

"P O S T-C A P E D"

written by

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FADE IN:

1. EXT. DETROIT RUINS - ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE - DAY (2005)

Black-and-white footage. Handheld. Chaotic.

A SUPERMAN-TYPE HERO lifts a collapsing skyscraper. Civilians cheer.

CUT TO:

The same hero overshoots - throws debris into another building. Screams.

Newscasters (V.O.) overlap in a rising cacophony:

NEWSCASTER #1 (V.O.)
The economic fallout from the Cape
Crisis continues-

NEWSCASTER #2 (V.O.)
-unprecedented unemployment-

NEWSCASTER #3 (V.O.)
-why strive when gods do it for
you?

Flash images:

- A hero vaporizes a militia convoy "by accident."
- Riots.
- Markets crashing.
- Churches emptying.
- Government parades turning into stampedes under the shadow of flying silhouettes.

A title burns in:

THE CAPED ERA (2000-2005)

A beat.

Then it glitches and collapses into static:

CONTAINMENT PROTOCOL ACTIVE.

2. EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - PRESENT DAY - MORNING (2045)

Ultra-clean. Overcorrected. Matching houses. Matching lawns. Matching dogs.

A DRONE hums overhead, scanning residents as they take identical white pills.

STABILITY DOSE - LEXAMINE flashes across its interface.

The street is quiet. Too quiet. Children bike silently. Adults smile politely. Perfect and dead.

3. INT. DRONE POV - CONTINUOUS

Infrared silhouettes. All human heat signatures neatly contained.

Until—

A MICROFLARE of light blooms on the horizon.

The drone pauses. Adjusts. Scans.

The flare vanishes.

The drone moves on.

4. EXT. OREGON SUSPENSION BRIDGE - DAY

Morning traffic. Commuters. Delivery trucks. A school bus.

A subtle tone hums under the soundscape — barely perceptible.

Bolts begin to twist. Cables tremble.

Then—

THE ENTIRE BRIDGE COLLAPSES in a roar of steel and stone.

Screams. Cars plummet. The school bus teeters—

—then the world seems to rewind.

Metal snaps back into place. Concrete rises. Time bends in reverse as a column of blinding white-gold light flares beneath the structure.

Phones record. People cry. "What is happening?!"
The bridge stands intact.

A mother whispers:

MOTHER

Aurora...?

5. INT. GLOBAL CONTAINMENT BUREAU (GCB) - SUBLEVEL 3 - DAY

Industrial, windowless, retrofitted Cold War aesthetics. Old analog tech welded to modern biometric locks.

LUCAS REEVE (50s) sits alone in a dim office lit by a single overhead bulb. Stubble, weathered face, eyes like someone who's seen gods fall.

He watches grainy footage of the bridge incident.

He rewinds. Zooms. Slow-motion.

On frame 346: a burst of signature photonic compression. A light distortion he hasn't seen in two decades.

He exhales as if punched.

LUCAS

Aurora...

6. INT. GCB WAR ROOM - LATER

A long table surrounded by humorless officials. The GCB seal: an eye inside a broken halo.

DIRECTOR NATHANIEL HORN (60s) presides — immaculate suit, predatory calm.

HORN

Publicly? Structural failure.
Privately? An anomaly.

He looks directly at Lucas.

HORN (CONT'D)

You're being reactivated. Quietly.
No reports, no names.
This does not reach the Council.
Not until we know.

Lucas doesn't answer.

HORN (CONT'D)

Find whoever did it. Retrieve or
eliminate.

A beat.

HORN (CONT'D)
If it's one of them, the world
cannot know.

Lucas swallows.

7. EXT. SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN - AFTERNOON

An Americana postcard. Kids walking home. Autumn leaves.

MARLA VANCE (40s) - warm, tired eyes, an earnest simplicity - walks out of the local high school with a stack of physics quizzes.

She feels a faint pulse behind her eyes. Winces.

The sunlight refracts strangely around her for a fraction of a second.

She shakes it off.

8. INT. MARLA'S CAR - DRIVING - MOMENTS LATER

Marla turns on the radio. A low-frequency static hum bleeds through stations.

Her hands tremble on the wheel.

Then-

A DOG darts across the road.

She swerves-
Her car spins-
Glass explodes-

Time slows.

A white-gold glow blooms from Marla's hands. Shards of glass freeze mid-air. Gravity bends. The world hangs suspended.

Her breath steams in the warped light.

When time snaps back, the car settles gently, perfectly intact.

Marla shakes violently, tears welling.

MARLA

What... what is happening to me?

9. EXT. MARLA'S HOUSE - SUNSET

Lucas stands across the street, watching her from behind a utility truck.

He sees tiny refractions of light bending around her silhouette — a signature he remembers like a scar.

He whispers to himself:

LUCAS

You're supposed to be gone.

He steps away, conflicted.

10. INT. HIGH SCHOOL - NEXT DAY

Marla teaches physics concepts. Waves. Light. Refraction.

Her fingers glow faintly as she writes an equation. Students whisper.

A bulb flickers and shatters overhead.

Students scream. Marla stumbles back, terrified of herself.

Then she sees something—

A FLASHBACK:

—HERSELF in a suit of liquid-gold light, flying above a cheering crowd.

—A man (Lucas) telling her, "Let us take the burden."

—A needle entering her neck.

Marla gasps and collapses to the floor.

Her eyes glow like a dying star.

CUT TO BLACK.

11. INT. HIGH SCHOOL NURSE'S OFFICE - LATER

Marla sits on the exam table. Pale. Shaken.

The NURSE (50s, maternal) shines a penlight into her eyes.
The pupils flicker with faint photonic halos.

NURSE
Could be stress. You've had a lot
on your plate.

Marla forces a smile, hands trembling in her lap.

MARLA
Yeah... long week.

The Nurse steps away to write notes.

Marla notices a metal tray vibrating softly—as if pulled by a
magnetic field emanating from her body.

She clamps her hands together, breath quickening.

The Nurse returns—Marla's panic subsides; the tray stops.

NURSE
Maybe take a day off. You don't
look well.

MARLA (soft)
I don't feel like myself.

The Nurse gives her a sympathetic look.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Who does these days?

12. EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Students scatter. Marla exits the building with a forced
calm.

Across the lot, Lucas leans against an unmarked GCB sedan. He
studies her movements with the intensity of someone watching
a bomb tick.

Marla sees him — something about his presence sparks another
memory flash:

A BRIGHT ROOM
Stainless steel.
Lucas standing beside her, younger.
She's strapped into a chair.
Needles.
Light being drained from her body.
(MORE)

A BRIGHT ROOM (CONT'D)
Lucas's voice: "It's for peace...
you'll forget everything."

BACK TO PRESENT.

Marla stumbles, dizzy.

Lucas steps toward her.

LUCAS
Marla--? Marla, stop. Don't run.

She backs away instinctively.

MARLA
Do I know you?

LUCAS
...You did.

A beat. She studies his eyes -- there's recognition buried somewhere.

MARLA
What's happening to me?

Lucas looks around the parking lot, wary of surveillance.

LUCAS (low)
Not here.

13. INT. DINER - EVENING

A small-town diner. Wood paneling. Old photographs of Little League teams. A bell rings each time someone enters.

Marla and Lucas sit in a corner booth. Lucas keeps his back to the wall, scanning exits.

Marla clutches a cup of tea, hands shaking slightly.

MARLA (CONT'D)
You're some kind of government
agent?

Lucas doesn't answer immediately. He watches the waitress refill coffee, waits until she walks away.

LUCAS
I used to be. A long time ago.

MARLA
And now you're stalking a
schoolteacher?

LUCAS
Because you're not a schoolteacher.

Marla's jaw tightens.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
You were someone... important.
Someone powerful.

Marla's eyes flicker — light bends at their edges.

MARLA
Don't do this. Please don't feed
into whatever—
(she taps her head)
—whatever breakdown I'm having.

Lucas leans closer.

LUCAS
You're not breaking down. You're
waking up.

A tense silence.

Marla whispers:

MARLA
I remember... light. Heat. People
shouting my name.

LUCAS
Aurora.

The name hits her like a punch. The diner's lights flare,
popping two bulbs.

She gasps, covering her ears.

Lucas stands, throws cash on the table.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
We need to go. Now.

14. EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Lucas ushers Marla toward his car.

MARLA

What does that name mean? Tell me
the truth!

Before he can answer—

A BLACK VAN screeches into the lot. Doors slide open.

Three SHEPHERD OPERATIVES in matte-grey tactical armor exit,
weapons drawn with suppressors.

Lucas pushes Marla behind a parked truck.

LUCAS

They're not here to arrest you.
They're here to erase you.

Marla hyperventilates, her hands glowing uncontrollably.

Lucas pulls a compact pistol — old, analog, unmarked.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Stay down. Do not use your powers.
They'll triangulate your signature.

MARLA

I can't control it!

The air warps with fluctuating photonic energy.

The Shepherds advance.

Lucas fires two shots — precise, disabling. Not killing.

He grabs Marla's hand and drags her into the passenger seat
of his sedan.

15. INT. GCB SEDAN - SPEEDING - NIGHT

Lucas drives like a man used to escaping gods.

Marla shakes violently.

MARLA (CONT'D)

They were going to kill me.

LUCAS

Containment. That's their word for
it.

MARLA

What did I do? What was I?

Lucas hesitates.

LUCAS
You saved the world. And then... you
broke it.

Marla looks at him, horrified.

MARLA
I don't understand.

LUCAS
You will. But not tonight.

Her light flickers again – illuminating the car's interior
like fireflies.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Marla, listen to me—if you don't
get control, they'll level this
entire town to stop you from
remembering.

16. EXT. REMOTE BACK ROAD - NIGHT

Rain pours. Lucas pulls off onto a dirt road, stopping near
an abandoned barn surrounded by tall grass.

He checks for drones overhead.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
We hide here. Just for tonight.

Marla sits on the ground beneath the barn's overhang,
exhausted.

Lucas kneels a few feet away.

MARLA
Why would they erase me?

LUCAS
Because your existence... all of you...
it broke everything.

MARLA
All of who?

LUCAS
The metas. The caped. The ones the
world worshipped.

Marla shakes her head, overwhelmed.

MARLA
This is insane.

LUCAS
You think I want this? I spent
twenty years burying your kind.
Keeping the world stable. But I
never thought—
(a beat)
—I never thought you'd come back.

Marla's voice cracks.

MARLA
Why do I remember you?

He swallows.

LUCAS
Because I'm the one who convinced
you to disappear.

17. EXT. ABANDONED BARN - LATER THAT NIGHT

A long, quiet scene.

Marla and Lucas sit separate, rain hammering the tin roof.

Marla stares at her hands as faint streaks of light crawl
under her skin.

MARLA
It feels like a dream trying to
remember itself.

LUCAS
That's normal. The inhibitor chips
don't fail clean. Memories bleed in
shards.

MARLA
What did you tell me... back then?

Lucas stares into the darkness.

LUCAS
That you were dangerous. That you
were saving the world by letting us
erase you.

Marla lets out a broken laugh.

MARLA
And I believed you?

LUCAS
You were... good. Too good. You
wanted peace more than glory.

A long silence.

MARLA
And now?

Lucas looks at her with a mixture of guilt and awe.

LUCAS
Now I don't know what's right
anymore.

18. EXT. WOODS NEAR BARN - SAME TIME

A DRONE sweeps the treeline. Stops. Scans.

Photonic residue trails from the car.

The drone flashes a red indicator: ANOMALY CONFIRMED.

It sends a silent ping.

Far away, in a GCB operations center, a map lights up with
Marla's location.

19. INT. GCB OPS ROOM - SAME TIME

Screens everywhere. Agents moving with mechanical precision.

Director Horn steps into view.

An aide whispers:

AIDE
We found her. And Reeve is aiding
her.

Horn's expression darkens.

HORN
Mobilize the Shepherds.
(beat)
(MORE)

HORN (CONT'D)
And scrub the entire zone. If Reeve
is going rogue, he's expendable.

The aide hesitates.

AIDE
Sir... that's a civilian area.

Horn stares at him coldly.

HORN
So was the world they broke.

20. EXT. ABANDONED BARN - DAWN

Soft light filters through rainclouds.

Marla awakens - Lucas already standing guard at the tree
line, gun low, eyes scanning.

She walks to him, still fragile.

MARLA
I don't remember everything... but I
can feel it. Something big inside
me. Something that shouldn't exist.

Lucas doesn't comfort her.

LUCAS
It's too late. They know where we
are.

Marla looks terrified.

MARLA
What do we do?

Lucas turns to her - a choice made.

LUCAS
We stop running.

He chambers a round.

The distant sound of helicopter rotors rises.

CUT TO BLACK.

21. EXT. BARN - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

The morning mist curls around the barn like breath on a cold window.

Lucas leads Marla toward the tree line.

The low hum of rotors grows louder.

Dust kicks up as a SHADOW sweeps over the clearing.

MARLA

Lucas—

LUCAS

Stay low. Stay behind me.

They duck behind a tractor as a BLACK HELICOPTER descends, rotors cutting the fog into ribbons.

Two Shepherds rappel down. Their armor emits a soft blue glow — anti-photonic tech.

Marla's hands begin to shimmer involuntarily.

Lucas clamps a hand over her wrists.

LUCAS (whispering)

Not yet. They'll track the surge.

A Shepherd turns, visor scanning—

SHEPHERD (modulated)

Heat signature. Two targets.

Lucas curses under his breath.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Run.

He shoves Marla toward the woods. She hesitates—

MARLA

Lucas—

A stun grenade lands where she stood.

Lucas throws her down behind the tractor as—

BOOM—WHITE LIGHT—SOUND SUCKS OUT—

The world shakes.

Lucas gets to his feet, shaky, ears ringing.

Marla's eyes glow brighter in panic.

One Shepherd advances, weapon raised.

Lucas fires first - two precise shots, hitting the Shepherd's armor in joints. Not lethal, but enough to drop him.

The SECOND Shepherd spots Marla - and begins charging a photonic suppression cannon.

Lucas sees it-

LUCAS
Marla-DOWN-

She falls-

The cannon fires a pulse-
It hits the tractor, folding metal like paper.

Marla screams, light spilling uncontrollably from her palms-

A pulse wave ripples outward-

Grass bends-
Air warps-
The sky flashes-
The helicopter BUCKLES mid-air, rotors grinding-

It crash-lands in the clearing with a metallic SHRIEK.

Silence.

Marla hyperventilates, horrified at herself.

Lucas grabs her hand.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
We have to move. Now.

They disappear into the woods as smoke rises behind them.

22. EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MORNING

Lucas' battered sedan speeds down an empty rural road. Marla stares out the window, trembling, afraid of her own reflection in the glass.

MARLA
I almost killed those men.

LUCAS
They were trying to erase you.

MARLA
You keep saying that. "Erase." What
does that mean?

Lucas doesn't answer.

MARLA (sharper)
Tell me the truth.

He grips the wheel.

LUCAS
In the Crisis years... people lost
hope. Lost purpose. The metas saved
the day too many times. The world
stopped trying. Governments
collapsed under their shadows.

MARLA
So... you erased us?

LUCAS
We hid you. We offered you peace. A
life without power. Without
responsibility. Without being
worshipped... or hated.

Marla looks devastated.

MARLA
You stole my life.

Lucas glances at her. He doesn't argue.

23. EXT. HIGHWAY CROSSROADS - DAY

Lucas slows at a crossroads. No signs. Only a cracked old
road leading into fog.

A faded wooden board reads:

WELCOME TO HAVEN OAKS - A GOOD PLACE
TO LIVE
(letters peeling)

Marla shivers.

MARLA
This place... I think I've seen it.

LUCAS
You never have. Not really.

He turns down the road.

24. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - DAY

A suburb frozen in time.

Perfect lawns. Perfect houses. Perfect silence.

Sunlight feels too symmetrical here — as if calibrated.

Marla steps out of the car.

A CHILD rides a bicycle down the street, laughing.

A WOMAN waters her garden.

A MAN collects his mail.

All too calm. Too cheerful.

A beat.

A glitch.

The child repeats the same laugh-loop — identical cadence, identical pitch. Twice. Then continues.

Marla's breath catches.

MARLA (whisper)
Something's wrong with this place.

Lucas nods grimly.

LUCUS
Yeah. Everything.

25. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

A MAN in his 40s, dressed in a postal worker uniform, approaches them with a bright smile.

POSTMAN
Beautiful morning, neighbors! Can I
interest you in our community
newsletter?

He holds out a crisp, perfectly folded sheet.

Every page is BLANK.

Marla steps back.

MARLA

Sir... where is everyone? I mean the other residents?

The Postman freezes. Smile still plastered on.

POSTMAN

Everyone is where they should be.
Everyone is happy in Haven Oaks.

He lowers his voice.

POSTMAN (SOFTER) (CONT'D)

You shouldn't be here.

His smile never breaks.

Then he walks away, robotic.

26. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

A picturesque gazebo. A fountain with crystal-clear water.

Marla touches the water — and sees FLASHES:

- A man in armor punching through walls.
- A woman lifting an ambulance with one hand.
- Children cheering behind barricades.
- Herself hovering above a crowd, radiant.

She stumbles backward, drenched in fear.

MARLA

They're here. The others... the metas... they're here.

Lucas nods.

LUCAS

Not exactly here. The real ones never see daylight. This is just the shell.

MARLA

Shell?

LUCAS

A simulation made physical. A behavioral loop. A retirement cage.

Marla tries to steady herself.

MARLA

You put us in suburban prisons?

Lucas flinches at the word "you."

27. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - CUL-DE-SAC - CONTINUOUS

A middle-aged MAN mowing his lawn stops. Turns.

His eyes flicker with recognition.

He steps toward Marla.

His voice cracks with desperation.

MAN

Aurora...?

Marla freezes.

MARLA

Do I... know you?

His façade breaks entirely. Tears well.

MAN

God, you don't. You don't remember.
I'm Titan. We fought the Halo
Siege. You saved my daughter—

His voice glitches mid-sentence.

MAN (glitching)

—saved my— saved my— saved—

He seizes, clutching his head.

Static emits from his skull like rupturing radio waves.

MARLA

Oh my god— Lucas, help him—

Lucas grabs Marla, pulling her back.

LUCAS

Don't touch him. The program is
collapsing.

Titan screams as he glitches in and out—

His lawnmower flickers—
The houses behind him stutter—
Every sprinkler freezes mid-air—

Titan collapses, unconscious.

Marla's voice breaks.

MARLA
You did this to them..

Lucas doesn't defend himself.

28. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - MAIN STREET - MINUTES LATER

A distant WHINE rises.

Lucas goes rigid.

LUCUS
Caretakers.

Marla turns—
Down the street, FOUR BLACK DRONES approach, hovering inches
above the asphalt, scanning with burning red light.

Sirens begin to wail — a chilling, computerized lullaby.

DRONE (V.O.)
RETURN TO YOUR DESIGNATED ROLE.
RETURN TO YOUR DESIGNATED ROLE.

Residents freeze, then begin marching into houses like
sleepwalkers.

Lucas grabs Marla.

LUCAS
We're leaving. Now.

29. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

They sprint through a narrow alley as the drones sweep
overhead.

Marla collapses behind a trash bin, shaking.

MARLA
I can't do this. I don't want any
of this—

LUCUS
You don't have a choice anymore.

A drone lands six feet away, scanning.

Marla's panic triggers her power — faint golden light seeps between her fingers.

Lucas grabs her face gently.

LUCAS (soft, urgent)
Marla. Look at me.
You have to hold it together or they'll wipe you right here.

She nods, hyperventilating.

The drone scans—

DRONE
ANOMALY—UNREGISTERED—CLASS:—

Lucas shoots the sensor before it finishes.

DRONE (CONT'D)
...error... error...

It collapses.

They run.

30. EXT. HAVEN OAKS - OUTER PERIMETER - DAY

Lucas and Marla reach the edge of the town — where a massive, shimmering photonic barrier flickers like a heat haze.

Marla touches it.

Her hand passes through — the illusion ripples like a broken hologram.

MARLA
This place... it's not real.

LUCAS
Real enough to keep a god
compliant.

Behind them:
Drones swarming.
Alarms blaring.
Residents glitching.

Titan crawling toward them, begging softly in two overlapping voices.

Lucas pulls Marla through the barrier.

It shatters like glass.

On the other side is an empty desert road.
No town.
No houses.
No people.

Just wasteland.

Marla turns back — Haven Oaks flickers, collapses inward like a corrupted file, and VANISHES.

She stares in horror.

MARLA

What did you turn us into?

Lucas looks gutted.

LUCUS

Something the world could forget.

CUT TO BLACK.

POST-CAPED — ACT II

Scenes 31-40

31. EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Lucas and Marla stand in silence, staring at the empty expanse where the suburb vanished.

Wind blows dust across cracked asphalt.

Marla's breathing turns shallow.

MARLA

They lived entire... lives in there.
Weren't they real?

Lucas watches the horizon, jaw clenched.

LUCAS
Real enough to hurt. Fake enough to
control.

Marla sits in the dirt, shaking. A faint halo of gold hovers
around her body.

MARLA
I felt him. Titan. He knew me.

LUCAS
He wasn't supposed to remember you.

MARLA
And you knew he still could.

Lucas doesn't deny it.

MARLA (soft, broken)
Lucas... what exactly did you erase?

Lucas looks away — the guilt is too heavy to face her.

32. EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - DAY

Lucas pulls the battered sedan under the rusting canopy.

The station is dead: no power, no signage, dust layered
thick.

He opens the trunk — pulling out a duffel stuffed with
unmarked analog tech and old GCB field gear.

Marla sits on a curb, hugging her knees.

Lucas approaches with a small injector.

MARLA (CONT'D)
No. No more needles.

LUCAS
This isn't an inhibitor. It's a
stabilizer. Keeps the memory bleed
from frying your brain.

Marla hesitates.

MARLA
Will it make me forget again?

LUCAS
...Not yet.

That "yet" devastates her.

After a long beat, she extends her arm.

Lucas injects her gently.

MARLA (whisper)

Did I... agree to this? To any of this?

Lucas answers quietly.

LUCUS

You agreed to save the world. You
didn't agree to what came after.

33. EXT. GAS STATION / ROOFTOP - SAME TIME

A drone passes overhead in the distance.

Lucas climbs to the roof with binoculars.

Marla watches him from below — seeing how instinctively
tactical he is, how haunted.

MARLA

Lucas...

(quietly, to herself)

What did they erase from you?

He doesn't hear.

34. INT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - LATER

Lucas wires old analog radios together — creating a crude,
drone-undetectable comm rig.

Marla paces, restless.

MARLA (CONT'D)

So I'm... what? A walking weapon?

Some kind of collapse risk?

Lucas tightens a bolt.

LUCAS

You were hope. People worshipped
you. Then resented you. Then feared
you. When the Cape Crisis peaked...
you decided the only way for
humanity to heal was to step aside.

MARLA

That doesn't sound like me.

He meets her gaze.

LUCAS

It was exactly like you.

This shakes her.

Suddenly—

The radio crackles with static.

A coded pattern emerges.

Lucas stiffens.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Someone's trying to reach us.

He taps the dials manually.

A woman's voice breaks through — coarse, accented, strained.

VOICE (V.O.)

Reeve... if you're hearing this...
they've activated Phase Two.

Lucas freezes.

MARLA

Who is that?

VOICE (V.O.)

The Shepherds won't stop. They'll
burn every inch of ground you
touch.

(beat)

You need to get to me. Seoul. Off-
grid channel 9-1-7. Hurry.

Static returns.

Lucas lowers his head.

LUCAS

Isla...

MARLA

Who?

LUCAS

The scientist who built your
inhibitor.

(beat)

(MORE)

LUCAS (CONT'D)
And the only person alive who knows
how to break it.

35. EXT. DESERT ROAD / SEDAN - SUNSET

Lucas and Marla load into the car.

Marla hesitates before getting in.

MARLA
Seoul? That's halfway across the
world.

LUCAS
We're not going there. Not yet.

He starts the engine.

LUCUS
We need a safehouse first. Someone
who owes me.

Marla studies him — seeing more and more fractures in the man
she thought was confident.

36. EXT. ABANDONED MOTEL - NIGHT

A peeling sign reads BLUE STAR MOTOR LODGE. Windows boarded.
Parking lot cracked.

Lucas pulls in behind the building.

Inside, the motel is a ghost — dust, broken soda machines,
ancient carpet smell.

MARLA
You know this place?

LUCUS
Stayed here once with a meta who
refused to go into relocation.
(beat)
He didn't last long.

Marla's expression darkens.

37. INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A dim, flickering bulb.

Marla sits on the bed. Lucas paces, checking lines of sight through the blinds.

Long, tense silence.

MARLA

Lucas... tell me everything.
Everything you did.
Everything I did.

Lucas stops pacing.

LUCAS

You don't want the truth all at once.

MARLA

I'm already drowning in pieces. I'd rather have the whole ocean.

Lucas sits, exhausted.

LUCAS

Fine.

(beat)

When the Cape Crisis hit... the world begged for you to take control. You said no. So they turned on you.

Marla stares, horrified.

MARLA

Why wouldn't I help them?

LUCAS

Because every time you saved them, they became less human.

(quiet)

Your existence broke the balance.

Marla rubs her temples, overwhelmed.

MARLA

And my memories?

LUCAS

Voluntary.

(painful beat)

But the Bureau twisted the deal.
They made the erasure permanent.
Took more than they promised.

Marla's voice is a whisper.

MARLA
What did I lose?

Lucas looks down.

LUCAS
Everything that made you Aurora.

A beat.

MARLA
So who am I now?

Lucas meets her eyes.

LUCAS
Someone who deserves the truth
back.

38. EXT. MOTEL - ROOFTOP - LATER THAT NIGHT

Lucas stands alone, smoking.
Watches distant lights — drones sweeping grids.

He pulls out an old analog photo from his jacket.

A younger Marla — radiant, golden, laughing — with Lucas
beside her.

Both smiling like they believed in something.

He crushes the photo in his fist.

39. INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

Marla sleeps fitfully.

A low hum rises — the same frequency from the bridge
incident.

Her skin glows. Her eyes twitch beneath lids.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE (disjointed):

- A crowd chanting "AURORA!"
- Lucas injecting her with a memory-suppressant.
- A blinding lightstorm tearing across a battlefield.
- A little girl running to her with open arms.

- A containment chamber closing around her.
- A golden flare exploding outward.

Marla wakes with a gasp.

Furniture rattles.
Lights flicker.
Glass vibrates.

Her power is growing — waking regardless of her will.

40. EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAWN

Lucas steps out as the sun rises.

He hears a distant rumble.

Dust trails on the horizon.

He lifts binoculars.

A convoy of BLACK GCB TRUCKS barreling toward them.

His jaw sets.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
They found us.

He rushes back inside.

Marla stands in the center of the room, haloed in soft light,
like a dawn contained in human form.

She looks terrified.

MARLA
Lucas... I can't turn it off.

Lucas grips her shoulders.

LUCAS
Then learn to aim it.
Because they're here.

In the distance, the convoy nears.
A helicopter silhouettes against the rising sun.

CUT TO BLACK.

41. INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

The walls tremble with the rumble of GCB engines approaching.
Dust shakes loose from the ceiling.

Marla stands in the center of the room, her skin lit with
faint golden fissures. She's overwhelmed, panicked.

Lucas grabs his duffel, moving with trained efficiency.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Marla—look at me.

She tries. Her eyes flicker with burning light.

MARLA
I can't— Lucas, I can't control
this!

LUCAS
You don't need control.
You need direction.

He takes her glowing hands and puts them against her chest—
like grounding a storm.

LUCAS
Feel your heartbeat. Match it.
Your power follows your pulse.

Marla tries. Her breathing slows. The glow stabilizes.

Outside—
TIRES SCREECH.
DOORS SLAM.
BOOTS HIT GROUND.

Lucas pulls a pistol and a copper-lined EMP knife.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
We move on my mark. Follow exactly
where I go.

Marla nods, barely holding it together.

42. EXT. BLUE STAR MOTOR LODGE - PARKING LOT - DAWN

The GCB convoy surrounds the motel — five armored trucks and
one tactical van containing a PHOTONIC SUPPRESSION GENERATOR.

Shepherd operatives fan out with precision.

SHEPHERD COMMANDER
Target confirmed inside.
Reeve is assisting.
Orders authorization: terminate
both.

Horn's voice crackles through their comms.

HORN (V.O.)
No witnesses. No escape.

The Commander gestures — a team breaches the front door.

43. INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Boots thunder down the hallway.

Lucas opens the bathroom window. Barely wide enough for a person.

LUCUS
You first.

Marla hesitates.

MARLA
Lucas... are you coming?

LUCAS
We're not dying in a motel
bathroom. Move.

She climbs through.

Lucas shoves the duffel out—

CRASH—
The motel door EXPLODES inward.

Three Shepherds storm in.

Lucas fires, taking cover behind the mattress. They return fire with photonic dampeners — crackling nets of light that short out everything they hit.

One net hits Marla's discarded water glass.
It DISINTEGRATES.

LUCUS
Go, Marla! NOW!

She disappears out the window.

Lucas fires three covering rounds—then dives out after her as nets shred the mattress.

44. EXT. BEHIND MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Lucas lands hard, rolling.

Marla helps him up, glowing again from fear.

LUCUS (CONT'D)
Not now—don't spike—

But it's too late.

Her fear triggers a flare.

A BLINDING AURA ERUPTS—

—just as Shepherds round the corner.

They shield their visors, but she's too bright.

MARLA (whispering)
Please... stop... please...

Lucas grips her shoulders.

LUCUS (CONT'D)
Marla. Breathe.
Remember the pulse.

She tries. She tries—

But the Shepherds advance, raising weapons.

MARLA (sob)
I don't want to hurt anyone—

LUCUS (CONT'D)
Then aim it above them. NOW!

She throws her hands upward—

A COLUMN OF LIGHT FIRES INTO THE SKY—
—missing the Shepherds by inches—
—but blasting a massive hole
through a billboard fifty feet up.

The shockwave knocks the operatives off their feet.

Lucas stares at her — awe and dread mixing.

LUCUS

...You just saved them.

Marla trembles violently.

45. EXT. DRAINAGE CANAL - MINUTES LATER

They run through a shallow concrete drainage canal behind the motel.

Marla is nearly collapsing.

MARLA

I didn't mean- I didn't-

LUCUS

That's enough talking. Save your strength.

Helicopter blades chop overhead.

A spotlight sweeps.

Lucas spots a hatch embedded in the canal wall - rusted, half-buried.

LUCUS (CONT'D)

Here.

He yanks it open with effort.

46. INT. DRAINAGE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Pitch black.

Lucas clicks on a small red LED.

The tunnel is cramped, claustrophobic, dripping with condensation. Old graffiti covers the walls - ghost stories of the past.

Marla leans on the wall, sweat beading.

MARLA

My head... it's splitting..

Her body flickers like a dying bulb.

Lucas digs into his bag, pulling a metal capsule.

LUCUS
One more stabilizer. You'll get
maybe an hour.

Marla's eyes widen.

MARLA
An hour until what?

Lucas doesn't answer.

He injects her.

47. EXT. MOTEL ABOVE - SAME TIME

Shepherds stand around the cratered billboard and scorched asphalt.

The Commander inspects the scene.

Aide approaches.

AIDE
Sir... we've never seen power
signatures this strong since the
original Paragon.

The Commander removes his visor.

His expression: fear.

COMMANDER
Get me Director Horn.
(beat)
Tell him Aurora is fully awake.

48. EXT. DESERT OUTSKIRTS - LATE MORNING

Lucas and Marla emerge from the drainage tunnel into blazing sunlight.

Marla shields her eyes - the light seems to respond to her movements, bending like it wants to follow her.

Lucas checks the road.

LUCUS
We hitch south. No tech. No the
highways.
They'll grid-scan everything.

Marla nods weakly.

They start walking.

49. EXT. ABANDONED FREEWAY OVERPASS - DAY

They walk under a decaying freeway.

A homeless encampment occupies the underpass - families, wanderers, the forgotten.

People watch Lucas and Marla with wariness.

One older woman points a trembling finger at Marla - her eyes widening with uncanny recognition.

OLDER WOMAN

You're one of them..

Marla freezes.

MARLA

One of who?

OLDER WOMAN

The forgotten gods.

Marla's throat tightens.

Lucas gently guides her past the crowd.

LUCUS (soft)

Don't stop. Don't react.

OLDER WOMAN (calling after them)

They'll come for you! They come for all the miracles!

Marla's expression collapses inward.

50. EXT. DUST ROAD / OVERLOOK - SUNSET

Lucas and Marla sit on a rocky overlook, catching breath.

Marla stares at the horizon - a vast desert, streaked gold by the setting sun.

Her voice barely above a whisper.

MARLA

Why did I agree to be erased?

Lucas exhales long and slow.

LUCUS
Because you believed the world
needed a chance to be human again.
(beat)
And you didn't trust yourself
anymore.

Marla closes her eyes — pained, ashamed, confused.

MARLA
I don't know who that person was.

Lucas looks at her with something bordering on regret.

LUCUS
She was brave. She was terrifying.
She was good.
(beat)
And she was tired.

Marla turns toward him.

MARLA
And now?

Lucas looks away — battles the truth.

LUCUS
Now... she's waking up.

A wind blows — carrying tiny specks of golden light that swirl around Marla like dust motes drawn to her.

She watches them, entranced and afraid.

They sit in silence as dusk falls.

A sense of destiny — heavy, tragic, inevitable — settles between them.

CUT TO BLACK.

51. EXT. DERELICT FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

A lonely farmhouse sits at the edge of nowhere, half-sunk into dry weeds, windows dark and boarded.

Lucas leads Marla toward it.

MARLA
Whose place is this?

LUCUS
Old friend.
(beat)
One of mine, not one of yours.

Marla notices subtle tension under his words.

They reach the door. Lucas taps a coded rhythm on the wood.

After a long pause, a metal hatch slides open, revealing a single eye peering out.

A gruff voice:

VOICE (O.S.)
Reeve...? You look like shit.

Lucas exhales in relief.

LUCUS
You're one to talk.

Bolts unlatch.

The door creaks open.

52. INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A cluttered interior: analog radios, EMP jammers, old anti-meta tech, stacks of newspapers. A prepper's bunker for someone who stopped trusting the world long ago.

A man emerges from the shadows:

CALEB HAWTHORNE (50s) — ex-GCB operative, sun-weathered, missing two fingers, eyes like someone who's seen too much.

He gives Lucas a wary half-smirk.

Then sees Marla.

His smirk dies instantly. He steps back, instinctively reaching for a weapon.

CALEB
That's—
(whispers)
—that's Aurora.

Marla flinches.

Lucas steps between them.

LUCUS
She's awake, not hostile.
And we need shelter.

Caleb stares at Marla like she's a nuclear reactor.

CALEB
You brought her here? Reeve, are
you insane?

Lucas stays firm.

LUCUS
You owe me.

Caleb hesitates... then reluctantly nods.

53. INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN TABLE - NIGHT

A dim, yellow bulb hangs overhead.

Marla sits, hands clasped. Caleb keeps a good ten feet
between them.

CALEB
You know what happens if they track
her here?

LUCUS
They won't. We shook surveillance
three towns back.

CALEB
You sure? After Haven Oaks?

Marla looks sharply at Lucas.

MARLA
You told him?

LUCUS
I tell him everything I need him to
know.

Marla bristles.

Caleb crosses his arms.

CALEB
She's unstable. Power like that
breaks containment protocols.
(MORE)

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

Power like that ends entire cities.

Marla speaks softly, barely holding herself together.

MARLA

I never meant to hurt anyone.

Caleb studies her—sees the sincerity, the fear.

His posture softens slightly.

CALEB

...Doesn't mean you won't.

A beat.

CALEB (CONT'D)

I'll help you. For one night.
But I'm doing it for him—not for
you, Goldlight.

Marla swallows the insult.

54. INT. FARMHOUSE - BASEMENT - LATER

Lucas and Caleb rummage through crates of contraband tech:
analog jammers, encrypted pagers, collapsible armor.

Caleb looks at Lucas with concern.

CALEB (CONT'D)

What's your endgame? You running?
You fighting?
Or you planning to get both of you
killed?

Lucas pauses.

LUCUS

We're finding Isla Kim.

Caleb goes pale.

CALEB

Isla Kim is a ghost. They wiped her
off the map after she tried to leak
the inhibitor blueprints.

Lucas continues packing.

LUCUS

She reached out to me. Yesterday.

Caleb stares, stunned.

CALEB

Then they'll kill her... and anyone
she contacted.

Lucas nods — resigned.

55. INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Marla sits by a window, staring at the moon.
Light bends faintly around her fingertips — as if responding
to her heartbeat.

She whispers to herself:

MARLA

Who was I?

She closes her eyes—

FLASH:

- A young girl hugging her.
- A burning battlefield.
- A crowd chanting "AURORA!"
- Lucas injecting her with tears in his eyes.
- A hospital bed.
- A collapsing star.

Marla snaps awake.

Her hand glows bright enough to cast shadows.

56. INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The radio crackles.

Lucas and Caleb rush in.

STATIC—

Then a familiar voice breaks
through:

ISLA KIM (V.O.)

Reeve... listen. They activated
Paragon.

Lucas freezes.

Caleb looks terrified.

CALEB
No... no, they wouldn't.

ISLA (V.O.)
He's awake. And he's not the man
you remember. He's cleaner-faster-
programmed.

Marla enters mid-broadcast, hearing the name.

MARLA
Paragon?

Lucas avoids her eyes.

ISLA (V.O.)
I'm sending coordinates.
They lead to what's left of the
Garden node on your continent.
(urgent)
You must see it for yourself. You
must understand what they did.

STATIC.

The transmission ends.

Marla watches Lucas.

MARLA
What is the Garden?

Lucas can't speak.

Caleb answers quietly, almost reverently.

CALEB
The place where they put the pieces
of you.

Marla's knees weaken.

57. EXT. FARMHOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Marla steps outside alone, clutching her chest.

The moonlight bends toward her.

Her power flares involuntarily, small pulses of gold rippling out like sonar waves.

She tries to calm herself.

MARLA (to herself)
Please... stop... please...

A pulse radiates out –

– hitting a crow perched on a fence.

The crow BLIPS – glitching between positions, like skipping frames.

Marla gasps in horror.

Lucas steps out.

Sees it.

LUCUS
You're destabilizing.
We need stabilizer injections
regularly now.

MARLA
How long until they stop working?

Lucas doesn't answer.

She looks at him.

MARLA (soft)
Did I ever kill anyone... before the erasure?

Lucas hesitates too long.

Marla's face cracks.

58. INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT - PACKING UP

Lucas and Caleb gather supplies.

Marla packs silently. Detached. Fragile.

Caleb approaches her cautiously.

CALEB
You want the truth? You weren't a
monster.
Heroes were never monsters.
(MORE)

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

But the world made you into one.

Marla nods — a quiet, broken acceptance.

MARLA

The world was afraid.

CALEB

The Bureau was afraid.
There's a difference.

59. EXT. FARMHOUSE - PRE-DAWN

They exit the farmhouse.

The sky is a dark indigo, stars fading.

Lucas carries his duffel.

Caleb stands guard, shotgun over his shoulder.

CALEB (CONT'D)

The coordinates Isla sent—

(pointing to map)

—there's nothing out there. Just
desert and dead land.

LUCUS

Exactly why they built it there.

Caleb hands Lucas a battered analog compass.

CALEB

No satellites.

No tracking.

You're on your own now.

Marla steps up to Caleb.

For a moment — he looks at her not as a threat, but as
something tragic.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Try to stay alive, Goldlight.

(beat)

You might be the last one who
deserves to.

Marla nods, touched despite herself.

60. EXT. ABANDONED HIGHWAY - DAWN

Lucas and Marla walk along a cracked highway toward a horizon of orange and gold.

Marla watches the sunrise — the light bending unnaturally around her silhouette, drawn to her like iron to a magnet.

MARLA

How far is this place?

LUCUS

Far enough the world forgot about it.

(beat)

Not far enough the Bureau did.

Marla looks at him.

MARLA

And Paragon?

Lucas keeps walking.

His silence says everything.

A faint RUMBLE echoes from the sky — distant, like a god waking up.

The sun rises.

They move toward whatever waits in the desert.

CUT TO BLACK.

61. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - MORNING

Lucas and Marla crest a ridge overlooking endless desert scrub.

Nothing but wind and dust.

Marla shields her eyes, squinting at the emptiness.

MARLA (CONT'D)

We're sure this is it?

Lucas checks the compass, then an old, analog topographic map.

LUCAS

Coordinates match.

(beat)

(MORE)

LUCAS (CONT'D)
But The Garden was built to be
invisible.

Marla frowns.

MARLA
Invisible how?

Lucas studies her.

LUCAS
You'll see it.
I won't.

Marla slowly realizes what he means.

MARLA
It reacts to metagenes.

Lucas nods.

LUCUS
Only a meta can open the door.

Marla inhales deeply — a mix of fear and destiny.

They descend the ridge.

62. EXT. DESERT FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Marla walks several paces ahead of Lucas.

Her hands tingle.

A low, electrical hum fills the air.

Marla stops.

A shimmer flickers at the edge of her vision — not in the
air, but in her mind.

MARLA
There.
I see something.

To Lucas, it's empty sand.

LUCUS
Describe it.

Marla moves closer — and something unfolds.

A faint, geometric hex-grid blooms into view — like light bending around a hidden structure.

MARLA

It's like... a hologram wrapped
around nothing.
No — not hologram.
Harder. Older.
A mirage with intention.

She reaches out.

Her fingertips touch the "air."

The illusion ripples like liquid metal — revealing a huge metal hatch buried beneath a projection field.

Lucas finally sees it once she disrupts it.

He exhales — shaken.

LUCUS

Jesus...

63. EXT. THE GARDEN HATCH - CONTINUOUS

A massive, circular door. No handle. Seamless—except for a small indentation the shape of a hand.

Marla stares at it, unsure.

MARLA

It wants... me?

Lucas nods.

LUCUS

Your signature is still in the
system. You were a founder class.

Marla reluctantly places her palm into the indentation.

A pulse of golden light spreads outward.

The hatch shifts—metal folding in concentric rings like a mechanical iris—revealing a dark shaft descending into the earth.

A hot, stale wind rises from below — tinged with chemicals and old electricity.

Lucas turns on a flashlight.

LUCUS (CONT'D)
Stay behind me.

Marla corrects him softly:

MARLA
No.
We go together.

They descend.

64. INT. GARDEN ENTRY SHAFT - CONTINUOUS

A vertical tunnel leading down several stories. Emergency lights flicker on as they climb.

Graffiti from former techs covers the walls:

"GOD'S BASEMENT"
"WE KEEP THEM SAFE SO WE STAY SAFE"
"TRUTH IS NOT OUR JOB"

Marla runs her fingers over the words.

They reach the bottom door — rusted steel. Lucas forces it open.

65. INT. THE GARDEN - SUBLEVEL 1 - CONTINUOUS

Darkness.

Then — motion sensors click.

Rows of dim lights flicker on.

Marla gasps.

Lucas goes still.

Before them stretches a cavernous warehouse the size of several football fields.

And inside it:

THOUSANDS OF HUMAN BODIES
—suspended in vertical pods, each
connected by a web of cables and
tubes.
Faces peaceful.
Eyes closed.
(MORE)

THOUSANDS OF HUMAN BODIES (CONT'D)
Some smile faintly.
Some twitch.
All dreaming.

The quiet hum of respiration and computer activity fills the air.

Marla steps forward trembling.

MARLA
Oh my god...

Lucas lowers his head — shame flooding him.

LUCUS
This... was the deal.
Lives without fear.
Without pressure.
No glory.
No destruction.
Just... dreamloops.

Marla moves to the nearest pod.

Inside is a woman — 30s — strong build, familiar costume colors.
Solaris.
One of the legendary Seven.

Marla presses her hand to the glass.

MARLA
Solaris... no...

Tears fill her eyes.

MARLA (CONT'D)
You put them in cages.

Lucas winces.

LUCUS
They agreed. At first.
But later... the Bureau saw potential.
Metadata. DNA.
A perfect genetic crop.
And—
(beat)
—it was easier to keep you all asleep than keep the world in panic.

Marla turns to him, devastated rage building.

MARLA
How could you do this?

He doesn't defend himself.

66. INT. THE GARDEN - SUBLEVEL 1 - LATER

They walk deeper among the pods.

Marla's steps slow - sensing.. something.

MARLA (CONT'D)
Lucas...
There's someone else here.
Awake.

Lucas tenses.

LUCUS
Who?

Before she can answer-

A faint, distorted voice echoes from deeper below.

A man's voice.
Strong. Familiar.
Echoing through speakers distorted by age.

VOICE (DISTORTED)
If you hear this... you weren't meant
to come back.

Marla's blood runs cold.

MARLA
That's-

LUCUS
-Paragon.

They share a terrified look.

67. INT. GARDEN - SERVER NEXUS - CONTINUOUS

Banks of ancient supercomputers hum with activity.

Monitors display idyllic suburban scenes - looping
infinitely:

Children playing.
 Birthday parties.
 Perfect homes.
 Artificial sunsets.

Dream loops.

An automated system monitors emotions, adjusting scenes
 algorithmically.

One screen glitches:

AURORA: MEMORY LEAK DETECTED
 INHIBITOR FAILURE
 DANGER LEVEL: LEVEL 7

Marla recoils.

MARLA
 They were tracking me even... here.

Lucas scans the consoles.

LUCUS
 We need the mainframe. Isla said
 the evidence was here. The truth.

Marla pauses.

She senses something behind the next door.

MARLA
 Not evidence.
 Someone.

68. INT. GARDEN - PARAGON CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

The final door slides open.

The room is cold. Frost lines the walls.

In the center:

A CRYO-POD
 —massive, reinforced, built like a
 vault.

Inside —

A man floats in stasis.
 Iconic jawline.
 Scar over brow.

Body sculpted like myth.

PARAGON.

Marla stares at him, breath trembling.

MARLA (whisper)
He's still alive..

Lucas steps forward, horrified.

LUCUS

He wasn't supposed to be here. He
volunteered. He didn't know they
kept his body.

(beat)

He thought "retirement" meant a
life somewhere else.

A monitor activates.

Footage plays – distorted, degraded.

Paragon speaking calmly:

PARAGON (RECORDED)

If I ever awaken again... make sure
it's worth it.
Make sure it's hope.
Not fear.

Marla touches the glass.

Her palm glows.

The cryo-pod responds – a faint pulsing.

Lucas grabs her hand.

LUCUS

Don't.
He's the failsafe.
If they activate him–

MARLA

They already have.

A tremor shakes the chamber.

An emergency klaxon blares.

SYSTEM (V.O.)
ANOMALY DETECTED.
PARAGON SIGNAL LOCKED INCOMING.
PLEASE CLEAR THE AREA.

Lucas stiffens.

LUCUS
He's coming.

69. INT. THE GARDEN - MAIN FLOOR - ESCAPE ROUTE

Alarms roar through the facility.

Lights flicker red.

Lucas and Marla race through the aisles of pods.

Marla's emotional overload spreads - pods glitch, lights flicker, dreamloops destabilize.

A nearby pod cracks.

Another flickers wildly.

Dreamers twitch violently inside.

Marla clutches her head.

MARLA
I'm... I'm hurting them-

LUCUS
Stop trying to control it! Just
move!

Overhead - metal CREAKS.

A massive structural support snaps.

The ceiling begins to collapse.

Pod glass shatters.

Lucas pulls Marla out of the way-

A pod EXPLODES, showering them with coolant.

Alarms intensify.

A deep metallic BOOM resounds above.

The whole facility shudders.

MARLA
He's here...

70. INT. THE GARDEN - EMERGENCY ELEVATOR SHAFT

Lucas forces open the emergency door.

LUCUS
Down! Now!

Marla climbs in first.

The shaft is dark and narrow.

They descend the ladder just as—

BAAAAAANG—

Something lands above them.
Heavy.
Inhumanly heavy.

Marla stares upward through the grate.

A silhouette stands above the shaft — broad, imposing,
radiant.

A man.

A legend.

Paragon.

Not asleep anymore.

His eyes glow white with programmed fury.

He speaks — voice like a calm storm.

PARAGON (O.S.)
Aurora...
You shouldn't have come back.

Marla freezes.

Lucas pulls her downward.

LUCUS
GO! NOW!

The grate bends overhead under Paragon's strength.

Metal screams.

The chase begins.

CUT TO BLACK.

71. INT. EMERGENCY SHAFT - DESCENDING - CONTINUOUS

Lucas and Marla climb down the narrow ladder inside the emergency shaft. The metal vibrates with each tremor of the collapsing Garden.

Above them:

THUD.

A footstep.
Inhumanly heavy.

Paragon's silhouette moves across the grate far above like a stalking predator.

Marla's breath hitches; light flickers involuntarily around her shoulders.

LUCAS (whispering)
Stay calm. He'll sense spikes.

Marla nods, forcing her glow inward.

The metal above bends inward from Paragon's strength.

A warm, blinding light floods downward for a split second — then vanishes.

Marla trembles.

MARLA (barely audible)
He's not... the man I remember...

Lucas descends faster.

LUCAS

He isn't anyone anymore. They
reprogrammed him.

Above — another CRUNCH of metal.

Paragon is tracking them through vibration alone.

72. INT. LOWER SHAFT EXIT - MOMENTS LATER

Lucas kicks open the lower hatch.

They tumble into—

A secondary corridor thick with steam and fractured pipes.

Warning lights pulse.

SYSTEM (V.O.)
CONTAINMENT FAILURE.
BIO-NEURAL NETWORK DESTABILIZING.

Marla looks horrified as she hears muffled screams — dreamers glitching in their pods above as the system collapses.

MARLA
We have to help them—

Lucas grabs her arm, almost pleading.

LUCAS
Marla, they're trapped in loops. We
can't pull them out without killing
them.
(beat)
We save who we can: us.

She swallows her guilt.
Nods.

73. INT. GARDEN MAINTENANCE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Sparks rain from overhead conduits.

The tunnel shakes with every step Paragon takes upstairs.

Lucas leads Marla through a maze of maintenance corridors.

They pass a broken panel displaying dreamloop stats:

HAPPINESS INDEX: 99.7%
FEAR INDEX: 0%
AGGRESSION INDEX: 0%
SELF-DETERMINATION: 0%

Marla stares in horror.

MARLA
They weren't living.
They were... content.

LUCUS
The perfect citizens.
The perfect prisoners.

The lights flicker and—

A SCREECHING metal fold overhead makes both jump.

Paragon is ripping open a section of the upper floors.

Dust rains down.

74. INT. FLOODED UTILITY CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

They enter a massive chamber half-filled with waist-deep water from ruptured coolant tanks.

Steam obscures everything.

Lucas checks the far exit—jammed shut.

LUCUS (CONT'D)
Dammit—! Help me pry this—

As they push—

The ceiling groans.

A section collapses, sending debris splashing into the water.

Through the steam, a faint golden glow grows... not from Marla—

But from ABOVE.

Paragon descends through the hole, hovering slightly, illuminated like a fallen archangel.

His eyes glow white-hot.

He speaks calmly, like reciting a script.

PARAGON
Aurora. You are in violation of
Protocol One.
Return to containment.

Marla steps backward, shaking.

MARLA
Paragon... please—
Don't you remember? Don't you know
who you were?

He tilts his head, expression neutral.

PARAGON

I am who they need me to be.

Lucas fires—three sharp shots.
They bounce off Paragon harmlessly.

Paragon barely glances at him.

PARAGON (CONT'D)

Do not interfere, Reeve.
You were retired.
You should not exist.

He raises a hand—light gathering.

Lucas braces for death.

Marla screams:

MARLA

STOP!

Her powers flare reflexively—

A ring of golden force EXPLODES outward—

Water erupts—
Pipes burst—
Steam engulfs the chamber—

Paragon is thrown back into the ceiling—

Lucas is thrown across the room, slamming into a wall.

Marla collapses, overwhelmed.

75. INT. UTILITY CORRIDOR - ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Lucas limps, dragging Marla through the haze.

The lights flicker violently—alarm klaxons echo through the complex.

A robotic voice:

SYSTEM (V.O.)

FULL FACILITY MELT.
NEURAL CORES COLLAPSING.
PLEASE EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY.

Marla looks up, dazed.

MARLA
Did I... kill him?

Lucas shakes his head.

LUCUS
No.
You pissed him off.

Another distant BOOM.

The facility begins tearing itself apart.

76. INT. SUBTERRANEAN ACCESS TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

They stumble into a long tunnel lit by emergency strobes.

At the far end: a ladder leading upward to a surface hatch.

Lucas pushes Marla toward it.

LUCUS (CONT'D)
Climb!

Marla grabs the rungs, still trembling from the uncontrolled power surge.

She begins ascending—

When—

THOOM.
The tunnel behind them erupts in
golden-white light.

Paragon steps out of blinding smoke.

Cape in tatters.
Eyes burning.
Expression unreadable.

PARAGON
Aurora.
Do not run.

Marla climbs faster.

Lucas raises his pistol again, hopelessly.

Paragon steps toward him—

77. INT. LADDER SHAFT - CONTINUOUS

Marla climbs frantically.

Lucas climbs beneath her.

Paragon flies after them, moving with smooth, terrifying precision.

MARLA

Lucas—HURRY!

PARAGON

Fleeing increases mission
aggression parameters.
Do not escalate.

Lucas fires downward at Paragon.
The bullets melt mid-air.

Paragon reaches out to grab Lucas' ankle—

A BURST of golden light shoots from Marla's hand upward,
reflecting off the metal walls and ricocheting downward—

Striking Paragon.

He halts mid-air.
Momentarily stunned.

Lucas pulls himself up beside Marla.

LUCUS

Keep going! Don't look back!

78. EXT. DESERT SURFACE - DAY

Lucas slams open the surface hatch.

Blinding sunlight floods in.

They crawl out onto sun-blasted sand dunes.

Behind them—
The ground RUMBLES ominously.

Marla collapses, gasping, power leaking uncontrolled from her pores.

Lucas shields her from the sun.

Suddenly—

A HUM of an engine.

A dust cloud.

A vehicle approaches.

Lucas raises his weapon.

The vehicle skids to a stop—

And from it steps:

DR. ISLA KIM (40s) — tense, brilliant, exhausted, eyes sharp with guilt and genius.

She speaks urgently, with no preamble:

ISLA

Get in.

Now.

The whole node is going to fold in on itself.

Lucas helps Marla up.

They sprint toward the vehicle—

Behind them—

THE GARDEN BEGINS TO COLLAPSE.

The desert floor implodes in a perfect geometric sinkhole—
Like a massive memory file being deleted.

Dust billows into the sky.

79. INT. ISLA'S VEHICLE - SPEEDING - CONTINUOUS

The three race away as the ground caves in behind them.

Marla leans against the window, dazed and shivering.

Isla drives like someone who has escaped death too many times.

ISLA (CONT'D)

I told you to come sooner.

(beat)

I didn't expect you to bring a god with you.

Marla gives her a shattered look.

MARLA
What... what did you do to us?

Isla doesn't meet her eyes.

ISLA
Exactly what they ordered me to.
And everything I regret.

Lucas turns to her.

LUCUS
Paragon's awake.

Isla nods grimly.

ISLA
Then we're out of time.

80. EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The vehicle speeds along an empty ribbon of asphalt.

In the distance—
Dust clouds rise from multiple vectors.

GCB units converging.

Marla watches them approach.

Her voice is small, hollow.

MARLA
All those people... all those heroes...
Locked in dreams.
Locked in cages.
And I was the first.

Lucas looks at her, devastated.

LUCUS
No.
You were the last one who still had
a choice.

Marla looks out the window at the destruction behind them —
the Garden gone, Paragon loose, the desert scarred.

And for the first time, anger forms behind her fear.

Her eyes glow faintly.

MARLA

Then I'm done running.

SMASH TO BLACK.

--

81. INT. ISLA'S VEHICLE - SPEEDING - DAY

Desert blurs by in heat-warped ribbons. Dust clouds from GCB convoys approach behind them.

Marla lies with her head against the window, drenched in sweat. Light flickers under her skin like trapped lightning.

Isla drives, tense, jaw clenched. Lucas watches Marla like she's fading.

LUCAS

How long until the stabilizers stop working?

Isla doesn't answer.

LUCUS (sharp)
Isla.

ISLA (quiet)
They already have.

Lucas stiffens.

Marla opens her eyes.

MARLA

What does that mean?

Isla hesitates, then:

ISLA

Your mind is recalibrating to its original bio-photonic state.
The Marla personality...
(soft)
...it can't coexist with Aurora for much longer.

Marla's voice barely holds.

MARLA

So who am I right now?

Isla looks at her with a scientist's precision and a penitent's guilt.

ISLA
Someone between lives.

82. EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

The vehicle races down an abandoned stretch of road.

Dust swirls violently behind them as GCB trucks fan out, forming a loose perimeter.

One truck advances too close.

ISLA (CONT'D)
Hold on.

She cuts the wheel sharply—
Sand sprays—
The truck overshoots and flips spectacularly into a ravine.

Lucas braces Marla as they jolt.

MARLA (weak)
You... you're not just a scientist.

Isla's eyes stay hard on the road.

ISLA (CONT'D)
I designed the inhibitors.
But I also designed ways around
them.
(beat)
The Bureau doesn't like creativity.

83. INT. ISLA'S VEHICLE - CONTINUOUS

Marla's hands glow faintly.

She stares at them — terrified but entranced.

MARLA
When I was... her...
When I was Aurora...
What did I want?

Isla glances at her — sympathetic, haunted.

ISLA
You wanted to save everyone.
Even when saving them meant
disappearing forever.

Marla bites her lip hard, trying to anchor herself.

84. EXT. DESERT OUTLOOK - MOMENTS LATER

Isla stops the vehicle atop a rocky overlook.

Below them:
A massive dried lake bed, cracked like porcelain.

Isla gestures toward a cluster of rusted radio towers half-swallowed by sand.

ISLA (CONT'D)
Skyline Lab.
One of the original inhibitor test
sites.
Still running on emergency power.
If we're going to restore your
memories safely—or what's left of
them—it has to happen there.

Marla steps out, legs shaky.

The wind picks up — lifting small spirals of sand glowing
gold as they swirl around her.

Isla watches with scientific dread.

ISLA (soft)
You're leaking energy.
The more your mind reconnects, the more unstable your
photonic field becomes.

Lucas steps closer to Marla.

LUCUS
We'll do it fast.
We'll fix this.

Isla doesn't disagree...
But her eyes say something else:

We might not survive it.

85. EXT. DESERT - SAME TIME

From far behind them—

A faint SHIMMER in the sky.

Heat, dust, and an angelic glow.

PARAGON flies low over the desert, scanning the ground like a hawk.

Calm. Efficient. Eternal.

He is moving directly toward them.

86. INT. ISLA'S VEHICLE - RESUMING SPEED - LATER

Lucas drives now; Isla navigates using analog maps.

Marla leans against the backseat window, whispering fragments of recollection.

MARLA

I remember a hospital...
No — a bunker...
People screaming...
Lucas... you were there.

Lucas keeps his eyes on the road.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Why were you there?

Lucas doesn't respond.

ISLA

Reeve was your handler.
He was also the only one who argued
we should give you your life back.

Lucas tenses.

MARLA

Is that true?

Silence.

MARLA (shakier)

Lucas...?

Did you fight for me?

Lucas finally answers, low:

LUCUS

I fought...
and I lost.

Marla absorbs this with a fragile, pained nod.

87. EXT. SKYLINE LAB PERIMETER - AFTERNOON

The lab appears like a bruise in the desert — scattered radio towers, half-collapsed satellite dishes, and a bunker entrance disguised as a sand dune.

The vehicle slows to a stop near a rusted gate.

Isla jumps out.

ISLA

We're close.
This place was built before the
Bureau consolidated power.
Analog backups.
No oversight.

Marla steps out, dizzy.

Wind blows dust around her — golden sparks mixed in the grit.

LUCAS

Is that supposed to happen?

Isla watches the sparks warily.

ISLA

It means the memory partition is
failing.
Aurora is merging with Marla
whether she wants to or not.

Marla leans against Lucas.

MARLA

I don't...
I don't want to disappear.

Lucas holds her.

LUCUS (gentle)
You're not disappearing.
You're remembering.

Isla looks away — she disagrees, but can't bring herself to say it.

88. INT. SKYLINE LAB - ENTRANCE TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

They enter through a cylindrical corridor.

Flickering lights.

Old cables.

Dust thick on every surface.

A sign hangs crooked:

SKYLINE: BIOPHOTONIC TEST BUNKER 03

AUTHORIZED CLEARANCE ONLY

Marla runs her fingers across it.

FLASH—

An image: herself strapped into a
chair here decades ago.

Light drilled out of her body.

Isla's younger face watching,
horrificed.

Marla jerks back, gasping.

MARLA

I've been here before.

Isla nods reluctantly.

ISLA

This is where we isolated your
photonic signature.

(softly)

And where we learned what you were
capable of.

89. INT. SKYLINE LAB - MEMORY CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

A dark, spherical chamber lined with broken mirrors and
photonic receptors.

Isla activates the emergency generators.

Soft amber lights hum to life.

The entire room glows — gold reflecting in fractured glass.

Marla steps inside, trembling.

ISLA (CONT'D)
Do you want the truth?
All of it?

Marla nods.

MARLA
Yes.
No more pieces.

Isla takes a breath.

ISLA
Your memories weren't just erased.
They were split.
Partitioned.
Marla's life was built around the
absence of Aurora.
And Aurora's mind was buried under
the weight of a life she didn't
live.

Marla's voice breaks.

MARLA
Why would I agree to that?

Isla looks down.

ISLA
You asked us to.

Marla stares in disbelief.

MARLA
Why?!

Lucas closes his eyes.

He knows.

90. INT. SKYLINE LAB - MEMORY CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Isla forces herself to continue.

ISLA
Because of the Halo Siege.
Because of the children that died.
Because you blamed yourself.
You said humanity couldn't heal
while gods walked the earth.
And you...

(MORE)

ISLA (CONT'D)

(soft)

...you couldn't live being worshipped
for the lives you couldn't save.

Marla covers her mouth, sobbing silently.

FLASHES hit her:

- Children running.
- A blast of white energy.
- Screams.
- Her hands glowing too bright.
- Buildings collapsing.
- Lucas carrying her away as she begged them to stop praising her.

MARLA (whisper)

I hurt them...

I hurt them...

Lucas steps forward.

LUCUS (soft but firm)

No.

You saved millions.

One mistake didn't define you.

You defined yourself by it.

Marla sinks to her knees.

The mirrors flicker with her light.

Isla kneels beside her.

ISLA (CONT'D)

You didn't ask to be a god, Marla.

You asked to stop feeling like one.

Marla's glow surges uncontrolled—

A pulse spreads through the chamber—

Mirrors SHATTER inward—

Lucas and Isla hit the floor as shards rain like a brilliant,
golden storm.

Marla kneels in the center, glowing like a star being born.

CUT TO BLACK.

91. INT. SKYLINE LAB - MEMORY CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER

The room is a storm of drifting mirror dust.

Marla kneels at its center, glowing in pulses – like a heartbeat manifesting as light.

Lucas crawls toward her, coughing through particulate.

LUCAS

Marla—can you hear me?

Her face is anguished, overwhelmed, eyes glowing too brightly to resemble anything human.

MARLA (fractured)

I'm remembering... all of it...

It's too much—

She clutches at her skull.

Isla moves quickly, gently placing a hand on Marla's shoulder.

ISLA

Let it come. Don't fight it.

You fought it for twenty years –
that's why it's killing you now.

Another surge pulses outward.

The amber lights sputter.

The broken mirror fragments on the floor flicker with images – her memories racing like film reels:

- Aurora floating above a city, radiant
- A collapsing school
- Children screaming
- Paragon lifting her away
- Lucas holding her as she sobbed
- The neural inhibitor chamber
- Her final words before erasure:

AURORA (V.O., MEMORY)

"If the world is ever ready for me
again... let me remember who I was."

Marla screams—and the room WHITES OUT—

Then goes completely still.

92. INT. SKYLINE LAB - MEMORY CHAMBER - LATER

Silence.

Marla stands slowly.

Her light has changed – no longer flickering or frantic.
It is steady.
Dim.
Controlled.

She wipes tears from her face.

MARLA (soft, hollow)
I'm her...
I'm me...
I'm both...

Lucas steps closer cautiously.

LUCUS
Marla?

She turns.
Her eyes are calm, older. Like someone who's lived two
lifetimes at once.

MARLA
I know who I was.
I know what I did.
And I know why I agreed to
disappear.

She breathes – and her breath glows slightly.

MARLA (CONT'D)
I'm not running anymore.

93. INT. SKYLINE LAB - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Isla leads them down a narrow hallway filled with old
servers.

ISLA
Your integration triggered
something.
A broadcast.

Lucas slows.

LUCUS
What kind of broadcast?

Isla gestures toward a flickering wall of analog monitors.

Each screen displays live footage from around the world:

- A child in Brazil rising three feet off the ground

- A firefighter walking through flames untouched
- A teenager in Mumbai healing from a broken arm in seconds
- A woman in Johannesburg bending light around her just like Marla

Marla steps closer, stunned.

MARLA

The others...
The dormant genes...
They're waking up?

Isla nods grimly.

ISLA

Your reintegration was the key.
A psychic beacon.

Lucas looks troubled.

LUCUS

The world wasn't ready twenty years ago.
It's not ready now.

Isla turns to him sharply.

ISLA

It doesn't matter if they're ready.
It's happening.

Marla watches the screens with awe and grief.

94. INT. SKYLINE LAB - SECURITY BAY - CONTINUOUS

Alarms suddenly start blaring.
Red lights rotate.
The dusty old monitors flash:

UNAUTHORIZED META PRESENCE DETECTED
DANGER CLASS: PARAGON

Lucas grabs Isla and Marla.

LUCUS

We need to move. NOW.

Isla checks a secondary feed - a grainy, black-and-white camera showing the outside.

A distant figure approaches the lab entrance.

Golden cape.
Eyes like white fire.
Walking calmly through the desert wind.

ISLA (whisper)
He found us...

Marla's breath catches.

MARLA
No... not yet...

Lucas chambers his pistol – a hopeless gesture.

LUCUS
What's his objective?

Isla's answer is immediate.

ISLA
Retrieve Aurora.
Eliminate witnesses.

Lucas swallows.

LUCUS (soft)
I'm the witness.

95. EXT. SKYLINE LAB - SURFACE - SAME TIME

Paragon stands before the lab hatch.

The wind swirls around him unnaturally – repelled by his field.

He doesn't hesitate.

He presses a hand to the steel.

It dissolves inward like melting wax.

He descends.

96. INT. SKYLINE LAB - MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Lucas, Marla, and Isla rush through a massive hall lined with obsolete testing rigs and rusted containment pods.

Paragon's footsteps echo distantly.
Slow.

Measured.
Passing through steel like fog.

Marla grabs Lucas's arm.

MARLA
Let me face him.

LUCUS
He'll kill you.

MARLA
He's not here to kill me.
He's here to bring me back.

Lucas looks at her — sees the terrible truth.

LUCUS
And you think you can stop him?

She looks at her hands — glowing steadily.

MARLA
I think I can reach him.
I have to try.

Isla shakes her head.

ISLA
You can't reach a man who doesn't
exist anymore.

Marla sets her jaw.

MARLA
Then I'll reach the part they
couldn't erase.

97. INT. SKYLINE LAB - LOWER RAMP - CONTINUOUS

Paragon walks down the ramp, illuminated by emergency lights
shifting red and white.

He speaks calmly to himself — or to someone unseen:

PARAGON (calm, low)
Objective: Retrieval.
Risk threshold: Moderate.
Deviation: Zero.

He stops.

A faint golden glow dances below — Marla.

A beat of silence.

Then Paragon steps forward, faster.

98. INT. SKYLINE LAB - ARCHIVE PIT - CONTINUOUS

Lucas, Isla, and Marla reach a circular pit lined with old data cores.

There's nowhere left to run.

Paragon appears in the doorway.

Calm.

Beautiful.

Terrifying.

His voice reverberates:

PARAGON

Aurora.

You were not authorized to wake.

Marla's glow intensifies.

MARLA

Paragon... listen to me.

You don't have to do this.

He tilts his head.

PARAGON

Compliance is peace.

Disobedience is suffering.

You chose peace once.

Marla steps toward him — Lucas grabs her arm.

LUCUS

No—Mara—

She gently removes his hand.

Her face is a mixture of fear, love, and righteous fury.

MARLA

I didn't choose peace.

I chose penance.

There's a difference.

Paragon raises his hand — energy gathering.

Marla raises hers — golden light answering his.

The lab hums with pressure.

A single breath between annihilation and salvation.

99. INT. SKYLINE LAB - ARCHIVE PIT - CONTINUOUS

The standoff breaks—

Paragon fires a beam of blinding white.

Marla counters with gold.

The two forces clash mid-air —
colliding in a shockwave that shatters glass, buckles steel,
and knocks Isla to the ground.

Lucas shields her.

Marla strains — her knees buckling.

Paragon steps forward through his own beam like a god wading
through light.

He is stronger.

More stable.

Unburdened by memory.

Isla screams:

ISLA
HE'S OVERLOADED — MARLA, PULL BACK
—!

But Marla digs deeper.

Her light shifts — from gold to a deeper, older spectrum.

Her real power.

Paragon's eyes widen for the first time — not fear, but
recognition.

PARAGON (soft)
...Aurora?

She gasps.

He remembers.

For one moment —
long enough for both of them to see the people they used to
be.

Then the ceiling cracks apart from the energy.

100. INT. SKYLINE LAB - ARCHIVE PIT - SECONDS LATER

The shockwave bursts outward.

Lucas grabs Isla and dives behind a server pillar.

The explosion rips the lab wide open —
beams of gold and white tearing through old steel like
tissue.

When the dust settles—

Paragon stands, dazed, breathing heavily.
Marla on one knee, glowing intensely.

Paragon whispers:

PARAGON (soft, broken)
...They lied to me.

Marla's voice shakes.

MARLA
They lied to all of us.

Lucas approaches carefully.

The three of them stand in the fractured lab, dust falling
like snow, power flickering around Marla like a dying star.

Then—

A deep rumble as the entire structure begins to collapse.

Isla screams:

ISLA
WE HAVE TO GO — NOW!

And just as they run—

Outside—

Dozens of GCB vehicles crest the dunes.

The world is converging.

CUT TO BLACK.

101. INT. SKYLINE LAB - ARCHIVE PIT - MOMENTS LATER

Dust rains from collapsing beams.

Paragon stands in the swirling debris, disoriented. His eyes flicker between white and something softer — something human.

Marla steadies herself on a bent steel column, breathing hard, her glow ragged and uneven. The reintegration has taken a toll.

Lucas helps Isla up, coughing through the haze.

Isla shouts over the rumbling:

ISLA (CONT'D)
The whole structure is coming down
— MOVE!

Paragon staggers, gripping his head.

PARAGON (strained)
Memory... conflict...
Protocol vs. recall...

His fists tremble as if two identities are fighting through the same bones.

Marla takes a step toward him.

MARLA (gentle, terrified)
Paragon... look at me.
Who do you see?

He looks at her — haunted.

PARAGON
I remember... a light.
I remember you crying.
I remember choosing to disappear...

He clamps his hands over his ears, agony flooding him.

PARAGON (shouting)
...AND I REMEMBER ORDERS.

The lab shakes violently.

Lucas pulls Marla away.

LUCUS
He's not stable — let's go!

Marla looks torn — wanting to save him, fearing him,
remembering him.

MARLA (whisper)
He chose peace... and they weaponized it.

102. INT. SKYLINE LAB - COLLAPSING CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

They sprint through crumbling hallways as dust clouds swallow
them.

Pipes burst overhead.
Walls fold in.
Sparks rain like fireflies.

Marla's glow intensifies with fear — walls bend subtly around
her as if responding to her presence.

Lucas notices — fear and awe mixing.

LUCUS (to Isla)
How long can she hold together like this?

ISLA
Without inhibitors?
(beat)
Minutes.

That lands heavily.

They push deeper.

A chunk of ceiling collapses in front of them — blocking
their path.

Marla raises her hands—

Golden light sweeps upward—

—holding the debris aloft just long enough for Lucas and Isla
to crawl under.

She collapses after, barely making it through.

103. INT. SKYLINE LAB - EXIT SHAFT - MOMENTS LATER

They reach a steep metal ladder leading up to the surface hatch.

Lucas helps Marla onto the bottom rung.

LUCUS
Go. I've got you.

She climbs — the ladder groaning under trembling palms that glow through the metal.

Isla climbs after her.

Lucas starts up—

BOOM—
The lower corridor explodes inward.

Paragon bursts through the smoke below, rising slowly, expression twisted by internal conflict.

He floats toward the ladder.

PARAGON (pained)
Aurora...
Don't leave...

Marla freezes near the top.

Lucas shouts:

LUCUS
MOVE, MARLA!

She resumes climbing — but Paragon ascends faster, reaching Lucas.

He grabs Lucas's ankle with superhuman force.

Lucas screams, gripping the ladder.

Marla looks down, horrified.

MARLA
PARAGON — STOP!

For a moment — a flicker — Paragon hesitates.

His grip loosens.

Lucas gasps, scrambling up a few rungs.

Then—

A harsh metallic CLICK echoes through the lab below.

A new voice:

HORN (over lab speakers)

Paragon. Override Code: Shepherd One.

Paragon's entire body goes rigid.

His eyes turn solid white.

His voice flattens.

PARAGON

Acknowledged.

He surges upward—

Lucas SHOUTS—

Isla pulls Marla through the hatch—

Paragon's hand SLAMS into the metal hatch frame as Lucas kicks him back just long enough to shut it.

THUD—

A dent forms instantly.

They scramble away from the hatch as Paragon POUNDS from below.

104. EXT. SKYLINE LAB - SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

The three burst into blinding sunlight.

Dozens of GCB trucks circle the perimeter.

Drones swarm overhead.

Horn himself stands atop a command vehicle, immaculate suit untouched by desert wind.

He speaks into a comm.

HORN

Paragon. Max Override.

Bring them down.

The hatch behind them dents outward again.

Lucas grabs Marla and Isla.

LUCUS

RUN!

They sprint.

105. EXT. SKYLINE LAB PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS

A drone swoops down, scanning Marla.

DRONE

AURORA IDENTIFIED.
THREAT LEVEL: EXTREME.

It charges a suppression pulse—

—but Marla instinctively waves her hand—

A ripple of golden distortion FLASHES—

The drone glitches midair—

—then falls, dead.

Isla stares.

ISLA (awed)
She's synchronizing with the world again...

Lucas, panting, looks ahead:

LUCUS

There — the ridge! Move!

They run toward a rocky outcrop.

Behind them—

The hatch EXPLODES.

Paragon shoots into the sky, leaving a comet-like trail.

106. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

They scramble up jagged rocks as Paragon descends like an avenging seraph, hitting the ground with bone-shaking force.

The shockwave knocks Marla off her feet.

Lucas shields Isla.

Marla gets up slowly – staring at Paragon with grief and fury.

MARLA
They did this to you.
They twisted you.

Paragon's face contorts – glitching between sorrow and obedience.

PARAGON
They showed me truth.
The world cannot handle gods.

Marla steps closer – trembling but resolute.

MARLA
Then let the world choose.
Not Horn.
Not the Bureau.
Not you.
Not me.

Paragon wavers – humanity trying to surface.

Horn shouts over loudspeakers:

HORN
PARAGON – STAND DOWN!
KILL HER IF YOU MUST!

Paragon convulses – orders battling memory.

107. EXT. DESERT RIDGE – CONTINUOUS

Marla approaches Paragon, tears streaming.

MARLA
I remember you.
I remember the man who lifted
people out of rubble and wept when
he couldn't save everyone.
You asked to disappear because you
believed the world deserved peace.
Not chains.

Paragon's eyes flicker from white to human – back to white.

PARAGON (fighting)
Aurora...
I can't—

He clutches his head, screaming.

Marla reaches for him—

ISLA
Marla — no!

Marla grabs his hands anyway.

A flash of gold envelops them both.

Memories flood Paragon's mind — projected onto the air like silent films:

- Him flying beside her
- Him telling her she wasn't alone
- Him agreeing to the erasure
- Him promising, "If the world ever needs us again... wake me."

Paragon gasps — eyes wide.

PARAGON (broken)
I... remember...

Lucas and Isla stare, stunned.

108. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Horn sees what's happening.

His face twists with fury.

HORN (to his troops)
Kill them both.
NOW.

GCB soldiers raise weapons—

Marla turns, raising her hands—

A dome of shimmering gold expands outward, blocking bullets, pulses, and sonic blasts.

She stands between Paragon and the world, light pouring from her like a sunrise.

109. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - GOLDEN SHIELD - CONTINUOUS

Inside the shimmering dome, time feels slowed.

Paragon kneels, overwhelmed.

PARAGON

Aurora...
What have I become?

Marla kneels across from him.

MARLA

What they made you.
But you're still in there.
(soft, powerful)
Come back.

He bows his head.

PARAGON (whisper)
Only if you lead.

Marla's breath catches — as if stabbed by memory.

MARLA (CONT'D)

I didn't save them last time.

Paragon lifts her chin.

PARAGON

Then save them now.

Marla's glow intensifies — stabilizes — becomes complete.

The dome expands—

Soldiers outside stumble back.

Horn watches, horrified.

110. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - HORN'S POV - CONTINUOUS

Through binoculars, Horn sees what no human has seen in 20 years:

Two gods kneeling together in unison, light bending around them like gravity losing its grip.

Fear grips him.

HORN (to comm)

Initiate Protocol Black Sun.

Wipe everything.

I want the sky burned clean of them.

A tense silence on comms.

Then:

TECH (V.O., shaken)
Sir... that's an extinction-level command. It requires
unanimous council approval—

Horn snarls:

HORN
THEN GET IT!

He slams the binoculars down.

HORN (to himself)
If they return... humanity ends.

His eyes burn with fanatic dread.

HORN (low)
Better a world of ashes...
than a world bowing to gods again.

CUT TO BLACK.

111. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - GOLDEN DOME - CONTINUOUS

Marla and Paragon kneel inside the shimmering dome of
photonic energy.
Outside, GCB soldiers scramble for cover, dwarfed by its
brilliance.

Marla's face is wet with tears, but her voice is steady.

MARLA
You remember everything?

Paragon nods — haunted.

PARAGON
Enough to hate what they made me.
Enough to remember you.

Marla takes a shaky breath.

MARLA
Then we finish what we started.

Lucas watches, torn between awe and terror.
Isla stands beside him, calculating, quietly terrified.

The dome flickers — destabilizing.

ISLA
She can't hold that much output.
Not for long.

Paragon hears her — and stands.

His presence stabilizes the dome, as if gravity shifts around him.

He looks at Marla with gentle clarity.

PARAGON
You don't do this alone.

She exhales, relieved and broken at once.

112. EXT. DESERT RIDGE — HORN'S COMMAND VEHICLE — SAME TIME

Horn listens to the council over encrypted comms.

The voices are panicked.

COUNCILOR #1 (V.O.)
You saw the satellites — people
levitating in São Paulo,
telekinetics in Seoul—

COUNCILOR #2 (V.O.)
This is a global event. We need
containment—

Horn cuts them off.

HORN
There is no containment.
There is only survival.

A long silence.

COUNCILOR #3
...Protocol Black Sun authorized.

Horn closes his eyes.
It feels like both a triumph and a funeral.

HORN (whisper)
This is mercy.

113. EXT. SKY ABOVE DESERT - SAME TIME

Far overhead, hidden in the atmosphere, OLD EARLY-ERA ANTI-META ORBITAL WEAPONS stir alive.

Massive mirror arrays rotate.

Power cells hum.

A network of satellites awakens - ancient, forgotten, terrifying.

BLACK SUN ARMING SEQUENCE ENGAGED.

A faint red glow begins forming in the upper atmosphere.

114. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - DOME - CONTINUOUS

Dust drifts around the dome like golden snow.

Marla's glow dims - she's weakening fast.

Isla checks her instruments.

ISLA

She's burning through her core reserves. If she drops now-

LUCUS

-Horn will wipe the ridgeline clean.

Marla hears them.

She turns to Paragon.

MARLA (soft)

The world is waking up.

All the people like us... their gifts are reactivating.

Paragon's expression softens - hopeful, uncertain.

PARAGON

Will they be afraid?

Marla shakes her head.

MARLA

Not if they see someone who's not afraid of herself.

Lucas looks at her - heart breaking.

LUCUS

Marla... you don't have to do this.

She steps to him, placing a glowing hand on his cheek.

MARLA

You spent twenty years protecting
my absence.

Let me protect my presence.

Lucas swallows hard — tears threatening.

115. EXT. DESERT - RUN TOWARD THE MESA - MOMENTS LATER

The golden dome COLLAPSES inward, imploding like a dying star
— intentionally released by Marla.

The moment it drops — gunfire erupts.

Paragon SHIELDS the team with a wave of white light that
melts bullets midair.

They sprint across the desert floor toward a distant mesa — a
rocky plateau that shelters the old Skyline Relay Array, the
only functioning transmitter powerful enough to counter Black
Sun.

Wind howls.
Sand slashes their faces.

Marla stumbles; Paragon hoists her arm over his shoulder.

PARAGON

Lean on me.

She smirks weakly.

MARLA

You weigh a ton.

He almost smiles.

116. EXT. BASE OF THE MESA - LATER

They reach the base of the giant plateau.

Old metal stairs zigzag upward.
Half-rusted. Swaying.

Isla looks up in horror.

ISLA
We climb that?

Lucas checks the sky – the red glow intensifying.

LUCUS
Unless you can fly.

Paragon and Marla exchange a look.

MARLA
I can lift, but not carry.

Paragon nods.

PARAGON
I can.

He lifts Isla and Lucas under each arm like weightless dolls.

Lucas yells:

LUCUS
Warn me next time!

Paragon leaps – soaring toward the mesa's upper ledge.

He lands hard but controlled, setting them down.

Then he looks over the edge toward Marla.

She hesitates – then rises slowly, golden tendrils lifting her off the ground.

Her levitation is shaky, uneven – the reintegration not fully complete.

But she flies.

Lucas watches her – wonder filling his face.

117. EXT. MESA TOP - SKYLINE RELAY ARRAY - MOMENTS LATER

The relay array is a graveyard of rusted dish antennas, broken towers, and old signal boosters.

Isla rushes to an ancient console – half-buried in sand.

ISLA
I can override Black Sun's
targeting.
(MORE)

ISLA (CONT'D)
But I need a live photonic source
to amplify the signal.
(a beat)
I need her.

Marla steps forward.

The sky is turning violet.
The red glow spreads like an apocalyptic dawn.

Paragon looks up — instinctively shielding her.

PARAGON
If Black Sun fires... this entire
region vaporizes.

ISLA
Not just the region.
Anything with a photonic signature.
Anyone awakening.
Half a million people will die in
the first minute.

Marla steadies herself.

MARLA
Tell me what to do.

Isla swallows her fear and hands Marla two photonic
conductors.

ISLA
Plug in.
Become the beacon.

Marla braces herself — terrified.

Lucas steps up to her.

LUCUS
You don't need to prove anything.
Not to them.
Not to me.

Marla touches his hand.

MARLA
I'm not proving anything.
I'm telling the truth — to the
world, and to myself.

118. EXT. MESA TOP - BLACK SUN TARGET LOCK - SAME TIME

Above them –
The full network of orbital weapons orients toward the mesa.

A single point of blinding light forms in the sky.

The air crackles.
Gravity bends subtly.
Wind roars.

Horn's voice emerges from Paragon's comm – overriding all channels.

HORN (V.O.)

Paragon.
Stand away from the anomaly.
Let the light cleanse what never
belonged on this earth.

Paragon looks at the comm – torn.

PARAGON

Horn...
We made a promise.
A promise to protect humans from
themselves.

Horn's voice seethes.

HORN (V.O.)

And look where mercy got us.

Paragon crushes the comm in his fist.

119. EXT. MESA TOP - RELAY ARRAY - CONTINUOUS

Isla finishes the makeshift setup.

Wires snake across the sand.
Old transmitters hum.
Dishes rotate on creaking axes.

ISLA

Marla – it's ready.

Marla steps forward, gripping the conductors with trembling hands.

Golden light seeps into the metal – powering systems that haven't run in decades.

The entire mesa begins to glow.

Lucas approaches her – desperate.

LUCUS
Marla... if this kills you–

MARLA
Then let it mean something.

A tear rolls down his cheek.

They share a look heavy with twenty years of buried truth.

Lucas whispers:

LUCUS
I remember you too.

Marla's breath catches – her hearts (both identities)
aligning.

120. EXT. MESA TOP – MARLA BECOMES THE BEACON – CONTINUOUS

The sky darkens.
Thunder cracks without clouds.
The red glow intensifies until the entire horizon is blood-
colored.

Marla pulls in breath – golden photons swirling into her
lungs like embers.

Her entire body ignites.

She becomes a living antenna.

A surge of gold erupts from her–

The dishes amplify it–

The signal fires into the atmosphere–

A column of radiant light piercing straight into the heart of
Black Sun's weapon arrays.

Worldwide, cameras capture it.
Phones record.
Livestreams explode.

People everywhere witness:

THE FIRST GOD RETURNING TO THE SKY.

Not destroying.

Not dominating.
Not commanding.

Just being seen.

Paragon steps behind her, placing a steadying hand on her back.

PARAGON
We do this together.

Her body shakes violently – the charge too great.

Lucas and Isla watch – horrified.

And then–
The sky SCREAMS.

A rumble like a dying star ripples across the atmosphere.

Marla's glow intensifies to blinding levels–

Isla cries out:

ISLA
MARLA – PULL BACK –
YOU'RE OVERLOADING–!

Marla's voice ruptures through the storm:

MARLA
LET THEM SEE US!
LET THEM ALL SEE THE TRUTH!

She surges–

The beacon erupts–

The entire sky lights with gold–

And–

BLACK SUN FIRES.

A beam of annihilation falls from orbit–

–straight toward Marla.

CUT TO BLACK.

121. EXT. MESA TOP - THE STRIKE - CONTINUOUS

The sky cracks open.

A beam of obliterating white-red energy – BLACK SUN – tears downward from orbit.

Marla stands in its path, arms outstretched, glowing like a newborn star.

Paragon braces behind her, reinforcing her with his own collapsing photonic signature.

The beam HITS—

It is cataclysmic.

The impact shatters the air.
 Sand becomes glass.
 Stones vaporize.
 The entire mesa trembles as if the planet itself is screaming.

Marla screams – a sound both human and cosmic.

Her light pulses once—

Twice—

Then surges, meeting the beam head-on.

Lucas shields Isla behind a rusted satellite dish.

ISLA (shouting)
 SHE CAN'T HOLD IT—SHE'S BURNING OUT—!

Lucas looks at the sky – then at Marla – then at the console Isla used to route the signal.

His face changes.

A realization.

A decision.

LUCUS (soft)
 She isn't the beacon.
 The array is.

He rises.

122. EXT. MESA TOP - APPROACHING THE ARRAY - CONTINUOUS

Lucas runs toward the failing relay console as the blast fallout whips sand past his face.

Isla grabs his arm but misses.

ISLA
LUCAS — NO — YOU CAN'T—!

He reaches the console — sparking violently, overloaded with photonic feedback.

He stares at the output regulators.

Only one human thing can do this:

Manual override.
From inside the feedback loop.

Lucas swallows a cold truth.

LUCUS (whisper to himself)
If I was the one who put her in the dark...
...I'll be the one to hold back the light.

He grabs the handles of the regulator frame—

AND IS INSTANTLY HIT WITH AN ARC OF PURE GOLD.

His body convulses.
Blood bursts from his nose.
Hair singes.

But he holds on.

The entire array stabilizes — if barely.

123. EXT. SKY ABOVE — SAME TIME

Black Sun's beam wavers for a moment — like a stuttering heartbeat.

Sensors glitch.

Satellites spin.

The orbital array tries to correct, but the ground signal won't collapse.

The world's cameras record it:

A second light source rising from the mesa beneath the beam.

A counter-signal.

A human one.

THE WORLD SEES BOTH.

124. EXT. MESA TOP - CONTINUOUS

Marla turns — mid-beam — and sees Lucas gripping the regulator frame, being electrocuted by her own light.

His skin blistering.
Eyes watering.
Barely conscious.

MARLA (screaming)
LUCAS — STOP —
STOP — YOU'LL DIE — !!!

Paragon, straining beneath the Black Sun blast, looks too.

His eyes widen — memory surging through him.

PARAGON

Reeve—
Lucas Reeve—
He was your—
 (he chokes)
—he stayed behind with you.
He was the last face you saw before
the erasure.

Marla's light flickers violently.

The truth hits her like another beam.

Lucas wasn't just her handler.
He was the man who stayed with her
while they erased her.

125. EXT. MESA TOP - MARLA STEPS FORWARD - CONTINUOUS

Marla PULLS AWAY from the Black Sun beam — defying all logic, all physics.

The blast tears gouges across the mesa, but she redirects her glow into a single, focused point.

A golden tether.

To Lucas.

MARLA (soft, breaking)
Lucas...

You stayed with me while I forgot everything.
Let me be here while you remember who you are.

He lifts his head — barely.

LUCUS (whisper)
I never forgot you.

Marla's core glows brighter than ever.

Paragon's eyes widen.

PARAGON (realizing)
She's transcending.
She's becoming what she was meant to be.

126. EXT. MESA RIDGELINE — DISTANT POV — CONTINUOUS

GCB soldiers watch in silent awe.

Phones filming.

Some lower their weapons completely.

A soldier whispers:

SOLDIER (whisper)
She's... protecting him.
Why would a god protect a human?

Another whispers back:

SOLDIER #2 (shaken)
Maybe she always did.

The world begins to change.

Right here.

127. INT. HORN'S COMMAND VEHICLE — SAME TIME

Horn watches through binoculars — stunned, enraged,
terrified.

The blast should have vaporized them by now.

Instead, Marla's light is GAINING against Black Sun.

An operator turns from his console.

TECH
Sir... the orbital feed is
destabilizing.
Black Sun is... losing coherence.

Horn snaps:

HORN
Impossible. Increase output. BURN
THEM.

TECH
It's already at maximum--!

Horn slams his fist.

HORN
Then override the override!

But the system responds:

SYSTEM (V.O.)
GROUND COUNTER-SIGNAL EXCEEDING
MAXIMUM INPUT.
BLACK SUN COMPROMISED.
SHUTDOWN IMMINENT.

Horn's face drains of color.

HORN (whisper)
No...
No... no no no--
This can't be happening--
Not again--

His fear is primal.

Humanity's fear, embodied.

128. EXT. MESA TOP - THE END OF BLACK SUN - CONTINUOUS

Marla glows bright enough that the sand around her lifts in
small spirals.

Paragon plants his feet, reinforcing the beam with his own
field.

Lucas holds the regulator frame, burning alive but refusing
to let go.

Isla cries silently - unable to intervene, forced to witness.

Marla closes her eyes.

MARLA (whisper)
Let them see us.
Let them all see us.

A pulse of gold races upward—
—striking Black Sun's beam.

The world watches as:

GOLD AND WHITE COLLIDE
in a sky-spanning explosion of
ethereal light.

In that instant:

Black Sun fractures
Satellites explode or go dark
Shockwaves ripple through the ionosphere
The beam dissolves like smoke in sunlight
The sky returns to blue.
Black Sun is gone.

129. EXT. MESA TOP - AFTERMATH - CONTINUOUS

Silence.

Dust drifts.
Ash falls like snow.

Marla collapses to her knees, gasping.

Paragon drops beside her, drained but alive.

Isla rushes them, but Marla pushes herself up—
her glow dim, human again.

MARLA (weak)
Lucas...?

And then she sees him.

Lucas is on his knees, hands still gripping the regulator
frame...

...but his arms are charred.
Shoulders burned.
Breathing shallow.

Marla crawls to him.

MARLA (shaking)
Lucas —
Lucas, stay with me —
Look at me —

He looks up at her — eyes soft.

LUCUS (half-smile)
Hey... I'm here.

Marla sobs, touching his face — her glow trying to heal him,
but flickering.

PARAGON
She's too depleted.
She can't repair that kind of
damage.

Marla clutches Lucas's hands.

MARLA
Why would you do this?

Lucas's answer is simple.

LUCUS (soft)
Because I couldn't save you then.
But I could save you now.

Marla breaks down completely.

130. EXT. MESA TOP - THE WORLD WATCHES - CONTINUOUS

Phones all around the world livestream the aftermath.

People cry watching Lucas — a human — give everything for a
superhuman.

An old man watching the stream whispers:

OLD MAN
Maybe they were never gods.
Just people trying their best.

Across the globe, awakened metahumans watch the footage and
see hope instead of fear.

On the mesa, Marla holds Lucas as the wind blows softly around them.

Paragon stands guard – protective, quiet, watching the horizon.

A new world has begun.

CUT TO BLACK.

-

131. EXT. MESA TOP - AFTERMATH - CONTINUOUS

The sky is quiet.
Blue.
Unbroken.

The wind hums softly across scorched glass and twisted metal.

Marla cradles Lucas's head in her lap.

His breathing is shallow, erratic.
Every inhale feels stolen from the afterlife.

Paragon kneels beside them, head bowed as if in prayer.

Isla stands a few steps back – watching, devastated, knowing she helped create all this pain.

Marla presses her forehead to Lucas's.

MARLA (whisper)
Stay with me.
Please.
Just... stay.

Lucas tries to smile.

LUCUS (weak)
You glow... when you're worried.

She laughs through tears.

MARLA
I used to glow for everything.

LUCUS
You still do.

He coughs hard – blood streaking his lips.

Marla closes her eyes, trying to summon power.

A faint pulse of gold forms between her hands—
—then flickers out.

She collapses forward.

MARLA
Why... why can't I save you?

Paragon answers gently — with a sorrow that feels ancient.

PARAGON
Because some lives are meant to be
lived... not rewritten.

Marla sobs softly.

Lucas lifts a shaking hand, placing it on her cheek.

LUCUS
You saved me the day I met you.
Everything after that was borrowed
time.

Marla holds his hand with both of hers.

He strains to look at her one last time.

LUCUS (fading)
Don't disappear again.
Not from the world.
Not from yourself.
Promise me...

Tears pour down Marla's face.

MARLA
I promise.

Lucas breathes one final, tiny breath—
—and exhales.

His hand slips from hers.

Marla lets out a shuddering gasp, as if part of her soul is
torn from her chest.

Paragon closes Lucas's eyes.

Isla turns away, crying silently.

Marla bends over Lucas, weeping into his shirt as the sun
rises.

132. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - HORN'S RETREAT - SAME TIME

Horn's forces watch from a distance.

No one fires.

No one advances.

They are witnessing something transcendent — not a battle,
but a funeral for the old world.

Horn stands alone beside his vehicle, binoculars slipping
from his hand, clattering forgotten onto the sand.

He whispers, horrified:

HORN

You weren't supposed to win...

He stumbles back.

His soldiers — once unquestioningly loyal — now look at him
with distrust, even disgust.

One lowers his rifle.

Another removes his helmet.

A third whispers:

SOLDIER

Sir... she protected us.

She protected everyone.

Horn's jaw tightens.

The world is slipping out of his hands.

133. EXT. MESA TOP - SHORTLY AFTER

Paragon stands at the edge of the mesa, looking out over the
desert.

His posture is heavier, older — the weight of memory
returned.

Marla stands beside him, arms wrapped around herself.

PARAGON

The world has seen you now.

They'll come.

(MORE)

PARAGON (CONT'D)
Some with hope.
Some with fear.

Marla nods.

The wind blows her hair gently.
Her glow is subtle, steady – no longer chaotic.

MARLA
I'm not the god they think I am.

PARAGON
They don't need a god.
They need proof the world didn't
end twenty years ago.
That the worst thing can happen...
and someone will still stand in the
ruins.

Marla studies him.

MARLA
What about you?

Paragon looks down at his hands – hands that have saved and
killed, hands used as tools by people he trusted.

PARAGON
I need to learn who I am without
orders.
I need to learn how to be human
again.

He turns to her.

PARAGON (soft)
But you don't have to do this alone.

Marla considers him – seeing vulnerability beneath the power.

Then she shakes her head gently.

MARLA
We walk separate paths.
For now.

Paragon nods – not hurt, but respectful.

He takes one last look at Lucas's body, kneels, and places a
hand on his heart.

PARAGON
Thank you, Reeve.
For saving her...
...so we could save the world.

134. EXT. MESA - BURIAL SITE - SUNSET

A simple burial.

The burned earth is too hard to dig deeply, but Paragon uses gentle photonic pressure to soften the ground.

Lucas is wrapped carefully in a torn jacket - his own, scorched at the edges.

Marla places a hand on his chest.

A soft glow passes from her palm into the fabric.

Not enough to resurrect.
Not enough to heal.

Just enough to warm him.

A gesture of love.

MARLA (whisper)
You carried me for twenty years.
Rest now.
I'll carry myself.

Paragon bows his head.

Isla stands back, crying silently, guilt threaded through her grief.

Together, they lower Lucas into the earth.

Marla places a stone over the grave.

A symbol.

A promise.

135. EXT. DESERT RIDGE - DUSK

Horn tries to retreat with what's left of his convoy.

But his soldiers no longer follow.

One steps in front of him.

SOLDIER

Sir...

We're turning ourselves in.

Horn stares in disbelief.

HORN

For what?

For surviving?

The soldier's expression hardens.

SOLDIER

For the things we did so the world
wouldn't have to know what we were
doing.

Another soldier speaks:

SOLDIER #2

We saw what she did.

You didn't save the world from
gods.

You saved your power from being
questioned.

Horn trembles.

HORN (screaming)

SHE WILL DESTROY EVERYTHING—

SHE ISN'T HUMAN—

A soldier lowers his rifle.

SOLDIER #3

Neither were we.

Not after what you made us do.

Horn backs away — hysterical, unraveling.

His legacy falls apart in front of him.

136. EXT. SKYLINE MESA - NIGHT

Marla stands alone at the edge of the cliff, overlooking the
sleeping desert.

Her glow pulses faintly — like a heartbeat.

Isla approaches quietly.

ISLA
What will you do now?

Marla watches the horizon.

The faint lights of towns and cities flicker like stars.

MARLA
The world is changing.
People are awakening.
Fear will follow.
So will wonder.

She turns to Isla.

MARLA (soft)
You helped erase us.
Will you help rebuild us?

Isla hesitates.

Then bows her head.

ISLA
Yes.
If you'll let me.

Marla nods.

Forgiveness is hard – but possible.

137. EXT. SKYLINE MESA - SAME TIME

Paragon walks up.

He looks different – calmer.
More human.

PARAGON
The world is watching.
Waiting for us to lead.

Marla shakes her head.

MARLA
Not lead.
Guide.
Quietly.
Carefully.
With humility we never had before.

Paragon smiles – a small, real smile.

PARAGON

You were always better at humility.

Marla raises an eyebrow.

MARLA

You? Humble?

They share quiet laughter – bittersweet, warm.

138. EXT. SKYLINE MESA - PRE-DAWN

The first light of morning creeps over the desert.

Marla closes her eyes and breaths deeply.

Golden dust rises around her ankles.

Her entire body lifts slowly, effortlessly, the air shimmering around her.

Paragon steps back, watching with awe.

Isla raises a hand to shield her eyes.

Marla floats upward a few feet – hovering between earth and sky.

She is centered.

Balanced.

Whole.

MARLA (V.O.)

I spent twenty years hiding from myself.

Now the world is waking up.

So am I.

She rises higher.

139. EXT. SKYLINE MESA - CONTINUOUS

Cameras from around the world – satellites, drones, distant onlookers – capture the moment:

A woman made of light rising gently into the dawn, not as a god, not as a weapon, not as a savior—

—but as a person choosing to be seen.

The golden light reflects across the desert, hitting Paragon, Isla, the ruined lab, even Lucas's grave.

The beginning of something new.

The end of something old.

140. EXT. SKY - SUNRISE

Marla rises above the mesa — the rising sun casting haloed fire around her silhouette.

Below her, the desert glows gold.

Far away, cities begin waking.

People look to the sky, see her, and whisper:

THE WORLD (V.O., overlapping whispers)

Aurora...

She returned...

They're real...

They came back...

The light is back...

Marla opens her eyes.

Full of grief.

Full of hope.

Full of purpose.

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

If I shine...

let it be as a reminder.

Not of gods.

But of the light we carry in
ourselves.

She turns, soaring gently across the horizon.

A streak of gold against the blue.

FADE OUT.

THE END.