

"The Bubble"

by Tom Ringrose

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FADE IN

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - DAWN

Desert in the city, the air is yellow.

SUPER - ENLARGED GOBI DESERT REGION - 2042

WIND HOWLS through skyscraper canyons and the dunes grow tall trying to climb them. In other places, Sandsweepers cut them down to size. The Sandsweeper trucks plough avenues through the key routes of the city. The hive of activity centers on the Bubble.

SUPER - THE BUBBLE - UNITED NATIONS PROJECT 019

Giant steel trusses arch up away from street level and meet in the middle. The central solar distributor sparkles as its sun pipes jostle for the first light of the day. A geodesic dome draped over vast steel arches, the surface shines and fades depending on the dance of the solar mirrors inside.

SUPER - TEN YEARS AFTER THE ASTEROID STRIKE

WIND WHISTLES around the curved glass rim, WHIPPING SAND into the air. A solitary Sandsweeper ploughs its path along the central avenue, leading back towards the towers.

INT. SLEEPING POD ROOM 028 - DAWN

BEE WANG, 17, wishes her life was different. She oversleeps inside her sedation pod; beautiful, a late bloomer, she lies next to her glass pod door. Her black hair half covers her face, a linen sheet covers the rest. A gentle blue neon light washes down the inside. The pods radiate around a circular concrete room, stacked in three tiers.

TOM MENNINGS, mid 40's, Caucasian, stands looking at his daughter, through the convex glass. His muscular body STRAINS his overalls. He BENDS Bee's POD MICROPHONE and CLICKS a button to communicate.

TOM

Bee, wake up. You didn't set your alarm ...

He FLIPS a SWITCH, bouncing direct light around her pod.

TOM

You're gonna be late for school.

INT. INSIDE BEE'S SLEEPING POD - DAWN

Bee turns over in bed. She PULLS the linen, covering her head.

BEE

Dad, turn it off. You're wasting  
electricity.

INT. SLEEPING POD ROOM 028 - DAWN

TOM

More worried about you wasting your  
potential. Get up! ...

INT. INSIDE BEE'S SLEEPING POD - DAWN

TOM

(looking through the glass door)  
You're gonna make me late for work.

Bee rests up on her elbows, linen still covering her legs. She wears a T-SHIRT, body tight with the sleeves CUT off.

BEE

I'll only miss line up.

TOM (O.S.)

That's not the point ...

Bee ACTIVATES the POD DOOR and HAULS herself out. She JUMPS like an athlete from the middle tier down onto a dark blue fleck lino floor. Tom holds out a dressing gown to her. He turns his head away as she WRAPS her body in WHITE. They are the last to leave.

INT. SLEEPING POD BASEMENT LEVEL CORRIDOR - DAWN

Elevator doors frame the end of a dark corridor. They walk towards the doors, silent in SLIPPED FEET. The elevator SENSES their arrival. The doors SLIDE apart. They STEP inside, in silence.

INT. ELEVATOR CAR - DAWN

TOM

I'm worried you're getting a bad reputation.

Tom PUNCHES the PAD (number 2). They travel upwards (6 to 2).

BEE

I don't care what people think.

TOM

You should.

BEE

Why? None of it matters. We're all TOAST in the end.

Tom looks at her, STARTLED. He looks up at the ceiling.

TOM

That's a bit morbid, first thing in the morning ...

They arrive on the second floor. The doors open. Tom steps out into a comparatively brighter corridor. Weak light shines on curved concrete walls, metal doorways both sides. Bee follows.

INT. SOUTH SECTOR LANE CORRIDOR - DAWN

Bee WALKS offset from her DAD (room numbers ascending in value). The narrow corridor is crowded with people starting their day.

TOM

Your Mom was never morbid.

BEE

Don't start.

TOM

Sorry.

In front of their door (21 stenciled onto its metal face) Tom pulls out his key card and swipes down through the slot.

INT. BEE'S HOME - DAWN

Tom enters ahead of Bee. The room is circular (the same size as the sedation pod room). There are two doors off the space and a long, curved kitchen worktop between them. Open shelves above the worktop hold their family photos and other personal belongings. The other half of the shelf unit is hidden behind a widescreen TV. A clear glass table and red beanbags form the room's centerpiece. Fabric zip bags hung on steel frames line the walls, hiding most of the rough concrete.

Tom opens a zip bag. He RETRIEVES a white spacesuit from a metal HANGER and a HELMET below. He turns to leave.

TOM

You coming home after school?

Bee stares at the centerpiece, her soft features turned stiff.

BEE

It's not really home is it?

TOM

I know ...

(then)

Love you. Get to school.

He steps forward and kisses the side of her head ... no reply. Tom exits into the narrow corridor. The place is still busy with people. He closes the door.

INT. BUBBLE OPERATIONS CENTER - MORNING

SUPER - BUBBLE OPERATIONS CENTER

The room is packed with screens, servers and ceiling fans. The air is stuffy and needs to change on shift like the staff.

JOHN REYNOLDS, in his 50's sports an army haircut and an overly wrinkled face. He tilts back in his executive chair with mug in hand, wearing faded desert fatigues and loosened tan boots. He STARES at a FLAT SCREEN on his desk, a bunch of spreadsheets.

Reynolds spots CALEB JABBOUR, middle-eastern, late 50's standing tall in the reception area. Jabbour is easily the smartest dressed man in the center. The operations staff around him responds to his suit and tie accordingly.

REYNOLDS

What's he doing here?

Reynolds' face disappears behind his oversized mug. He drinks deep. He reemerges to find Jabbour standing in front of him.

JABBOUR

Mr. Reynolds, how is our system update?  
Did we satisfy your requirements?

REYNOLDS

I'll tell you in a few weeks. At least  
this time your crew didn't turn the  
place upside down ...

LIEUTENANT, Hispanic mid 30's SWIVELS round to his chief's desk. He hands a report to Reynolds. Reynolds drops it on his desk.

Reynolds takes another gulp from his mug. Jabbour glances at his own campaign flyer on the desk. Reynolds notices a pin badge on Jabbour's lapel stating 'open source - power to the people'.

REYNOLDS

Shouldn't you be out winning votes?

JABBOUR

Not tempting fate but I would not put bars on anyone else.

REYNOLDS

I'll keep my bars for paying my bills.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - MORNING

The central avenue is deserted apart from a single black dot on the horizon. The black dot grows bigger, accompanied by a VEHICLE HUM. Dry bush weed wafts in the street.

INT. BUBBLE OPERATIONS CENTER - MORNING

DUTY OFFICER #1 stiffens to concentrate on his screen. He beckons the LIEUTENANT over for a second opinion. The Lieutenant reviews the situation on screen.

LIEUTENANT

Chief, come look at this. Unidentified vehicle approaching through sector nine.

Reynolds stands to move alongside the Duty Officer's screen.

REYNOLDS

He's moving pretty fast. Perimeter defenses intact?

DUTY OFFICER #1

Power's down ... saving energy for tonight.

REYNOLDS

That's insane. We've got a bogey coming down the avenue and no perimeter defense. Override it now. Get me the power.

DUTY OFFICER #1

May take a few minutes.

REYNOLDS

We don't have a few minutes.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - MORNING

The approaching vehicle is now clearly visible. It is a dune buggy campervan hybrid with no driver at the wheel.

The ROAR of the ENGINE grows steadily and continues its straight path towards us. The van CRUSHES the BUSH WEED under its wide WHEELS.

INT. BUBBLE OPERATIONS CENTER - MORNING

Reynolds looks at Jabbour, looking for someone to blame.

LIEUTENANT

Defenses starting to be raised.

JABBOUR

Too late.

Four men watch helplessly as the center's screens depict from various angles a dune buggy campervan FLYING up half lifted barricades and into the Bubble's GLASS RIM.

ALARMS PIERCE the collective moment of disbelief.

REYNOLDS

Deploy airbags. Stabilize air pressure.  
I want men on the ground patching that  
hole in two minutes. Get them suited up.  
Get me reserves on the line. We need to  
contain that damage. Seal up the Bubble.  
Lieutenant, find out who the HELL that  
is.

Jabbour slips away unnoticed.

INT. SCHOOL ROOM - MORNING

Bee is oblivious to her classmates. She zones in on the math solution that seems elusive to everyone else. She writes the answer then looks up pretty and smug. The teacher is absent.

RUFAN LEWIS, 18, Black American, adventurer, SCRIBBLES on a NOTE "I need some help, Rxxx". He passes the note to Bee behind him. She smiles and starts to write the answer on the note for him.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNING

MR. HUANG, early 40's, math teacher, balding, GREETs Caleb Jabbour with an overly warm HANDSHAKE. They are alone. Metal lockers line one side of the corridor with bright light at the end. The light is mottled with vine greenery.

MR. HUANG

Thank you for coming, today of all days.  
You must be busy.

JABBOUR

I am. What is this about?

MR. HUANG

Mr. Jabbour, I thought you'd want to  
know ... you've always been good to me.

JABBOUR

Cut to the chase.

MR. HUANG

Operations has commissioned our top student to cross check your company's software. There's been more complaints about the solar distributor.

JABBOUR

Probably from Mr. Wei.

(then)

Student IT reports rarely stack up.

MR. HUANG

Bee's do! Report deadline is tonight, before the election results.

JABBOUR

I NEED to see it before an upload.

MR. HUANG

I can't ask to see it ahead of time ...  
I'll be hauled in for favoritism.

JABBOUR

What is the student's name?

The glass door through to Mr. Huang's classroom shows Bee handing a note to Rufan.

MR. HUANG

Bee Wang ...

(then)

Go easy on her, she is my favorite.

INT. SCHOOL ROOM - MORNING

Rufan pockets the note ("I love you" written at its base).

NOAH HALAND, 17, tall and scrawny, sat next to Rufan catches sight of Rufan's new watch (Citizen eco-drive). His eyes light up.

NOAH

You found that on the last scav trip?

RUFAN

Yeah.

Rufan takes it off his wrist. He flips it over. It looks good.

RUFAN

Sweet, isn't it? Easy to sell on,  
no need for batteries.

NOAH

Can I take a look?

Rufan passes the watch to his friend and notices two FIGURES in the school corridor. He recognizes both of them.

RUFAN

What's Caleb Jabbour doing here?

Jabbour listens to Mr. Huang but stares through the glass at Bee.

RUFAN

He seems pretty interested in Bee ...

He turns to look at his girlfriend behind.

RUFAN

Hey, you gonna let me show you that cool  
place after school?

BEE

Maybe.

MAX OWEN, 18, with a school hero physique and the attitude to match, sidles up to Noah still inspecting the watch. Max's body

dwarfs Noah's slight frame, in one move he barges Noah and snatches the watch.

MAX

Finders keepers, losers weepers!

A small scuffle erupts between the boys. The men outside truncate their conversation. Mr. Huang returns to break up the fight, his bald head glows with annoyance.

MR. HUANG

I assume by the commotion that you have all finished that exercise. No?

The boys slink back into place. Noah surreptitiously takes back the watch from Max's desk and hands it to Rufan with a smile.

RUFAN

(quietly)

Nice move.

MR. HUANG

OK. Listen up. Some excellent thesis first drafts from a number of you. Bee especially, our likely future CEO Mr. Caleb Jabbour took a keen interest in your work just now.

A BELL RINGS throughout the schoolrooms, vibrating the thin crinkled steel walls. The teenagers all rise to leave.

RUFAN

What's next?

BEE

P.E.

INT. CALEB JABBOUR'S OFFICE - MORNING

Jabbour enters the office and sits behind an immaculate white freeform desk. He places a thumb on the desktop's security pad.

JABBOUR

We may have a problem

COMPUTER VOICE (MALE)

All the packages are in place. We detect no problem.

JABBOUR

There is a student who could cause me a problem.

COMPUTER VOICE (FEMALE)

Do we have a name to search?

JABBOUR

Wang, Bee Wang.

COMPUTER VOICE (MALE)

What is the threat?

JABBOUR

A cross check report due today.

COMPUTER VOICE (FEMALE)

She is a negative threat to you

JABBOUR

How can you know? She has not uploaded the report yet. When she does, OS will read it, assess it in an instant and, if the math is half decent, it will suspend my prequal for CEO, pending a full inquiry.

COMPUTER VOICE (MALE)

Elevated blood pressure. I recommend calm.

JABBOUR

Forget me. Find her. Give me permutations. I want to know the risk to my timeframe. Use our network if you have to.

QUASI EXT. BUBBLE OUTER RING - MORNING

The crashed hybrid vehicle lies on its back, wheels no longer spinning. A giant airbag plugs the hole it came through. The LIEUTENANT and a squadron of RESERVES surround the van, dressed in Type A Hazmat suits. They move slower than they would like. They carry Taser weapons.

LIEUTENANT

(amplified voice)

Come out with your hands up.

RESERVE #1

Could have been a drone driving it Sir.

LIEUTENANT

Get the door.

RESERVE #1 commands RESERVE #2. Together they wire an explosive charge, stand back and FIRE. The door seal buckles. Air escapes. RESERVE #2 uses a crowbar to prize it open.

LIEUTENANT

(amplified voice)

Come out slowly with your hands up.

A FIGURE moves inside. This is the OUTSIDER, late 20's, his silhouette hobbles, top-heavy with a shock of frizzed hair. The Reserves aim their Taser guns. The WEAPONS BUZZ up.

OUTSIDER (O.S.)

Put your weapons down!

LIEUTENANT

How can we trust you?

OUTSIDER (O.S.)

I've not come all this way to get shot.

Put them down! ...

The Lieutenant signals for his troops to comply.

OUTSIDER (O.S.)

Someone's prepping the wires for a large energy transfer. I came here to tell you.

LIEUTENANT

What's wrong with a phone call?

OUTSIDER (O.S.)

Don't know who's listening. Can't trust a phone call.

LIEUTENANT

How can we trust you?

INT. UPTURNED HYBRID VEHICLE - MORNING

The vehicle is a mess. Gas canisters, food tins and clothes SCATTERED across the roof. The Outsider is propped against the side. He HOLDS a back-pack to his chest then STRAPS it onto his back.

OUTSIDER

I'm risking everything doing this. This van is my life. It's totaled. Came here to warn you. I had to jump your fence ... I had to get in.

QUASI EXT. BUBBLE OUTER RING - MORNING

LIEUTENANT

Have you got any I.D.?

OUTSIDER (O.S.)

Look Mister, no I ain't. I'm nomad, tryin' to get safe. Give me a break!

LIEUTENANT

How can we trust you if you can't prove  
who you are? It doesn't work like that  
... you should have made that phone call!

OUTSIDER (O.S.)

Screw you!

The Reserves gather up their weapons at the Lieutenant's command.  
They approach the vehicle, the Outsider scurries around inside.

Reserves #1 and #2 are at the upturned doorway.

A SINGLE WHEEL gains traction on the van's roof and FLIES OUT  
on a makeshift ramp, over the heads of the Reserves. The Outsider  
lands the mono-wheel contraption weaving left and right to avoid  
Taser fire. The Reserves are unable to chase him down.

LIEUTENANT

We'll catch him later. Can't hide in  
the Bubble.

INT. SCHOOL FITNESS GYM - MORNING

Rows of dynamo bikes fill the gym connected by cables to a central  
hub computer. A communal entertainment system hangs on the wall.

MS FRIEL, early 30's, wearing hot pants, stares up at the red  
bar readings from the students' previous session.

MS FRIEL

OK class, get up on your wheels ...

Ceiling fans spin idly above each bike, speeding up as they sense  
a rider to keep cool. The students plug in their neck tags.

MS FRIEL

Good session last time ...

Ms Friel taps a screen to log the students' allotted time.

MS FRIEL

I know it's been an eventful morning but  
I want you to forget all about outsiders  
and emergency drills. You know your P.B.s  
and monthly targets. Start them up!

Ms Friel turns to the back of the room and pulls out a music player.  
She crosses her supple legs, plugs music into her ears and closes  
her eyes.

LYDIA TURAY's dark, athletic body leans forward to make a start.

LYDIA

God, I miss air-con.

Bee (sat next to Lydia) starts to pedal but she is slower and  
distracted tapping away at a Surface computer lain out across the  
bike's readout panel.

LYDIA

(to Bee)

What you working on?

BEE

Some stuff.

LYDIA

What stuff?

BEE

My stuff.

LYDIA

Yeah but what?

Lydia leans across her bike to see over Bee's shoulder. Bee blocks  
Lydia's view to keep her work private.

LYDIA

You get out of bed the wrong side?

BEE

Didn't we all?

Lydia gives up her nosiness, focusing on her wheel rate instead.

LYDIA

Chill out girl. I'm just curious.

BEE

And I just don't want to tell you.

LYDIA

(losing interest)

Chill out ... earn some bars.

Rufan observes the conversation from the far side of the room. Bee pedals a pace that enables her to multitask. Head down, she taps at her Srface keyboard, zoning out Lydia and the others.

Max SWITCHES ON the class' ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM. The WHIRR of BIKE WHEELS soon competes with a TV COMMERCIAL on the big screen.

(On screen) An elderly LAB TECHNICIAN holds up a Y-prong headset to the camera then places it over the mannequin in front of him. The two branches of the Y frame cover the eyes and extend back over the ears. The flexi trunk of the Y frame bends back over the head bulging out around the forehead with white disc electrodes on the inner face. Behind the Lab Technician is a collage of TV images and picture perfect memories.

COMMERCIAL (MALE VOICE) (V.O.)

The new Futuremine headset offers unparalleled capture of your mental workspace allowing you to re-live your memories with the best audio visuals that bars can buy.

The mannequin morphs into a model and she treats the viewers to a 360 degree spin of her most beautiful memories.

COMMERCIAL (MALE VOICE) (V.O.)

Try in store or at your local gym.  
Order while mainland stocks last.

A TV chat-show discussing the upcoming CEO elections replaces the tacky commercial. Max GRABS the remote control from the central hub and TURNS UP the VOLUME.

(On screen) CALVIN ROSS, mid 40's, puffed up and pompous struts onto the stage. He addresses the camera.

CALVIN ROSS

Big night, tonight, for our two candidates  
Most of our votes have been cast and so we  
are holding our breath to discover who will  
become our new CEO. Who will win the 'keys  
to the city'? Any final words to help the  
undecided?

WEI JIANGUO

Thank you Mr. Ross. I am privileged to  
represent the majority and I will work  
tirelessly for all. Our Bubble Community  
was founded on random selection. But our  
existence here today is far from random.  
We have been chosen. For ten long years  
we have survived the asteroid's desolation  
of our planet. We need strong leadership  
to carry us to the end of this darkness.  
'Watchman, what is left of the night?'  
This will be my night, watch and see.

CALVIN ROSS

Mr. Wei, thank you. I am sure you are  
all eager to hear words from our other  
candidate as well ... Mr. Caleb Jabbour.

JABBOUR

Calvin, thank you, as you all know, I  
advocate open source governance. It is the

(MORE)

JABBOUR (CONT'D)

future. The Bubble's open source operating system already runs our utilities, school and healthcare but it can do so much more. It is the ultimate tool of government, for the people, by the people. We need fitter, leaner government and I will deliver.

CALVIN ROSS

Thank you candidates. Food for thought. Let's open the lines, Caller One, what's your name and where d'you come from?

CALLER ONE

Guo LiJun. South sector 4-581. How is open source gonna to heal my Mom?

JABBOUR

Mr. Guo, good question. Maybe cryosleep is the solution for your Mom? It depends on the pooled knowledge available through our updated OS. It's all available at the touch of a button ... open to all.

The TV turns blue screen as Max selects a music channel. The new PULSATING ASIAN BEATS match the rhythm of the students' cycling. Some students choose to entertain themselves with the gym's complimentary Y-prong headsets.

MAX

Makes no difference to us.

LYDIA

Too young to vote!

RUFAN

Thought no one could afford cyrosleep anymore.

MAX

Yeah, not even you ... not even the CEO!

RUFAN

CEO's keys to the city are worth having ...  
Get to fast-track your own projects ...  
gotta be some good money in that.

NOAH

Do we have to have YOUR taste in music?

Max blanks Noah. A few more students select the Y-prong headsets. Bee installs a debug program and is the last to want to block out Max's Asian beats. She logs into her personal account on the Futuremine server. She selects her new favorite ... "abseil ABC". She puts on her headset and settles into a rhythm.

Ms Friel rouses from her meditation at the back of the class.

MS FRIEL

Good work team. Keep it up.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. ABC TOWER ROOFTOP - AFTERNOON

FADE IN

The WIND is HOT. The tower rooftop is exposed to the elements. Rufan checks the rope assemblies. Rufan and Bee both wear white spacesuits and transparent helmets. Bee peers over the edge at the vertical face below, a wall waiting to be conquered.

RUFAN

Ready to look death in the face?

BEE

Seen it already.

RUFAN

You can't bring her back Bee.

Bee runs her gloved hand along the rooftop parapet.

BEE

I know ... am I gonna survive?

RUFAN

This? Or judgment?

BEE

This first ...

Rufan pulls a scrap of paper from his pocket. It's fashioned into the shape of a paper airplane. He launches it off the rooftop.

BEE

Why d'you do that?

RUFAN

Good luck ... apparently.

They watch it fly. It glides away from the vertical façade.

BEE

I don't believe in luck!

RUFAN

You first.

Bee breathes deeply.

BEE

Live like there's no tomorrow.

She places herself in front of Rufan, placing herself into his trust. He attaches a safety line and runs another rope through her harness. He signals, she is ready. She leans back, the rope STRAINS, her body leaning out 300 meters above the deserted city. Her boots arch in the middle, over the ledge. Fully stretched, horizontal, she smiles at Rufan. He smiles back. She walks the wall, towards the sandy street below. The view is stunning.

BEE (V.O.)

Live like there's no tomorrow.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. SCHOOL FITNESS GYM - MIDDAY

FADE IN

MS FRIEL (O.S.)

OK. Time's up.

Sweat drips off bike handles. Some of the student tire.

NOAH

I'm beat.

MS FRIEL

Time's up class ... power down ... log out ...

Max continues to pedal pushing up his bars to the maximum.

MS FRIEL

Max, I said cool it! Go take showers ...

The students reluctantly step away from the equipment and their chance to add more credit to their individual bar accounts.

MS FRIEL

Can you remember the way to the men's?

MAX

(smiling)

Thanks for the reminder Coach.

The boys jockey together as they crowd into the corridor.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

Rufan opens his LOCKER with a key and a gentle NUDGE in the bottom right hand corner. He places his sports bag into a hoard of jumbled

belongings. Floor to ceiling lockers line the corridor. Horizontal shade lines mottled with vine greenery permeate the space. The view beyond shows raked concrete walls leading up to the base of the dome, the protective bubble over everything.

Bee (with long wet black hair) runs up the corridor almost knocking into Max in front of his open locker. Bee bounces up besides Rufan. She hangs on his arm. Rufan is busy checking a stack of army ration tins against a hand written note.

BEE

Ru, I'm free. I can come with you.

RUFAN

You sure?

BEE

Yeah. I'm done. I'll upload it later. I need to clear my head ... where we going?

RUFAN

Up on the roof, I got two engineer passes in a deal last week. It's beautiful up there.

Max is within earshot. He watches them, jealously.

MAX

Rufan and Bee looking for a tree  
K.I.S.S.I.N.G.

RUFAN

Give up Max.

CLICK-CLICK, the Bubble's P.A. SYSTEM fires up. All the students stop and orientate towards the loudspeaker.

P.A. SYSTEM (MALE VOICE)

Be aware. Intruder is still at large within the Bubble. Any sightings must be reported immediately.

Rufan looks back into his locker. He digs out some desert goggles.

RUFAN

You'll need these ...

He hands the goggles to Bee. She tries them on for size. Happy with, she drops them round her neck and spins them 180 degrees.

RUFAN

Gets hot up there too.

Bee unclips her water bottle and goes to the water stand. She hands her bar card and bottle to the WATERMAN. He dispenses the water. He clocks the amount. The old man resets her bar account then adds a few drops more. Bee rewards him with a smile.

INT. BEE'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Tom arrives home after his shift. He kicks off his steel toe-capped boots, places his helmet on a hook and throws his loosely folded spacesuit onto a beanbag. The circular room's light is dim, saving energy. He runs his fingers along the fabric bags leading up to the kitchen worktop. He FLICKS a SWITCH to add task light. He PLACES a PAN of WATER onto a CAMPING STOVE.

The shelf unit holds a photo of him, Bee and BEATRICE WANG on a rooftop. His wife looks unwell but she is forcing a smile. He takes down a well-worn tea flask and runs his fingers across the acid etched design. WATER BOILS. He selects a variety of leaves and berries from a tin. He drops them into the flask. He adds water and twirls the flask to mix his brew.

He opens a door onto a vertical ladder held within a concrete shaft. A rush of hot air rises past him. There is a DISTANT DRONE from the AIR HANDLING UNITS in the lowest basement. Looking up, he sees the underside of a steel arch, the geodesic dome and a hazy blue sky beyond. He climbs the ladder one-handed with his tea flask DANGLING from a string.

QUASI EXT. BEE'S ROOFTOP - AFTERNOON

Reaching the rooftop, Tom picks his way between knee height water troughs to inspect the readout on the trunk of his photovoltaic 'tree'. He pats the side of its trunk like a rider pats a racehorse to keep going. A metal plaque is tacked to the trunk 'planted 06.08.2034'. The panel stretches the width of his home. It tracks both the sun and the solar distributor. He shields his eyes from the light that penetrates between his unit and his neighbors'.

Satisfied with what he sees, Tom lies down on a reed mat laid between two salt water tanks. The tanks are full of seaweed. He lies flat and his body disappears from view.

Some moments later WATER NOISES are heard off screen as objects are lifted and replaced into water. The WATER NOISES continue. BOB JOOSTEN, mid 40's, chubby, smiley, leans over the small gap between the two rooftops inspecting his neighbor's seaweed.

TOM (O.S.)

Get your hands off my weed Bob ...

Bob looks around in shock not knowing where the voice came from.

TOM (O.S.)

Grow your own fuel!

Tom props up onto his elbows to make himself visible.

BOB

Oh! Hi, Tom, didn't see you there ...  
everything OK?

TOM

Yes ... if you stop stealing my weed.

BOB

Just looking, thinking of buying some tanks  
myself when I get enough bars to my name.

(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

They still haven't caught the guy who crashed the dome. I pity the man when they do, assuming it is a man.

(then)

How's Bee?

TOM

To be honest Bob, I'm worried about her ... she's doesn't seem to care about anything. And she's taking some wild risks. Last week she and Ru abseiled the old ABC tower!

BOB

Rufan a bad influence?

TOM

The budding businessman? ... no ... just Bee's unstable right now and she's stubborn ... like her Mom.

Tom pauses at the mention of his wife so casually in conversation. He checks the time on his phonewatch then sits up fully.

TOM

You wanna go watch the game?

BOB

Sure, it's too hot here.

Tom stands up with his flask in hand. He spies two FIGURES preparing to climb the underside of the dome.

TOM

Must be even hotter up there.

QUASI EXT. UNDERSIDE OF BUBBLE DOME - AFTERNOON

Rufan and Bee adjust their harnesses. They clip onto the safety line that runs the length of the arch. Rufan's body seems more

alert strapped into a harness primed for adventure. He wears circular mirrored lenses with brown leather side pieces. The sunglasses are over a hundred years old. His short black afro hair bristles in the hot air. He checks the safety line ahead of them.

Helicopters BUZZ above the Bubble. Water streaks down the roof in several places. Cleaner drones held on ropes wash the dome. The water evaporates to nothing before reaching the ground.

BEE

The choppers are busy today ... Dad'll be tired after his shift.

Rufan turns to look at Bee. He sees she is ready.

RUFAN

(rhetorically)

You ready?

BEE

Is it worth it?

RUFAN

Trust me.

Three steel tubes latticed together make up a single arch of the dome structure. The steel mesh walkway follows the top side of the bottom tube. The incline starts steep then flattens out.

QUASI EXT - HALFWAY UP (UNDERSIDE OF BUBBLE DOME) - AFTERNOON

Bee stops to take a drink. Her name is scratched into the aluminum face of her water bottle. It catches the light.

RUFAN

You and Lydia OK?

BEE

I was working on something private.

Rufan looks up the walkway.

BEE  
(looking for reassurance)  
I'm like a private island.

He looks back at her.

RUFAN  
Every man's dream!  
(looks back up the walkway)  
Let's keep going. We wanna get there  
before the light fades.

Bee wipes her mouth. She nods.

QUASI EXT. - ARCH APEX (UNDERSIDE OF BUBBLE DOME) - AFTERNOON

A separate ring beam holds the solar distributor mirrors and heat exchangers above the roofline. Each mirror has its own sun pipe beaming the purest sunlight down towards the solar photovoltaic farm below. The vertical mirrors individually rotate at the base of the sunpipes. From the top of the dome the mirrors are like a giant disco ball spreading their reflected light down onto the dance-floor.

BEE  
WOW, what a view!

RUFAN  
Blows you away doesn't it?

They sit down side by side, legs dangling through the walkway's open balustrade. Their shielded eyes continue to follow the dance of a hundred mirrors over a circular sea of PV panels.

RUFAN  
I thought you'd like it up here.

BEE

Sure looks random doesn't it? ...  
Each unit getting a fair proportion  
of the best sunlight on the planet.

Rufan's gaze shifts to the skyscrapers beyond the dome. He sees the ABC tower they conquered last week; the oil tankers moored on the river and the oil supply lines as they snake back towards the Bubble.

RUFAN

There's gotta be more to life than  
eat, sleep, survive ...

Bee turns to see he is looking out at the deserted city.

BEE

What d'you think happens when we die?

RUFAN

More light and beauty than our eyes can  
cope with.

Rufan pulls one of Jabbour's campaign flyers from his khaki cargo pants. A few folds later and he hands a paper airplane to Bee. She throws it into the void below. They watch it fly away.

RUFAN

Good arm.

BEE

Good luck?

Rufan holds her shoulder and kisses the side of her head. His eyes glimpse a red haze on the horizon.

RUFAN

Storm's coming.

Bee twists out of the cozy embrace to see what her boyfriend is looking at. The horizon appears red, fuzzy and growing. Rufan

stands up. He looks across the underside of the solar mirrors.

RUFAN

I wanna go look for any keepers on the far side.

BEE

Let's go back.

RUFAN

Go on Bee. Never know who's left what.

Bee stands up. She stays put. Further around the ring beam's narrow walkway, Rufan spots an object blocking the way, something hidden under a crinkled silver blanket. He strides up to it but jumps back in horror. Straggled hair and bad feet stick out from under the blanket.

It is the Outsider.

RUFAN

(raised voice)

Woh!

BEE

(raised voice)

What is it?

RUFAN

(raised voice)

Wasn't expecting this.

Rufan lifts up the blanket to get a decent look. Bee reluctantly walks around to join him. She stands behind him, between the handrails. She sees a foot sticking out from under the blanket.

BEE

(hushed voice)

Ru, don't. This is serious. Don't touch!

Rufan lifts the crinkled edge and peers underneath at the man.

RUFAN

He looks half dead.

BEE

Well, leave him. Let's go.

RUFAN

He might have some valuable stuff on him.

BEE

Forget it. We should go tell ops.

RUFAN

Give me a minute.

Rufan checks under the blanket then slowly lifts it off.

BEE

(quietly)

What are you doing?

RUFAN

Just looking, he's fast asleep.

BEE

(looking away)

Ru, come on.

Rufan riffles through the man's belongings. He takes longer than a minute. Bee's curiosity overtakes her and she steals a glance. The man's breathing is labored. He is dehydrated.

RUFAN

Not much here.

BEE

He looks ill.

Bee unclips her water bottle.

BEE

Here, give him this.

Bee hands her water bottle to Rufan. He lays it down next to the Outsider's mono-wheel (the man is using his wheel as a pillow). Rufan pinches the Outsider's Swiss army pen knife and replaces the silver blanket as before.

BEE

Can we go now?

RUFAN

Yeah. Let's go.

Rufan and Bee walk back down the same tube.

BEE

I saw what you took.

RUFAN

Couldn't resist.

BEE

Just get us back down.

INT. BUBBLE OPERATIONS CENTER - AFTERNOON

DUTY OFFICERS #1 and #2 review CCTV footage on the monitors whilst the Lieutenant PORES over PHOTOS of the Outsider CRASHING the dome. A scattering of empty mugs litters the meeting table.

Reynolds enters the room holding his trusty mug.

REYNOLDS

Have you found the freak who ruined my day?

LIEUTENANT

Still on the case Chief.

Reynolds looks unimpressed.

DUTY OFFICER #1  
Chief, perimeter power is off again.

Reynolds more unimpressed.

REYNOLDS  
I know ... CEO election results.

The Duty Officer's CELLPHONE RINGS. She answers.

DUTY OFFICER #2  
Operations.

She listens to the speaker then covers the mouthpiece.

DUTY OFFICER #2  
Chief, you're gonna wanna hear this.

REYNOLDS  
Put it on speakerphone.

The Duty Officer puts REVANT SEKHON on speakerphone.

DUTY OFFICER #2  
Repeat what you just said.

REVANT SEKHON (V.O.)  
We found him - the outsider - asleep!

Reynolds takes up the phone into his own hand.

REYNOLDS  
Don't touch him. Where is he?

REVANT SEKHON (V.O.)  
Up on roof - next to distributor.

REYNOLDS  
OK. Hold on, we'll send a team up to you.

Reynolds covers the mouthpiece.

REYNOLDS

Lieutenant, take your men and a paramedic.  
Get that freak into quarantine a.s.a.p.

He releases his grip over the mouthpiece.

REYNOLDS

Caller, what's your name?

REVANT SEKHON (V.O.)

Revant Sekhon - solar engineer.

REYNOLDS

OK, Revant. Stay there. We're on our way.

REVANT SEKHON (V.O.)

There is water bottle next to the man -  
with name I recognize - Bee Wang - she  
lives in my sector.

REYNOLDS

OK. You'll need to follow my team to the  
quarantine clinic after you come down off  
the roof. Is there anyone else with you?

REVANT SEKHON (V.O.)

My colleague.

REYNOLDS

You'll both need to report to quarantine.  
Is that clear?

REVANT SEKHON (V.O.)

OK.

Reynolds ends the call.

He turns to face Duty Officer #2.

REYNOLDS

We'll have to get that other one in  
for questioning too. Get on the P.A.  
for Bee Wang.

QUASI EXT. - BUBBLE OUTER RING - AFTERNOON

Rufan and Bee walk along the base of the dome slightly apart from  
each other, their figures dwarfed by the photovoltaic 'trees'  
and their lengthening shadows. The sky is tinted red.

CLICK-CLICK echoes through the pressurized air under the dome.

P.A. SYSTEM (FEMALE VOICE)

The intruder has been located. Thank you  
for your co-operation. Ms. Bee Wang to  
report to quarantine.

Bee's pale Asian complexion drains of blood, she stops in her  
tracks. Rufan continues some paces before turning back to her.

RUFAN

Bee ... you Ok? What's the matter?

BEE

I can't go to quarantine.

RUFAN

Why not? Should just be routine?

BEE

I can't go to quarantine ...

Rufan looks puzzled.

BEE

It's coz I gave my water to that man.

RUFAN

There you go. Nothing to worry about.

BEE

I can't go back to where Mom died.

RUFAN

I thought you'd worked through things after changing your name?

BEE

I had ... but I can't. It's still too close.

RUFAN

They just wanna check you out. The man's an outsider.

BEE

(sharp tone)

What's it got to do with me? Why don't they want you? You rummaged through his stuff. I didn't touch him!

RUFAN

They want you Bee, it won't take half an hour.

Bee walks away then back.

BEE

I know it's irrational, I can't go. I can't go to quarantine ... if I could, I'd forget this whole bloody place!

RUFAN

Maybe you could hide ... for the rest of the day, let it all blow over. They'll all be focused on the election ...

Bee looks into the distance along the rows of PV panels.

RUFAN

You could hide at Waz's place ...

He pauses to think further. Bee is still miles away.

RUFAN

But that won't work coz ops can track  
your neckchip.

BEE

Take me home Ru. I wanna talk to Dad.

INT. SOUTH SECTOR LANE CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

Bee keeps her head down. The narrow lane is punctuated with curved walls, metal doorways and shafts of tired sunlight. A blue light from her cellphone screen frustrates her.

BEE

Dad's not answering his phone

In front of her door (number 21 stenciled onto its metal face) she pulls out her key card and swipes down through the slot.

RUFAN

(hushed voice)

Maybe he's asleep.

INT. BEE'S HOME - DAY

Bee checks to see if her boyfriend is right.

BEE

Where are you when I need you?

She sinks, head in hands.

BEE

Where are you Dad?

Rufan spots a phonewatch in the gloom and gestures to Bee.

BEE

What was your idea?

RUFAN

Hide out at Waz's place for a few hours. He's in the lowest basement. He's got a piece of kit he likes to keep secret ...

Bee looks blank.

RUFAN

What he does. It's not strictly legal. But it's a great way to spend a few hours ... if you can afford it.

BEE

What you talking about?

RUFAN

His simulator. They banned it coz they don't understand it. He's got a neurogaming system with an A.I. bolt-on. Clever computers synced to your short term memory. He's just set up again. No one knows his new place yet.

BEE

Is it safe?

RUFAN

He's never had a problem. He's good. You could lie low for a bit. No one would look for you there ... what about your neckchip though?

BEE

Got just the thing.

Bee lifts a tube from inside her cargo pant pocket and unrolls her Srface PC onto the glass table in front of her.

RUFAN

You've got a program that masks your neckchip signal?

BEE

I've designed it to bounce my location all over the Bubble. Every ten minutes it sends out a new false signal.

RUFAN

That must be worth a bar or two.

BEE

(smiling)

Or three, I've written you one too.

Rufan stands for a moment admiring his girlfriend tapping away on her Srface flexi-screen then pulls out his cellphone to dial.

RUFAN

Waz, how you doing? You got time? Now?

He waits for an affirmative.

RUFAN

Book it for one, in fifteen.

He hangs up.

BEE

You not coming with me?

RUFAN

Not got enough credit ... got enough for you. I'll come with you, get you set up.

BEE

OK, programs are running. Let's go.

Bee picks up an old baseball cap and pulls it down over her eyes.

INT. WAZ'S SIM - AFTERNOON

WAZ, early 40's, a techie with a grunge look, peers through the parted curtains of his long blonde fringe. He wears the latest phonewatch but holds an older cellphone in his hand. His face looks hollowed out in the reflected light of a cellphone message.

KNOCK-KNOCK, he blackens the screen and TAPS the CELLPHONE on the only clear area of his workbench, echoing the knock at the door. The stand-to workbench is a jumble of cables and dissected computers. He slots the cellphone into a pocket in his skin tight jeans.

KNOCK-KNOCK.

WAZ

Yeh, Yeh. Who is it?

RUFAN

Me. And Bee.

WAZ

You and who?

RUFAN

Bee, my girlfriend.

Waz turns the deadbolt and opens the door ajar with his foot wedged behind; ineffectively guarding against a forced entry. He checks the voice matches the face. Rufan and Bee step into the room. Waz locks the door after them.

In the center of the circular room is Waz's latest creation, two flat beds on the floor either side of a computer stack. A grid of cooling fans covers the computer's external skin and thick coaxial cables connect its 'brain' to two Y-pronged headsets and two hooped neck-braces. Screens of differing sizes pepper the face of the machine; a pinchpad, keyboard and microphone finish the assembly.

WAZ

First time you brought a lady friend ...

Waz inspects Bee like a voyeur-operated body scan.

WAZ

He's kept you quiet.

RUFAN

From you!

Waz turns back towards one of the carcasses on his workbench and fumbles for some motherboards under a computer case.

WAZ

(to himself)

My G time's going to be fun tonight.

RUFAN

Easy Waz.

Rufan jolts him from his lewd imaginings.

He forgets the boards.

WAZ

Just messing with you, what can I do you for buddy? Thrills, spills or a bit of both?

RUFAN

Nothing too gory, it's for Bee, not me. She's a first-timer so you'll need to walk her through it.

WAZ

With pleasure.

Waz guides their eyes to the center of the room. He raises his arms like a conductor about to start a symphony.

WAZ

This is my baby. It'll take images and experiences from your short term memory and interweave them into a game world. So if you want to fight zombies in the classroom or drive Sandsweepers round the solar farm, we can do that ...

He pauses for the climax.

WAZ

And make it feel real.

Waz lifts a headset and neck-brace up for his audience of one.

WAZ

The headset picks up images from your short term memory and feeds them to the computer. The A.I. sifts the images into a preset game then the neck-brace sends the signals back into your nervous system. Because you're sedated and have processed the images recently your brain tricks you into believing it's real.

Waz pauses expecting applause.

BEE

Doesn't it use a lot of power?

WAZ

I've got a few friends who are well connected!

(to Rufan)

Shame you're not joining her. Two player link ups are always more fun. Things get mashed up ... unexpected.

RUFAN

I would if you lowered your price.

WAZ

Sorry buddy, a man's gotta eat.

RUFAN

(to Bee)

How long you wanna hide down here?

BEE

I'm not sure about this Ru. I didn't realize there would be needles involved.

RUFAN

It's either needles here or needles in quarantine.

The thought of quarantine stumps her. She breathes hard.

BEE

Live like there's no tomorrow! two hours, you got enough credit?

Rufan nods.

BEE

You sure?

RUFAN

Yeah. Let's do it, should be fun. What game do you reckon Waz?

WAZ

Roleplays are best for newbies.

BEE

OK?

RUFAN

OK.

WAZ

OK ...

Waz steps up to the screens to start his symphony.

WAZ

I'll need to pull down your vitals  
from the OS database. It helps the A.I.  
sync the game back to your body. What's  
your full name sweetheart?

BEE

Bee Wang.

Waz does a double take lifting his hand off the pinchpad.

RUFAN

Waz, you OK?

WAZ

(like a judge passing sentence)

Bee Wang.

Silence in court.

WAZ

Didn't the P.A. just put a call out  
for you?

RUFAN

Is that a problem?

The two teenagers shift uneasily in front of Waz.

RUFAN

OK if she lays low for a few hours?

WAZ

Is she clean?

BEE

I didn't touch him.

WAZ

His loss!

RUFAN

Waz! Are you clean?! Can I trust you?

Waz seems distant calculating something. He clutches his index finger with his thumb and PONDERs the KEYBOARD with his middle finger.

WAZ

Yeah. Sure. No worries, two hours.

Waz pulls out his cellphone and lays it next to the pinchpad. He picks up a headset and neck-brace motioning for Bee to lie down on the padded mat.

WAZ

OK sweetheart let's hook you up.

BEE

Ru, stay with me.

RUFAN

I gotta help my Dad at the Watergate.

Waz wipes Bee's forehead with a dry cloth. He checks the array of white disc electrodes on the neck brace then tailors it to her body along with the Y-pronged headset.

BEE

Stay with me Ru.

(then)

'til I'm sedated.

INT. WAZ'S SIM - AFTERNOON - BEE POV

Rufan folds into a cross-legged position next to Bee, his hands clutching his ankles, his gaze switching between Bee and his friend. Waz continues to prep the system then goes to a cupboard

on the far side of the room. Bee tilts her head. She sees Waz pull out a needle and syringe. The room darkens in her mind. The LED spot lights above her cluster together like the lights in an operating theater. She reaches out to squeeze Rufan's hand. He squeezes back.

WAZ

Oh, forgot to mention, try not to sweat.  
It messes up the sensors.

BEE (O.S.)

You're about to stick a needle in me!

Rufan reads the situation and times a long kiss to her cheek for the duration of the colorless fluid entering her body. Her eyes drift from Rufan to Waz and back again.

Bee's eyes blur in and out and finally close.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. WAZ'S SIM - AFTERNOON

FADE IN

WAZ

You're OK to go. She's safely under.

RUFAN

I'll be at the Watergate. Call the guard  
room if you need me. My phone's off.

Waz nods once. Rufan unlocks the deadbolt and exits the room. Waz follows him to lock the door then returns to check Bee's life signs and the computer's machinations. He picks up his old cellphone to send a message.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. WAZ'S SIM - AFTERNOON

FADE IN

Bee lies motionless on the floor mat, her eyes closed.

KNOCK-KNOCK, Waz opens the door with his habitual foot move. Smart black leather shoes enter the room and stand opposite Waz's open-neck converse boots.

JABBOUR (O.S.)

Wake her up.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. WAZ'S SIM - AFTERNOON

FADE IN

Waz pulls another needle and syringe from the opposite side of the drawer. He WIPES Bee's arm with an ANTISEPTIC CLOTH and SPIKES her forearm a second time ... nothing. He FLICKS the SIDE OF HER CHEEK with his middle finger ... nothing.

JABBOUR

Try the hot cold treatment.

Waz submits to his new paymaster. He fills one bowl with hot water, one with iced water and lays a hand in each. Nothing happens. Moments later a wet patch spreads across her pants and she stirs.

WAZ

Sorry sweetheart had to wake you up.  
You've got a visitor.

Jabbour bends at his mid-rift to look into her eyes

JABBOUR

Everyone is looking for you.

BEE

Where's Ru?

JABBOUR

Ms. Wang, I just want to ask you a few questions. It won't take long.

BEE

Waz, where's Ru?

JABBOUR

Waz, would you give me some moments alone with Ms. Wang?

Waz acquiesces and exits the room. Jabbour locks the door.

JABBOUR

Sorry to startle you my dear. I have something on my mind.

He pulls out a wooden bar stool from under the workbench. He turns it backwards, sits and slants his head to look down at Bee.

JABBOUR

Pardon the intrusion. Do you know who I am?

BEE

Yes.

JABBOUR

Do you mind me asking a few questions?

BEE

(Strength returning)

Yes. Not like this ... where's Ru?

JABBOUR

Ms. Wang you have a choice before you. Your teacher tells me you are working

(MORE)

JABBOUR (CONT'D)

on some controversial research into my company's open source software. He also tells me you are a talented programmer. Now, talent needs employment after it graduates. It would be in your interests to co-operate with me ...

Bee is silent.

JABBOUR

Ms. Wang, it is not worth sacrificing your future by making an enemy of me. I am sure we can come to some amicable agreement if your research uncovers a few skeletons in my closet. No one is perfect, we just try to look perfect on TV ...

Bee tries to get up but she cannot.

JABBOUR

Let me see your cross check report, it will either force me to open my wallet or it will put my fears at rest and we can move on. The job offer I just mentioned could be yours. It would set you up for life ... either way, you win.

BEE

I did not invite you in here.

JABBOUR

No, but Waz did. I have a little deal with him too ...

(Silence) Jabbour expects a response.

JABBOUR

Do not blow this. Do not cross me Ms.

(MORE)

JABBOUR (CONT'D)

Wang. This is your last chance for the pleasant way of doing things. I have a busy schedule this evening.

Bee glares at Jabbour.

BEE

Let me speak to Waz or Ru.

JABBOUR

I was hoping not to have to do this.

Jabbour rises, unlocks the door and beckons in two DOCTORS, one MALE one FEMALE. They are wearing white lab coats and no expression. The Male Doctor pulls a Medivac capsule hovering on a cushion of air. He stops and lifts the lid, like a coffin.

JABBOUR

I need you two to work your magic.

Jabbour locks the door again. The Female Doctor lays out a stainless steel carry-box packed with equipment. She selects a glass vial and hypodermic needle. Bee rolls her head from side to side hoping her body will follow. The Male Doctor kneels down clamping her head with the insides of his knees.

BEE

(crying)

Where's Waz? What are you doing?

The Female Doctor continues her preparations jabbing the needle up into the vial, drawing the clear fluid. She squirts an excess into the air. Bee is frantic.

BEE

Where's Waz?

The others remain expressionless. Bee SHATTERS the SILENCE with an EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM. The Male Doctor smothers her mouth with his right hand.

Bee bites the Doctor.

MALE DOCTOR

DO IT.

The Female Doctor injects, releasing the fluid. Bee's entire body is devoid of motion. She relaxes her jaw and her eyes stare up at the ceiling like an uncared for corpse. She is ready for the coffin. The Doctors check Bee's body and her life signs on the computer monitors. The screens confirm a state similar to suspended animation.

FEMALE DOCTOR

We have half an hour before the drugs wear off and she starts screaming again.

JABBOUR

Her neckchip has been taken care of.  
Does she have a phone?

The Female Doctor performs a thorough body search. She finds an old fashioned cellphone but it is dripping with urine. She offers it to Jabbour. He wraps his hand with a white handkerchief. He takes the phone and STAMPS on it to make sure.

The Male Doctor brings the medivac capsule alongside the bed mat.

JABBOUR

Take her to the helipad. Nibo's office will be quiet. They are still decorating. Do not hurt her but get her to talk. I need file locations and passwords.

MALE DOCTOR

Are you not coming with us?

Jabbour is at the doorway. He unlocks the door.

JABBOUR

I will. Call me when she is ready.

QUASI EXT. - WATERGATE - DUSK

The last of the sunlight shines on the Watergate's airlock door. A stenciled 03 logo denotes its position on the Bubble's outer rim. The large water intake valve gives the gate its nickname. A YOUNG BOY squats guarding a blue plastic canister, catching the valve's occasional drips.

KAM LEWIS, in his late 40's, both grubby and respectable in equal measure, prepares large opaque plastic canisters into lines in front of the airlock door. Grime layers the tubs, their insides, full of food waste. Rufan manipulates the trash van's hydraulic arm making the line of tubs more orderly. He rushes the job, knocking a tub and its lid dislodges. Rotting veg spills out.

KAM

Easy with the tubs Ru ...

Kam walks back between the van's high-sided metal panels.

KAM (O.S.)

Otherwise my boss will give me earache,  
'waste not, want not'.

Rufan jumps off the hydraulic arm platform to remedy his mistake. He scoops up the mess with gloved hands and replaces the lid to seal in the smell. His father reemerges.

RUFAN

This is a rough job Dad.

KAM

Recycling ... it's how we survive.

(then)

Did you hear that P.A. for Bee?

RUFAN

Yeah.

KAM

You know where she is?

RUFAN

Nope.

Rufan checks the time on his new wristwatch, diverting attention.

KAM

When was the last time you saw her?

RUFAN

Up on the roof, I left her at her place.

KAM

Have you tried calling her?

Rufan (looking away) stands below the van's rear-end platform.

RUFAN

Her phone's off.

Kam tidies the van's floor with a broom.

KAM

What does quarantine want with Bee?  
You need to go too?

RUFAN

Dunno. Are we done here?

KAM

Yeah. Go sign off with the guards.

Rufan walks past two doctors (one male, one female) preparing a medivac capsule. They sort through documents on top of the capsule's lid. Doctors at the Watergate during election night seems strange to Rufan but he cannot see past the files.

Rufan signs the logbook in the guardroom and conducts some scav business with the GUARDS. They buy Rufan's newly acquired

penknife with some easy negotiations (silent hand gestures).

KAM

What was that all about?

RUFAN

Bit of business. Can I drive?

Kam slides across the trash van's cab seat to let his son take over. He settles behind the steering wheel like a seasoned pro. He POWERS the TRUCK through a short WHEEL SPIN. The tires and his Dad disapprove. The Doctors move their documents into a neat pile on the medivac capsule's lid but Rufan still cannot see inside the pod as he drives past.

INT. MEDIVAC CAPSULE - DUSK

Bee looks up through the Plexiglas aperture in the capsule's lid. She sees the large white 03 logo on the Watergate's airlock door. She knows Rufan could be here with his Dad. She is unable to move her body but feels a scream surge up from within her.

BEE

Ru, get me out of here! Ru, are you there?  
GET ME OUT OF HERE!

QUASI EXT. - WATERGATE - DUSK

The Female Doctor picks up the files to look inside the capsule.

Bee is lifeless.

The Female Doctor removes her cellphone from a buttoned pocket. She motions to her colleague at the same time.

FEMALE DOCTOR

We're ready.

INT. - WATERGATE GUARDROOM - DUSK

JOHN HOLT, early 30's, Caucasian, plays poker on his phonewatch. SAMUEL JEFFERIES, late 20's, Black (sat behind the same desk) stares through a portable TV screen, the news bulletin does not interest him. He fiddles with his new army penknife.

The guardroom is sparse and seedy.

HOLT

He's got me.

JEFFERIES

Lemme see.

Jefferies switches his stare from his screen to his friend's.

JEFFERIES

Not lookin' good. How much?

HOLT

Too much.

They focus on the news as a welcome distraction.

TV ANNOUNCER (FEMALE VOICE)

And now to other news ... the helipad's Sandsweeper loading bay was officially opened today by its owner Charles Nibo and CEO candidate, Caleb Jabbour. Mr Nibo heralds the development as part of his long term vision for the helipad zone ...

JEFFERIES

Nibo and Jabbour holdin' hands again!

HOLT

They grease my wheel.

JEFFERIES

Gotta share the love next time my man.

HOLT

Yeah, Yeah. No worries.

At the doorway, the Male Doctor coughs to call the Guards outside.

QUASI EXT. WATERGATE - DUSK

The Guards saunter over to the capsule. They peer at Bee, peering back at them and browse through the documents presented to them by the Doctors.

MALE DOCTOR

Urgent package to airlift, she's prepped for cryosleep.

JEFFERIES

Thought no one could afford it anymore.

The Female Doctor hands more false documents to Holt.

MALE DOCTOR

This one was sitting on a huge diamond. Cryosleep has agreed payment.

Holt prefers to sift through the first set of documents.

HOLT

Any other diamonds lying around on south sector level 3?

FEMALE DOCTOR

Gentlemen, time is of the essence. We need a transit to the helipad a.s.a.p.

The Doctors shift uneasily in front of the Guards. The Female Doctor fingers the canvas strap on her carry-box.

JEFFERIES

Transit's down.

MALE DOCTOR

We need a local over-ride.

FEMALE DOCTOR

We can make it worth your while.

A FIGURE loiters in the distance.

HOLT

I'll need to clear it with operations.

FEMALE DOCTOR

(stressed)

No, don't. They'll tie us up in red tape.  
We've got a helicopter waiting ...

She stops to look at her colleague. He gestures agreement.

FEMALE DOCTOR

We can make it REALLY worth your while.

Holt and Jefferies look at each other and agree with their eyes. Holt checks to see if any strangers are watching. He does not see the Figure in the distance (the Young Boy has disappeared).

HOLT

I can give you fifteen minutes of  
emergency lighting in the tunnel and  
power for the transit ... one way.

The group conducts financial negotiations with hand symbols. They agree a price and the guards pull out their individual bar cards to receive payment. The contactless payment takes less than a second.

MALE DOCTOR

OK?

HOLT

Follow me.

The doctors follow the guards to the other side of the guardroom with the medivac capsule in tow on its cushion of air. The Figure steps forward from the shadows. It is Caleb Jabbour. He approaches the guards, busy preparing the transit platform.

JABBOUR

John, it looks like I have timed it well.  
I need some gifts from Nibo's office for  
the speeches tonight.

JEFFERIES

No guarantee you'll win!

Holt smiles. Jefferies smiles back. Jabbour smiles knowingly.

HOLT

OK, you can go too but you'll need to  
call me for the ride back. Power's in  
high demand this evening.

Jabbour and the two doctors pretend to be strangers. They stand awkwardly together on the transit platform. Holt operates the computer system. Jefferies straps a safety belt over the top of the capsule.

INT. MEDIVAC CAPSULE - DUSK

Bee sees the shoulder of a guard's uniform above her.

BEE

(screams)

HEY, HEY! Get me out of here. HEY!  
Can you hear me? ... I'M TRAPPED.

The guard does not look down and soon disappears. LIGHTS above her SWITCH ON then shrink as the platform descends. She hears the BUZZ of the TRANSIT PLATFORM and some MUFFLED VOICES. The platform moves forwards a short distance. A single strip of LEDs replaces the spotlights above. The dots of the individual LED

bulbs blur into a single line as the platform speeds out of the station. The Bubble slips away from her as the light snakes left and right in its concrete channel.

INT. BUBBLE OPERATIONS CENTER - DUSK

The air feels heavy with tiredness. Reynolds, Lieutenant and Duty officer #1 review their strategy for the evening's upcoming election results party. Screens show a plethora of guest lists, security tags and emergency exit procedures. The contingencies differ depending on who wins the election.

Reynolds is mugless and grouchy.

REYNOLDS

OK, is that the last of it? Are we happy with the contingencies?

DUTY OFFICER #1

Mr. Wei, wants us to scroll the verse he quoted from Isaiah up on the screens.

REYNOLDS

He can sod off! Anything else?

LIEUTENANT

The outsider is recovering in quarantine. Early signs are he's clean and no threat. They say he's delusional. We think he's from one of the outlying sub-stations but we can't confirm coz the lines are down.

REYNOLDS

OK, I need a drink.

Tom enters the reception area and confronts the unprepared DESKMAN. Reynolds spots him through the glass.

REYNOLDS

More trouble ...

Tom is shown through to the operations center and the Deskman happily disappears to wash out the earful he just received.

REYNOLDS

Problem?

TOM

My daughter is missing!

REYNOLDS

You sure?

TOM

'course I'm sure. Something's not right.

REYNOLDS

Lieutenant, can you deal with Mr. ...?

TOM

Mennings, and no he can't.

REYNOLDS

Mr. Mennings, I'm sure there's a perfectly logical explanation for your daughter being off the radar. She's probably with her boyfriend.

TOM

His phone's off too.

REYNOLDS

There you go ... do not disturb!

Others laugh; Tom does not.

TOM

It's not funny. I know them. It's not like them. Something's not right.

REYNOLDS

OK, OK, what's her name?

TOM

Bee Wang.

Reynolds straightens to look directly at Tom.

REYNOLDS

We've been looking for her too. No idea where she is?

TOM

No, a few missed calls and then nothing.

REYNOLDS

What's the boyfriend's name?

TOM

Rufan Lewis.

REYNOLDS

(to his Lieutenant)

Search his movements.

The Lieutenant manipulates his pinchpad for location data.

REYNOLDS

Nothing untoward 'til today?

TOM

Her Mom died recently.

The Lieutenant looks up from his screen.

LIEUTENANT

Chief, his location is bouncing all over the place just like her's.

TOM

What do you mean?

Reynolds holds up a tracking device with Bee's ID data.

DATA BANK READS: BEE WANG (FORMER NAME BEE MENNINGS)  
BORN: 2024.11.09 SHANGHAI, CHINA  
FATHER: TOM MENNINGS  
MOTHER: BEATRICE WANG (DECEASED)  
ID TAG: 24-04989-BM  
LOCATION: 01-2-407

REYNOLDS

She's not where this says she is. Her location jumps every ten minutes. She's not there, we've checked. Sometimes the system goes haywire ... today's one of those days.

TOM

Can't you fix it?

REYNOLDS

We could reset the system ...

Tom's body relaxes given a glimmer of hope.

REYNOLDS

But it'll have to wait 'til after the CEO results because a reset would mess up everything.

TOM

But that's still several hours away. My daughter is missing!

REYNOLDS

Mr. Mennings I appreciate your concern but I'm sure there's an explanation for your daughter's disappearance. If she's not turned up once the results are in, we'll reset.

TOM

This is ridiculous.

REYNOLDS

No, it's reasonable. Lieutenant, escort  
Mr. Mennings out.

The Lieutenant motions for Tom to move towards the door. He resists the push at his side and glares at Reynolds. An uncomfortable pause is broken by Tom lunging over the desk at Reynolds.

Reynolds backs away but misses the real reason for Tom's action. After feigning an attack, Tom's right hand drags along the face of the desk and lifts Bee's tracker into his pocket. Tom leaves with his right hand disguising the steal.

REYNOLDS

I need that drink.

INT. HELIPAD TRANSIT STATION - DUSK

The transit platform slides into its docking station under the helipad. The two Doctors push and pull the medivac capsule towards the elevator shaft.

BANG-CLUNK reverberates around in the tunnel behind them.

FEMALE DOCTOR

What was that?

They spin round, their senses heightened.

MALE DOCTOR

Probably nothing ...

Staring into the tube, they see nothing but the light strip above.

Then blackness.

JABBOUR

Time's up.

MALE DOCTOR

Probably noises from the air system.

JABBOUR

Up to Nibo's office.

The elevator car works as normal but the place is deserted. The group rides the elevator up to the executive suite level.

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE LEVEL - DUSK

The Doctors reassure each other with side glances before exiting into a dimly lit corridor. The mahogany side panels absorb most of the available light and the capsule's blown air bounces off cold marble tiles. Occasional windows to the outside show dark tower podiums shrouded in sand. The WIND BATTERS the WINDOWS, the SANDSTORM, in full swing, trying to break in.

Jabbour opens double doors at the end of the corridor. The Doctors slide the capsule into a spacious office. Jabbour locks the door behind them.

INT. NIBO'S OFFICE - DUSK

Dust sheets cover Nibo's office furniture; plain white walls await decoration. The red rage beyond the windows, projects a temporary exhibition of blood on white.

The Doctors set the capsule down against a blank wall and a diagonal trestle table. They lift the lid and unhinge its side panel to expose Bee's body to the floor. The Doctors transfer her limp body onto a floor mat. Then the Female Doctor swings her stainless steel box off her shoulder to select her magic.

JABBOUR

What next?

FEMALE DOCTOR

Inject the truth serum, wake her up  
and she will tell you anything you  
want to know ...

The Female Doctor selects a vial and a hypodermic needle. The Male Doctor looks at Bee's life signs on a portable screen.

FEMALE DOCTOR

Mr. Jabbour, you'll need to help us.

The Male Doctor's knees straddle Bee's head, his hands clamp down on hers. Jabbour holds her feet. The Female Doctor jams the needle high into Bee's exposed thigh. Bee's body reacts violently and the two men restrain her limbs until a coma-like equilibrium returns to her body.

FEMALE DOCTOR

Time to wake her up.

She holds a pre-prepared needle, wipes Bee's arm and jabs again. Bee's chest rises, gasping for air like she's been submerged in water too long, eyes wide grasping for life. She does not scream. She glares at Jabbour.

BEE

What have you done? Where am I?  
Where's Waz?

JABBOUR

Ms. Wang, do not worry.

The Male Doctor observes Bee's life signs on the screen.

MALE DOCTOR

She's ready.

JABBOUR

OK, my dear, what is the content of  
your cross check report? ...

Silence. Bee stares at Jabbour.

JABBOUR

I do not have all day Ms. Wang. What is the risk to me and my election? ...

Bee transfers her glare from Jabbour to the Doctors, and back.

JABBOUR

I need to protect my interests ...

More silence.

JABBOUR

Ms. Wang?

BEE

(screams)

HELP! Get me out of here. I'M TRAPPED.

JABBOUR

Scream all you like. No one can hear you ...

Jabbour addresses the Doctors.

JABBOUR

Why is this not working?

MALE DOCTOR

I ... I don't know.

The Female Doctor shrugs her shoulders. The Male Doctor revisits Bee's life signs on the screen. Bee continues to YELL.

BEE

ANYONE THERE? HELP ME!

MALE DOCTOR

In her mind, she is fighting back.

FEMALE DOCTOR

That's impossible.

KNOCK-KNOCK, at the door, the startled three turn toward the door. The Male Doctor rises. The DOOR RATTLES briefly ... SLAM. Rufan shoulder barges the door as the Male Doctor reaches for the handle. The door flies open knocking him against the wall.

BEE

Ru!

Rufan assesses the room in a moment and zones in on Bee's voice. The Female Doctor blocks his route to Bee. The Male Doctor arrives to tackle him from behind. Rufan reacts to the grapple hold but he cannot shake free.

RUFAN

Bee, you OK?

Rufan struggles two against one. Jabbour retreats to the far side of the office. He lifts the corner of a dust sheet to expose Nibo's ornate executive desk. He knows it well. He locates Nibo's classic IOF.32 from the top right drawer. He holds the gun up to the scrum beside Bee.

JABBOUR

Back off boy! ...

Rufan relents seeing the gun barrel boring down on him.

JABBOUR

No one invited you! Back down.

Rufan's body wilts in the grip of the gun and the Male Doctor.

BEE

How did you find me?

RUFAN

I followed the transit platform.

JABBOUR

Impressive but useless, now, sit down  
with her. Let us try something new.

The Doctors release their hold on Rufan and happily step away from the eye of the gun. Jabbour first tracks Rufan as he reunites with Bee on the floor then twists to aim his gun at the Doctors.

BAM-BAM, the gun spits two bullets, one each.

Rufan and Bee cower together at the edge of the decorator's table, their eyes out on stalks staring at the dead Doctors.

JABBOUR

They were proving ineffective ...

He walks over to the Doctors to check his effectiveness then turns towards the teenagers. He passes beyond them following the grains of the tabletop with the tip of his gun.

JABBOUR

Let us try a different approach. I am  
going to be honest with you Ms. Wang ...

He pauses to gather his thoughts.

JABBOUR

A month before the asteroid struck the earth I discovered my wife had a terminal illness. We decided to use cryosleep until a cure could be found in the future. The plan was for me to join her once I had put our affairs in order but the chaos of the sulphur cloud ruined all that.

Jabbour contemplates red swirls on the wall in front of him.

RUFAN

What's this got to do with Bee?

Jabbour reengages.

JABBOUR

My programming skills enabled me and my friends to get rich, but not rich enough. I have now BOUGHT this election. The keys to the city are MY key ... I love democracy! The clinic's current owners need viable payment and I have agreed, once I am CEO, to sell to them the Bubble's entire power supply in exchange for my own cryopod. By the time Reynolds works out the battery cells have all been depleted I will be safely frozen in time.

RUFAN

But what's this got to do with Bee?

JABBOUR

She knows. That's why she's keeping quiet. Depending on the contents of her research she could jeopardize my plan by simply uploading her cross check report to a public server.

Jabbour looks outside at the storm.

JABBOUR

(ironically)

Open source governance, by the people,  
for the people.

BEE

How did I get into this mess ...

She stares vacantly at the crumpled Doctors on the floor.

BEE

I'm just me.

JABBOUR

Do you know what comes next my dear?  
I told you my sad story to help you  
see me in a different light when I  
do this.

He points the gun at her boyfriend.

BEE

No. Stop. Don't do it. I'll talk.  
I'll tell you what you want to know.

JABBOUR

That is more like it.

BEE

Put the gun down.

Jabbour complies with her request. He LAYS the GUN down on the trestle tabletop. Rufan seizes the opportunity. He SHOVES his end of the loose laid tabletop into Jabbour's side trapping him against the wall. The GUN FALLS to the floor along with several PAINT POTS.

Rufan grabs Bee's hand and they sprint for the door. Jabbour writhes in pain and anger. The pain delays his reaction. He pushes back the tabletop and bends for the gun. Rufan and Bee are already at the doorway when he takes aim.

Rufan shields Bee with his body. She clears the threshold when he HEARS another BAM from the GUN. PLASTERBOARD and POWDER SPLATTERS the corridor between them and they run on. Jabbour curses his poor aim and injured side before giving chase.

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The corridor is darker than before. Bee races towards a green emergency exit sign, arms and heart pounding. Rufan follows running hard as another BULLET WHISTLES past his head. Jabbour sees his prey turn the corner into the escape stairwell.

JABBOUR

Shit!

He limps in pursuit. His pace quickens, gritting through the pain, clenched fists, face knotted. He HURLS his BODY at the escape door and the dark stairwell swallows him whole.

INT. BASE OF FIRE ESCAPE STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Jabbour enters the stairwell two levels above them. Rufan and Bee BUNDLE down the last few steps into an empty black space.

BEE

Where are we?

RUFAN

Sandsweeper loading bay.

They gauge Jabbour's progress above them then push through double doors into a cavernous space full of metal and wheels.

INT. SANDSWEEPER LOADING BAY - NIGHT

Rufan scours the fluorescent lit loading bay. He SLOTS a WOODEN BROOM through the door handles. Bee grabs two white space suits from a rack. They regroup and climb up into the nearest truck. The ladder's barnacled sand pinches Bee's soft hands.

THUD. Jabbour THUMPS the DOOR. RATTLE. Rufan and Bee look out through the open cab door. The door opens a slither to expose the broom handle. The GUN FIRES twice, BAM-CLICK. The door holds. The GUN CLATTERS to the floor. Jabbour WALKS away.

INT. L0128 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

Rufan and Bee pull on their suits in seconds. HELMETS SNAP SHUT and their breathing quickens, SUCKING OXYGEN from AIR TANKS.

The Sandsweeper cab has three distinct compartments. One bulbous space connected to the air lock door and the ladder below, a driver's cab to the left and a digger's cab to the right. Windbreak construction gear litters the central space.

RUFAN

Get up on the wheel, start her up.

Bee jumps up three steps into the driver's seat and turns the ignition. The ENGINE ROARS. Rufan seals the cabin door then replaces Bee in the driver's seat.

BEE

You know the airlock codes?

RUFAN

Got them on the last scav trip.

Rufan taps the code. A one minute countdown starts. They both look ahead at the vast airlock door ticking down to a way home. ALERT WARNINGS RING OUT around the hangar. Rufan reassures Bee with a squeeze of her hand. She squeezes back.

Suddenly, CRACK, a crowbar swings down from above. Bee SCREAMS.

The toughened windscreen splinters but holds. Jabbour (dressed in an orange space suit) jumps down onto the Sandsweeper's hood. His body moves freely. He attacks the glass repeatedly, his face tightening with each failed attempt.

Bee steps away from the battered glass. Rufan moves to find a weapon from the windbreak clutter. The countdown runs its course and the airlock door slides open.

RUFAN

(to Bee)

DRIVE!

A hole appears in the glass. Bee sits as Jabbour takes another backswing and hits the accelerator. TIRES SCREAM as the vehicle

kick-starts and the motion FLINGS JABBOUR against the glass. He FALLS into the hole. Rufan LANCES it with a METAL FENCE POST. JABBOUR SCREAMS, he DROPS the CROWBAR and rolls to his left.

Bee BRAKES to a halt in the airlock chamber. Jabbour FALLS to the floor. The inner door SLIDES SHUT and the outside air fills the gap. Flecks of dust float in with the toxic air.

EXT. AIRLOCK CHAMBER - NIGHT

Jabbour sways as he stands. He looks up at Bee, her face still stiff with fear. The outer airlock door slides open to reveal a blackened cityscape and the tail-end of the storm.

The ENGINE ROARS again and the Sandsweeper BLASTS OUT into the night. Its headlights burrow into the blackness. Jabbour watches them drive up onto the elevated freeway, heading back towards the Bubble.

INT. SANDSWEEPER LOADING BAY - NIGHT

Jabbour strides out of the airlock chamber towards the line of Sandsweeper trucks. He activates his phonewatch cuffed over his suit, wirelessly connected to his ear-piece.

JABBOUR

Nibo, I need your help.

NIBO (V.O.)

I thought you were home and dry?

JABBOUR

Need to call in that favor. I need you to fly up a roadblock on the elevated freeway ... between the helipad and the Bubble.

NIBO (V.O.)

It'll cost you!

Jabbour climbs up into the nearest Sandsweeper.

JABBOUR

Have I not made you rich enough?

Jabbour locks the cabin door and waits for Nibo's reply.

NIBO (V.O.)

The sandstorm may come back.

JABBOUR

Forget that. You owe me.

INT. L0128 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

Rufan replaces Bee in the driver's seat. He puts his foot to the floor. The TRUCK POWERS ON towards the Bubble, the elevated road almost clear of sand. Rufan peers through the splintered glass. Bee stares at the cracks, thinking on the past.

BEE

He gave me a way out. He wanted to cut a deal ... I turned him down.

RUFAN

Why? Why d'you do that?

BEE

I couldn't give in ... I've got to be strong ... like Mom.

RUFAN

No, you gotta survive! ...

Bee is silent, staring into the cracks.

RUFAN

You can't bring her back.

INT. - OUTSIDE QUARANTINE CLINIC - NIGHT

Tom stops in his tracks. He recognizes the linoleum, a pastel green floor coved at the corners. The clear plastic door sheet appears like a vision he shies away from. He checks Bee's location tracker ... no mistake.

This environment is intensely real to him, he remembers it well. Blue rimmed plastic tent structures line the quarantine clinic, slightly bowed inwards under their negative pressure. Tom looks through a tiny observation window of thick meshed glass. He sees the receptionist is missing. He UNZIPS the PLASTIC DOOR SHEET and steps inside.

INT. - QUARANTINE CLINIC - NIGHT

HUMAN HOWLS rise from a corner of the room. Tom creeps forward. Two male NURSES and a male RECEPTIONIST wrestle with the Outsider. The three men (dressed in Hazmat suits) move awkwardly to contain their patient. Tom lifts a white lab coat off a wall hook.

The outsider is clean but his hair is wild, as wild as his SHOUTS. Tom (now wearing the coat) hides behind a blue curtain, too close for comfort. The NURSES administer fresh injections. The Outsider simmers with his hands and feet cuffed. The three men exit the Outsider's pod, their shoulders weary from exertion, their faces lost behind their windowed masks.

The Nurses leave the room. The Receptionist returns to his desk. Tom looks at the tracker again. The Outsider sees him move.

OUTSIDER

(starts quietly)

What d'you want? Come to laugh?

Check me out? I'm done with here.

The Receptionist pokes his head above the desk to see if there's a risk of escalation. The Outsider gives him an over-exaggerated wave. The Receptionist slinks back, sweating inside his suit.

TOM  
(barely audible)  
I'm looking for my daughter.

OUTSIDER  
Ain't no one here but me ... and him.

TOM  
(barely audible)  
This tracker says she's here.

OUTSIDER  
(electronic buzzer noise)  
Agh-Agh.

TOM  
Bee Wang. This says she's here.

OUTSIDER  
(masking Tom's voice)  
Agh-Agh. Agh-Agh.

The receptionist contemplates coming over.

OUTSIDER  
Who'd you say Mister?

TOM  
Bee Wang

OUTSIDER  
Like this?

He shows Bee's water bottle wrapped in polythene.

TOM  
Where did you get that?

OUTSIDER  
(cuffed arms wild in the air)  
Just appeared, saved my li-ife!

RECEPTIONIST

Save it for the asylum wierdo.

TOM

(thinking the worst)

WHERE'S MY DAUGHTER?

The Receptionist stands scared at the unknown voice.

OUTSIDER

Nothin' to do with me.

Tom emerges from behind the curtain. He UNZIPS the Outsider's POD. He brandishes a surgical knife in his right hand. The Outsider cowers in the corner, nowhere to escape.

TOM

WHERE'S MY DAUGHTER?

OUTSIDER

I don't know!

The Receptionist HITS the ALARM. Shutters drop over the entrance.

TOM

(to the Receptionist)

Get Reynolds here. NOW!

The ALARM blends into an ALERT ...

INT. L0128 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

... a WARNING ALERT blares through the cab. The truck's display panel indicates a roadblock ahead. The RADIO SQUAWKS to life.

NIBO (V.O.)

Slow down. The road is blocked.

Rufan keeps his foot down on the accelerator.

NIBO (V.O.)  
I repeat. Slow down.

Rufan and Bee make out the silhouette of a helicopter ahead.

NIBO (V.O.)  
(stressed)  
Slow down. There's no way through.

Rufan disregards the warning. Bee grips the back of Rufan's seat.

They see ROTATING BLADES SLICING the AIR ahead of them.

Rufan lines up on the tail of the helicopter.

RUFAN  
GET DOWN!

Bee dives down onto the windbreak netting. Rufan raises the sand plough to its highest setting then ducks down. Nibo, wearing a red space suit over his rotund body, scissor kicks over the freeway's central barrier.

EXT. ELEVATED FREEWAY - NIGHT

The Sandsweeper's plough DESTROYS the TAILFIN, the helicopter SLICES the cab's BULBOUS TOP clean off but the Sandsweeper has the final word ... a FLAME BALL engulfs the HELICOPTER. Nibo peers over the barrier in a state of shock.

EXT. ELEVATED FREEWAY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

A second Sandsweeper pulls up short of the wreck. Nibo inspects the helicopter debris, his face as red as the flames. Jabbour opens his cab door.

NIBO  
Look at this!

JABBOUR

Get in!

INT. L0128 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

AIR BULGES through Rufan and Bee's open-top cab, the extra drag slows their truck down. Bee sits on the top step, sheltering behind the driver's seat.

BEE

Ru, check out behind.

Rufan turns to look.

RUFAN

(voice raised above the WIND)

Take the wheel.

Bee drives. Rufan analyses the object coming out of the dark.

RUFAN

(sitting down in the digger's cab seat)

It's another Sandsweeper.

BEE

Must be Jabbour.

RUFAN

It's Jabbour AND Nibo.

Rufan MANIPULATES the digger arm's HYDRAULICS preparing to block an attack from behind. He's done this before. Jabbour's NOSE-CONE SWIPES at the back of the slower truck. Rufan BATS it back with the MECHANICAL ARM. Jabbour's Sandsweeper tries a different angle. Rufan BLOCKS. One of the ARM BOLTS SHEARS off onto the asphalt.

RUFAN

They're trying to get past.

Bee responds, veering to the right. METAL SCRAPES against CONCRETE. The concrete barrier edge buckles under the force. A SECTION DISLODGES, FALLING thirty feet to the GROUND below. Bee steadies the vehicle as Jabbour takes another SWIPE at their rear end. Rufan tries to BLOCK him. The entire DIGGER ARM SNAPS OFF on to the tarmac.

RUFAN

Bee ... we need a plan B!

Jabbour SHUNTS the defenseless truck from behind. Bee loses steering control and the dipped SAND PLOUGH GOUGES an arc in the tarmac. Rufan has an idea. He spins his seat 180 degrees.

RUFAN

Swing the truck, center then right.  
Get up here before we go over!

BEE

Are you insane?

RUFAN

DO IT ... Trust me.

Bee complies. She turns the wheel left and right.

EXT. ELEVATED FREEWAY - NIGHT

The nose-cone powers through the concrete edge and into thin air.

INT. L0128 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

Bee launches herself across the central space into Rufan's arms. Rufan spins and locks the digger's chair, facing towards the rear. Together, they watch the underside of the elevated road shrink in the windscreen. Air time happens slowly ... slow enough for Rufan to strap a seatbelt across their legs.

EXT. BASE OF THE ELEVATED FREEWAY - NIGHT

The FRONT CAB DISINTEGRATES into the ground, its BULBOUS MIDDLE CRUMPLES like an airbag but the DIGGER'S CAB stands PROUD. Rufan KICKS OUT the REAR WINDSCREEN. Bee follows him.

INT. QUARANTINE CLINIC - NIGHT

Tom shuffles the Outsider towards the lockdown. The surgical knife hovers beyond his hostage's unshaved beard. The Receptionist hides under his desk until the INTERCOM CRACKLES.

REYNOLDS

(looking through the observation window)  
Quarantine, what's your status?

RECEPTIONIST

The Outsider is held hostage. He is walking towards you. He has a knife.

REYNOLDS

Who is HE?

RECEPTIONIST

I don't know.

Tom holds his hostage in front of the shutters.

TOM

Reynolds? ... is that you?

The Receptionist retreats into his hiding hole.

REYNOLDS (O.S.)

Whoever you are, stand down. There's no escape from here.

OUTSIDER

Get this nutter off me!

TOM

Shut up you. This guy knows something about my daughter. He's got her water bottle.

REYNOLDS (O.S.)

Mennings? ... none of us know where your daughter is and I'm pretty damn sure that guy doesn't either.

TOM

How do you know?

REYNOLDS (O.S.)

There's no trace of her DNA on his body or clothes. He's clean.

TOM

How can you be sure?

REYNOLDS (O.S.)

We're 100 percent sure. You have to trust me!

The dead-end dawns on Tom, he **SHOVES** the Outsider onto the shutters. He steps away from the doorway.

OUTSIDER

GET IN HERE!

The Receptionist deactivates the lockdown. Tom drops his knife as he backs away. He pulls Bee's tracking device from his pocket knowing he's about to lose his search for her. (On screen) Bee's location has remained the same for the past twelve minutes.

REYNOLDS (O.S.)

Mennings, don't do anything rash.

The shutter rises to Reynolds and a squadron in Hazmat suits.

TOM  
(raised voice)  
Something's changed ... on Bee's tracker.

Reynolds enters the clinic and his team fan out behind him. The Receptionist rushes away. The Outsider tries the same but the Reserves block his way.

REYNOLDS  
Nothing rash Mennings.

TOM  
(holding up the tracker)  
Look at this. It's not jumped ...

Reynolds sees the surgical knife lying on the floor.

TOM  
It's been twelve minutes since ...

REYNOLDS  
Take him down!

Two Reserves surge forwards, flipping Tom to the floor. He knows he has lost. He does not resist.

TOM  
Reynolds, wait!

EXT. FREEWAY JUNCTION - NIGHT

Sand everywhere, an undulating yellow sea. The dunes have shifted in the storm. Rufan and Bee pick their way forward, sheltering under the oil supply pipes.

Bee hears the ROAR first, the ROAR of a SANDSWEEPER. From behind, Jabbour's truck nearly scoops them onto the sand plough. Nibo emerges with a 9mm Luger in hand. He ushers them into the cab.

INT. L0087 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

Jabbour pressurizes the air then comes down to join the party.

JABBOUR

You cannot win this Ms. Wang ...  
Nibo, search him. I have Ms. Wang.

Jabbour runs his hands over Bee's suit. She winces. Nibo gestures at Rufan's suit pocket with the barrel of his gun. Rufan opens his pouch pocket to show its contents. He guesses correctly. Nibo's eyes light up at the sight of his new wristwatch. Rufan holds it out to him with a limp hand. He drops it.

NIBO

Pick it up!

Rufan stoops pretending to pick it up but gathers windbreak netting into his hands instead. Nibo's green eyes fix on the watch. Rufan YANKS hard pulling Nibo off his feet. He falls back, onto the cabin wall. He loses touch with his gun and reality, slumping to the floor, unconscious. Rufan collects both gun and watch.

He points the gun at Jabbour.

BEE

Ru, don't. The cab's pressurized.

Rufan acknowledges. He secures the safety. He lowers the gun and the watch into his pouch. JABBOUR STRIKES, his hands like claws. Rufan pushes him back. Bee scrambles up to the driver's seat. Jabbour lunges again, stopping Rufan from pulling the gun.

RUFAN

(to Bee)

DRIVE!

Bee shifts the truck out of neutral and spins it 90 degrees onto Century Avenue, flinging the fight against the cabin door.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - NIGHT

Sand dunes stretch across the avenue leading to the Bubble. Sandsweeper, full throttle, its lights ablaze.

INT. L0087 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

Rufan goes for the gun again. Jabbour counters with fists pumping into his ribcage. Rufan stomachs the blows and retaliates. The younger body assumes supremacy in the fistfight.

BEE (O.S.)

Ru, help ...

Rufan is torn both ways. The cab windscreen is a wall of sand.

BEE

Hold tight.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - NIGHT

The Sandsweeper's sand plough cuts a path up the face of the dune. The deep tread monster wheels power on until the sand gives way. The truck careers through the dune halfway up and bounces down the far side ... out of control.

INT. L0087 SANDSWEEPER CAB - NIGHT

The cabin tilts from side to side. Rufan grips a handrail with both hands. Jabbour flounders against the concave cabin door.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - NIGHT

The truck's headlights arc towards abandoned walls of glass. The hulking mass of metal lurches onto the sidewalk; SHRIEKS of SHATTERED GLASS fill the street as the shopfront wall implodes. Bee turns the wheel to avoid a line of concrete columns. Bare

mannequins part like the Red Sea. She finds an exit wall and BLASTS OUT into the street again.

RUFAN

Nice move.

The cab's motion brings Nibo slowly back to life. Rufan releases the handrail to attack Jabbour. He CRUNCHES into Jabbour on the face of the cabin door. Jabbour throws a punch. Rufan ducks. He realizes Jabbour is pinned to the door. The cab rolls have intertwined his suit straps within the door mechanism. He holds Jabbour against the door so he cannot break free.

RUFAN

Bee, arm the door!

Bee turns around. She sees what he is thinking.

BEE

You'll get blown out too.

RUFAN

Do it. Get back to the Bubble.

Bee knows which button to press but hesitates. She looks back at Rufan struggling to contain Jabbour against the door.

BEE

You could get hurt.

Nibo summons his strength to join the fight. He jumps on Rufan's back. All three men sandwiched against the cabin door.

RUFAN

DO IT.

Bee pushes the button. Rufan SLAMS the GREEN DOOR LIGHT and the men disappear, out into the night on an unhinged door. The BLAST of PRESSURE CHANGE rocks the cab more violently than before. Bee loses control. She heads towards a tidal wave of sand.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - NIGHT

This time the sand wins.

INT. - QUARANTINE CLINIC - NIGHT

The Lieutenant and two Reserves prepare to escort Tom away.

REYNOLDS

Got yourself in a heap of trouble  
Mennings ... what were you thinking?

Reynolds holds Bee's tracker. He holds it down at his side.

TOM

(his back to Reynolds)

What would you do? if you were me? You  
think it's easy for me to be here? Where  
my wife died, Beatrice died here of bird  
flu, would you believe. There's hardly  
any bloody birds left! ...

The Reserves and Lieutenant push him towards the door.

TOM

(trying to twist around)

The tracker said Bee was here ...

(hurriedly)

I followed the trail. It led to that  
madman in the corner. I thought he knew  
where she was. He had her water bottle.

LIEUTENANT

Save it for the Judge.

REYNOLDS

(to the Lieutenant)

Take him to the brig.

Tom tries to face Reynolds but the Reserves strong arm him away.

INT. - OUTSIDE QUARANTINE CLINIC - NIGHT

TOM

(man-handled by the Reserves)

Reynolds, please. Bee's in trouble ...

TOM (O.S.)

(almost out of earshot)

Look at her tracker. Something's changed.

Reynolds pauses. His frame fills the doorway. He looks down at Bee's tracker screen.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - NIGHT

Bleeding, bruised, Bee emerges from the wrecked Sandsweeper. She exits from the digger cab's smashed windscreen and climbs up, over the Sandsweeper's metal arm. The avenue is deserted.

BEE

Ru, where are you? Ru? ... Ru?

She follows tire tracks from the Sandsweeper back towards road-kill and wreckage. She bites through her body's pain, running towards three FIGURES strewn across the sandy street.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - NIGHT - BEE POV

Nibo is clearly dead.

His spacesuit visor, smashed.

His face, hollowed out. Bee GASPS.

Jabbour's orange suit is motionless still strapped to the inner

face of the cab door. She runs up to Rufan's white suit.

BEE (O.S.)

Ru, it's me. Get up let's go.

Rufan lies on his side, his face away from her's. She kneels. She rolls him onto his back. His face, frozen like a photo, eyes open looking for stars.

BEE (O.S.)

Ru, come on, let's go.

She shakes his shoulders ... HISS. GAS ESCAPES. She fingers a hairline crack in his helmet. TOXIC AIR BUBBLES through it.

BEE (O.S.)

(quieter)

Ru?

She looks again at his eyes ... motionless.

Nothing ... no life.

BEE (O.S.)

Can't be. Wake up ...

She cries, heavy over his body.

BEE (O.S.)

Ru ... don't leave me all alone.

Her CRIES echo through her mind.

She lifts to look at his face once more ...

... and FLIPS his HELMET VISOR to hide her new nightmare.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - NIGHT

GROANS rise from inside Jabbour's suit. Bee turns to see Jabbour

wrenching his straps free from the door.

BEE

This can't be real.

She stands, tears streaming down her face. She stoops to take out the gun, watch and cellphone from Rufan's pouch. She hesitates ... fight or flight? ... Bee zips up his belongings into her own suit. She runs. Sand everywhere, she sees only sand.

Jabbour stands erect but broken. He limps towards Rufan and Nibo, glances at the dead then follows Bee's footprints in the sand.

INT. OFFICE TOWER LOBBY - NIGHT - BEE POV

Bee arrives at the base of an office tower. It is clad in mirrored glass, reflecting the darkness onto itself. She runs through open lobby doors onto a sand splattered marble floor. The elevator cars are missing. The tower is deserted. Bee RATTLES the ground floor OFFICE DOORS ... they are all locked.

INT. FIRE ESCAPE STAIRCASE FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT - BEE POV

The fire escape staircase door is open but pitch black beyond. She runs towards the stairwell. Only a triangle of light comes from her suit helmet. Her breathing is heavy.

INT. FIRE ESCAPE STAIRCASE SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT - BEE POV

Bee runs up the stairs.

BEE (O.S.)

Come on.

Reaching the landing, she grabs at another door handle ... denied.

BEE (O.S.)

Shit!

She starts up the next flight of stairs.

INT. FIRE ESCAPE STAIRCASE TENTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Bee rises up the building. DOOR RATTLES echo in the stairwell.

INT. FIRE ESCAPE STAIRCASE TWENTY FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

The floor level is stenciled large in white on the wall. She knows this is the top floor. She prays over the handle.

BEE

God, please ...

LOCKED. She sinks to the floor, staring at the giant '21' logo. She lifts out Rufan's watch, gun and cellphone. She places them in her lap and checks the phone ... no signal. She looks to the ceiling, still nothing. She stuffs the phone inside her suit pocket. She caresses Rufan's watch with her glove, running her finger counterclockwise around the rim. Her wet eyes scared dry.

BEE

Can I turn back time?

Unable to say more, she posts silence on the wall and lets it hang there. The giant '21' stares back at her.

BEE

(like a prayer)

Ru, I'm sorry.

A new NOISE replies ... METAL on CONCRETE ... getting closer. Jabbour turns the corner. He holds a short section of scaffolding like a walking stick. Bee raises the gun but forgets the safety. She squeezes the trigger ... nothing. She realizes her mistake but Jabbour is upon her. He grabs the gun and the watch, one in each hand. He throws them both down the stairwell. Bee reaches for the watch and her memory of Ru. Jabbour's eyes are on her before

METAL and GLASS CLATTERS below.

JABBOUR

We meet again.

BEE

Go to hell.

JABBOUR

Is the door locked?...

Bee puzzles the question but replies with silence.

JABBOUR

You have the key ...

Bee looks up at Jabbour incredulously.

JABBOUR

You KNOW what is behind the door ...

Bee stifles a laugh.

JABBOUR

Check your pockets.

She opens her pouch pocket. There is a key!

BEE

This doesn't make sense.

JABBOUR

It will. Open the door.

Bee turns the lock with the key. The door opens to a blaze of reflected light rotating in slow motion. She steps into the room.

INT. MIRROR MAZE ROOM - NIGHT

Jabbour follows Bee into the room. In long rows, floor to ceiling

mirrors turn slowly like the solar distributor. The ceiling is an uninterrupted blaze of light. The floor is polished concrete. Light bounces from surface to surface in a million different ways. Bee stands in front of the first line of mirrors.

BEE

A hundred mirrors beaming the planet's purest sunlight down into the Bubble.

JABBOUR

What about it?

BEE

It's not random.

JABBOUR

What do you mean?

BEE

The open source code for the solar distributor is written to LOOK random but it's not. The program on the OS is a mask program that hides algorithms. Algorithms which secretly favor YOUR solar panels. It makes you rich!

JABBOUR

Me and my supporters ... but not rich enough! I need the keys to the city ...

Jabbour offers Bee a marker pen.

JABBOUR

Can you prove it?

Bee takes the pen from Jabbour's open palm. Frenzied, she writes line after line of equations on the mirrors. Jabbour stands back to view the whole evidence (the mirrors stand still while she writes). Jabbour has seen it all. The mirrors restart their movement. The effect is kaleidoscopic. The math is solid. Jabbour stands marveling at the evidence in front of him.

Bee SNATCHES the POLE from under his hand. She WHACKS across his back. He stumbles forwards CRACKING the first mirror. Bee does not relent. BLOW after BLOW she hits MAN and MIRROR, she does not discriminate.

JABBOUR

This is not meant happen ...

The room becomes a powder keg of EXPLODING GLASS.

JABBOUR

I control this world.

BEE

(with unnatural strength)

Not anymore!

Jabbour is lost within the complexity of the mirror maze he cannot fathom which way the blows are coming. Bee BEATS him towards the edge of the room until just a glass wall stands between him and the void. Bee swings hoping for it to be the final blow. Jabbour moves backwards, out of the arc's range. The pole SHATTERS the GLASS behind into thin air. Bee connects again. Jabbour twists round and out into nothing. His arms flail for something solid, a window cleaning rig, a dangling rope. His first grab fails. His second grab holds. The rope saves him.

EXT. OUTSIDE MIRROR MAZE ROOM - NIGHT

At the edge of the building, Bee sees Jabbour grabbing for the exposed floor. She fetches a piece of broken mirror. Leaning out to the taut rope she frays the rope stroke by stroke.

JABBOUR

Bee, don't. None of this is real.

BEE

Then it doesn't matter if you die.

She continues to cut strands off the rope.

JABBOUR

I can explain.

BEE

You don't deserve to live.

JABBOUR

Bee, don't. You will kill both of us.

BEE

No, just you.

The rope is half gone.

JABBOUR

You don't understand. Your boyfriend is not dead.

BEE

What do you mean? I saw him ... dead.

JABBOUR

He's not dead. Nibo is not dead.

BEE

What?

JABBOUR

Not real. This is not real.

BEE

What do you mean?

JABBOUR

I hi-jacked Waz's simulator to find out the risk you pose me. I know now but if you kill me ... you kill you.

BEE

I don't understand. You woke me up.

JABBOUR

I pretended to wake you up. The game was switched. I took over the roleplay with my own objective ... to crack your mind.

BEE

Waz's sim, it's just a game, isn't it?

JABBOUR

Yes and no. You are tied to me. I control this world but not this! This is unknown. That door was my objective. I need to walk back through it to exit the game and release you.

BEE

You don't deserve to live.

JABBOUR

But you are not a killer.

Bee collapses, wedged between a column and an unbroken pane of glass. She watches Jabbour gain a hand hold on the floor ledge then a leg hold and then his whole body.

Bee stares beyond him at the Bubble in the distance, lit up like a spaceship, lost in space.

Jabbour stands in front of her.

BEE

You don't deserve to live.

JABBOUR

Ms. Wang, I am sorry. I was hoping no one would get hurt in all this ...

The mirrors are gone. He reaches the door, he half smiles at Bee.

JABBOUR

You are not a killer ...

He opens the door with his hand lingering on the handle.

JABBOUR

But I am.

He walks through the doorway. Scared by the tone of his voice, Bee leaps up, chasing after him. He smiles at Bee through the door as it shuts. If a smile could kill, Jabbour nails it.

She snaps the door open but he is gone. It doesn't make sense.

Something has changed. Bee looks back at the room and the horizon. The Bubble's lights have gone out. She runs for the stairs, running for her life.

EXT. OFFICE TOWER LOBBY - NIGHT - BEE POV

She sprints back through the lobby. Outside is pitch black. Her helmet light zips left and right in time with her arms.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - NIGHT - BEE POV

Something has changed. All the lights have gone out, the Bubble, invisible. Her breath steams the visor, clouding her view, clouding the blackness. She follows her footprints back to Rufan's body.

BEE (O.S.)

Not dead?

She walks up to his body.

BEE (O.S.)

Not dead.

Bee's SPACESUIT RINGS. Startled, she locates the sound inside her pouch pocket. She swipes the phone onto speaker.

BEE (O.S.)

Hello?

RUFAN (V.O.)

Bee.

BEE (O.S.)

Ru?

Bee looks around, expecting Rufan to walk out of the darkness.

RUFAN (V.O.)

Yeah, it's me.

BEE (O.S.)

You're alive! Thank God you're alive.

RUFAN (V.O.)

Not going anywhere.

A new light, a WARNING LIGHT, a red light flashes in her eyes.

WARNING SYSTEM(FEMALE VOICE)

Oxygen supply low. Return to station.

RUFAN (V.O.)

We need to save you though.

Bee bends down over his spacesuit. She FLIPS his VISOR open.

The suit is empty.

BEE (O.S.)

I don't understand. Where are you?

INT. WAZ'S SIM - NIGHT

Rufan leans into the microphone attached to Waz's computer.

RUFAN

In the Bubble ... Waz's sim.

Jabbour and Waz stand in the corner, both in handcuffs and surrounded by Reserves. Tom paces back and forth in front.

BEE (V.O.)

Shut it down!

RUFAN

It's not that simple ... Waz handed control of the sim to Jabbour. Your mind is trapped as a subset of his game world and he's saying he can't release you.

BEE (V.O.)

I bet he is.

RUFAN

Find a place you recognize, anywhere. Find a door and walk through it. The game world is built as a combination of both of your short term memories, there should be something you recognize.

BEE (V.O.)

Can't you get back in? Show me the way out?

RUFAN

If I was in, I must have been part of your mind fighting Jabbour's ... but he cracked your mind. You've gotta get yourself out.

BEE (V.O.)

How did you know I was in trouble?

RUFAN

Your neckchip program had a sub-clause,  
when your stress levels went over a safe  
zone it shut down automatically. Your  
Dad led the ops to Waz's sim but no one  
knows how to get you out, not even Waz.

WARNING SYSTEM(FEMALE VOICE) (V.O.)

Oxygen supply low. Return to station.

RUFAN

You need to get out. Your body is  
shutting down.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - NIGHT

Disorientated, Bee rotates 360 degrees above Rufan's spacesuit.

BEE

Something's changed. All the lights have  
gone out.

No landmarks, nothing, just black.

WARNING SYSTEM(FEMALE VOICE) (O.S.)

Oxygen supply low. Return to station.

Bee is frantic.

She looks left and right, nothing but a triangular cone of light  
and the blackness beyond. She scrapes the sand away hoping to  
see street markings, a way to orientate ... nothing.

BEE

I can't see ... I can't see anything.

WARNING SYSTEM(FEMALE VOICE) (O.S.)

Oxygen supply low. Return to station.

BEE  
(crying)  
Ru, get me out ...

BEE  
(sobbing)  
Ru, please ...

INT. WAZ'S SIM - NIGHT

Bee's body lies motionless on the plastic floor mat (she has not moved since Rufan left her) the Y-prong headset and neck-brace still locking her into Jabbour's fabricated game world. The people around her are either unable or unwilling to help.

DUTY OFFICER #2  
(looking at Bee's life signs)  
We're losing her.

Tom's pace quickens, back and forth, his forehead sweating.

TOM  
Ru, get her out! If you can't, I'm gonna start ripping wires out.

WAZ  
Don't, that'll induce a coma for sure.

TOM  
Shut up you!

BEE (V.O.)  
(desperate)  
Ru, please.

RUFAN  
(into the microphone)  
Hang in there. I've got an idea.

Rufan moves away from the computer and kneels beside Bee.

He holds her hand and leans down. He comes close.

Lips on lips, he leaves them there.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - NIGHT

Bee's triangle of light is alone in the night.

She spins, her eyes grasping for something she recognizes.

A FLICKER, a glimmer of hope, a CANDLE in the distance.

She sees one ... two ... three, four ...

WARNING SYSTEM(FEMALE VOICE) (O.S.)  
Oxygen supply low. Return to station.

INT. WAZ'S SIM LOCATION - NIGHT

Rufan and Bee are one, joined at the lips.

He dare not move. He feels a warmth return to her body.

Her hand flickers and he squeezes the moment.

EXT. CENTURY AVENUE - NIGHT

Five, six, seven candles, Bee starts to lose count. A collection of naked flames line the outer rim of the Bubble. The flames stretch up the dome in lines, like vines growing to the top, until the whole geodesic structure is a blaze of light.

BEE  
I can see ... it's beautiful ...

Bee, a solitary figure, shields her eyes from too much light and beauty. She walks towards the light.

BEE

I'm coming home.

FADE OUT

"Watchman, what is left of the night?"

The watchman replies, "Morning is coming, but also the night."