

CAPSULE

Written by

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BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD:

"Truth is stranger than Fiction, but
it is because Fiction is obliged to
stick to possibilities; Truth isn't."

Mark Twain

FADE IN:

EXT. A MIDNIGHT SKY

A supreme, blue moon radiates. A cloud streams across and partially shields it. A streak of light shoots across -- like a comet -- the vastness.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

ERIC BYRON is four. He sits in the middle of the plush grass which envelops him.

His eyes transfixed on the star-filled sky. He focuses, keenly, on the lunar structure which emits radiance on his cherubic face.

It is a dreamful state for Eric.

A silhouette eclipses him.

The silhouette belongs to a sinewy featured woman with a kind smile -- ERIC'S MOM.

Eric's tranquil smile stills her.

ERIC'S MOM

Eric, honey...

She crouches down before him and gives the clear, starry sky a glance, then turns her care-filled eyes back to her child.

Eric has something in his small hand. It is a BLUE TULIP. It is held up for her to see. Eric's Mom takes it in hand.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)

A blue tulip. I don't think they
grow around here.

She is taken aback by her son's gift to her.

ERIC
I found it.

Eric's Mom cannot help but smile.

ERIC'S MOM
That's a good thing.
(beat)
Hey, think of it as Daddy smiling
down on us.

ERIC
(this excites him)
Yeah!

Eric, bashfully, turns his eyes down. His small hands,
playfully, brush the grass that encircles him.

Eric's Mom is clearly endeared by her son.

ERIC'S MOM
We're going to be OK.

Eric nods. An acceptance.

Eric's Mom looks up to the Blue Moon.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)
It is pretty, huh?

ERIC
Uh huh.

She extends her hand to him.

ERIC'S MOM
C'mon...

ERIC
I'm gonna go, Mom.

ERIC'S MOM
Where?

Eric points up to the sky.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)
You're important here... now. When
you get older... maybe...

Her smile comforts him.

ERIC
You believe me, Mom.

ERIC'S MOM

That's a silly thing to say... of course I believe in you.

ERIC

I'm going to do good things.

ERIC'S MOM

I know you are, but you need your dinner first.

ERIC

I get visitors in my dreams, you know.

ERIC'S MOM

That's good to know.

She leads Eric back to the house.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - DAY

Eric's Mom guides Eric through the tall grass to their rural home in the distance. A small flicker of light emits from the front porch.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Eric -- now eleven -- watches with keen interest at what takes place before him.

TITLE: Eric, now eleven.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Four 14-year-old boys bully a fragile 9-year-old boy.

The 9-year-old is clearly intimidated, not sure how to defend himself from the ruffians who surround him.

The bullies cackle and shove the fragile boy roughly from one another. A few vicious swipes are added on for good measure.

ERIC

Leave him alone.

The bullies all take note of this intrusive 11-year-old who watches. Not sure how to take him, but they know better than to give him a pass.

LEAD BULLY

What are you, his fucking
boyfriend?

The Lead Bully's accomplices all snicker and cackle at Eric.

ERIC

Leave him alone.

He's calm and confident.

The Lead Bully now faces Eric.

The intimidation is on.

The Lead Bully towers over Eric. Eric's eyes barely reach
over the harasser's shoulders.

LEAD BULLY

Yeah? What are you gonna do, bitch?

He shoves Eric back onto his ass. Eric slowly rises to his
feet.

All the bullies snigger at Eric now.

Eric is not taken aback by this.

LEAD BULLY (CONT'D)

You got what it takes, piss-ass?

He takes a sudden swing at Eric which only hits air.

Eric's elusive move is smooth. His eyes honed in on his
assaulter.

Now pissed to the gills, the Lead Bully takes a second swing,
which brings on --

Snap! Crack! Pop!

Eric's fists strike the Lead Bully's head, throat and
sternum.

The Lead Bully is left dazed. Not sure if he can still stand.
That doesn't matter at this point.

Eric has both hands clasped. This is where a thunderous right
and left which tears across the Lead Bully's face with a --

Smack! Crack!

The Lead Bully hits the pavement hard. Out cold.

With their leader down-and-out the sidekicks scatter like mice.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Eric sits outside the principal's office.

A receptionist from behind the counter before Eric, holds a questionable look on him. She turns away.

The principal's office door opens. PRINCIPAL MEGER steps out.

Principal Meger is a staunch, middle-aged man whose years have not treated him well.

Eric's Mom emerges from the principal's office.

PRINCIPAL MEGER

(to Eric's Mom)

We can't have this happening. It's immoral. It indicates instability.

ERIC'S MOM

My son's not a fighter.

Principal Meger feigns interest.

PRINCIPAL MEGER

I can't have this at my school. I'm suspending him.

ERIC'S MOM

He wasn't the instigator. You know that. The other kids saw what happened!

PRINCIPAL MEGER

That's beside the point. This isn't his first incident. He needs help. He's erratic... irrational... he's not all there. I don't know what else to tell you. His case will be under review -- again!

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Eric follows his mom to a worn Chevy parked at the far end of the lot.

Eric stops. His eyes catch --

A Mystery Man stands on the sidewalk and watches Eric. He's off the school property. His stare is deep.

Eric's eyes lock on this Mystery Man.

Eric's Mom reaches back to take hold of Eric's arm. She leads him to the car.

EXT. CHEVY - DAY

Eric's Mom drives in silence. She gives into a few cautionary glances at Eric.

Beat.

ERIC'S MOM
Why, Eric? Why are you doing this?
Do you have something to prove?

ERIC
I was trying to help.

Eric's Mom offers a cautionary pause.

Eric bows his head, ashamed.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Mom.

Eric's Mom holds concern.

ERIC'S MOM
Honey...
(a concerned pause)
I know you tried to help. It's
just... everybody sees it
differently. They're different.

Eric is apprehensive before he speaks. Then, like a confessional:

ERIC
Men come pick me up in my dreams.
They take me away... they teach me
how to protect myself. They tell me
they want me to be ready.

ERIC'S MOM
Be ready? Be ready for what? To
fight the world?

A wry smile.

ERIC

They train me to fight. They say my wellbeing is crucial for my future. They tell me things... about Dad. How he helped them to be better.

Eric's Mom cannot help but smile at the thought in disbelief

ERIC'S MOM

How would they know who your father was?

ERIC

I don't know...

ERIC'S MOM

Eric, honey, OK... why do these men take you away then? That's bizarre, wouldn't you think?

Eric has no answer.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)

Dreams are funny sometimes, Eric. I just think you've been thinking about Dad a lot lately. Dreams aren't real, honey, but they can feel real sometimes.

(more for herself)

Believe me. I know. I've had it happen.

ERIC

They say I fight like a warrior.

ERIC'S MOM

Is that what they tell you?

ERIC

See...

Shows her the bruises on his arms.

Eric's Mom is taken aback by this sight. Her concern has risen.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Eric sits quietly.

Eric's Mom sits beside him. She explains her situation to the affable PSYCHIATRIST seated behind his desk.

Degrees and plaques of merit cover the office walls.

The Psychiatrist's eyes are locked on Eric as she speaks:

ERIC'S MOM

-- He says he has these dreams
where he's taught to fight. I just
noticed these bruises when he
showed me.

A pregnant pause.

PSYCHIATRIST

Does he sleepwalk?

ERIC'S MOM

No.

PSYCHIATRIST

Sleep apnea?

ERIC'S MOM

Not that I know of.

PSYCHIATRIST

Do you like to hit yourself, Eric?

Eric shakes his head "No."

Eric's Mom suddenly gets defensive:

ERIC'S MOM

-- He's never hit himself! He's not
that way! He's quiet. He doesn't
even talk back. He's respectful to
his teachers -- to everyone!

PSYCHIATRIST

Where's his father?

ERIC'S MOM

He died... when Eric was three.

PSYCHIATRIST

Does he have friends?

Beat.

ERIC'S MOM

I don't know.

EXT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY

Eric and his mom walk out. Eric's Mom tosses a vial of prescription pills into a trash bin. Frustrated.

ERIC'S MOM
I don't believe them!

Tears well-up in her eyes.

ERIC
It's OK, Mom.

Eric's Mom forces a smile for him.

ERIC'S MOM
I know... I know. It's OK. You're OK.

ERIC
Don't cry, Mom.

Eric's Mom wipes the tears from her cheeks.

ERIC'S MOM
It's all right. It's OK...

ERIC
I wanna help.

ERIC'S MOM
I know you do.

They embrace.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)
You're good. You're good.

Beat.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)
You hungry? C'mon...

EXT. MILITARY FIELD - DAY

A gray haze envelopes the area.

MAJOR SERGEANT ANDREWS is the drill instructor -- 30, intense, thick. He stands among a handful of teenage cadets.

Eric is one of the teens; lean and muscular now.

TITLE: Eric, now seventeen.

MAJOR ANDREWS
-- You are Marines! Believe it!
(beat)
You -- c'mere!

His thick finger stabbed at Eric.

Eric doesn't move.

Major Andrews' steely eyes are honed in on Eric.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Take a position, cadet!

ERIC
I am, Sergeant Major!

Steadies himself the best that he can.

Major Andrews gets in Eric's face.

MAJOR ANDREWS
You jacking me off, cadet?

ERIC
No, Sergeant Major!

Major Andrews is not going to take this likely.

MAJOR ANDREWS
You better not me jacking me off,
cadet. You making a stand with me
now?

ERIC
Just holding my position, Sergeant
Major.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Holding your position?

Mock sarcasm.

ERIC
Yes, Sergeant Major.

Major Andrews circles around Eric.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Oh, yeah... oh, yeah... Uh huh...

He stops behind Eric. Suddenly, his muscular arm wraps around Eric's throat. The grip tightens. Eric struggles for a breath.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
 What are you going to do, cadet?
 I've got control of you. You're
 losing consciousness. You can't
 breathe. What are you gonna to do?

Eric is beet red. He gasps for air and is about to lose consciousness.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
 What's it gonna to be, cadet?
 What's-it-gonna-to-be?

Eric can't fight it any longer.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
 Nobody's coming!

Eric reaches back over his head with both hands, grabs Major Andrews by his ears, then --

With unexplainable force -- tears Major Andrews' ears off --

Blood spews!

Major Andrews releases his hold and slaps his hands over his ears -- now gone! Blood seeps through his fingers and down his arms.

Eric takes a step back with Major Andrews' ears in his hands, which are now caked in blood.

BRIGADIER GENERAL TOM DUCHENE -- late 40's, fit, cool, composed, hardened man in casual attire -- steps in and takes Major Andrews' ears from Eric.

Duchene is the "Mystery Man" from the school yard.

DUCHENE
 (to an associate)
 Get him to the medics.

The associate takes the ears from Duchene and guides Major Andrews away.

Duchene holds Eric with a calm stare.

Then --

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eric awakens, startled. He has to take a few, deep breaths. He checks his clock --

The clock: 3:33 A.M.

Eric's eyes turn to the open window.

A faint streak shoots across the clear, dark sky.

Eric's breaths slowly compose himself.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

It is lunch hour. Most of the students are scattered across the grounds.

Eric sits on the school front steps. He watches the activities of the students before him.

A RANDOM STUDENT passes:

RANDOM STUDENT

Hey, Eric.

Eric waves. As he does this his eyes catch sight of --

TERESA DE TORRO -- a natural, self-assured 16-year-old. She speaks with a friend when she catches sight of Eric's stare. She offers him a bashful smile.

Eric returns the gesture in kind.

Teresa makes her way over to Eric.

TERESA

Hey.

ERIC

Hey.

TERESA

Rumor has it you slept through the algorithms in Mr. Chesney's class.

ERIC

Well, you know about rumors, they're half-truths that want to be real.

(beat)

Yeah, it's true. I guess algorithms aren't my thing.

TERESA

You want help?

ERIC

I don't think it'll do me any good.
Algorithms and me don't agree.

TERESA

Maybe. Get back to me if you change
your mind.

She leaves Eric perplexed.

EXT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DUSK

Through the window, Teresa is seen with Eric, at the kitchen table. Eric glares into the large text before him. Clearly lost. Teresa gets up from the table, disappears, then returns with another notebook for Eric.

INT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DUSK

Teresa stands to one side of Eric. She leans in closer to place the notebook before him. She puts him to ease.

TERESA

Algorithms are not subjective. For
example; If the sky brings rain,
you take an umbrella. Right? If
it's sunny outside, you bring your
sunglasses. Hmm?

Eric nods.

TERESA (CONT'D)

There's never any room to question
it. Your response is automatic.

She returns to her chair across from Eric.

Eric tries to remain subtle about his interest in her..

Teresa does her best not to acknowledge it.

TERESA (CONT'D)

See?

She gets back up with text in hand and returns to Eric's side. The text is dropped before him. Eric is somewhat startled as Teresa makes her point known to him.

TERESA (CONT'D)

You don't have to make it harder
than it is.

Eric understands her point.

TERESA (CONT'D)
I don't think your problem is
algorithms -- it's focus!

ERIC
I can focus.

His assurance to her falls on deaf ears.

TERESA
Really?

ERIC
I like those flowers.

TERESA
What?

She turns to the Blue Tulips that sit on the window sill.

TERESA (CONT'D)
The tulips? They're my mother's.
She's a floral-ista. The blue
tulips are her favorite.

ERIC
I've never seen them that color
before.

TERESA
Dark blue means truth, and when
given to someone it's a message of
trust and loyalty.

She takes one of the blue tulips in hand and places it down
before Eric.

Eric is taken aback by this.

TERESA (CONT'D)
Let's get back to your algorithms.

EXT. DE TORRO HOUSE - NIGHT

Eric turns onto the sidewalk. He passes underneath the
streetlight which beams down on him. He stops. His eyes hold
on --

TWO STRANGE MEN that stand across the street. One juts his
chin in Eric's direction.

Eric is curious more than intimidated.

What Eric isn't aware of is of the man who stands by a car behind him. It's Duchene, shrouded in silhouette by the streetlight and the night.

Eric crosses the street and cautiously approaches the two men.

Inexplicably, both Strange Men suddenly get in their sedan and race away.

Eric stands in the middle of the street not sure what just happened. He turns back around to see --

The shrouded Duchene get in his car and drive off. The car passes a streetlight --

Eric catches sight of Duchene as he speeds past him.

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eric sits up on his bed.

Eric's Mom appears at the open door.

ERIC'S MOM

Teresa called for you. She asked if you were all right.

Now concerned.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)

Are you... all right?

ERIC

Yeah.

Beat.

ERIC'S MOM

OK.

Still cautious, she lets it pass and turns away.

Eric takes the tex that lies by his side and opens it --

A dark blue tulip is between the pages.

Eric doesn't know what to make of it. He looks to his clock --

The clock reads: 3:33.

A gradual dissolve to --

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eric is still. Wide awake. He doesn't move. His eyes turn to the --

Digital clock which says: 2:59 AM. It turns to 3:00 AM.

Eric's eyes then turn to the open window.

From the open window -- a clear, star-filled, night sky.

Eric plants his bare feet on the floor as he gets up.

Footsteps are heard outside his room.

Eric turns to his open door.

Duchene arrives. He is casually dressed.

DUCHENE

Let's go.

Eric follows Duchene out --

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Duchene walks out. Eric follows him to a black van parked on the street.

Duchene opens the side door of the van and Eric gets in --

INT. BLACK VAN - NIGHT

There are five other teens seated: four males, two females.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Duchene gets in the passenger side of the black van. The black van drives off --

INT. BLACK VAN - NIGHT

Eric watches his sleepy neighborhood pass.

EXT. CITY LIMITS - NIGHT

There is a clear night sky as the black van disappears into the horizon.

EXT. OUTLET MALL - NIGHT

The black van pulls into the lot and parks at the far end.

The teen recruits file out along with their guides: the driver, Sergeant Major Andrews and Duchene.

Duchene keeps a keen eye on the recruits that file past him.

DUCHENE

(calm)

Everybody follow the Sergeant
Major.

He and Eric exchange eye contact.

The teen recruits are in alignment as Sergeant Major Andrews (with his ears now intact) leads them to a large storage unit -- some twenty feet in height.

Eric gives the stoned-face Major a peculiar look.

KANE -- skittish and thin -- is taken aback by all this.

KANE

(pensive)

This is fucking unreal!

DUCHENE

Move! Don't hold up the line.

Kane does as told.

Sergeant Major Andrews holds the door to the storage unit open for all the recruits to enter --

Eric walks in --

He is instantly hit by a bright, bluish-white light --

Eric is sucked into its rapid vortex.

It is a sudden rush through a dark tunnel with the bright white light at the end of it. Lights flicker past Eric at light speed.

Eric spins uncontrollably.

Then an instant FLASH!

INT. JUMP ROOM PORTAL - NIGHT

Eric is spit out of a black portal hole. The force is so great it shoots him across a ceramic floor of a room. He slams into a far wall. This leaves him dazed and confused as he does his best to catch his breath.

Eric's eyes transfix on the others that went before him.

The other recruits are already on their feet. All are at a loss to what has just happened.

Within seconds --

Duchene shoots through the black portal. He lands on his feet. He composes himself quickly. It's not his first time, obviously. He checks on his new recruits to see if they are all intact.

Kane checks his feet, which are bare. He's at a loss to this.

KANE

Hey... what happened to my shoes? I lost them in that thing.

DUCHENE

We'll get you a new pair.

KANE

They were new. I just got them!

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A door opens and the Sergeant Major is the first to step out.

The teen recruits follow.

Eric and Duchene are the last to emerge. Duchene closes the door behind himself.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

What was that?

MAJOR ANDREWS

It's a Jump Room.

KANE

That was a ride, not a jump.

Eric keeps to himself as he follows the other recruits down the long, narrow hallway.

The walls are worn and weathered. They could stand some renovations.

Duchene's eyes are locked on Eric.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

This place looks like it's been here for a while.

DUCHENE

It was constructed over seventy years ago.

KANE

A little paint wouldn't hurt.

Eric stands in the middle of the corridor. He looks up.

What Eric sees is a domed-glass window which captures a pristine, star-filled black sky. A distant planet is noticed to one side.

Kane arrives at his side and looks up as well.

Both of their questionable expressions turn to --

Sergeant Major Andrews stands directly ahead of them. His stern eyes freeze on them.

MAJOR ANDREWS

(in answer to their lost glazes)

This is the moonMove!

INT. ADJACENT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Sergeant Major Andrews comes around the corner with everyone in line.

The teen recruits come around.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

Where are we?

Kane arrives at her side.

KANE

The moon.

The Blonde Female Recruit holds a questionable glare on him. All Kane can do is give her a questionable nod.

KANE (CONT'D)
Fucking-A!

KANE (CONT'D)
Holy shit!

The Blonde Female Recruit moves to a small, circular window to one side and has a look out.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT
What are those buildings over there?

MAJOR ANDREWS
Lunar Bases.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT
(quietly to Eric)
Is that a planet out there?

Eric quietly shakes his head.

ERIC
It's Earth.

KANE
Are you shitting me? I've been drafted to the moon?
(at a loss)
Shit!

Duchene affronts him.

DUCHENE
You speak out of line again, recruit, and I'll plant your ass out there with no environment suit. We clear?

Kane nods. Now unnerved.

KANE
Yes, sir.

INT. RECRUIT QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The teen recruits file in. All stand around with quizzical expressions.

MAJOR ANDREWS

Bunks and uniforms are tagged. Get your rest. You'll be called up at six-hundred hours.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

There are no clocks here, Sergeant Major.

MAJOR ANDREWS

That's why you have me. That's all you need. Deal with it. Rest up, recruits!

He walks out and closes the door.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

We're Lunar Recruits!

KANE

This is unreal shit!

ERIC

We're here. No point in bitching about it now.

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

(to Eric)

Did you expect this?

ERIC

I gave up expecting.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ GYMNASIUM - LATER

Thirty teen recruits stand in formation.

Eric is in the middle of them all. His eyes catch sight of --

Teresa a few rows over. She picks Eric up out of the corner of her eye. She gives him a subtle wink, then turns her focus to the Sergeant Major:

MAJOR ANDREWS

-- You are a special crew. You are here for a reason. You are all here because you were created by us. Yes -- created by us! The Secret Space Program. You are SSP Marines! Elite! You're here to keep peace throughout our solar system. Like it or not, you are the first line of defense.

(MORE)

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)

As it says in the memo: to protect civilians from invasions -- foreign and domestic!

(beat)

Surprisingly enough, you survived to this point. All those who fail to pass the regiment here will either be sent back to where you came from, with your memories erased, or be relocated some where out here. Those of you that will have your memories erased will not be able to recall your time here.

(beat)

You are here because you are ready... psychologically as well as physically. If you fuck up, in any way, you will be eliminated. If you disobey orders, you will be eliminated. You are Secret Space Marines! Elite of the elite! Never forget that!

There is a long pause to let this all sink in on them.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)

(to Duchene)

Brigadier General Duchene...

Sergeant Major Andrews steps aside to allow Brigadier General Duchene to step forward:

DUCHENE

Two groups will be traveling with me. These two here...

Points to the ten recruits to his left.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

I want you to pack your gear. The remainder of you will be assigned to Sergeant Major Andrews.

Eric gives Teresa a questionable look.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

Hangar deck in fifteen minutes. Let's move.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ HANGAR DECK - LATER

The deck is as big as a football stadium.

A long, oblong-shaped, spacecraft is ready to depart. It is clearly three stories in height and half of a football field in length. Two small wings re in the tile end.

The teen recruits file toward it.

Eric and Teresa are side-by-side.

Eric comments to the PILOT as they walk past.

ERIC

Big.

TERESA

(to Pilot)

Where are we going?

PILOT

Didn't they tell you?

ERIC

No.

The Pilot smiles.

PILOT

You're going to Mars.

Kane hears this further back.

KANE

(stunned)

Mars?

INT. LUNAR BASE/ HANGAR DECK - LATER

The oblong-shaped spacecraft lifts off. It does so in silence.

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT/ COCKPIT - SAME

The Pilot turns on the intercom:

PILOT

Don't worry, it won't take long.
Enjoy the ride, folks.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ HANGAR DECK - SAME

The domed roof opens up overhead. The oblong-shaped spacecraft rises --

EXT. LUNAR BASE/ OVER OPEN DOME - SPACE

The oblong-shaped spacecraft hovers over the structure, then veers to one side. It glide across the moon's, gray surface --

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - SAME

The recruits all look out the windows to the lunar bases below.

TERESA
(points)
Look...

Eric has a look out the window.

Other tall structures are seen in the distance. They don't appear man-made -- Obscure shapes. Some pointed and are dark and ominous in appearance.

Various spacecrafts shoot out and away from them.

ERIC
I don't think they're ours.

TERESA
Must be Reptoid or Draconian.
(clarifies to Eric)
I heard they're hear too.

EXT. MOON SURFACE - SPACE

The oblong-shaped spacecraft shoots off.

In the distance, the shadowed surface of the moon illuminates light from the sun.

The spacecraft targets towards Earth --

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - SPACE

PILOT
(into his mic)
Everybody take a good look, that's home on the starboard bow. Salute it... you're leaving to protect it.

Eric, Teresa and everyone else stare out at the Earth with heartfelt gazes --

EXT. EARTH'S ORBIT - SAME

The oblong-shaped spacecraft steadies itself on the cusp of the planet's orbit.

Within seconds -- the oblong-shaped spacecraft veers to one side. Then --

An abstract, HALO-SHAPED BLUE LIGHT appears. A Wormhole.

The oblong-shaped spacecraft instantly fires into it with a FLASH.

The Wormhole disappears.

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - SPACE

The Pilot and his copilot hold the craft steady.

The Pilot gets up from his seat --

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - SPACE

Eric watches the Pilot buffer past him. He gets up from his seat and follows the Pilot back down the aisle.

Further down the aisle, Eric confronts the Pilot.

ERIC

Hey.

The Pilot is cordial.

PILOT

Hey. You're out of your seat.

ERIC

I was wondering --

PILOT

No point in wondering. You were all selected for a specific mission. Everybody's here to fulfill a contract.

(beat)

You better take your seat, we'll be landing soon.

Eric is taken aback by this.

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Eric retakes his seat back by Teresa. He holds more doubt than when he left.

TERESA
You OK?

ERIC
I don't know.

TERESA
What did he say?

ERIC
Enough.

The Pilot's voice comes through the intercom:

PILOT'S VOICE
Remain seated. We'll be landing in
two minutes.

TERESA
That was fast.

EXT. SPACE

A HALO-SHAPED BLUE LIGHT appears.

The oblong-shaped spacecraft shoot outs from the Wormhole like a missile.

EXT. SPACE

The oblong-shaped spacecraft banks to one side.

Directly ahead -- MARS.

The oblong-shaped spacecraft closes in fast.

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - SPACE

From the windows, the blackness of space dissolves into the crimson sky of Mars --

EXT. MARS' SKY - DAY

The oblong-shaped spacecraft soars across the crimson sky. It jettisons across the horizon over a forest, dusted with snow toward a rigid, rocky terrain --

EXT. MARS MILITARY STRUCTURE/ ALPHA BASE - DAY

The oblong-shaped spacecraft arrives and hovers over a landing pad. Its gears emerge as it softly lands.

INT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - DAY

The Pilot and Copilot emerge from the cockpit. They carry their gear.

The recruits are all on their feet.

PILOT

(to recruits)

It's a little brisk out there right now. Get your jackets on.

KANE

Don't we need space gear?

The Pilot smiles.

A swoosh is heard as the side door opens.

PILOT

The atmosphere's a little thin, but breathable. Almost like being on a mountain.

KANE

I've never been on a mountain.

PILOT

Your bodies are dense... built for heavy gravity, but don't worry, you'll acclimate. It's only thirty yards to the entrance.

EXT. OBLONG-SHAPED SPACECRAFT - DAY

It sits on the pad.

The Pilot and copilot make their way to the massive gateway which leads into the side of a mountain.

Eric steps out along with everyone else. He has to stop a moment to take it all in. He is in awe.

The gateway into the mountain side is fifty feet wide and some twenty feet high. The florescent stream of light emerges from the concave.

The sky is bright in a purplish tinge. A few clouds hang overhead.

Eric is caught off guard as he notes a few snowflakes fall around him. He takes a few in hand and has a taste.

ERIC

Snow.

Teresa, Kane and the others are all in awe.

KANE

This isn't real, man, it's a mind trip.

YOUNG RECRUITER (O.S.)

You bet your ass it is!

The YOUNG RECRUITER steps forward.

YOUNG RECRUITER (CONT'D)

Get your asses in gear. Sun's about to set. It's going to get cold. Move!

INT. MARS/ ALPHA BASE - DAY

The last recruit steps through the gateway.

An alarm sounds which sets the massive door to slide shut. The door is some thirty feet thick and impressive.

The Young Recruiter busies with his checklist.

YOUNG RECRUITER

OK, everybody's accounted for. You'll be separated into two groups. You ten come with me. The remaining with go with the staff sergeant.

(beat)

Let's go!

Eric, Teresa and Kane are among the ones that follow the Young Recruiter.

INT. ALPHA BASE/ LONG CORRIDOR - DAY

The Young Recruiter leads his group through.

The recruits take note of their new environment.

An "alien" couple, human in appearance, but seven feet in height with small, pointed ears like antennae, walk by.

Kane cannot help but gawk.

 YOUNG RECRUITER
 (to Kane)
 -- Hey!

Kane suddenly stops.

The Young Recruiter steps before him.

 YOUNG RECRUITER (CONT'D)
 You're not in Kansas anymore,
 Dorothy. Adapt and deal. Here me?

 KANE
 (echoes the adage)
 Adapt and deal.

Kane is put in his place.

 YOUNG RECRUITER
 Haul ass!

INT. ALPHA BASE/ AUDITORIUM - DAY

The recruits into the large facility.

The door slams shut behind the.

A few of the recruits are startled by this.

 KANE
 Now what?

 TERESA
 Stop asking, it's not helping.

Eric wanders his way through to process it all for himself. His eyes rise up to the top of the auditorium, some fifty feet high.

 TERESA (CONT'D)
 (to Eric)
 What do you think?

ERIC
It doesn't help to think about it.

KANE
Don't you want to make sense of
this?

Eric's eyes lock onto what is directly ahead of him.

ERIC
No. That would mean I'd want to
know more about this.

Brigadier General Duchene stands across the floor from them.

INSTANTLY -- Eric is donned in and Exoskeleton-space suit. He
stares out of his helmet at --

EXT. MARS TERRAIN - DAY

The sky is a bright blue and the sun is high. The landscape
is rugged and rocky.

A hint of a forest lines the horizon.

Eric takes in the ground before him, dusted with snow.

EXT. NEAR ALPHA BASE - DAY

Five recruits -- all in exoskeleton-space suits -- are led
through the hard terrain by Sergeant Major Andrews. He stops
and faces his troop.

MAJOR ANDREWS
We are on patrol, people. We will
observe the surroundings and its
inhabitants -- that's all! We are
on surveillance! You got that? I
repeat -- you observe and report.
That's it! Nobody get trigger-
happy. You are armed with a sidearm
that shoots plasma beams, an
electrically charged laser ripcord
and a ray-o gun which fires
multiple ballbearings that possess
homing sensors. That means whatever
you take aim at the ballbearings
will hit.

(beat)
Be aware. Be cautious. Be
compliant!

Eric checks his own armor as the Major Andrews speaks.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
They will not be used today. Do we understand?

The troopers all nod in accordance.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Move out!

EXT. MARS TERRAIN - DAY

Major Andrews occasionally gestures to specific ares of the landscape to his troop to familiarize them all on their area.

The rugged vista holds a sense of beauty in its own right. The high sun radiates a gleam that reflects a rainbow off the rocks.

TERESA
Almost like Earth, if you think about it. It's surreal, but feels real.
(to Eric)
You feel it?

ERIC
I feel it.

KANE
I can get high here, that's a fact.

EXT. FURTHER ALONG MARS TERRAIN - DAY

Eric steps up to Major Andrews.

MAJOR ANDREWS
What is it, Marine?

ERIC
I was thinking about what we're here for.

MAJOR ANDREWS
You're here for a reason: to protect you, your people and the environment. That's your purpose. As for combat... ? You'll see it... that's a fact.

Eric acknowledges with a quiet nod.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Anybody that isn't human is the
enemy. Keep that in mind.

EXT. MARS/ DEEPER IN RUGGED TERRAIN - DUSK

On the edge of the horizon, the sun sets. A ripple of purple haze stretches across landscape.

Kane walks. A bird-like rodent scurries past him. He is clearly startled by this animal.

The bird-like rodent stops. Kane doesn't know what to make of this strange creature. It's black eyes hone in on him. It growls and shows its sharp, jagged teeth. It slowly approaches...

-- A taser hits the ground before the animal. The animal instantly darts off. Dirt shoots up in its wake.

Sergeant Major Andrews steps forward, his sidearm barrel smokes from the taser blast.

MAJOR ANDREWS
(to Kane)
Don't trust the inhabitants,
Recruit. You're not the top of the
food chain anywhere here.

KANE
How many of them are there?

MAJOR ANDREWS
More than you think. And they won't
hesitate to turn on you. And
understand one thing: they care
about you as much as you care about
them.

Kane uses deep, controlled breaths to compose himself.

EXT. MARS/ OPEN TERRAIN - DUSK

The troop moves on through.

Eric stumbles over a rock, but catches himself. Out of the corner of his eye he sees --

A base camp over a ridge, near a mountain-side.

Eric stops. Curious.

Sergeant Major Andrews arrives at his side.

MAJOR ANDREWS
What do you see, Byron?

ERIC
Over there, beyond the ridge. I
thought I saw movement.

Sergeant Major Andrews focuses in on the distance. Curious.

MAJOR ANDREWS
I don't think it's ours.

Eric moves in for a closer look.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
-- Marine!

Eric stands on the edge of the ridge.

Sergeant Major Andrews steps forward.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Get back in formation, Byron.

Eric's curiosity has the best of him.

ERIC
I'm going in for observation,
Sergeant Major.

MAJOR ANDREWS
The fuck you are!

It's useless, Eric has already left.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
-- Byron!
(sotto voce)
Shit!

EXT. EDGE OF RIDGE - NIGHT

Eric jumps down to the lower ground, some five feet down. He
continues forward --

EXT. HIGHER RIDGE - NIGHT

Sergeant Major Andrews has pulled out his binoculars to check
on Eric.

Teresa now stands beside him.

TERESA
Where's he going?

MAJOR ANDREWS
Where he's going is not the
problem... it's what he comes back
with that bothers me.

TERESA
Should we go after him?

MAJOR ANDREWS
Wait.

Takes his side mic in hand:

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
(into side mic)
Platoon Beta, come in...

EXT. OPEN TERRAIN - NIGHT

Eric moves forward, none the worse for wear. He closes in to
the mountain side --

EXT. HIGHER RIDGE - NIGHT

The rest of the troop, along with Sergeant Major Andrews,
watch Eric from their standpoint.

Eric has put some distance on them.

EXT. OPEN TERRAIN - NIGHT

Eric closes in on the campsite. His eyes catch sight of what
lies before him --

Tiny, insect-like, footprints scattered around him.

Eric's skepticism looms large. He braces himself on his
approach --

EXT. NEAR MOUNTAIN SIDE - NIGHT

Eric arrives. He stays back some distance. Holds himself well
despite the circumstances. He gawks at the large hole on the
side of the mountain.

Beat.

What emerges from the large hole overwhelms Eric.

Four foot high, insect-like, prey mantises. Two of them. They possess six appendages and stand on their hind legs.

The apparent MANTID LEADER takes a step closer to Eric to see what he wants. He stares Eric down with his large, black eyes.

Eric isn't sure what to do. Out of reflex, he offers the Mantid Leader a friendly wave.

The Mantid Leader raises an appendage and responds in kind.

Beat.

Eric shakes his head no as if in response to something said.

The Mantid Leader tilts his head to one side. Curious.

Beat.

Eric has no response.

The Mantid Leader stands his ground.

EXT. HIGHER RIDGE - NIGHT

Sergeant Major Andrews is at a loss to the exchange he watches.

TERESA
What's happening?

MAJOR ANDREWS
I wish I knew.

From behind, a squadron arrives.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Here he comes.

EXT. OPEN TERRAIN - NIGHT

Eric returns to the higher ridge. He climbs back up to where the troops are who await him --

EXT. HIGHER RIDGE - NIGHT

Eric glides past Sergeant Major Andrews and Teresa who hold him in question.

MAJOR ANDREWS
(to Eric)
Marine!

He's clearly aggravated.

Eric is in a dazed state as he stops and faces his superior.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Explain!

Eric is at a loss to it all.

Kane checks back at the Mantid campsite, ray-o gun in hand.

KANE
Hey, they're moving!

He takes aim at the Mantid campsite --

MAJOR ANDREWS
-- Kane -- no!

Kane fires!

EXT. MANTID CAMP - NIGHT

Multiple ballbearings strike the ground at the Mantid Leader. Dirt shoots up. The Mantid Leader turns to the higher ground where the shots came from --

EXT. HIGHER RIDGE - SAME

MAJOR ANDREWS
-- Shit! Run!

The troops take off for their lives!

A swarm of Mantids -- gigantic centipedes, small ants the size of fists along with others that are man-size -- pour over the ridge and converge of the troops.

The attack is on.

The troops do their best with this sudden invasion. They shoot at the Mantids with their ray-o guns and plasma sidearms.

Some strikes are made, but most shots are random and haphazard.

The gigantic centipedes envelop troopers who are ten consumed.

The small and man-size ants sting and bite whatever trooper they get a hold of.

It is chaos.

Teresa is swarmed upon by frantic Mantids.

Eric runs, but isn't fast enough -- small Mantids grab onto him and pull him down. He is instantly enveloped.

Various Mantids shred him to pieces.

From Eric's view -- a Mantid growls in his face. A hideous sight. He watches his own arms and legs torn away --

BLACK OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. ALPHA BASE/ MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Medics have a patient on a Holographic Regenerating Medical Bed.

The patient is Eric. All that is left of him -- a torso and a nearly decapitated head -- lies on the medical bed in a gelatin solution. All encompassed in a clear tube.

A neon scanner glides over and rotates back-and-forth over his body. The parts of Eric's body that no longer exist are slowly regenerated back into form. His severed head is, miraculously, mended back into place.

Eric's entire body returns back to its original form.

The scanners stop once the job is complete.

The medics watch.

Brigadier General Duchene stands behind them.

One of the medics gives him an assured nod. All OK.

INT. ALPHA BASE/ RECOVERY WARD - NIGHT

Eric sleeps on a medical bed. He is surrounded by other troops who have gone through the same process.

Eric opens his eyes. He's confused. Not sure where he is. He turns his head over to catch sight of --

Duchene who sits in a chair to the side.

A NURSE arrives.

DUCHENE

(to Nurse)

When he's ready to get up, I want to see him.

NURSE

Yes, General.

Duchene walks out.

The Nurse arrives bedside.

NURSE (CONT'D)

(to Eric)

You'll be here for a couple of days. We'll have you walking in a couple of hours. Hungry?

Eric is taken aback at the sight of his arms and legs. All intact and move. He wiggles his toes.

ERIC

(sotto voce)

Holy shit!

INT. OUTER OFFICE - NIGHT

Eric enters and meets Duchene's SECRETARY.

ERIC

I'm Eric Byron --

SECRETARY

(warm smile)

Of course. How are you, Eric?

ERIC

I'm fine. Thank you.

SECRETARY

The general's expecting you. Go on in.

INT. BRIGADIER GENERAL DUCHENE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Duchene is seated behind his desk. Various papers and forms are scattered before him. He gets up to get himself a cup of coffee.

Eric walks in.

DUCHENE

Take a seat, Eric.

Eric plants himself in the chair before Duchene's desk.

Duchene sits back in his chair.

Duchene's office is far from ostentatious: a handful of honorary plaques sit behind a table-sized cabinet behind him. Other than that the only sign that indicates his rank is his jacket that hangs on an Aeron Chair off to one side.

Eric remains reserved.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

What happened out there?

ERIC

We were observing a foreign base, then... we were attacked...

DUCHENE

Really...

ERIC

Yes, sir.

DUCHENE

First of all, we're the ones that are foreign in this environment. The Mantids, the ones that "attacked," are one of the indigenous beings here. One of many. We're the new kids on the block.

ERIC

Yes, sir.

DUCHENE

They were coerced, weren't they.

Eric responds with a questionable nod.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

Don't worry... they do the same to us.

(beat)

Luckily, re-enforcements arrived when they did. We lost twenty-two of our own. We were able to walk away with more than we left lost, which is a good thing.

ERIC

They just swarmed us.

DUCHENE

They do that well.

Eric has no response.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

You approached an enemy compound, Byron. You were lucky they let you walk back. If Kane hadn't set them off they would never have attacked.

ERIC

I've never seen anything like it.

DUCHENE

Get used to it. They're not the only ones out there.

(beat)

What was your exchange like with them? What did they say to you?

ERIC

It's not so much what was said... it was more like... thoughts.

DUCHENE

It's called a psionic exchange. They, like every other species here, communicate through thoughts. We have a basic understanding of the various languages of most of the other beings here, but they don't like it when we try to speak it. We basically butcher any other language that's not our own. We're good at that.

(beat)

(MORE)

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

The Mantids allowed you to approach, which is impressive on your behalf. What did they tell you?

ERIC

They asked why I was there. I told them I was on patrol. He asked if I knew who he was. I told him no. He then asked me how many were with me. I didn't answer. He was more curious than anything. Then he told me to leave. I wasn't in any position to negotiate, so... I went back to my squad, then all hell broke loose.

DUCHENE

The mantids were shot at. It pissed them off. We were lucky, it could of been worse.

ERIC

If that was lucky... I'd hate to see worse.

DUCHENE

Kane was one of the twenty-two lost. They got who they wanted. We were able to get you back in time, before your spirit made the decision to leave.

(beat)

How was your time on the Holographic Regenerating Bed?

ERIC

Tranquil.

DUCHENE

(smiles)

I bet. Your cells were manipulated back into their harmonic resilience. The bed repairs what we as a species are not capable of doing. We're not that advanced, yet.

ERIC

Thank you.

DUCHENE

Thank the taxpayers back home. They paid for it.

Eric acknowledges this with a respectful nod.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
Get back to your troop, Marine. You
have foot patrol at dawn.

EXT. MARS/ FLAT LANDSCAPE - DAY

Eric is back with a handful of troops.

Sergeant Major Andrews leads them.

Teresa is the only other familiar face on patrol.

ERIC
(to Major Andrews)
Sergeant Major...

Sergeant Major answers before Eric has a chance to ask.

MAJOR ANDREWS
-- We are in combat mode with two
other factions at this point,
Marine. Negotiations are still
ongoing. If that answers your
question.

ERIC
I guess.

MAJOR ANDREWS
That shit you pulled off last week
didn't help the way you thought.
We're still trying to figure out
where everybody stands. Let's just
stick with the program right now.
(beat)
Do me a favor... don't do that
again.

Teresa moves up to Eric.

TERESA
(to Eric)
Kane instigated it. Everybody heard
what happened. Those inside are
still talking about what you did.

ERIC
Kane got scared. He wouldn't of
shot if I didn't approach the
mantid camp in the first place.

TERESA

It was still a ballsy move.

Sergeant Major Andrews stops.

Some fifty yard ahead, an entrance to a cave.

Sergeant Major Andrews turns to his troops:

MAJOR ANDREWS

Reptoids were last located here.
We'll be splitting up into two
parties. We have to know if they've
vacated.

TERESA

Are they carnivore?

MAJOR ANDREWS

We are all on the menu here,
Marine. A smorgasbord I'd rather
avoid. We flushed them out about a
month ago. There hasn't been any
movement here since, but the
faculty back at Alpha Base wants to
make sure its clear before we move
forward.

The entranceway into the cave is twelve feet high and twenty
feet wide. Eric stands before it.

ERIC

I'm sure.

Sergeant Major Andrews steps to his side.

MAJOR ANDREWS

That's all right, Byron, you're
sociable.

(back to other troops)

This is a peace-keeping mission.
Let's keep that in mind.

(to Eric)

Agreed, Marine?

ERIC

Agreed, Sergeant Major.

MAJOR ANDREWS

(to troops)

If anyone finds themselves in
combat mode with a Reptoid -- take
two clean shots... here and here...

Points to Eric's heart and sternum.

TERESA

I hear they have three hearts.

MAJOR ANDREWS

Those two body shots will take out two of them. They'll still come in on you if you only take one out. Those are the closest together. One's an exterior, the third heart is located under their right arm pit. They're not the sociable type, just to let you know. So don't expect a hug-fest.

ERIC

That's good to know.

MAJOR ANDREWS

(to Eric)

Take De Torro with you, plus you three.

Points to three others to follow Eric.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)

We're all back here in twenty minutes.

(beat)

Move out!

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

Eric leads his party through.

TERESA

They can be over nine feet tall and weigh over five hundred pounds.

ERIC

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. I'm still not past the three heart thing.

(sighs)

Let's cover as much ground as possible, then get our asses out.

The party of five are visible through the darkness by the light beams on the side of their helmets.

TERESA

-- Look!

She spots an object on the ground.

A plasma gun is hit with the light from Teresa's helmet.

TERESA (CONT'D)
Is that one of ours.

Eric crouches down for a better look.

ERIC
Yeah.

Stands.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Somebody didn't make it back.

INT. DEEPER INTO ABYSS - DAY

Eric stops. He fortifies the helmet light and focuses on what is ahead.

Eric's beeper goes off.

TERESA
We're being called back.

ERIC
Take it. I want to see what's ahead. I'll be right back.

TERESA
Eric!

She presses a button on her helmet to speak:

TERESA (CONT'D)
De Torro...

INT. FURTHER INTO CAVE - DAY

Eric is the sole light that moves through the blackness. He stops. What is before him is beyond what he could imagine --

Skeletal, human bodies lie all around. To one side what appears to be might have been a campfire.

It is hard for Eric to take this all in. His movements are calculated and slow.

His boot accidentally kicks over a tiny, human skull.

As Eric scans what is around him -- three tall figures come into view from behind him.

Faint breaths are heard.

Eric slowly turns. The light beam from his helmet comes upon --

Three Reptoids who now encircle him. Each one nine feet in height, thick with greenish reptilian skin. They are donned with black armor and boots.

Eric tries to control his nerves with slow, deep breaths.

The Reptoids sneer at him.

Eric's nerves get the better of him. He does his best to control his body as it trembles. He shuts his eyes tightly to get a grip of himself.

The Reptoids now chuckle at the sight of their prey.

From Eric's view -- the three Reptoids move in on him

Eric's hand reaches for the electrical ripcord from his belt. As if in slow motion the electrical ripcord in hand is whipped out at the nearest Reptoid and slices his head off --

The second Reptoid watches his colleague's head tumble off into the darkness. When he turns to face Eric -- his head is instantly sliced off --

In an urge to escape -- the third Reptoid quickly spins, but it is in vain -- his head is decapitated --

Eric is frozen at what sees before him -- three decapitated Reptoids on the ground. His focus turns what the blackness before him --

Two Reptoids erupt through the darkness and charge him --

Suddenly -- ballbearings shoot in on the Reptoids like mini-missiles.

The first Reptoid is shredded by the ballbearings and drops hard before Eric's feet.

The second Reptoid has his head blasted off by a beam of light that shoots out from behind Eric. The Reptoid lands with a thud on top of his colleague.

Eric turns --

Teresa steps out from behind him with her ray-o gun in hand. She takes hold of Eric's arm.

TERESA
C'mon, Eric...

INT. ALPHA BASE/ BARRACKS - LATER

Eric sits on his bunk, still in shock at what he experienced.

ERIC
So much for being sociable.

A cup is handed to him. It's from Teresa.

TERESA
Take it. It's water.

Eric drinks.

ERIC
This is beyond bizarre.

Teresa takes a seat down beside him.

TERESA
Your equilibrium took over.

A smile to ease Eric's nerves.

TERESA (CONT'D)
I've seen it before. What you experienced as slow-motion was rapid-fire from what they saw. It scared the shit out of them. I saw it. You even scared the shit out of me. It's called a norepinephrine rush. Simply put -- an adrenaline rush. You broke through any common known factor of normality. You sped up. Like the mother who tore the door off to save her trapped child from a burning car. Depending on the circumstance -- you can exceed exponentially -- strength and/or speed.

(beat)
Your instincts for survival exceeded themselves.

ERIC
I thought I was going to throw up.
I thought it was over.

TERESA

Good thing you didn't. And it's not.

ERIC

They built me a new body, and I fuck it up.

TERESA

Not in so many words. You're OK, Eric. That's all that matters. You're still here.

EXT. ALPHA BASE/ NEAR GATEWAY ENTRANCE - DAY

Sergeant Major Andrews stands before his troops.

MAJOR ANDREWS

All alright, peeps, keep your eyes and ears on ultra-sensory mode today. Word's out something might be up.

TERESA

Are we up for a fight?

MAJOR ANDREWS

Are you?

TERESA

We're up for whatever comes, Sergeant Major.

MAJOR ANDREWS

You better be. Anything could happen out there... maybe nothing will.

YOUNG TROOPER

What's your gut feeling, Sergeant Major?

MAJOR ANDREWS

I have a feeling this could get very hot. It's been quiet for some time. Negotiations are at a standstill. I don't expect today to be our usual walk in the park. Everybody watch everybody's ass out there. Let's be smart, not smart-ass. Let's move!

EXT. FURTHER OUT FROM ALPHA BASE - DAY

The sky is bright, clear and calm.

The marines move toward the flat terrain ahead of them.

Eric and Teresa are in separate squads. They both give each other glances.

Both squads part ways as they near the forest in the distance.

EXT. MARS/ OPEN TERRAIN - DAY

Eric sits with Sergeant Major Andrews and a handful from their squad.

Eric's focuses on the troops up ahead.

Troops strap mini-rockets on their shoulders.

ERIC

I've never seen those before.

Sergeant Major Andrews has a look for himself.

MAJOR ANDREWS

Shoulder missile launchers. They're Premiere Alpha. That's new arsenal. I don't even know if it's been tested. Premiere Alpha are the only ones who will carry them. They're authorized personnel. That's what you hope to be some day.

ERIC

(impressed)

Badass.

MAJOR ANDREWS

Nothing less. The missiles have homing devices. They can travel between two to five hundred meters and shoot the balls out of a fly in mid-flight.

ERIC

Never seen anything like it.

MAJOR ANDREWS

They're hardcore.

ERIC
Absolutely.

MAJOR ANDREWS
No worries. They know their shit.
Keep dreaming, Marine, maybe one
day.

ERIC
Here's to hoping.

MAJOR ANDREWS
This is where dreams become
reality.

ERIC
I don't even dream normal here.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Different atmosphere. Completely
surreal environment. Where you come
from, the atmosphere is dense.
Heavy gravitational pull. That's
what your body's acclimated to.
Here the atmosphere is lighter.
You're not conditioned to it.
That's why you feel different.

ERIC
Feels like I'm floating most of the
time.

MAJOR ANDREWS
I've been here for fifteen years,
seven months, twenty-one days, and
counting.

Takes a moment for himself.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
I can't wait to get my ass out of
here.

ERIC
That's says a lot.

MAJOR ANDREWS
All I want to do is leave with my
ass intact and my mind aware.
That'll be unlikely. They'll case
erase my thoughts. They don't want
you to remember anything from here.
I've lost too many friends my tour.
(MORE)

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)

(beat)

I can't wait to forget this place.

He stands and walks away.

EXT. MARS LANDSCAPE - DUSK

Two platoons move forward.

Eric is at the tail end of the formation. His focus is on Premiere Alpha platoon that he follows.

All close in on the serene forest ahead.

Within an instant -- a Premiere Alpha's shoulder missile explodes!

The trooper's head explodes along with it.
The other Premiere Alpha's in formation are stunned.

A second Premiere Alpha's shoulder missile explodes.
His head is launched off like a cannon blast --

MAJOR ANDREWS

-- Take cover!

His squad scrambles for cover.

Troops dive behind rocks, hit the ground flat and take cover wherever they can.

Suddenly -- all Premiere Alphas have their shoulder missiles detonated or launch unexpectedly.

The mayhem has body parts shatter and pieces of marines launched in every direction --

EXT. LOWER GROUND - SAME

This is where Eric and Sergeant Major Andrews lie flat.

Explosions and high-pitched whistles from missiles have turned their serene environment into a manic chaos.

ERIC

I didn't see any movement!

MAJOR ANDREWS

You never do! It was a psionic detonation!

ERIC
A psionic detonation?

MAJOR ANDREWS
They can detonate our weapons
through their thoughts. They're
telekinetic. They waited until we
were close enough.

ERIC
That's good to know.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Fucking pricks!

ERIC
Now that's an advantage -- all they
have to do is think about killing
us!

Sergeant Major Andrews checks his side mic. It doesn't work.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Shit! It's dead. They took out our
communication units!

ERIC
(dreads)
That doesn't sound good.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Those are Reptoids for you! They
want to fight mano-a-mano, but
they'll take advantage of any
situation when they see it.

Sergeant Major Andrews catches sight of --

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Oh, shit!

Deep black space crafts that come over the horizon. These
crafts are sleek with a large wingspan and a pointed nose.
The sheen on these crafts ooze evil.

ERIC
That doesn't look good.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Dracos!

Eric gives the Sergeant Major a questionable look.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Draconians. Shit disturbers in the
worst sense. Motherfuckers from
afar! They just want in on a
"menage a trois" whenever possible.

ERIC
So we're trapped!

MAJOR ANDREWS
Let's hope someone was able to send
a signal back to base about our
location.

ERIC
We can't stay here!

Troops jump out of the trenches and race across the maze of
firepower that envelop them.

The Premiere Alpha crew arrive in a cluster and take cover in
brush and trees.

Explosions erupt from behind them.

Fire engulfs all around and vaporizes the troops that
scatter.

EXT. FOREST RANGE - NIGHT

Eric and Sergeant Major Andrews are the only two to take
cover behind the shallow brush.

Draconians approach on circular hover pads.

Draconians can best be described as dragon-like entities with
capas and wings. Satan figures. Black humanoids with antennae
that protrude from their forehead. They have three-toed feet
and fingers with long, sharp talons. They stand near ten feet
in height.

EXT. NEAR SHALLOW BRUSH - NIGHT

Eric stands and takes fire at the Draconians that move in --

A Draconian is knocked off his hover pad. Shots continue to
spray in. This stops his colleagues as they turn to where the
shots come from.

ERIC
Oh, shit!

MAJOR ANDREWS

Fuck!

He stands and automatically takes laser shots at the Draconians who home in on them --

Three Draconians are blasted off their hover pads.

Two more Draconians are quickly vaporized from electrical charges from behind them.

An army of Draconians move in on the Reptoids that charge forward.

A vicious fight -- hand-to-hand combat -- erupts as Reptoids and Draconians clash.

Both Reptoids and Draconians are vaporized by the unknown electrical charges.

Eric turns into the direction of the forest. He stops --

EXT. FOREST EDGE - NIGHT

Mantids come through the trees.

Laser beams come directly at them. The Mantids fire back --

Reptoids now storm the forest range.

EXT. NEAR SHALLOW BRUSH - NIGHT

Eric jumps back into the shallow ground by Sergeant Major Andrews' side.

ERIC

That wasn't good.

MAJOR ANDREWS

You think?

ERIC

We're surrounded!

MAJOR ANDREWS

We're now in a four-way!

ERIC

It's a cluster-fuck!

He notes Sergeant Major Andrews' wounded leg -- half of which is blown off.

MAJOR ANDREWS
Re-enforcements have their hands
tied right now!

ERIC
We have to get back to Alpha Base!

MAJOR ANDREWS
I'm open to suggestions, marine!

Eric notes a clear gap in the distance.

ERIC
C'mon!

He helps the Sergeant Major up. Sergeant Major Andrew does his best to stand on his one leg. His grimace is apparent.

Eric wraps one arm around the Sergeant Major's waist --

EXT. EDGE OF FOREST - NIGHT

Eric and Sergeant Major Andrews arrive at a tree which the Sergeant Major leans up against.

Through the night, beyond the open terrain, the firepower is intense. A spectacle beyond comprehension. The night sky is lit up by explosions and artillery that screams through the madness.

MAJOR ANDREWS
You don't stand a chance with me on
this one, Byron!

Eric is more than certain.

ERIC
We go -- together!

MAJOR ANDREWS
Bad idea, Marine!

The fire show behind them closes in with a vengeance.

Eric rips off his helmet.

MAJOR ANDREWS (CONT'D)
Put your helmet back on, Marine!

ERIC
Let's go!

He grabs Sergeant Major Andrews and lifts him to his shoulders. Eric braces himself and pushes forward --

EXT. OPEN TERRAIN - NIGHT

Missiles shoot across the night sky.

Rockets arc in on the forest.

Fire and smoke plume up like tsunamis once the forest is hit.

Eric and Sergeant Major Andrews are mere ants in the inferno.

EXT. FLAT FIELD - NIGHT

The missiles and rockets don't let up as Eric moves with the Sergeant Major Andrews on his shoulders.

Explosions go off just feet from where Eric steps. Eric has to stop -- a missile misses him by inches. He forges on --

The forest behind Eric and Sergeant Major Andrews is hit with such force it's as if the sun erupted. The night sky lights up.

Eric does his best to ignore it.

Laser beams shoot in on Eric from up ahead. He pushes onward.

Another explosion from behind --

Eric drops to his knees.
Teeth clenched, he gets to his feet and forces himself to move.

More laser beams shoot in their direction from ahead.

MAJOR ANDREWS

Those beams look like ours!

A missile comes in from behind and detonates just feet from where they were.

Eric is blown off his feet.
Sergeant Major Andrews lands hard on the rock-like ground.

Snow begins to fall.

Eric crawls over to the Sergeant Major.

ERIC

We're almost there! I can see it up ahead!

MAJOR ANDREWS

If we make it back, I'll have you charged as an insubordinate, Marine!

ERIC

Yes, Sergeant Major!

Eric picks Sergeant Major Andrews off the ground and back on his shoulders. He has to take deep breaths, the thin air has gotten to him. He forces his way through --

Hell's fury surrounds them.

Eric's breaths are hard and shallow. It's difficult for him.

There is a thud -- a missile EXPLODES behind them.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(sotto voce)

Almost there... almost there...

The reverberations from the blast hits them hard.

Eric drops to his knees. Sergeant Major Andrews still on his shoulders.

ERIC (CONT'D)

We're close!

Another explosion from behind --

This launches Eric off his feet. He lands with a force that shatters him. His breaths are labored.

Eric releases hold of the Sergeant Major from his shoulders. He suddenly notes that Sergeant Major Andrews has been blown in half. He's at a loss to this. Checks below his waist --

Both of Eric's legs have been blown away.

Pained, Eric rolls to one side and looks ahead --

From Eric's blurred vision -- tall, Black Shadows close in.

Beyond the Black Shadows -- Alpha Base erupts. Fire and smoke light up the night sky.

Eric struggles to reach for his sidearm. Grits his teeth --

From Eric's blurred vision -- the BLACK SHADOWS are practically on top of him --

BLACK OUT:

POV from eyes that open from a sleep --

Blurred florescent lights gleam. Everything slowly comes into focus.

It's a face -- Duchene.

DUCHENE

You're awake.

From Eric's point-of-view -- he checks on his arms and legs. All is intact. He wiggles his fingers, then his toes.

INT. MEDICAL STATION/ RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Eric lies on a medical bed. He's just awakened. Looks out the window to see the blackness of space. His eyes suddenly catch sight of a BLUE TULIP that lies on the bedside stand. Not sure what to make of it. Turns his head and sees --

Duchene, who stares at him. He's seated in the only chair.

DUCHENE

You keep this up and we're going to have to rename the regenerating bed after you.

A medic walks in with an iPad.

Duchene takes the chart in hand and signs a form. It is handed back. Duchene gives the medic an assured nod before the medic leaves.

Eric sits himself up and turns to drape his legs over. Still queasy.

Duchene stands and steps toward Eric.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

Hold on, Byron.

ERIC

(firm, but quiet)

I want to stand. You won't let me to die, so...

Duchene takes a step back.

Eric is somewhat cautious as he places his feet on the floor. He grits his teeth.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Cold.

Duchene has no response. Just watches.

Eric makes his way over to the window and has a seat in a chair.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I didn't think I would ever do that again.

(to Duchene, in answer)

Walk...

DUCHENE

(explains)

Alpha Base was decimated. Re-enforcements came in late from two other stations. Everyone was evacuated who we could get to. You're at Orion Base right now. Four hundred miles south from where we found you.

ERIC

(solemn)

I'm still here.

DUCHENE

You are.

ERIC

Sergeant Major Andrews...

Duchene shakes his solemn head to answer him.

DUCHENE

You're being transferred.

Eric is disgruntled by this.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

How do you feel about a pilot's license?

Eric is perplexed by this.

Duchene stands.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
Think about it. You're here for
another two days.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Eric moves quietly as he takes in the activity around him.

He wanders past:

Patients in medical beds, tended to by medics.
Doctors and nurses they walk by.

Eric stops a moment as two military personnel pass by him.
The two smile as if through a light conversation.

A DOCTOR steps out from a room that Eric stands before. A
NURSE steps out after the doctor:

DOCTOR
(to Nurse)
Tell her commander I want to keep
her for another day. We had to
repair more than we thought.

NURSE
Yes, Doctor.

They walk away.

Eric's curiosity gets the best of him. He peers into the
patient's room --

INT. PATIENT'S ROOM - DAY

Eric takes a cautious step in and stops.

Teresa lies on the bed. She sleeps.

Eric nears Teresa's bed.

The Nurse returns.

NURSE
(to Eric)
Can I help you?

ERIC
I know her.

The Nurse offers him a kind smile.

NURSE

She was just brought in. She won't
be much of a conversationalist
today.

ERIC

(concerned)
I wanna see her.

NURSE

Ninety percent of her had to be
regenerated.
(beat)
You can stay for a little longer.

ERIC

Thank you.

Eric pulls up a chair and takes a seat. He gently takes hold
of Teresa's limp hand.

A series of sequences. Passages of time.

Eric, patient as he sits bedside.

Eric paces the room.

Eric sits by the window -- the sun peers over the horizon.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Eric's head lies on his crossed arms which rest on the edge
of Teresa's bed. He awakens. He raises his head and refocuses
his eyes on --

Teresa who sits up on the bed. She's wide awake. Her
attention turns from her computer pad to him. A warm smile
appears.

TERESA

Well rested?

Eric leans back in the chair.

ERIC

(relieved)
You're awake!

TERESA

Welcome back.

Eric gives her a sleepy smile.

ERIC

Yeah.

He turns --

Duchene sits in a chair to one side of the room.

DUCHENE

(to Eric)

This is not becoming of a Major.

Eric is confused by this, at first. He catches Teresa's assured smile.

ERIC

That's a hell of a leap... Major!
Ready... ?

Duchene stands.

DUCHENE

I pulled a lot of strings here. My
purpose is now your purpose.

Eric and Teresa understand.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

There are a number of new arrivals
on their way in. Major De Torro,
you'll be stationed here for now.
Registration will see before the
end of the day.

(beat)

Major Byron... you'll be returning
to the Lunar Base with me. Get your
gear together, we'll be leaving
within the hour.

Eric doesn't know what to make of this. He turns to Teresa for clarification.

TERESA

We'll see each other, Eric.

EXT. MARS/ ORION BASE - DAY

A rectangular-shaped spacecraft (a hybrid TR3B) lifts off the pad. Once high enough, it banks and instantly shoots away --

INT. TR3B - DAY

Duchene is seated beside the PILOT. Eric is behind him. The compartment is tight for all three.

PILOT
(to Duchene)
It shouldn't take more than five
minutes. The portal vortex is
streaming well.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The TR3B is far enough away from Mars as it enters the
wormhole. There is a flash and the TR3B vanishes as soon as
it hits the portal --

EXT. NEAR EARTH - SPACE

The planet and stars are pristine.

Another flash and the TR3B shoots out from the wormhole --

The TR3B streaks toward the moon.

EXT. MOON - SPACE

The TR3B arcs around and shoots toward the dark side --

EXT. MOON/ LUNAR BASE - SPACE

The TR3B hovers over a dome structure which opens. The TR3B
lowers into the structure --

INT. LUNAR BASE - SAME

The TR3B softly sets down on the pad. The dome closes
overhead.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ CORRIDOR - LATER

Duchene comes around the corner. Eric is close behind. Their
pace is brisk.

DUCHENE
The oration has already begun.

He gives Eric a quick glance.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
Get changed.

ERIC

I don't have a uniform.

DUCHENE

I'll get you one. You're an officer now. The bullshit you hear from now on holds greater validity and less substance.

ERIC

That's good to know.

DUCHENE

Get used to it.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ DUCHENE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Duchene walks in.

Duchene's Secretary turns from a cabinet at the far wall.

SECRETARY

Welcome back, General.

Eric walks in.

DUCHENE

Call human resources, Julie, and get him his uniform -- ASAP.

SECRETARY/JULIE

Yes, General.

She gets on the phone.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE AUDITORIUM - LATER

Eric stands by the door to enter. He wears his formal attire well. Duchene is at his side.

The SECURITY GUARD steps out from the auditorium door.

SECURITY GUARD

Welcome, General.

DUCHENE

(to Security Guard)
How far along are they?

SECURITY GUARD

Twenty-two minutes, General.

DUCHENE
 (to Eric)
Let's go.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Duchene leads Eric through.

It is shrouded in darkness except for the lighted stage where a REPRESENTATIVE from Earth speaks. He is impressed with what he says and how he conducts himself.

Duchene and Eric take their seats in the half-filled theater.

 REPRESENTATIVE
-- We are impressed with how things
have progressed at this stage. And
as we continue with broadening our
horizons with our allies throughout
the galaxy, we hope to open more
gateways and expand our presence...

Duchene leans in on Eric.

 DUCHENE
He represents us... believe it or
not.

 REPRESENTATIVE
-- I am here to say... we will
suspend disbelief of our people who
are in doubt of what we want done --

 DUCHENE
-- Here it comes --

 REPRESENTATIVE
-- We are here not only for our
progress, but for those who want to
help us achieve and enhance our
ever evolving universe --

 DUCHENE
-- Like eliminate over three-
quarters of the souls from our
glorious home planet --

Eric gives him a questionable look.

 REPRESENTATIVE
-- So I say to all of you, let's do
what is best for all.
(MORE)

REPRESENTATIVE (CONT'D)

We all want progress and to heal
our past so that we can enhance our
future --

ERIC

(to Duchene)
That's genocide!

DUCHENE

(tinge of spite)
No, it's progress.

His satirical tone is evident.

The Government Official's chatter is heard throughout their
exchange.

ERIC

He can't do that.

DUCHENE

You know that, he knows that and I
know that. He wants everyone else
in the galaxy to know that he's not
going to take blame for it when it
happens.

ERIC

That's insane!

DUCHENE

In so many words.

REPRESENTATIVE

-- So I plead to all those in
attendance, see within yourselves
the benefit and wellbeing of aiding
us in our task --

Eric's eyes catch sight of --

Four Tall Figures -- silhouetted -- stand to one side of the
stage. It is difficult to see them actually, but they are ten
feet in height with long limbs and covered with feathers. All
avian in appearance.

INT. OUTSIDE AUDITORIUM - LATER

Those in attendance all file out.

Duchene and Eric step to one side.

ERIC
This can't be real.

DUCHENE
Most of the hierarchy from our planet have gone into hiding. They are either here on Lunar Base, on Mars or are underground on Earth. They're expecting something we want to stop.

Eric is at a loss to this.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
Remember that time you saw those to strange men staring at you at Teresa's house?

ERIC
I thought they were with you.

DUCHENE
They're the other ones. They want control. We won't let them have it.

ERIC
I don't get it.

DUCHENE
I'll explain it all to you later.

Eric is perplexed.

ERIC
OK.

DUCHENE
For now, if you've noticed, over there, other beings from the galaxy are in attendance. They're keeping a low profile.

ERIC
They can't be in compliance with this.

DUCHENE
They're not. But they're in no position to do anything about it.

ERIC
A hell of a position to be in.

DUCHENE

There's one thing you have to understand about all this; we have to clean our own house.

ERIC

We have to learn -- and fix -- our own mistakes.

It's as if it is said as an acknowledgement to himself.

DUCHENE

It's our backyard. We're in control.

INT. STEEL DOOR - TIME PASSED

Duchene and Eric stand before it. On it reads: AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY.

Duchene places his eye before a scanner. A light reads his pupil.

Click!

The door latch releases and the door opens.

Duchene enters --

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two security guards are stationed in front of a second door. Both salute Duchene who glides past them as he enters through the second door with Eric --

INT. HANGAR BAY - CONTINUOUS

A Galactic Freedom Class (GFC) Fighter sits in the open bay. It is compact, bullet-like with wings.

SHANE, a young mechanic, stands as Duchene walks in.

SHANE

General.

DUCHENE

Shane, this is Major Byron.

Shane confirms with a nod of respect to Eric.

SHANE

Major.

DUCHENE

(to Shane)

You're going to show him how to pilot one of these.

SHANE

Yes, General.

DUCHENE

(to Eric)

You're on.

In a series of scenes:

Shane stands before the GFC Fighter and goes over it with Eric, who listens intently.

Eric is now in the pilot's seat, Shane at his side as he goes through the instrument panel. Eric asks a few questions for clarification.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - LATER

Shane enters, followed by Eric.

SHANE

-- There's a lot to take in. I won't expect you to learn this overnight, but the general said there's a time constraint with you.

A three inch manual is slammed on the desk.

Eric is at a loss to it.

SHANE (CONT'D)

I'll get you through it.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ CAFETERIA - TIME PASSED

Eric is halfway through the manual. He reads under a penlight.

INT. HANGAR BAY - DAY

Eric sits in the cockpit of the GFC Fighter.

Duchene and Shane watch him through the control room window --

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

DUCHENE
(into mic)
When you're ready... take her up.

INT. HANGAR BAY - SAME

Eric gives the "thumbs up."

The dome overhead is open.

The GFC Fighter lifts off.

Duchene and Shane hold themselves well. Then --

The GFC Fighter shoots up and vanishes --

Duchene and Shane's expressions say it all. Both have their doubts.

EXT. HANGAR BASE - SPACE

The GFC Fighter speeds upward -- then suddenly stops.

INT. GFC FIGHTER - SAME

ERIC
OK... shit.

He steadies the spacecraft.

EXT. LUNAR BASE - SPACE

Alien spacecrafts hover through in formation.

The GFC Fighter streaks past them in a flash --

EXT. MOON ORBIT - SPACE

The GFC Fighter leaves a trail of light as it tours across the lunar surface --

INT. GFC FIGHTER - SAME

Eric takes note of the moon's surface below him.

Ancient downed spacecrafts lie on the rugged lunar surface.

The GFC Fighter streamlines through what appears as domed tunnels and ruined structures and monoliths --

EXT. MOON SURFACE - SPACE

The GFC Fighter hits the bright side of the lunar satellite.

A fly-by the American Flag, obviously planted by a previous lunar mission. The centrifugal force of the GFC Fighter ruffles the banner --

INT. GFC FIGHTER - SAME

Eric takes in the sun's rays that shoot around the Earth before him --

EXT. MOON SURFACE - SPACE

The GFC Fighter glows --

EXT. HANGAR BASE - SPACE

The GFC Fighter arrives and lowers back through the opened dome into the hangar bay --

INT. HANGAR BAY - SAME

The GFC Fighter settles on the pad. The dome closes.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - TIME PASSED

Eric sits before Duchene and Shane who hold him in question.

ERIC

I think I've got the hang of it
now.

Duchene shakes his head at the thought and walks out.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ CAFETERIA - LATER

Eric sits alone, by a window. He stares out at the cusp of Earth, which sits just over the horizon.

Duchene arrives and places his tray of food down before Eric.

There is silence, as Duchene prepares himself with his napkin and utensils.

Eric doesn't know what to make of this. He waits.

Duchene now locks eyes with him and starts to eat.

It is an awkward moment.

Eric decides to break the ice:

ERIC

Back home, they don't even know.

DUCHENE

It's to their benefit that they don't. Not now. They're not ready for it.

ERIC

They should be told.

Beat.

DUCHENE

You're right. How do you purpose you do it?

ERIC

Hiding it from them doesn't help.

DUCHENE

And telling them does?

Eric now isn't sure if he should respond.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

Eric, they're not ready to know about what's been happening, or for how long.

ERIC

It's not right!

DUCHENE

OK, let's start with how long they've been taken advantage of.

(MORE)

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
How their livelihoods have been
controlled and manipulated... by
everything that exists around them.
See how far that takes you.

ERIC
That's fucked up!

Beat.

DUCHENE
Look, your intensions are
honorable. I understand them. We
live by our own rules here. What
we've developed here in just a few
decades has gotten us closer to
what we need. That's to be a part
of a Universal Federation that is
lightyears from where we want to
be.

(beat)
I agree with your hypothesis, but
your execution needs to be
rethought. What has been going on
can't continue. That's understood.
That's why I brought you in. I want
you to change things for the
better, so those back home see a
better tomorrow.

No response.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
It's up to us, and we will make it
better.
(beat)
Now let's go a save 7.5 billion
souls.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ LABORATORY - TIME PASSED

A metallic drone structure -- four-feet in length with four
appendages -- sits on a table.

Eric and Duchene stand behind two technical engineers who go
over the drone (capsule).

DUCHENE
(to Eric)
This capsule took time to develop.
It carries sensors which span over
a thousand mile radius.
(MORE)

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

The Big Five all carry more nuclear warheads to blow a hole through space. We have to prevent any one of them from getting an itchy finger. All we have to do is bring these capsules within that one thousand range to paralyze their warheads from being triggered.

(beat)

That's our job.

ERIC

One isn't enough, I guess.

DUCHENE

One never is. You'll carry five.

Eric is nonplussed.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

I'll carry the other five. And, no... it doesn't make everybody safe. We're just doing our best to reduce the chances of it getting out of hand.

ERIC

I wasn't going to ask.

DUCHENE

You didn't have to.

ERIC

Fighters will be sent in on us.

DUCHENE

Absolutely... but our GFC's will outrun them.

ERIC

Nice being the enemy within.

DUCHENE

We're here -- now -- to prevent annihilation. Consider it all damage control.

Eric has no response.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

This is why we created you.

ERIC
That's not making me feel warm and
fuzzy inside.

DUCHENE
If you want "warm and fuzzy" I'll
put you in a cage with rabid polar
bear.

Eric glares at Duchene as if to absorb all that has been said
to him.

ERIC
OK. You keep seeing you how you see
you, I'll keep seeing you how I see
you. Maybe we can find a Happy
Place at some point.

DUCHENE
If we continued on this path that's
been created, there wouldn't be any
"you" to discuss.
(beat)
You still in on this?

ERIC
I guess we're on.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ HANGAR BAY - TIME PASSED

Duchene sits in GFD Fighter-1.

Eric sits in GFC Fighter-2.

Shane is seen through the window into the control room. He
gives them both a "thumbs up."

The GFC Fighters lift off --

EXT. LUNAR BASE - SPACE

Both GFC Fighters rise above the opened dome. They hover side-
by-side, then streak off --

EXT. MOON SURFACE - SPACE

Both GFC Fighters race out from the dark side of the moon and
speed toward Earth --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - SAME

Eric checks over on GFC Fighter-1 across from him --

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Both GFC Fighters speed toward the Earth directly ahead --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - SAME

Eric watches as he closes in on his home planet --

EXT. EARTH'S ORBIT - SPACE

The GFC Fighters break through the atmosphere --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - DAY

Duchene checks on Eric directly beside him. He gives Eric a thumbs up --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - SAME

Eric returns the gesture --

EXT. EARTH - DAY

The GFC Fighters shoot through the bright blue sky that now surrounds them.

GFC Fighter-1 breaks right.

GFC Fighter-2 breaks left.

EXT. EARTH'S SKY - DAY

A blue ocean lies beneath the GFC Fighters that part ways.

INT. COMMERCIAL PASSENGER PLANE - SAME

A CHILD catches sight of the GFC Fighter craft race pass at the speed of light.

His MOTHER, seated beside him, is too preoccupied with her smartphone.

The Child pokes her.

CHILD
Mom... I saw something.

MOTHER
That's nice, Donny.

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - CONTINUOUS

Duchene comes through the speaker:

DUCHENE'S VOICE
We're two minutes out. The capsules
carry homing devices. Once you're
close enough, jettison them.

ERIC
Yes, sir.

EXT. EARTH'S SKY - DAY

A GFC Fighter streaks across --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - DAY

Eric checks what's underneath him.

ERIC
I'm over Australia.

DUCHENE'S VOICE
Countdown --

Eric hovers his finger over the button --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - DAY

Duchene checks what's underneath him --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C./ STATE CAPITAL - DAY

GFC Fighter-1 shoots past --

A beat. Then:

Two F-14 Tomcat Fighters jet across --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - DAY

Duchene notes the Tomcats close in on him.

DUCHENE
OK, I have greeters.

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - DAY

Eric checks to one side and notes two fighter close ion on him.

ERIC
Ditto, here. Raptors.

EXT. SKY - DAY

The two Raptors move in fast on the GFC Fighter.

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - DAY

DUCHENE
-- On three -- two -- one --

EXT. SKY - DAY

Simultaneously -- both GFC Fighters launch their capsules --

Intersperse as the five capsules from either GFC Fighter stream through the sky toward their destination points.

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - DAY

DUCHENE
Let's haul ass, Major!

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - DAY

ERIC
I got that!

EXT. EARTH'S SKY - DAY

GFC Fighter-2 makes a sharp -- ninety-degree -- upward turn and is gone --

Both Raptor Fighters shoot past --

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE - SPACE

Both GFC Fighters meet up where they originally separated and race into space --

Two laser beams -- from different parts of the hemisphere -- collide and just miss both GFC Fighters --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - SPACE

ERIC

That was close. I thought we were the good guys!

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - SPACE

DUCHENE

All depends on where you're standing. Let's get back.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Both GFC Fighters shoot toward the moon.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ DUCHENE'S OFFICE - LATER

Eric stares at the various photos on the wall. One holds his focus.

The photograph is of the Milky Way -- littered with blue, red and yellow dots (markers).

ERIC

This a pretty legitimate picture of The Milky Way.

DUCHENE

It better be... it's real.

ERIC

Reality is something.

Duchene raises his eyes from the papers before him.

DUCHENE

The blue markers are ours. We have bases there.

Eric points to a blue marker on the galaxy's brim.

ERIC
So that's our solar system.

DUCHENE
Uh huh.

ERIC
Red?

DUCHENE
We cohabit. And yellow are works-in-progress.

Eric turns to face Duchene.

ERIC
We have bases throughout the galaxy and we are here to disarm ourselves from killing ourselves.
(beat)
That makes sense.

DUCHENE
You have to understand something... wherever you go out there... if you shit-disturb any inhabitants... anywhere... you stand accountable.

ERIC
We do it here.

DUCHENE
This is our backyard.
(beat)
The Galactic Federation frowns upon the idea of seize and conquer. Everybody takes care of their own. It's the unwritten law of the Universe. Anybody can offer services to aid and advance -- if asked upon first. But ulterior motives are frowned upon. Once done, get ready for a judgement call.

ERIC
Explain Mars, then.

DUCHENE
Mars wasn't the only planet with so-called "frenemies," Like neighbors who didn't get along... one neighbor took it too far.

(MORE)

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

The Galactic Federation had to be approached first. One of the Mars inhabitants brought it before council and said that tactful approaches were getting nowhere. They just wanted to take out a base -- but it became a suicide mission.

Eric listens, interested.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

What happened was the destruction of a planet and the wiping out of eighty percent of its inhabitants.

ERIC

(realizes)

Sounds like an Earth issue.

DUCHENE

It's a continual work-in-progress. We're still the new kids-on-the-block.

ERIC

We're still here.

DUCHENE

That's the plan. Disputes still exist. Like neighbors that disagree, but we're now here for the better good.

ERIC

We can't be alone in this.

DUCHENE

We're not, but compromise is always a continuum.

Duchene's phone rings. He answers:

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

(into receiver)

Yes.

His eyes stay on Eric.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

I have somebody right here. When?

(beat)

OK.

Hangs up.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)
 (to Eric)
 How's your chauffeuring skills?

INT. LUNAR BASE/ CONTROL ROOM - TIME PASSED

Duchene and Eric walk in, greeted by Shane.

Four senior dignitaries are in the middle of a conversation off to the side.

 DUCHENE
 (to Shane)
 What's the template?

Shane hands him the file. Duchene goes over it.

 DUCHENE (CONT'D)
 Just these four?

Shane nods.

 SHANE
 They were asked to attend a
 correspondence at the last minute.
 If something comes of it, then it
 would help council considerably.

Duchene hands the template back to Shane.

 DUCHENE
 So, they want muscle, nothing more.

 SHANE
 Yes.

Duchene goes to a safe on the wall. He unlocks it and pulls out a ray-o sidearm. Checks it over, then hands it to Eric.

 DUCHENE
 (to Eric)
 It's charged.

He gives into a half-smile.

 DUCHENE (CONT'D)
 You'll be escorting these gentlemen
 to the barter.

 ERIC
 The barter's new to me. Where is
 this... barter?

DUCHENE
Jupiter.

INT. HANGAR BAY - LATER

A Passenger Spacecraft readies to take off.

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

Eric is in the pilot seat. The four senior dignitaries are seated behind him.

ERIC
Gentlemen please make sure you are
all secured in your seats.

1ST DIGNITARY
How long will the ride take? We're
late already.

ERIC
Not long.

EXT. LUNAR BASE/ HANGAR BAY - SPACE

The dome opens and the Passenger Spacecraft rises out --

EXT. LUNAR BASE - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft veers to one side, then suddenly streaks away --

EXT. MOON - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft arcs away --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

Eric notes Mars directly ahead.

1ST DIGNITARY
Is this your first time?

2ND DIGNITARY
First time to Jupiter. I've been to
Mars twice.

Eric notes a blue halo out in space. He drives it --

EXT. SPACE - SAME

The Passenger Spacecraft bullets in on the blue halo (the wormhole) --

FLASH!

The spacecraft is gone.

Beat.

EXT. SPACE/ NEAR JUPITER - SPACE

There is a flash!

The Passenger Spacecraft instantly reappears. And shoots across --

EXT. ASTEROID BELT - SAME

The Passenger Spacecraft travels through --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

The senior dignitaries are in awe of the asteroids that surround them.

3RD DIGNITARY

-- Will you look at that!

1ST DIGNITARY

You can see Jupiter over there.
Look at the size of it!

3RD DIGNITARY

(to 2nd Dignitary)

Did you know that these asteroids
were once a planet.

2ND DIGNITARY

A planet?

3RD DIGNITARY

There was a battle when one life
form got antsy with another and
decided to annihilate the planet.
Rumor has it that's what brought
the attention from everybody from
across the universe.

2ND DIGNITARY

I guess humans aren't the worst...
yet.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The Passenger Spacecraft nears Jupiter's orbit.

Jupiter's colorful spectrum leaves one in awe.

The Passenger Spacecraft passes through and buffers past
Europa --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

ERIC

We'll be landing soon, gentlemen.

Out the window -- an oblong-shaped Space Station comes into
view. It hovers past the eye of Jupiter --

EXT. JUPITER'S ORBIT - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft arcs back around toward the Space
Station as a bay door opens --

INT. SPACE STATION - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft sets down in the open bay. The
hangar bay doors close.

INT. SPACE STATION/ HANGAR BAY - SAME

Guides await to greet the dignitaries.

The Passenger Spacecraft doors open. The dignitaries
disembark and are welcomed by their guides and scurried away.

Eric follows --

INT. SPACE STATION/ CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Eric remains behind the dignitaries as their GUIDE leads them
to their destination. Eric takes in the massive width and
height of the walkway he moves through -- clearly eighty feet
high, forty feet wide. It is luminesced in a soft light and
would appear to emit a pleasant sheen.

The Guide stops before a tall door -- it practically reaches the entire height of the corridor, and is twenty feet in width.

ERIC
(to Guide)
Big.

GUIDE
For good reason.

He stands by the open door as the dignitaries walk in. Eric follows them --

INT. SPACE STATION/ CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM - SAME

It is as large as a football field.

Eric has to stop a moment to take it all in. What his eyes behold is beyond his comprehension --

The life forms are various and abundant.

Reptoids, Mantids, Large Human species (ten to twenty feet in height), Gnomes that are eighteen inches in height, Aquatic species who wear circular space helmets filled with water, Avian-like humanoids that are ten feet in height, Feline humanoids, tall Zetas (grayish white, thin-bodied life-forms with large heads and big black eyes), etc...

Eric slowly makes his way through the room. He has to absorb it all gradually. He does this while he stays close to his dignitaries who greet and who are greeted by the variety of alien species.

Eric stops and sees --

A Mantid at a table with a Human whose ears protrude out like antennae. The Mantid catches Eric's stare.

Eric looks past that and takes in the sight of --

A Tall Alien seated at a table which is clearly over ten feet high. The Tall Alien appears as if to come from Easter Island. It barter with a Gnome which stands atop the table.

The Tall Alien rises to his feet.

Eric is right beside him and the Tall Alien towers over everything in the room. It clears sixty feet in height and practically reaches the top of the auditorium.

INT. CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM - TIME PASSED

Eric keeps his eyes on the dignitaries -- all who are in the midst of discussions with a pair of Blue Avians.

Teresa arrives before Eric.

Eric is shocked, but smiles at the sight of her. She too is suited like him with a sidearm

TERESA
(smiles)
Need anything?

Eric does himself a favor and keeps composed.

ERIC
I don't know. I guess you're here for the same reason.

TERESA
(jests)
As long as everybody keeps there cool. Who are you with?

ERIC
Those over there.

Gestures to his dignitaries who speak with a Twenty-Foot Human cloaked in a robe.

TERESA
I was told to absorb all I can.

ERIC
It's an experience, that's for sure.

TERESA
I guess this is the new normal nobody knows about.

ERIC
Everybody here... are so civil.

TERESA
It's mandatory. If you're not good you don't get to come back.

ERIC
I have a hard time believing we are in combat with some of these beings.

GUIDE

This goes on throughout the galaxy... throughout the universe, actually. It's like getting a puzzle for the first time and trying to figure out where all the pieces go.

ERIC

Hell of a puzzle.

Teresa's eyes are suddenly diverted --

TERESA

I gotta go...
(pulls away)
Duty calls. It was great to see you, Eric. I'd give you a hug, but it wouldn't be protocol.

Eric is now sombre as he watches --

Teresa arrives before her dignitaries: Aquatic Beings in headgear. She follows them as they leave.

Eric turns to the window that overlooks Jupiter -- it's a brilliant sight.

Beyond is the asteroid belt -- Mars and Earth are mere specks, and the Sun shines brightly in the distance. The view is pristine.

INT. SPACE STATION/ CORRIDOR - LATER

The dignitaries are ahead of Eric as he make heir way back to where they came in. The dignitaries discuss, among themselves, what they accomplished in their transactions and what more they need to do to get what they need.

Out of the corner of Eric's eye --

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME

A hangar bay door is open. Two Draconians stand by their spacecraft in the hangar deck. They quickly note Eric's stare.

Eric remain steady. Cautious. Aware. His hand hovers close to his ray-o gun at his side.

The Draconians step out from view.

Eric moves to the hangar bay door. Curious, but cautious --

INT. HANGAR BAY - SAME

Eric enters. He approaches the Draconian Spaceship.

Eric stands before the craft which oozes an ominous eeriness.
The Draconians are on where to be found.

Eric takes in the spaceship's iniquity.

An ENGINEER appears.

ENGINEER
Your party is ready to leave,
Major.

ERIC
Visitors?

Gestures to the Draconian Spaceship.

ENGINEER
They had to make repairs, Major.
We're obligated to assist anyone in
need. They'll be leaving shortly.

INT. HANGAR BAY - LATER

Eric climbs into the Passenger Spacecraft --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Eric takes his seat in the cockpit and gets on his
transmitter:

ERIC
(into mic)
Major Byron to Lunar Base.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Come in, Major.

ERIC
I need some intel.

INT. SPACE STATION/ HANGAR BAY - SOON AFTER

The Passenger Spacecraft lifts off and turns to the open bay
doors into space --

EXT. JUPITER'S ORBIT - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft leaves the Space Station behind --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SPACE

The dignitaries continue to discuss among themselves about what they accomplished.

Eric watches the asteroid belt that he closes in on --

EXT. SPACE - NEAR THE ASTEROID BELT

The Passenger Spacecraft nears the portal that transported him previously. Rather than enter, the Passenger Spacecraft is buffered to one side of it.

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

ERIC
(sotto voce)
Interesting...

1ST DIGNITARY
(to Eric)
What is it, Pilot?

ERIC
I don't know yet.

EXT. SPACE - SAME

As the Passenger Spacecraft banks around to the wormhole for another go around --

Three Draconian Spaceships shoot out from the wormhole --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Eric catches sight of the Draconian Spaceships that close in on him.

ERIC
That explains that.

1ST DIGNITARY
What's wrong?

ERIC
We're going to have to take the
scenic route.

2ND DIGNITARY
What's that mean?

EXT. SPACE - FURTHER ON

The Passenger Spacecraft rockets through the asteroid belt.

The three Draconian Spaceships are met up with the Draconian
Spaceship that comes from the Space Station --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SPACE

ERIC
Gentlemen, please make sure you're
all strapped in your seats.

The dignitaries all hold concern --

EXT. ASTEROID BELT - SPACE

A Draconian Spaceship fires a laser torpedo.

The Passenger Spacecraft is struck on its tail --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

The dignitaries are rattled from the impact.

2ND DIGNITARY
What was that?

ERIC
Hang on!

He hits the thrusters --

EXT. ASTEROID BELT - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft rushes through --

The first Draconian Spaceship shoots laser missiles at the
Passenger Spacecraft --

The missiles strike and ricochet off random asteroids --

The Passenger Spacecraft now has to maneuver around asteroids and the laser missiles at the same time --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

1ST DIGNITARY
(to Eric)
Do you know what you're doing?

ERIC
Not really --

He holds himself well despite the consequences.

EXT. ASTEROID BELT - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft and four Draconian Spaceships snake their way through --

The Draconian Spaceships take haphazard shots that narrowly miss their target --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

The dignitaries are frazzled by all this.

1ST DIGNITARY
Can't you fire back?

ERIC
I'm not armed.

3RD DIGNITARY
Are you serious?

EXT. ASTEROID BELT - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft makes a hard turn through the maze --

The Draconian Spaceships copy the move of their prey --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

1ST DIGNITARY
(to Eric)
-- You're going to kill us!

All Eric does is steady himself --

EXT. ASTEROID BELT - SPACE

The Passenger Spacecraft shoots out into open space --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

ERIC

OK...

The dignitaries brace themselves for the inevitable --

EXT. SPACE - SAME

The Passenger Spacecraft makes a hard turn upward --

A Draconian Spaceship, right behind, does the same and fires off another shot --

The other three Draconian Spaceships separate --

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

A BEEP.

2ND DIGNITARY

Now what?

ERIC

I'm low on fuel.

1ST DIGNITARY

(to Eric)

Are you for real?

EXT. SPACE - SAME

Two GFC Fighters enter the fray at top speed. They fire torpedoes at two Draconian Spaceships --

The Two Draconian Spaceships veer around the torpedoes.

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - SAME

TERESA

It moved!

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - SAME

 DUCHENE
 Don't let that stop you.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

GFC Fighter-2 on a Draconian Spaceship directly ahead. The Draconian Spaceship tries to escape --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-2 - SAME

 TERESA
 Saludos, pendejos!

EXT. SPACE - SAME

GFC Fighter-2 fires its torpedo --

The Draconian Spaceship is struck -- it EXPLODES!

Through the flash -- another Draconian Spaceship shoots through --

GFC Fighter-2 quickly shoots out another torpedo --

That Draconian Spaceship is struck head-on and explodes with a FLASH --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - SAME

 DUCHENE
 Hang on.

EXT. SPACE - SAME

GFC Fighter-1 arcs on through.

Two Draconian Spaceships appear out of nowhere and zero in on GFC Fighter-1 --

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - CONTINUOUS

 DUCHENE
 Sneaky, fuckers. Cloak me, will ya!

EXT. SPACE - FURTHER THROUGH

GFC Fighter-1 rapidly fires two torpedoes -- one after the other -- at the Draconian Spaceships --

Both Draconian Spaceships explode into vapors.

Both GFC Fighters arrive along the Passenger Spacecraft, which now hangs limp in space.

INT. GFC FIGHTER-1 - SAME

 DUCHENE
 (into mic)
 Everybody all right?

INT. PASSENGER SPACECRAFT - SAME

 ERIC
 We're just hangin'.

Smiles at the dignitaries who are all in disbelief about the circumstance.

EXT. SPACE - SAME

The Passenger Spacecraft and two GFC Fighters hover. Mars can be seen in the distance.

 DUCHENE'S VOICE
 Relax, we'll tow you in.

INT. LUNAR BASE/ CAFETERIA - LATER

Eric sits at a table and stares out at the landscape and space. The brim of Earth hovers over the horizon.

Duchene takes a seat down across from Eric.

 DUCHENE
 You sure changed things around
 here.

 ERIC
 That doesn't sound like a
 compliment.

 DUCHENE
 It's not meant to.

ERIC

So I guess I'm being abandoned to some outpost on the other side of the galaxy.

DUCHENE

Don't think I haven't thought about it.

(beat)

I'm sending you home.

Eric is at a loss to this.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

Yeah. Believe it or not, you've been here twenty years. Your tour is over. The hierarchy wanted to keep you here -- I told them no.

(beat)

Twenty years and you haven't aged a day. That's not bad.

Eric can only shake his head at the thought.

ERIC

(in disbelief)

Twenty years.

DUCHENE

(smiles)

You were brought in because you fit the bill. You were programmed before birth. Your father intended for you to be here. We lost him in battle. He saved thousands of beings from annihilation.

(beat)

He was my friend.

There is a deep, sorrowful moment for him. His eyes hold on Eric.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

Your run is done, Eric. Your flight leaves at the end of the scheduled day. We'll erase any memory of what happened to you here.

EXT. CLEAR SKY - NIGHT

Scattered with stars.

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The digital clock goes from: 3:32 to 3:33.

Eric is asleep on the bed. His eyes pop open instantly. He quickly sits up.

INT. ERIC'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - DAY

Eric's Mom readies to leave.

ERIC'S MOM
(calls up)
Eric. Eric!

INT. ERIC'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - LATER

Eric walks in just as his mom is about to leave.

ERIC'S MOM
Didn't sleep, again?

Eric takes a seat at the kitchen table.

ERIC
Yeah.

ERIC'S MOM
I'm going to have to get to work
early. Can you get a ride?

ERIC
OK.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Eric walks to the bus stop.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/ CLASS ROOM - DAY

Eric is lost in thought as the teacher instructs the class. He looks to the clock on the wall --

The clock goes from: 2:21 to 2:22.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The bell sounds.

The students quickly rush out.

Eric is amongst the onslaught of students that buffer past him --

He gets to the sidewalk. His eyes drop down to --

A Blue Tulip that lies on the grass.

Eric picks up the Blue Tulip. His eyes hold on them. Curious more than anything at this point.

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - DAY

Eric turns up the walk --

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - DAY

Eric drops his books on the bed and takes a seat. He opens the cover to the top book on the pile and pull out the blue tulip. He can't help but stare at it.

EXT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DUSK

Eric arrives at the front door and knocks.

No response.

Eric rings the doorbell.

No answer.

Eric moves to the front window and peers in --

INT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DUSK

Eric presses his face on the window to get a better look into the darkened house.

EXT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DUSK

Eric pulls back and turns away.

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A moon beam gleams in through the window. He steps over to the window and catches sight of --

A Full Moon. A cloud slides over it.

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Eric stands outside. He eyes on the open field to his right.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

Eric glides through it. His hand buffers over the knee-high grass. Cricket sounds and owl hoots encompass the darkness. His eyes turn upward --

Eric's point-of-view take in the star-filled sky.

Eric stands alone in the field.

INT. ERIC'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - DAY

Eric sits at the kitchen table.

Eric's Mom walks in.

ERIC'S MOM

Wow, you made coffee. Can I have a cup?

Eric shrugs.

Eric's Mom pours herself a cup.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)

You all right?

ERIC

I guess.

Eric's Mom stops a moment to observe her son.

ERIC'S MOM

Something's up, you're not normal.

Eric offers a haphazard smile.

ERIC'S MOM (CONT'D)

You need a lift to school?

Eric shakes his head no.

ERIC

It's OK, I'll walk.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Eric walks slowly. The school bus glides by and stops just ahead to pick up students.

Eric stops a moment.

The school bus would seem to wait with its door open.

Eric doesn't move.

Beat.

The school bus closes its door and drives off.

Eric watches it go.

EXT. FAR END OF RURAL ROAD - DAY

Eric runs in. His breaths are heavy and he would seem to be in a rush --

EXT. MIDDLE OF RURAL ROAD - DAY

Eric suddenly stops --

Teresa arrives before him from the opposite direction. Teresa's breaths heavy from a run as well.

They stare at each other.

EXT. FURTHER ALONG RURAL ROAD - DAY

Eric and Teresa walk.

TERESA

I woke up the day before last and I haven't been able to fall back asleep.

ERIC

It's been over a week for me.

TERESA

I can't sleep!

ERIC

I'm there, too.

TERESA

I'm suppose to remember
something... but I don't know what.

ERIC

I felt paralyzed after I woke up.
My mind is racing with weird
thoughts so fast... I don't know.
It doesn't make any sense. I can't
think straight.

TERESA

(jokes)

We're both too confused to figure
out what we're suppose to remember.

ERIC

Crazy.

Beat.

TERESA

I thought about you this morning...
I knew I had to see you.

ERIC

I checked for you at school, but
never saw you. I didn't know what
to think. I even checked your
house. I thought you ran off
somewhere.

Teresa smiles at him.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I feel... older, if that makes any
sense.

TERESA

Me too.

They look at each other and laugh.

TERESA (CONT'D)

We're both going nuts at the same
time.

Eric takes her by the hand.

ERIC

I want to show you something.

Suddenly --

The textbook opens and the flattened blue tulip is seen.

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - DAY

Eric and Teresa sit on the front porch steps. Teresa stares at the open textbook with the flattened Blue Tulip. She takes the Blue Tulip in hand and holds it up.

ERIC

I found it at school. I thought about the blue tulips I saw when I was at your house -- then it was there!

TERESA

Someone gave it to you. Remember, it means a message of trust and loyalty.

(beat)

Somebody's relying on you to do something.

ERIC

As if I'm not confused about enough about things right now.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

School lets out and students pour out from the doors.

Eric and Teresa walk together, then part ways.

Eric crosses the street and wanders down the street --

EXT. STREET - DAY

Eric walks alone.

The Black Sedan follows, some distance behind him.

Eric is unaware as he turns down a side street --

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

Eric is practically through. Then, out of reflex, he checks over his shoulder --

From Eric's point-of-view -- the Black Sedan moves slowly as it follows.

Eric continues forward, concerned. He is at a loss to this --

INT. BLACK SEDAN - DAY

It is even darker with the tinted windows.

Suddenly -- Eric darts in between two houses --

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

The Black Sedan jets into motion --

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

The Black Sedan skids around the bend and races on --

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

Eric races across the lawn to a tall fence. He scales up and over --

EXT. HOUSE FRONT YARD - DAY

Eric runs like a fiend as he hits the road --

The Black Sedan comes in from down the street at high speed. It closes in on Eric fast --

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Eric continues to runs for his life as he gets across the street --

The Black Sedan is practically right on top of him --

EXT. OUTLET MALL - DAY

Confined.

Eric darts through the lot which is scattered with cars --

The Black Sedan makes a sharp turn into the lot and bolts after Eric --

Eric weaves in and around cars. He barely bumps into a car that pulls out. He pushes off and moves on --

The Black Sedan shoots through --

EXT. OUTLET MALL - DAY

Opposite end of the lot.

The Black Sedan screams through and skids into a ninety degree turn once it hits the street.

INT. BLACK SEDAN - SAME

From what is seen, Eric is nowhere to be found.

A city passes through --

INT. CITY BUS - SAME

Eric glares out at the black sedan as he passes by. He is crouched in his seat. Still at a point where he catches his breath.

EXT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DUSK

A hand knocks on the front door. The doors opens -- it's Teresa.

Eric stands on the front porch, a loss for words.

INT. TERESA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Teresa closes the door and turns to Eric, seated on her bed. Teresa takes a seat down beside him and notes his uneasiness.

ERIC
Something's going on.

TERESA
What happened?

ERIC
A black car chased me. When I first saw it I knew something wasn't right!

TERESA
Slow down, Eric.

Beat.

ERIC

I'm not paranoid, this is all too real. Something's not right.

Beat.

TERESA

We have to get out of here then.

EXT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Scattered with riders ready to leave.

Eric And Teresa enter with backpacks in hand.

TERESA

Let me check what's available.

She goes to the teller's counter.

Eric takes a seat by the window which overlooks the quiet street. He scans the area at the various people.

Teresa returns and takes a seat down beside him.

TERESA (CONT'D)

There's a bus leaving in twenty minutes for Minneapolis. It's the soonest one I could get.

Eric sighs.

ERIC

OK.

Two young couples walk in. They laugh as they move to the teller behind the counter.

Eric stares at them with curiosity. His eyes hold on the --

Young Blonde Woman with her boyfriend's arm around her. Through her smile she catches Eric's stare.

Eric holds his focus on her.

A flash cut --

Scene with Eric and the Blonde Female Recruit from the Lunar Base:

BLONDE FEMALE RECRUIT

Did you expect this?

ERIC

I gave up expecting.

Back to Eric seated at the Bus Depot.

Eric's stare of the Young Blonde is frozen.

The Young Blonde loses her smile on Eric.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(to Teresa)

We gotta go!

TERESA

What?

Eric grabs Teresa by the hand and beelines to the exit --

The two Young Couples suddenly head to the exit --

EXT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Eric and Teresa no sooner get outside that Teresa is grabbed from behind by the Lead Young Male --

Teresa's kicks him hard.

The Lead Young Male doubles over from the strike to the sternum.

Eric is suddenly tackled to the ground by the Second Young Male and Young Blonde. A struggle ensues. The Young Blonde puts Eric in a headlock.

Teresa and the Young Female Brunette battle.

Quick punches along with swift, evasive moves between the two is impressive. Both know the art-of-combat.

Teresa doesn't waste any more of her effort and knocks out her opponent.

Eric is able to punch his male opponent out, but struggles with the Young Blonde with her arm around his throat.

Teresa kicks out her leg and strikes the Young Blonde from behind. The Young Blonde doubles back. Teresa gives in to rapid punches to the Young Blonde's face and throat which knocks her out.

The Young Lead Male hits Eric with hard punches in the back and midsection.

Eric is struck hard, but quickly responds with punches to the Young Lead Male's throat and sternum. Eric finally kicks him in the groin for good measure.

The Young Lead Male drops to his knees, then hits the pavement. Out cold.

Eric and Teresa glare down at their attackers. Amazed at what just transpired. They run off --

EXT. DOWNTOWN/ STREET - NIGHT

Eric and Teresa run and dart into an alleyway --

EXT. DOWNTOWN/ ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Eric and Teresa stop to catch their breaths.

TERESA

What did you see?

ERIC

Something flashed in my mind, like a dream. I knew that blonde girl. I met her some place -- it was so clear. Something wasn't right.

TERESA

All right.

She now paces.

TERESA (CONT'D)

We have to be careful. OK? What happened back there, I can't even explain!

ERIC

I don't remember learning to fight like that!

TERESA

You and me both.

(beat)

Who were they?

ERIC

I don't know, but they wanted us to go with them. That I'm sure of!

TERESA

This is beyond strange!

ERIC
We need to get out of here!

TERESA
Where to?

ERIC
C'mon...

He checks either end of the street outside the alleyway.

ERIC (CONT'D)
It's clear -- let's go!

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

Eric runs as fast as he can through a war zone. He can't seem to move fast enough. The strain is apparent on his face.

There are a few explosions behind him.

He does his best to run from them.

Suddenly -- a large explosion plumes from behind him -- the flash is tremendous --

CUT TO:

On Eric's face -- his eyes pop open. He's panicked.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAWN

Eric lies on the grass behind the bleachers. He is still. He does his best to control his breaths. He looks down on his lap --

Teresa's head lies on his lap. She is sound asleep.

A sun beam hits Eric's face. He checks his environment --

To one side of the bleachers -- a handful of high school football players walk through to ready for practice. They don't see him.

Eric checks on Teresa who slowly awakens. Groggily, she raises her head and has a look around. She turns to face Eric.

No reaction.

EXT. LONG RURAL ROAD - DAY

A pick-up truck comes in from a distance --

EXT. DE TORRO HOUSE - DAY

The pick-up truck pulls to a stop.

Eric and Tresa jump off from the back bed. They wave thanks to the driver -- who returns the gesture -- as the pick-up drives away.

Eric and Teresa make their way up the walk.

ERIC

I had a weird dream last night... I was trying to run away from things that were exploding around him --

TERESA

-- Then there was a flash and you woke up.

Eric is stunned by her response.

ERIC

Yeah.

TERESA

I had the same dream.

Both stop before the front door.

TERESA (CONT'D)

We're both having the same experiences...

ERIC

And none of it makes sense.

Teresa gives him a heartfelt hug.

TERESA

I'll call you later.

EXT. RUAL LANDSCAPE - DAY

The serenity of the community is encompassed is silence.

Transition to --

EXT. SAME RURAL LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

There is a stillness.

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eric is wide awake on his bed. He checks his digital clock.

The clock reads: 3:33.

Footsteps are heard outside his room.

Eric stares at the open doorway --

Two Men-In-Black arrive and enter --

Eric doesn't know what to make of it -- he cannot even seem to move.

The Men-In-Black pick Eric up and carry him out --

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Eric is carried out by the Men-In-Black to a black sedan that is parked on the road --

Suddenly -- the two Men-In-Black are zapped by laser beams -- they shutter from shock -- and release Eric who drops on all fours.

Eric is unable to move for the moment. He stares at the two Men-In-Black who lie on the ground before him.

Two other Men-In-Plain-Clothes arrive at his side.

Eric looks up to them, but doesn't see any faces.

1ST MAN-IN-PLAIN-CLOTHES
Give yourself a minute. Once you
get your bearings back, get up and
walk to the end of the road.

Both Men-In-Plain-Clothes walk away.

Eric holds himself steady for a beat, then slowly gets to his feet.

He checks around himself. All that is seen are the two downed Men-In-Black and the black sedan before him.

Eric turns his focus to what is down the road.

A Silhouetted Man stands at the end of the road.

Eric is apprehensive, but makes his approach --

EXT. FAR END OF RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

Eric stops before the Silhouetted Man who waits on him --

It is Duchene.

DUCHENE

More will come.

Eric holds a quizzical look.

ERIC

That girl... at the bus depot...

DUCHENE

You recognized her. She was a recruit... like yourself, but those here got to her before we could do anything.

Eric is exasperated with himself.

ERIC

I'm suppose to remember things...
I'm suppose to remember you.

DUCHENE

Brigadier General Duchene.

Eric finally realizes it.

ERIC

You drafted me. You took me away.

DUCHENE

I've come back for you.

ERIC

-- I don't believe this!

DUCHENE

Your memories were erased, but your subconscious couldn't let go of them.

ERIC

In my dreams... like sharp flashes.

DUCHENE

I had to wait for you to realize
this on your own.

ERIC

You're not with those from the bus
station --

DUCHENE

Or those chasing you. They want to
keep you for their own agendas.

ERIC

You're the one who left the tulips!

DUCHENE

No.

ERIC

I thought for sure --

DUCHENE

They were given to you by your
father.

Eric holds him in question.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

He waited for you. This is your
time.

(beat)

The rhetoric has reigned supreme
for too long. Right now, we're
going through a process of what
would be best described... as a
cleansing. I'm here because a
handful of us are on a mission...
to expose what's been happening.

A roar is heard in the distance.

Eric looks up --

Two F-22 Raptors streak across the night sky.

Duchene doesn't look up. He knows.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

They're close. Those are the ones
that want to stop you. They are the
ones that knew your father. They
wanted him, now they want you.

(beat)

They fear you.

ERIC

They were the ones at Teresa's house.

DUCHENE

She's on the same path. They will go after her as well. I'm not here to take you away. You went away on a twenty-year tour, in linear time. You were then brought back. What you experienced was a quantum dilation. It was real.

ERIC

Nobody will believe me.

DUCHENE

Let me worry about that. What happened to you, De Torro and everyone there was real. You and Teresa will probably have to explain it to those who will listen. I'm going for her next.

ERIC

You're asking for a leap of faith here.

DUCHENE

Your father wanted you to be prepared for this. He wanted you to be prepared to lead.

(beat)

Look up.

Eric does that and notes --

A massive Circular Craft, the size of a football stadium, hovers. It eclipses the sky.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

We'll back you. We're here. We're not backing out. We'll see to it that you're heard.

ERIC

(back to Duchene)

It won't be easy.

DUCHENE

Truth never is when you first hear it.

Eric looks back up --

The Circular Craft is now gone. The clear night sky has taken over.

ERIC

I lived it and I'm having a hard time with it.

DUCHENE

The Earth is going through a transformation. We want you to start talking about what you experienced. We want you to prepare those here who will listen to you.

ERIC

No one will believe me.

DUCHENE

Those who control what is here are going to see to it. I've got your back. You can do it, and I know you will. That's my promise I made to your father, and to you. The blue tulips... they're from him. His belief in you. We have support from the higher entities, but they can't interfere. It's protocol. We created our own mess. We have to clean our own house.

The roar of the fighter jets as they make another fly-by.

Military helicopters close in from beyond the trees.

DUCHENE (CONT'D)

You won't be alone. You have my word.

Headlights from military vehicles close in fast.

ERIC

I didn't ask for this.

DUCHENE

Fear makes people desperate. Truth scares them.

Your father knows you're ready. He brought you to me.

(beat)

You're on.

The military vehicles practically on top of him.

ERIC

OK.

His eyes check on the military vehicles that approach, then back to --

Duchene, who is no longer there.

Eric turns his eyes down --

A BLUE TULIP lies by his shoes. He takes it in hand.

Eric's eyes fixate on the Blue Tulip. He checks over his shoulder --

Military Officers make their approach.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(sotto voce)

Here it comes.

EXT. RURAL COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Eric is surrounded.

Military helicopters hold their positions overhead. Their spotlights beam down on him.

A STREAK OF LIGHT -- possibly Duchene's spacecraft -- shoots across the distant sky.

FADE OUT

THE END