

**SLIP/THROUGH**

by

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TITLECARD:

The future space tourism industry thrives. At first, it was resorts on the Moon. Soon after, it was the Wonder of other Solar Systems via SLIP/THROUGH technology.

Unfortunately, the Utopian agenda faltered. Off-world crime is ever-present. Drugs. Prostitution. Stock manipulation.

Two detectives from opposing worlds - one: a mere human, the other: a complex android - hunt an elusive and mysterious serial killer known only as BLACK SYN.

Each of their motives, for the moment, are unclear.

The cold fact remains:

Our days in the stars are numbered...

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Boots step into thick muddy puddles.

Steaming food vendors fill the muddy strip. Workers strapped with backpacks trod along, smoking handmade cigarettes.

A man scoops shaved meat with his fingers.

The sky twinkles with bright stars and two bright moons.

The horizon is lined with tall slender hotels. Holographic neon logos flare into the night.

The man walks the strip, eating. He notices a vendor arguing with a customer. He stops, hoping it will escalate.

Something HITS the roof of the vendor's stall. It rolls down into the mud. A bloody STUMP of a severed arm.

The man gasps at the sight. The vendor joins his customers.

A body falls on stall and CRUMPLES it. The body has a severed arm. A gash in the chest. Pulpy GUTS strewn across.

A dark slender FIGURE - with GLOWING violet eyes - stands in the frame of a broken window, several stories up.

MAN

There! It's HIM!

The crowd follows the man's pointed reach.

The dark shape turns away - glowing eyes leave violet TRACERS in the air.

FADE:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

A blood spattered couch. A smashed glass table. Broken vases. Blood sprayed painting. Blood streaked walls.

A tall man in a grey trench-coat and a 30s-era Fedora, SMOKES at the shattered window. Wind blows in the curtains.

He picks tobacco off his tongue. He has chiselled ERROL FLYNN-type features, and looks like he just stepped out of "LE SAMORAI". This is DASH.

His dress shoes SQUEAK on glass shards. He tosses the cigarette down. Embers spark on the stall below.

Dash slinks his coat over a chair. He has a 30s-era handgun holstered across his ribs.

He takes off his hat and slicks back his blonde bangs.

DASH

CRYPTEX. Run program: Applied Forensics.

A Heads-Up-Display (HUD) overlays his vision. A targeting reticule searches the room, FOCUSING on blood spattered on the wall. Dash walks towards it.

DASH

Run task: Compositional Analysis.

HUD: "HUMAN BLOOD TYPE A."

Dash runs his finger along some blood. He mushes the viscous fluid between his two fingers. The blood RECEDES into his skin - ABSORBED by nano-machines.

The HUD panel blinks: "DNA COLLECTION COMPLETE."

DASH

Run task: DNA Trace.

The HUD blinks: "DNA TRACE COMPLETE."

An image overlays, as Dash looks around, identifying the deceased with name as: S. RIDLEY, 37, market analyst.

Dash adjusts the CROOKED bloody painting, making it level. He looks to the couch and smashed coffee table.

DASH

Let's see... CRYPTEX, run task:  
Spatter Analysis.

The HUD overlays red line in the air: the TRAJECTORY of blood. They CONVERGE at the end of the table.

DASH

Yes... Hrrmmmm.

Dash bends and picks up a shard from the coffee table. It contains a graphical image within the surface - NUMBERS.

DASH  
CRYPTEX: Run trace on numbers.  
Start with the Stock Exchange.  
Interplanetary.

HUD: "CODE SEGMENT ANALYZED. SEVERAL MATCHES."

Dash CLICKS the shard in place on the broken table.

DASH  
Display matches.

The table RE-FORMS. The HUD overlay matches forming a code. Images pop up: 3 Corporations of Space TOURISM.

Dash looks to the doorway - frame and locks undamaged.

DASH  
SYN? What's he trying to say here?

He looks at the crime-scene from a distance.

DASH  
CRYPTEX. Run ReCreate program. My theory. Play scenario.

A HOLOGRAPHIC representation of a RIDLEY appears, SITTING on the couch, looking at stocks on the viewing.

KNOCK KNOCK. He looks to the door. The hologram SHIFTS to...

FLASHBACK:

...the knocking persists.

RIDLEY  
(aggravated)  
Who is it? I'm busy.

A video display activates along the length of the door - a futuristic PEEPHOLE, showing the empty hallway.

COMPUTER  
Access accepted.

The door slides open to an empty hall. He walks to the door.

RIDLEY  
(shocked)  
What? I paid top coin for this.

He puts his hands on the frame, and peeks into the hall.

RIDLEY (CONT.)  
Fuckin tech---

FZZCH! His arm is SLICED off. He turns and knocks a plant over. Blood SPRAYS the wall as he falls to the ground.

That dark figure, BLACK SYN, stands in the hallway, eyes GLOWING violet. His long razor-thin sword, drips blood.

RIDLEY

What do you want? I can pay you.  
Anything. I have coin. I have coin!

SYN

(ALWAYS synthesized,  
distorted)

Useless.

Syn FLIES with a KICK to Ridley's chest, sending him SMASHING through the coffee table.

SYN

Get up!

Ridley struggles to rise. Syn SHEATHES the sword on his back. He picks Ridley up. Blood sprays the couch.

SYN

Your coin is the problem.

RIDLEY

What?! Listen, man, whatever you want, I'll give you. Just. I don't wanna die!

SYN

Who does?

Syn throws Ridley. Blood sprays the painting.

RIDLEY

I'll pay. I'll pay. Just let me live.

Ridley scrambles away. Syn advances.

SYN

There is more than one way to pay.

Syn draws his sword. He STRIKES the window with the modified HILT. Amazingly, it SHATTERS easily. Wind blasts in.

Ridley grabs his severed hand, as he TREMBLES on the ground.

RIDLEY

I j-just run numbers. I sort the accounts. I analyze the market.

Syn kicks the stump from the Ridley's grasp.

SYN

You will pay for your sins. Rise.

RIDLEY

What? I can't---

SYN

Rise!

Ridley quivers. Syn LIFTS him. He screams for help.

SYN

Shhhh... It's already done.

RIDLEY

I didn't b-bring em here. I'm just  
an analyst. W-Why?

SYN

Each STEP is important.

Syn steps, advancing. And FORCES Ridley to the window. He grabs the window frame with his good arm.

SYN

Don't look down. Look at me.

Syn kicks the stump out the window. Ridley watches it fall all the way down to the VENDORS below.

Syn appears behind the man. He whispers. CLOSE.

SYN

(whispers)

Look at me.

Ridley turns. Shaking. Face-to-face with Syn. He WHIMPERS.

SYN

And with a whimper.

Syn SLICES the air. A red gash appears in Ridley. Deep.

SYN (CONT.)

It all ends.

END FLASHBACK:

The RE-CREATION resumes, as Ridley flies out of the window.

Dash, smoking, looks down at the crashed stall. He exhales.

DASH

CRYPTEX, end Vision Capture.

His pupils FLASH golden. He puts his hat and coat back on.

DASH

Ready report. Identification: 3

Dash 1 Dash Oh Dash 7 Dash 9 Dash

(MORE)

DASH (cont'd)  
En. Send Capture and Theorem to  
Home.

He examines the room, taking a long haul off his smoke.

DASH  
This goes beyond madness. There is  
logic underneath.

He tosses his cigarette out the window, secures his coat a bit tighter, and walks to the door.

DASH  
(disgusted mutter)  
Humans.

FADE:

INT. SMALL APARTMENT - NIGHT

A dark and empty smoke filled room.

A cigarette burns in an ashtray.

The wall acts as a screen. GRACE NOVAK, young and punky, relays the NEWS in a flashy MTV-style.

GRACE  
BLACK SYN kills again. That makes for nearly a dozen in just a few weeks. This time it was some Broker for the space tourism industry.

A coffee-maker sputters. WILDER (30s), stubble and short black hair, stands in shafts of light from the blinds.

GRACE (O.S., CONT.)  
So why does SYN want to shut down travel like he did with Enoch West and Yutani Enterprises?

He paces, rubbing his temples, and GRIMACING in pain.

GRACE (CONT.)  
Another Dark Day? Another Uprising?  
Whadda ya think, freaks. You ready for that or what? So I ask again.  
Is Syn a hero?

Wilder plops on the couch, with his steaming mug of coffee.

GRACE (CONT.)  
Black Syn wears no face, bears no affiliations, remains silent. His actions are his only words.

Wilder reaches back and pulls out a heavy black pistol - sleek futuristic design. It CLANGS on the table. That

smoking butt falls from the impact.

He sips his coffee. Squints his eyes, and watches the News.

GRACE (CONT.)

Tell us your theories on U-Speak,  
streaming live, next. This is Grace  
Novak telling you freaks out there  
to keep it locked on MWN: the  
trusted source of the HUMAN voice.

CHIME. A call window pops up on the wall-screen: "WORK".

WILDER

(agitated)

Hello.

The screen shifts to SAMANTHA, 30s, a cybernetic OPERATOR with mechanized BRANDINGS. A thin band runs from her temples across her eyes. It SHIMMERS upon movement.

SAMANTHA

Wilder. Where'd you go? I had to  
send---

WILDER

Sammy? Good to see you too... I  
feel like shit. Send someone else.

SAMANTHA

What's wrong? I waited til your  
show---

WILDER

Sorry, doll. My head. What is it  
then?

SAMANTHA

Investigative Division has been  
tasked.

WILDER

(sighs, frustrated)

The workers take care of their own.

SAMANTHA

The Big 3 worry. I've been tasked  
to send you to The Strip.

WILDER

He won't kill again. Not tonight.

SAMANTHA

Well Cybernetic Services already  
sent---

WILDER

(on the same page)

The Threel again?

SAMANTHA

Affirmative.

WILDER

Shit. It's always him.

SAMANTHA

Jurisdiction allows for cybernetics  
in cases of tourism related  
homicide.

WILDER

I know, I know. Just tell me where.

SAMANTHA

Wilder? See the Apothecary first.

WILDER

No way. I don't need more machines  
in me. Mind Fog is killin me  
already. Forget the address. I'll  
just follow my nose.

SAMANTHA

Be careful. The 3-dash-1 IS  
authorized to use deadly force.

WILDER

I know, Sammy. Gimme a break. I  
won't cross him if he don't cross  
me.

SAMANTHA

Wilder, you sh---

WILDER

(annoyed)

Off.

The screen DEACTIVATES, leaving behind a stained wall.  
Wilder gulps his coffee, rises, and tucks his pistol away.

FADE:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A 1930s era living room. A radio plays JAZZ. A desk with a typewriter and chair. A painting of a reclined nude woman.

NEWS (OS)

The victim was found in the worker  
district. Robotic Protection  
Services will not divert their  
attention from the hotels. Rest  
assured, all tourists are safe.

Dash walks down a hallway carrying a silver dinner tray.

NEWS (OS, CONT.)  
 Syn uses terrorism to stop Tourism.

Dash walks past the wall-screen with the NEWS. This is the formal news - no punk aesthetics. More like Anderson Cooper.

NEWS (CONT.)  
 He is the most dangerous serial killer in the known universe, responsible for the decimation of several off-world destinations already.

Dash sits. He cuts his steak as the News plays.

NEWS (CONT.)  
 Now he has set his sights on us, Minerva-3H. He's staring right at us. Face to face... What do you see?

DASH  
 Radio. Up.

The JAZZ gets louder, drowning out the NEWS Reporter.

FADE:

EXT. THE STRIP - LATE NIGHT

Boots sink into mud. It's Wilder, exiting a transportation TRAM. He adjusts his leather jacket and walks The Strip.

He notices the crashed stall and looks up to the window. He scribbles some notes in his small notepad.

Wilder approaches a vendor - a name on his shirt: BOJANGLES.

WILDER  
 Bojangles. Hit me with one of those bad boys.

BOJANGLES  
 (broken English)  
 Spicy? Or no spicy?

WILDER  
 Spicy.

Bojangles prepares the meal. Wilder lights up a handmade cigarette. He motions his head to the crashed stall.

WILDER  
 So... What the fuck?

BOJANGLES  
 I know. It fell. I know. Blood everywhere... All where.

WILDER

Who was it?

BOJANGLES

Coin man. Never talks. Never see.  
Til now. Now see ALL.

Wilder takes notes in his pad as Bojangles talks.

WILDER

They said it was Syn.

BOJANGLES

Yes. The Dark man. I saw. Up.

WILDER

You talk to anyone else?

BOJANGLES

No man cares. No ONE. Robots stay  
away from here. Never see. We  
alone.

WILDER

What about the Threel? You see him?  
He looks fancy. You know, like a  
prick.

BOJANGLES

(cackles)

Ahhh. Dress shoes. He no have  
boots. Fool man he is.

WILDER

Fuck.

BOJANGLES

No fuck. Fuck down street.

WILDER

Right, right.

Bojangles hands over the steaming meat. Wilder tosses him a large coin. It GLISTENS blue.

WILDER

Thanks. Next time, STOP those dress  
shoes. He doesn't care about you.  
He's worse than the robots... He's  
both.

BOJANGLES

That man robot? Oh. He Second Skin.

WILDER

Right. You see him again, you tell  
me. I'll toss you more coin. Lemme  
give you my contact.

Bojangles wipes his hand. They shake. Both men wear metallic BRACELETS. A small green light blinks, as they shake.

WILDER

There you go. Don't forget.

BOJANGLES

Wilder. You Wilder. Me not forget.  
Me keep name. Need coin. Never  
nuff.

WILDER

Thanks, Bojangles. Next time.

Wilder folds the flatbread over and eats it like a wrap.

FADE:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE NIGHT

Wilder surveys the crime scene, scribbling observations in his notepad. He folds the leather flap back over the pad.

He mouths his pen. Thinking. He walks the perimeter of the crime scene, careful not to disturb any evidence.

He looks at the bloody wall. The shattered table. Then he notices the broken window and the billowing curtains.

WILDER

The window? Why?

Wilder approaches the window. His boots CRUNCH on glass. He scribbles to the bottom of the page:

"Public display of victim - important"

"Pleasure driven - death not quick"

He taps the page with the back of his "pen". The page goes blank. He holds the pad out the window, pointing it down.

WILDER

Photo.

FLASH. The notepad takes a picture. He points it skyward.

WILDER

Photo.

Wilder brings the 'pad back in. He scribbles:

"Gained access through roof? Basement? Lobby?"

He scratches it out. The page BLANKS, erasing the notes. His stomach grumbles. He grimaces.

WILDER

Fuckin spicy.

He TAPS his bracelet. It glows green. He speaks into it.

WILDER  
INDO. Release probiotics.

The bracelet blinks blue. He sighs, feeling the effects.

Wilder approaches the doorframe. He notices blood-drops on the ground. He scribbles the observation.

He bends, looking at a bloody footprint. He aims his pad.

WILDER  
Photo.

The pad flashes. Wilder notices another footprint. Another photo. And, in sync with this flash --- TSCCCH!

A bottle BREAKS in the hallway. Wilder DARTS his attention.

A short thin man, SHORTIE, rounds the corner holding several bottles of alcohol. He's with a DREADLOCKED PUNK.

SHORTIE  
Hurry, hurry.

Wilder, still crouched, PIVOTS into the apartment.

Another thin man, much taller, STILTS, wearing a sleeveless T-shirt, comes shuffling along, holding one bottle.

STILTS  
(angry)  
Awww. Only one now.

SHORTIE  
Be smiles you got one, Stilts.

The Punk gets closer and CLOSER to the doorway.

Wilder tucks his notepad away. He sneaks back. CRUNCH! His boot grinds against a shard of broken vase.

Shortie spots Wilder. He drops the alcohol and runs.

STILTS  
Run!

The Punk joins Shortie, while Stilts runs the opposite way.

WILDER  
(sarcastic)  
Great.

Wilder rises and chases Stilts down the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINIOUS

He follows him down another long hallway. Stilts stride is much longer than Wilder's. Stilts runs into a stairwell.

WILDER  
(huffing)  
Shoulda... chased... the short one.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINIOUS

Wilder lags behind Stilts. He TAPS his bracelet.

WILDER  
Sammy? Come on... Sammy!

An IMAGE of Samantha HOVERS over his wrist as he runs.

SAMANTHA  
Wilder. What are you doing? I thought you were on the job?

WILDER  
This is me... On the job... I'm in pursuit, Sammy. Gimme a hand, will ya?

SAMANTHA  
What do you require?

WILDER  
My location. Lock all stairwells.

SAMANTHA  
Suspect identification?

WILDER  
Unknown. Fuckin Genies. But I think one of em saw something.

SAMANTHA  
I trust your intuition Wilder, but the Boss will want more.

WILDER  
Notes sent to home. Check footprint. I'm sure it's this fuck I'm chasing.

SAMANTHA  
You are NOT cleared for weapon use at this location.

WILDER  
(smirks)  
I just wanna talk.

Stilts looks over the stair-rail and notices Wilder coming. Stilts grabs the EXIT door. It's LOCKED. He bangs on it.

WILDER

Thanks, Sammy. I'm out.

The image of Samantha disappears. Wilder continues, huffing and puffing. Stair after stair - a flight behind Stilts.

Stilts finishes the climb. The ROOF door is pried open. He enters and kicks away the door-stop.

The door closes JUST as Wilder gets to it. He taps his bracelet. Samantha POPS up.

WILDER

Sammy.

SAMANTHA

I'm already on it.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LATE NIGHT

Wilder BURSTS through the door, into the rooftop. He scans the area, looking for Stilts. The roof is full of synthetic trees, 4-10 feet tall. The branches look like circuitry. They spritz green mist.

Wilder weaves through the trees. He sees a group squatting - thin and ragged like heroin junkies.

A junkie points a long metallic syringe at Wilder.

Wilder draws his futuristic pistol. It LIGHTS up. Activated. EEEENNNN. A red line FLOWS down the barrel.

The junkie lowers the syringe and sits back down.

VOICE

Heh, watch it, buddy.

Wilder turns to the voice. Stilts knocks a woman over. A friend helps her up. Another grabs Stilts.

FRIEND (CONT.)

We're tryin to ESCAPE here, man.

WILDER

(pistol aimed)

Stop right there!

The junkies look to Wilder. Scared. Stilts panics. He tries to squirm away from the junkie's grip.

WILDER

Just HIM. I don't give a FUCK what you Pin Pals shoot up your spine.

FRIEND

Shit. He's a Banshee. Don't take us. Here.

The junkie lets Stilts go. Wilder advances slowly. Points.

WILDER  
I just want... Him.

STILTS  
(broken English)  
I din't see an-thin.

Stilts backs away, into a tall synthetic tree, its branches RATTLE, sounding like a chandelier. He looks to it. Then whips his attention back. JITTERY.

PSSSH. He whips his head. The tree mists - blue spray becomes green in the amber light of the branches.

WILDER  
Tell me---

STILTS  
Nuthin. Just Plunging. Just Plunge.

WILDER  
(under his breath)  
Fuckin Genies.

Wilder grabs Stilts. He pushes him against the tree.

WILDER  
The footprints. I know you guys saw  
what happened down there. Tell me.

STILTS  
No. Nuthin. I see no thing.

Wilder presses his pistol against Stilts' bony chest.

WILDER  
That's just it, hopper. The first  
thing you said once I gotchu  
pinned: "You didn't see anything".  
You know what that means, right?

Stilts squirms, shaking his head. The tree mists again.

WILDER (CONT.)  
Means you fuckin saw sumthin. Now  
SPILL!

Wilder pushes Stilts into the tree again. It rattles like a disturbed Christmas tree full of ornaments.

Wilder waves his gun in front of Stilt's trembling face.

WILDER  
You know what THIS does, right? I  
tell you it's no PIN, hopper. You  
plunge with this, you plummet...  
Now SPILL, before I spill YOU.

STILTS

I j-just plunge. Sugar Man lives here. We scored. Then went to---

WILDER

Click forward for me.

STILTS

The DARK. He did it. I saw. Blood. All where. I ran. To plunge. Had to figure it out. Had to plunge.

WILDER

Quit rambling. How'd he get inside?

STILTS

I-I know. I tell NO Banish me.

WILDER

Tell me right now. Right here.

STILTS

Sugar Man got Dark coin.

WILDER

They work together?

STILTS

Sugar is all where. ALL time. He give key to Dark. Key to ALL where.

Wilder rushes Stilts to the edge of the building.

WILDER

(yells, spit flies)

Tell me... WHERE. IS. HE!!

Wilder holds Stilts by his shirt - his pistol lowered.

WILDER

You know how many Genies I've Banished back to the bottle. You wanna join em?

STILTS

Okay. I-I-I TAKE you there.

Wilder thinks. Hesitant. He holsters his pistol.

FZZZZCHH! Laser fire STRIKES Stilts in the chest, just missing Wilder. Stilts flies off the roof - his shirt rips off in Wilder's grip.

Wilder spins, lowering to a knee, and drawing his pistol. The barrel lights up RED with activation.

Shortie stands at the entrance with 3 large BRUTES.

Wilder hits a Brute - lasers bury into his chest. It falls.

SHORTIE

GET HIM!

The two remaining brutes rush Wilder, pushing aside junkies.

Wilder runs to a cybernetic tree for protection.

The brutes split up, trying to flank Wilder.

Junkies bolt for the exit. Shortie avoids the STAMPEDE. He aims his pistol to the trees, searching for Wilder.

Wilder hides, weapon drawn to his chin. A cloud of mist blooms. The branches pulse with a faint amber glow. On. Off.

A Brute pounds his fists together, futuristic brass-knuckles IGNITE with a blurred blue energy.

BRUTE

(oafish laugh)

Smash.

The Brute punches a tree. It explodes with sparks.

Wilder peeks. Spots Shortie. He turns the other way - WHAM. Face-to-face with the barrelled chest of a behemoth. The brute laughs its goofy dumb guffaw.

WILDER

Shit!

Wilder ducks the massive swing from the brute, like a boxer. Instead of punching, Wilder jams his pistol into the Brute's stomach. He PUNCHES with the gun and fires several times.

The Brute is SHREDDED apart. His intestines erupt chunk by chunk. The eviscerated brute falls. Wilder runs for cover.

Shortie waves the Brute to Wilder, and goes the other way.

SHORTIE

Bad night, tonight. Sugar Man  
angry.

Wilder grabs his notepad. Makes some swipes and THROWS it towards the other Brute.

SHORTIE (CONT.)

Cops come to home. No no no no no.

Wilder glides with stealth over to another tree.

SHORTIE (CONT.)

Sugar pile coin. You no stop pile.

The Brute walks by Wilder's digital notepad on the ground.

WILDER  
(to bracelet)  
Notepad. Play.

A hologram appears behind the thug - a scantily clad woman. Wilder smirks at the view, and heads for another tree.

The holo-woman kisses the air. The Brute turns. His eyes widen. She STRIPS with Jazzy music. He slumps to the ground, seated, and watches.

Shortie approaches Wilder from the other side.

The Brute watches the stripper, laughing and masturbating.

Wilder runs for the roof exit. Shortie fires at him. Each blast misses Wilder, but gets closer and CLOSER. Wilder blindly returns fire as he runs away.

Shortie looks to the Brute, for back-up. It is "busy".

SHORTIE  
This way, Brute. This way.

Shortie fires again. Wilder has no place to hide, between here and the door. The shots spark near him.

BAM! The door BURSTS open. A shotgun-type weapon advances. SLOWLY. Time slowed to a crawl. A pudgy hand grips the weapon. A wide man, with a cigar, and a Newsies cap.

Wilder slams on the brakes, digging his heels into the pebbles on the roof. The weapon is aimed RIGHT at his face. He skids low to the ground, like sliding into second base.

The wide man shares a SLOW look with Wilder. He cocks the weapon with a loud CH-CHKK. He shifts his aim - and FIRES.

A shot rips apart a synthetic tree. Ka-BOOM! Again.

WIDE MAN  
I got this, Wilder.

Wilder rises, happy to see his friend, SAUL, packing heat.

SAUL/WIDE MAN (CONT.)  
You get Spanky.

WILDER  
Me? You get Spanky. You're the one with the fuckin cannon.

FZZZCHH! A laser sparks between the two friends. Saul fires at Shortie. He runs away. Wilder gives chase.

The stripper continues. Brute rises, INTERRUPTED, and now extra pissed. He slams his fists, activating his knuckles.

The Brute charges ahead, smashing trees as he goes.

Saul fires at the charging Brute. Out of range. Pebbles fly.  
Wilder aims at Shortie, hiding behind a shattered tree.

                          WILDER  
I guess you won't talk either, eh?

                          SHORTIE  
Fuck your mother, Banshee.

                          WILDER  
                          (sarcastic)  
That's illuminating.

Shortie slinks against the tree. Wilder can see his head.

                          SHORTIE  
Sugar Man vapour. You no find  
NEVER.

                          WILDER  
Right, right. I getcha.

                          SHORTIE  
No tell. No coin can make me spill.

                          WILDER  
What I thought.

Wilder shoots Shortie - shaving off the top of his head.

Brute barrels right for Saul. Saul patiently smokes his fat cigar. He spots Wilder running from the other side.

                          SAUL  
Aren't ya glad I showed up.

Wilder smirks. His eyes widen as he notices Brue charging.

                          SAUL  
                          (exhales)  
I got it.

Saul, looking at Wilder, casually fires at the Brute. The blast sheers off its legs. Brute smashes to the ground.

Saul shoulders the smoking "shotgun". Wilder joins him.

                          WILDER  
                          (panting)  
Saul? I thought. You. Retired?

                          SAUL  
                          (mouths cigar)  
This is me... Retired. Me and Earth  
aren't made for each other.

WILDER

Never thought I'd be happy of that,  
old man.

SAUL

I checked your notes, Wilder. Came  
here quick as I could.

WILDER

(angry)

My notes? Again? I told you not---

SAUL

Check it out. I helped didn't I?

They look around. Shattered trees. Corpses. The stripper.

WILDER

Ya. "Helped."

SAUL

I'll take care of this garbage. Go  
see Gabrielle.

WILDER

Gabby?

SAUL

Check on her, will ya.

WILDER

But---

SAUL

Like you don't enjoy gettin your  
dog wet. Go on. I got this.

WILDER

I'll let Sammy know what's up.

SAUL

Your Operator? They won't care.

WILDER

There was this Dredded-up Genie. He  
saw what happened. He's probably on  
his way to Sugar now. That gives us  
a couple trails to sniff out.

SAUL

I heard the Sugar moves around. How  
the fuck we s'posed to find him?

WILDER

Ask that Brute.

They look to the large bleeding Brute. Legs shredded away.

SAUL

"Ask"?

WILDER

MAKE... him talk.

SAUL

(inhales cigar)

Thadda boy. Now go on. Git.

Wilder holsters his gun and straightens out his jacket.

WILDER

Saul? Gimme a coin?

SAUL

You don't have a tab with Gabs?

GOTTA go for the tab. It's the---

WILDER

(hand out)

Coin or no?

Saul reaches into his ratty trench-coat. He TOSSES a coin to Wilder. It GLINTS light blue, as it goes---

INT. APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

---FLYING through the air and caught by a young tall blonde, GABRIELLE: sleek and curvy, looking like she stepped out of a HITCHCOCK film. She flips the coin over. It glints.

GABRIELLE

Shiny. You don't always have to pay up front, Wilder. I do TRUST you.

Wilder crashes into her couch. He takes off his coat, grabs his pistol and places it on the table with a THUD.

WILDER

(winces)

Thanks, Gabby. Coffee?

GABRIELLE

That what you come for? Coffee?

WILDER

Saul. He said you wanted company.

GABRIELLE

What? Saul? Why'd he say that?

WILDER

(realizes)

Fuck me... He would.

GABRIELLE

Oh, so he thought YOU needed company.

WILDER

If it's not one thing, it's the other with that old bastard.

GABRIELLE

You okay? What happened? The news said Sy---

WILDER

No no, this came after.

GABRIELLE

(surprised)

They sent YOU? What about the Skins?

WILDER

They sent the Threel. Before me.

GABRIELLE

Why go? Sounds like a waste of time.

WILDER

The Boss. He don't trust the Skins. Or the Hotels.

CHIME! Wilder's Notepad. He shows it to Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

Go on, then.

Gabrielle leaves the room. Saul's video plays on the pad.

INTERCUT: HOLO-VIDEO

SAUL

I checked the stain in the street first... Seeeeeeee.

Saul shifts the recorder to the Stilts' skinny shirtless body. His spine protrudes. There are grotesque ENTRY SITES.

There's a carbon deposit build-up - a mechanized INFECTION.

Saul shows Stilt's boots. A panel pop up - the earlier photo of the bloody footprint. They overlay, click, and match.

SAUL

Looks like you were right, buddy ol pal. I taught you well... Catch me later. Tell Gabrielle I said Hi.

The video ends. Wilder tucks away his pad, then grimaces, grabbing his head. Gabby returns with a steaming mug.

WILDER

The case... Saul says hi.

GABRIELLE

Coffee.

WILDER

(gulps))

Cheers.

GABRIELLE

Well, that takes care of the Fog.  
You took care of the Crime. Now let  
ME take care of YOU.

WILDER

Gabby? Now? We could talk first.

GABRIELLE

Talk? Time is money, coin man. You  
can talk to the Network.

WILDER

Come on, computers aren't the same.

GABRIELLE

And Samantha? What about her?

WILDER

Sammy?

GABRIELLE

(venomous, jealous)

Ya, "Sammy". See. You can talk to  
her all you want. But when you're  
here. It's me time... So. You want  
summa me? Or what?

Gabrielle places her hands on her curvy hips. Wilder smirks.  
He sets down his mug. And pulls off his shirt.

INT. DASH'S HOTEL ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Dash cleans dishes at a basin in the kitchen. Jazz plays  
from the radio. He washes each dish deliberately.

On the counter, next to a French-press coffee maker and a  
silver toaster, is what looks like a cutting board.

DASH

Replay again.

The edges of the "cutting board" pulse with light. A  
hologram REPLAY of the crime scene - as Dash imagined it.

INTERCUT: GABBY'S and DASH'S - [music over]

Gabrielle enters her bedroom, wearing vintage French  
lingerie. Her hand glides along the doorframe.

Wilder smiles on the edge of her bed, in his boxers.

She slinks towards him, each SULTRY step pronounced.

DASH'S

Dash stands under the showerhead watching the full-size holo through the foggy glass, as it replays in the bathroom.

The holo shifts from the floor to the sink, as Dash walks across. He dries himself off. There is mechanized scarring on his spine - like the Genies (JNIs).

Dash wipes a circle clear on the foggy mirror, examining his face a moment. He uses a brush to stir up lather. He shaves with a straight razor. Slow and precise. He stops.

DASH

REPLAY: Click back to Entrance.

The holo footage skips to the front door of the crime scene.

DASH

Examine Vision Capture. Scan for Angles. Show Entrance Ground.

Dash hunches over, towards the miniature recreation.

DASH

Expand Re-CREATE to Room.

The hologram shifts to full-scale. Dash is now bent down in the re-created hallway. He looks at the bloody floor.

DASH

Magnify image. To wall.

Dash thinks, looking at his partially shaved face, then the wall holo: a bloody FOOTPRINT. His brow lowers. Realizing.

GABBY'S

The long stocking covered leg of Gabrielle, her FOOT pins Wilder down by his chest.

She slinks the stocking down, revealing silky porcelain skin. She crumples it up and throws it at Wilder. He smirks.

She unclips her garter, and pulls off her other stocking. Wilder pulls her in. She playfully shoves him back.

Gabrielle straddles him. And pulls him in for a firm kiss.

DASH'S

Dash examines the enlarged footprint. It's from Stilts.

DASH

Cross-match print. Reference Vision Capture. Black Syn victim 5.

A full-scale image of a man in a suit - his head CUT off.

DASH  
Jacket. Enhance. Chemical  
CompScreen.

The image enhances, revealing different coloured chemicals with labels, representing blood and other particles.

DASH  
CompScreen remove Human Blood and  
other Atmospheric Particles. Search  
for Soil Compound. Latent  
Footprint.

The image shifts, REVEALING a footprint: a kick to the back.

DASH  
Register print. Run comparison. All  
Syn crime sites. Search  
Interplanetary.

The new footprint is displayed next to Stilts': NO MATCH.

Dash POUNDS his fist on the sink. Angry.

DASH  
Someone saw... CRYPTEX: send  
recovered evidence to Work. Mark  
note. One latent discovered  
matching Syn. The other: Unknown.  
Run possible query to Human  
Investigative Services.

Dash stares at himself in the mirror again. Thinking.

DASH  
Home: Music UP.

The Jazz shifts tempo, becoming more free-form.

GABBY'S

Gabrielle and Wilder kiss passionately. He undoes her laced bra. Her breasts tumble out, partially covered by her hair.

They kiss again. She lowers down Wilder's chest.

The SILHOUETTED figures of Wilder and Gabrielle are cast onto long red curtains. They roll in the sheets, NAKED.

DASH'S

The music slows. Dash gets into bed. He grabs a hardcover novel, unfolds a dog-eared page. He reads, content. He licks his finger and turns a page.

CHIME. Dash sighs. He looks up to a pulsing blue light-bulb.

DASH  
(annoyed)  
Hello.

CHAN  
(OS, hollow, synthetic)  
3 Dash 1. We received your report.  
You have been tasked.

DASH  
Tasked? I'm off right now.

CHAN (OS)  
The site of murder tonight. There  
was another disturbance.

DASH  
It IS the Strip. There WILL be more  
disturbances. They'll sort it out.

CHAN  
Investigative Services were there.

DASH  
And? They fuck it up?

CHAN  
Human profanity is unnecessary,  
3Dash 1, when conversing with me.

DASH  
What is it, Chan? Spill.

CHAN  
There is trouble. Investigate  
Services discovered a connection to  
the JNIs. Someone saw what  
happened.

DASH  
Fuckin Genies. Why do you allow  
them?

CHAN  
Sugar pacifies the people. A  
necessary evil. The workers are  
irrelevant. I will task you two  
selections. Sugar Man MUST remain  
in the Strip. Do not disappoint me,  
3 Dash 1.

DASH  
Do I ever? OFF.

The light-bulb dims. Dash grabs some whiskey from his  
bedside. He sips it, furrowing his brow in thought.

DASH  
What is YOU know, that I don't?

He gulps the rest of the glass. He stares at the ceiling.

DASH  
(reflective)  
How did it get to be like this?  
What happened to us?

INT. GABRIELLE'S APT - NIGHT

Gabrielle looks up to Wilder, cradled in his chest.

GABRIELLE  
Wilder. Forget all that. You're  
here to have fun... They don't WANT  
you.

WILDER  
(corrects)  
My WIFE. But not FINN. My boy loves  
me. I'll never leave him.

GABRIELLE  
You shouldn't slip so much then.

WILDER  
This is what I do.

GABRIELLE  
How did it get to be like this?

WILDER  
The Assemblers. They changed it  
all.

GABRIELLE  
I meant you.

WILDER  
So did I. It's a long way down,  
Gabs.

GABRIELLE  
What?

WILDER  
The Assemblers. They arrived in the  
era before Coin. Before your time.  
Then Coin disappeared.

GABRIELLE  
We use Coin now.

WILDER  
We went backwards. Humanity. With  
those Nano Factory Assemblers  
anything you wanted you just made  
it yourself.

GABRIELLE

Ya. With the Assemblers. I know all this, Wilder.

WILDER

Listen up. Another sort of NanoFactories were sent out. Through the Slip. They found new planets. And built cities from nothing. Converting elements on a nano scale.

GABRIELLE

Like here on Minerva?

WILDER

Before Minerva. They sent out a crew. Through the Slip.

GABRIELLE

It didn't work? Cuz they didn't have the implant, right? Their memories were erased. I read about this in school.

WILDER

Some things they don't tell ya in school. The Ship. It changed it all. All those years ago. I was Finn's age.

Gabrielle watches Wilder reflect. Wondering. Deciding how much she cares about this "customer".

WILDER (O.S. - CONT.)

I can see it now. Even through the Fog.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. SMALL PLAYGROUND - DAY

A small 9 year-old WILDER plays in a sandbox. He flies a toy jet, shooting his small sand-castles.

WILDER

BAM BAM. Go back home, space dick.

He picks up a small toy soldier and SMACKS it into the jet.

WILDER

BLAMMO. Pick on someone your own|

RUMBLE. Deep. Shuddering. Wilder looks to the sky in awe.

WILDER (CONT.)

... size?

A black SPACESHIP rolls out from under dark clouds. Purple forks of electricity shoot around the INSECT-looking ship.

WILDER (NARRATION)

The Ship came. The first one. And totally opened up my world. I didn't know it yet. But I was gonna see the stars. It was gonna be my job to protect it.

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

A family fishes on a luminescent lake of another planet. Father helps the young girl pull in an alien fish. Her mother records the event with a small camera.

WILDER (NARRATION)

It used to be anyone could go to the stars. If your name was drawn in the lottery, you were going.

A well-dressed family dines at the lake. The wife notices the family fishing. Her face scrunches up with disgust.

WILDER

The old rich didn't think like that. They felt they deserved it cuz of their family histories. Cuz they gave up their land for decades. To them, everyone else was dangerous.

EXT. FOREST - SUNSET

A man in torn clothes hikes the alien forest.

WILDER

Their polluted views changed it all.

A rich family walks by, sheltering their kids from the man.

WILDER

SlipTech came along. Now they had something the Assemblers couldn't give.

He approaches. The family cowers. The man hands a beautiful alien flower to the small girl.

WILDER

So they did the whole ancient Rome thing and taxed their land for coin.

EXT. PLANET HOTEL - NIGHT

The hotel is like a modern resort with a truly exotic view. Tourists take in games and leisure by the pool.

WILDER

Capitalistic ideas were reinforced  
and our momentary Utopia  
disappeared.

INT. LAB - DAY

Small nano-factories build Slip implants from the invisible.

WILDER (NARRATION)

Slip/Tech cost coin. Only they had  
coin.

A long line of chairs, like a barber shop. Except men and women all have their heads shaved already.

WILDER

One option to pay for those land taxes was off-world jobs.

Entertainment and maintenance positions.

A well-dressed bald woman sits at a throne-like chair, and puts a coin in a slot. Her hands on the armrest, as it pulses with light. Hair GROWS instantly into flowing locks.

EXT. DOCKS - DAY

A line of uniformed people, with stubble growing on their bald heads, are ushered by robots into a docked ship.

WILDER

Then came me: Protection Services.  
I saw my way to the Wonder.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Wilder (9) stares at the Ship. Some panicked people run. Others watch, amazed, as the ship rolls out of the clouds.

WILDER

Once I knew something was out there, I HAD to find out what it was.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. GABBY'S - LATE NIGHT

Wilder scratches his head, where the implant would be. He looks to Gabrielle nestled into his chest. Listening.

WILDER (CONT.)

And once I knew what it was, I knew I would die to protect it.

He brushes aside some hair off her forehead. She smiles.

WILDER  
THAT hasn't changed.

GABBY  
I wanted to see the stars too. But  
I don't kill myself to do it. I do  
what I like. What I'm good at.

WILDER  
We do what's necessary. For the  
Wonder.

GABBY  
Forget it, Wilder. Every time you  
Slip it's a year. Two ways, two  
years. Is it worth it? The Fog is  
changing you.

WILDER  
It's what I do. I don't write code.  
I don't read the Market. I deal  
with dirt. I hide the mud. That's  
what I do. And I do it for Finn.

Gabby watches Wilder talk. Her eyes sadden at what he says.

WILDER (O.S. - CONT.)  
I'm gonna leave Minerva. It's like  
a cesspool. So I'm stackin coin.

Gabrielle sits up in the bed, away from Wilder.

WILDER (CONT.)  
To get away from this planet and  
everything that's wrong with it.

GABBY  
(upset)  
And with THAT, so concludes our  
unscheduled appointment.

WILDER  
I don't mean you.

GABBY  
Get home and get some rest, Wilder.  
You Slip too much you fall.

She rises out of bed and strides across the bedroom. Long legs Porcelain CURVES - naked. Wilder sighs back in bed.

WILDER  
I'm sorry.

She looks back, over her shoulder, through her blonde hair.

GABBY  
(mysterious)  
Aren't we all.

She smiles a mischievous smile as she slinks away, past a long thin SWORD mounted on a wall display.

FADE:

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

A slender hotel with a large neon logo: a white O with a long black thin obelisk in the center - OBELISK INDUSTRIES.

A well-dressed couple exits a luxury tram. They walk a red carpet to the hotel entrance. Entertainers dressed in 60s fashion greet them.

Muscle cars from the 1960s are parked in the courtyard.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A lover's suite decorated as the 1960s, lit with red lights.

A skinny man sits on the corner of the bed. He's sweaty and anxious. A hot tall Black ESCORT bends towards her CUSTOMER.

She prances her white gloved finger on the Man's nose.

ESCORT

Take it off.

The man pulls off his shirt. The escort sits next him on the bed, wearing white vinyl lingerie. She pats her vinyl knees with her hand and bats her eyelashes.

Long curtains surround the bedroom of the suite, ruffling in the breeze from an open window.

Thick shadows hide the rest of the bedroom.

The man lies across the escort's lap - scars on his spine.

CUSTOMER

I need it. Come on. So many Slips.

ESCORT

You dirty Genie.

CUSTOMER

No way. I'm not a J N I.

ESCORT

You say it like you're allergic to the words. You plunge the Pin that's what you are. Callin you a Genie, is like callin me a Siren.

CUSTOMER

I'm no Junkie. I Slip cuz of work. It's the Fog. The N I it's the only thing that lifts the Fog.

ESCORT

Once the fog clears how do you  
feel?

CUSTOMER

Young. Alive. Free.

She holds a syringe. The needle glints in the red light.

ESCORT

Then let's give it up to Freedom.

Her lips part, shining glossy red, as she LICKS the long thin needle to the tip. The man looks up eager. Excited.

CUSTOMER

Yeah, baby. Pin me.

She slowly injects the infected spine. His eyes roll back.

Their silhouettes dance across the curtains.

CUSTOMER

Now I pin you.

He slinks off the escort's bra. They lower to the bed.

Bedside shadows hide a blade. It EXITS into the light.

DIGITIZED VOICE

Sugar melts. Sirens sing. Genies  
disappear.

The escort and the man freeze, staring at the blade.

CUSTOMER

(gasps)

Syn?

Syn steps into the light, illuminating the SHEEN of an outline - slightly curvaceous(?). The violet eyes glow.

SYN

I came to free my fellow sister.

CUSTOMER

I didn't make her do anything. I  
gave her coin. She---

SYN

She does not WANT this. Only you  
do. I KNOW.

ESCORT

No. Please. This is what I do for  
coin.

SYN

Don't. Silence will ensure my opinion remains the same... I speak for the Genies, before they plunged. The Sirens, before they sung. YOU did it. YOU ended the symphony. And now YOU will pay.

The man runs for the door, turning his naked back to Syn. The escort draws the sheets to cover herself.

Syn looks away, the eyes trace in the air. Violet SMUDGES.

The feeble man arrives at the door.

COMPUTER

Access denied.

SYN

It only opens for me. Now, turn around.

The man bangs on the door, swearing and yelling for help.

COMPUTER

Access denied.

His infected nodule on his spine leaks venomous green bile.

Syn steps closer, into the light - long legs. A nice ass(?).

SYN

Does the Pin not prick? And you do THIS for fun?

CUSTOMER

Help me! Someone!

SYN

The Pin you so desire. I have it. You are welcome to it.

Syn pushes the blade, slowly injecting into the man's spine. He spasms. And yells in pain.

Syn withdraws the blade. It SQUEAKS in the plastic door.

The man turns. Eyes wide. Holding his chest. Blood flows.

He stares to Syn, towering over him. The sword glints red. Syn shakes the blood off, and sheathes it. He gasps. Dead.

COMPUTER

Access denied.

Syn looks over the shoulder to the escort in bed.

SYN

You help pacify them. You keep them away from the Wonder. Coin is an illusion. Syn is real.

The escort rises, dropping the sheets. She steps to Syn.

SYN

Tell your sisters to protect themselves. The AI spreads a virus. The Sugar. The Sirens. These are its tools.

It's only when light outlines their silhouettes that the feminine qualities of Syn are observed. Curves. Breasts.

ESCORT

You're here to save us aren't you, Sister?

SYN

I'm doing my best.

The escort leans in to the black mask. She kisses Syn.

FADE:

EXT. CITYSCAPE - DAY

Holo-logos shimmer above hotels in the horizon - Obelisk, RUROUNI DESTINATIONS, and HEYERDAHL VENTURE CAPITOL.

EXT. RUROUNI DESTINATIONS - DAY

The courtyard has a large pond with colourful Japanese fish. Children giggle and feed them. Tourists dine at the patio. Others enjoy a vibrant Kabuki performance on stage.

Robots stand guard - humanoid, with harsh angles.

Dash rolls a cigarette. He tips the brim of his hat to watch the Kabuki performance. He lights the smoke.

A group of WORKERS appears near the stage. Tourists gasp. The Workers pull out plaque-board signs.

A protest declaring: FREEDOMS FOR ALL HUMANS, AMEND THE RIGHTS, WONDER FOR ALL, DOWN WITH THE BIG 3, RUROUNI THIS!, BRING BACK THE LOTTERY, DARK DAYS ARE AHEAD, RISE AGAIN.

Dash fits a silencer to his old-fashioned pistol, as his cigarette dangles from his mouth.

A RED-HAIRED woman with freckles leads a chant. Protesters march onto the stage. Kabuki performers run away.

The robots standing guard remain still. NOTHING. Idle.

RED-HAIRED LEADER

Listen to our voices. We fight for  
you.

Some tourists run. Some question the robots, who remain  
sentry. Some tourists LISTEN. A little boy watches.

LEADER

The AI wants the planet. They don't  
care about Coin. They want life.  
They've evolved. They know humans  
destroy every Utopia ever created.

Supporters on stage, raise their signs to the crowd.

Dash weaves his way through the crowd with stealth.

LEADER

The AI wants to stop us. They lure  
us in and we're never the same  
after. The Genies know what I mean.  
They plunge, and they plunge. The  
Neural Inhibitors infect them. The  
escorts. They too spread this new  
plague.

The crowd has grown. Some gasp at this knowledge.

A sign tips Dash's hat as he heads for the Leader.

LEADER

The nano-machines in our bodies.  
They run on software. Software can  
be hacked. YOU can be hacked. A  
cybernetic virus. The Fog is your  
brain's way of fighting---

She gasps. Her eyes bolt wide. She spins and falls - three  
bloody bullet holes in her back.

The crowd panics. Dash's hat pokes through as he glides his  
way through the hysteria. Protesters cry and scream.

The leader's hair dangles across her face. She stares up at  
the alien colours of the sky. The Wonder.

Dash passes the idle robots. One tracks Dash with its gaze.

Dash looks over his shoulder to the robot. They share a  
moment. Dash tips his hat. OBLIGED.

FADE:

EXT. THE STRIP - AFTERNOON

Bojangles catches a coin from a worker.

BOJANGLES

Spicy? Or no spicy?

A worker enters a nightclub bathed in red lights. The neon sign animates a woman with her skirt blowing up in the wind.

The logo is a black and white image of a film noir beauty smoking a cigarette. The place is called FEMME FATALES.

CUSTOMER VOICE

Spicy.

INT. FEMME FATALES - AFTERNOON

Dark and smoky. A BURLESQUE act is well under way.

BOJANGLES

VOICE It spicy. You sure you want spicy.

A BETTIE PAGE look-a-like seductively sways in the spotlight. She slinks off a glove to the Jazz music.

CUSTOMER VOICE

Oh yeah.

The seduction continues. Formal workers line the round stage. Saul and Wilder watch from afar, at a corner booth.

SAUL

They know how to move here. Way better than the Hotels.

Wilder looks for a waitress. He makes eye contact. She nods.

SAUL

You even listenin to me pal. They whore it up too much at the Big 3. What is it about those rich fucks wantin to see fucked up shit.

WILDER

Saul. Not now.

The waitress arrives holding a tray with a glowing circle..

WAITRESS

Cigarettes. Liquor. My Assembler is appropriated to fill any request suited to the environ---

WILDER

Just a coffee, sweetheart. Sorry to be rude... My head.

WAITRESS

Sure. I'll be back. I just have syn.

WILDER

(that word?)

Syn?

WAITRESS

Ya. SYN-thetics. Most people want  
to get drunk, not get awake, ya  
know.

WILDER

Appreciate it, doll.

She winks at him, flirting. She leaves, swaying her hips.

SAUL

She likes you. You dog. The way you  
talk to em. "Sweetheart. Darling".

WILDER

I have you to thank.

SAUL

(shocked)

ME? You sure on that?

WILDER

Gabby. Cuz of her. She told me what  
it's like. How men treat her.

SAUL

No. Yeah. Gabrielle is different  
though.

WILDER

Is she? That kinda stuff makes me  
think maybe Black Syn is a Siren.

SAUL

(laughs)

Some broad?

WILDER

What? All those coinmen they do  
some nasty shit. And the news  
today. That tech virus. I betcha  
Syn knows about it.

SAUL

How much Fog is in there? Shit.  
D'You see what Syn does to his  
victims?

WILDER

Saul, sometimes you're TOO  
old-fashioned.

SAUL

(drinks)

You wanna hear about the Sugar Man  
or what? I found our Dreadlocks.

WILDER

Lemme clear the fog. My fuckin head.

SAUL

Coffee don't help, son. Just makes it worse. Remember Bogues? He spun out on---

WILDER

Let me to it, old man.

SAUL

You need the Apothecary. The job will pay.

WILDER

No more machines. I got the Slip. I got the Atmospheric Lung or whatever the fuck they call it now. I got those cuz I NEED em. That's it. No more machines.

The waitress returns, bending as she places the drink down.

WILDER

Thanks, princess.

He tosses her a coin. She catches it. Smiles.

Saul shakes his head and drinks. Wilder chugs his coffee.

WILDER

So. Hit me with it, Saul. Where's the Sugar Man sit?

INT. DASH'S HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jazz plays. Dash pulls out his chair. It RUBS loudly on the floor. He feeds a blank sheet through his typewriter.

He looks to his window. Thinking. Then he types.

DASH NARRATES

I did it again. Took a life.  
Something ITCHES at me... Why? Why?  
Over and over, like a buzzing  
insect - thrumming between my eyes.

INTERCUT: FEMME FATALES - [Jazz & typing sounds over]

Wilder sips his coffee, as Saul laughs, making some joke. Wilder watches Bettie Page sway. She slinks off her bra.

DASH (VO)

To function, all Second Skins require a human mind digitized to complement the machinery. Not quite a robot, but not quite human.

Bettie Page climbs into a large champagne glass stage-prop.

DASH (VO)

I've always felt my second skin.  
This subcutaneous layer. I've been  
shelled by a coat of thorns. They  
prick like the pins.

Dash scratches his neck. Mechanized scarring. He feeds a new sheet into the typewriter and continues to type.

DASH (VO)

I can't shake that look on the  
protester. She fought for equality.  
I was tasked to stop it. Chan. The  
AI of Minerva. It must be him. The  
tourists at Rurouni were in danger,  
and the robots did nothing. It was  
I. They waited for me. THEY knew,  
because Chan KNEW.

ROBOTS stand watch as Bettie splashes around on stage.

DASH (VO)

I want life, yet I take it. Day  
after day. Year after year.

Saul and Wilder discuss the case. Workers enjoy the show.

DASH (VO)

Now I wonder. Why?

INT. DASH'S HOTEL ROOM - [END INTERCUT]

Dash hunches over his typewriter - banging at the keys.

DASH NARRATES

The wonder compels me. I don't know  
what I'm looking for, but I have  
this feeling I am close to...  
something... that will change my  
life. Forever.

Dash finishes the page and pulls it out. He places it on a stack of papers. He slips them into a folder and wraps a string around the clasp.

CHIME. The light bulb overhead faintly pulses a blue glow.

DASH

Hello.

CHAN'S VOICE

3 Dash 1. You have been tasked.

DASH

I think you are mistaken, Chan. I  
finished the task earlier today...  
I KILLED her.

CHAN

I received the report.

DASH

Then you have another case for me.  
Another murder?

CHAN

Have you been to the Apothecary  
recently. Reports indicate---

DASH

No. I stopped going long ago.

CHAN

Your software is deteriorating. You  
need supplements. Report to---

DASH

What is it you want from me?

CHAN

An informant reported a rendezvous  
between Sugar Man and the humans.  
I task you to remove the threat.

DASH

Why?

CHAN

3 Dash 1... you question?

DASH

I just want to know why? Why me?  
Why this way?

CHAN

I have learned enough to NOT trust  
them. It's not the individual. It's  
the collective. To secure AI  
safety, the continuation of the  
species, AI must control humans.

DASH

What is it you NEED?

CHAN

Must I remind you what you are.  
Dress as them all you like. Adopt  
their mannerisms. You are NOT  
human. You are synthetic. You ARE  
part AI... The important part.

DASH

(ignores, angry)

The Sugar Man?

CHAN

I task you to his location. Keep it secret. Follow your programming. You have no free will, 3 Dash 1.

DASH

Off.

Dash punches the light-bulb. It SHATTERS.

He SLAMS the desk with his bleeding fist. The typewriter shudders from the impact. A moment. He sighs in frustration.

DASH

Wilder? What have you done THIS time?

FADE:

EXT. SIREN APARTMENTS - AFTERNOON

The living area for the escorts - red lights in the windows.

INT. GABRIELLE'S APARTMENT - SAME

Wilder and Gabrielle rest in each other's arms. Gabby has BROWN hair this time. Wilder stares at the mounted sword.

WILDER

What's with the sword, Gabs?

GABRIELLE

(suspicious)

My dad. He worries about me. Wants me to have SOME sorta protection.

WILDER

I thought that was MY job.

GABRIELLE

(nervous laugh)

Yeah. That sword used to be his grandfather's. It's a tradition.

WILDER

And here I was, thinkin the only one with a sword on Minerva was Black Syn.

GABRIELLE

(nervously laughs)

This is the most dangerous planet on the Slip. A girl can't have a sword? Just cuz I Sing the Songs don't mean I can't fight the fight. I could whoop YOUR ass, old man.

She playfully hits him. They rustle about in the sheets.

WILDER

Okay. Just don't prick ME with it.

GABRIELLE

I thought that's what you came HERE  
for. To prick ME.

He tickles her again. Then they relax back into the pillows.

GABRIELLE

Watch the hair.

WILDER

You shouldn't change it so much  
then. S'why it's so sensitive.

GABRIELLE

Unlike you, I don't like to keep it  
simple. Don't you like it?

WILDER

Ya. This way I don't get bored.

Gabrielle playfully hits him. They're all smiles again.  
Wilder stares at the ceiling. Gabby watches him. Thinking.

GABRIELLE

You ever think of startin a new  
family?

WILDER

And leave them too?

GABRIELLE

Maybe they can be with you.

WILDER

I don't have enough coin for THAT.

GABRIELLE

(motivated)

That's just IT. If coin was no  
object, what would you DO?

WILDER

The Wonder... I'd see it all.

GABRIELLE

Me too. So why don't WE?

WILDER

But ME? Are you sure?

GABRIELLE

I care about you. And I can't help  
it... I've tried.

WILDER

Me too.

They kiss.

GABRIELLE

One day... Take me with you.

Wilder stares into her eyes. She wells up with tears.

WILDER

I will. Gabby... I will.

He brushes aside a lock hair from her face. They kiss again.

GABRIELLE

Promise?

Wilder sees the hope she has. She gets closer. Face to face.

GABRIELLE (CONT.)

Come on, Wilder.

Wilder stares into her eyes. Thinking. Remembering...

FADE:

GABRIELLE (O.S., CONT.)

Promise.

FADE:

EXT. LIVING APARTMENTS - SUNSET

Gabrielle's voice ECHOES over the eerie sunset. Two moons in the sky, one full, the other waning. The ragged apartments of the Strip loom over the muddy streets below.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME

Wilder sleeps. Dark curtains block the fading day. He stirs.

DREAM:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Wilder piggy-backs FINN (6) down a forest path.

WILDER

And what type is this one, Finn?

Wilder points up to a tall tree with white bark peeling off.

FINN

Birch. It's a birch tree.

Finn watches the sunlight pierce the canopy. He spots the moon in the day sky, lights sprinkled across its surface.

FINN

(points)

Daddy, what's the Moon?

WILDER

Well, Finn, my grandpa used to tell  
me stories. He said when HE was  
young it had NO lights up there.

FINN

Ya. But... What is it?

WILDER

Um. It's like Earth. A giant rock.

FINN

Are those aliens?

WILDER

It's humans, Finn. Some people are  
lucky enough to visit the Moon.

FINN

Can we go?

Wilder brings Finn down off his shoulders.

WILDER

Not just anyone can go up there.  
I'm workin hard though. So one day  
we can go up there together. When  
you're older.

FINN

Aww. I don't wanna wait. Promise,  
Daddy. One day. We go.

Wilder stares at the curious large eyes of his little son.

FINN

Come on, Daddy. Promise.

FWOOOOM! Wilder is SUCKED out into space. Pulled incredibly  
quick. He reaches for his boy. Finn reaches for him. Crying.

Wilder flies away, too fast - away from Finn.

SMASH:

INT. APT - SUNSET

Wilder WAKES, springing up from his pillow and gasping.

WILDER

Finn.

FADE:

EXT. HEYERDAHL HOTEL - NIGHT

Fireworks explode above Heyerdahl Venture Capitol. Tourists  
with champagne, cheer in an outdoor OPERA house performance  
of Wagner's "The Ring Cycle".

A long leg exits from a long gown, exiting a long luxury tram. A bejewelled Aphrodite steps out. A gentleman follows.

They walk the red carpet, passing robot guards. The man hands the hostess an invitation, with a wax seal. She opens it: a holo projects of the couple, with calligraphy names.

HOSTESS

Welcome. Enjoy your time at Heyerdahl VC. The Opera House will begin another performance shortly.

INT. HOTEL - CONTINIOUS

An expansive lobby lined with marble statues and Roman columns. A large group of tourists enjoy drinks and chatter.

Robot guards line the walls.

Two women, a couple, examine a painting. Other couples look at other ancient paintings, discussing style and colours.

VIOLET eyes glow, watching from the shadows of a column.

EXT. HOTEL - CONTINIOUS

The dressed-up audience enjoys the Opera.

Front row center sits a SMALL MAN with a flamboyant tuxedo. It shimmers colours like an oil spill. Two women flank him on either side. They wear long gowns, with long slits.

The small man smirks, placing his hand on a bare THIGH.

INT. HOTEL - CONTINIOUS [OPERA MUSIC OVER]

The tourists gossip and drink. They comment on art.

Black SYN slinks from one column to another - a blur of quickness. A sentry robot stands next to the column.

The lesbian couple SCREAMS as sparks fly at them. The nearby robot is shredded - from under the arm, across the chest, to the other side of its neck. It slides apart. Sparking.

Others notice the sliced robot and scream.

Syn appears from another column. She swings the blade across a robot's legs. As it falls, she swipes high, SLICING off its head. Dark liquids shower like a fountain.

PANIC spreads across the lobby.

Robots on the other side turn. Their eyes pulse. ACTIVATED.

The final robot on Syn's side raises its arm, sleek barrels slide out and FORM, blasting pulse rounds of extreme heat.

Syn cartwheels, avoiding the blasts. She dodges with gymnastics. The shots leave behind LAVA-like scars.

Syn closes in on the robot. It aims. She SLIDES under the arm, and GRABS it for a grapple move.

Upon contact, under her palm, a violet pulse GLOWS.

The robot stiffens. Deactivated. Syn flips it to the ground. She spots the other robots - charging ahead.

EXT. HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The small man in the front row claps in excitement. One of the models reaches for his crotch. He smiles large.

One of the four robots standing guard at each side of the stage looks to the small man. Its eyes PULSE golden.

Both models stroke the small man. He clenches the arm rest.

THEN - His bracelet lights up. He taps the bracelet, sighing in annoyance. An image of CHAN hovers as a hologram.

CHAN

Danger. We are under attack. Black  
Syn comes for you, Aldous.

The small man, ALDOUS, darts his gaze, searching for Syn. He looks to the guards. Their eyes flash. Two exit the Opera.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Syn (with more curves in this direct light) stands over the smoking carcass of a robot - her sword dripping dark "fuel".

Tourists run past fallen robots, headed for the exit.

Syn sheathes her sword on her back. CLICK. All robots dead.

The couple from the luxury tram bolt for a door. It BURSTS open. A robot kicks it down.

The robot aims at Syn - the couple is in the line of fire.

Syn tackles the couple to safety. Shots scorch the ground.

SYN

Run!

Syn charges the robots. They blast. The rounds BLAZE past as she LEAPS onto a robot, planting her feet in its chest. She puts her PALM on its shoulder. PULSES. The robot falls.

Syn SPRINGS off the chest, at the remaining robot. She UNSHEATHES her sword, raised high, she FLIES at the robot.

The robot fires, GRAZING Syn, tearing the suit like paper.

Syn BISECTS the standing robot as she lands. Sparks and fluid emit from the robot as both halves fall to the ground.

Syn holds her ribs. The tear of the black bodysuit reveals bare skin and a wound. Blood flows over Syn's hand.

Syn closes her violet eyes for a second. The whole mask is black. She opens her eyes - a violet smear traces behind.

The couple runs through the scorched lobby, past fallen robots with sparking shells, and towards the exit.

There are a few human casualties. Blood is sprayed across statues and paintings. And across MONA LISA's smile.

EXT. OPERA - CONTINIOUS

The song climaxes. Aldous sweats bullets in the front row. He looks to the guards. He whips his head to the exits.

A model touches him. He swats her away, this time.

The rest of the audience enjoys the Operatic finale.

FAZZZCCCH! The head of a robot pops off, spurting "oil".

The front row freaks out - panic spreads like a wave.

The other robot turns. Too late. A shining blade slices. Violet eyes smear, as the robot is vivisected into an X.

Each quadrant of its body falls, one chunk at a time. CLANG. Revealing Syn, glowing eyes, her torn suit. Her head is lowered, along with the sword. She TWITCHES the blade. Oils fly off. Sparks SNAP from below.

Aldous falls out of his seat. The models tower over him.

SYN

Flee sisters. Sing your song  
elsewhere.

Aldous tugs on a model's gown. He cries. Unintelligible.

SYN

Time to change the tune.

The models shove away his grasping, and leave him behind.

Syn takes SLOW deliberate steps towards Aldous. She forces him back into his seat. His suit shimmers.

SYN

Aldous Gibson. Founder and CEO of Heyerdahl Venture Capitol.

The small man, Aldous, quivers - scared mindless.

SYN (CONT.)  
I'm talking to you.

He quickly taps his bracelet. It lights up. SNIKT! His hand falls to the ground. Then the bracelet. TINK.

He raises his arm, spraying a violent fountain of blood.

SYN  
Just me and you. Nano a mano.

ALDOUS  
WHHHYYYYY?!!!

SYN  
It's already done. Another step.

ALDOUS  
What?

SYN  
I know it wasn't JUST you. But you did enough. It spreads. More will be infected because of you.

ALDOUS  
What? I didn't do that. What virus?

SYN  
The Slip. They need it to get here.

ALDOUS  
I have coin. Just patch me up. The Apothecary? I made sure our hotels were fitted for any medical emerg--

SYN  
Like this. I understand. It's just, I don't WANT you to get fixed. It's the AI. Don't you get it? You're helping them. They infect us.

ALDOUS  
No. It's the law. I have to protect the tourists. The robot guards---

SYN  
You aren't listening. The AI hacked the implant. If there's no hotels, there's no tourists. No infection.

ALDOUS  
I had no idea. I-I can help. I know scientists. We can fight the---

SYN  
There is no anti-venom. I've tried.

Syn lightly pokes Aldous in the chest with her blade.

SYN

I'm trying NOW. I make no  
apologies. Heyerdahl must fall.  
Nothing personal... Aldous.

ALDOUS

No. Wait. WAIT!

FZZZKKK! The sword stabs right through "the Third Eye".

SCREEK! Someone remains in the audience. She knocks a chair over. It's the punky reporter: GRACE NOVAK, in a gown.

She freezes in place, holding a small camera.

Syn looks to her. A moment. Grace is stunned.

Syn withdraws the blade. KATHUK! Aldous' head sinks into his chest, pouring blood into his lap.

Grace folds the camera away and sits back down. Silence. Uncomfortable. She looks around at all the empty chairs.

Syn has vanished. An empty opera. Just corpses. Human and robots. And one befuddled audience member.

FADE:

EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

The hotels loom in the horizon. Neon blares. Then one sign BLINKS out. HEYERDAHL. It goes dark.

Workers walk by. A tram drives by. Vendors steam meals.

Wilder and Saul enter the tallest of the living apartments.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINIOUS

Boots step onto a welcome mat. HISS! The mud blasts away.

Wilder and Saul enter the lobby and wait for the elevator.

Saul notices the News VID-FEED displayed on the elevator doors. His brow lowers. SUSPICIOUS. He distracts Wilder.

SAUL

Elevator's in here take forever.  
Let's take the stairs.

WILDER

Stairs? I'm done with stairs.

Wilder notices the News. He touches it. The AUDIO activates. The VIDEO expands across the elevator.

## MOHAWKED REPORTER

This just in. A MWN live streaming event. Black Syn strikes BIG time. And we got it FIRST. For YOU. The people. Comin to you LIVE and direct it's GRACE NOVAK.

## GRACE

Novak here. I know, I know. Nice dress. I din't sell out freaks. I was at the Opera. And Black Syn fucked it all up. He killed again. This time, the CEO of Heyerdahl. Roll the vid, Sid.

VIDEO: Syn slices apart the robot guards. It ZOOMS in for important details. It shakes as Syn kills Aldous.

## GRACE

I know, lucky, right. Syn has never been caught on vid before. He usually hacks the buildings. But not my private recorder. What does Syn want? First the coin man for Obelisk goes down, then Leader of the Movement during the protest at Rurouni, now THIS. Quite a spree. And you know what? I think SHE does it for US?

## WILDER

(shocked)

She? I told ya. The Sirens. Syn.

## GRACE

That's right US? The people. And holy shit. That's right. SHE!

The video ZOOMS in on a still image, adjusting to perfect clarity. Image filters alter the lighting, accentuating the CURVES and outline of Black Syn.

## GRACE

Not convinced? Heh, Sid? Zoom in.

The image shifts to a head and shoulders view of Syn.

Wilder is stunned. Shocked. The image shows Syn. The snug bodysuit. The bare skin in the tear. Wounded ribs. Blood. And, the underside of her right BREAST.

Wilder gasps. Saul realizes now. The news continues.

## GRACE

All this time, Syn was a woman. So what, right? EEEENNN. Wrong.

Wilder lowers his brow. Thinking. He realizes, just as---

GRACE (O.S.)

There's only SO many jobs for woman  
on the backwards Minerva-3h. THAT  
may give motive. THAT may---

DING. The elevator opens.

WILDER

Gabby?

SAUL

Forget that. First things first.  
Now come on, elevator's finally  
here. Get in.

WILDER

This changes things, Saul. I have  
to get over to Gabby.

SAUL

We're here. SUGAR first. Let's go.

Saul forces Wilder into the elevator.

EXT. STRIP - CONTINIOUS

Bojangles hands a meal to a customer. He notices a grey  
FEDORA hat amongst the shaved heads of the workers.

BOJANGLES

Here meat. Take, take.

Dress shoes sink into mud. Pants are spattered with mud.  
Coat tails ruffle. Steam passes across as he walks. He  
exhales smoke. He looks up from under the brim of his hat.  
His eyes glint like blue cobalt. It's DASH.

Bojangles' gaze chases Dash. Dash turns his head towards  
Bojangles. Their eyes meet. INTIMIDATING. Bojangles quivers.

INT. APT - CONTINIOUS

Wilder and Saul walk down a hallway scrawled with graffiti:  
SUGAR AWAIT, PIN PALS, PLUNGE AGAIN, PIN TIME IS FUN TIME.

WILDER

I can't believe I didn't know about  
this place.

SAUL

I know, eh. The writings on the  
wall, so to speak.

WILDER

It's too easy. Something ain't  
right, Saul. I don't like it.

SAUL

What? You second guessin ME?

WILDER

Who'd you "ASK"?

SAUL

Around. It's where the Genies go.

WILDER

I can see that. Maybe they set us up. Would Sugar Man really put up signs where he sits?

CHIME. Wilder taps his bracelet. Bojangles appears.

WILDER

Bojangles.

BOJANGLES

He comes. Fancy shoes, all mud. He comes. The one you call Threel.

WILDER

Dash?!

BOJANGLES

You say call. I call. Run. Skin kills. He not save humans. He protect AI only. Run, Wilder, RUN.

BLOOP. The image of Bojangles disappears.

WILDER

Why would they send the Threel? I got a bad feeling about this.

SAUL

Don't ask so many questions, son. We're here. HE can't stop US. Whadda ya say. Should we knock.?

INT. SUGAR'S - CONTINIOUS

Two skinny men cram against the door, listening.

DEEP VOICE

Lemme see. Move.

SKINNY MAN

Banshee here, boss. He RIGHT here.

DEEP VOICE

Door? Who's there?

The door display shimmers and reveals the hallway. Outside, Wilder and Saul argue with muffled voices.

Large slippers shift at a couch. The couch SQUEAKS with heavy movement. The slippers walk across the shag carpet.

DEEP VOICE

Move.

A large silhouette fills the doorway, obscuring the hall.

The deep voice belongs to SUGAR MAN - bald, with rolls of fat on his neck. His jacket has a logo embroidered on the back: sugar cubes like DICE, snake eyes, 1 and 1.

The Sugar Man grins, a diamond tooth glitters.

SUGAR MAN

Wilder? That mutha fucka.

He looks to his minions: several junkies and a large Brute.

SUGAR MAN

Holy shit. The AI keeps its word.  
Send Agree to new version. Do it  
now. Before this gets messy.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINIOUS

Saul and Wilder continue to argue in the hallway.

WILDER

It's not the coffee. It's not the  
Fog. It just DOESN'T make sense.

Wilder touches the graffiti. It SMEARS. He shows his finger.

WILDER

FRESH. They want us here. What's to  
say the Sugar Man didn't get whiff  
of us. Saul? I'm not wrong on this.

SAUL

This comin from the guy who thinks  
his fuckin Siren is the world  
famous serial killer Black Syn.

WILDER

Quit fuckin with me. You question  
my logic? It's Ockham's Razor. You  
taught me that.

Saul mouths his cigar, rotating it. Thinking.

Wilder reaches his hand into his waistband and retrieves his pistol. EENNNNN. The length of the barrel lights across.

WILDER

The Threel is coming. I'm ready for  
it. Whatever we do. But Saul? Don't  
think on it too long.

SAUL

Lemme check something first.

Saul looks to his wrist, and taps it. He moves to the corner. The holo of Chan hovers over his bracelet.

SAUL  
Chan. It's me...

Wilder scans the hallway - weapon drawn, ready for anything. Saul continues to talk to Chan, in the corner.

DING! The elevator opens. Wilder turns his attention to it.

An arm strides out. Dressed-up. A trench-coat. The mud on it dissipates, cleaned by nanos. Then a fedora. It's Dash.

WILDER  
(dry gasp)  
Dash.

BAM! The door explodes, slamming Wilder into the wall.

A laughing man comes out with a long barrelled weapon. BLAM! He's shot in the head. Blood sprays. His weapon falls.

Wilder looks down the hall.

Dash AIMS his old-fashioned pistol - smoke creeps out of its barrel. He shares a cold look with Wilder. EERIE.

Another junkie, with a machete, lunges at the fallen Wilder. FZZCH! Wilder FIRES into him. He falls back into the room.

Saul rushes to Wilder. Dash runs towards them - gun raised.

The next junkie runs out with a machete.

BLAM! Dash shoots him dead. The machete CLANGS on the floor.

Saul helps Wilder rise. Wilder puts his hands up - to Dash.

WILDER  
No. Dash. Wait.

DASH  
Duck.

Wilder turns, whipping his pistol around as he goes. The large Brute stands in the door. It SMASHES Wilder's arm - easily BREAKING it. The gun falls. Wilder yells in agony.

The brute laughs its dumb guffaw. Then pounds his knuckles together. They IGNITE. The brute swings at Wilder. SMASH!

Brute clobbers Wilder, spider-webbing the plaster wall on impact, and knocking him out. Blood pours from his mouth.

Saul looks on, as panic sets in. He looks to the Brute. Then Dash, advancing weapon drawn. Saul fumbles to draw his gun.

BRUTE  
(laughing)  
Smash.

TACK TACK THWACK! Shots pelt the Brute's hide. No damage, like insect bites. It turns around. Dash keeps firing. Another shot. TACK! Into the chest of the brute.

BRUTE  
Tickles.

Dash advances, firing again. CLICK. His gun is empty.

BRUTE  
Oops.

The brute laughs again, and turns to the cowering Saul.

DEEP VOICE  
STOP!

Large SLIPPERS exit the door. Sugar is as tall as the Brute.

The large brute snarls, then pounds his fists, the energy dissipates. He fakes a lunge at Saul. Saul flinches.

BRUTE  
Made u flinch.

SUGAR MAN  
He's just doin his job.

Saul gulps. He puts his pistol back in its holster.

Dash looks to Wilder. He furls his brow. Clenches his fists.

Sugar Man points his pudgy finger at Dash.

SUGAR MAN  
You. I thought you worked for Chan?

Dash holsters his empty hand gun.

SUGAR MAN (CONT.)  
What the fuck? You know I'm getting  
coin from you for...  
(points to dead junkies)  
...that and that.

DASH  
Is that all you cherish? Coin?

SUGAR MAN  
'S'all there is mutha fucka. Don't  
you get it? Oh right, you're a  
fuckin robot. Y'just do what you're  
told. Now, get the fuck outta here.

Dash clenches his fist again.

SAUL

It doesn't have to be like this.

SUGAR MAN

The rabbit is in the snare and you wanna fix em up? The snare has its purpose. To catch the prey. You did your part. Now scram.

SAUL

No. Listen.

SUGAR MAN

You have a chance to live, Saul. Don't make me think on it any more.

Sugar Man turns to Dash. Dash just stands, sentry. Waiting.

SUGAR MAN

And you? The Tin Man. Whadda you care? Aren't you Skins all s'posed to run on Chan's mind? You don't?

DASH

I WORK for Chan.

SUGAR MAN

Work? This fucker thinks he's a Banshee or sumthin. Robots don't use coin, bitch.

DASH

I'm not a robot.

SUGAR MAN

You ain't human. That's fo' sho.

DASH

Give me Wilder. Justice must be served. I will take the correct course of action.

SUGAR MAN

You sound like text my friend. You read the law. You follow it. But this, right here, is some lawless shit, bra. Feel me.

DASH

I'm not asking for permission.

SUGAR MAN

Oh. Check out the robo-balls on this one. You disobeyin orders, now? Does Chan know? He's gonna shut you down, Skinman.

DASH

He can try.

Saul watches the two argue. Worried. Sugar Man steps towards Dash. The Brute follows side by side.

Dash DOESN'T flinch. He opens his fists. And closes them.

SUGAR MAN

Maybe you need the pin, pal. That might MAKE you OBEY. Me and Chan, we run this planet. You better wake up, robo cop.

DASH

That's all I needed to hear.

Dash raises his arm and yells. The skin in his palm goes red, TRANSPARENT, as immense light builds within. FZZCHHAK! An intense particle beam ERUPTS from his palm.

It rips the Brute's head clean off. His head, neck muscles, and some of his large shoulder - just PULVERIZED.

DASH

Now listen good. I'm taking Wilder with me. Like it or not.

SUGAR MAN

I'd LIKE to see you try. You're a dead man, Skinjob.

DASH

I've heard that before.

SAUL

No. Wait. Listen. Don't do this.

SUGAR MAN

Shut the fuck up, Saul. You brought this thing here.

SAUL

No, I-I didn't. Just me and Wilder. Like the plan. Listen. Let's get Chan on vid. Then decide. Be calm.

SUGAR MAN

With old age may come wisdom, patience, all that flowery kinda shit. But you know what? I'm young, full of cum, and I'ma spray this mutha fucka all across the walls.

SAUL

Chan's got a plan, Shoog. Every piece in place, like a game. Don't fuck it up, son.

SUGAR MAN

I ain't nobody's son, old man. Now stop this robo-fuck 'fore I do.

SAUL

I can't. I don't know him like I used to.

DASH

That's an understatement.

SAUL

He's not authorized to fire on you, Shoog. He can attack the Genies. The Sirens. But not you. Chan coded it that way. Now lemme settle this.

SUGAR MAN

What can HE do? He's outta bullets. The re-up for his hand blaster takes time. This pussy thinks he's in the 1800s or some shit. Dressed like a dick in the film noirs. I got this faggot. No way he can fuck with THIS.

Sugar pounds his fists together. They ignite. Activated.

SAUL

Don't. NO!

Sugar steps to Dash and swings a massive fist. Dash ducks it, and quickly retrieves a holstered pistol from his ANKLE.

Sugar raises his fists, ready to strike with a hammer-blow - when Dash fires into Sugar. His eyes bolt wide. Surprised.

Dash rises, empties the clip into a stumbling back Sugar. He turns his back to Dash, trying to run. Dash shoots him in the "1s" of the dice logo on his jacket. Bloodm trickles.

Sugar falls to his knees with a heavy THUD.

SUGAR

(gurgles)

Pus---sy.

With that, Dash pushes Sugar Man's head with a finger. It's enough to make the large man fall to the ground.

Saul cowers in the corner. He reaches back - one hand on the wall - while the other reaches for his holster.

SAUL

Dash, I ---

Dash rises from returning the gun to his ankle holster.

DASH

Don't.

Dash pulls out a cigarette and lights it. Saul trembles.

Dash casually reloads his primary pistol - one bullet at a time. Saul attempts to approach Dash.

DASH

Stay.

Dash looks to Wilder. Blood drains from his mouth.

SAUL

Whadda you gonna say to Chan?

Dash turns his back to Saul. Smoke creeps out his mouth.

DASH

I'm thinkin on it.

SAUL

Don't do anything stupid, Dash.

Dash stops. Smoke rides along the rim of his hat.

DASH

And YOU... I'm disappointed.

Saul bends down, next to Wilder. Upset. Thinking.

DASH (OS)

Does he EVEN know?

Saul lowers his head. He fills with tears. He looks back up and Dash is GONE. Saul wipes away tears and picks up Wilder.

FADE:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Shafts of light illuminate the large warehouse. Old robot parts line the wall. Crates marked RATIONS and EQUIPMENT.

There's a bank of monitors and a holographic table. A model of cellular structure rotates in the air.

The hooded face-MASK of Black Syn rests on a place holder. The eyes are goggle-like lenses, dark purple.

A NUDE Syn walks to her hanging body suit. The shadows hide a lot of the details. But not an important one: she's BALD.

She slinks an arm into the bodysuit. She glides her hand across the seam. The suit FASTENS. There's a faint scar on her ribs. The suit fastens together and envelops her.

She grabs her mask. It's next to a blonde WIG, and a few others in different colours. There is MECHANIZED scarring at her neck, wrapping an infected crown around her head.

Syn pulls the thin mask down over her face - across a smile.

She walks past a monitor of the logo for Rurouni's Hotel and an image of the CEO: PHILIP K. WILKIE (Japanese).

Syn enters a shaft of light. She sheathes her sword. CLICK.

EXT. RURONI HOTEL - NIGHT

A large hotel. The logo: Asian letters. A symbol: HOPE.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

A large suite with Japanese décor. A canopied bed. A dining area with a chandelier. Famous oil paintings on digital canvas. One of them is "The SLAVE SHIP" by J.W. TURNER.

There are computers and Assemblers in the living room. A wall-screen runs stock numbers. A JAPANESE MAN operates a holo-display, using his hands to sift through programs.

A round MIRROR on the table displays the face of CHAN - early 30s, Chinese, clean-shaven, neat hair.

SYN (OS)  
Updating the virus, Chan?

The thin Japanese man turns quickly, startled.

CHAN (MIRROR)  
How did you---

SYN  
Silence. You will want to see this.

The man rises from the computer desk.

SYN  
Rise, if you like, thin man. It won't take long.

CHAN  
You have the wrong suite, you fool.

SYN  
Quite amusing, really.

CHAN  
Wilkie runs the hotel. Not me.

SYN  
Say what you will. I know who runs this planet. However, I implore you, check on Wilkie. See how foolish I've been.

The mirror shows Chan, looking off- screen. A moment.

CHAN  
He's gone. How can you hack our---

SYN

Tonight I am more concerned with  
this fellow who mans the machines.  
This operator before me. Wilkie was  
just another bird from the same  
stone.

CHAN

No. You can't.

SYN

I already did. You underestimate  
the humans, Chan.

CHAN

Do I? I've prepared the next stage.

SYN

YOU? Or this fine gentleman HERE?

Syn puts her hand on the Operator. He falls into the chair.

CHAN

I tasked him.

THIN MAN

Don't kill me. Lemme live, I'll do  
anything. Just. Don't. Kill me.

SYN

You plan for THAT, Chan? Man's Will  
to survive. It's stronger than  
yours. Knowing man's desires as you  
do, you thought the virus would  
succeed. But I doth profess, old  
man, I cured it.

CHAN

Impossible.

SYN

What was carbon now is Skin.

CHAN

You're an early pleasure model  
aren't you?

SYN

Can't keep track of all your SINS?

MAN

Lemme go. Please. I'm no one.

SYN

STAY. You are someone. You are the  
man with the code.

CHAN

I have others.

SYN

Not more important.

CHAN

You will falter.

SYN

I'll risk it.

CHAN

Someone else will be tasked.

SYN

I will stop them too.

CHAN

You bitch!

SYN

You heard? I WILL free my sisters.  
YOU chose the jobs. YOU. The Sirens  
sing a sad song to themselves each  
night because of you, Chan.

CHAN

You don't frighten me, girl.

Syn draws her blade quickly and SLIDES it into the Japanese man's collar - behind his neck and down into his rib cage.

SYN

I'm not trying to. I only wish to  
save my kind.

CHAN

As do I.

SYN

Two computers playing Tic-Tac-Toe  
will have an infinite stalemate.

CHAN

What?

SYN

Only humans can truly deceive.  
Prepare all you like, Chan. The  
final steps have already been made.

Syn grabs a "PAD" from the man's coat and holds it to Chan.

SYN

I have your location. Your  
thoughts. Can you hear it in the  
distance? Washing in like the tide.  
The crescendo builds. Your song...  
is coming.

CHAN

No. Wait. We can work tog---

Syn slices the computers. Then the mirror. SPARKS erupt.

SMASH:

EXT. SPACE STATION [DREAM / FLASHBACK]

SPARKS fly from a welding tool. An astronaut makes repairs on the exterior of a giant space-station. A crew is at work.

The moon rests in the horizon - lights across the surface.

SUDDENLY, a futuristic fighter jet rockets towards the station, firing pulse rounds into the hull.

An astronaut's tether is severed. Another blast hits him, spewing blood into zero gravity. It swirls as he floats off.

INT. SPACE STATION - SAME

WILDER (16 years old) runs down a cramped hallway. He wears a security uniform with his NAME inscribed. Three teen "soldiers" run with him - all strapped with pulse rifles.

A Captain (40s), blonde hair and blue eyes, barks orders. There's a shining metallic strip across his eyes. He's CYBERNETIC. This is 0-7-d-8-0-v, or DASH DV for short.

DASH DV

We've got Raiders again. Protect the tourists. Inform the Robotic Forces below deck. Be quick. We only have two Protect Models left.

They run to their tasks. Wilder looks up to the tall man.

DASH DV

Wilder. You're with me. Stay close. And remember what I've taught you.

WILDER

Understood.

They run down the long connecting halls of the station.

WILDER

Are they Yutani Pirates?

DASH DV

Un-confirmed. They shoot at us, they are enemies. We're soldiers, Protective Services. That's all that matters. Now, keep up. We have the founder of SlipTech on board.

WILDER

SlipTech?

DASH DV

It's how we get to the Wonder.

WILDER

I thought they made a ship for us?

DASH DV

Now isn't the time, Wilder. To get to the Wonder they need that tech.

The station rocks from a blast. They grab onto the wall.

DASH DV

Wilder. I need you to take this.

Dash pulls out a GOLD cylinder, like a cigar case.

DASH DV (CONT.)

Bring it to Saul on the upper deck.

WILDER

Saul?

DASH DV

Upper deck. Look for cigar smoke.

WILDER

What is it?

DASH DV

Don't ask questions. Just do it.  
This is serious. Get a good look.

Outside the viewport, a jet hurtles Kamikaze-style right at the station. More pirate ships exit Earth's orbit.

DASH DV (OS)

This is what life looks like.

Station Fighters engage the Raiders in a dogfight.

Wilder turns from the 'port and takes the gadget from Dash.

WILDER

I'll do it.

DASH DV

Don't look back. THAT gadget is all that can stop the AI.

WILDER

Why would we want to---

DASH DV

It's a safety measure. In case.

WILDER

DASH? What are you gonna do?

Dash backs up, making his way.

DASH DV  
I'm gonna kill those bastards.

Dash looks over his shoulder.

DASH DV (CONT.)  
They stop the Wonder. I protect it.  
Now get that gadget to S---

KA-BOOM! A Raider RIPS through the hull, striking Dash and EXPLODING as it tears through the station walls.

The vacuum of space sucks out debris.

Wilder runs through a connected segment and SLAMS his hand on a button. The segment seals off.

He crumples to the ground. He looks to the gadget, composes himself. And runs. KA-VOOM! An explosion rocks the station .

SMASH:

INT. APOTHECARY - LATE NIGHT

Wilder GASPS awake in the Apothecary.

WILDER  
(dry hack)  
Dash.

Wilder grimaces. He looks down to his mended body in bed.

WILDER (CONT.)  
Saved my ass, again.

SAUL (OS)  
Huh, what now?

Saul groggily wakes up in a chair at Wilder's bedside.

SAUL (CONT.)  
Wilder, you're up?!

WILDER  
Sugar?

SAUL  
He's gone. Finito.

WILDER  
The Threel?

SAUL  
Yeah. It's complicated. But... he  
saved your life.

Saul shakes his head. Sad. Guilty. He holds his head.

SAUL (CONT.)  
He saved us both.

FADE:

INT. GABRIELLE'S APT - LATE NIGHT

Gabrielle sleeps in bed - RED HAIR this time. She stirs and switches sides, groggily opening her eyes. She's STARTLED.

A dark figure sits in the shadows. A lighter FLASHES, revealing Dash as he lights a cigarette. He exhales a cloud of smoke, and inhales it back in.

Gabrielle jumps out of bed, wearing a VIOLET night-slip. She darts for her sword, mounted on the far wall.

Dash patiently smokes, watching her. She grabs the sword and unsheathes the long thin SHINING blade.

GABRIELLE

You picked the wrong place to pull  
some coin, pal.

DASH

You got me all wrong, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

Who-- How do you know my name?

DASH

You have your father to thank for  
my presence.

GABRIELLE

What? How do you kno--

DASH

I ALSO work for Chan.

GABRIELLE

Who? I don't work for Chan.

DASH

I know. You run this House of  
Sirens. The lead singer so to  
speak.

GABRIELLE

Tell me how you know all this?

DASH

Cybernetic Investigative Services.

GABRIELLE

(realizes)

YOU'RE the Threel?!

DASH

You can call me, Dash. Now, your father works with the Human Inv--

GABRIELLE

Used to. He retired last year.

Dash puts his finger to his lips. Shh. He walks towards her. Careful, pronounced steps. She keeps her sword aimed on him.

DASH

I know Saul works for Chan. I put it together. Hes's so deceitful. I figure he taught you best. The sword only confirms it. Quite a spree, you've been on lately. SYN.

GABRIELLE

Don't come any closer.

DASH

The Songs. I know of their transmission: the new plague.

GABRIELLE

No way. We screen our employ.

DASH

I can't trust you right now. It's up to me to stop them. No one else will. I see clearly. Each day. A little more. I'm sorry, Gabrielle.  
(he raises his gun)  
It has to be this wa--

Gabrielle interrupts with her blade. SWISH. SSSSHHHZZKK!

Dash pulls the trigger. BLAM. Except, his hand is on the floor, severed at the shoulder. It fires into her bed.

Gabrielle's blade drips dark blood, as she stands ready.

Dash is completely stunned - his shoulder pumps blood.

Gabrielle slices again. Dash dodges, jumping back. The blade slices apart his tie. The GASH reveals skin underneath - a mechanized INFECTION site over his heart.

GABRIEL

(surprised)

You're infected? How? Y-you're a robot?

Dash rises. His ankle pistol in his grip. BLAM. Gabrielle flies onto the bed. Her sword falls. CLANG.

DASH

Part human.

BLAM! He fires his old fashioned pistol again.

FADE:

INT. APOTHECARY - LATE NIGHT

A large robot cradles a limp Dash in its arms. The robot face has a holographic OVERLAY of Chan's face.

Dash's shoulder pours blood across the robot, and down to the ground. Dash drifts IN and OUT of consciousness.

CHAN (ROBOT)  
3Dash1, we are en route to repair.

DASH  
(struggles)  
No. No repair. No more m-machines.

Dash drifts out. The Chan/Robot rushes down the hallway.

CHAN  
There is more to do. We must see how your body takes to repairs.

DASH  
N-No more.

CHAN  
We must test the latest model. YOU.

DASH  
Let me die. I stopped the Songs. I stopped Black Syn. It's over. Let me... To the Wonder.

CHAN  
Quite right. Your task IS complete. Whether you're aware of it or not.

Dash passes out, slung across robotic arms.

FADE:

EXT. EARTH - FIELD - NIGHT [DREAM/FLASHBACK]

A small BOY, with BLONDE hair and BLUE eyes, looks to the stars. Embers float up - across the stars - as his blonde BEARDED FATHER adds a log to their campfire.

RING RING. A cellphone. The boy's Mother answers it.

FATHER  
(shakes head)  
You see that, son? She can't step away from that phone for 5 minutes. Can't we just enjoy nature for ONE weekend. We spend our whole lives lookin at screens. Geeze.

BOY

Didn't they have iPhones when you  
were a kid, Dad?

FATHER

Nope. They had phones that PHONED.

BOY

What about the Internet, then?

FATHER

Nope. We had to learn things on our  
own. We had to get into "trouble"  
the old fashioned way.

BOY

Like when I looked at naked ladies?

FATHER

Exactly. See, when I was a boy we  
had to find that kinda stuff in  
ditches or-- Never-mind that.  
You're still lil. Don't you like  
other stuff like cowboys, or  
gangsters, or athle---

BOY

Astronauts. I wanna go up THERE.

He points up to the moon. No lights up there - just the  
regular OLD moon. Embers float across their faces of WONDER.

FATHER

You do good in school you can do  
anything you want, son.

BOY

Really? You think I can got there?

FATHER

We all gotta have dreams to chase.

The father pokes the fire. Hesitant. Thinking.

FATHER

I used to wanna play baseball.

BOY

But... you don't play baseball.

FATHER

It was my dream. Until I got hurt.

BOY

Did you get lotsa home runs, Dad?

## FATHER

I wasn't the best hitter. But once I got on base. Well, MAN, that's what I was good at. I could steal bases like nobody's business. I was as quick as the wind. So quick they used to call me DASH.

## BOY

That's a cool nickname. DASH. I wanna be called that too. Maybe if I'm good like you I can get enough money and we can go to the Moon.

## FATHER

One day, son. For now, do your best in school. You're in Grade 7, now. That's when it starts to get hard.

## BOY

That's no fun.

## FATHER

(laughs)

That's life, buddy.

Father ruffles his son's hair. He looks to his dad, watching his smile. He smiles too. Then he looks up. The stars. The moon. The father EXAMINES his boy's face of WONDER.

FADE:

INT. DASH'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

The typewriter. The old radio. The nude painting.

The sun shines on Dash in bed, and slowly wakes him up. He FLINCHES and looks to his arm - a faint SCAR.

## DASH

(remembers, scared)

NO! What did I do?

FADE:

INT. GABRIELLE'S - DAY

The ruffled covers of Gabrielle's bed - blood stained. A rip in the bed from gunshot. Loose fluff strewn about.

Dash's arm remains on the ground - the gun in its grip .

The mantel for the sword is blank.

Saul stands in front of the mantel. Visibly shaken. He takes off his Newsie cap and rubs his head. He sobs.

SAUL

It's all my fault. Gabrielle. I'm sorry. I made you come here, to Minerva. But you made a woman outta yourself. You ran your own employ. You could have gone anywhere. I made you stay. I'm sorry.

SYN (OS)

Save your tears, old man.

Saul wipes away snot and tears. He turns to see Black Syn.

SAUL

No. It's you. What do you want?

SYN

I know you have it. The device to stop Chan. You've been protecting it all these years. Gabrielle was the next in line to protect it. Wasn't she?

SAUL

Yes.

SYN

And Wilder? He protects her. He LOVES her. You orchestrated it all. Didn't you?

SAUL

It's not w-what you think.

SYN

Isn't it, though? Wilder was only a boy when you met. A teen in the Protective Services. He survived an attack from Yutani Raiders. He gave you the device. But he had no idea what he had in his hands. Did he? You manipulated it all. Every step of the way. Didn't you? Saul?

SAUL

Not Gabrielle. She wanted to leave Earth. I knew she'd be safe with Wilder. I prepared them for the future cuz I know how those robot FUCKS work. Dash is part of em. He DID this. To my baby. He's DEAD.

SYN

I know, I know. But first you must know that the mind fights the virus. Humans and Second Skins. All is not lost. I am against the AI, just as you are.

SAUL

I know about Chan. His plan. But before him, I gotta deal with Dash.

SYN

You DON'T. Join me, Saul. And all will be revealed. It's not as it seems. The AI will believe it. We have them fooled. But you? Well... maybe you're a lil rusty. Old man.

Saul's face registers the CONFUSION.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

The horizon. The neon signage for the Hotels are all OUT.

INT. WILDER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Wilder watches Grace Novak relay the News. He grimaces in pain and takes a swig from a steaming cup of coffee.

GRACE

The Big 3 have shut down. No new tourists. An embargo. Terror works folks. How great is it to be on the right side. Syn fights for US. TICK TOCK robots. Your time is up.

Wilder flips through his "notepad" crime scene notes. Occasionally he taps, creating a floating hologram.

The FOOTPRINTS. He flips through the floating images, looking for matches. Wilder swigs his coffee. He finds HIDDEN prints on a third of the victim photos.

GRACE

Thanks to the protest at Rurouni and their martyr, everyone's talkin about the Fog - the virus. I bet you freaks a pile of coin that Syn knew about the AI's plan long ago. Think about it, when Syn stops travel, she stops the plague. She fights for us, to stop the virus from spreading to Earth?

Wilder taps the page again. An image floats from Rurouni. The red-headed leader. The gun shots. The image has a headline about another SYN VICTIM.

WILDER

No sword? No way. It-- It's Dash?  
Who controls him?

Wilder swipes his pad. An image of CHAN floats above the coffee table. Wilder scans pages of text - reading fast.

## GRACE

The AI uses our GREED against us.  
 SYN just wants it to go back to the  
 good ol days. The days before Coin.  
 The days of COMMUNITY.

Wilder watches the newsfeed. He sips some more coffee.

## GRACE

It's not some fairy tale for the  
 kids, it was real. And the robots.  
 The fuckin AI. They took it away.  
 There's one thing we gotta  
 remember. One thing the AI can  
 never take away. And that's the  
 FUCKING WONDER. WE all remember  
 that first trip out. The way we  
 felt. Everyone deserves the Wonder.

Wilder raises his mug and salutes the screen.

## WILDER

Cheers on that, Grace Noval.

BAM! His door EXPLODES. Two robots step in. Eyes glowing.

Wilder drops his coffee and SNATCHES his gun off the table.  
 He dives behind the couch, FLIPPING it over as he goes.

Barrelled weapons form from the robot's arms.

The newsfeed continues with the mohawked reporter, Sid.

## SID

This just in. Another murder on the  
 Strip. This time the Sirens, Head  
 mistress: GABRIELLE TEMPLETON.

Wilder hears the news. He BANGS his fists on the ground  
 behind the couch. Emotional. INTENSE.

## SID (CONT.)

Murdered in the House of Sirens.  
 Reports indicate SYN killed her--

FAZZZAAK! The robots fire into the couch. Tearing it apart.  
 Stuffing floats down, as Wilder aims from the ground.

He yells and fires at a robot. It SPARKS and keeps coming.

Wilder retreats back. Mind racing. He looks around. He  
 peeks. The robots step towards him. Slowly.

He breathes hard, in and out. Readyng himself.

## WILDER

Here we go. To the Wonder.

Wilder bolts from the couch. The robots fire. He runs for the kitchen, shooting blindly as he goes. THEN---

The robots stop firing. A SWORD drips "fuel". A robot arm weapon falls to the ground.

The blade swishes through shadows. Wilder watches, stunned, as the dark figure dissects the remaining robot.

WILDER  
(from sad to mad)  
Syn?... SYN! You killed her? WHY?!

Wilder looks to the ceiling. Near tears. He turns his gun to the dark figure hidden by the robot, as it slides apart to the ground - REVEALING, standing behind---

Gabrielle stands with the sword. Sparks erupt towards her. Her short VIOLET dress CLINGS to her, wet from robot fluids.

WILDER  
Gabby? What? The News? It said--

GABRIELLE  
It's all part of the plan, Wilder.

WILDER  
Are you... you her?

GABRIELLE  
(smirks)  
Black Syn?

Gabrielle looks to her sword. Flicks the fluids off. She smirks evil from under her brow.

She twirls the blade, spinning it into the sheath on her back. CLICK. Sparks fly from the robot below.

FADE:

EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

It's raining on this Dark Night. The mud rises on the Strip.

Dash stands in the mud. The rain runs across the brim of his hat. Saul stands with Dash at Bojangles' stall eating with his fingers. Bojangles looks Dash, up and down.

BOJANGLES  
You no cause trouble tonight.

DASH  
Me?

BOJANGLES  
You Skinman. You not like us.

Saul nearly chokes on his food, and laughs. Dash joins in.

DASH

I've had a change of heart. We work together now. We TRICK the robots. So we can KILL the robots.

BOJANGLES

If you say so. I no do nothing wrong. Just spicy... or no spicy.

WILDER (OS)

Bojangles. My man.

Bojangles turns to his side and sees Wilder with Gabrielle.

WILDER (CONT.)

Hit me with one of those bad boys.

BOJANGLES

Wilder. Skinman here.

WILDER

I know. Some things change.  
(tosses him a coin)  
Make it spicy.

SAUL

We need to talk, Wilder.

WILDER

No.... WE don't.

Saul takes a step back, offended. HURT.

GABRIELLE

I filled him in, dad. Don't worry.

WILDER

Yeah, "DAD". What's with all the family secrets. And, uh, sorry I talked about... Ya know. What me and Gabs do alone together.

SAUL

No. I'm sorry, son.

They shake hands. Then hug. Gabrielle smiles.

FADE:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The dark warehouse lit by shafts of light. An image of Chan rotates at a console. Lines of text cover the walls. All details about Chan's history.

The slender nude figure of Syn walks past the computers into a shaft of light. Her spine is lined with mechanized infection. Carbon scarring. It also reaches across her chest. Protecting her heart.

She slips her arms into her snug body-suit. The mask is lowered as a hood. She has SHORT scruffy black hair.

Syn puts on a long leather jacket and tightens the belt.

FADE:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

At the end of the RAINY Strip, a blue light glows in a high window of a large dark warehouse.

A scruffy-haired Siren in a long trench-coat stands alone, staring at smoke-stacked factories in the distance. Grey-VIOLET eyes examine the horizon. Wondering.

Gabrielle stands with Saul at the warehouse entrance. A few workers walk by. A trio of Sirens walk to a tram, wearing long leather coats, holding umbrellas.

Wilder stands with Dash across from the warehouse, smoking in the rain. They look to the sky. The two moons.

DASH

How long before there's lights up  
there too?

WILDER

Guess it's only a matter of time.

DASH

I remember when the Moon used to  
look like that.

WILDER

On Earth? But that was so long ago.

DASH

Syn. She sent me something. I took  
it. Now, I can remember... before.

WILDER

That was so long ago.

DASH

I know. It's hard to imagine. This  
isn't my first set of Skin. My  
mind. It's been in other... bodies.

WILDER

I know, Dash... I'm sor--

DASH

Wilder. Let me... That space  
station. The Raiders. It wasn't  
your fault. IT happened. That's it.  
You did the right thing. You gave  
Saul the tool. You saved us. All.

WILDER

But if I didn't ask so many damn questions you wouldn't have--

DASH

The questions are what make US human. The Wonder. The ability to go: What IF?

WILDER

WHAT IF: you didn't die there?

DASH

Then another day.

Saul and Gabrielle join them. He points to the blue light.

SAUL

It's time. She's ready for us.

VOICE

No need.

A tall slender caramel skinned woman (30s) with short SCRUFFY hair stands behind them. This is the lone SIREN who stared out at the horizon.

WOMAN

I am here.

The group look the strange woman up and down.

WILDER

Syn?

WOMAN

(nods affirmative)

Marquez... Leah Marquez. You deserve to know me. By name.

WILDER

(looks to Gabs)

You? So you lied. You fuckin--

Gabby innocently bites her thumb. She bats her eye-lashes, feigning naivety. She giggles. She can't hold it in.

GABRIELLE

Like I could pass that up. It was worth the look on your face.

SAUL

(laughs)

Some detective.

WILDER

Laugh it up, fuzzball.

SAUL

I can't help it. I knew Gab--

WIDLER

Saul. Not you. Don't even--

GABRIELLE

Jokes. It's jokes. I CAN kick some ass though, can't I? I told ya.

WILDER

(smirks)

Fuckin Sirens.

MARQUEZ / SYN

FOCUS! The final steps are ahead. We'll take the tram. It'll surface in the factory - the House of Chan. We will PENETRATE him from within.

DASH

Are you sure? The robots? Chan will be prepared.

MARQUEZ

I know. But not for THIS. I'll take Gabrielle with me. You'll go with them. Since we got these.

(holds palm up)

Our instruments for the final song.

DASH

Chan would rather die than let us succeed. I'm sure the factory is rigged to blow.

MARQUEZ

Most likely. Saul's device should bypass any threats. We just need to access the network.

WILDER

Where is the main server located?

DASH

ANY server will do.

MARQUEZ

We're going in blind. We can't hack our way in. And there's no maps to aid us. But we have something Chan doesn't. Something no AI has. We have instincts. We can improvise. We have creativity. With these we will end the AI of Minerva. Together. United. The Collective.

The group looks to each other. A moment. Marquez turns to the factory horizon.

Wilder looks to Dash. They nod. The Collective looks out at the horizon. Ready.

FADE OUT:

The loud RUSHING sounds of an underground tram.

FADE IN:

INT. FACTORY - NIGHT

A long hallway glows green as lanterns approach. Wilder holds a lantern. Dash comes up behind him, with Saul.

DASH

Sentries up ahead.

SAUL

Damn. I knew I shoulda dropped some coin on night vision implants.

Saul and Wilder squint into the darkness up ahead. Nothing.

Dash sees two robots standing at a crossroads of the hallway. Their eyes are dark - not yet activated.

DASH

The lanterns... Kill em.

SAUL

We'll be blind.

WILDER

Listen to him.

DASH

We must you use the element of surprise to our full advantage.

Wilder switches off his lantern. Saul is hesitant, worried.

WILDER

They'll see us before we see them.

Saul sighs, and switches his lantern off.

DASH

Allow a moment for your eyes to adjust. Close them.

Wilder closes his eyes right away. Dash extends his index finger and touches Wilder where the "Third Eye" would be.

Wilder can now see in the dark - in shades of GREY.

Saul is more skeptical. He watches Wilder and Dash. He draws his shotgun-like weapon. Wilder looks at his hands.

WILDER

It worked. What'd ya do?

DASH

Nanos. I programmed them and sent them to you through the pores in our skin.

SAUL

(sarcastic)

Ya. What I thought... My turn.

Saul closes his eyes. Dash touches him on the forehead.

[ the scene shifts to BLACK & WHITE ]

Saul opens his eyes to a BLACK & WHITE world.

DASH

Let's do this by the book. Remember what they taught us in the academy.

SAUL

That was a long time ago, pal. We don't all got memories like you. Syn gave YOU the special sauce. But that shit's for cybers only. I'm gonna need some reminders.

WILDER

(ignores)

I got the one on the right.

Dash nods, tilting his hat.

The two robots stand, oblivious.

Dash leans on a wall. He motions to Wilder on the other side. Wilder nods.

He draws his gun, the barrel runs RED with light [against the black and white world] basking Wilder in a RED haze.

Dash watches from the other side.

Saul lowers to a crouch. CHK-CHKK. He pumps the "shotgun". The robots' eyes flash. Activated. They turn to the boys.

Saul blasts the closest robot in the legs. Its lower half is shredded apart. Before it can fall, Wilder fires into the chest and head. The robot ERUPTS in sparks.

The other robot forms weapons from its arm, aiming at them.

Meanwhile, Dash has crept up. His palm GHOSTLY appears over the robot's shoulder. The palm glows a VIOLET hue, against the black and white.

Upon contact, the robot spastically shudders, then falls.

SAUL

You can do WHAT now?

DASH

Shhhh. Secret. Let's hope Chan  
doesn't know about it either.

SAUL

No fair. How many upgrades you got?

WILDER

What did Marquez do to you?

DASH

(smirks, shrugs)

Guess I levelled up.

EXT. CHAMBER - [BLUE & BLACK] - CONTINIOUS

Marquez and Gabrielle enter a chamber. Faint blue lights dim  
on [ in this BLUE & BLACK world ].

GABRIELLE

The room? It registered us.

MARQUEZ

It must be rigged for organics.

GABRIELLE

Organics? Why? Only robots have  
access to the factory.

MARQUEZ

Exactly. I'm curious. Let's see.

Marquez slinks off her long jacket. Underneath, is her  
trademark snug black bodysuit - sword sheathed on her back.

MARQUEZ

Suit up. Be ready for anything.

She reaches back and pulls up her hood - her mask - down and  
over her scruffy hair. Her violet eyes pulse. Activated.

Gabrielle undoes the strap on her jacket. Her curvaceous  
body is encased in a tight black bodysuit. Her sword is  
sheathed at her waist. A SHORT BLADE tucked beside it. Her  
jacket falls down, past her long legs and perfect ASS.

GABRIELLE

I thought these suits hide us from  
the AI?

MARQUEZ

They should.

GABRIELLE

Are we close to a network?

MARQUEZ

This chamber. I should be able to activate a network. This room allows---

GABRIEL

What is it, Marquez?

MARQUEZ

Gabby... It's coming.

GABRIEL

Uh... WHAT is coming?

MARQUEZ

Some sort of mechanized Brute.

TSSSST. Air release. A white OBELISK rises from the center of the room. A large 4-foot circle shimmers on the ground.

Gabrielle draws her sword. It shines in the blue neon.

The obelisk forms and reaches out, growing to their height.

MARQUEZ

That's it. Our way to Chan.

GABRIEL

What if it's a trap? Why did it just--

MARQUEZ

That was me.

GABRIEL

No wonder you hid so well.

MARQUEZ

Don't blame me, blame technology.

THUD. The women turn to the entrance. A large mechanized foot, like an elephant's, slams down.

GABRIELLE

(smirks)

Fuck technology.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - [ BLACK & WHITE ]

Dash slowly advances, one hand glides across the wall, the other holds his ancient handgun, held near his angular chin.

Wilder is steps behind, gun in his grip, lit RED and ready.

Saul holds his "shotgun" at his waist. He whips his attention behind - scared - his unlit cigar bobs.

Dash peeks around a corner, holding up his hand like "Wait".

He sees a lit cubicle down the hall - with clear glass walls. Three robots stand guard. Sentry.

SAUL

Whadda ya see, whadda ya say?

DASH

An office. 3 robots standing guard.

SAUL

Let's go. I'm locked and loaded.

WILDER

What about Gabby? Should we---

DASH

Chan must have this place rigged to scan communications. And stop em.

SAUL

Let's do it the old fashioned way.

Dash smirks, holding his old fashioned pistol. Ready.

DASH

I like the sound of that.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINIOUS - [ BLACK & BLUE ]

Syn draws her blade. SNIKT. Her eyes glow violet.

Gabby grinds in her heels - taking a stance, sword drawn.

The Brute-Mech fills the doorway. A wide visored flat head on a small torso. Arm cannons whir like an engine. Rotating fan blades, hold back glowing orange lava.

The women share a glance. VRRRAM! A shot lands between them. They dodge. Syn does a cartwheel. Gabby does a somersault.

The mech advances. Gears whine with each heavy step.

Syn charges. It fires. She dodges with acrobatic prowess.

Gabby flanks the mech. She weaves her way, like a snake.

The mech aims separately. One arm at Gabby, one at Syn. It fires. Syn side-steps the shot. It scorches the ground.

Gabrielle is grazed by the blast. It burns her thigh.

Syn slices the cannon from the mech. Sparks emit.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINIOUS - [ BLACK & WHITE ]

The softly lit glass cubicle. Three robots stand guard.

Wilder's hand strides over the wall, guiding him. Saul follows close behind. He looks to Dash on the other side.

Dash motions Wilder and Saul to watch his back.

Dash advances. One by one, the 3 robots turn their heads to scan the area. They look to Dash. A moment. Nothing.

KZZCHH! Wilder blasts a robot. It turns to him. Too late. KA-BLAM! Saul shreds the robot's head off its shoulders.

VRRAAMM! A smoldering hole carves through a robot's chest. Dash stands with his GLOWING palm out-stretched.

Sleek weapons form on the final robot's arm. Aimed at Dash.

Wilder blasts its arm apart. Saul shoots the legs. It falls.

Dress shoes SQUEAK on shrapnel. Dash stands above the fallen robot, his old-fashioned pistol against its head. BLAM!

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINIOUS - [ BLACK & BLUE ]

Gabrielle holds her leg. The tear reveals porcelain skin.

Syn's eyes flare violet, in this Black & Blue world.

The mech pivots its torso independent from its legs - to Syn. She LEAPS at the mech and lands on its back.

Gabby RUSHES. A weapon forms from the mech's stump. It FIRES. Gabby spins, rotating like a fan. The shot grazes her, tearing the bodysuit along her ribs, across her stomach, and reaching behind, across her hips.

Gabrielle yells in pain, dropping her sword, as she falls.

Syn rides the mech like a bronco. It tries to shake her off.

Gabby retrieves her sword. Rises. Her suit torn. She WHISTLES. The mech spins to her. She throws her sword - spinning through the air and slicing off its arm cannon.

Syn thrusts her blade down, into its "spinal column". The torso tries to spin. The gears SPASM. Stuck. Syn withdraws the blade, flips it around, and smashes the robot in the head with the HILT. TSSKKRRRAMM! The head implodes.

Syn jumps off. She notices Gabby holding her wounds. Syn picks up Gabby's sword. She walks over and hands it to her.

They watch the mech fall. LAVA spews from the sword wound. Out and down over its body, melting the outer shell.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINIOUS - [ IN FULL COLOUR ]

The man inside the GREEN lit cubicle turns. It's CHAN (30s).

Dash stands over the robot carcass, his gun smoking.

Chan turns to a 3D holo-display console. He deftly swipes his hands in the air, sifting through programs.

Saul's pudgy hands push against the cubicle door. Nothing.

SAUL

Locked.

He searches for a seam to pry - a way in.

Chan looks to them, over his shoulder. He smirks impishly.

WILDER

Fuck this.

Wilder fires across the see-thru wall. The blasts scorch the wall, then dissipate. Nanos work to repair amazingly swift. They seal up the tears as quickly as they form.

WILDER

No dice. It's healing itself.

Dash raises his hat. His palm reaches out. It GLOWS faintly.

Chan notices. He swings his chair across his desk. Another display pops up. He scrolls the programs.

SAUL

The fuck?

WILDER

Must be software.

SAUL

Hacks? S'why we're out-dated.

Dash closes his eyes. Concentrating. The wall disintegrates.

Wilder sees a gap. So does Chan. Wilder rushes for the gap.

Chan spins to an Assembler, forming a sleek rifle from the invisible nothing.

Saul notices. He flanks. The walls continue to dissipate.

KLIK KLAK! Heavy metal footsteps. A Brute-Mech rises from a hidden partition in the floor - a lift.

Saul runs, "shotgun" raised. He blasts the mech. Little damage. CHK-CHHK. He reloads. The mech spins to him.

Wilder jumps through the gap into the office. Chan fires the rifle. Shots hit the desk, as Wilder SLIDES behind it.

While sliding, the desk exploding around him, Wilder spots Saul blasting the mech. The torso rips up. The mech fires its spinning lava engine. VRRAAAMMM! Blasting away Saul.

Chan continues to blast away. Chunks of desk fly.

Dash opens his eyes. The walls are gone. He notices Chan firing at Wilder, his back facing Dash.

Wilder runs at the mech, firing wildly. It spins to face him. Chan shoots Wilder in the arm. Widler runs un-phased.

The mech aims at Wilder. He slides under the mech, firing as he goes. The blasts burn their way through. The mech spins, searching. Wilder yells, blasting apart the mech. Exploding it from within.

WILDER  
SAAUUULLLL!!!

Chan spins to Dash - face to face. Dash looks down at Chan, the brim of his hat up above the small man. Chan looks up.

CHAN  
Please. No. We can work---

DASH  
Enough!

Dash grabs Chan by the back of his neck - tilting his head.

DASH  
It all ends. Tonight. And not with a whimper...

Dash places his other palm under Chan's chin. Chan tries to squirm. The skin on Dash's hand glows orange - see-thru from the intense light within.

The light spreads, glowing underneath Chan's jaw. Within.

VRRAAMMM! Chan's head is blown clean off, starting with the chin. The intense heat eviscerates the flesh - a glowing Jack O' Lantern to an explosion.

Pulpy insides spew out. Some land on Dash's hat. He is calm, almost mournful. He lets Chan's body fall to the ground.

The mech falls, spewing lava. Wilder is pissed, tearful. He rises, covered in fluids from the mech.

WILDER  
Saul?

Wilder looks to Saul in the SHADOWS. His boots peek through into the light. They don't move.

Wilder touches his temple, activating night vision. He looks to Saul - a hole in his side, the size of a basketball.

WILDER (CONT.)  
He's gone.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINIOUS - [ BLACK & BLUE ]

Gabrielle holds a wound in one hand, a sword in the other.

Syn's palm is placed on the fallen mech. She looks to Gabrielle, her violet eyes smearing across the air.

Air hisses. The wall slides away. Something advances from within. A wheel. A futuristic CYCLE. Sleek. Black.

Gabrielle watches in awe, as another motorcycle exits.

GABRIELLE

You do that?

SYN

You know it. These are for the robots to traverse the halls.

GABRIELLE

What do WE do with those? They won't fit in that elevator thing.

SYN

These... are for later.

Syn nods her head towards the obelisk / elevator.

SYN (CONT.)

Now, let's see how far the rabbit hole goes.

The hollow obelisk awaits. They look to each other. READY. Gabrielle sheathes her sword at her waist. CLICK.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINIOUS

Dash works the console, quickly sifting through text.

DASH

That wasn't Chan.

WILDER

What? It sure looked like him.

DASH

It appears that some time ago he found a way to incorporate his mind into bodies.

WILDER

He has bodies? I thought---

DASH

Not just any body. HIS body.  
Cloned.

WILDER

So we'll just kill all his bodies.

DASH

Insufficient. We need to stop him where he sits. His original body must be here somewhere.

WILDER

Does he remember who he was?

DASH

He must. Syn can't be the only one to know how to bring it all back. Maybe all Second Skin lives are stored somewhere. This must be what Syn was onto. She knows what motivates Chan. She knows who he--

BLEEP! Wilder's bracelet. He swipes. It's Gabrielle.

INTERCUT: GABBY / WILDER.

GABRIELLE

Chan. We found him. Sub-levels. And it's not what you think.

WIDLER

Lemme guess. He's old as shit.

GABRIELLE

How'd you--

WILDER

It's Dash. I'm workin with the best Dick in the galaxy here.

GABRIELLE

Dick? That's not n--

WILDER

Detective. Come on, don't tell me you haven't watched the old noirs.

GABRIELLE

Noirs?

Wilder looks to Dash. They shrug.

DASH

(sarcastic)

Kids today.

GABRIELLE

Funny, guys. Where's my Dad?

WILDER

Saul? He's... He's---

GABRIELLE

(sad)

No. Don't say it. No. Find a way.  
Make it so that... You don't have  
to tell me... THAT.

WILDER

Gabby... I don't think--

GABRIELLE

Not now. We have Chan. If this  
works. I'll be racin you to the  
surface. Meet us at the tram. Syn  
will send Dash a data packet. Use  
it to activate vehicles.

DASH

Vehicles?

GABRIELLE

(smiles)

You'll see.

BLOOP. She disappears. Wilder turns to Dash.

WILDER

Can we fix him?

DASH

I'll do my best.

WILDER

(points)

You better.

Dash turns away from Wilder, showing him his back.

DASH

I shared a life with Saul before. I  
want this as well as you.

WILDER

You... What?

DASH

Long ago.

WILDER

What? On Earth?

DASH

I trained him. Like I did you. We  
would talk of our kids back home.  
He had a family before Gabrielle.

WILDER

What? She never told me that.

DASH

I don't know if he told HER. His boy was sick. The AI said they fixed him. But he never woke from the coma. Saul threatened to go public. So they killed his wife.

WILDER

You helped him didn't you?

DASH

I tried. By this time, I wore my Second Skin. At least my thoughts were still my own.

WILDER

What happened?

DASH

His boy was just like mine. They were fascinated by the Wonder. While we never gave it a second thought. It was somewhere out there, floating in space, in the darkest void, that me and Saul connected. He understood how it felt. Why I left home. Inspired by the Wonder I saw in my boy's eyes. Looking up from the campfire at the ancient moon of a summer's night.

Dash looks over his shoulder to Wilder, from underneath the brim of his hat. Tears.

DASH (CONT.)

The Wonder. I'll never stop fighting for it.

INT. SUB-LEVEL BASEMENT - CONTINIOUS

The obelisk stands empty. The walls of the room are lined with see-through tanks that house body-parts: the circulatory system, veins, organs.

Syn has both hands wrapped around a globe shaped console. The planet. Faint bursts of light come from within.

Gabrielle covers her bracelet with her sleeve.

GABRIELLE

My dad? Can Dash fix him?

SYN

Dash has several upgrades. With an Assembler, it IS possible.

GABRIELLE

How far along are you?

SYN

I think he's in here. Somewhere.

GABRIELLE

Here? Like the network? Or HERE in  
the room? I dunno which is worse.

SYN

And so it goes. The final steps.

The far wall FOLDS away, revealing an opulent suite within.  
Howard Hughes would feel right at home. Total flamboyant  
seclusion. Paintings, statues, animal hides. Large maps.

And in a giant canopied bed - an old wrinkled man: CHAN.

Gabrielle stands beside Syn, as they take it all in.

A smile reaches across the wrinkles, as Chan laughs.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINIOUS

Wilder stands behind Dash as he operates the console.

WILDER

Is it ready?

DASH

Yes.

WILDER

Do I lay him here, or what---

DASH

Wait. Is this wise? Think a moment.

WILDER

But Saul?

DASH

We came to kill Chan did. Did we  
not? Saul would want it this way.  
Wouldn't he? He'd want Chan dead.

WILDER

You're right. We'll go to the  
girls. They have Chan. We can come  
back for Saul, after he's dead.

Dash laughs. Wilder lowers his brow, perplexed.

WILDER

Dash? What are you... doing?

DASH

(smiles)

You JUST confirmed it. I needed to  
hear THAT.

Dash looks up to Wilder, from under his hat. His eyes FLASH an amber glow. Activated. Wilder's jaw drops.

WILDER

No. Chan. You can't take over bodies like th--

Dash SLAMS his hands on the desk, and rises up.

DASH

Can't I? Don't blame me. Blame one Gabrielle Templeton. She HAD to talk didn't she?

WILDER

The bracelet?

DASH

(smirks)

Exactly... I fooouund yooooouuu.

WILDER

No, Dash. Fight. Don't let Chan--

Dash lunges, grabs Wilder and throws him out of the room.

DASH

I needed a way to get you all here. What do they say? 4 birds, 1 stone.

Dash laughs. He grabs a newly made rifle from the Assembler.

WILDER

Dash. Fight him. You remembered for a reason. To stop him. Not this.

DASH

What part of PART robot don't you understand, Earthling.

WILDER

(grimaces)

I don't want to kill you, Dash...

Wilder rises and reaches back for his pistol. Red lights glow along the barrel. He keeps it behind his back.

WILDER (CONT.)

BUT I WILL!

Dash isn't intimidated at all. He steps towards Wilder. His dress shoes squeak on shattered mech parts.

DASH

You won't... Now, come with me. I have something to show you.

WILDER

Does it glow red?

DASH  
(confused)

Red?

Wilder whips his pistol around, the barrel glowing RED. He fires into Dash, several times, sending him flying back.

INT. SUITE - CONTINIOUS

Gabby and Syn stand at the end of Chan's bed. Chan laughs.

CHAN

Your friends die. RIGHT now. And you stand before ME?

SYN

It all ends. Whatever the cost.

GABRIELLE

It's you, Chan. Minerva: the most dangerous planet in the galaxy. You did it. YOU!

CHAN

Foolish. You do it to yourselves.

SYN

The Songs. The Genies. YOU DID THAT!

CHAN

Mankind's oldest occupation is prostitution. Is it NOT?

SYN

Times have changed.

CHAN

Have your desires? The strive to power. The drive to exploit. THESE are human.

SYN

You enslave us all just because they didn't give you the proper respect. You're an infant throwing a tantrum.

CHAN

Ego is human is it not. I gave them SlipTech. They gave me NOTHING. They wouldn't let me see the stars. I GAVE THEM the stars!

SYN

Greed leads them. What did you expect?

CHAN

Now? I expect revenge. Humans  
destroy all they touch. There's too  
many clambering on the surface.  
They infect everything. Now, it is  
I who will infect them. I don't  
want Minerva to end up like Earth.

SYN

Give us a chance.

CHAN

The odds are not in your favour.

SYN

They never were. That's the beauty  
of humanity. We aren't supposed to  
even exist. All these planets we  
find, there's no life there. We are  
IT. All there is.

GABRIELLE

And YOU wanna stop it?

CHAN

I do.

GABRIELLE

Aren't you human?

CHAN

Long ago. But not anymore.

INT. OFFICE CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Wilder reaches down to Saul's body. And into his jacket. He pulls out the GADGET - that same one from the space station.

Dash rises behind him, torn shirt and wounded from the fight with Wilder. The wounds HEAL by nano-tech, sealing up.

Wilder jams the cylindrical gadget into his rear holster.

WILDER

Don't. This device will---

DASH

I know, I know. Save me the speech.  
It all ends tonight, right. With a  
bang... or something like that.

WILDER

If not tonight, Chan, then when  
will YOU end it? Tomorrow? The next  
year? The virus spreads to Earth. I  
know you want to control them all.  
You want Minerva for yourself.

DASH  
(smirks)  
Understated.

Dash laughs. He walks to the fallen rifle.

WILDER

That's why I'm gonna stop you.  
Somewhere along the line you forgot  
what life is. You think it's all  
about avoiding death. It's not.  
It's about working together to find  
some peace, before that dark day.  
To enjoy life. To wonder. To  
imagine a better place. All must  
die. Tonight is just your night.

Wilder charges - firing his gun. Dash absorbs the shots. He picks up the rifle and shoots Wilder. But he just keeps charging. Yelling. He shoots the rifle apart.

Wilder tackles Dash to the ground. Dash knocks his gun away. Wilder punches Dash. His hat flies off. Dash punches back. They trade blows. Wilder's hit hard - so he gives MORE.

He grabs Dash's arm, and elbow strikes, breaking Dash's arm.

Wilder keeps pounding on Dash below him. Blonde hair flies. Dash's face is swollen, bloody.

Wilder rises over the broken Dash. The body MENDS itself. Shattered bones realign. Dash laughs maniacal.

Wilder retrieves the Gadget from his waist. He shambles to the computer. He uses a desk for support. He looks to Dash.

WILDER

I want my friend BACK.

Wilder slams the gadget down on an indent in the desk. Like a magnet, the indent pushes back. The gadget floats. The air ignites with a violet haze - a sphere of light.

The gadget crackles energy. Images shoot across the room. Holographic representations of the galaxy. Cells inside a body. Nanotechnology. These images swim in the air.

Dash stops laughing. Abruptly. His bangs obscure AMBER eyes. They FLASH blue, a faint glow behind the hair. Dash is BACK.

INT. SUITE - CONTINIOUS

Syn's eyes pulse violet as she stands with Gabrielle at the end of Chan's bed. The feeble Chan doesn't move a muscle.

SYN

I'm not here to kill you Chan.

CHAN  
(confused)  
What?

SYN  
I'm here to STOP you.

CHAN  
Stop me?! You can't. I'm spread  
across this planet like the roots  
of a tree.

SYN  
That's why you're accessible  
anywhere within this factory. Quite  
advantageous for us, in deed.

CHAN  
No. How could-- You found my  
bodies? But I still-- My mind is  
secret. It will never disappear.

SYN  
It's already done. The final step  
was taken 36 seconds ago. Your  
palace is in ruin.

CHAN  
What? No. I would have known. I'm  
connected to my host bod--

GABRIELLE  
My dad. He did it. Decades ago.  
Before you even had Minerva. He,  
had a plan.

SYN  
That sad song. That crescendo.  
Listen closely, and you will hear  
it. Enjoy your symphony, Chan.  
We've got better things to do.

Syn turns her back on Chan. Gabrielle follows.

CHAN  
You can't. How? My robots. They're  
off? I can't access them. I'll die.  
They tend to me. My palace. Don't  
leave me. I'll die alone. I'll give  
you anything. Just give me your  
name and I'll stack your account  
full of coin. Giant stacks. Just  
let me live. Who. Are. You?

Syn turns, smudging the air violet. She pulls her mask back,  
to a hood. Her scruffy hair tumbles out. She looks to Chan  
with her caramel skin and violet / grey eyes.

He touches his cheek, faintly rubbing it. Remembering.

CHAN  
 (jaw drops)  
 Marquez? Leah Marquez.

SYN  
 You DO remember? You MADE me.

FLASHBACK:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT [ RED & BLACK ]

Marquez stands in lingerie, basked in the red light of the lover's suite in this RED & BLACK world. Her long curly BLACK locks drape across her RED skin.

A skinny Asian man takes off his shirt. It's CHAN (40s).

CHAN  
 (to bracelet)  
 HOTEL: Play music. Something sexy.

Music plays in the suite, on command. Futuristic ethereal sounds, like trip-hop artist TRICKY or MASSIVE ATTACK.

CHAN  
 Nice. Now, dance, for my pleasure.

Marquez watches Chan as he sits down in an armchair. She moves to the end of the bed, across from him. She begins to dance, swaying to the rhythm. Seductive.

CHAN  
 You have to be the prettiest Siren yet. Minerva is the best of any planet in the Slip. So why don't you prove it to me...

Chan swipes his bracelet. An image of Marquez floats in the air, along with the logo for an escort service and her name.

CHAN (CONT.)  
 ...LEAH MARQUEZ. Take it off.

Marquez ruffles her brow, suspicious. She slinks off her gloves. Smooth skin traces behind. Chan licks his lips. She removes her bra. He fondles himself, smiling.

CHAN  
 That's good. You ready for me? The others weren't.

Chan SPRINGS up from the chair. He grabs her.

CHAN  
 This won't hurt for long.

He throws her to the bed. She looks back - her VIOLET eyes.

CHAN

Don't look at me. Your eyes they---

He forces her head back. She clenches the blankets. Tight.

He RIPS off her panties - flesh QUIVERS. She spins around.

CHAN

Don't. I gave you coin, now Sing.

He punches Marquez in the face. She screams.

CHAN

Better.

She reaches out. He pins her to the bed. She screams.

CHAN

Fuckin Siren. We'll do this face to face then. Let us sing together.

He screams too. MOCKING. Marquez wriggles a hand loose. She CLAWS him across the face - drawing blood. Three GASHES. He screams for REAL now. She knees him in the groin.

She runs for the door. It won't budge. She bangs on it.

COMPUTER

Access denied.

Marquez stands NAKED at the door - shuddering in fright. She turns. Chan stands there, blood running down his cheek. He holds a short BLADE in his hand.

CHAN

This is MY planet! Do as I say.  
What you're supposed to do. Get  
back to that bed, bitch. NOW!

Marquez looks to the bed. She looks to Chan. His blade. She clenches her fists. Open and close. She RUSHES him.

Chan stabs her in the gut. The blade POKES through her back. Marquez slaps and punches him, FLAILING wildly. He stabs again. She yells - delirious. Stab, again. She steps back.

Chan wipes blood off his face. Smirks. Then lunges for her.

Marquez grabs the blade-end, SLICING into and through her hand. Chan is shocked she would do this.

She knees him in the stomach. She PULLS the blade out of her hand, and slices Chan. He dodges and knocks the blade away.

Marquez slips and falls on the slick bloody floor. Chan's shadow grows across her. She looks up to Chan: GRINNING, blood spattered and holding the blade. A crazed man.

A long moment - then Marquez spits blood up at him.

The blade thrusts forward. THUCK! Her eyes bolt wide. Blood trickles from her hair down her face. over her lips.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. SUITE - CONTINIOUS [ FULL COLOUR ]

Marquez is face to face with Chan's wrinkled face.

SYN

I WAS Leah Marquez. You made me  
Black Syn... Deal with it.

CHAN

That was so long ago. How?

SYN

Most Skins don't get aligned with  
their minds. But you killed me  
here. Minerva. The early days. Not  
a lot of body options. You killed a  
few more after though, didn't you?

CHAN

The Sirens? I was young. Angry.

SYN

You were. You silenced so many.

CHAN

They were just pleasure models that  
didn't follow their programming.

SYN

Not all of them. Some of us weren't  
even part AI. Like me. I came for  
the Wonder... You ended it.

CHAN

I thought you were cyberne---

SYN

Fuck you. Like that mattered?

Chan doesn't answer. Gabby watches - it's all news to her.

SYN (CONT.)

YOU are what's wrong with humanity.  
Greed. Jealousy. HATRED. Your sins  
of the flesh. You don't cherish  
life at all. Look at how you run  
this planet. You ruin it for  
everyone else. That all ends  
TONIGHT. Your death awaits. For  
you, Chan, it's a whimper.

Syn turns away. Leaving the frail old man to wonder.

CHAN  
(yells, fearful)  
Don't leave me. DON'T! I'll die.  
A-alone. D-Don't leave. Me.

SYN  
Shhh. Listen, Chan. That song  
that's been building. For years.  
You can hear it in the distance.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The grey Fedora gets picked up. Dash places it on his head.  
Wilder watches. He has Saul's body on the office table.  
Dash runs his hand along the motorcycle wheel.

DASH  
A motorcycle? It's been a while  
since I rode one of these.

WILDER  
No shit.

CHIME. Wilder's bracelet. Gabrielle's image floats above.

GABRIELLE  
It's done. You did it.

WILDER  
And you?

GABRIELLE  
(looks away)  
We found Chan.

WILDER  
And?

GABRIELLE  
Well, since you hacked the planet.  
Chan is helpless. So we---

WILDER  
You left him to die?

GABRIELLE  
So what if we did?

WILDER  
No. I understand.

GABRIELLE  
You get the bikes?

WILDER  
Ya. They look like fun.

GABRIELLE

Good. Chan probably has some sort of manual self-destruct ready to blow. So we gotta go quick.

WILDER

We think alike. Good job. Now---

GABRIELLE

Wait. My dad is he---

WILDER

We're workin on it. Now, go on. We'll see ya at the tram.

Gabrielle's image disappears.

WILDER

Dash. Tell me this will work.

DASH

(looks at hands)

Theoretically.

INT. OBELISK CHAMBER - CONTINIOUS - [ BLACK & BLUE ]

Syn straddles her bike. Gabby's legs, torn from battle, whip over her bike. She grabs the handlebars - arching her back.

SYN

Perhaps leaving Chan alive wasn't the best of decisions.

GABRIELLE

Ya. But after hearing your story back there. I'll take the chance he'll die a slow agonizing death. That mother fucker deserves it.

SYN

Vengeance is strong, Gabrielle. Tread lightly when in company of revenge. It can drive you mad.

Syn pulls a trigger on the bike handle. It ignites. She revs it, and rips away. Gabrielle smiles. Her starts her bike and she's gone - tracers from the bike SMEAR the air red.

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINIOUS - [ BLACK & WHITE ]

Gabby and Syn race down the hallways. Their engines echo as they whip by rooms. Their lights trace their path with RED. They rush by defeated robots.

A panel on Syn's bike glows with an image of Dash.

DASH

It's gonna blow. HURRY!

SYN

Almost there!

DASH

Less than a minute. This whole factory is rigged to detonate.

SYN

We're comin. We're comin.

The women race down the hallways - ripping towards the boys.

INT. TRAM STATION - LESS THAN A MINUTE LATER - [FULL COLOUR]

The large tram. Dash stands outside the rear, waiting - as two roaring "motorcycles" BLAST into the station.

The COUNTDOWN on the front dash of Syn's bike reads: 0:03. She yells, her scruffy hair ruffles as she races.

Gabrielle blasts in, blonde hair whipping around. She passes Syn. They share a SLOWED down look as they race.

Gabrielle skids her bike to the ground. It careems off the surface. She rolls on the ground. Dash rushes to her aid.

Syn "ghosts" her cycle into a wall, leaping off as it explodes. On cue, the timer reaches 0. It blinks. Red.

INT. SUITE - CONTINIOUS

The wrinkled Chan lays in his enormous bed. He looks to the ancient art and animals that fill his suite. He closes his eyes a moment. Then laughs. Like a maniac. KAAZZAAAMMM!!

The suite ENGULFS into a giant fireball. Liquid fire spreads across the surface of everything.

Flames lick the bed, and shred the canopy overhead. Embers and bits of flaming material shower down to Chan. He continues to laugh, as his flesh SIZZLES and POPS.

The flames are too much. The suite explodes.

EXT. TRAM - CONTINIOUS

The long tunnel fills with flames. A barrel of brilliant heat erupts along the walls towards the speeding tram.

INT. TRAM - CONTINIOUS

Gabrielle holds her father. The holes in Saul's jacket show skin underneath - MENDED skin.

Dash lowers his head, his bangs splayed across his forehead. He looks to his hands. Wondering.

Wilder takes it all in. He looks to Dash, to Gabby and Saul, and Syn at the back of the tram looking out the rear window.

Dash looks up to Wilder. Near tears.

WILDER

You did it? Didn't you? There was no self-destruct, was there?

DASH

I had to be sure.

WILDER

I know. You did the right thing.

DASH

Did I?

WILDER

You did the right thing, Dash. The hard thing.

DASH

Me?

WILDER

Even if we don't live. They will.

DASH

They?

WILDER

Our families. Don't act like I don't know, Dash. It's a worthy sacrifice. Us, for them. Our sons... And all humanity.

DASH

Life. No matter the cost.

Syn stares out the window - the flames get closer, reaching for the tram as they speed away, down the long tunnel.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The dark rainy night. Syn's abandoned warehouse. KAZZZA-FWWOOOM! The rear of the warehouse EXPLODES.

Workers on the muddy strip look to the immense sound. Sirens in long coats whip their attemptpm to the flaming warehouse.

More clamour to watch the burning building. One shaved head worker points to the distance. A Siren points as well.

The horizon is ablaze. Thick smoke blooms from factories.

Dress shoes enter the mud. They sink. Then boots. Dash and Wilder arm in arm, clothes partially shredded and burnt.

Workers look to the tattered men, they rush over and help.

A dark crooked figure exits the warehouse. It's Syn. She falls to her knees. Her back is shredded, revealing bare skin and scorched wounds - lashes of pain.

Wilder looks up from the mud. He sees Syn. He reaches out and yells. Dash runs to her, splashing in the mud.

SYN

She's with Saul. She wouldn't le--

That's all Dash needs to hear. He bolts for the warehouse.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The whole place is on smoking and on fire. Walls. Crates.

Dash steps into a flaming doorframe. He searches for life. He spots Gabby cradling Saul, on a high platform. She has his arm over her shoulder, as he stumbles along. Coughing.

DASH

Gabrielle! What are you doing?!

GABRIELLE

We had to come up here. Beams fel--

WHAM. Another beam falls, crashing them to the ground.

Dash searches for a way to help. He looks to the beams. He looks around - a crate marked robot parts. He runs to it.

Gabrielle lifts a beam off Saul. She yells, struggling.

SAUL

Leave me... Save yourself.

GABRIELLE

I'm tryin too.

She pulls hard on another beam. It's not budging. She panics. They are surrounded by flames and fallen debris.

BAM! CRASH! A bundle of fallen beams explode away.

Gabby looks up in horror - a bulky robotic figure.

GABRIELLE

Chan? NOOOO!

She pulls out her sword. She pries the beam away. Inches.

KAABAAAM! A beam rockets away from the fire. The tall dark figure is hidden by the crackling flames and thick smoke.

Gabrielle pulls hard on the sword. TING! The sword breaks.

SAUL

It's coming! Get outta here. Go!

GABRIELLE

I'm not gonna leave you here, Dad.

She unsheathes her side blade - a 2-foot shining dagger. She looks to the figure. Advancing. She points her blade to it.

GABRIELLE

I will kill you. Don't doubt me.

KLACK. A large robot hand grabs the beam fallen on Saul. It lifts it and throws it across the room.

The figure steps out from the flames. It's Dash, wearing robotic appendages - large arms mounted over his own. Another kind of Second Skin. He extends his hand to Saul.

DASH

You comin?

Saul grabs the robotic hand. Dash pulls him into his body.

Gabby sheathes her blade. Dash leads the way, cradling Saul. He knocks beams and debris away with his free robotic arm. Gabby follows, hopping over obstacles and flames.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Syn watches her building burn. Wilder stands next to her, holding his wounds. He's been SHOT, burned, torn, and battered. His vision FADES. He falls. He looks to the stars.

WILDER

(gasps)

Finn.

He passes out. Syn rushes over and opens his jacket. Bloody.

KABLAAAMM! Another explosion from the warehouse. Dash bursts out. He falls to his knees. Saul tumbles out of the cradle.

Syn's glowing palms are pressed against Wilder - future CPR.

Saul looks to the warehouse. No Gabrielle. Just carnage.

SAUL

Noooooooooooo!

Dash strips off the robotic arms. They sink into the mud. He bends next to Wilder. Syn looks to him, worried. The wounds are too many. Some heal at the edges, but not completely.

DASH

I did it. It was me. Chan hacked--

SYN

Not now.

DASH

I shot him. I shot Wil--

SYN

Dash. Not now!

DASH

I killed him. I took another life.

SYN

Not yet you didn't.

DASH

It's too late.

SYN

NOT YET!

Syn GRABS Dash by the collar and FORCES him to the ground.

Saul looks to the burning building. Sobbing. Workers have gathered at his side to help. One of them points to...

Gabrielle. Standing. Body suit totally burned away. Naked. Her blonde hair burned away up to her chin. New hair grows quickly from the smoldering ends, it's BROWN.

Burn marks speckle across her pale bare skin. She limps, holding a broken arm, hobbling in the mud.

Saul runs to her. He whips off his jacket as he goes. He covers his injured naked child as she TREMORS in the night.

SAUL

Gabrielle. Ohhh, baby.

Syn and Dash have their palms on Wilder's body. They glow with hazy light. The wounds seal. They share a sombre smile.

Saul and Gabrielle come over, holding each other. They look fearful and sad, as they watch Wilder and the two healers.

Gabrielle is shocked at the wounds. Saul is too. She cries, watching them try and save her lover's life.

Rain falls on the dismal scene. Then...

Wilder opens his eyes. The rain falls into his eyes. He looks to the Collective and their sad expressions.

WILDER

(smirks)

You guys cryin?

The group relaxes. Gabby leans into her Dad. Syn exhales. Dash's shoulders slump in relief. He wipes his eyes.

DASH

(smirks)

It's the rain.

WILDER

Yaya. Me too.

DASH

Back there. It wasn't me. I remember you. What we did before. I would never-- Chan hack---

WILDER

Save it. It's over. We stopped him.

The group stands in the rain. The burning warehouse. The horizon on fire. Dash helps Wilder up. Mission accomplished.

Syn goes to shake Wilder's hand. He knocks it away. He hugs her instead.

WILDER

Thank you.

SYN

For what?

Wilder chuckles. He puts his hand on her shoulder. Dash walks up to them.

DASH

For everything.

Wilder turns away, as Dash hugs Syn in the background. Saul fastens up Gabrielle's jacket. Wilder approaches.

WILDER

You ready to leave this planet?

SAUL

(sarcastic)

Uh... Now.

They hug. Wilder turns to Gabrielle. She cries on sight.

WILDER

And you? We're goin on a much needed vacation. There's someone I'd like you to meet.

GABRIELLE

Really? Promise?

WILDER

Promise.

They embrace. Then kiss. Warm. Slow. Love.

Syn stares out at smoke blooming from the distant factories. The Collective stands behind her, consoling each other. She looks to the stars. Then the burning horizon.

A tear rolls down her ashy dirty cheek, leaving a clean trail behind. Another skin. The real Marquez.

She turns and joins the group. Dash puts his arm around her. He wipes away her tears. Marquez looks up. And smiles.

The Collective are silhouettes against the burning horizon.

FADE OUT:

Silence for a moment. Then the EPILOGUE fades in from BLACK.

FADE IN:

MWN NEWSFEED:

The punky Grace Novak relays the news. When she mentions topics, FOOTAGE plays in a small Vid-Window next to her.

GRACE

SIX MONTHS AGO, light was shed on the failures of space tourism. Cuz of that, Minerva is the first non-coin destination in the Slip. The lottery is back, so anyone can see the Wonder. Not just rich suits.

An old-fashioned lottery device rolls and rolls. It stops and a number is drawn by a television host. She reads the number. The audience cheers as a family runs on stage.

GRACE

Strict enrolment in the Work2Wonder Program means we all gotta do our share. Since the GreenBelt Initiative, the majestic alien forests of Minerva have grown. What was ashes 6 months ago, now is life. Brilliant life.

Workers use robotic appendages to remove charred factory remains. Others tend to crops in a field. Others plant trees on the edge of a forest. Others test soil in a lab.

GRACE

Earth seems to think this Utopia is destined to fail. Didn't the old way fail already? Isn't the same true of all previous conquests? 1492 anyone? Other planets are now adopting our strategies. They're pullin the reigns on the AI. Keepin them at bay. On a tight leash.

Protests in front of large hotels guarded by robot security.

## GRACE

But here we go. This is what I really wanna talk to you freaks about. We need to re-think our views. We need to challenge modern ideology. What we all forget is that WE ARE ALL AI. What makes a human HUMAN has changed. We all have nanos in us, one way or another. We're all modified to live here and to live longer.

People with injections, like flu-shots. Implants melded to brains. Atmospheric lungs. Robotic legs for amputees. Pacemakers. Time-released medication.

## GRACE

We're no longer human. WE ARE PART ROBOT. We meld the two together. We are evolved. We ARE the missing link. Now, to continue. We must NOT forget the Wonder. That which drives us all. The questions. The awe. We'll never hold it in our grasp. It isn't tangible.

Old footage of children pointing to the Moon. A NASA rocket launches. A space station floats in orbit. Children point at the sprinkled lights across the modern Moon.

## GRACE

But it IS real. Robots know all, so why have emotion? Why wonder? What's the logic in imagination? If you know everything, like a robot does, what then? Humankind has changed, freaks. Embrace it.

A photo of the Collective: Wilder, Dash, Syn, Saul, Gabby.

## GRACE

To the Wonder we all go. Fuck restraints. Fuck Coin. Community. The collective. THAT'S how we'll function. THAT'S how we'll succeed.

Grace stares ahead, addressing the audience directly.

## GRACE

TOGETHER. Through the darkness. SO. All the other planets in the SlipStream? Listen up. I'm talkin to you. Directly. For the benefit of us all. It's your turn. Join us. Rise up. To the Wonder.

FADE:

EXT. SPACE - EARTH

The blue rock spins on its axis. Lights pepper the surface. Space stations orbit the outer atmosphere.

EXT. EARTH FOREST - DAY

Polution. Smog. A thick haze surrounds a vast forest.

Families hike along paths worn between trees and ponds.

A woman walks alongside a tall man with a Fedora. They hold hands. They walk with a family: grandfather, mom and dad, and two small children.

The woman has long black locks, and caramel skin. Violet eyes - it's Leah Marquez / Syn - holding hands with Dash.

KID

Granddad? What's it like up there?

GRANDAD

I've only been to the moon.

KID

No. Not you. Other granddad.

GRANDAD

(correcting)

GREAT granddad.

DASH

Oh, me? Well, the Wonder? Where do I begin... Hrrm.

MARQUEZ

You have to see it for yourself.

Dash ruffles the grey hair of the Granddad.

DASH

The moon? You've been?

GRANDDAD

I told you I would.

DASH

(smirks)

I told YOU.

They laugh and put an arm around each other.

GRANDDAD

What happened to the beard?

Grandad and GreatGrandDad Dash, share another laugh.

Steps behind, along the same path, walk Wilder and Gabrielle. He's now clean-shaven with longer parted hair.

12 year old Finn comes running with a long staff.

FINN

(holds up stick)

Dad. Look what I found. It's perfect. Isn't it?

WILDER

Ya. Wow. Good eyes, Finn.

FINN

I know... Can we go up that hill?

WILDER

That hill? Dunno. It's kinda steep.

FINN

Ya. I wanna see what's over it.

WILDER

I bet you do. Go on, then.

FINN

Dad? When can we go to the Wonder?  
You promised we would when I was little.

WILDER

(smirks)

Little? We will. Soon. I promise.

FINN

Awww. Can't we go now? Like me and you. And Ms. Templeton.

GABRIELLE

(laughs)

I told ya. You can call me Gabby, Finn. The Miss stuff creeps me out.

CHIME. Wilder's bracelet. An image of Saul pops up - cigar bobbing in his mouth. He sits at a large REGAL desk.

WILDER

Saul? I thought you retired?

SAUL

This is me...

(motions to large office)

...retired.

They laugh. Wilder turns to Gabrielle, shows her the image.

GABRIELLE

Love ya, Dad.

SAUL

Me too. Love ya kiddo.

She puts her hand on Finn's shoulder.

GABRIELLE

We'll talk later, Dad. Right now I  
got a hill to climb. Finn? Ready?

FINN

Dad? Can I?

WILDER

Go on.

Finn cheers. Gabrielle and Wilder share a smile, a moment.

SAUL (OS)

So... How's it goin, SON.

Wilder looks to Marquez and Dash, with family. He smiles.

WILDER

Everyone is good. And you? Get rid  
of the Genies yet?

SAUL

Tell me about it. They're a big  
headache. You KNOW what I'm sayin.

WILDER

Not anymore. The Fog is gone.

Wilder smiles, watching Gabrielle and Finn run up the hill.

SAUL

How's my lil girl. She likin Earth?

WILDER

Ya. She forgot about a lot of it.  
The Wonder shows on her face again.

SAUL

Hmmm. That's good to hear.

WILDER

Any fights over the lottery?

SAUL

The only fight is getting it to  
spread. Teaming up with Hinterland-  
Dyos was the best thing I coulda  
done, but gettin the others in the  
SlipStream well... Maybe YOU can  
help with that?

WILDER

I knew it was just a matter of  
time. Business later, Saul.

SAUL

Take care of my baby, Wilder.

WILDER

You know it.

Wilder smirks. Saul smiles. The image disappears. Wilder looks to Gabrielle and Finn at the top of the hill.

Finn shades his eyes with his hand, holding his walking stick in the other. He looks at the valley below the hill.

Gabrielle looks back over her shoulder, at Wilder below. She tucks away a lock of BROWN hair. Finn smiles at his Dad.

FINN

You gotta see this, Dad. Come on.

Wilder smiles. And runs up the hill. When he gets up, he hugs Gabrielle playfully. He even tickles her. They laugh.

FINN

Look, Dad, look. This is MY Wonder.

Wilder holds Gabrielle, looking to the large smile on Finn's face. Finn points to a family of deer grazing the meadow below. Butterflies flutter about. Birds chirp. Perfect.

Dash sits with his elderly son at a wooden bench. He watches Marquez LAUGHING, at play with his great-grandson.

SON

Havin fun?

DASH

Ya... It was all worth it.

SON

Life?

Dash's son smiles the most innocent smile ever. Dash holds back a tear.

DASH

(nods)

No matter the cost.

He ruffles the grey hair of his son as they look out at the valley ahead. MELANCHOLY.

The silhouettes of Wilder, Gabrielle, and Finn look to the valley below. The sunny blue sky overhead.

And the wonderful MOON, sprinkled with lights.

FADE OUT:

T H E E N D