

HYPERDRIVE

written by

David Daniels & Morgan Jurgenson

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INT. HARDY JONES'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

HARDY JONES (30) jolts awake, sweating, fights back the anxiety from whatever nightmare he was suffering through. An oversized bedside digital clock reads 4:15 AM.

INT. HARDY JONES'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Still in a black T-shirt and boxers, Hardy splashes cold water on his face, runs wet fingers through his hair.

INT. HARDY JONES'S HOME OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Scratching his tummy, Hardy reaches a desk and turns on a light, illuminating the inner sanctum of a nerd with money.

Floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, complete with a rolling track-ladder. A sampling of the sci-fi spines: Robert Heinlein, William Gibson, Roger Zelazny, Isaac Asimov.

So many worlds, so many places to get lost.

TELESCOPE by the window. Collectibles from Comic-Con. And a special bookshelf --

This one has every published edition of Jones's own novels: The OMICRON Series. Hardbacks, paperbacks, translations in Polish, German, Japanese, etc. Sleek, clean cover art. Space opera for smart people.

Above Hardy's desk is a huge cork-board covered with maps, star charts, notes and sketches: the building blocks of his homemade universe and the skeleton of his latest book.

Hardy stretches, tries to touch his toes. Fails. Screw it, time to work. He drops in front of his computer, cracks knuckles and elbows (ugh) and begins typing furiously.

Then, a sudden loud KNOCK at the front door interrupts his flow. He looks over at another clock: it's still 4:15 AM...?

INT. HARDY JONES'S FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Jones tiptoes towards his door, cautious to avoid making any sound whatsoever.

Another LOUD KNOCK scares the bejesus out of him.

PLEASANT VOICE (O.S.)
Hardy Jones? Sorry to bother you,
but this will just take a moment of
your time.

Jones stops dead. The voice has an odd metallic quality, like it might be computerized. Now he hears heavy BREATHING, mechanized WHIRRING. Who the hell is this?

PLEASANT VOICE (CONT'D)

Mr. Jones, please open the door. I know you're inside.

Jones makes a decision. He is not moving, he is not opening that door. No way, no how--

An incredibly loud DOCTOR WHO THEME RINGTONE goes off! It's from his cell phone on a table by the door.

PLEASANT VOICE (CONT'D)

Left the ringer on, Mr. Jones?
Just open the door, and we can get
this business taken care of.

Jones is frozen between answering the phone and answering the door. Indecision and panic take hold. He's sweating as he starts to lean toward the PEEPHOLE...

But the door is KICKED DOWN, revealing SEVEN FEET OF MENACING, ARMORED ALIEN MECH SOLDIER! Extra ridges on its chest and arms. Pale red irises. Oversized canines glisten with saliva. Humanoid, but definitely not from around here.

Clutched in its hand is a VERY BIG RIFLE that looks like a mini-particle accelerator.

Jones gapes in awe. His phone drops to the ground. Finally, the Alien SPEAKS in his brutal, native tongue. It's LOUD, RUDE and totally impossible to understand.

After a pause, the Alien touches a button on his armor, and the pleasant computerized voice translates:

PLEASANT VOICE (CONT'D)

(subtitled)

*Are you currently with DirectTV or
Time-Warner cable?*

Jones is frozen in fear and confusion. Unable to answer, he shrinks back against his wall of books.

The Alien ROARS, switches on the RIFLE. A fuel cell HUMS TO LIFE, glows bright blue. The Alien gives a BATTLE CRY and OPENS FIRE. As shredded books fill the air we SMASH TO:

INT. HARDY JONES'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Hardy Jones once again jolts awake, sweating. He raises a fistful of Nintendo NES bedsheets, mops his face, safe.

INT. HARDY JONES'S HOME OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Hardy's fingers are a flurry on the keyboard as inspiration flows out of him and into his latest novel.

We drift across the room and through a window, where San Francisco is laced with pre-dawn silver and gold--

EXT. JONES'S BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

The city is waking up before it even went to bed. Headlights speed over the Bay Bridge as we glide across the bay --

EXT. STREETS BY A BAYSIDE PARK - EARLY MORNING

A FIGURE in a sleek MOTORCYCLE HELMET and BACKPACK runs. Fast. Like first prize is gold and second prize is a bullet.

A BLACK HUMMER crests the hill behind the figure.

Legs pumping, the figure speeds up an insanely steep incline. Before physics can slow the runner's pace, the Backpack GLOWS BLUE, propels the figure uphill AT SUPERHUMAN SPEED.

The Hummer can barely keep up.

EXT. BERKELEY - STREET CORNER - EARLY MORNING

A TAXI CAB gives birth to a group of still-wasted UC BERKELEY STUDENTS. The CAB DRIVER, an affable Chinese-American goof, makes quick change, a seasoned pro.

CAB DRIVER

OK, fare is \$35. Out of \$100, so 5-10-15 and 10 more makes us even.

The kid hesitates, but he's pretty high, turns, staggers off. The Cabbie stuffs the swindled cash into his breast pocket.

CAB DRIVER (CONT'D)

The hidden costs of higher education.

Before the Cabbie pulls away, a new PASSENGER dives in back.

It's the figure from the chase, and on closer inspection it's not a motorcycle helmet, it's a FLIGHT CRASH HELMET. The figure rips it free, reveals a WOMAN.

She's fearless, impassioned, and hotter than your girlfriend - and right now she's breathing like she's just run a marathon through a minefield. This is SERA (late 20s).

The Cabbie spots her in the rear-view, his smile evaporates.

CAB DRIVER (CONT'D)
You're not supposed to be here.
Not for another eleven years.

SERA
We're breached. It moves today.
Now.

Tires SCREECH as the Black Hummer slides into view.

SERA (CONT'D)
Now, Tommy!

The driver slams the car in gear and floors it.

EXT. BAY BRIDGE - SUNRISE

Early morning traffic rolls towards the Bay Bridge. The taxi blows past at top speed, yet the Hummer pursues.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Traffic grows thicker, and the Cab Driver has to make a few unsafe lane changes. Horns HONK.

EXT. HUMMER - CONTINUOUS

Through an open window, someone is visible in the BACKSEAT.

Square jaw, eyes of a true believer. This is HUNTER (late 30s), the kind of military man you'd trust to get things done no matter what it took. Whoever these guys are, this is definitely their leader.

EXT. BAY BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The Hummer has no trouble keeping up. It drives in a fast straight line, and the cars in its path INVOLUNTARILY SWERVE OUT OF ITS WAY, like a magnet repelling everything around it.

A Mini flies into a Prius, a Sequoia slams an Acura. Chaos.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

The Cabbie weaves, but the traffic grows unavoidable.

One bad decision, and suddenly the Cab is TRAPPED, boxed in behind an 18-wheeler, with an F-150 to the left and the San Francisco Bay to the right.

Sera turns, ready for anything, but... the Hummer HAS DISAPPEARED. No sign of it, just a lot of scared motorists.

Sera catches her breath. For a moment, calm.

Then - ON THE RIGHT - up from nowhere, the HUMMER RISES, floating in MID-AIR NEXT TO THE BRIDGE!

EXT. HUMMER - CONTINUOUS

A door flies open, KORT - muscular, grey-eyed, vicious - hangs out, extends an ASSAULT RIFLE, and lets it talk - BBRRRAAPPAAAPAAPP!!!

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Sera panics as BULLETS rip through the interior.

SERA

Go!!!

The Cabbie slams on the gas. But he takes one IN THE FOREHEAD and the taxi swerves out of control.

Sera dives into the front seat. Pushes the dead Cab Driver aside. Grasps for the steering wheel, fights to survive.

Another SHOT misses Sera by millimeters, SHATTERS the window.

Impossibly, Sera gets seated and jams the car into REVERSE. Traffic still hems her in, so she accelerates the only direction she can... right towards the edge.

As the taxi plunges into the open air we CUT TO BLACK.

MOORE (V.O.)

I just don't think you're being realistic.

EXT. TWO-FAMILY HOME - DOLORES HEIGHTS, SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

DETECTIVE ROBERT MOORE (mid-30s), cop-handsome, purposeful, ever unflappable, hefts a grocery bag out of the trunk of his unmarked Chevy as he talks into a cell phone.

MOORE

Annie, I'm sorry but your math is all wrong. Two dates, a sleep-over and a brunch don't equal me meeting your mother.

(inaudible plea)

I'm sure she's a wonderful woman, but this isn't Fantasy Island.

(MORE)

MOORE (CONT'D)
(inaudible anger)
Well nice sleeping with you too.

Moore hangs up, takes a deep breath, checks his reflection in the car's side-view mirror, then heads through the open gate.

EXT. BACKYARD - MATHESON HOUSE - DAY

A small barbecue is in progress as Moore appears.

DETECTIVE MATHESON (34), Moore's partner for the past decade, is a good cop and better family man with a "License to Grill," or so his apron declares.

He's also attempting a transition to a healthy diet: he's enthusiastically flipping veggies and something chicken-ish.

MATHESON
There he is.

MOORE
(scans the grill)
Should I get the M.E. down here to identify that?

MATHESON
Meatless chicken. Tempeh. Smile, it's good for you.

Moore conspiratorially produces a package of hamburger meat.

MOORE
I got your back, partner.

MATHESON
C'mon. My cholesterol's at 295. If I eat that, I'm not gonna see Archie get through grade school. Support the lifestyle choice, man.

MOORE
I brought bacon. Smoked Gouda.

Across the yard, Matheson's lovely wife CHERYL (30) spots Moore, steps away from her two girlfriends. She's not happy.

MATHESON
Well, I hope you brought your vest.

Before Moore can brace for impact, Cheryl is in his face.

CHERYL
Really?

MOORE
Hi, Cheryl.

CHERYL
Really?

Moore is unsure how to respond.

CHERYL (CONT'D)
I got a text from Annie.

MOORE
(oh shit)
So fast. So frighteningly fast.

CHERYL
You're a pig. Just bring your
death-burgers to the kitchen, don't
hit on my friends, and don't make
my son cry.

Moore grits his teeth, does as told. Matheson remains zen.

MATHESON
Just a relaxing family barbecue.

INT. KITCHEN - MATHESON HOUSE - DAY

Moore puts the beers on ice, turns and comes face to face
with ARCHIE (4), cute, shy, pudgy. It's not gonna take much.

MOORE
Hi, Archie.

ARCHIE
Hi, Uncle Robbie. I'm playing
Mickey Mouse Clubhouse and I wanna
bring the special Mouse-ka-tool to
Goofy, OK? Will you help me?

Moore is clearly uncomfortable.

MOORE
So how's school?

ARCHIE
I'm Mickey and you're Pluto and we
have to bring the Mouse-ka-Tool to
Goofy, OK?

MOORE
(not up for pretending)
I don't think so, Arch.

ARCHIE

We have to bring the Mouse-ka-Tool
to Goofy!

MOORE

I'm going out to talk to your Dad.

And that's all it took. Little Archie lets loose with a sob.

ARCHIE

MOOOOOOMMMYYYYY!!!!

MOORE

No. No. Shhh!

Cheryl runs in, furious.

MOORE (CONT'D)

I didn't do anything!

CHERYL

I can't believe --

Moore's cell phone RINGS ("Peter Gunn Theme" ringtone).

MOORE

(answers)

Moore... I'm just talking to
someone... No, it's not important.

(an apologetic "just being
honest" shrug to Cheryl)

We'll be there in fifteen.

INT. HARBOR COURT HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Broken glass everywhere. Crime Scene Techs bag samples and
dust for fingerprints.

Moore inspects the Cab Driver's dead body with a pen,
indifferent. Detective Matheson refers to his notepad.

MATHESON

Vic's name was Tommy Chang. Cab
was his. Last paying fare was a
couple of Berkeley kids around 4AM.

(can't let it go)

I can't believe you said no to
Mickey Mouse Clubhouse. Did you
know kids under five who engage in
imaginative play every day are
three times more likely to go to
Ivy League schools?

MOORE

No, Matty, I did not know that.
Now how about we put on our big boy
pants and solve a brutal homicide?

MATHESON

Fine. But pretending with my son
has made me a better detective.

MOORE

(concentrates hard)
OK. I'm pretending... we're doing
policework. Anyone find the gun?

MATHESON

Is that really your first question?

Moore finally stands, reveals the smallish room with a bed,
desk, TV, and an upside-down, battered TAXI CAB.

MOORE

Anyone see anything?

MATHESON

A housekeeper and some guests heard
a loud crash around 8:15, but no
one actually entered the room until
about an hour ago.

Moore moves some debris and reveals SERA, unconscious in the
back seat. They lock eyes. Her look is urgent.

MOORE

Live one!

Paramedics swoop in, gingerly free her from the wreck. She
SPEAKS frantic gibberish at Moore.

TIGHT ON SERA'S EYES: Her irises flicker from green to red
like a dying neon bulb.

The paramedics speed her away. Moore steps to the door.

MOORE (CONT'D)

That didn't sound like English.
Call the liaison, have him figure
out whatever language she's
speaking so we can get a trans-
lator. Dig up what you can on our
vic, then meet me at the hospital.

MATHESON

(shaking his head)
This is so unbelievable.

MOORE

Only because we don't have all the facts yet, Matty.

MATHESON

This story's gotta be bigger.

MOORE

The story will never be bigger than the facts. Maybe dumber, but not bigger.

MATHESON

You don't find anything strange about this crime scene? Anything at all?

Moore makes one last survey of the room.

MOORE

No coffee. I'm gonna go find some.

As he exits, his partner calls out to him.

MATHESON

There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, Robbie!

We pull back, OUT THE WINDOW to reveal--

EXT. HARBOR COURT HOTEL - DAY

THE TAXI'S REAR END IS STICKING OUT OF A WINDOW ON THE 37TH FLOOR. A truly impossible sight.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sera is in bed, wired into monitors and IVs.

A nurse attempts to draw blood, but the needle can't penetrate her skin. Then the tip actually breaks off. Confused, the nurse leaves to get another --

Passes Moore in the hall with a baby-faced LIAISON OFFICER.

MOORE

Was there a crisis over in Chinatown, they needed all the adult translators?

LIAISON OFFICER

I have a Ph.D. in literary translation from Stanford.

(MORE)

LIAISON OFFICER (CONT'D)

(Moore: "Who cares")

I speak eight languages fluently.

(Moore still unimpressed)

That includes Farsi and Japanese.

And I'm 29!

MOORE

(opening Sera's door)

Be my guest, Ambassador.

Sera is weak, but alert enough to panic at the sight of the cops. She spews a TORRENT of unintelligible words.

LIAISON OFFICER

Whoa.

MOORE

"Whoa"?

LIAISON OFFICER

I'm gonna need back up.

MOORE

Call it in.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY - MONTAGE

A parade of A DOZEN TRANSLATORS, all different ethnicities and ages. No one understands Sera. She POINTS at her WRIST as her speech becomes more and more impassioned, then angry.

She glares at Moore, who grows increasingly frustrated.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The LAST TRANSLATOR shrugs, turns to Moore.

LAST TRANSLATOR

Maybe it's the head injury.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - DAY

Moore exits Sera's room, rubs his temples. A burly mass of an ORDERLY, sleeve tattoos, oddly bushy sideburns, attends to a service cart, folding small towels. He sizes up Moore.

ORDERLY

Azilari.

Moore looks around, is this weirdo talking to him?

ORDERLY (CONT'D)

The girl. She's, uh, speaking Azilari. Least I think so, never heard it out loud before.

MOORE

You understand what she's saying?

ORDERLY

Bits and pieces. She doesn't like you. Like, at all.

MOORE

What's Azzy Larry? Where's it from?

ORDERLY

(patiently)

Azzz-eee-laaaari. It's from Omicron Eridani.

Beat. Moore stares.

MOORE

What the fuck are you talking about?

The Orderly motions for Moore to follow him.

INT. HOSPITAL - BREAK ROOM - DAY

The Orderly produces a book from his locker, hands it to Moore. It's a sci-fi paperback, titled "Destination".

At 900 plus pages, it's not a book, it's a doorstop.

ORDERLY

Book Six in the Omicron series. I cannot believe you've never heard of Hardy Jones. He's like George R.R. Martin before HBO. In two years, everyone's gonna know him. He is the shit.

Moore looks at the cover, reads the name HARDY JONES under the title. He flips to the 'About the Author' page--

A PICTURE of Hardy Jones - the writer from our opening - seated in a Star Trek Captain's Chair with the mother of all dorky grins. Definitely not "the shit."

Moore reads: "Hardy Jones is a former comic shop clerk now known throughout the galaxy as the author of the Hugo and Nebula Award-winning Omicron Eridani series. He lives in San Francisco with no pets."

ORDERLY (CONT'D)

This one's the last book of the second trilogy. I've been re-reading from the beginning, prepping for Book Seven coming out this summer.

MOORE

Good thinking.
(scans the pages)
The language you heard, it's in here?

ORDERLY

Yeah. Jones writes all the chapter intros in Azilari, but...
(with respect)
...to actually learn how to speak it, that is some next-level Star Trek convention shit.

MOORE

Mind if I borrow this?

ORDERLY

(earnestly)
You should really start with the first one. You're gonna be lost.

MOORE

Thanks, I'm good. Nice chops, by the way.

ORDERLY

The ladies love 'em.

Moore heads out.

INT. JONES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Three dedicated flatscreen monitors are wired to an endless online game of Starcraft 2. Jones sits in a custom-built GAME CHAIR, shouting into a head mic.

JONES

Yeah, okay Brad. Okay. Let's see if you like the taste of m'balls. Bling. Suck it. Yeah? Really?

A KNOCK at his door. Jones ignores it.

JONES (CONT'D)

You and your Naruto headband need to be put to bed. Which reminds me, did your mom make it home from my place yet?

The KNOCK grows urgent. Jones finally answers and lights up. It's THE MAILMAN (50s), a paternal Richard Jenkins type. He's Jones's buddy and link to the outside world.

THE MAILMAN

Mr. Jones.

JONES

So did it come?

THE MAILMAN

Mail first.

Jones impatiently flips through the stack of envelopes: fan mail, junk mail, residual checks.

JONES

So?

The Mailman finally stands aside, reveals a large package.

JONES (CONT'D)

Aw, hell yeah. C'mon in!

As Jones attacks the package, the Mailman heads to the kitchen and checks the fridge. Nothing but Monster Energy cans, Japanese vitamin drinks, and a bucket of cold KFC.

He opens a cupboard: at least five bags of each variety of Pepperidge Farm cookies, shelved alphabetically.

THE MAILMAN

You ever hear of a vegetable?

Jones ignores him. He's ripping through bubble wrap.

THE MAILMAN (CONT'D)

(suffers a sip of Monster)

Seriously, I worry about your diet.

The Mailman notes the game on Jones's monitor screens.

THE MAILMAN (CONT'D)

And your social life. Online gamers are 34 times more likely to develop agoraphobia than the general population.

(MORE)

THE MAILMAN (CONT'D)
Have you set the dates for your
book tour yet?

JONES
Yeah... no. Europe. That's...
(incredibly scary)
a *huge* time commitment. And I have
a ton of work to do on Book Seven
before it goes to press.

MAILMAN
So it has absolutely nothing to do
with anxiety over leaving your
comfort zone?

Jones winces. That's exactly what this has to do with.

JONES
I like my comfort zone. I have
everything I need here. Why would
anyone opt in on discomfort?

For a beat Jones is vulnerable, but the shield goes back up.

JONES (CONT'D)
Besides, I can't disappoint the
fans. Work to do.
(tears the bubble wrap)
Sweeeeet.

Jones holds up his new treasures: a BAMBOO KENDO SWORD and a
HUGE KENDO HELMET.

THE MAILMAN
Wowzers.

JONES
Right? *Impossible* to get these in
the States. I gotta post this!
Take a shot!

Jones gives the Mailman his iPad then dons the ridiculous
helmet. He POSES with the bamboo sword poised to strike.

THE MAILMAN
(getting into it)
OK, now give me some attitude!

With a ridiculous samurai YELL, Jones charges at the Mailman.

And that's when DETECTIVE MOORE appears at the open front
door. He surveys Jones, swinging the sword like a jackass.

MOORE
Hardy Jones?

The Mailman straightens up.

JONES
(muffled by the helmet)
That's me.

Jones removes the helmet and grabs his iPad from the Mailman. He can't resist completing the status update. In seconds, he's lost messaging his "Geek" Chorus.

Moore parts his coat, shows the seven-pointed star clipped to his belt. And in case the sidearm doesn't sell it--

MOORE
San Francisco P.D.

The Mailman heads for the door.

THE MAILMAN
You take it easy, Jones.

Jones guffaws, shows Moore the freshly posted photo as if he cares, and types one last text.

JONES
Sorry, you're with the police? You
sure you got the right place?
Everything's cool here.

Moore eyes the nerd's abode: no sign of "cool" anywhere. He pulls out the copy of Destination.

MOORE
Are you the author of this book?

Jones understands, takes the book, grabs a pen and signs it.

JONES
Next time, just call the publisher.
They'll send a box of these over to
your Media Relations Department.
Save the City some gas money.

MOORE
Yeah, thanks. I'm actually with
Homicide.

JONES
Like murder?

MOORE
Yeah. Like murder. I'm
investigating one that happened
this morning and I need to ask you
some questions.

JONES
I didn't do it.

MOORE
That's what guilty people say.

JONES
Really?

MOORE
Relax Bruce Lee, you're not a
suspect. That said --

JONES
Mifune.

MOORE
What?

JONES
Bruce Lee never played a samurai,
Toshiro Mifune would be a *much*
better comparison.

Moore grits his teeth.

MOORE
I'm hoping you can help me with
something.

JONES
Have a seat. Color me intrigued.

Moore sits in a highly-stylish, poorly-functional chair.
Tries his best to stay balanced.

MOORE
Your books use a language called
Ass-U-Larry.

JONES
Azilari. Yes.

MOORE
Where did you learn that language?

JONES
(is this a joke)
Learned? I made it up.

MOORE
You made it up.

JONES
Yeah. I made it up. I'm a writer.

MOORE
Writers do that, make stuff up.

JONES
Yeah. We make stuff up.

MOORE
So this language isn't real.

JONES
Well you don't have to be a dick
about it, I thought I did a fairly
decent job.

MOORE
Easy. I'm just working through
something.

JONES
Maybe if you just tell me what's
going on I can help you out.

MOORE
Good. Because I'm trying to figure
out how I have a murder witness who
only speaks your made-up language.

JONES
No way. Like a few words?

MOORE
Like every word.

Jones tilts his head like a confused puppy.

MOORE (CONT'D)
Look, what I really need is for you
to come down to San Francisco
General and talk to her. See if
you can translate what she says.

JONES
Yeah. Yeah, of course.

MOORE
Good. Thank you.

He gladly gets up from the uncomfortable chair, heads for the
door, is surprised to find Jones not following.

MOORE (CONT'D)
You coming?

JONES

Oh, I don't leave the house on
Thursdays.

(off Moore's look)
Starcraft Day.

Like it's the most normal thing in the world.

MOORE

(incredulous)
Of course.

Jones buries his agitation. Threats to the schedule are not good. To calm himself, he resumes texting, multi-tasking.

JONES

You said she's at SFG? I can just
drop by in the morning.
(obviously lying)
I have some errands to run out that
way so it's no problem.

MOORE

(losing patience)
OK, Mr. Jones? It is a problem.
If you don't solve a case in the
first thirty-six hours, it's
probably not getting solved.

JONES

(does the math)
Perfect, there's plenty of time.

Jones returns to texting. Moore walks up, rips the iPad away.

JONES (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

MOORE

You want your toy back? It'll be
in my car.

JONES

You can't take that! That's
robbery.

MOORE

Not my department.

JONES

It's not a toy!

But Moore is already out the door.

Jones starts to follow, but stops. Debates. He can always get a new iPad. Looks over at his Starcraft game. The nest so inviting.

But he steals a glance at the shelf of books he's authored... and something tells him to go, like it or not.

EXT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Moore walks toward the elevator. The door OPENS, and surprise, there's DETECTIVE MATHESON coming out.

MOORE
I already got him, Matty.

Jones storms out of his door, heads straight for Moore.

JONES
That is not a cheap piece of hardware, my friend!

MATHESON
I'm not here for him.

He gestures to the door right across from Jones's.

MATHESON (CONT'D)
This is our victim's place.

Moore looks at Jones, looks at the neighbor's door.

MATHESON (CONT'D)
Weird yet?

JONES
Tommy's dead?

MOORE
You knew him?

JONES
(feels terrible)
I just saw him last week at the landlord's potluck. He made pork dumplings.

MOORE
C'mon.

Trying to ignore the weirdness of the situation, Moore grabs Jones and guides him down the hall. Jones resists.

JONES

I don't know, man. I've been out of my apartment thirty seconds, and my neighbor's already dead. Maybe this isn't such a good idea.

MOORE

We're just going to the hospital. It's not exactly the Danger Zone.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DUSK

The sun has vanished behind the HOSPITAL by the time Moore whips his car into the lot. Jones rides shotgun.

As Moore's car disappears, another vehicle pulls into view and parks: the black Hummer from the bridge.

INT. HUMMER - DUSK

In the passenger seat is KORT, the man with the assault rifle, a hulking mass of intimidation.

The driver is CLAG, bad teeth, worse hair, and a pinched face that's currently a sickly green. He doesn't look well.

In the backseat sits SATISHA, a cruelly beautiful woman in skin-tight leather. Her eyes glow a subtle red.

And beside her is their leader, HUNTER. Not happy.

Satisha scans the hospital with a WHITE HANDHELD DEVICE.

SATISHA

She's in there.

HUNTER

Let's try to do this quietly. I'd like to avoid another Rigel-9 incident.

Without a word, Clag suddenly opens his door and vomits.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

And someone get him a wet-nap.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - NIGHT

Jones peeks into Sera's room through a small window.

JONES

Holy shit!

MOORE

What? You recognize her?

JONES

No. She's hot. None of my fans are hot.

MOORE

So today's your lucky day.

JONES

What are the odds that my one hot fan would be involved in a murder investigation?

MOORE

What are the odds that you'll get in there sometime today?

Jones looks sheepish.

JONES

This may shock you, but I'm actually not very good with women.

MOORE

You're not good with men either. She's a murder witness, go ask her what she saw. That's how we're gonna catch the bad guy who shot your neighbor.

Jones nods, reaches for the door, but stops. He retreats, paces, tries to calm himself. Deep breath.

JONES

(to himself)

Just talking to the beautiful woman. The beautiful murder witness. No problem.

Moore rolls his eyes. Jones checks himself out in the glass of a wall-mounted fire-extinguisher cabinet, steels his resolve, and opens the door.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sera is up, standing by the window, surveying the lights of the city. She doesn't look well, the early stages of the flu maybe, hair matted with sweat.

Jones enters, but freezes when he sees flashes of Sera's bare body through the openings in her hospital gown. She turns to Jones, unself-conscious but surprised to see him.

Moore steps into the room and Sera's features quickly harden. He hands Jones a photo of Tommy. Jones hesitates.

MOORE
(impatient)
Start with how she knows him.

Jones begins a SUBTITLED DIALOGUE, still amazed someone actually speaks this language.

JONES
(halting, not fluent)
*Hello attractive-yet-respected
woman. My name is Hardy Jones.*

SERA
*Hello Jones. I'm Sera Nikadane
from Guardian Station 16. You live
in a beautiful city.*

JONES
(accidentally in English)
Thanks.
(holds up a photo, back to
Azilari)
*The unkind policeman needs
information. This man. Tommy.
How do you know him?*

SERA
We trained together.
(re: Moore)
Can he be trusted?

MOORE
What's she saying?

JONES
She wants to know if you can be
trusted.

MOORE
(to Sera, slow)
You can trust me. I'm a good guy.

Sera locks eyes with Moore, makes a decision, starts speaking, and she has a lot to say.

MOORE (CONT'D)
Well?

Jones holds up a finger, one moment, while he listens. Sera continues, growing more passionate, desperate even.

JONES

She's a Guardian of Omicron
Eridani. She's... responsible for
a Weapon... a very powerful Weapon.
The Syndicate... is here to steal
it. Ooh, I know this - to use in
the coming inter-dimensional war
with the Confederation! Right?

Sera nods, allowing herself a smile. Jones understood her.

MOORE

You wanna boil that down for me?

JONES

The Syndicate and the Confederation
have been enemies for centuries --

MOORE

(interrupts)

Less is more.

Jones pulls Moore to the corner, away from Sera.

JONES

She says that her and Tommy are
from Omicron. That's the star
system where my books take place.

MOORE

So... she's crazy.

JONES

Also my first guess. But she's
kind of freaking me out because
she's basically telling me the
whole plot of Book Eight.

MOORE

OK, so she read Book Eight.

JONES

I haven't written it yet.

Moore looks at Sera who's fuming, and back at Jones who's
mystified, teetering on the edge of the rabbit hole.

MOORE

So she's psychic?

JONES

I don't think so.

MOORE

Don't be an idiot. You have notes about your next book, right? Maybe someone crazy enough to memorize your ridiculous-sounding fake language is also crazy enough to break into your apartment and read your notes. Maybe Tommy told her about them. Isn't that a tad more likely than her being from a remote corner of the goddamn Milky Way?

Sera approaches, urgently grabs Jones and SPEAKS in Azilari.

JONES

She says she wants to talk to me alone. Without you.

Moore debates, but he's been a cop long enough to know wonderful things can happen outside the playbook.

MOORE

Make this clear to her. I can detain a suspect for twenty-four hours without charge. I also have a buddy in the mental evaluation unit at Atascadero on speed-dial. The truth might move things in a better direction.

As Moore walks out, he tosses a PLASTIC BAG full of Sera's personal effects onto a chair, then furtively glances up at a CAMERA in the corner of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL SECURITY STATION - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Moore enters, shows his badge.

MOORE

I need to see Room 6-0-7.

The SECURITY GUARD obliges, and Sera appears on the screen.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sera glances up at the camera, then rifles through the bag of her personal effects. Finds a COPPER BRACELET, slides it onto her wrist, and runs her fingers over it purposefully.

INT. HOSPITAL SECURITY STATION - NIGHT

The monitor Moore is watching distorts, turns to static.

MOORE

Wha--? Can you fix that?

The Guard puts his only technical skill into motion, WHACKS the side of the monitor. Doesn't help. He shrugs at Moore.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sera speaks rapidly to Jones, puts a desperate hand to her chest appealing to him for help.

JONES

C'mon, you don't really need *that*.
Even if you did, how could I
possibly get it for you?

A pleading look comes over Sera's eyes.

JONES (CONT'D)

(he points to his head)
I think you might need help. Like
a doctor? I want to help you...
Can you understand me?

Sera looks at Jones, dead serious. In seconds, she makes an impromptu torch out of hospital supplies: she dips a face-cloth in rubbing alcohol, generates a spark by scraping her fingernail across an emery board, and lights it up.

Without missing a beat, she removes her hospital gown. Jones is speechless.

She runs the flame back and forth along her collar bone.

JONES (CONT'D)

Don't do that!

But Sera's skin doesn't burn... something else happens.

The bones in her chest CHANGE SHAPE. Subtle ridges form, her veins pulsate with luminous blood.

She touches her copper bracelet one last time, finally enabling her to speak in perfect English.

SERA

I was born in the first Orbital
Colony off Eridani B in the ninth
decade of the Middle War.

As she speaks, her irises turn redder and redder.

SERA (CONT'D)

My father fought at the Syndicate Incursion on Omicron 2 and was part of the Guardian unit that finally hid the Weapon. They chose here, in the most remote backwater star system they could find. I've been training to come here since I was seven. Until today, my feet have never touched the Earth, and I have never seen a sky with a single sun. I lost everything when my ship was shot down. You know the truth. You know I need your help.

Jones jaw is on the floor. His space opera has somehow come to Earth, and the proof is right before his eyes.

SERA (CONT'D)

No offense about the whole "backwater" thing, it's actually kind of nice.

Jones freezes like a circuit just blew in his brain.

JONES

This isn't possible.
(hyperventilating)
I'm feeling really light-headed right now.

He steadies himself on the bed... then lies down on it.

JONES (CONT'D)

Is there water?

Suddenly, the OVERHEAD LIGHTS die. EMERGENCY LIGHTS kick on with a low whine. The Hospital power has shut down.

Sera's expression melts to fear. She rests a hand on Jones.

SERA

Stay here. The people chasing me are very dangerous. I'll come back for you.

JONES

(in the fetal position)
OK. Bye.

As Jones tries to process what the hell is going on, Sera BOLTS OUT OF THE ROOM.

JONES (CONT'D)
(semi-delirious)
The hot fan is from space. She's --

He snaps out of it, realizes Sera escaped on his watch.

JONES (CONT'D)
Hey, come back!

EXT. HOSPITAL - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Satisha turns from an OPEN ELECTRICAL TERMINAL. Hunter and his team survey the hospital perimeter.

HUNTER
Let's go.

Unfortunately, Clag is still not adjusting very well to our atmosphere. He's sweating, out of breath and growing more and more queasy. Earthsick.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
Blue hell, man, your metabolism should've stabilized by now. Are you gonna vomit *again*?

CLAG
No sir.

Clag vomits. Hunter recoils, adjusts his plan.

HUNTER
Stay with the vehicle. You two, with me.

He moves off with Kort and Satisha.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - SIXTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Sera speeds down the hall in her hospital gown, earning stares from workers and patients.

Moore appears at the end of the hall, spots her, reacts with urgency. But Sera turns on a dime, leaps over an Orderly's cart, and tears down another corridor.

Jones runs into view, frantic.

JONES
She ran away!

MOORE
Oh really?

They take off after her. She's fast, but Moore's been in his share of foot chases. He stays on Sera's tail as she enters -

INT. HOSPITAL - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Moore bursts through the doors as Sera bounds over the rail--

MOORE

No!

He leans out, stunned to see Sera land flawlessly on the opposite rail TWO FLIGHTS BELOW, swing over and disappear.

For the first time, Moore looks genuinely confused.

MOORE (CONT'D)

How...?

Jones finally catches up, out of breath, maybe dying.

JONES

I don't think... she's human.

But Moore is already bounding down the stairs.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Sera sprints around a corner. Slides to a stop.

HUNTER AND HIS CREW appear at the other end of the hall. They spot her, produce ASSAULT RIFLES from under their coats.

Nurses, doctors and patients scream and duck for cover as the gunmen UNLOAD their clips.

Sera runs back the way she came. Bullets pepper the walls all around her, but she makes it through a door.

HUNTER

Split up! Don't let her leave!

His partners peel off.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Moore and Jones emerge into the aftermath, survey the damage.

JONES

(getting scared)

Oh my god, that was *gunfire*!

Moore continues on, gun raised.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Sera hides in a Nurses' Station.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Hunter and his crew search, room by room.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Moore cautiously peers around a corner. A moment later, Jones peers next to him. They make their way down the hall.

JONES

(aggressive whisper)

Exactly how much longer will you need my help?

MOORE

(more aggressive whisper)

Actually, I've got this part!

JONES

(even more aggressive whisper)

You said I'd be safe. The hospital is the Danger Zone!

Moore holds up a "stay right here" hand and a "be quiet" finger. Jones hangs back as Moore disappears from view.

A beat as Jones realizes he's alone and unarmed. Not good.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Satisha steps into view as Sera ducks deeper into the dark of her hiding place in the Nurses' Station.

As Satisha walks past, Sera ATTACKS. She flips Satisha to the ground, then immediately takes off running again.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - FOURTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Sera rips around a corner, finds HUNTER waiting. She turns. CLICK! Kort grins widely, blocks her escape.

HUNTER

Now, now. Where is it?

Sera looks back at Hunter with hatred in her eyes.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

You're not still upset about Commander Vorhis, are you Sera? I promise he didn't feel a thing when I ripped the location of the Weapon out of his mind. Actually, maybe he did when I inserted the probe into the base of his skull.

SERA

He was the only father I ever had, you gutless murderer.

HUNTER

I really couldn't care less. The Syndicate is finally taking control of its future. We're not leaving without the Weapon.

SERA

You'll never find it in time. The Confed has activated the protocols. My backup is already on its way.

Hunter is far from excited by the news.

DOWN THE HALL

Moore spots Hunter and Kort pinning Sera down.

BACK WITH SERA

Hunter prods her further.

HUNTER

You're making the worst kind of mistake.

SERA

And you're about to experience a hot quick death. We're ready to sacrifice everything, Hunter.

MOORE (O.S.)

Drop it, dickhead.

CLICK! Moore holds Hunter in his sights, nods to Kort.

MOORE (CONT'D)

You too, Barry Bonds.

Hunter and Kort hold their ground.

MOORE (CONT'D)

No English? Drop the fucking guns!

Just then JONES STUMBLES IN through a side door, clutching an IV POLE like a samurai sword --

And stops dead when he realizes he's just stepped into a gigantic hornet's nest... and blocked Moore's angle to shoot.

JONES

Frak.

BULLETS FLY as Hunter and Kort unload their clips. Moore dives, tackles Jones to safety. Sera flees.

SATISHA appears and AIMS A SMALL DART GUN AT MOORE -- BUT JONES STUMBLES INTO THE LINE OF FIRE at the last second.

A tiny dart zips right into Jones's ass.

JONES (CONT'D)

Ow!!!

Jones grabs for the dart, but it DISSOLVES as he touches it.

MOORE

(pushing Jones to safety)

Stay down, dumb-ass!

Satisha takes shelter, pulls out HER WHITE HANDHELD DEVICE. Picks up a signal, smiles. We realize SHE JUST SHOT JONES WITH A TRACKER. She catches Hunter's eye, nods.

HUNTER

Pull back!

The trio withdraws from Moore's fire with tactical precision.

EXT. FRONT OF THE HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Backup arrives. A dozen cop cars slide to a stop, including Matheson in his unmarked sedan.

INT/EXT. BEHIND THE HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Clag swerves the Hummer into view just as the Syndicate crew exits the building. They smash through cop cars and make an easy getaway as Matheson and the other cops dive to safety.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - NIGHT

Sera, disguised by a lab coat, purposefully heads for an exit. She masks a COUGH, her illness growing worse.

In the chaos, no one notices her escape into the night.

EXT. SIDE OF THE EMBARCADERO - NIGHT

The Hummer is parked on the Embarcadero along the Bay.

Hunter stares at the water, thinking. Clag has contracted a steady spasmodic shake. Kort fidgets, impatient.

KORT

We should be tearing this city apart. We need more men.

HUNTER

We have our reenforcements on the ship if necessary.

KORT

That policeman is learning too much, we should have killed him.

HUNTER

(smoldering anger)

Kort. I like killing annoying people too, but we have no time to search blindly. The Confed's fail-safe will rip a hole in this planet in hours. That policeman is tracking Sera, we are tracking him. He leads us to her, she leads us to the Weapon, Syndicate victorious. Am I going too fast? Would you be more comfortable back in the Supervoid?

Cowed, Kort turns away.

Satisha monitors the tracking chip embedded on Jones.

EXT. HOSPITAL - LATER THAT NIGHT

Police are interviewing witnesses, photographing evidence. Detective Matheson approaches Moore.

MOORE

You handing out smiles?

MATHESON

They're in the wind.

MOORE

C'mon Matty! We've got half the damn force here, and what... they just flew away?

MATHESON

We're on the Hummer. I'm meeting the Transpo Director in ten to go over video from the street cams. So... um... what exactly happened?

Moore fingers a photo of Sera. Something about her eyes...

MOORE

I want this photo everywhere, APB. The girl's the key.

Jones staggers up to them, absently eating from a bag of Teriyaki Turkey Jerky. He's about a minute away from the onset of PTSD. He looks at Moore, wide-eyed.

JONES

Ride home? Please?

MOORE

Alright, listen up. You tell me every goddamn thing she told you after I left, or I swear I'll get a search warrant for your apartment, and when the cops toss it, I'm pretty sure you won't be happy with the level of respect they pay to your comic book collection.

Jones starts to lose it.

JONES

OK, Detective? I keep my graphic novels in a safety deposit box.
(beat)
She said she'd come back.

Moore looks around, incredulous.

MOORE

Do you see her around? That woman is now wanted for questioning in a murder. And it doesn't matter that you think she's pretty.

JONES

Pretty? I just had my entire reality realigned. And then two minutes later, I got shot at! I want to go home, I want to watch the Doctor Who premiere, and *I want my goddamn iPad back!*

MOORE
(had enough)
Who the hell is she?!

Jones is breathing hard. That's almost as big a tantrum he's thrown in his entire life. But for the first time since Sera revealed herself to him, the wheels start to turn.

He locks eyes with Moore, realizes the absurdity of trying to convince this guy that Sera is anything but human. Finally:

JONES
OK, I'm just gonna throw this out there. I'm not saying you'll believe it, but I think I know what's going on here. You remember the rebels in Star Wars?

MOORE
Never seen it.

A pause.

JONES
You just blew my mind.

MOORE
Keep talking.

Jones presses on, he really wants them to get it.

JONES
The rebels hid their most important weapons on the most remote planets where the Empire would never find them. Well, that's us, that's Earth. Sera - she hid something here. And those guys with the guns? They're the Empire. And they just found us.

Moore and Matheson are speechless for an eternity, then--

MATHESON
I'm gonna go call in that APB.

MOORE
And find me a coffee, with about this much Irish whiskey in it.
(turns to Jones)
Jones, it's been fun, the City thanks you for your help. I'll get someone to drive you home.

Moore walks off, gets into his car. Jones runs after him. Talking it out has given him clarity, made him turn a corner.

JONES

I can figure out where she's going.

MOORE

Go home Jones.

JONES

There's nothing I'd like to do more right now. And frankly, you're not that fun to be around. But she's in trouble, and you're never gonna find her without me.

MOORE

This isn't one of your stories.
This is real.

JONES

That's what's freaking me out.

Moore looks like he's agreeing to a vasectomy, but Jones is the only lead he's got. He hands over the iPad.

MOORE

Get in, Mifune.

Jones nervously hops in the car, happy to have his electronic security blanket back, and they speed off.

EXT. LASER BEANS - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Elaborate neon depicts a space-helmeted hottie firing a laser pistol at giant green one-eyed monsters.

INT. LASER BEANS - NIGHT

There's no other way to say it - this is a Starbucks with Laser Tag. Geek nirvana.

Tables and rows of terminals where guys who don't get a lot of sun are jacked into Warcraft, Final Fantasy XIV, Star Wars: The Old Republic, a dozen more MMORPGs.

Bookshelves packed with Japanese manga. Posters of superheroes and anime babes. One booth is a life-size recreation of the scene where the baby xenomorph bursts out of Kane's chest in *Alien*.

Nerds drink coffee, read their favorite stuff, and yes, occasionally take out their frustrations on the laser tag indoor arena and shooting range in the back.

A chunky NERD-BARISTA, goatee, Game of Thrones T-shirt, perfectly executes the Vacuum Method, a notoriously tricky but oh-my-god-so-worth-it way to brew. It involves two glass globes, a Bunsen burner, and a working knowledge of physics.

Jones eagerly awaits his cup, fully entranced by the magic. Moore cannot fucking believe this shit.

MOORE

Do you really feel we're doing all
we can to find that girl right now?

JONES

Just... be cool.

MOORE

Did you really just say that *here*?

The Barista finished up, hands over two cups.

NERD-BARISTA

There you go, gentlemen.
(conspiratorial to Jones)
Can't wait for Ataxia! Torvin is
the greatest anti-hero ever!

JONES

And I'm sure he'd love this coffee.

Jones receives his cup reverentially.

Moore accepts his like it's a telemarketing call, takes a quick hello-goodbye sip.

MOORE

Mmmm. OK, break's over.

JONES

No no no, you know, savor it?

Jones does, his eyes show only bliss. Moore relents, savors a sip of the steaming goodness.

MOORE

(quiet menace)

That's really really good, I'm not
gonna lie, but if I'm in here for
more than another five minutes, I'm
gonna feel compelled to give
someone a wedgie.

The Nerd-Barista's eyes widen, his sense-memory kicking in.

JONES
(to Barista)
We need to see Lewis.

NERD-BARISTA
(nodding to the back)
In the Arena.

As they head over, a buzz of "That's really him!" sweeps through the place. Jones is deep in his fanbase.

The entrance to the Arena is a gigantic DRAGON'S MOUTH complete with SMOKE pouring out, glowing lights and the CONAN SCORE coming through speakers. It's ridiculous.

MOORE
If this is a dead end, I am going
to be very, very angry.

JONES
Look, I know you think she's crazy,
but if Sera really thinks she's
from O.E., there's something she
thinks she needs, and Lewis will
know where to find it. Now don't
make any sudden moves in there,
he's jittery.

MOORE
I just hope none of this geek shit
is contagious.

INT. LASER BEANS ARENA - NIGHT

Two fourteen-year-old dorks, taking their situation way too seriously, take cover on either side of a doorway leading into a dark hallway. They meet eyes, nod, and burst forward.

Nothing. They walk forward into a larger chamber with glowing fractal patterns projected onto the walls. Then-

LEWIS
AHHHHHH!!!!!!!

A fat, bearded uber-nerd rolls into the chamber on the ground, fires his "laser pistol" as he tumbles, takes out the teens, then jumps to his feet in triumph.

This is LEWIS MIKELBERG (38).

LEWIS (CONT'D)
You have been owned, bitches. And
I don't mean pwned. I'm old-school
like that.

TEEN

You suck, Nickel-bag. My mom picks us up in 15, we're gonna go catch Peter Jackson's Hobbit vlog on the widescreen.

Moore and Jones enter. Lewis spins and fires, his laser lights on Moore's forehead. Moore frowns.

LEWIS

Jones.

JONES

Lewis.

LEWIS

You're interrupting my conquest of Gamma sector. What the hell are you doing here in meat-space?

JONES

Trust me, if I had a choice, this would be an iChat. Can we, uh, mind-meld for a sec?

Lewis assesses Moore, quickly makes him as a cop.

LEWIS

Suppose we play a little *game* first... Detective.

INT. LASER BEANS SHOOTING RANGE - CONTINUOUS

Lewis guides Jones and Moore to the target practice range like he's some high-level government informant.

LEWIS

If you can hit every target before I do, then *perhaps* --

Moore picks up a laser gun and SHOOTs out every single target in the room in about ten seconds.

MOORE

I trained at Quantico, fucknuts.
(to Jones)
Please god, just ask him what you need to ask him so I can get back to Earth.

JONES

Lithium Hydride.
(off Lewis's raised eyebrow)
(MORE)

JONES (CONT'D)
I don't need it, I just need to
know where I'd find it if I did.

Lewis ponders, strokes the beard, makes a decision.

LEWIS
I need my secure terminal.

INT. LASER BEANS - LEWIS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lewis sits at a desktop, typing away. We'll pretend we don't notice the pervy anime chick blow-up dolls and scale models.

JONES
(fascinated by the screen)
So this is a safe forum?

LEWIS
It's better if you don't ask about
that, Jonesy.

JONES
Oh my god. Are you in with...

LEWIS
The Cypherpunks? They've been shut
down for years. But occasionally
it pays to believe in ghosts.

Lewis logs on to a Bulletin Board site and uploads a message.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
This forum runs on the Rubberhose
system - the encryption's
encrypted. Even the Cray XT5 would
take a month to recognize that
there's anything hidden.

MOORE
(not impressed)
This gonna take a lot of time?

LEWIS
I already got a hit. Jonesy, your
answer is the Vallecitos Nuclear
Center, thirty miles west of town.

Moore and Jones trade an ominous look.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
There's something else...
(turns to them)
You guys aren't the only ones
asking around about this stuff.

EXT. LASER BEANS - NIGHT

Moore gets in Jones' face at the car.

MOORE

Alright Neo, this just got bigger than you and me. I need the details about what that girl thinks is happening, or I swear I'll put you in a prison where they re-enact Desperate Housewives episodes at group time.

JONES

Why are you so fixated on her anyway? What about chasing down those scary arch-criminals who were shooting at us? You know they're the guys who killed Tommy.

MOORE

In the real world, there are laws. That girl is a witness in a murder investigation. I can get them for shooting up the hospital, but I *need* her to connect them to Tommy. I can't just make shit up like you do all day.

Jones desperately wants to tell Moore that none of this is made up, but he knows it's hopeless. Instead:

JONES

OK so in Alien? The xenomorph has acid for blood. Which is totally awesome because even after you kill a xenomorph, it can still kill you. Coolest villains ever, by the way.

He SNORTS in geeky ecstasy.

MOORE

I need you to stop saying 'xenomorph' right now.

JONES

Look, in my books, the OEs are the same way. If they're not on their home planet, they need a chemical to cool their blood. Like a diabetic needs insulin. Only with this, if they miss a dose, their bodies will literally explode.

(MORE)

JONES (CONT'D)

That's how Book Two of my series ends - Rygar gives up his last dose to save his daughter.

MOORE

Sounds truly heartbreaking.

JONES

I cried when I wrote it. Dick. Anyway, the chemical is Lithium Hydride. Sera said her supply was destroyed. We use it to keep nuclear reactors cool. That's why it's at Vallecitos, and that's where your witness is headed.

Moore shakes his head, somewhere between skeptical and impressed. He might be onto something, or he might be blowing this entire investigation on a wild goose chase.

EXT. INTERSTATE 580 - LATER

Moore's car speeds from the city into the country. A short distance back, Hunter's black Hummer follows.

INT. MOORE'S CAR - NIGHT

Moore listens to a baseball game to help him think, an old habit. Jones is busy typing on his iPad. It gets to Moore.

MOORE

(re: Jones's iPad)

What is that? What are you doing?

JONES

I'm blogging about the case.

MOORE

You can't blog about the case.

JONES

Relax, I haven't uploaded anything yet. But if anything happens to me, I want the fans to know...

(can't resist)

...that I might be in the middle of an intergalactic arms race.

Moore slams on the brakes, traffic whips all around them.

MOORE

This is an open homicide investigation.

He grabs the iPad, futilely searches for an off switch.

MOORE (CONT'D)

I'm tracking a foreigner trying to obtain illegal chemicals. There's nothing intergalactic about it.

A trailer ROARS past them, shakes the car.

JONES

I don't think we're parked in a good spot.

MOORE

Too real for you?

JONES

You have a serious problem with what I do, don't you?

MOORE

Hey, if you want to waste your life making up stories about little wizards and little dragons magically jerking each other off all day, it's fine by me. But I have a job to do.

JONES

OK, wizards and dragons? That's fantasy. Which I also like. But I write sci-fi, there's a huge difference. It inspires people.

MOORE

To do what? Buy more comic books? Pretend there's a better world out there? I got news for you, pal. You can fly around up in the clouds for awhile, but when you come back down, people are still people. They steal from each other, they kill each other, they disappoint each other. That never changes.

JONES

Wow. Who killed Santa Claus for you? Mommy or Daddy?

Moore chucks the iPad in the backseat.

JONES (CONT'D)

Careful!

Moore drives on, huffy. Jones sulks.

MOORE
Intergalactic, my ass.

JONES
Your ass will never be
intergalactic.

EXT. VALLECITOS NUCLEAR CENTER - NIGHT

A sprawling CAMPUS of buildings and a HUGE NUCLEAR REACTOR
CONTAINMENT SILO. Moore's car idles at a SECURITY GATE.

SECURITY GUARD
I'm sorry, Detective, there's no
way I can let you in there with a
civilian at this hour with no
warrant and no clearance.

MOORE
Look, we just need to talk to a
technician, make sure everything is
normal, and we're out.

Security Guard notes Jones playing HUNGRY SHARK on his iPad.

SECURITY GUARD
I'm gonna need something,
Detective.

JONES
Will a call from DHS work?

Moore lights up, dials his contact. Voicemail.

MOORE
Shit.

JONES
What's the number here?

SECURITY GUARD
415-384-9200.

Jones fires off an email.

MOORE
What could you possibly--?

Jones holds up a 'wait for it' finger.

The phone inside the Security booth rings. The Guard picks
up, listens, raises the gate, waves them through.

Moore is speechless.

JONES

Deputy Secretary Lute's a huge
Omicron nerd. She posts on my
fanpage daily, trying to get me to
give up spoilers.

EXT. VALLECITOS NUCLEAR CENTER - NIGHT

A smarmy TECHNICIAN guides Moore and Jones across the campus.

TECHNICIAN

Welcome to Vallecitos. I'm Billy,
and I'm so happy to be touring you
around instead of making sure the
nuclear reactor is working
properly.

EXT. BUILDING 14 - NIGHT

They arrive at a massive storage facility that could double
as an airplane hangar. The door is one huge slab of steel.

TECHNICIAN

Building 14. Chemical Storage.

Moore does a cursory glance looking for a disturbance.

MOORE

Anything out of the ordinary
tonight? Signs of a break-in?

TECHNICIAN

As I mentioned, I've been kind of
busy preventing meltdowns.

JONES

Nothing unusual in the sky?

Moore stares daggers at Jones. The Technician looks at Jones
like he's insane - which at this point, he may be.

MOORE

Can we see inside?

TECHNICIAN

Nope. Condition of our insurance.
They don't want to be making pay-
outs to every visitor who grows a
third nipple in five years.

Moore peels a hundred from his money clip, offers it up. The
Technician eyes the money, debates. Pockets the cash.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

(lifts his silent walkie)

My radio is calling me away.

The Tech scans his card, and the STEEL DOOR OPENS.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

(to Moore re: Jones)

If he touches anything, shoot him.

MOORE

I like you, Billy.

The Technician heads off. Jones and Moore enter.

INT. BUILDING FOURTEEN - NIGHT

A warehouse full of pallet after pallet of chemical drums, technical equipment and construction material. They walk past the many, many storage units.

JONES

I think the Ark of the Covenant is in here.

MOORE

Does anything you know not come from a movie?

JONES

I know you're an asshole.

Moore and Jones assess the situation. All appears normal.

MOORE

Wow, your hunch was dead on.

JONES

Maybe she's not here yet.

MOORE

You know what I think? I think you need this to be true. To justify all the time you waste thinking about shit that doesn't exist.

Jones can't let that one go.

JONES

OK, Detective, let me break it down for you. I make a good living on stories, but I'd write them even if no one was reading.

(MORE)

JONES (CONT'D)

Those stories were what I had when there was no one to talk to during recess. Or study hall. Or my early twenties. Now I don't know who this girl really is, but I know she's someone I need to find, and this is the only place I can think of where she needs to go.

Moore looks like he may actually have some sympathy, but --

Ahead, a NOISE signals trouble. An intruder. Moore draws his gun. A SHADOW moves on the CATWALK above.

MOORE

San Francisco Police, stay where you are!

The shadow crosses into the light, pausing to get his bearings. The figure comes into view. A familiar face.

JONES

That's my mailman.

MOORE

That's your mailman.

The Mailman produces a SILVER BALL from inside his coat, tosses it into the air.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Look out!

THE BALL HOVERS IN MIDDLE OF THE ROOM... and immediately SWELLS until it becomes a GLOBE the size of a VW Beetle. The globe vibrates and EMITS A VISIBLE PULSE THAT SPREADS OUT IN A WAVE THROUGHOUT THE ROOM.

JONES

What the hell is he doing with that?

MOORE

What?

The wave hits them. Moore squints, his ears won't pop.

MOORE (CONT'D)

(yells)

What is that?!

JONES

I think... it's a Gravity-Flex!

MOORE

What?!

Moore and Jones suddenly FALL UP through the air, their feet slamming into the ceiling as their world rotates.

EVERYTHING NOT TIED DOWN starts falling upwards all around them. Tables, tools, pressurized tanks fly at them.

MOORE (CONT'D)
What the fuck is going on?!

JONES
I think my mailman is involved in this somehow.

MOORE
(points at the floor/ceiling)
This! This! Why am I on the ceiling?!

A massive CRATE SMASHES into the ceiling right next to Moore.

JONES
Too real for you?

Moore's glare screams, "Not now."

JONES (CONT'D)
That globe is emitting a field of repolarized gravitons. The ceiling can be the floor, the wall can be the ceiling.
(confused but in awe)
I totally thought I made that shit up.
(spots something)
There!

Jones points to the Mailman running away ACROSS THE CEILING, a duffle bag slung over his back.

MOORE
I'll get him. You find a way to turn that thing off.

Moore chases after the man. Jones stays behind and holds onto the catwalk.

JONES
Yeah... I'll just turn it off.
(suddenly remembers)
Moore, be careful about--!

But another WAVE emanates from the GLOBE, and gravity SHIFTS AGAIN. Now EVERYTHING SHIFTS and FALLS over to the west wall of the facility.

Moore SLAMS into a pile of SMASHED LAB EQUIPMENT. He fights for balance, gains his sea legs, and continues the chase.

The Mailman is bizarrely spry for his age, and apparently accustomed to shifting gravity. He adapts to each change like it was nothing, using unexpected hand-holds to keep him upright and balanced.

A huge PALLET OF EQUIPMENT smashes through the side wall leaving a GAPING HOLE. The MAILMAN DROPS THROUGH IT like it was a hole in the floor --

EXT. BUILDING THREE - CONTINUOUS

-- and lands ON THE OUTER WALL OF ANOTHER BUILDING.

From where the Mailman lands, we see Moore struggling to replicate the move, but he can't quite get out.

Moore loses his grip and FALLS INTO THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING in a heap.

INT. BUILDING FOURTEEN - NIGHT

Jones stands on the side of the catwalk, jumps for the silver globe, tries over and over, he's not exactly NBA material.

Finally, he uses his brain, and opens a glass cabinet holding a FIRE HOSE. The hose DROPS OUT SIDEWAYS and dangles into the center of the room, right near the Gravity Flex globe.

Jones SWINGS on the fire hose, and manages to put a hand on the Gravity-Flex...

...but it starts to ROLL AWAY.

Oh shit.

EXT. BUILDING THREE - NIGHT

Moore and the Mailman cling impossibly perpendicular to the outer wall, about 20 yards apart. The shadow of a MASSIVE NUCLEAR REACTOR CONTAINMENT SILO towers in the background.

Moore staggers to his feet and shouts to the Mailman.

MOORE

Where is she?

THE MAILMAN

You're in over your head,
Detective.

That's when the next gravity wave HITS. Moore immediately starts to fall.

But The Mailman is ready for it, and sails in exactly the right direction so that he lands on --

EXT. NUCLEAR REACTOR CONTAINMENT SILO - CONTINUOUS

The Mailman lands on the curved surface of the massive silo and makes a RUNNING LEAP ONTO A SECURE LADDER that reaches from the ground to the very top.

MOORE IS FALLING FAST... if he doesn't grab onto something soon, he might just fall up into the sky.

He HITS THE SIDE OF THE SILO, starts SLIDING UPWARD, clutches desperately for a hand-hold as he quickly RUNS OUT OF SILO.

INT. BUILDING FOURTEEN - NIGHT

Jones still hangs by the firehose, but the Gravity Flex Globe has rolled further and now hovers about 30 yards away.

He spots three OBJECTS at once: a METAL DRUM with a FLAMMABLE label leaking LIQUID ONTO THE GLOBE, a STEEL BEAM dislodged from the ceiling, and SCAFFOLDING WITH ALUMINUM SIDING.

He does a quick bit of guesswork, anticipating the next gravity shift... the PULSE IS EMITTED...

EXT. NUCLEAR REACTOR CONTAINMENT SILO - CONTINUOUS

MOORE has fallen all the way to very TOP OF THE SILO...

Like Luke dangling at the bottom of Cloud City, Moore hangs by a SMALL LEAD PIPE that is STARTING TO GIVE WAY!

If it breaks, Moore will fall up into the sky... to a very unpleasant death.

INT. BUILDING FOURTEEN - CONTINUOUS

Jones guesses right about the next pulse, SWINGS OFF OF THE FIREHOSE and lands on the DISLODGED STEEL BEAM. He hangs on for dear life.

JONES
AHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The beam FALLS, scraping the scaffolding. SPARKS SHOWER!
The liquid from the leaking DRUM ignites...

JONES (CONT'D)
Don't die. Please don't die.

Jones rides the beam as it CRACKS into the Globe like a mallet hitting a croquet ball. The device CRASHES TO THE FLOOR, TRAPPED under the beam.

Jones shouts victoriously, grins like an idiot - this is the coolest thing he's ever done. And he survived!

But he spots the blazing liquid -- he springs to his feet, dives for cover just as the leaking drum EXPLODES, TAKING THE GLOBE WITH IT!

EXT. NUCLEAR REACTOR CONTAINMENT SILO - CONTINUOUS

Gravity normalizes! Moore drops to the roof of the silo like a brick, safe from oblivion.

The Mailman climbs onto the roof from the safety ladder. And is promptly greeted by Moore's gun.

MOORE
(incredibly shaken)
Hold it.

The Mailman raises both hands in a gesture of surrender.

MAILMAN
You need to help us, Detective.
Sera needs what I have and the
Weapon needs to be moved. All of
our worlds are at stake.

Moore's eyes narrow ever so slightly.

INT. MOORE'S CAR - NIGHT

Moore drives, silent. The Mailman sits in back, hands zip-tied. Jones, in the passenger seat, turns to look at his formerly normal friend with wide eyes.

He mouths, *What the fuck?* The Mailman mouths back, *I'm sorry!*

MOORE
(to Jones)
Don't talk. Not to me, not to him.

His cell RINGS. Moore answers, hoping for good news.

MOORE (CONT'D)
Matty? Any luck with that Hummer?

INTERCUT - INT. SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Matheson stands with some officials in front of the numerous video screens monitoring traffic flow.

MATHESON

We got them heading out on
Interstate 580 about an hour ago.

BACK TO MOORE: He looks up just in time to see a sign reminding us that they're on Interstate 580 right now.

The Mailman leans over the backseat.

MAILMAN

They're tracking you, Detective.

Moore is torn. None of this is making sense.

MOORE

(into phone)

We're back in town in half an hour.
The girl's at the Hibernia Bank
Building. Meet us there.

Moore hangs up. Jones squirms like he's about to speak--

MOORE (CONT'D)

Don't even.

They drive on in silence.

INT. BUILDING FOURTEEN - NIGHT - LATER

Clag, looking sicker, sweating bullets, desperately searches an LiH container, finds nothing left. Kort laughs at him.

SATISHA

She's sick.

HUNTER

She can't last more than a few
hours. A simple matter of time.

Hunter surveys the damaged remains of the Gravity-Flex.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

Who are these idiots?

EXT. SECURITY STATION - NIGHT

The Black Hummer drives through the gates, past a metal drum bearing a RADIATION WARNING.

Sticking out of the drum, the DEAD HAND OF THE SMARMY TECHNICIAN clutches his walkie-talkie, ominously chirping out static.

EXT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - DAWN - ESTABLISHING

Moore's car is parked in the Tenderloin across from the historic Hibernia Bank Building. This is a gorgeous 19th century building that's been abandoned for thirty years.

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - LOBBY - DAWN

Sunbeams filter into the lobby. Cathedral ceilings, ornate stonework, marble floors. Moore and Jones trail the Mailman.

JONES

Wow, look at this place... Did you know this is the bank Patty Hearst robbed back in the '70s?

MOORE

Hey ADD, stay focused.
(to the Mailman)
Where is she? Where's Sera?

MAILMAN

She's close.

Moore stands his ground.

MOORE

Why don't you call her, have her meet us right here.

MAILMAN

She's not well. We have to go to her. Trust me, I want to get her healthy and get her out of here.

MOORE

Forgive me if I'm not in a trusting mood right now.

JONES

Don't mind him, he gets like that when someone shatters his entire world-view.

The Mailman concedes, speaks into his wrist in Azilari.

MOORE

What'd he say?

JONES
She's coming to us.

Moore straightens up, back in control of things.

MOORE
Good.

They wait, and waiting gives Jones time to think. And talk.

JONES
You know the most amazing part of
all this?
(Moore could care less)
Definitive proof of multiverse
theory. I mean, I was having a
freak-out earlier, I'm not gonna
lie, but really it's just a chicken-
egg problem. Like I'm the chicken,
my books are the eggs, but then
there are these other eggs that
look just like mine, but I didn't
lay 'em. Right?

Moore looks like his head is going to explode.

JONES (CONT'D)
Then I remembered - multiverse
theory. Whatever we think of,
somewhere out there it really
exists. Like think of a hobbit,
right? Somewhere out there --
hobbits are real.

MOORE
The bullets in this gun are real, I
swear to god.

JONES
That's because, if the universe is
infinite, every possible variation
of everything actually exists an
infinite number of times in an
infinite number of ways. So we
should never be surprised about
anything! Take this conversation--

MOORE
We're not having a conversation.

JONES

If you go far enough into the universe, you'll actually encounter another us talking about exactly the same thing. And if you go even further, you'll see us again, but maybe we're speaking Mandarin... anything you can imagine... infinite versions!

Fascination washes over Moore's face.

JONES (CONT'D)

You're getting it, aren't you?

MOORE

Yeah... somewhere out there, there's a version of me kicking your ass right now.

JONES

Well, yeah, but there's a version of me kicking your ass too.

MOORE

See, that's where your little theory falls apar-- Shit.

The Mailman is no longer there, Moore draws his gun.

JONES

Where's my mailman?

MOORE

You're the genius, you tell me!

Moore spots a large leather-padded door still swinging slightly. Moore and Jones rush through it.

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - MAIN HALL - DAY

Moore and Jones enter the massive Main Hall.

This is a bank like they don't build 'em anymore. A wall of teller stations, all solid marble. On the back wall are three enormous VAULTS, doors ajar.

The CEILING is dominated by a STAINED GLASS SKYLIGHT in disrepair. Light streams in through the cracked dusty glass.

Moore gestures for Jones to keep quiet as they peer behind the teller stations to see --

The Mailman kneels beside Sera, sweating, severely ill.

A GLOWING RED ORB the size of ping-pong ball floats above the Mailman's hand. It pulses a cool BLUE as it floats toward Sera and MELDS INTO HER CHEST with a bright FLASH. Her eyes clear as she recovers.

SERA

We have to repair the ship.

MAILMAN

We have to explain everything. One of them is going to figure it out.

SERA

First, the ship. We can't risk the Weapon becoming unstable. Tommy's gone, it's only you and me.

Moore steps up, gun raised. Sera and the Mailman freeze.

MOORE

You know what to do.

Sera stares at Jones. But Jones stares at something else.

JONES

Moore.

MOORE

Not now.

JONES

Moore --

MOORE

I don't know many more ways to say it, Jones, just shut your mouth! No more aliens, no more laser guns, no more goddamn anti-gravity! You two, on your knees, hands behind your head, interlock your--

JONES

(hushed, voice cracking)
Moore!

MOORE

What?!

Moore finally turns--

And sees TWO SMALL CREATURES EMERGING FROM THE CENTER VAULT. They look like mutant tiger cubs: feline, patterned fur, slightly bigger than house cats, but just as cute.

JONES
Don't. Move.

Moore eyeballs the harmless little animals.

MOORE
Are you not a cat person?

Moore shuts up as the Creatures bare sharp TEETH and over-sized CLAWS... and rapidly begin to GROW.

With each step toward MOORE AND JONES, the cats grow LARGER and MORE MENACING. TEETH EXTEND into SABERTOOTH SPIKES. CLAWS BECOME DAGGERS mounted on crackling knuckles.

Whatever bioengineering lab these things came from is definitely not in our neighborhood.

The large cats circle Moore and Jones, studying their lunch. They've grown so tall the guys have to look up at them.

The Mailman touches his own copper bracelet (similar to Sera's). He is somehow KEEPING THE CREATURES AT BAY.

CRASH!!! HUNTER AND HIS TEAM smash down through the skylight above. Assault rifles replaced with LASER CARBINES.

They drop down towards Moore and Jones using Anti-Grav Packs, giving them a huge tactical advantage...

...until they notice the CREATURES whose eyes light up at the sight of fresh meat descending from the sky.

THE FIGHT IS ON:

- Creature #1 GROWLS AND LEAPS AT SATISHA. She OPENS FIRE, but the beast is too fast, and she's SKEWERED by its CLAWS.

- MOORE FIRES UP AT HUNTER, who evades the bullets and blasts away into a corner of the room.

- CLAG drops to the ground. His Earthsickness is much worse, and he knows the MAILMAN has the cure. Nearly delirious, he runs at the old man. But the bad-ass Mailman holds his own.

- KORT isn't screwing around. He drops down in front of Sera and holds his CARBINE in her face.

KORT
Get up!

She does, hands raised.

JONES makes a run at KORT'S BACK, SLAMS into him with all the strength and speed he can muster. It is not effective.

Kort turns, PICKS UP JONES by the scruff of the neck and HURLS HIM OVER THE TELLER COUNTER.

SERA takes advantage of the distraction and throws a KICK into KORT'S FACE. He staggers backward, then starts to FIRE AT HER. She tumbles behind a counter.

Moore keeps Hunter pinned down, but Hunter grins when he sees-

CREATURE #2 - no longer under the Mailman's control - has set its sights on MOORE who turns and UNLOADS HIS CLIP AT IT, but the thing just keeps on coming.

Now free to move, Hunter sets his sights on Sera.

Jones recovers, sees Moore is in trouble. He rushes up, digs in a pocket, holds aloft the bag of Teriyaki Turkey Jerky.

JONES
C'mere girl!

The Creature re-directs toward the smell of food.

MOORE
Are you crazy?!

JONES
It's a Shi'Ar. Just a kitten.

Jones's plan works a little too well: the Creature pounces, chases them OUT THROUGH A BACK DOOR.

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Moore and Jones run for their life.

MOORE
Just a little kitten. Tony the friggin' Tiger!

JONES
In my books, they never attack anyone who feeds them!

MOORE
I don't think they can read!

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - MAIN HALL - DAY

SERA trades a desperate look with the MAILMAN.

MAILMAN
Go. Protect the Weapon.

Sera turns, runs after Moore and Jones.

The Mailman steels his resolve as Kort and Clag close in.

HUNTER

Leave him to me, get Sera!

Hunter grabs the Mailman as Kort and Clag run off after Sera. The Mailman directs his attention across the room--

Creature #1 looks up from feasting on Satisha, feels the Mailman's commanding gaze, then LEAPS at Hunter.

Its jaws clamp onto his LEFT ARM. Some of Hunter's flesh is torn away, reveals HIS LEFT ARM IS ACTUALLY A POWERFUL BIONIC LIMB - as we'll see, this is his own lethal Swiss Army knife.

The Creature pounces again, and Hunter BATS IT AWAY. It lands in a LIFELESS HEAP.

Hunter surveys his exposed arm. He's not happy. He turns his wrath on the Mailman, pushes the old man down to his knees, stands behind him.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

How many cycles have you wasted
your existence on this backwater?

MAILMAN

You don't scare me.

HUNTER

Oh no?

He produces a TOOL from his utility belt. It's a nasty-looking SPIKE that crackles with blue electricity.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

How about now?

With that, he JAMS THE SPIKE INTO THE BACK OF THE MAILMAN'S NECK! The Mailman attempts to scream in pain, but collapses like he's just been unplugged.

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Moore and Jones sprint through a pair of double doors. Fast.

CRAAASSHHH!!! CREATURE #2 breaks through the double doors and surrounding wall, still hot on their trail.

The guys fly around a corner, but find the Hallway is coming to a rapid end. They have run out of exits. They turn and face the on-coming threat...

The Creature LEAPS AT THEM, CLAWS EXTENDED!

The guys SCREAM. Jones faints.

Just as the Creature knocks Moore to the floor, Sera touches her wristband, and instantly SHRINKS the beast back to the size of a house cat.

The cat stands on Moore's chest, harmlessly licks his face.

SERA
(to Moore, slowly)
You can trust me. I'm a good guy.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Moore's car SCREECHES into traffic, speeds around vehicles.

INT. MOORE'S CAR - DAY

Moore guns the engine, but he's driving SHELL-SHOCKED, directionless. Jones is still passed out in the backseat, Sera is beside him moving a SCANNING DEVICE over his body.

She gets a reading in the region of his ass. With a quick motion, she changes the setting on the scanner and SLAPS IT ONTO JONES'S REAR END. He jolts awake for a moment -

JONES
Agent Scully, no!

There's a loud SUCKING SOUND, and the tiny tracking device POPS OUT and disintegrates into dust.

Sera looks to Moore, who's still in a daze.

SERA
Detective?

MOORE
(snapped out of it)
Huh?

He makes a quick decision, pulls the car into a parking lot.

MOORE (CONT'D)
(finally cracking)
OK, please make it make sense. And
I don't want to hear about his
goddamn books.
(to Sera)
Are you... is there a... plan?
What the hell is going on?

Sera softens. She touches Moore reassuringly.

SERA

I know what I need to do. The
Weapon I need to retrieve, I know
where it is. And yes... I'm not
from here.

MOORE

(calming a little)
Great. That's great. At least you
look like us, right? No tentacles
or... whatnot. So what do we do?
Grab this thing, you phone home and
get on your way?

SERA

The problem is my ship. It's
damaged. Hunter ambushed me before
I entered your atmosphere.

MOORE

Damaged how?

SERA

The hyperdrive core has been
compromised.

JONES

(finally recovered)
A hyperdrive core is the key
component to an FTL drive, which--

MOORE

(back to being Moore)
Less is still more.

JONES

She means the fuel cell was damaged
and it's deteriorating. Like an
element with a short half-life.

MOORE

She's out of gas. Just say that.
Where do we get a new--?

JONES

Hyperdrive core.

MOORE

Yeah.
(trying it on for size)
"Hyperdrive core." Whatever.

SERA

The element is rare, but there
should be a supply on this planet.
If I could access your data web, I
might be able to find something
with comparable specs.

Jones produces his iPad.

JONES

Good thing I brought my "toy."

He hits the power switch. Nothing. Batteries are dead.

MOORE

I hope that shark game was fun.

JONES

My apartment's two blocks away.

Moore drives out of the parking lot.

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Matheson enters, looks around.

MATHESON

Robbie? Buddy..?

No sign of Moore. Checks his watch, maybe he's early.
Checks the pedometer on his belt, decides to get a few more
steps in while he waits.

Matheson hears a noise. Spots Kort and Clag. He quickly
takes cover and draws his weapon.

INT. HIBERNIA BANK BUILDING - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Hunter has the MAILMAN propped up in a chair, the old man's
eyes open and flashing, as though he's... rebooting somehow.

Just then, Kort and Clag return from their search holding
MATHESON between them. He's been beaten into submission.

KORT

We found something. Hiding.
Ineffectively.

Hunter looks up, pleased.

HUNTER

A policeman. Wonderful. Just, you
know, secure him. Take away his
really scary weapons.

Clag is sweating bullets, veins pulse in his forehead and neck. Clearly not well. He nudges what's left of Satisha's mauled corpse with his boot.

CLAG

The tracking beacon is offline.

HUNTER

Not to worry. We have a new source of information.

Hunter takes a LONG METAL ROD and slides it into the Mailman's chest until a loud CRUNCH-POP rings out.

Matheson's eyes widen. He's incredibly freaked out, but keeps quiet.

A data stream and various icons appear on a device at the other end of the jack. Hunter begins to tap the touchscreen.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

Here we go.

CLAG

You found it?

We do not see what Hunter sees, only that his smile grows. Kort and Clag crowd the monitor, even Matheson is amazed.

HUNTER

Now that is a clever hiding spot.

INT. JONES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jones is clearly relieved to be back in his comfort zone, nearly kisses the ground in relief as they enter his abode. He busies himself setting up his work station for Sera.

MOORE

What about your friend back there?

SERA

(sad, but driven)

He was doing his duty.

MOORE

Neither snow, nor rain, nor alien invasion.

JONES

Technically, this isn't an invasion.

SERA

None of this matters if we don't
move the Weapon in time.

MOORE

What happens then?

SERA

Do you really want to know?

JONES

Here you go. I have it set so--

Sera is already several web-pages deep.

JONES (CONT'D)

OK, you're good.

Moore pulls Jones aside.

MOORE

What did she mean "in time"?

JONES

Some kind of fail-safe.

MOORE

Like what?

JONES

If her civilization is anything
like the one I write about, they
have some pretty extreme
capabilities. Nukes to them would
be... small-scale.

MOORE

So what the hell is this Weapon?

JONES

It's almost a myth. Hidden for
generations. I was going to reveal
it in the last book in my series,
but I'm years away from writing it.

MOORE

Well use your imagination!

JONES

I just know it's something that
could destroy entire worlds. The
fail-safe would have to be... you
know, like when a Bomb Unit sends
that robot in to detonate a bomb so
no one else can use it?

MOORE

What are we talking about? A few blocks? The whole city?

JONES

No, more like... North America? Give or take?

MOORE

(as this sinks in)

You couldn't have written about a peaceful tropical island? With umbrella drinks and naked women running around on the beach?

Sera motions to the computer. Jones inspects what she's brought up on the screen. Moore grabs a bag of Milano cookies from the cupboard, goes to town.

SERA

From what I can understand of your systems of measurement, we need a material that is crystallographically isometric with a mid-range density, and a specific gravity between 5.6 and 6.0.

Jones is at a loss. Moore, however, stops chewing, a look of dread washing over his face.

MOORE

No.

JONES

What?

MOORE

Those specs have to be wrong.

JONES

(impressed but suspect)

You know what she's looking for?

Moore does, and he isn't happy.

Suddenly, a LOUD KNOCK at the door.

MOORE

Expecting someone?

Jones shakes his head. Moore steps to the door, checks the peephole.

JONES

Who is it?

MOORE
It's your mailman.

Jones fights Moore for space at the peephole.

FISH-EYE VIEW: The Mailman stands in the hallway.

JONES
He doesn't look very good.

SERA
Get away from the door!

She grabs Jones and SHOVES HIM UNDER A DESK. Moore backs away just in time. The door blasts off its hinges and the Mailman storms in. He raises a LASER CARBINE and opens fire.

Moore and Sera barely reach cover. Jones shrieks as his sanctum sanctorum is turned into swiss cheese.

SERA (CONT'D)
We have to go!

MOORE
Sure! Just as soon as the goddamn mailman stops trying to kill us!

The Mailman's gun sputters. He struggles to get it to work.

Moore rises, fires at the Mailman. The bullet PINGS off him, ricochets back and destroys Jones's life-size VOLTRON MODEL.

JONES
Hey!

MOORE
The hell..?

The Mailman leaps at Moore, lifts him up by the throat with superhuman strength.

MOORE (CONT'D)
(squeaky)
Little help.

Jones is on it. He grabs his bamboo Kendo sword and charges. The weapon slashes through the air--

And shatters uselessly on the Mailman's skull.

Jones gasps in regret. Moore gasps in pain, he scratches at the Mailman's face--

And rips it off!

The Mailman is an ANDROID!

JONES

What in the Westworld..?

The Mailman levels his carbine at Jones.

Sera leaps into action, uses her Copper Bracelet to generate an ENERGY SHIELD. It glows ORANGE as it deflects the Mailman's laserfire.

She expertly tumbles and rolls, pops up and slices at the Mailman with the shield.

As soon as the sparking particles hit him, the Mailman shorts out for a split-second. Enough for Moore to break away.

The Mailman recovers, produces a gadget that we know instantly can ONLY BE AN EXPLOSIVE CHARGE.

MOORE

Oh shit.

SERA

Get out, now!

She pushes Moore and Jones towards the large picture window. Jones panics, looks at his computer, his destroyed note wall.

JONES

My book!

Sera hugs them both tight, impossibly strong, and leaps through the glass and into space.

The Mailman hammers the detonator.

EXT. JONES'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

The top half of the building erupts, bricks and mortar fly everywhere, glass and steel sparks shower down like rain.

Ten stories up, Sera SAILS THROUGH THE AIR with Moore and Jones clinging tightly to her.

SERA

Hold on!

Sera adjusts the ENERGY SHIELD, and it changes shape into a makeshift PARACHUTE!

They land painfully atop a SPEEDING METRO BUS, safe.

As the bus races away, Jones looks back at the fire raging where his peaceful, quiet life used to be. Where his latest novel just went up in smoke.

And to where the burnt-but-still-functional Android Mailman stares out at them before rising to his feet.

INT. SYNDICATE CREW'S HUMMER - DUSK

HUNTER sits in the backseat with a very frightened Matheson. They watch the last bit of the explosion drift up into the atmosphere a few blocks away.

HUNTER

That should flush them out. Now they'll make for her ship, and we'll be there waiting.

(to Kort and Clag)

I feel it's best to be honest about a few things right now.

Kort shifts uncomfortably in the passenger seat. Clag shivers behind the wheel, looks near death.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

This is the most important thing either of you will ever do. The survival of our way of life and that of countless future generations is on our shoulders.

HUNTER holds the box full of LITHIUM HYDRIDE that O.E.s need to survive on Earth. Two of the RED ORBS begin to hover.

One floats to Kort and melds into his body. He glows with renewed energy.

CLAG

Thank you, Hunter.

Clag eagerly awaits his dose. It doesn't come.

HUNTER

I just don't feel like I'm getting the support I need.

Instead, the orb floats to Hunter who absorbs it with a shudder. Clag can see what's about to happen.

CLAG

Not here. This planet smells worse than the laundry room of an Arcturian brothel.

Hunter looks at Clag with contempt.

HUNTER
What pathetic last words.

Clag begins to tremble violently as the Earthsickness wins out. His skin bubbles and boils grotesquely until finally... he EXPLODES across the interior of the Hummer.

The ACIDIC GORE sprays onto Matheson, who finally snaps:

MATHESON
Ahhhh!!! What the fuck?!?
Whatthefuckwhatthefuck!?!?

Kort and Hunter exchange a look, then burst out laughing.

EXT. THE GRANADA HOTEL - NIGHT

The sign sells us on "San Francisco's top rated retirement community." We'll take their word.

Moore, Jones and Sera stand next to Moore's car.

JONES
Let's just go to the mall.

MOORE
Mall's closed.

JONES
You're a cop, get a security guard to let us in.

MOORE
Right. We'll just say the planet's in danger, and the only thing that can save it is cubic zirconium which is, in fact, priceless inter-planetary rocket fuel. Jackass.

JONES
So Plan B: knock off an old folks' home?

MOORE
There's someone here who owes me, and I'm 99% sure he'll have plenty of what we need.

INT. THE GRANADA HOTEL - NIGHT

Not the happiest place on Earth, but there is a game room.

That's where we find ALASTAIR (76). Good-looking for his age, shades of Burt Lancaster. Silver hair coiffed like he's at the country club. Right now, he's neck-deep in a poker game that he will not lose.

His poker-mates are all MISSHAPEN OLD DUDES who probably know they're being fleeced, but they're way past caring. In this place, the house always wins anyway.

ALASTAIR
Who's ready to keep it going past
third street?

A froggy-looking OLD FART with coke-bottle glasses folds.

OLD FART
Aw, cram it, Alastair. If that
deck isn't marked, I still have
both my balls. And unless the left
one's reproduced, that ain't so.

His buddy, entangled in breathing equipment, chimes in.

WHEEZER
Yeah, fuckstick!

Alastair looks disappointed, but before he can defend himself against the slings and arrows, a NURSE approaches.

ALASTAIR
You're just in time, darlin', looks
like a seat's opening up.

NURSE
A policeman's here to see you.

Alastair straightens up.

ALASTAIR
Gentlemen, I hope you reconsider
your harsh words, and maybe we'll
resume after my visit.

He follows the Nurse to the Lobby.

INT. THE GRANADA HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Alastair spots Moore.

ALASTAIR
Detective Moore.

He surveys Jones and Sera and the weight on their shoulders.

ALASTAIR (CONT'D)
I sense this is not a social call.

INT. THE GRENADA HOTEL - ALASTAIR'S ROOM - EVENING

Alastair slides a massive TRUNK out from underneath his bed.

He opens it, reveals rows and rows of the tools of his former trade: gambling paraphernalia, false beards and spirit gum, a wad of counterfeit bills and of course... paste. Fake jewels of all shapes and sizes.

ALASTAIR
(to Sera)
What'll it be, young lady? I'm sure that whatever we place around your neck will never be more than gild on a perfect lily.

Sera blushes, but Moore's seen it before.

MOORE
Save the act. We just need the stones.

JONES
Oh man! Is that a Svengali deck?

He grabs a deck of cards and starts playing around with them.

ALASTAIR
You have an eye for the trade.

JONES
I saw these on Breaking the Magician's Code. Awesome.

Moore yanks the cards away, dumps them unceremoniously back into the trunk.

MOORE
Yeah, it's awesome getting your fingers broken so you can't work to support your wife and child. Not that "work" was ever really part of the equation, was it Dad?

At "Dad," Jones gulps, finally understanding the situation.

ALASTAIR
That was a long time ago, Robbie.

Sera holds up a huge necklace of cubic zirconia.

SERA

We can take this?

ALASTAIR

You don't want that junk, darling.
This one brings out your eyes.

He expertly exchanges the necklace for another, "rubies."
Moore takes it from Sera.

MOORE

We'll go with the other one.

ALASTAIR

Which other one?

Alastair opens his hand. The cubic zirconia has vanished.

JONES

Whoa, that was so cool.

MOORE

Not cool. Hand it over.

ALASTAIR

Not until you tell me what's going
on. Nothing better to do on a
Friday night than shake down an old
grifter?

MOORE

You wouldn't believe it. I don't
even believe it.

ALASTAIR

Try me.

MOORE

I don't have time to argue, Dad.
Give me the damn necklace.

JONES

He's right, Mr. Moore, it's too
complicated to explain now.

ALASTAIR

And who are you again?

JONES

Hardy Jones. The sci-fi writer.

ALASTAIR

(lights up)
Oh, Robbie loved that stuff when he
was little.

(MORE)

ALASTAIR (CONT'D)

What was that TV show you used to watch? You remember, you made me buy the lunchbox with the picture on the front--

MOORE

OK, hands on the wall.

Alastair obliges, the drill is muscle memory at his age. Moore pats him down, searching for the necklace.

ALASTAIR

The one in space, with the robots and the people looking for Earth?

JONES

(shock)

You watched Battlestar Galactica?!

Moore averts his eyes.

ALASTAIR

That's the one! Every Sunday night this kid! Like a goddamn religion.

MOORE

That's funny, I remember someone pawning the TV.

ALASTAIR

Yeah, that's when you created your own story -- what was that name you called yourself?

Moore comes up empty on his search.

MOORE

Aw, come on. Where is it?

ALASTAIR

If only my memory could be jogged, I might just remember where that necklace walked away to.

Moore looks to Jones. Looks to Sera. Sucks it up. But his RESPONSE is hushed, unintelligible.

ALASTAIR (CONT'D)

What was that? Alzheimer's kicks in like that at my age, we're working against the clock.

MOORE

(deep breath)

Kaltar... Warrior Prince of Space.

ALASTAIR

There it is.

Jones grins ear to ear. Moore glares.

MOORE

Shut up.

JONES

Did I say anything?

Moore turns, Alastair is already fastening the necklace around Sera's neck.

ALASTAIR

(to Sera)

I was wrong, you look divine.

Maybe it's the moonlight hitting the necklace just right... maybe it's her unearthly warmth, but for the first time, Sera looks elegant.

Moore and Jones stare just a moment too long, and Alastair breaks the silence.

ALASTAIR (CONT'D)

Now you wanna tell me what's really going on?

MOORE

I can't, Dad.

Alastair stops Moore as they're heading out the door. He looks like he wants to say more, but only manages--

ALASTAIR

You're still a warrior, Robbie.
Say hello to your mother.

EXT. THE GRANADA HOTEL - NIGHT

Moore walks to the car, tense. He looks at Jones --

MOORE

Are you -- are you crying?

JONES

No.

Jones dabs his wet cheeks.

MOORE

Unbelievable.

JONES

I never knew my father. It was
just Mom and me growing up. After
she passed --

MOORE

(not in the mood)
Get the hell in the car.

They get in, Moore driving, Sera and Jones in the back.

MOORE (CONT'D)

(to Sera re: necklace)
So we're good? That'll work?

SERA

It'll have to. We're out of time.

Sera adjusts her wrist-device, makes the standard "picture frame" gesture with her hands. A SCREEN projects ONTO THE CAR WINDOW. She resizes it, begins to manipulate the data.

JONES

Dude! You're a walking M.I.T. lab.
This all goes into the next book.
(remembers it's gone)
If I can reconstruct it.

SERA

You will. Don't lose hope.

A WARNING SENSOR lights up on Sera's data display.

SERA (CONT'D)

We need to drive faster. My back-
up is almost here.

MOORE

Back up? That fail-safe thing?
How long?

SERA

190 minutes.

JONES

Guess you won't get to see Avatar.

Moore floors it.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - ACCESS ROAD - NIGHT

The car SPEEDS DOWN A WOODED ACCESS ROAD to a parking area.

SERA (V.O.)
It's just behind this building.

Moore parks, they exit and start towards --

EXT. THE CONSERVATORY OF FLOWERS - NIGHT

An enormous, ornate Victorian GREENHOUSE and botanical garden nestled in the woods in a corner of Golden Gate Park.

As Sera leads Jones and Moore around the back, she speaks.

SERA
We had gardens like this inside the
Orbital Colony. They were the
closest most of us ever came to
being on a real planet. It was a
beautiful place but a little sad.

JONES
(slightly out of breath)
How did you get out?

SERA
Just lucky, I guess.

Her reminiscences are cut short. They arrive at:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - CONTINUOUS

Forklifts and bulldozers ring a DEEP EXCAVATION behind the Conservatory, about half the size of a football field, which will become the basement of a new building.

The ground is packed earth, scarred by the landing of Sera's ship: a trench stretches across the site.

Sera climbs a LADDER down into the excavation. Moore follows. Jones awkwardly steps onto the ladder but has a flash of vertigo. Moore steadies him.

MOORE
Easy there, Speed Racer.

They continue down.

EXT. EXCAVATION SITE - NIGHT

Sera approaches a massive pile of BUILDING MATERIALS at one end of the trench. She holds out her hand, and suddenly...

The PILE SHIFTS and FRAGMENTS into what looks like several plate-glass windows. Then, one by one, the windows disappear, as if sucked down a drain.

The holo-projection is gone, in its place is SERA'S SHIP.

Sleek, reflective surfaces. Aerodynamic nose, streamlined cabin pods, and in back, spherical housing for an FTL drive. Moore and Jones react like gearheads at a concept car show.

Sera approaches the SPHERE, touches its surface. A round HOLE melts open, reveals the inner workings of the engine.

There is a central chamber with a spinning core, but it's glowing a sickly PALE GREEN. Sera fuses the cubic zirconia INTO THE SPINNING CORE. After a few minor adjustments, the glow becomes a healthier BRIGHT BLUE.

Jones walks around the ship in a daze. Moore watches Sera. Something about a woman working on an engine...

JONES

I still don't get it. I got too many details right.

MOORE

Look, there's an explanation. Whatever you wrote about, you got it somewhere.

JONES

No, I don't think so, man. It's this weird jumble. All my characters, they're just made up, they don't really exist. But the history, the wars... Sera says they're *dead on*.

MOORE

So do the nerds get a happy ending?

Before Jones can reply, Sera approaches.

SERA

It's done. With time to spare.

JONES

How long do we have?

SERA

About two hours.

MOORE

Alright, mission accomplished. Now where's this Weapon stashed?

Sera breathes deep.

SERA

It's better if I show you.

Moore is cautious. Jones is excited.

Sera takes a new DEVICE from a satchel. A slim stick with a crystalline tip - it could almost be a magic wand.

Waves of ELECTRICITY form around the device. Moore and Jones are MESMERIZED.

And then...

JONES'S EYES BEGIN TO GLOW. He faints, his lips part, and the GLOW EMERGES FROM HIS MOUTH.

Suddenly, Jones LEVITATES TWO FEET OFF THE GROUND, tendrils of electricity channel back and forth between Sera's Device and his head.

Moore is dumbfounded. He looks to Sera who is SMILING.

Over the sound of the crackling energy --

SERA (CONT'D)

The Weapon wasn't stable without a biological host!

MOORE

What's happening to him?!

SERA

He's waking up.

As she looks on at her destiny being fulfilled --

FFFTTTT! FFFTTT! FFFTTT!

THREE BOLTS OF LASER FIRE SHOOT SERA THROUGH THE CHEST!

Sera collapses, wounds smoking.

Moore swoops in to catch her.

The wand device SHATTERS on the ground.

Jones drops from the air, falls on his face.

Above on the ledge, THE MAILMAN ANDROID, or whatever is left of him, looks down, levels his LASER CARBINE.

His RED LASER FIRE narrowly misses Moore as he drags Sera and Jones behind the massive landing gear of the ship.

MOORE
(to Sera)
Stay with me, sweetheart!

JONES
(dazed)
I'm OK, I'm not going anywhere.

MOORE
Not you.

Moore pushes Jones out of the way, focused on Sera's wounds.

SERA
Keep him safe.

MOORE
Don't talk.

JONES
What is she saying? What - What
happened to me?

SERA
(locks eyes with Jones)
You're --
(struggles)
It's not just a story anymore.

Sera fades. Jones just stares. Moore fruitlessly tries CPR.

MOORE
No, goddammit.

JONES
What did she mean? Not a story
anymore?

MOORE
It's you.

JONES
It's me?

Moore finally gives up on Sera, devastated but professional.

MOORE
You're the Weapon. You're who they
were guarding. Your *mailman*, your
neighbor the cab driver. Her. Who
knows who else in your life.

JONES
I'm the--? I've never even been in
a fight. People in my life?

MOORE
Keeping you safe.

JONES
I can't be the Weapon.

The Mailman drops down into the excavation site.

Moore reacts, assesses the situation. He grabs Sera's bracelet and slides it onto his wrist, the copper instantly MORPHS TO FIT HIS ARM.

JONES (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

MOORE
Guarding your ass.

Moore steps out to face the Mailman, raises the bracelet--

And nearly knocks himself out as the released ENERGY SHIELD smacks him in the face. He stumbles, dazed from the hit. Sera made this look so easy.

The Mailman takes aim. Moore recovers, blocks the laser blasts just before they strike Jones.

Using an Anti-Grav Pack, the Mailman flies over them, lands on the other side. Moore adjusts, keeps the shield up.

The Mailman bounds around, firing. Moore weaves, waving the shield. It's not pretty, but he defends their position.

MOORE (CONT'D)
Do something?!

JONES
What do you want me to do?!

MOORE
Use your damn... powers!

JONES
I don't have any powers!

MOORE
You picked a hell of a time to stop believing in magic!

Moore charges, hits the Mailman like he's tackling a quarterback. But the Mailman catches him...

...and LIFTS MOORE OFF THE GROUND. It looks like he's about to deliver a suplex.

At the last second, Moore blindly SMACKS THE CONTROLS ON THE ANTI-GRAV PACK.

The Mailman, with Moore hanging on for dear life, TAKES OFF like a comet. His AGP is out of control.

EXT. THE CONSERVATORY OF FLOWERS - CONTINUOUS

THE MAILMAN AND MOORE fly through the air towards the beautiful white greenhouse. They're heading straight for the 60-foot-high dome made of thousands of window-panes.

Gaining speed, they SMASH INTO THE GREENHOUSE!

INT. THE CONSERVATORY OF FLOWERS - CONTINUOUS

They continue to soar right through the massive building, CRASHING into huge displays of FLOWERS and SPLASHING into man-made ponds full of exotic AQUATIC PLANTS until...

EXT. THE CONSERVATORY OF FLOWERS - CONTINUOUS

They SMASH OUT THROUGH THE ROOF, shattering hundreds of windows as they ascend.

For a moment, they're airborne, but it's a quick trip. They COLLIDE with a massive palm tree and hit the ground, followed by a downpour of heavy PALM FRONDS.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Jones looks down at SERA'S BODY, pleading with her ghost.

JONES

I don't know what to do. You need
to tell me.

Hunter and Kort suddenly appear above on the ledge. Jones withdraws, hides behind the ship as Hunter and Kort drop.

Hunter approaches Sera, nudges her with his boot.

HUNTER

Such a waste.

KORT

(creepy)

Take a skin sample, we can make a
clone that looks just like her.

HUNTER

Could you please just focus on
obtaining the most powerful weapon
in the universe? Please?

KORT

Fine, but it's a long trip back.
I'm just saying.

Hunter turns his attention to Jones.

HUNTER

Care to come out? Or shall we come
get you?

Jones holds his breath. Clenches his fists. Attempts to
activate *anything*...

JONES

(hushed)

C'mon. Stupid. Do something.

Kort rounds the corner. Jones reacts, leaps out SCREAMING,
does an impressive Street Fighter "Hadouken!"... to no
effect. Clearly this is not how he activates his powers.

Hunter gives Kort a nod, and the large man SUCKER-PUNCHES
Jones in the face. And Jones goes down for the count.

EXT. CONSERVATORY OF FLOWERS - NIGHT

Moore stirs next to the shell of The Mailman who now looks
more like C3PO's broken and battered grandpa than the
friendly paternal man we met at Jones's apartment.

Moore pulls himself to his feet, runs back for Jones--

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Moore arrives in time to see Kort loading Jones into the
black Hummer. Hunter stands with Matheson, who looks like he
just got out of a prison brawl.

MOORE

Jesus, Matty!

HUNTER

Stay where you are, Detective.
We'll be leaving shortly, and I can
guarantee you, we'll never be back.
If you follow us, this nice police-
man will have his neck snapped.

And with that, Kort starts the engine and they speed off. Moore is left standing in the road, huffing and puffing.

MOORE
Goddammit!

In minutes, he's lost the only thing he needed to protect. He looks down at Sera, lying dead. His partner is probably next. Loses it.

MOORE (CONT'D)
AGGGHHH!!!!

He sucks back a breath, warding off despair with every ounce of energy he has left.

Then a moment of calm. Something hits him. He takes on a look of resolve as an idea forms. He runs back to the Conservatory punching a number into his CELL PHONE.

INT. LASER BEANS - NIGHT

LEWIS is busy macking on a couple of COSPLAY GIRLS. He wears a shirt that says, "The Password is JOSHUA."

LEWIS
What do you think?

He shows a temporary tattoo of the Zelda Triforce on his arm.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Or...?

Shows a temporary Thundercats logo on the other arm.

SAILOR MOON GIRL
Zelda, definitely.

FINAL FANTASY GIRL
I don't know, Thundercats are *sexy*.

Lewis's ringtone starts - it's the FIREFLY theme. He lets it play, singing along, lovin' it, then answers.

LEWIS
(into phone)
Moshi-moshi.

INTERCUT - EXT. CONSERVATORY - NIGHT

Moore stands over the remains of the Mailman android.

MOORE
Lewis?

LEWIS

Yeah?

MOORE

Lewis, it's Detective Moore. I was there with Jones?

LEWIS

Ah, Detective, how can you be of service to me?

Lewis hams it up for the ladies.

MOORE

Give it a rest, I need your help.

LEWIS

I'm kind of in the middle of something. A blonde and a brunette something if you take my meaning.

MOORE

Look Lewis? I'm sure whatever creepy adolescent fantasy you're fulfilling may seem important, but Jones is in serious trouble and I need to reprogram an android.

LEWIS

Cell phones, Moore? Call customer service.

MOORE

Not a cell phone! An actual honest-to-god space robot! And we've got about 45 minutes to save the planet from an even bigger space robot!

ON LEWIS as his eyes light up. He's waited a lifetime for just this call.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Hello? Lewis?

INTERCUT - INT. LASER BEANS - LEWIS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lewis drops in front of his workstation. He's amped but freaked out, convinced of how important this is.

ANDROID SCHEMATICS, fictional and not, filter through on Lewis's monitor array.

LEWIS

OK, I'm cross-referencing every publication on androids since the first US patent in 1863. If I'm going to find any kind of match, I need the exact details of what you're looking at.

Moore scans the dead man's chest, torn open and robotic, but oozing with biomass.

MOORE

I got wires, microchips and sludge.

LEWIS

Microchips or microprocessors?

MOORE

Are you kidding me right now?

LEWIS

(rolls his eyes)

Is there anything that looks like a display driver amplifier?

MOORE

How the fuck should I know!?

Lewis types wildly.

LEWIS

I can't believe your phone doesn't have video. I can't work under these conditions.

MOORE

Lewis! No time.

LEWIS

OK. Don't panic.

(laughs to himself)

Is there a diaphragm? Like a fleshy partition dividing the upper and lower torso?

Moore spots it, a gooey mess.

MOORE

I see it.

LEWIS

OK, I need you to plunge your hand through the diaphragm, down into the stomach cavity.

MOORE
Reach inside?

LEWIS
Yeah, reach inside, Braveheart.
You should feel something like a
gas cap underneath it.

Moore touches the gooey diaphragm, pushes his hand in. It looks and sounds disgusting and, judging from Moore's pained expression, must feel and smell even worse.

He pulls his hand away, gagging.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
You got it?

MOORE
Hold on.

Taking a deep breath, Moore gives it another go and pushes his hand all the way inside the Mailman's stomach cavity.

MOORE (CONT'D)
I got nothing.

LEWIS
One sec.

His fingers are a flurry on the keys.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
OK, the reset switch is probably
deeper. Between the hip bones.

MOORE
This is the only way to reach it?

LEWIS
The least homoerotic. Up to you.

Moore steels himself, pushes in further, nearly up to his shoulder inside the Mailman's midsection.

MOORE
I got it!

Moore does, he turns the cap with a loud CRUNCH.

LEWIS
OK, just don't turn the cap.

MOORE
What?!! I turned the cap!!

LEWIS
Oh shit.

MOORE
Shit, shit what?

LEWIS
Clockwise or counterclockwise?!

MOORE
Lewis, I swear to god--

LEWIS
Alright, alright wait! Let me think.

Beat. Lewis starts to sweat.

MOORE
Any time Lewis. Fate of the universe, man.

Lewis deliberates. This is the most important decision he's ever made, he cannot be wrong.

LEWIS
OK, try this--

ONLY ON MOORE as he digests what Lewis is saying.

MOORE
Uh-huh... yeah... OK.

Moore PUNCHES THE MAILMAN IN THE FACE as hard as he can. The Android lights up, snaps back to life --

MAILMAN
(where he left off)
The Weapon will stay hidden!
You'll never find it!!

MOORE
Uh... they found it. Him. And they've got him.

MAILMAN
Oh dear.

LEWIS
(in phone)
How'd we do?

MOORE
Nice work, Lewis.

INT. LASER BEANS - LEWIS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lewis leans back in his chair, breathes easier. He looks up at a huge poster of LANDO CALRISSIAN, smiles ear to ear.

LEWIS
We're heroes.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The Mailman, moving with jerks and twitches, examines Sera.

MOORE
Can we do anything?

THE MAILMAN
(shaking his head)
We can only do what she wanted to do. Keep them from taking Jones.

Moore is pissed, checks his gun, empty.

MOORE
Well unless you can shoot lasers out of your ass, this is gonna be a short fight.

Moore's cell phone RINGS. The I.D. says it's his boss CAPTAIN KELLY. He debates, finally picks up.

MOORE (CONT'D)
Moore.

The Mailman respectfully takes Sera's body to her ship.

CAPTAIN (PHONE)
Moore? Where the hell are you?
I've got Homeland chewing my ass--

MOORE
Listen, Captain, I--

The Mailman places a hand on the hull of Sera's ship, and an ENTRYWAY melts open, revealing --

A HIDDEN CACHE of ALIEN WEAPONS.

MOORE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
--I'm gonna have to call you back.

CAPTAIN (PHONE)
Moore--?

Moore hangs up, evaluates the arsenal as the Mailman sets Sera's body in some kind of DEEP-FREEZE storage compartment.

THE MAILMAN

The men that have Jones - the Syndicate recruited them from the prison worlds in the Eridanus Supervoid. They're the most vicious killers in the system.

MOORE

Well, let's see 'em try to stop a kid from the Mission District.

Quick cuts:

- Moore pulls on a CHEST PLATE made of SMART MATERIAL - it molds itself to the shape of his upper body.
- He straps crystalline SHIELD GENERATORS to his arms. POWER courses through them as they lock into place.
- He stows something that looks like the bladeless HILT OF A SWORD into a holster.
- He grabs the biggest, baddest GUN you or your father have ever seen.
- He locks and loads, and the gigantic gun HUMS TO LIFE.

The Mailman tilts his head, takes in the new Moore: bad-ass, well-armed... but wouldn't be out of place at Comic-Con.

MOORE (CONT'D)

This better not end up on the internet.

INT. HUMMER - MOVING

Jones is zip-tied in the rear storage compartment.

KORT

Keep him whole or slice him up?

In the rear, Jones's EYES ARE OPEN. He stares at the TRUNK LATCH, desperately trying to think of an escape route.

HUNTER (O.S.)

The Weapon is an integral part of him. Functionality might be compromised if we try to remove it.

KORT (O.S.)

Say the word, I start cutting.

Jones FOCUSES ON THE LATCH - can he use the Force? He focuses his thoughts... strains his face... Nope.

HUNTER

Leave it to the surgeons. With this power, the Syndicate can destroy worlds, even create new ones. It can't arrive damaged.

Jones's wheels turn furiously, but he can't crack the code.

Battered and bruised, Matheson makes an attempt at reason.

MATHESON

You look like smart guys. Why don't you just pull the car over and turn yourselves in before this gets any worse for you?

Hunter locks eyes with him, his features DISTORT. We are reminded that these bad guys are not human.

MATHESON (CONT'D)

No? OK.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - NIGHT

The Hummer speeds North over the bridge.

EXT. SKY OVER GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Above the bridge towers, a RIPPLE. Sera's SHIP FLICKERS IN AND OUT OF VIEW, its cloaking device obviously damaged. Still, it moves with incredible speed, tracking the Hummer.

INT. SERA'S SHIP - NIGHT

The Mailman pilots. Moore is crammed in the seat behind him.

THE MAILMAN

My motor skills are compromised, I'm losing mobility. I have to turn on the ship's A.I.

He inserts a finger into a socket, and the shipboard ARTIFICIALLY INTELLIGENT COMPUTER activates.

AN ANGRY GARBLED ALIEN LANGUAGE can be heard from a speaker, but it quickly scrambles and switches to English.

A.I.

-- and I have never been so humiliated in all my life!

THE MAILMAN
Don't put this on me.

A.I.
What are you gonna do, Tin Man?

THE MAILMAN
I'm going to ignore you until
you're in a better mood.

MOORE
You guys need a time-out? Just
follow the goddamn car!

A.I.
Who's the meat-bucket?

Before Moore can answer, the surviving SHI'AR CAT from
earlier suddenly manifests aboard the ship, scares the shit
out of Moore, even in its small form.

MOORE
We got a problem.

THE MAILMAN
Stay calm. The Shi'Ar is inter-
dimensional. Sometimes she pops
up. Unexpectedly.

The cat hops onto Moore's lap. He's frozen with fear, but
the cat just curls up and snuggles.

THE MAILMAN (CONT'D)
Don't worry, you're off the menu.

Moore assess the situation: he's on a neurotic spaceship with
a broken robot and a carnivorous alien kitten.

MOORE
Lucky me.

EXT. MARIN HEADLANDS - NIGHT

The Hummer winds down Bunker Road, wrapping around an
enormous lagoon. San Francisco lights in the distance.

EXT. SHORES OF RODEO LAGOON - NIGHT

The Hummer slides to a stop at the muddy edge of the lagoon.
The night is quiet. Brown PELICANS float among the pondweed.

Hunter exits, configures a remote control DISPLAY that
appears on the forearm of his Bionic Arm. Kort opens the
back of the Hummer, drags Jones to his feet.

JONES

You guys are gonna be in seriously deep shit as soon as I figure myself out.

(spots something)

Oh. My. Spaghetti monster.

The LAGOON BUBBLES as one MASSIVE METALLIC GUN TURRET, then ANOTHER, and ANOTHER rise up out of the water.

In moments, HUNTER'S ENTIRE SHIP is visible. If Sera's was a Corvette, this is a Mack Truck. A well-armed Mack Truck.

The ship DESCENDS and comes to rest in the empty parking lot next to the Marin Headlands Visitor Center.

Hunter heads for the ship with Jones.

KORT

(re: Matheson)

What about him?

HUNTER

All yours.

Kort smiles. Matheson panics.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

Hunter starts his pre-flight. Jones can't help but be intrigued by his surroundings.

Hunter drops in front of the ships controls, which conform to his presence, shifting and retracting as he needs them.

JONES

Damn, the bad guys always get the best tech.

(to Hunter)

So do you fly us home, or is there an A.I.?

(gets no answer)

I'm just fact-checking. I wrote that organics need to be put into hypersleep before a ship hits light-speed. If that's the case, you should know I get an awful reaction to sleeping pills. Just a heads up, 'cause I'm pretty sure you do not want to be in zero-G with projectile vomit floating around.

Hunter ignores him, activates a communication station.

A high-resolution HOLOGRAM appears of a conference table, around which sit the SYNDICATE OLIGARCHY, an obviously nasty bunch. They speak in AZILARI, subtitled.

SILVER-HAIRED OLIGARCH (HOLOGRAM)
Do you have news for us?

HUNTER
The Confed Guardians are dead, and
the Weapon has been recovered.

FOXY FEMALE OLIGARCH (HOLOGRAM)
And its condition?

Jones leans into view, waves hello with his bound hands.

JONES
(in English)
Oh my god, you guys are the
Syndicate Oligarchy! I can't
believe you evil bastards are real!
How many of you guys still live in
your original bodies?

Hunter pushes him away.

HUNTER
(subtitled)
The Weapon is intact. For now.
But the fail-safe is on its way, we
must leave immediately.

FREAKISHLY PALE OLIGARCH (HOLOGRAM)
(subtitled)
You have made us proud, Hunter. To
think the new hero of the Syndicate
was born in a Confed colony. Send
a communique when you come out of
hypersleep.

The hologram disappears. Jones reappraises Hunter.

JONES
You're a Confed?
(no response)
Let me guess. Your parents were
Aggies... glass farmers? Probably
kept you out of school, simple
economics there. But one night in
a bar, a Syndicate Believer talks
to you. You're so desperate to get
off the farm, you don't even care
if it's all propaganda.
(MORE)

JONES (CONT'D)

Before you know it, you're helping the local rebels take out a Confed councilman. A botched job or a snitch lands you in jail. Some nasty shithole like the Supervoid prisons. That's where you have no choice but to stick with your Syndie buddies. Maybe you were even the toughest one in there. And when you got out, they gave you a mission. The most important one they had. But you're still just a kid from a glass farm who didn't want to harvest crops like his dad.

Hunter finally snaps.

He SLAMS HIS BIONIC FIST INTO JONES'S STOMACH. Jones doubles over, more than the wind knocked out of him.

HUNTER

This ends with you dead. You're nothing but the sheath for a blade, the holster for a gun. The Weapon will be ripped from your insides. And then I will personally see to it that this, your disgusting Earth, is taken apart atom by atom. The Syndicate will strip it clean, sell half the population as slave labor and bring the other half back to O.E. as fertilizer.

Jones struggles on the floor, desperate to keep breathing, to buy time until something tells him what to do.

EXT. HUNTER'S SHIP/VISITOR CENTER - NIGHT

Kort has Matheson propped against the wall of the Visitor Center, and proceeds to play William Tell with him.

MATHESON

Oh god. Miss. Miss. Miss.

Matheson jumps as each blast SPLINTERS THE WALL next to his head. Kort smiles, takes aim for a kill shot--

MOORE (O.S.)

Turn around nice and easy, Dolph Lungren.

Kort freezes, turns, and LAUGHS at the sight of Moore in his ridiculous warrior get-up, the giant cannon in his hands.

KORT

What are you supposed to be?

MOORE

I'm the guy who's about to kick
your ass.

Kort CRACKS his neckbones and gets ready for a fight.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

On a monitor, Hunter notices Moore's arrival.

HUNTER

I've had enough of your friend.

He moves to the rear hold, touches a panel. THREE CHAMBERS
OPEN, their doors splitting and disappearing into the wall.

Inside are THREE COPIES OF SATISHA. They emerge from their
pods and stretch. They're armed to the teeth.

EXT. HUNTER'S SHIP/VISITOR CENTER - NIGHT

Moore closes in on Kort, cocky.

MOORE

If you put the gun down, I can
still just arrest you.

Kort doesn't fret, his grin grows wider as the THREE SATISHAS
silently drop down from Hunter's ship one by one.

MOORE (CONT'D)

What, no police brutality where
you're from?

Moore finally gets that feeling, like someone is behind him.
He turns, finds he's surrounded by three gorgeous killers.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Ladies.

Moore fires his HUGE GUN, an explosive particle beam that
nearly fries the three Satishas as they tumble to safety.

MOORE (CONT'D)

(admiring his new gun)
Not bad.

The clones ATTACK like they've been taking gymnastics class.
As Moore BLASTS AWAY, one of them FLIPS THROUGH THE AIR,
lands in front of him and RIPS THE GUN AWAY.

Moore backs up, tries to activate his defensive shields, but the alien tech is too complicated. He gets them working JUST IN TIME as laser fire SPRAYS ALL AROUND.

Desperate, he pulls the bladeless SWORD HILT out of its holster. Unsure, he GRIPS it, activates it--

And a six-inch ENERGY BLADE emerges. A pussified, way-too-small version of a light saber.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Oh come on!

The Satishas produce their own weapons, SONIC WHIPS. Each snap ripples the air with a THUNDEROUS CRACK, the energy burst knocking Moore back.

He tries to block with the tiny sword, but it's useless.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

Jones watches a monitor helplessly as Moore loses ground.

EXT. HUNTER'S SHIP/VISITOR CENTER - NIGHT

A WHIP-SNAP knocks the energy dagger out of Moore's hands. The deactivated hilt lands at Matheson's feet.

Moore turns as the three Satishas circle him.

MOORE

Look, how about we call it a draw
and the three of you come back to
my houseboat, enjoy a few
margaritas, and we make some
memories?

A whip cracks dangerously close to him.

MOORE (CONT'D)

OK, how about just two of you?

Just as one of the lethal women gets the drop on Moore, she is BATTED AWAY by the MASSIVE PAW of the Shi'Ar Cat!

The Creature, now in full-on giant lion form, leaps into sight and quickly turns the tide, distracting the clones.

Moore reacts, dives for a dropped sonic whip.

Kort responds, raises his gun. But Matheson makes a move too, quickly scoops up Moore's fallen sword hilt--

And plunges THE GLOWING DAGGER INTO KORT'S BELLY.

MATHESON
 AHHHHHH!!!!

Matheson CARVES KORT UP LIKE A TURKEY. The hulking bad guy VOMITS ACID BILE as his entrails burn through his armor.

MOORE
 You OK?

MATHESON
 Go. Get Jones.

Moore races aboard the ship as Matheson watches the two remaining Satishas get menaced by the giant Shi'Ar cat.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

Hunter finishes his PRE-FLIGHT, and grabs Jones. He drags him into the rear hold and jams him into a HYPERSLEEP POD.

HARNESSES automatically strap Jones's head and body in place.

JONES
 So that's a yes on the hypersleep?

HUNTER
 And you're never waking up.

Hunter ACTIVATES THE POD. The doors CLOSE.

Through the portal glass, we see TWO NEEDLES emerge and PIERCE JONES'S NECK. In seconds, he's UNCONSCIOUS.

PAN OVER TO DISPLAY SCREEN. A shot of THE NIGHT SKY... overlaid with rapidly changing ALIEN SYMBOLS that begin to look frighteningly like a COUNTDOWN. PUSH IN AND CUT TO:

EXT. THE SKY OVER HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

We push higher and higher, into SPACE. SOMETHING IS COMING.

Speeding toward Earth is a GIGANTIC SLEEK SILVER MISSILE DRONE. An ICBM's interstellar big brother. Not good.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

Moore sneaks on board. He speaks quietly into his headset.

MOORE
 Which way?

INTERCUT - INT. SERA'S SHIP - NIGHT

The Mailman Android, too damaged to join the fight, is running navigation, scanning schematics of Hunter's ship.

THE MAILMAN

Keep going straight. Turn left.

MOORE

Is he alive?

THE MAILMAN

My scan says yes.

MOORE

How much time -- ?

THE MAILMAN

Just find him. When you do, he's got to complete his activation.

MOORE

How the hell does that work?

THE MAILMAN

There's no manual. He just needs a moment of self-awareness, and he should know what to do.

MOORE

How close am I?

THE MAILMAN

Jones should be just--

A flood of static and feedback cuts in. Moore winces, ditches the headset.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

Hunter turns from the terminal that is JAMMING Moore's signal. His BIONIC ARM POWERING UP.

INT. HYPERSLEEP POD - NIGHT

Jones sleeps soundly. We FLASH TO IMAGES OF JONES'S PAST:

- Jones (age 10) with his MOM (30s, vital, nurturing). She gives him a TELESCOPE.

- Mom watching Jones as he plays Nintendo.

- His mom's funeral, Jones (17) looking sad and scared.

- Jones writing in a college dorm room while everyone else parties downstairs.

- An adult Jones still writing with even more passion.
- The vivid covers of the O.E. books.
- The recent moment where Sera ACTIVATES him, as glowing energy spews from his eyes and mouth.
- Sera saying something in Azilari, Jones responding.
- Jones's Mother smiling.

CLOSE ON JONES'S FACE.

JONES
You said "we."

SERA (O.S.)
Yes. You knew.

JONES
No! I didn't know. We're from
Omicron?

SERA (O.S.)
Yes, Jones. You and I. Your
Mother. She was a Guardian like
me. We are from Omicron Eridani.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - NIGHT

Moore finally sees the Hypersleep chamber ahead. But then --

Hunter appears in his way. Moore cracks the whip, but Hunter grabs it with his Bionic Arm, effortlessly tugs it free and starts RUNNING RIGHT AT MOORE.

Moore quickdraws a BLASTER holstered on his thigh. But Hunter is faster, already at CLOSE QUARTERS, and the bionic fist SMACKS THE BLASTER AWAY.

Out of weapons, Moore relies on side-steps, head-fakes and spins, street-ball style. He gets around Hunter, bolts.

Moore dashes into the sleep chamber, slaps the door controls, and the panels slam shut. He SMASHES THE CONTROLS WITH HIS ELBOW, hopefully securing his escape. Hunter seethes.

Moore looks in from the other side of the glass portal, grins victoriously at Hunter before he disappears.

Enraged, Hunter sledgehammers the door with his bionic fist.

INT. JONES'S DREAMSCAPE - NIGHT

Jones continues to talk with Sera in his hypersleep dream. She appears in a white, flowing robe.

SERA

You were conceived on the Ring Colony Aggrandis by your mother and father, both scientists for the Confed. When they invented the Weapon, they thought they were ending hunger, poverty, disease. Curing their race of its weaknesses forever. But the invention was weaponized, turned into an unstoppable force of destruction. And so they hid it. In you. An organic hiding place for the most fearsome weapon in existence.

JONES

That's not me. I grew up here.

SERA

Your memory has been closed off. Only bleeding out from time to time. Your stories? Your books? They're a blend of your memories and your dreams. It's you.

JONES

But I've spent my life just hiding.

SERA

Not hiding. Becoming. Your journey - every moment you felt out of place, every night you retreated into your imagination. It all had a purpose.

INT. HYPERSLEEP POD - NIGHT

Moore struggles to open the hypersleep pod, finally wins. But Jones is out cold. Moore shakes him.

MOORE

Wake up! Jones!

(whistles)

Hey! C'mon, man, wake up!

Moore starts slapping him, hard, nothing works.

INT. JONES'S DREAMSCAPE - NIGHT

Jones's dream self stares at his hands.

JONES
I feel it. It's there. I have to
wake up.

SERA
Yes.

JONES
How --?

She reels back and SLAPS JONES HARD! --

INT. HYPERSLEEP CHAMBER - NIGHT

--Moore's hand slaps Jones hard. Jones's eyes fly open. He grimaces in pain.

Moore lights up, happy to see him. But Hunter's fist pounds away, the steel doors dent in, dangerously close to failing.

MOORE
C'mon, Sleeping Beauty.

Jones is still dazed as Moore lifts him out of the chamber and sets him on his feet.

Jones immediately collapses, as if he suddenly has no bones.

MOORE (CONT'D)
Get up!

JONES
I can't. The hypersleep drugs
haven't worn off. What are you
wearing?

CRACK!!! The steel doors give way and Hunter pushes in.

Moore readies to fight. Hunter has had enough playing around, he raises his hand like it's a cannon --

And FIRES A PLASMA BEAM at Moore!!!

Moore narrowly dodges, slams onto the floor beside Jones.

MOORE
What the fuck was that?!

JONES

He probably has... a plasma
accelerator in his prosthesis.

MOORE

How about a heads up next time?

Hunter is on him. He grabs Moore and SLAMS him into a wall.

Jones eyes his useless legs... but THEN HE WIGGLES A TOE.

Moore groans in pain as Hunter slams him into another wall.

Jones drags himself across the floor, half awake.

Moore punches Hunter, who takes it, gives it back harder.
Moore is losing this fight quickly.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Had enough..?

Hunter is having fun now, bloodies Moore's other nostril.

Jones pulls himself toward Hunter, almost there. Moore spots
him. Gets the plan.

HUNTER

How many hits do you think it'll
take to crack your skull?

MOORE

(battered and broken)
I don't know, I'm not big on math.

HUNTER

Let's find out.

MOORE

Why don't you sleep on it.

Jones pulls himself to his hands and knees, and Moore shoves
Hunter, knocking him over Jones, and into a hypersleep pod.

Jones hits the controls and the harnesses SECURE Hunter.

HUNTER

NO!!!!

His yell is cut short as the door of the pod slams shut, and
the needle injections PUT HIM TO SLEEP.

MOORE

Frozen in carbonite.

JONES
(double-take)
You have seen it!

MOORE
Of course I've seen it.

For just a moment, the cold adult exterior cracks, and Moore is the kid that still believes. He sends a brotherly punch into Jones's arm.

JONES
Ow!

But before they can relax - an ALARM BLARES out.

MOORE
Tell me that's a good alarm.

JONES
I don't think they have those.
That's why they're called "alarms."

He pushes toward the ship's bridge. Moore runs after him.

INT. HUNTER'S SHIP - BRIDGE - NIGHT

Jones plops into the captain's chair and the controls morph to adapt to him. (This is the real, much more bad-ass version of Jones's dorky "About the Author" photo.)

JONES
Cool.

He makes some adjustments and a display illuminates, showing the FAIL-SAFE MISSILE DRONE BURNING THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERE.

MOORE
Is that --?

JONES
The Fail-Safe Drone.

MOORE
No problem. We'll just tell it to
stop, everything's OK now.

Moore slaps Jones on the back, confident. Jones isn't sure.

EXT. HUNTER'S SHIP/VISITOR CENTER - NIGHT

Moore steps from the ship. Sees the Shi'Ar snacking on the remains of the Satishas. Matheson gestures all is good.

The MAILMAN waves from inside the cockpit of Sera's ship.
 Jones emerges, stands by Moore's side. They look to the SKY.
 The FAIL-SAFE MISSILE DRONE is heading right for them, but
 somehow it's SLOWING DOWN.

MOORE
 I think it knows you're safe.

As if to answer, the Drone starts to HOVER above them and
 emits an array of SCANNING LASERS over the lagoon.

JONES
 Maybe.

THEN IT TRANSFORMS - expanding PANEL AFTER PANEL, APPENDAGE
 AFTER APPENDAGE until it's an ENORMOUS INTIMIDATING DEATH
 MACHINE with METALLIC TENDRILS, GUN TURRETS, and the MOTHER
 OF ALL DEATH RAYS right in the center.

JONES (CONT'D)
 Maybe not.

It TEARS ACROSS THE LAGOON, TENDRILS picking up and tossing
 aside BOAT AFTER BOAT. The air becomes a blur of LASER FIRE.

Moore and Jones run for higher ground to a hill overlooking
 the Lagoon and the mile-long Golden Gate Recreation Complex.

The Drone hovers menacingly...then the DEATH RAY activates --
 VAPORIZES SEVERAL BUILDINGS AND ALL THE WATER IN THE LAGOON.

MOORE
 Holy shit! Stop it!

JONES
 OK... here it goes!

Jones looks at his hands. Strains his mind.

JONES (CONT'D)
 I have no idea what the hell I'm
 doing!

MOORE
 You're the Weapon! Be the goddamn
 Weapon!

The DRONE IS CLOSING IN.

JONES
 OK, the pressure thing? It doesn't
 help me. I'm getting a neck cramp.

MOORE

Are you fucking kidding me?

Another larger building is vaporized. They're next.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Suck it up!

The guys TAKE SHELTER IN A GROVE OF TREES.

JONES

(rubbing his neck)

This one's bad.

Moore starts to rub his shoulders and neck.

MOORE

Is that better?

JONES

(closing his eyes)

That's good. You're good at this.

MOORE

Just -- be self-aware. That's what your Mailman said.

Jones opens his eyes. A new clarity.

MOORE (CONT'D)

Does that mean anything?

JONES

Yes. Yes it does.

He stands on the hilltop and faces the DRONE...

CLOSE ON JONES'S EYES -- ZOOM INTO HIS MIND AND SEE:

- Jones's parents HOLDING JONES AS A BABY.
- A childhood AMONG THE STARS. A FOUR-YEAR OLD JONES playing in the gardens of a FLOATING SPHERICAL SPACE COLONY.
- A FLASH OF AN INTERSTELLAR JOURNEY
- EARTH seen from space.

Jones has broken through. He knows what he is, what he's been all along. He is not of this Earth. And he has great power.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

JONES stands below the MASSIVE INTIMIDATING DRONE. But with a new clarity behind his eyes. He holds up a HAND...

JONES

Stop.

And it does. The DRONE LITERALLY FREEZES IN PLACE. The sudden SILENCE IS SHOCKING.

Then Jones begins to TAKE THE DRONE APART... MOLECULE BY MOLECULE. It's astonishing.

The deconstruction goes FASTER AND FASTER until, in moments, there's literally NOTHING LEFT.

Moore and Jones trade a look.

MOORE

Wow.

JONES

Right?

Jones eyes his hands, sees the potential. So does Moore.

MOORE

Sera.

INT. SERA'S SHIP - SUNRISE

Moore and the Mailman gently lift Sera's body out of storage.

EXT. SERA'S SHIP - SUNRISE

Moore lays Sera down before Jones.

JONES

I don't know if I can.

MOORE

Try.

Jones kneels down and inspects her wounds. He places a hand gently in the center of her chest, concentrates...

At first, nothing. But then Moore can see it, something is happening. Jones's hands act like a conduit for some kind of energy, flowing into Sera, awakening the dead tissue.

And she OPENS HER EYES, TAKES A BREATH! The deus has exed the machina.

THE MAILMAN
(to Jones)
You were worth protecting.

MOORE
Glad I didn't kill you myself.

Matheson perks up, gives his partner a head nod.

MATHESON
I just hope he can lower my
cholesterol because I really need a
goddamn cheeseburger.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - STAIRWELL - DAYS LATER

Moore hoofs it up the metal stairs, his footsteps echoing.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - ROOF - NIGHT

Moore steps outside, finds Jones waiting with packed bags.

MOORE
Are you really doing this?

JONES
It's kind of my job now. Speaking
of which, I'm down a few Guardians.

MOORE
I think I'd fail the entrance exam.

SERA (O.S.)
I could put in a good word for you.

The AIR SHIMMERS, and SERA'S SHIP is revealed, Sera, the
Mailman, and the small Shi'ar standing in the open door.

Moore locks eyes with Sera. She steps to him, hugs him.

SERA (CONT'D)
Thank you for believing, Detective.

The Mailman looks to Jones.

MAILMAN
Alright, Mr. Jones. Time to see
the world you thought you made up.

Jones accepts his destiny, turns to his bags.

JONES
Oh, I almost forgot. I won
something on eBay for you.

Jones produces a gift, hands it to Moore.

Suspect, Moore unwraps the package to reveal -- a vintage original series Battlestar Galactica lunch box.

No words are exchanged, none are needed. Jones hefts his bags, steps toward the ship.

MOORE
Hey, Jones.

JONES
(turns back)
Yeah?

Moore looks back at the city he loves, but he knows what he needs to do.

MOORE
Shotgun.

JONES
Whatever you say, Kaltar.

The SHIP'S DOOR seals behind them.

As the SHIP TAKES OFF INTO THE NIGHT SKY...

FADE OUT.

THE END