.

He stops and slowly opens his eyes. Approaches the podium as others open their eyes.

CREMENTAL

Hello and thank you for coming. Welcome. We come here to escape, block out the teetering world of ours. To find peace in uncertainty. We think that there are threats around every corner. But do we really know that?

(pause)

No. We don't. As a matter of fact we have a news flash. A good news flash. Stop the presses. The leader of our little club has learned that we have nothing to worry about. Absolutely nothing. And soon we will bring that to the people and this world, make the utopia that was envisioned and promised us all along.

Halford joins Sebastian.

HALFORD

May I speak with you in private?

Sebastian glances at Halford who turns and exits into the foyer.

INT. FOYER

The two men, alone, face off.

HALFORD

We're not about that, Sebastian. Not here.

Sebastian smiles.

SEBASTIAN

About what?

HALFORD

Treating our members with disrespect.

SEBASTIAN

Members? More like lemmings.

HALFORD

That's what I mean. They, like I,  
believe in your father.

SEBASTIAN

I believe in him, too. The great Harris  
Mar. I believe he's crazy. I believe he  
suckered these people into some sort of  
cult. But it's not like they didn't want  
to be that way. They are born for this.  
Born to be used. My father is very good  
at using people.

Halford tightens his fist for a moment and then releases it.

HALFORD

Your father sent you to help me. And I  
need your help right now. Would you  
please check the upper floors? Make  
sure our members are not disturbed.

SEBASTIAN

Those useless homeless men we found last  
week? Big deal.

Halford eyes the kid.

SEBASTIAN

Sure, boss. Sure. Be glad to.

With a smile, he turns and steps off.

SEBASTIAN

(to himself)  
I'd like somebody to disturb MY member.

INT. HALL

Ben continues to watch Cremental.

## CREMENTAL

Now let us return to our meditations.

Cremental takes his place again and begins his bizarre tones. Everyone drops back into meditation.

SEBASTIAN

comes up the steps and hesitates. Sees Ben but the cop not him.

Slowly, he breaks a smile. He slips off his jacket and lays it across a chair. Rolls up his sleeves. This guy BIG!

BEN

seemingly doesn't notice as Sebastian sneaks up behind him. Then, at the last moment, Ben sees and rolls out of the way.

Sebastian charges but the cop trips him up. Then Sebastian jumps up again and throws a kick that connects. Ben flies backwards into some boxes.

The monster charges forward but too confidently. Ben manages to connect with a few punches. They continue to exchange blows in the small space.

DOWN BELOW HALFORD

senses something. Hears the faint rustling and turns his head in the direction.

SEBASTIAN AND BEN

take a moment.

SEBASTIAN

By the way. Are you authorized to be up here?

BEN

Not really.

SEBASTIAN

Good.

Sebastian charges again. Ben side-steps and cracks the big man on the head with a piece of wood. Does the job and the cop disappears up some stairs as TWO other GUARDS appear.

SEBASTIAN

Kill him!

Guns out as they go after the mystery man.

EXT. ROOF

Ben bursts through the door.

He takes a moment to position himself for the jump but the two guards are on his tail. They fire and he narrowly jumps out of the way.

Instantly Ben removes two square metal cartridges from his belt. With a push of a button pieces pop out of the casing and form two guns. "Click, click, click".

The cop fires back and the two guards take cover for a moment.

Not wasting his breath, Ben runs and leaps over the chasm between the two buildings. But this time he lands hard and in a daze for a moment.

HALFORD

comes behind the two guards.

HALFORD

What are you doing?

GUARD #1

Trying to kill him.

HALFORD

Well don't.

Halford pushes them out of the way and warily approaches the roof. Looks out and sees the mystery man on the other side.

Then Ben turns his head and Cliff sees the cop's face before he ducks down the stairwell of the other building.

HALFORD

turns to the guards.

HALFORD

He's in the building next door. Catch him but DON'T kill him.

The guards turn and run down the stairs.

INT. HALL

Halford approaches the big man who nurses his wounds.

HALFORD

Are you okay?

SEBASTIAN

Never better.

HALFORD

What happened?

SEBASTIAN

That guy attacked me. Tried to kill me.

Cliff glares at the kid.

HALFORD

Why would he? He's a policeman.

SEBASTIAN

A cop?

INT. 2<sup>ND</sup> BUILDING

Ben rushes down the stairs and then stops. Hears metal doors fly open and a few feet as men rush in.

The cop looks down to the floor below and sees 6 guys.

GUARD #1

We have to take him alive.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, should I call the local police?

BEN

No, Lisa. Not yet.

Shadows swallow the cop.

GUARDS #1 & 2

cautiously search their area. Flashlights cut the darkness.

A figure comes up behind them. They hesitate for a moment

and then both turn.

"Smack, smack, smack" and Ben lays them both out.

GUARDS #3-4

hear the "thud" of the bodies above. One of them slowly calls on his thin radio.

GUARD #3

Jesse? George?

The two men cross the room and go up a stairwell. Ben swings down and connects with both of them.

They get to their feet and face off. Both charge and Ben gets contact on both.

One collapses away as the other takes a moment. Tries again, gets in a couple of licks but finally put down.

A shot rings out and tears into the wall beside Ben. He slowly turns to see the final two guards.

GUARD #5

Don't move.

Ben stands motionless as his fingers get a hold of his gun canister.

Then the cop twists as he draws his weapon. Clicks into place a second later and Ben fires.

His bullet impacts against the goon's gun. The final guard draws his weapon and Ben narrowly escapes around a corner as he fires.

BEN

That's not taking me alive.

Ben runs down the hall. The sound of the train grows louder.

He reaches a bank of windows. With a flick of a switch, shoots on the automatic setting. Glass falls away and he leaps on the ledge.

OUTSIDE

he stands right above the tracks of the tram that grows bigger in the distance. Fires behind him to back down the

two guards.

BEN

Hold on, Lisa.

Then the train slows right below him. Ben jumps and lands hard on the roof.

He slips a few feet but grabs the railing. With a swing he pushes open a window with his feet and then slides inside the car as it slows at the station.

THE TWO GUARDS

lean out the window and see the train stop at the stop.

GUARD #6

(on radio)

He got away but is on the train at the station.

INT. TRAM

Ben glances back at the building and ahead to the station.

BEN

Uh-oh.

He glances around the empty car.

BEN

Should I stay or should I go?

LISA (V.O.)

If you stay there might be trouble.

BEN

If I go there might be double.

GUARDS

galore swarm out of the shadows and approach the tram.

BEN

clicks in his guns and fires. They retreat for a moment and then the doors close on the tram. Begins to move. The cop relaxes for a moment.

INT. HALL-NIGHT

The meditation area vacant except for Cliff and Sebastian.

A large limo seen as it enters a side garage. A DRIVER quickly climbs out and opens the back door.

Harris Mar glances out and one of his eyes just an empty socket. He takes a moment and inserts the electronic eye in his hand into the empty space. Clicks into place.

Mar exits the car and crosses to the two men.

SEBASTIAN

Hello, father.

Harris glances at his son and then at Halford.

MAR

How do you know it was a police officer?

HALFORD

He was the one at the office, looking over Westmore's work area.

MAR

What does he know?

HALFORD

I would say nothing. If he did, he would have acted on it by now.

SEBASTIAN

But we can't take that chance. We have to kill him now. To make sure.

HALFORD

We don't have to. It could backfire on us.

Harris sighs and paces away.

MAR

This is not what I wanted. All this killing. Distasteful.

SEBASTIAN

(whispers to Halford)  
Never bothered him before.

Halford gives the kid an evil eye and then turns to Mar.

HALFORD

He won't have enough time to do anything about it. It's only one day away.

He nods.

MAR

Probably. But we can't take that chance. This is bigger than just one cop. Kill him.

Sebastian smiles as Halford sighs.

HALFORD

I'll assemble a team.

EXT. BLUE DAISY MOTEL-NIGHT

Ben exits a cab and pays the driver.

The vehicle scoots off as Ben hesitates for a moment. Then slowly enters the front door.

INT. BLUE DAISY MOTEL

Nina comes around the corner as Ben enters. They hesitate for a moment and smile at each other.

BEN

Hello.

NINA

Hi.

And then her face drops.

NINA

Ohmygod.

A thin stream of blood appears from Ben's scalp and goes down his temple.

Nina rushes forward as Ben feels his head.

BEN

Oh. It's nothing. I just fell.

NINA  
From what? A building?

BEN  
A train broke my fall, though. Don't  
worry. I'll just wash it out.

He starts to go towards the elevator. Grabs his arm and  
leads him behind the counter.

NINA  
No. I got a first-aid kit. Come on.

BEN  
Are you going to bill me for this?

She smiles.

NINA  
Don't worry. It's free. We want you  
alive so you can pay for your room.

INT. KITCHEN

She leads him into the small kitchen.

NINA  
Have a seat.

Nina disappears into the living room.

Ben glances around the surroundings and then sees a cake on  
the counter. His eyes widen.

Nina appears again with a high-tech first-aid kit. A glances  
at him.

NINA  
Okay. You didn't just fall. What  
happened?

BEN  
Cop stuff.

NINA  
Cop stuff. Hmmmmm.

She begins to work on him with the tiny equipment. A vacuum  
sucks up all the blood.

BEN  
What was that for?

NINA  
What?

BEN  
The hmmmmmm. You sounded skeptical.

She trades the vacuum for a pen light but the light slowly seals up the cut.

NINA  
Did I? Hmmmmmmmm.

Continues to work on his head.

BEN  
You did it again.

NINA  
You're just so secretive.

BEN  
I have to be.

NINA  
Really? It's that big?

BEN  
Yes. It is.

She nods.

NINA  
Hmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

Ben's expression drops.

NINA  
All right. That's all done. Any more hemorrhages? Contusions? Abrasions?

He smiles.

BEN  
No. I don't think so.

She studies him closely.

BEN

What's wrong?

NINA

You DO want some cake, though, right?

She smiles.

BEN

Yes, ma'am.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-STREET

Halford looks over the motel. He opens his tiny radio.

HALFORD

Okay. He's inside. Take the room. Street team watch for him.

He pockets the radio.

HALFORD

Shit.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-ALLEY

FOUR BLACK-SUITED MEN appear in the alley.

One stands on a small metal platform. The platform launches him like a rocket in a straight line-up.

The man gets propelled so perfectly that he pauses in mid-air for a moment, reaches out and steps onto the outer balcony of a dark room. Easy as one-two-three.

INT. KITCHEN

Nina and Ben talk.

NINA

There was that big guy. Kevin something. A real jerk. He hung that kid on the flagpole from his pants. Then the week after Kevin's car was sliced right in half. Just two pieces sittin' there. A lot of guts for a geek like that.

BEN

But it worked. He was never bothered again.

NINA  
Still a lot of guts.

BEN  
If it was him who did it.

Her eyes widen.

NINA  
You?

He nods.

NINA  
Why?

BEN  
Because Kevin was an ass. Enough was  
enough. It made all the sense in the  
world to my 17 year-old head. But I  
didn't want it to look like I was  
defending those guys. I guess I wasn't  
perfect.

Just then, Ash enters and has a double-take.

NINA  
Well, hello, young man.

ASH  
Hello.

She notices his puzzlement.

NINA  
Ben hit his head on something. I was  
just helping him out. He's apparently  
as clumsy as you.

ASH  
Mom!

BEN  
You should have some cake. It's very  
good.

ASH  
Uh. Okay.

Ash turns to the confection.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-14<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR

The 4<sup>th</sup> man launches and grabs hold of the railing. He joins the other three on the balcony.

INT. BEN'S ROOM

The four men enter the dark room, guns in hand.

INT. KITCHEN

Ash sits down with the other two and glances at Ben. After a moment, he quickly smiles to himself as he takes a bite of cake.

NINA

We were just talking about high school stories.

INT. BEN'S ROOM

The men find nothing.

ASSASSIN #1

He's not here.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-STREET

Halford's eyes widen.

HALFORD

We saw him. He has to be inside. Maybe still in the lobby.

INT. BLUE DAISY-KITCHEN

Ben's finished plate sits to the side as the three talk. The cop seems to enjoy himself.

ASH

You know. I went to school today.

Nina hesitates and looks at her son.

NINA

Really. I'm glad.

Ash glances at the man.

ASH  
I figured it'd be a good idea to keep  
going. I'll probably need it and stuff.

Ben nods.

LISA (V.O.)  
Ben?

BEN  
Yes, Lisa.

NINA  
What's that?

The cop removes Lisa from his belt.

BEN  
My girlfriend. What is it, Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)  
I was analyzing information through the  
database on board your transport when  
the line was cut off. When I tried to  
re-connect, I found a dampening field  
had been placed on this building.

NINA  
What does that mean?

Ben stands and tries to work the video phone on the wall.  
Nothing but static.

NINA  
The phones are down. So?

Then a bell.

NINA  
Someone's at the front desk.

She stands and Ben stops her.

BEN  
Take Ash and hide somewhere.

NINA  
What?

BEN

Trust me.

They eye each other for a moment and then Nina turns to Ash.

BEN

Don't try to get out. Just hide.

NINA

Come on, Ash.

ASH

Why? What's going on?

Mother and son disappear into another room.

Ben removes his guns and they click into place.

INT. LOBBY

The cop peeks a look through the curtain and sees one lone MAN in his 50s, paunchy and in a rumpled suit.

Ben appears.

MAN

Oh. Hello.

BEN

Hello. Can I help you?

MAN

I guess. I'd like a room.

BEN

No problem.

The man nods for a moment.

MAN

I'd like to pay with credit.

The man checks his pockets. He chuckles to himself.

MAN

It's in my bag.

The man leans over to a case. Then he slips out a heavy-duty assault rifle.

He pops up and sprays the area---Ben absent from such. His expression drops.

MAN

Shit.

NINA AND ASH

hear the shots. The kid tries to bolt but momma holds him tightly.

BEN

rolls his eyes behind the counter. Then he lets loose with a volley of bullets through the thin wall.

The assassin drops like a sack of bricks.

ASH

tries to pull free of his Mom's grasp.

ASH

He needs help, mom.

NINA

We can't, Ash. We can't.

BEN

slips over the counter and retracts his guns. He picks up the small but bulky assault rifle.

"Ding" goes the elevator and the cop twists around a moment too late.

The four men from the room swarm out and fire. Ben narrowly side-steps them as he leaps behind a pillar.

The cop then fires again and cuts down two other men as he disappears down a side hall.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-SIDE

Ben crashes through a side door and then lays eyes on two other gunmen.

They fire a hair late as their prey twists back inside the motel.

INT. BLUE DAISY

The door shears apart behind him. He ducks down a stairwell as the all four men appear.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-STREET

Halford gets on his radio.

HALFORD

What's happening in there? You've got about two minutes before the police arrive.

RADIO (V.O.)

We'll get him.

INT. BLUE DAISY-BASEMENT

Ben rushes through the catacombs with the bad guys hot on his tail.

BEN

Lisa, is there a blueprint of this building?

LISA (V.O.)

Checking.

He disappears around a corner.

After a moment the four goons appear. They rush down the narrow passage and then come out to a

BOILER ROOM.

A maze of pipes and walkways.

GOON #1

We got sixty seconds.

GOON #2

We'll get it done.

Suddenly Ben appears across the way and fires.

He cuts down one of the men. The other three scatter and return fire. All Hell breaks loose.

BEN

hesitates.

BEN

Lisa, I need that layout.

LISA (V.O.)

The building department server is giving me trouble, Ben.

The gun battle resumes.

EXT. BLUE DAISY-STREET

Halford hears sirens in the distance.

HALFORD

Police on the way. Terminate job.

INT. BLUE DAISY-BOILER ROOM

Goon #1 looks at Goon #2.

GOON #1

One way or another.

A goon reaches into his pocket and pulls out a metal canister, a picture of a dragon on the side.

GOON #2

Another it is.

With that, he sticks the object to the side of the stairwell and they exit the room. The device counts down from :30.

INT. CATACOMBS

The three men close the door and seal it up. They haul ass out of the joint.

INT. BOILER ROOM

Ben sees himself alone.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, I hear a timer.

BEN

Crap.

INT. LOBBY

The three men hit a switch on their guns and toss them on the ground. After a moment, the guns begin to quickly dissolve to a blue dust.

They hesitate and do the same with the two dead guys on the floor, which includes a push of a button on their lapels.

EXT. BLUE DAISY

The three men exit as their black over-clothes quickly dissolve too and just leave them in street clothes.

They join Halford and all four just simply walk away.

INT. BLUE DAISY-BOILER ROOM

No sign of Ben.

Then the canister lets out an explosion and envelops the area in flames. After a moment it dissipates and leaves the room with a faint charred surface.

EXT. BLUE DAISY

Police cars appear and swarm over the area.

INT. BLUE DAISY-CLOSET

Nina clutches Ash and tries to listen.

She hears a rustle. Footsteps. Then the closet gets yanked open and they look up to---Jackson and several other officers.

INT. ROOM-NIGHT

A vast television screen shows the exterior of the Blue Daisy.

Cop cars litter the area. A hovercraft hangs above the mess. LIVE in the corner of the screen.

As the REPORTER speaks, Mar, Sebastian and Halford watch the report.

REPORTER

We're here at the Blue Daisy Motel located on the Chester side of town where a fierce gun battle broke out and took the lives of four pedestrians and an out-of-town officer named Ben Tempesta.

EXT. BLUE DAISY

The same scene as on TV.

Jackson stops the medics and pulls back the sheet. Sure enough Ben under there and his face blackened. Looks as dead as a doornail.

Behind, Nina gasps when she sees his body. Jackson covers him up again and the medics load it in a van.

INT. ROOM-NIGHT

Mar turns off the television.

MAR

It's a shame. It shouldn't have come to this.

Halford listens to his headpiece for a moment.

HALFORD

Our man in the crowd says that it's him. Positive facial recognition.

SEBASTIAN

Then we're free and clear.

He glances at Sebastian.

HALFORD

Yes. I guess we are.

INT. BLUE DAISY-LOBBY-NIGHT

Jackson enters the demolished lobby. He absently kicks the small pile of blue dust that was once one of the rifles.

JACKSON

I'm glad I didn't get into insurance.

INT. POLICE STATION-NIGHT

Jackson walks down the hall with a bag of fast food. Eats an orange French fry. Enters the morgue.

INT. MORGUE

A man washes his face in the nearby sink.

JACKSON

I got too much. Want anything to eat?

The man turns off the water and grabs a towel. He turns and--Ben!

BEN

No. But I'm sure you can eat it all.

Jackson takes a mocking expression.

JACKSON

It'll be a task but I think I'm up to it.

BEN

Am I dead?

JACKSON

Seems so. All the news shows are reporting that. How'd you get out of it anyway.

BEN

Lisa found me a hiding place.

INT. BASEMENT-FLASHBACK

The fire bomb counts down: :10, :09---

BEN

Lisa, need a little help here!

LISA (V.O.)

Around the tank to your left is an access corridor door in the floor.

Ben whips around the tank and finds the door.

He pulls it open as the bomb explodes.

The flames flap at the ends of his hair as he jumps inside

and yanks the door closed.

INT. MORGUE

BEN

It took her long enough.

LISA (V.O.)

I'm sorry, Ben. But I am only as expeditious as my processor will allow.

BEN

Did you find anything else?

JACKSON

The guys you blasted were there but they were all in street clothes. No guns. No black clothes.

BEN

Really? I don't think they'd have time to clean the scene.

JACKSON

So whatta we have?

Ben throws the towel in the trash. This one sucks up the waste, too.

BEN

Nothing really. It has something to do with MarCorp, but to what extent? Then again, I'm not sure.

JACKSON

Well, Harris Mar is AWOL right now. Nobody can find him, his kid or that security chief.

BEN

And who knows if it has anything to do with that temple thing they had set-up. It could be zealots who want to rid us of some of the unclean people.

JACKSON

I don't know if you've looked around lately but that might not be a bad idea.

Ben sighs.

BEN

It has to be with Harris Mar. He knows something. But what's he trying to do?

Just then, an OFFICER enters the room.

OFFICER

Sorry to interrupt. But the lady and her kid are in interview room three.

JACKSON

Thanks.

The officer leaves.

JACKSON

I thought it best to keep them under wraps for awhile. So I brought them in for "questioning".

Ben looks indecisive.

BEN

I should talk to them.

The cop heads for the door and exits without an answer from Jackson.

JACKSON

But. We have the world to save. Or at least this lousy city.

But Jackson relaxes and takes another bite of his food.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM #3

Nina and Ash sit at a table. The kid drinks out of a soda can.

ASH

When're they going to let us go, mom?

NINA

I don't know, honey.

Just then, Ben enters. A thick pause between the three of them. He takes a seat.

BEN

I'm sorry about what happened.

NINA

You pissed off people in high school.  
But I had no idea you'd make a career  
out of it.

BEN

I know. If I had any sense of that, I  
would have never come there.

NINA

We could have been killed, Ben!

ASH

But we didn't!

They look at the kid.

ASH

He didn't want it to happen. And nothing  
happened to us.

NINA

You didn't see your room, did you? I  
think you'd change your mind.

Nina glances warily at Ben.

NINA

What's going on? When do we get out  
of here?

BEN

I don't know yet. We're in the middle  
of a case and we don't want you to  
attract anybody's interest yet. It's  
better you're here.

She nods.

NINA

Fine.

Ben turns to Ash.

BEN

Are you okay?

The kid nods his head.

ASH

Oh yes. Anything I can do to help?

Ben and Nina smile and glance at each other. When their eyes meet, they lose the good cheer.

BEN

Yes. Watch your mom. Okay?

ASH

You got it.

The adults look at each other again.

BEN

I should get back.

He stands and crosses to the door.

NINA

Tell you what.

Ben stops and turns.

NINA

Since you didn't deserve me yelling,  
I'll overlook the next time when you  
DO deserve it.

He smiles.

BEN

Okay.

Exits.

Ash sips his soda.

ASH

You like him.

NINA

Shut up, you twerp.

The kid smiles.

INT. MORGUE

Ben enters, in a daydream.

Jackson grumbles as he inspects his discolored, blue-stained shoes.

JACKSON

Dammit, I just bought these. Shit.

The cop glances at him.

BEN

What'd you do?

JACKSON

I stepped in something at the scene. Oh well, where were we?

Suddenly Ben's eyes widen.

BEN

You said the bodies were in street clothes?

JACKSON

Yeah. Why?

INT. LAB

Jackson has one shoe on. The blue stained one sits in a scanner as Bethany inspects the data.

BETHANY

Yes, it's Spattle.

JACKSON

What's that?

BEN

The stuff that was found on 4. Like an acid, especially when it's activated with a small electrical charge.

BETHANY

It was going to be used for waste disposal but was toxic in any significant form. And too expensive to begin with.

BEN

But in small amounts it could easily dispose of small items, like clothes and weapons. We had a serial killer on 1 about six years ago that was using it.

JACKSON

Okay. So they're clever. How do we find them with this information.

BEN

Again, it's expensive and has very few uses. Like, uh---

BETHANY

---it's an intake cleaner for cruisers. And a pesticide additive. Wait, I get it. You want to trace it back to Mar Corp.

BEN

Yes.

LISA (O.C.)

Would you like me to track that for you, Ben?

BEN

No. Bethany's computer has more access and speed. But thank you, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

(taken aback but professional)

Well. Okay. Let me know if I can help.

Bethany goes to work.

BETHANY

It's processed by one company on 4. I'll track their records.

After a moment, three chimes from the computer.

BETHANY

MarCorp made three purchases. One at an engine manufacturer on the other side of town. One for a research facility on 3.

All three come with specs of the locations.

BEN

The plant is too conspicuous. Too many prying eyes. The other is too small. What about the last one?

Bethany switches the screen to the final record.

BETHANY

A geological mill on the Tria plane.  
It was set up about a year ago.

JACKSON

That's in the middle of nowhere.

BEN

Out of the way.

BETHANY

And I'm no geologist but I don't see  
there'd be anything out there to mine.  
No profit-profit-profit.

JACKSON

Then that's the place to look. I'll get  
a team together.

Ben stops him.

BEN

They went out there for a purpose.  
They'd see us comin' a mile away.

Jackson realizes something.

JACKSON

So you're going to go alone. I'm glad  
I'm not your momma. I'd probably have  
died of stress years ago.

INT. GARAGE-NIGHT

Jackson and Ben stand in the empty Police garage next to a  
battered motorcycle.

JACKSON

So you have our phone number in case you  
need anything.

BEN

Yes, dad.

JACKSON

You don't have much time. Once we get into  
tomorrow then it's anybody's guess.

BEN

I know.

The cop mounts the bike.

BEN

We'll get it done.

JACKSON

We'll, if I end up a crispy critter  
after the zero hour, it was nice  
knowing you.

They shake.

Ben fires up the 'cycle and puts on the helmet. The bike  
purrs like nothing ever seen before.

EXT. POLICE STATION

The vehicle rolls out of the garage. Ben glances up and sees  
the tower clock---12:07 am.

He angles the bike through traffic and onto the near empty  
freeway. Then tears ass down the asphalt.

EXT. DESERT FLOOR-NIGHT

An expanse of sand that mixes with rock formations and  
various trees.

Silence. A strange group of small creatures mill around a  
lone tree as they pick from its meager offerings.

Then they sense something. A moment later and a small ship  
rises from behind the dunes. Very sleek.

INT. SLEEK SHIP

Inside sits Sebastian as he targets the creatures.

SEBASTIAN

Hello, little fellas.

EXT. DESERT FLOOR

The ship streaks forward and the creatures scatter in all  
directions.

Sebastian centers in on one and begins to torment it. It  
can't escape anywhere. This ship? Amazing! Can turn on a  
dime.

Finally the creature cowers.

INT. SLEEK SHIP

The big goon smiles and flips the safety on his joystick gun.

EXT. DESERT FLOOR

A few birds startled by the quick bark of the guns.

EXT. MAR COMPOUND-NIGHT

In the stark desert stands a compound with a high fence that looks something like an oil refinery. Pipes criss-cross everywhere.

Sebastian's ship appears over the dunes and then lands behind the walls.

INT. MAR COMPOUND

The big man steps down a walkway, though the steam. Comes upon Cliff who looks up to something.

SEBASTIAN

Well, this is it. I thought it was a bit crazy at first. But I really do believe him. And just imagine what it'll be like afterwards. We'll be heroes. Gods.

Sebastian smiles wickedly. The other man glances to a side area and sees Mar and Cremental as they speak at the window of a room above.

HALFORD

I don't think that's what your father had in mind.

SEBASTIAN

Of course he does. That's all he ever has in mind. And if he doesn't---I do.

The big goon walks off as Cliff sighs.

EXT. HIGHWAY-NIGHT/DAY

Ben's `cycle speeds down the empty highway.

The sun begins to rise in the distance. A heard of strange

cattle-like creatures run parallel on an adjacent plain.

Ben rounds a tight corner and suddenly brakes. One of the cattle creatures sits right in the middle of the road. The two look at each other for a long moment. The skin in its mouth and ears the bright green seen in the previous foods.

BEN

Hey! Get outta the way!

No movement.

Ben sighs and pulls out his gun. He shoots in the ground near the creature. It then slowly ambles out of the way.

BEN

And you make terrible sandwiches, too.

BEN CONTINUES HIS TRIP

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, you asked for a mark and we're three miles from the compound.

BEN

Thank you, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben?

BEN

Yes, Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

This may be inappropriate but I've analyzed the conversations you've had with the woman Nina. A large portion of the voice inflections lead me to conclude that she has affection for you. And pupil dilation suggest the same results.

BEN

And what are you getting at, Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Just thought you'd like to know my conclusions, Ben.

BEN

I think I'll have to restrict your operating parameters.

LISA (V.O.)

It will limit my effectiveness. But that's your choice, of course.

EXT. MAR COMPOUND-DAY

A single road leads to the compound.

BEN

slides to the edge of a rock formation and looks down to the structure through high-powered binoculars.

THROUGH THE GLASSES,

he sees people going here and there. Nothing special. He spots Sebastian's ship to the side.

BEN

The place is pretty secure, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben. You should have thought of that before we came all the way out here.

BEN

Maybe, Lisa. Maybe.

He notices a truck down the road behind him as it makes its way toward the compound.

BEN

Then again, maybe not.

Ben leaps to his feet and runs across the rocks.

He reaches an outcropping as the truck appears below him. Leaps up and lands in the back with a grunt.

Ben scales to the bottom of the truck and underneath. Holds on for dear life.

The truck approaches the entrance and drives inside. It turns to the side and parks with some others as Ben rolls out and hides behind some machinery.

The cop makes his way around the workers and guards through the piles of junk, vehicles and equipment. Notices an area with a mesh of pipe that surrounds it, the one that Mar and Cremental met within.

He disappears into an adjacent building.

INT. BUILDING

An empty hallway.

Ben steps down the tile floor.

A LARGE GUARD rounds the corner and approaches. The cop keeps his head down. They pass.

LARGE GUARD

Hey, buddy.

Ben hesitates and then turns with a smile.

BEN

Me?

LARGE GUARD

Yeah.

The guard approaches.

LARGE GUARD

Would you happen to have a smoke?

Ben smiles again.

BEN

Smoke? Sure.

The cop reaches into his pocket.

BEN

Lisa?

With that, a tiny door on the side of her surface opens and shoots out a small dart. The guard collapses.

BEN

You'd think people would learn about those things after 400 years.

Ben grabs the man's arms and drags him into a side office.

INT. SIDE OFFICE

The cop strips the guard.

LISA (V.O.)  
Ben, may I remind you that you haven't  
installed the needle?

BEN  
Installed? Hardly the right word. It  
really hurts, too.

LISA (V.O.)  
But what if you're captured? The chances  
are very high in a case like this.

BEN  
I was countin' on getting' killed.

INT. HALLWAY

Ben reappears with the guard's uniform on, although too long  
and rolled up at the sleeves and legs.

He continues down the hall.

LATER

Ben enters another corridor.

Glances through a doorway and sees an empty computer  
terminal. Enters and closes the door.

INT. ROOM

Ben removes Lisa and positions her.

BEN  
Lisa, can you access their mainframe?

LISA (V.O.)  
Just a moment, Ben.

After a beat.

LISA (V.O.)  
We have the right place, Ben. They have  
a ship and a bomb.

Another moment.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, you should look at this.

Lisa brings up a celestial map. Ben looks it over for a moment as his eyes widen.

BEN

They're going to try and open the worm hole.

LISA (V.O.)

It looks that way. They're going to send a ship up there and try and blow it open.

BEN

Can they do it?

LISA (V.O.)

It's highly likely, based on the data.

BEN

Can you stop the ship?

LISA (V.O.)

One moment.

Another moment.

LISA (V.O.)

No chance. It would take hours. They have the program chrome-encrypted.

BEN

Where is it?

LISA (V.O.)

Back pad. The north end of this building.

VOICE (O.C.)

Hey.

Ben turns to see ANOTHER GUARD.

GUARD #2

What're you doing here?

The cop whips around, knocks the gun out of his hand and lays him out with roundhouse to the jaw.

BEN

Kickin' back.

Two other guards appear around the corner and spot the situation.

They bring up their weapons as Ben grabs Lisa and leaps out of the way.

Shots pummel the area he was just in. Ben scurries across the floor and ducks out another door.

INT. CORRIDOR

The cop holsters Lisa and scampers down the hall as more goons appear, guns in hand. "Blam! Blam! Blam!"

BEN

Lisa, can you call Jackson?

LISA (V.O.)

Negative. They put up a communications blanket.

BEN

Dammit!

Ben returns fire and drives them back a ways. Then retreats further.

INT. OFFICE

Mar, Cremental, Sebastian and Cliff hear the commotion.

MAR

What is that?

SEBASTIAN

We have guests.

INT. BUILDING

Ben shoots it out with the guards. Wings a couple of them but their shots are awfully close to the cop.

BEN

I need a way out of here, Lisa!

LISA (V.O.)

I don't have one, Ben. Maybe you should keep shooting.

BEN

Thanks. Thanks a lot.

And that he does.

Ben retreats again and rounds a corner.

Suddenly Halford and Ben right on top of each other, to the surprise of both. They fire and both miss.

Ben kicks a rolling table across the floor and knocks Halford off-balance, who loses his gun. The cop rushes up, slides across the table and lays a foot into the man's chest.

But Halford absorbs it and counters with a toss of Ben off the table. The cop, too, loses his weapon. As he scampers for it, the a'hole leaps out and catches the cop. The two men struggle, back and forth.

Both get to their feet and eye their respective weapons on either side of the rooms. Then square off and start to trade punches and kicks. Both pretty good.

But Ben starts to get the upper hand.

BLAM!

They freeze and look over to Sebastian who trains a gun on both.

SEBASTIAN

Why don't you come over here, Cliffy?  
Since we're friends and all.

Halford separates from his opponent.

INT. CELL-DAY

Ben, his hands in shackles, gets shoved into a chair.

The only other person in the large but bare room Halford who dumps Lisa on the table. The a'hole then prepares a syringe. He injects it into the struggling cop's shoulder.

HALFORD

It'll only take a minute to take effect.

BEN

What was that? Vitamins?

Halford smiles.

HALFORD

Funny. Truth serum.

The cop nods.

BEN

I would have told you that you're an asshole if you just asked.

HALFORD

If only my mother thought so highly of me.

BEN

That's funny, too. We're a couple of comediennes.

HALFORD

But I know some things about you, too, Detective Tempesta. Like your wife and child. Died in the attack on Earth.

Ben becomes annoyed.

HALFORD

You had a series of meetings with a marriage counselor before that. And then you requested a transfer to the colonies. Your wife was going to come here with your daughter. To finalize a divorce? But that was about a week before the attack. If that happened, she'd probably be alive today.

BEN

What are you getting at?

Ben sweats and twitches oddly.

HALFORD

But she didn't come over when she said she would. Mom postponed the trip for a week. To the day after the attack. Why was that? Did she change it or did you ask her to change it?

BEN

I asked her to change it.

Ben struggles with the words, as if they push out of him from the drug.

HALFORD

Why?

BEN

I didn't want her to come. I didn't want to deal with her. It was me. It was my fault. And you're really an asshole.

Halford nods.

BEN

Why are you doing this?

HALFORD

I didn't want to be called an asshole and not earn it.

Then Harris Mar enters with his son, Sebastian.

MAR

Did he say anything?

HALFORD

No. Not yet. I just gave him the drug.

Mar nods and faces the cop.

MAR

Do the police know what we're doing?

BEN

No. We knew you probably had a bomb but didn't know what you were going to do with it. But I know now. You're going to open the worm hole. Let those monsters in here. They'll kill us all!

MAR

No. It's not going to happen that way.

The man leans into the cop with a vacant smile on his face.

MAR

It's going to be all right. I saw it. We are safe. The aliens won't attack us. God has touched me and let me know. That's why we have to do this. To save our kind, to give them a reason to live. Right now, they live their lives in fear. It will kill them if we go on like this. It's killing us now.

BEN

But Westmore didn't think so.

Mar loses his smile.

MAR

That was unfortunate. We lied to him and he found out anyway. I regret that but it would have stopped us.

BEN

And what next. The hole opens and nothing happens. What does that make you? God.

MAR

I am not God. But he does speak through me. I will do his bidding.

BEN

You're crazy.

MAR

No, son. You will see. By tomorrow you will know the truth.

Ben glances at the other two.

BEN

You have to stop this. He's going to wipe out the last of the human race.

HALFORD

We are killing off each other. Either he is right or he is wrong. But our only chance is to know.

SEBASTIAN

We should end him.

MAR

No. The murdering is done. But he must stay here until it's over. Let's go.

They begin to exit and close the door behind them.

Then Ben fumbles with his hands behind his back. With one finger he digs into the side of his palm and extracts a small needle stuck in there. A spec of blood follows it.

He pulls out the need and angles it toward the shackles.

BEN

Spray now.

The needle lights up and then emits a thin spray that hits the chain on the shackles. It begins to slowly eat into the metal.

Then Sebastian appears through the door and closes it behind him.

SEBASTIAN

Well, I seem to remember that we didn't finish what we started.

The large hulk takes off his jacket and rolls up his sleeves. He walks over to Ben and stands him up on wobbly legs.

SEBASTIAN

Now I want to make this a fair fight so make sure you defend yourself.

Sebastian takes a step back and readies himself. He throws a punch and---Ben ducks out of the way. The cop stumbles to the side and avoids a few more punches.

The big man seems disgruntled. Ben tries to shake off his daze. The goon rushes forward and the cop manages to kick him to the side. The acid continues to burn through the shackles.

But now Sebastian becomes enraged and grabs the cop and runs him into the wall. Then another. Then another. He drops the little man to the ground. Ben gasps for air.

SEBASTIAN

Not feelin' too light on your feet now,  
are ya?

The big man leans over and picks up Ben by the collar.

SEBASTIAN

Time to feel the burn.

Just then, the acid breaks through the shackles and the cop has his hands back. He grabs Sebastian's head and rams his forehead into the goon's nose.

The a'hole drops Ben as the cop tosses several punches all over the hulk. Sebastian reels back as the cop finishes with a kick. The goon teeters for a moment---and then drops like a tree.

Ben waits for a moment to make sure he's down and then turns to the table and Lisa.

BEN

Are you all right, Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben. I'm a machine.

BEN

Just tryin' to be polite.

He holsters her and then goes to the door.

INT. HALLWAY

The coast seems to be clear.

Ben exits the cell as a guard comes around the corner. SMACK, SMACK, SMACK and the cop relieves him of the weapon.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK

Mar and Halford meet with Cremental at the ship. The bomb nestles under its wing.

EXT. BUILDING

Then apocalypse breaks out as guards start to trade fire with Ben.

Another stray guard comes into striking distance and the cop has another weapon.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK

Mar turns to Cremental.

MAR

You have to go now.

He nods and races to the ship.

INT. COMPOUND

Stray shots hit a tank and it explodes. Several guards fly from the concussion.

BEN

notices the bomb ship and Cremental as he fires the ship up. He starts to fight his way towards it.

HALFORD

escorts his boss into the adjacent building.

BEN

keeps up the fight. He then cuts off himself from the guards as he ignites another explosion.

He runs into the flight deck and towards the ship.

Suddenly, Ben cut off as he quickly ducks away from some shots from Halford.

Helpless, Ben crouches down as the ship begins to lift-off.

He tries in vain to shoot the ship down before Halford drives him back again. Then the cop notices the gauge on the

guns show empty.

HALFORD

presses closer through the labyrinth of pipes. Inches closer. Closer. He reaches Ben's hiding place---but the guy gone!

Halford whips around but Ben swings down and hits him with both feet. The goon leaves his feet but still keeps a hold of the gun.

The a'hole quickly shakes it off and gets to his feet. But not before Ben appears and they grapple with the weapon. Chest-to-chest as a shot rings out.

A pause---and then evident that Halford hit. Both men lock eyes as he goes down.

BEN

And thanks for the interest in my life.

Ben stands over the dying man, gun in hand.

BEN

The other ship.

EXT. LANDING AREA

Ben runs out, trades shots with some guards and jumps into Sebastian's slick ship.

INT. SHIP

Ben fires up the engines and the guards quickly close in.

SEBASTIAN

stumbles into view in a daze and bleeding.

THE SHIP

wildly bucks, side-swipes another building and then streaks off into the sky.

SEBASTIAN

My ship!

INT. SHIP

The sky whips by outside. Ben grips the controls.

BEN

Lisa?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes, Ben.

BEN

Can you communicate?

LISA (V.O.)

Yes.

BEN

Get a hold of Jackson and the regional air force. Tell them to scramble some fighters to intercept that ship.

LISA (V.O.)

I'm on it.

EXT. SHIP

Ben slowly gains on the bomb ship.

CREMENTAL

notices him.

BEN

opens the guns on the wing and fires. But misses. Tries again but

CREMENTAL

flies good, very good. Not even a scratch.

THREE OTHER FIGHTERS

appear in the sky as the chase enters space.

Cremental quickly downs one of them. Hits another one and it drops back, disabled.

BEN

shocked.

BEN

No, dammit. This isn't happening.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, at these speeds, he'll be at the worm hole site in 3 minutes.

THE TWO

final fighters close into the bomb ship. They fire and actually wing the craft. With that

CREMENTAL

banks hard and disappears through a sea of asteroids. They start to lose him.

BEN

banks too hard and violently clips one of the rocks. He spins as the controls begin to spasm.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, we're 1 minute away.

THE REMAINING FIGHTER

continues the chase.

BEN,

dazed, tries to fire the engines. No go.

Wide-eyed, he looks out to the disappearing ships.

CREMENTAL

glances back at his pursuer. Calmly punches a few buttons and arms the bomb.

CREMENTAL

Praise God.

THE BOMB SHIP

hits its thrusters and streaks ahead.

After a moment, it turns into a rapidly widening flash of light.

The massive concussion then rolls over the fighter and turns it to dust.

BEN

sees the explosion wave come. Nothing he can do.

BEN

Aw Hell---

But some of the rocks deflect the heat but toss his ship around like a kid's toy. He hits his head and loses consciousness.

MONTAGE

Flashes of his daughter. His wife. The story so far.

THROUGH A HAZE

Ben sees an alien ship approach and then stop right over him.

A hatch opens and a large ALIEN stands in the light. Leaps out and lands on Ben's viewport.

The hideous creature then smashes through the window and grabs him by the neck.

INT. BEN'S SHIP

An electronic jolt from Lisa wakes the cop with a gasp.

He frantically looks around.

Controls back to normal. No alien ship. No alien. He checks his head and finds some blood.

LISA (V.O.)

Ben, are you alive?

BEN

Yes, Lisa.

Then he looks out the window---to the open worm hole. Stunned understates his expression.

LISA (V.O.)  
Are you harmed, Ben?

BEN  
Not more than usual, Lisa. How long  
has it been since the explosion?

LISA (V.O.)  
Five minutes, twelve seconds.

He stares at the swirl a moment longer. His fingers absently stroke the wheel. Then snaps out of it and checks the controls.

BEN  
It's stable. It's open.

LISA (V.O.)  
What should we do next, Ben?

Ben doesn't answer.

LISA (V.O.)  
Ben?

BEN  
I'm not sure, Lisa.

ENGINES ON THE SHIP

fire up and Ben streaks forward, into the worm hole. He travels through the breathtaking swirl of colors. Ben emerges from the other side of the opening.

INT. SHIP

LISA (V.O.)  
Ben, we are headed for Earth.

BEN  
If it's still there.

LISA (V.O.)  
Is this the best course of action?

BEN  
If the aliens are around, I'm dead sooner  
or later. We all are.

LISA (V.O.)

But why, Ben? Why are we going there now?

BEN

I have to see it, Lisa. I have to see it.

EXT. SPACE-EARTH

Earth slowly comes into view through his cockpit.

BEN

Here we go.

EXT. SKY

Ben bumps around in the atmosphere.

Then hits the clouds.

The clouds break and the city below by the sea.

BEN

Home sweet home.

LISA (V.O.)

Are we at San Simone?

BEN

Yes, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

Then you are trying to find your wife and child.

No answer.

LISA (V.O.)

I know this is distressing, Ben. But they are more than likely deceased.

BEN

I know, Lisa.

LISA (V.O.)

Do you, Ben?

He checks his controls.

BEN

No movement. Nothing.

EXT. THE CITY

The city looks ravaged but not totally decimated.

The streets empty.

But becomes clear. Bodies here and there. Alien bodies. And been there for awhile by the looks of it.

Ben looks in awe as he sees one of the alien ships impaled into a high-rise.

BEN

What happened? Where is everybody?

A sensor goes off on his console. He angles the ship toward a huge patch of land.

A HUMAN HAND

sticks out of the ground. Then another. All lifeless.

THE SENSOR

shows the outline of hundreds of human bodies under the soil.

ESTIMATED TOTAL OF CORPSES: 9,469,000 across the monitor.

BEN

My God.

Another sensor goes off.

ORGANIC LIFEFORM MOVEMENT DETECTED flashes on the screen.

THE SHIP

angles around and streaks off.

EXT. CITY STREET

A figure, head obscured by cloth, sees the ship approach and runs up a set of stairs to THE SAN SIMONE LIBRARY.

After a moment, the ship gently lands on the street.

At the ready and gun in hand, Ben jumps down from the craft and approaches the library steps.

INT. LIBRARY

Ben enters and scans the interior, the place a wreck.

Then he comes upon a table with stacks and stacks of paper books mixed with disc copies of such. Then small pieces of equipment with strange writing on them.

A shuffle and Ben whips around to face SRA-TA, an alien. But this one doesn't exhibit the menace of ones that have been seen. This one looks tired and sickly and holds a book in its hands. Both creatures just look at each other for a moment.

SRA-TA

Hello.

The creature speaks disjointed and odd English.

BEN

Who are you?

SRA-TA

Sra-Ta my name.

Ben keeps the gun trained on the guy.

BEN

What are you doing? What happened?

Sra-Ta slowly crosses to the table and sits. Puts the book down and picks up a package of pudding. He slowly eats.

SRA-TA

I am reading your books. I am learning of the people that were here.

BEN

Were?

SRA-TA

Yes. They are gone now.

Ben's shoulders drop.

BEN

All of them?

SRA-TA

Yes. Except for you. But you could not have survived.

BEN

The worm hole was opened.

Ben becomes enraged and grabs the alien.

BEN

Why? Why did you do this?

SRA-TA

To live. We are no different, you and I.

The human hesitates as the creature's clothes slip out of his fingers.

SRA-TA

I've read about your people. Your history is full of struggle and conquest. We were a people who had no home. This was our last chance.

BEN

You could have asked for help.

SRA-TA

From people like you? No. We want it all and took it we. Just like you taken from one another for centuries. But then we the final irony had. We didn't detect the microbe in your air. Something to you innocuous. Something deadly to us.

BEN

He was right.

Ben looks at the alien.

BEN

You didn't always believe that, did you?

Sra-TA hesitates.

SRA-TA

No. I guess didn't I. My people were militaristic to say the least. I didn't want to others kill. I'm a doctor. But all I would do would heal murderous people. I felt alone very with my kind. But now I am alone truly.

BEN

You're the last?

SRA-TA

There more may be. But don't I know where they are. But I don't have much time anyway. I've off held the disease but I can't for much longer. So I sit here and try to understand your people. To know the ones my people murdered, to that my convictions verify were right. But they wrong were. You are no better than my people. It's just the way of life.

BEN

Maybe.

Silence.

SRA-TA

So here we are. The last of my kind who killed your people. A chance last to exact revenge.

Ben turns the gun towards the alien and hesitates. Then slowly lowers it. Sets the gun on the table and sits across from the creature. Either being could easily grab the weapon.

BEN

Have you ever been in love?

SRA-TA

Love?

He thinks for a moment.

SRA-TA

The bonding of a male and female?

Ben nods. Sra-Ta hesitates. Uncertain.

SRA-TA

Yes. I had a mate.

BEN

She's gone.

SRA-TA

Yes.

BEN

It's amazing, isn't it. You were right. We are awful, barbaric peoples. So much we can do to each other. And often we lose it in all that. You'd think we'd snuff it out entirely. But we don't. Even through all that, love has a staying power. It's like an incurable disease in all of us. Some can't find it. But it's there.

Ben smiles.

BEN

I thought I had it once, but I didn't. Close, but no cigar. My wife and I had a child. And I thought that was love. I wish it was but no.

Ben studies the creature who listens intently.

BEN

But I did find some. Walked right into it. Wasn't even looking. And now—

The human smiles.

BEN

-- I want to live for a 1,000 years.

The creature smiles, too.

BEN

Or I could die today, content that I found what life's all about. It's very close.

Ben holds two fingers together.

BEN

Life's very cruel and horrible. And  
it's also very beautiful. Like a  
strange stew.

Ben looks at the alien.

BEN

You don't need my help.

With that, Ben stands and walks out of the library.

EXT. LIBRARY

Ben shuffles out of the building and then sits on a concrete  
bench. He lies down and closes his eyes.

BLACK

The sound of engines. The rustle of footsteps.

VOICE (V.O.)

Hey you.

EXT. LIBRARY

Ben wakes to see several human SOLDIERS surround him with  
COLONY insignias on their uniforms.

SOLDIER

Who are you?

Ben reaches into his pocket and pulls out his badge and ID.

SOLDIER

A colony cop? What're you doing here?

The cop pulls himself up.

Overhead in the sky sits a large cruiser. A transport ship  
rests down the street.

BEN

Was in the neighborhood.

Another soldier appears out of the alley.

ANOTHER SOLDIER

There's an alien body in here. Looks like  
it just died recently.

The soldier glances at Ben.

SOLDIER

You shoot 'em?

ANOTHER SOLDIER

No. It looks like he just died there. No wounds.

BEN

I didn't need to.

He nods as the cop stands.

SOLDIER

It's terrible. Other units are reporting in all over. Looks like they wiped us out. But something sure got them, though.

BEN

Looks like it.

SOLDIER

Well, gotta see the bright side. Could have been worse. So let me be the first to welcome you home.

He offers a hand to Ben. The cop hesitates and then smiles.

BEN

Thanks for the offer.

He slaps the soldier's shoulder and glances around.

BEN

But this isn't my home. Not anymore.

With that, Ben descends the stairs and climbs into his ship.

EXT. PLANET 2-NIGHT

Ben angles the craft down through the atmosphere.

BEN (V.O.)

Turns out I didn't make any difference at all. Almost screwed it up actually.

EXT. STREET-NIGHT

Solemn gatherings in the street with the announcements of

what happened on Earth. Correspondents often use "bittersweet".

On separate screens, Mar and his buddies led to jail.

BEN (V.O.)

Mar was sentenced for murder. He acquired a cult following but nothing more. Who knows if he was right or just crazy lucky.

EXT. LANDING PAD-NIGHT

Ben angles his ship.

BEN (V.O.)

I know that life doesn't always work out for everyone. But the truth is, some bad can come from good. And some good can come from bad. It's not fair but that's the way it works. And right now, I'm not going to question it at all.

INT. BLUE DAISY MOTEL-NIGHT

Nina and Ash walk through the door to the wreck of a lobby. Ash kicks around some trash.

ASH

Mom, we don't have to clean this up, do we? Not ourselves?

NINA

I think we can get some help.

BEN (O.C.)

I'll pitch in.

They turn and see Ben. Everyone smiles. He approaches Nina.

BEN

If you need it.

NINA

Could always use the company.

Then the man leans in and kisses her. Ash smiles.

NINA

Could always use that, too.

Ben glances at the kid.

BEN

You gonna help.

ASH

You betcha.

The cop smiles and shakes hands with the kid.