

The background is a dark red, textured image that resembles a microscopic view of a biological specimen. In the center, there is a structure that looks like a face, with two prominent, glowing blue circular spots that serve as eyes. The overall appearance is organic and somewhat abstract.

TOXIC

A SCREENPLAY BY

JOHN
XAVIER

TOXIC

A

Screenplay

By

John Xavier

jx85@protonmail.com
Burnaby, BC

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OPEN ON:

A tracking shot of an expansive cave system in color-shifted NIGHT VISION. This is accompanied by a gentle, whispering string instrumental punctuated with musical effects reminiscent of droplets falling into water at various speeds. The mood remains transporting. Include wide shots and close in shots of interesting mineral structures too while TITLE CREDITS run.

Light in camera DIMS and naturalizes as it's replaced by the luminescence of various FUNGAL CLUSTERS. Converge on a woman with a HIGH-CONTRAST FLASHLIGHT she turns on and off as she collects several mushrooms. This is PAOLA, (Late 40s) female agriculturalist. She has a natural confidence that fuels her ability to be a good leader and an earthy quality, despite being intellectually formidable, which makes her approachable.

A NOISE like a bouncing stone suddenly piques her interest but shining the flashlight in its direction reveals nothing. Again this happens and the tension rises. It happens once more and Paola is about to yell something when, turning her head, a surprise flashes in front of her.

CLOSE IN

A contorted ghoulish face lit from below.

GHOULISH FACE
(Guttural)

YUAHHH!

Paola freezes with fear, her breath catching, before she rolls her eyes and grimaces. Her irritation is tempered by love.

PAOLA

Damn it Dad! Please! Enough.

Her father flicks on his flashlight and illuminates himself again. The man, HIDALGO, (Early 70s) is a meaty bearded rogue with distinguished features.

HIDALGO
(With a slightly lilting tongue)

Stay on your toes sweetie.

Paola ignores her father's juvenile sense of mischief, shaking her head at the old man's fun, and goes back to mushroom gathering. Hidalgo, self-illuminated, feigns sadness but then joins his daughter in their shared task. This continues until a light beam in the distance becomes visible.

VOICE
(Friendly)

Nothing much along the southern passage.

WIDE SHOT

Approaching from the background, GEORGE slowly comes into view. A lanky spectacled man (Mid 30s) who commands vast stores of memorized knowledge but displays noticeable uncertainty when it comes to human interactions. Literally a genius who has an expert level understanding in three disciplines: Geology, Biology, and Genetics.

PAOLA

That's alright. We've got enough right here.

George helps Paola and Hidalgo load up the last BASKETS.

GEORGE

Ironic, how we were driven below ground and this becomes one of our staple foods.

PAOLA

Yeah. A little bit.

The group finishes up, gathers their things and sets out.

WIDE SHOT

UNDERGROUND. CAVE SYSTEM HAB ENTRY

An impressive PISTON DOORWAY among a mound of solid rock. Some time passes before Paola, Hidalgo, and George appear on frame. Now the door slides up to open and the group begins to enter.

CUT TO:

UNDERGROUND. MINING OPERATIONS AREA

WIDE SHOT

The constant ROAR of RUMBLING mining equipment. YELLOWY electrical lights strung up along the walls and ceilings. Two shadow drenched figures in close proximity attending to technical duties. One is WYLER, male (Early 40s) with a brawny physique and kindly eyes. Machinist by training and profession. The other person accompanying him is QUINE, male (Early 20s) who likes to invent and tinker but does so with an ear for jazz rather than order and planning. They are right next to each other but still have to yell to hear themselves.

QUINE

YOU SURE WE DON'T NEED THE DIG TRAWLER!?

WYLER

NAH! WE'VE GOT TWENTY MINUTES LEFT! NO POINT!

CUT TO:

INT. HAB KITCHEN

WIDE SHOT

Arranged composition. Four people attempting to relax in various states of comfort. In descending order of ease we have VALE (Mid 30s) a non-binary person with a consciously neutral style. A capable novelist and historian as well. Then there's MINH (Early 50s) male. A chef with a flare for Parisian cuisine. Prefers to avoid taking firm positions on things. Next is ICHABOD (Late 40s) male. The Hab's security-organizer, responsible for maintaining group safety and external threat awareness. Has an inflated sense of his own importance and resents any infringement against this. In fact, he's deeply pathological. Lastly there's INANNA (Late 20s) female. Her apathy has led her to become Minh's kitchen helper but she puts considerably more effort into skimming off the food resources and manipulating others. Someone who savors gossip and shuns complex thought.

Minh is doing intricate prep work with a KNIFE. Inanna is impatiently dicing leafy greens on a cutting board. Ichabod is

carefully observing everyone while drinking tea. Vale is discussing events from before the founding of The Hab.

VALE

That's what the archives say at least. The planetary birthrate declined to such precarious levels that, in some cities, state orchestrated industrial repopulation began to be carried out. In vitro fertilization in warehouses FILLED with synthetic wombs.

MINH

(Chuckling darkly)

Human factory farming.

VALE

Yeah. But then, of course, you end up raising a generation of orphans. Which meant that traditional family units were now fringe outliers compared to the overwhelming mass of state-owned individuals. And, following naturally from these mutating demographics, cultural trends underwent radical transformation as well. A lawn mower style effect. It was awful.

ICHABOD

(Snorting)

In comparison to what? Anarchy? Addicts and psychotics parenting future addicts and psychotics? Anything has to be better than that.

VALE

(Annoyed)

You think they were, what? Carrying out some kind of benevolent rational program? Come on. In every one of these power structures there were utterly brutal domestic campaigns. Once people were no longer recognized first and foremost as individuals, the state could justify anything. And it did. One, oh, one of the policies I remember was ah, one mandating ergonomic

surgeries. They literally did things like amputating the legs of military pilots so that g-force resilience could be maximized. And then, of course, people (Surging emotion) LIKE MYSELF, people who deviated too much from the narrow conformist ideals of society. We were... often just disposed of.

Ichabod responds to this by challenging Vale with an indifferent look, implying that Vale's existence and identity have little to no value. Vale is slightly taken aback and becomes silent.

INANNA

You guys are so tedious some times. Anyways, I don't think the baby makes a difference.

MINH

(Pausing his work)

The baby makes a big difference.

INANNA

(Unimpressed and petty)

Why?

No one answers for a moment. Finally, Ichabod, idly swirling the last liquid residue in his teacup, speaks.

ICHABOD

Because. It might be the only one you ever see.

CUT TO:

INT. HAB MED CLINIC

YASMIN (Early 30s) female, is currently undergoing contractions on a gurney. A clammy sweat beads on her forehead. Her large mound of a belly blocks most of her face when viewed from the other end of the bed; there the widely spread stirrups on either side each hold one of her feet. With her though is ADRIAN (Early 30s) male, her spouse. The nature of their relationship can be gleaned in the following: he's a hardware engineer and she's a software engineer, a pair whose

conversations over shared IT problems priority escalated into a romance. They've only been together two years and though they were incredibly comfortable with each other at the beginning, in the last nine months something dark and unwelcome has subtly crept in between them. But this isn't a fact everyone else knows about. They are quite good at maintaining the appearance of their original love in front of people and, to some extent, for each other. Meanwhile, their new distance has its mysterious source on her end.

ADRIAN

You're doing well.

YASMIN
(Wincing)

I wonder, uhhh, if you could say that with a straight face, uhh, if you knew what this felt like.

ADRIAN
(Smirking at the end)

Well, fortunately, I never have to find out.

Yasmin scowls at Adrian but, beneath their banter, she's glad he's standing over her. In his NON-CONTEMPORARY MEDICAL SCRUBS, he manages to project a much needed sense of self-assurance. And this despite the fact that he only received a crash course in obstetrics and child delivery in the last couple months.

ADRIAN
(Teasing)

Go ahead, just lie there and relax. I'll do all the hard work. (Beat) Hey. Honey. Better me than the android right?

CLOSE IN

Yasmin gives Adrian an exasperated look but she genuinely appreciates his efforts to keep her distracted from anxieties.

WIDE SHOT

INTERCOM SPEAKER

(Voice of Hidalgo)

You two doin' alright? Need anything?

Adrian grabs the receiver on a COM DEVICE attached to his belt and speaks into this after pressing a button.

ADRIAN

I mean, I'm fine. I was thinking though... a photographer maybe? For posterity.

Adrian and Yasmin make eye contact. Her face is an exasperated plea for mercy while she shakes her head and struggles with contractions.

INTERCOM SPEAKER
(Voice of Hidalgo)

Sure. With flash photography right? It'll be like, what's it called, having your very own paparazzi right in the delivery room.

ADRIAN
(Smiling at Yasmin while on the com)

Ah. Unfortunately your excellent suggestion has been vetoed there good buddy.

INTERCOM SPEAKER
(Hidalgo happily)

Shucks. Well, let us know if you need us.

ADRIAN
(On com)

Will do.

Adrian takes up a position between his wife's stirrups feet. He rubs her leg in a reassuring gesture.

CUT TO:

INT. HAB MESS HALL

Vale, Minh, Ichabod, and Inanna passing the time. Not speaking. A glance at a WALL CLOCK by Vale. The mess hall meanwhile follows military design principles of simplicity and function. The expansive room is much larger than what the few people we've been introduced to require.

CUT TO:

INT. HAB HYDROPONICS BAY

Paola and Hidalgo tending plants. Aerating soil in planting troughs. The hydroponics bay is likewise a huge space where much of it is clearly unutilized and hasn't been for quite some time. Such details suggest that The Hab had a larger population at one point. AMBIENT SOUNDS for a vast metallic space.

MEDIUM SHOT

Paola and Hidalgo grooming a MULTI-HYBRID CROP PLANT together.

INTERCOM SPEAKER
(A joyous Adrian)

Hey everyone! Listen to this!

There's a long pause before we hear it. The STRONG CRY of a healthy newborn.

Paola and Hidalgo are struck with visible happiness. They each beam in sheer delight and then beam at one another.

CUT TO:

INT. HAB MED CLINIC

WIDE SHOT

A disheveled but happy Yasmin is holding her SWADDLED child. Adrian is leaning over the bed from the right side, his right arm around her as they both stare lovingly at their new baby. It's a perfectly blissful moment.

ADRIAN

She's wonderful.

PAOLA

Fatima.

ADRIAN

Agreed.

The two parents are half-cocooned around their daughter when Adrian decides to say something.

ADRIAN

(Towards Fatima but as if about to look at Paola)

If our next kid's a boy though we have to name him Adrian Jr. After his daddy.

Yasmin unexpectedly bursts into sobbing. Adrian is dumbfounded.

CUT TO:

INT. HAB HALLWAYS

View on hallway corner. The SOUND of a WHEELCHAIR approaching. Eventually Yasmin, Fatima, and Adrian come into frame; Adrian pushing the former in the chair. TRACK BACKWARDS as the trio advance around the corner and makes their way forward. Yasmin is putting on a brave face. Adrian is distracted but determined to not let this moment be anything less than celebratory. After they make considerable progress, a voice calls out.

VOICE

Hey!

INT. HAB MESS HALL

Everyone else is there. Paola and Wyler, a romantic couple, are holding hands. Ichabod is reviewing a TABLET and on the fringes of the group. Minh is putting out the last of the food. Vale is hand writing in a HARDCOVER NOTEBOOK. George is playing a HANDHELD VIDEO GAME. Quine has a SMALL ROBOTIC APPENDAGE in his lap which he's adjusting using TUNING INSTRUMENTS. Inanna is listening to music on UNIQUE EAR BUDS with protruding antennae. Hidalgo is arranging some CHAMPAGNE GLASSES for a toast. Lastly, we are introduced to TYRE, (Late 40s) male. The most fit and physically imposing member of the group, he sits alone. He prefers as much space as possible from everyone but remains

connected to the group in a far off outer orbit, mainly so that he continues to know what's going on. Because, living underground, even he must depend on others for his survival.

At the approach of the new parents and their child, everyone reacts in their own way. Mostly jubilant, although Ichabod has a faint luridness about him, Inanna is slightly bored, and Tyre is impassive. Hidalgo and Vale are the most notably enthusiastic meanwhile and approach the wheelchair as soon as it enters. A lot of chatter commences.

HIDALGO
(To Yasmin)

Let me see her little face. (Beat) Oh. She's lovely.

VALE
(To Yasmin)

Those teeny hands!

ADRIAN
(Proudly to the whole group)

So. Who wants to sign up for babysitting duties?

Warm laughter.

ADRIAN
(Insistent but jocular)

Seriously. The queue starts now.

MINH
(Holding a bottle of champagne and a knife)

Settle down stud. Let's party a little first.

Minh opens the champagne bottle with a LOUD POP, eliciting excited reactions, and begins to pour out champagne while George assists with handing out glasses. By now, Paola and Wyler have also gathered in close near Yasmin to see the baby.

VIEW ON Yasmin

YASMIN

(Declining champagne)

No. Thank you. I don't feel like drinking.

VIEW ON Wyler

WYLER

(Holding up his glass and tapping it with a pen)

A toast. To Fatima, the Hab's newest resident.
May she always find her way in this maze we call
home and may she enjoy good health and long
life.

Wyler pauses as if to end his toast but then raises a hand to
stop everyone from taking a drink.

WYLER

(Congenially)

Oh. Oh. And a toast to the parents! You two, I'm
so glad, I really am. This couldn't have
happened to better people. And we're all here
for you, whatever you need. So cheers!

Several "Cheers!" echo from the others in attendance.

VIEW ON Inanna

She looks a little bored but takes a drink.

VIEW ON Ichabod

He hesitates with his glass. Some private thought preoccupies
him. Then suddenly he decides to interject.

ICHABOD

(Slyly)

And a toast to The Hab itself. Our numbers may
be low but we can renew ourselves and begin
again.

Ichabod's toast however has a sour note to it, landing flat as
the others lightly wince or feign not hearing him. Noticing
this failure, Ichabod's eyes narrow and he drinks from his
glass with a malevolent smoldering look in his eyes.

FADE TO:

INT. HAB HALLWAYS

Paola driving a SMALL EV in a schedule-conscious manner while George sits shotgun. This is continuous throughout their entire conversation.

GEORGE
(Mildly complaining)

Is doing this bi-weekly "really" necessary? All our critical systems have their own neural nets and if a malfunction occurs we get notified immediately. Every. Single. Time.

PAOLA
(Mildly chastising)

George, you are really very smart. The smartest of us all no doubt. A certified science wiz. (Laughs) But it amazes me sometimes what you don't see. (Beat) What happens to us as a group if we fail to maintain discipline? If we allow our own abilities to atrophy? If we succumb to... the lure of un-involvement... in our own welfare? (She glances at him before looking ahead again) And what if, God forbid, there was a disaster tomorrow? And we were all rust and dust? Huh? Come on George, you know what's at stake.

GEORGE
(Putting up his hands deferentially)

Alright Paola. I surrender.

PAOLA
(Authoritatively)

Okay. Then give me the updates.

Use INSERT SHOTS of CRITICAL FACILITIES while report is given.

GEORGE

Right. Right. So... starting with agriculture which, of course, you mostly know already because you yourself run that program. Well? Power consumption is normal. I reviewed the logs myself, no spikes. And I looked over your equipment repair requests which you just sent to... your husband. All in order. (Smiles) And uh, I didn't check in on him but maybe you and Wyler can discuss it at some point among your... usual activities.

PAOLA
(Laughing)

Our usual activities? Meaning?

GEORGE

What do I know? I've never been in a relationship.

PAOLA
(Surprised)

What about Inanna?

GEORGE

That doesn't count. No one would call that a relationship.

PAOLA

Well, maybe if you ask Quine nicely he can make you a robotic girlfriend once he's done building himself an aluminum sidekick.

GEORGE
(Friendly but vexed)

Sure, it's easy to make jokes when you actually have somebody. Try being single with only one potential romantic partner to share among four other guys.

Paola frowns.

PAOLA

Anyways...

GEORGE

Yeah, so mining's next. Mining, again your husband's sector of responsibility. From what I understand though the mineral deposits we discovered in the new exploratory shaft this month are more than enough to keep productivity at current levels through next year. Who knows, the automated reclamation swarm we're manufacturing might be ready before Fatima learns to speak. Some of her first memories might be walking under a bright clear sky.

PAOLA

Let's hope.

GEORGE

Which brings us to the science lab. Aside from the aforementioned drone army we're building, there's our two other big projects; the signal search and genome tests.

PAOLA

Start with signals.

GEORGE

Okay. Organic interference is the same as it's been for the last thirty years. Our signal array still reports zero radio traffic but that's because of all the alien biome in the air. For all we know, civilization is thriving on the other side of the planet. I still think we should launch a satellite into orbit and try to make contact that way.

PAOLA

Have you and Quine figured out how to build one yet? And put it in space?

GEORGE
(In chagrin)

Well, it's rocket science...

PAOLA

Yeah. Let me know when you make progress on that. But in the meantime, how about the genome rundown?

GEORGE

Well, we haven't found traces of any hyperxenopolycordyceps in the gametes cells so whatever's affecting fertility could be unrelated to atmospheric contamination. Which, (Needling Paola) in "layman's terms" means our friends on the surface might not be the cause of the problem. Which, is probably worse.

PAOLA
(Sarcastically)

Thanks for the good news.

GEORGE
(Beginning gravely, joking at the end)

Well it's not all good. We're suffering rolling power outages in the upper sections. We've had to shut off multiple sectors due to structural integrity issues. And, if THAT wasn't enough, someone clogged one of the toilets by the mess and just left it that way.

PAOLA
(Bleakly comedic)

Sounds like a summary execution order for the commissar.

GEORGE
(Mischievously)

Indeed. Do you want to be the one to inform him?
Or shall I?

Paola and George's EV pulls up to the SECURITY OFFICE.

CONTINUOUS:

ENTRANCE. SECURITY OFFICE - INT. SECURITY OFFICE

Paola and George walk in to find Ichabod in a swivel chair looking at a HUGE CURVED DISPLAY PANEL with multiple monitor feeds running. At the same time live data is streaming in on other screens adjacent to him. Ichabod shows no immediate interest in his guests and George takes a quick glance around. The room contains some CLASSICAL BUSTS (SULLA, ARISTOTLE, and SCHOPENHAUER) a FLAG of the BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY, and COLD WAR era MILITARY MAPS. Other than that there's also some assorted office supplies.

CLOSE IN

There's a tiredness in Ichabod's expression bordering on lifelessness. The colors of the monitors faintly flicker across his face.

WIDE SHOT ON ALL THREE

PAOLA

You said there was something you wanted me to see?

With deliberate sluggishness, Ichabod swivels his chair, his head still lying against the head rest as he looks at Paola.

ICHABOD

You know we have missing supplies.

PAOLA

More specifically..

ICHABOD

Protein gel. Twenty packs worth. No video of it of course but I did an extra inventory check

myself first hand. The way I see it, could be Quine. Or Inanna.

PAOLA
(Stifling irritation)

But you don't have proof.

ICHABOD
(Glaring)

No.

PAOLA

Then let's not run around wildly accusing anyone.

ICHABOD
(Angry)

Food is missing! I'm sorry it's not a full scale Exo event but given our limited resources I would expect a little more concern from our "duly elected" leader.

PAOLA

It's minor foodstuffs. We don't need to go all gestapo just yet.

Tense interlude. George awkwardly fiddles with his COM DEVICE.

ICHABOD
(Disgusted)

We used to be a good team. Before the last incursion.

PAOLA
(Balking at his delusion)

Please Ichabod. Is that how you remember it?

CUT TO:

INT. HAB SCIENCE LAB

MEDIUM SHOT

Yasmin and Adrian are sitting next to each other, center frame, in a pair of utilitarian chairs. Yasmin fidgets quietly and adjusts her clothes. Adrian is looking around the room somewhat impatiently. Finally the NOISE of someone arriving and sitting down nearby is heard.

GEORGE
(Out of frame)

Sorry about that.

Yasmin politely offers a shy smile. Adrian waves away George's comment.

ADRIAN

Not a problem. Totally understandable.

GEORGE
(Friendly, still out of frame)

Right. Well let me reassure you before I get into anything else that Fatima is as healthy as can be. Perfect in every way.

Yasmin and Adrian both show their relief and pleasure.

MEDIUM SHOT

George sitting at his desk across from the couple with all of them in frame. A north-west angle.

GEORGE

With that dealt with though, I did want to bring up the matter of a genome scan. We have the DNA we took *in uterine* anyways so it's not like... you even need to bring her in.

MEDIUM SHOT

Back to previous view of Yasmin and Adrian in their chairs. Adrian is visibly receptive to the idea but Yasmin looks uncomfortable.

YASMIN

I don't know...

Adrian turns towards his wife.

ADRIAN
(Confused)

What do you mean?

Yasmin looks down at her hands before half-meeting her husband's eyes. There's a hint of a pain in her voice.

YASMIN

It's just that, do we really need these tests?
Is it necessary?

Adrian furrows his brow.

GEORGE
(Out of frame)

Honestly Yasmin, it's the easiest thing in the world for me to do. I just run the sample through the analyzer and the machine does everything else. *Light upon light...*

Yasmin squirms in a barely perceptible way while searching the room with her eyes and trying to think of an excuse.

ADRIAN
(Softly)

Honey. Come on. This is our baby we're talking about. What could be more important than keeping her safe? (Whispering) With all the proper medical care we can't give her, we can at least do this.

Yasmin sighs. She offers Adrian a meek and agonized look. His reaction is to consider the matter settled.

ADRIAN
(Turning his attention to George)

Do whatever you can George. The more the better.

GEORGE
(Out of frame)

I will.

Hold shot with Yasmin and Adrian in their chairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUINE'S WORKSHOP

The space is inundated with the body parts of robots. Some are entirely industrial, some are vaguely humanoid. Other than that the room looks like a cross between an interstate gas station garage and an airport hangar. On one of the walls a black and white POSTER for Fritz Lang's Metropolis is tacked up. In a corner of the room meanwhile, FUZZ the android is recharging. Fuzz, short for "Fuzzy Logic," has a smooth gunmetal-black chassis and a small black display screen on his head-like imaging unit. Since the EIGHT FOOT TALL android is recharging, this currently has a repeating animation of the letters "Zzz" swelling and evaporating in a glowing pixelated font.

Quine and Vale are both in the room too though. He's trying to do an inventory count of his tools while Vale runs some ideas for a work-in-progress novel past him.

VALE
(Eager)

It's a tragedy. It has to be a tragedy. But within that there's a gesture towards affirmation. A pin prick of light. That's... all you need. We need. Because, and this is the point of the whole thing, in the totality of darkness even the least amount of light is revealing. And this' what I'm trying to show. Through the novel, through the protagonist's journey towards renunciation, there's fundamental self-discovery. So, while bleak, it should encourage a sense of detachment on the part of the reader, allowing them to more clearly contemplate the blinding condition of mundane non-tragic existence.

Quine, losing count of the drill bits he was tallying, gives up and looks at Vale.

QUINE

Okay, but I still don't understand why you killed the dragon. The dragon was my favorite character.

VALE

Don't you see? He had to die and the protagonist had to kill him. Otherwise, the protagonist is never confronted with the anguish of unsatisfactory choices and so won't be thrust into the emotional state required to realize the truth. And then, on top of that, the dragon is mythopoetically linked to the ouroboros...

QUINE

(Exasperated interrupting)

Again and again with the ouroboros. You and the ouroboros... it just never ends.

Vale sticks out their tongue.

VALE

(Cheekily)

Says the guy who can drone on for hours about modal logic and cyberpunk aesthetics and... and...

Vale is drowned out here by a Star Trek style RED ALERT sound effect. Quine's attention immediately leaps to Fuzz.

QUINE

Hey! You're back online!

A simplified anime smiley face appears on Fuzz' display screen in a monochrome laser blue. This makes rudimentary facial expressions as the android talks.

FUZZ

(In a robotic voice - I.R.V)

[[Question. Are you back as well?]]

QUINE
(With cool affectation)

Fuzz, my man. I never left.

Quine looks over at Vale apologetically.

QUINE

Object permanence is still a challenge for him.
But he's only six months old.

VALE
(Arching an eyebrow)

He?

Quine shrugs. Then recovers.

QUINE

Fuzz, you remember Vale right? Say hi to Vale?

FUZZ
(I.R.V)

[[Salutations to human person Vale. Memory recall confirmed. Shall we enjoy a relevant factoid? Android and androgynous share a common etymology. Please reply.]]

Vale giving Quine a sarcastically awed look.

VALE
(With a wry smile)

Well, I can't say he's the least charming man I've met.

Quine rubs his temple in comic mortification before sighing and gesturing towards the ground.

QUINE
(To Fuzz)

Come here.

Fuzz complies, moving like a baby elephant in plate mail. Vale astutely steps back a bit in caution.

QUINE
(Reassuring)

Don't worry. He has proximity sensors.

VALE
(Dubious)

So I'm safe huh?

QUINE

Practically speaking. As long as you don't ask for a hug.

VALE
(Amused and worried at the same time)

You taught him to hug?

Quine makes a self-deprecating face that suggests many trial tests of failed "hug" attempts.

QUINE
(Iffy)

Depends on what counts as a hug.

CUT TO:

UNDERGROUND. CAVE SYSTEM HAB ENTRY

Inanna is leaning against the rock wall just outside the door. The single LIGHT above the arch illuminates an equilateral triangle of space intersecting the base of the frame. She has a plain glass bottle in her hand with a cider-colored liquid in it and is casually drinking this when Ichabod appears from the entryway. He nods in acknowledgement at Inanna and she responds with a curt nod of her own. After taking up a position next to her on the wall, Ichabod is offered the bottle and he takes a swig before handing it back.

ICHABOD
(Wincing at first)

Oooo. This batch is something bitter.

INANNA
(With a petulant pout)

A little like me I guess.

ICHABOD
(Feigning commiseration)

Getting a bit sick of this place right? I don't blame you.

INANNA

Aren't you?

ICHABOD
(Nonchalantly)

Yeah. But at least I don't have to put up with what you put up with.

Inanna replies with a harsh laugh at first but then forgets about the bottle she has for a moment.

INANNA
(Accusatively)

You're joking.

ICHABOD
(Pretending at first to try and evade her implied question)

Well, ah... if it doesn't bother you... oh? Okay. I mean, just the other day Paola came to me saying she wants me to look into you. Something about missing foodstuffs.

INANNA
(Staring with icy suspicion)

And?

ICHABOD
(Contemptuously)

I don't work for her.

Hearing this, Inanna lets down her guard and the expression on her face is a tunnel to the fury within her. When she speaks next, she doesn't hold back a drop of venom.

INANNA
(Sneering)

I hate her.

Ichabod looks over at Inanna who is staring thirty feet ahead.

ICHABOD
(With a smile)

Good choice.

Ichabod saying this catches Inanna by surprise. She slowly shifts her gaze to him and seems to look at Ichabod now for the first time. She smiles wickedly at her counterpart and he responds in kind. Then, after a moment of this...

INANNA

So, icky Ichabod... (Beat) What are we going to do about it?

Before Ichabod can reply though something diverts his attention beyond the camera. Noticing this, Inanna's eyes follow.

MEDIUM SHOT

Across from them, neither character in frame, a shadowy area with STALAGMITES. And, slowly, a figure emerges from this. It's Tyre. He's been watching and listening for some time. He doesn't say anything however. Instead he radiates a dangerous aura. A general ominousness.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HAB MESS HALL

Adrian is hunched over a bowl of PLANT CHOWDER at a long table when George sidles up next to him on the bench seat. The latter hesitates before speaking.

GEORGE
(Strained)

Adrian. Hey. Can I talk to you?

Adrian nonchalantly continues his meal and doesn't look at George when he replies.

ADRIAN
(In between bites)

Go ahead.

GEORGE
(Uncomfortable)

Yeah. Alright. I wanted to ask... actually, okay, how 'bout this? Say there was someone who knew something that someone else might want to know. Something big.

ADRIAN
(Benignly disinterested)

Could you be a little vaguer?

GEORGE
(Painfully)

I mean what if you, and I mean YOU, learned something that someone else didn't know... something that could hurt them. And you had to figure-out what you should do about it?

ADRIAN
(Pausing his meal and looking at George)

Life and death?

GEORGE
(Unsure)

No? Not really...

ADRIAN

What do you mean by "hurt" then?

GEORGE

Like... emotionally. But worse. Like devastating.

Adrian ponders this for a few seconds.

ADRIAN
(Thoughtfully)

Would the person, who this affects, make
different choices if they knew what you knew?

George anxiously stares into Adrian's eyes.

GEORGE
(Subdued)

Yeah. Probably.

ADRIAN
(Philosophically)

Then it's pretty straightforward. You should tell
them. Everyone has the right to make their own
choices in life and, if you keep this information
to yourself, you're depriving them of that.

GEORGE
(Looking sick)

Even with all the damage that will cause?

ADRIAN

Hey, you asked me. The way I see it, the damage
is done. Others might say that sparing someone's
feelings is of the utmost importance but, again,
for me, living a lie is worse.

Adrian shrugs to punctuate the subjectivity of what he's saying
and then, seeing George in distress, puts a reassuring hand on

George's shoulder. George can't raise his face to Adrian but he starts speaking anyways as tears fall from his face.

GEORGE
(Wrecked)

Fatima's not your daughter.

Adrian has a wary puzzled smile on his face. He doesn't understand at first.

ADRIAN
(Trying to brush George's statement off)

I uh... what?

GEORGE
(Looking up with a tear stained face)

I'm so sorry. She isn't.

ADRIAN
(Unravelling)

No. (Beat) No... no... no. Why... why would you say this? How would you... the test? (Beat) The TEST!?

Adrian abruptly shoves George away, knocking the man off his seat, as Adrian himself rapidly stands.

GEORGE
(On the ground and looking up at Adrian)

It was a genetic history search. I really didn't mean to.

ADRIAN
(Yelling)

AND THIS IS HOW YOU TELL ME! YOU! You! Uhhh.

Faced with George's sincere dejection, the violent rage begins to drain from Adrian. Stunned, he sinks on to the bench again.

ADRIAN
(Grieving)

George... George... (Deflated) You just put a sword through my heart.

George looks down again. Ashamed.

ADRIAN
(Clarity amid suffering)

Who was it?

CLOSE IN On George

George makes eye contact with Adrian and the last hunk of dam gives way, unleashing the flood.

GEORGE
(Bleeding regret)

Ichabod.

CUT TO:

CLOSE IN

Ichabod at his desk. A cruel smirk on his face. BAROQUE MUSIC accompanies the shot.

CUT TO:

INT. ADRIAN AND YASMIN'S QUARTERS

A modest space with a dystopian industrial homesteader vibe. Some personal items and FRAMED PHOTOS indicate the owners. In a CRIB near the bed, Fatima is sleeping soundly. Meanwhile, Adrian and Yasmin are preparing dinner together. There is no talking between them and, during the entire sequence, Adrian doesn't look at Yasmin once.

JUMP CUT TO:

VIEW ON Spartan bed

OVERHEAD. 30 degrees down

Adrian and Yasmin climb in together. They are still not speaking. Adrian is brooding while Yasmin is confused and despondent. When Yasmin's stare lingers on Adrian, he reaches

over on his side of the bed and turns off the bedside lamp. The view goes dark.

FADE IN:

UNDERGROUND. HAB ENTRY near MINING OPERATIONS AREA

Adrian is doing rewiring work underneath the MINING TRAWLER, a large "CONTINUOUS TRACK" drone used for excavating new tunnels and collecting mineral deposits.

CLOSE IN

Adrian's face. He's concentrating. Sweating. Much of this is owed to his internal turmoil though.

WIDE SHOT

Hidalgo carries some equipment over and drops it with a THUD beside the trawler. He looks at Adrian's legs poking out from under the machine and then stretches his arms and works out a kink in his back.

HIDALGO
(Wistfully)

I remember when Paola had her first birthday. Well, there must have been at least four hundred of us back then. A few kids too, which was nice. We gave her a celebration like children used to have during the surface times. Hats. A cake. Everything. (Smiles to himself) I was much too young myself but my father reminisced with me sometimes. Our planet was beautiful once. Sure, the video archives preserve something of the past but... (Concentrating) the most important things are the least tangible. Maybe. It's just... how can we explain to our children what freedom was? What do we even know of it? Here... (Looking around) we survive by imprisoning ourselves in the deep underside. In this mausoleum of rock.

Hidalgo laughs at himself.

HIDALGO
(Apologetically)

I'm just the old man. Until our next one. But I raised a magnificent daughter. Even in this place. So if you ever want any advice with your little girl, please, bend my ear.

VIEW ON Adrian

He's straining to remove a panel while gritting his teeth. It's not just the work of course. Then, realizing Hidalgo is waiting for a response, he exhales and pauses.

ADRIAN
(Cryptically)

I'd have been lucky to be a father like you.

WIDE SHOT

Hidalgo, Adrian, and the Trawler in profile.

HIDALGO
(Leaning down with mild elderly difficulty)

You're almost done here, right Adrian? There's a sliver of Minh's caramel soufflé still left in the fridge and I want to grab it before anyone else does.

Unnoticed, Ichabod enters the frame and stands observing the two men. After a few seconds he announces himself.

ICHABOD
(Rudely)

Having a tough go of it?

Hidalgo turns, caught off guard. Under the trawler, Adrian stops working.

HIDALGO

Ick? Trying to make an entrance?

ICHABOD
(Unblinking)

I did.

Hidalgo detects the note of challenge in Ichabod's words but he's not susceptible to the provocation. Meanwhile, Adrian uses his ELECTRIC SCREWDRIVER to close the ACCESS PORT before sliding out from under the machine. He stands up but ignores Ichabod completely.

ADRIAN
(Wiping his hands on a rag)

I'm just gonna spin the wheels a minute. Make sure we're good to go first thing tomorrow.

Adrian now walks over to a second vehicle. This is an open chassis cart with a roll cage called the TELEMETRIC MODULE VEHICLE (TMV for short) Inside on the dashboard is a remote control interface with which the trawler can be piloted from a safe distance and, accordingly, Adrian gets in the TMV and engages the engine start up launcher. Ichabod however has observed that he's being ignored so he immediately focuses on making himself a nuisance to Adrian.

ICHABOD
(Aggressively)

Must be nice, eh Adrian? Always just working on your own time? Perks of being likable enough to compensate for everything else I guess.

HIDALGO

You're a real sour apple Ick. Is this visit just to be obnoxious?

ICHABOD

I came to discuss safety concerns related to the baby.

Ichabod gives Adrian a dagger look but Adrian responds with a mere stony glance before revving the engine of the trawler. The machine CHUGS and fills the cavern with its NOISE. Adrian then starts driving it around but Ichabod is undeterred.

ICHABOD
(Shouting)

YOU KNOW, YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE INVESTED IN HER WELFARE!

Turning the trawler around, Adrian pauses it about twenty feet in front of Ichabod. Adrian revs the engine more, his primitive desire to blot out Ichabod beginning to seep forth from his subconscious into an appetite for revenge.

ICHABOD
(Defiant)

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO!? RUN ME OVER!?

The revving of the trawler continues for a few more seconds and then, surprising even himself, Adrian pushes the throttle on the remote control forward and the machine roars towards Ichabod. Shocked, Ichabod backpedals a few feet before diving awkwardly aside. The TMV however keeps going and plows right into a POWER RELAY STATION. The crash unleashes a REALISTIC electrical catastrophe with a few minor tesla arcs and some black smoke and crumbling steel structure. Directly following this, the fluorescence of The Hab's normal lighting systems flickers and is replaced by dimmer emergency backups.

HIDALGO
(Sighing to himself)

Mayday.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINE'S WORKSHOP

The emergency lighting is on here too but Quine has his speaker cranked. He's listening to a ridiculous SONG and doing a ridiculous DANCE when Minh comes into the room and shuts the music off.

QUINE
(Annoyed)

Minh!

MINH
(Blunt)

Mess hall. Now. All hands meeting.

With this Minh turns around and walks away.

MEDIUM SHOT

View on Quine. He examines both his hands in a comical fashion.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS HALL

People are still arriving but a core group consisting of Paola, Ichabod, and Hidalgo are standing in the middle of the room. Adrian is off to one side by himself, head hung low. Yasmin is sitting with Vale a few feet away.

ICHABOD
(Apoplectic)

He tried to KILL ME!

HIDALGO
(Shaking his head for everyone's benefit)

It was an accident.

ICHABOD
(Furious)

LIAR.

Ichabod says this while pointing accusatively at Hidalgo. Paola, trying not to play favorites but growing impatient with Ichabod, gestures for him to put his arm down.

PAOLA
(Impartially)

The nature of these accusations is highly serious, and will have to be dealt with in a formal tribunal but... BUT, for the present time being, we need to focus on more immediate concerns.

Ichabod turns away, disgusted, and there are worried looks on many of the others in the room. Suddenly, Wyler comes jogging in, partially out of breath.

PAOLA
(Relieved)

Good. You're back. How's it look.

Wyler shakes his head apologetically and Paola's relief begins to crumble.

PAOLA
(Apprehensive)

But we can fix it?

The expression on Wyler's face says otherwise.

WYLER
(Weighing his words)

Even optimistically... it would take weeks of round the clock repairs. Not including the trawler. Then we'd have to refabricate all the original components. And...

PAOLA

And?

WYLER
(Defeated)

We don't have the circuitry.

PAOLA
(Insistent)

So we convert some of the drone assemblers.
Manufacture more.

Paola looks at Wyler hopefully but the bleak look on his face says everything. She then looks over at Quine but he shakes his head to confirm the extent of the problem.

PAOLA
(Angry)

Well doing nothing is unacceptable. That's suicide.

The effect her last sentence has on those present is promptly realized by Paola but it's too late for her to take back what's already been said.

PAOLA
(Pleading)

Come on. Give me options.

Paola looks first to Wyler and Quine but neither has anything to offer. Then she looks out at the others in the room. Everyone is there now. Finally George steps forward with a TABLET in hand.

GEORGE
(Uncertain)

I "may" have something.

PAOLA

Hero away.

GEORGE
(Shyly at first)

Well, there's an old mining site. About forty five kilometers north of here. A preliminary search of the archival index suggests they had a comprehensive operations center located there. Including the same model of mining drone. Theoretically, it should have everything we need.

Paola absorbs this suggestion with sober reflection and the faces on the others hints at the gravity of what is being proposed. Quine however is unexpectedly agitated by the idea and stares in disbelief at Paola before speaking.

QUINE
(Earnest)

You're not seriously considering going to the surface. I mean, I figure why not start with something reasonable like...

Quine searches his mind for an example but Minh finishes his thought for him.

MINH

Cannibalizing our non-critical systems?

QUINE
(Gropingly)

Sure. Yeah. Why not? Better that than risk zombification!

GEORGE

Things are... desperate.

QUINE
(Livid)

The last time we had an incursion, sixty-three people died! Sixty-three! We were nearly wiped out! So okay! Maybe I'm super cautious! But I'd LITERALLY have to be INSANE not to be!

WYLER

You were just a kid.

QUINE
(Hysterical)

Old enough to watch his parent's corpses incinerated!

The rest of the group is silenced by Quine's outburst, the anxiety of his childhood trauma bubbling up, but Paola quickly comes over to him and puts her arm around him.

VIEW ON Paola and Quine only

He's breathing with a visible rise and fall in his chest while looking off to the side. He is extremely tense but Paola begins to placate him with gentle reassurance.

PAOLA

(Soothingly)

That happened because of a failure in due diligence. This time the doors would be open just long enough to send a team out. And back in.

Quine doesn't respond but his body language changes to someone not on the verge of lashing out.

VIEW ON Adrian

He's been following the exchange with growing resolution.

ADRIAN

I'll go.

VIEW ON Yasmin and Vale

Yasmin reacts with quiet shock while Vale displays a notable protectiveness over Yasmin.

WIDE SHOT

The group.

PAOLA

You don't need to volunteer.

ICHABOD
(Derisively)

Maybe he wants to run away?

ADRIAN
(To Paola, ignoring Ichabod)

I caused this. I need to take responsibility.

PAOLA

Well, you can't go alone.

Paola proceeds to look around the room and notes the reluctance in the faces of most of those who look back. Finally her eyes settle on Wyler.

PAOLA
(Deeply sad but affectionate)

Wy-lee. My Wy-lee.

WYLER
(Also sad but smiling)

It's the right decision babe.

VIEW ON Ichabod

He feels conscious of himself as a nonentity in the important decision making process of the group.

ICHABOD
(Indignant)

It's always like this. Always! An incestuous little clique making choices for us all! (Seething) Nepotism.. Nepotism.. What else can you call it? (Glancing wildly) How about TREATING THE GROUP AS A WHOLE WITH PRIORITY FIRST!? People! We've reached this point because of a FAILURE in LEADERSHIP!

GEORGE
(Struggling)

You? You're the last person who... who should be lecturing anyone on... morality.

Ichabod stares at George with sinister intensity before it dawns on him.

ICHABOD
(Having an epiphany)

This is about Yasmin isn't it. (Smiles with cruel satisfaction) You know.

George realizes he's said too much and looks away.

HIDALGO

Know what?

Silence. The question goes unanswered. Yasmin, horrified, looks towards Arian, hoping for puzzlement or anything else but what she finds. Adrian's face is grim and unconfused.

PAOLA

(Distracted but trying to restore focus)

What do you want Ichabod? A vote?

ICHABOD

Yes! All in favor of working on a different solution, raise your hands.

PAN 180 degrees clockwise - START

Crossing Quine and Paola among others.

QUINE

I'm sorry Paola.

Quine puts up his hand. No one else does though until Inanna when she catches Ichabod's look.

INANNA

I dunno. (Puckering her face) It's a bit rushed right?

PAN 180 degrees clockwise - STOP

VIEW ON Tyre

He's leaned up against a wall, arms folded.

ICHABOD

(Out of frame)

You're not really for this, are you?

TYRE

(With detachment)

Nah. But not against it either.

WIDE SHOT

The whole group. Only Ichabod, Quine, and Inanna have their hands up. These are gradually dropped.

PAOLA

Okay. Now who wants to go with the plan?

PAN 180 degrees counter-clockwise - START

Going the opposite direction, many more hands are raised. Tyre is out of frame so only Minh visibly withholds his. The looks of those who raise them though are directed first and foremost at each other, a sense of solidarity evident.

PAN 180 degrees counter-clockwise - STOP

MEDIUM SHOT

George in proximity to Minh.

GEORGE

You're not voting?

MINH
(Unapologetic)

Abstaining.

WIDE SHOT

Most of the group. Paola makes a show of looking around but tallying the votes is unnecessary.

PAOLA
(To Ichabod with a faint smugness)

Satisfied?

VIEW ON Ichabod

He scowls but doesn't say anything.

VIEW ON Adrian

He is staring at Ichabod.

PAOLA
(Out of frame)

Alright everyone. Nothing changes in the
meantime. Stick to your routines.

The SOUNDS of the group slowly disbanding. Adrian however
remains standing where he is.

VIEW ON Ichabod

He notices Adrian's attention and stares back with a muted but
hostile expression. The he speaks.

ICHABOD
(Taunting)

Maybe our colony is dying out because the wrong
people are trying to breed?

VIEW ON Adrian

His face is impassive.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PAOLA AND WYLER'S QUARTERS

Wyler and Paola are tightly cuddled in a worn down modernist
love seat. They are perfectly comfortable with each other.
There's a sorrow in Paola's eyes though. Noticing this, Wyler
caresses the near side of her face with delicate tracing
fingers. She meets his gaze. His hand moves underneath her chin
as he gently guides her face towards his while leaning in for a
kiss. Their mouths dock like two spaceships in orbit. Their
tongues eagerly entwine one another, the intensity increasing
with barely restrained passion. Finally the kiss relaxes to a
soft pressing of the lips. Then, with closed eyes, they gently
touch their foreheads together.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ADRIAN AND YASMIN'S QUARTERS

Adrian and Yasmin are both on separate UNIQUE LAPTOPS; preoccupied with separate things. Fatima, out of frame, WHINES in a GURGLING FASHION, drawing Yasmin's notice. She gets up and leaves the frame.

PIVOT TRACKING Yasmin

She picks up a swaddled Fatima from her BASINET and walks back and forth around the room, rocking the baby. The camera catches her looking frequently in Adrian's direction, her eyes betraying an emotional intensity. This continues until the baby is settled back to sleep, at which point Yasmin deposits her in the basinet again and then approaches Adrian.

MEDIUM SHOT

Yasmin standing in front of a seated Adrian. He deliberately tries to ignore her but eventually looks up and speaks.

ADRIAN
(Harsh and allusive)

Not now. It can wait until after.

YASMIN
(First worried then prevaricating)

You mean "if." If you come back. (Beat) I don't know what you think...

ADRIAN
(Fed up)

Stop. I know, okay? I know.

YASMIN

You...

ADRIAN
(Interrupting)

...really won't let this rest will you? Fine. What do you want to say? Huh?

YASMIN
(Tearing up)

I want you... I want us to... explain ourselves.

Yasmin holds back a sob as Adrian rolls his eyes. Finally he decides to cease all ambiguity.

ADRIAN
(Blunt)

Tell me. Am I or am I not raising another man's child?

Two faint cataracts of tears are streaming down Yasmin's face now. The question comes at her like a harpoon. Unable to meet it head on however, she responds with evasion.

YASMIN
(Her voice cracking)

Is that so terrible!? Adoption...

Adrian moves the laptop aside and stands up.

ADRIAN
(With tired sadness)

That's... not even the problem. I mean, it would have been nice. For her to be mine. (Sorrowful pause before revulsion arises) And Ichabod? (Nauseous face) Him? I... I can't even fathom it. (Beat) I thought what we had meant something. I've always loved you (Beat) IN MY... HEART. It was never merely words. Never. Uhhh, so I... I don't know how what we had would matter so little to you. To lie, all this time. And then, to act surprised. It defies me.

WIDE SHOT

Adrian has an air of pessimistic exasperation as he wanders a few steps from Yasmin. He wants to put a distance between them but at the moment there's nowhere else to go. Yasmin slumps down on the BED beside the basinet on the floor.

YASMIN
(Broken)

It wasn't my fault.

ADRIAN
(Not looking at her)

Even if this place had a thousand women, I still never would've betrayed what WE... had.

There's a long pause.

YASMIN
(Looking up at the ceiling)

I didn't cheat on you. (Looking down) I was... assaulted.

In the total surprise with which this news hits Adrian, all the hardness drains from his face. Slacked jawed, he slowly turns to look at Yasmin. Alone on the bed she seems lost and abandoned. He feels a desperate urge to protect her now. And shame. Shame at having doubted her. Edging closer he soon takes a seat beside her, settling in unsurely. She does not look in his direction. Finally, trying to catch her gaze, he speaks.

ADRIAN
(Full of gentle remorse)

I. Am. An idiot.

A spark returns to Yasmin. She meets his gaze. His tentative hand on hers dissolves the barrier between them and they embrace. They hold each other with relieved gratitude.

CUT TO:

INT. SURFACE ELEVATOR ENTRANCE BAY

The room is covered in dust. Even the many HAZMAT SUITS there with heavy filtration AIR PURIFIERS are coated in it. Each of these though has their own alcove with a pair of HERMETIC HEAVY BOOTS, HERMETIC HEAVY GLOVES, and ASSORTED ACCESSORIES.

PAN right

Two of the alcoves have been recently emptied, as is evident by the dust vacant silhouettes left by the missing gear.

CUE some SOUNDS from the suits being put on.

MEDIUM WIDE SHOT

Both Wyler and Adrian are simultaneously being given assistance as they get into the heavy cumbersome apparel. Paola and Hidalgo are helping Wyler, Yasmin and Vale are helping Adrian. Their figures fill the entire frame.

WYLER

It's like being an astronaut... without the sweet ride.

HIDALGO

Save some of that humor for the journey. It's got to last you a minimum of four days.

WYLER
(Nonchalantly)

I might not be in my prime but I can still run a marathon under three-ten.

HIDALGO

What's your record with fifty kilos on your back? Covered head to toe in a chromel-R fabric? With a catheter and a colonic hose inside you? (Beat) See my point?

WYLER
(Unperturbed)

So you're saying we should take our time. Maybe do a little site-seeing.

PAOLA
(Serious)

Let's hope you don't see anything.

Wyler pats his wife on the hand.

WYLER

I'm sure they've long left this area. After all, Habitat 3 was founded here precisely because of how barren the region is.

GEORGE
(Out of frame)

Don't underestimate the dangers out there. The atmospheric readings suggest the Exo is still as prevalent as it ever was. (Beat) It's too bad we couldn't find anything useful in the old armory.

CLOSE IN

Wyler winks at Adrian

WYLER
(Jocular)

We'll have to rely on our fine skills in diplomacy then eh?

Here Adrian is the first to secure his helmet but Wyler quickly follows. Both are aided by those around them.

WIDE SHOT

Everyone is present except Ichabod and Tyre. The helmeted voyagers, unrecognizable under these, both give the thumbs up sign. They are DISTINGUISHED though by large white roman numerals located on multiple locations on their suits. Wyler for example has suit III, Adrian has suit IV.

GEORGE

Test the radios again.

WYLER
(With radio static - W.R.S)

[This is the wolf man! Comin' to you live, deep underground!]

People nod and smirk, then look to Adrian.

ADRIAN

(W.R.S)

[Yeah, I'm good too.]

Satisfied, their well-wishers reluctantly stand back as Wyler and Adrian share a last goodbye with their respective spouses. Then they turn and begin marching to the elevator, not only in the suits but with full RUCKSACKS as well. The doors open at their approach and the two men get in. They turn around and look beyond the frame at those still gathered a few feet away. Wyler raises a hand in farewell. Finally the doors close and the two men are taken away. Hold on doors.

MINH

(Out of frame)

I should've made a farewell cake.

CUT TO:

INT. INDUSTRIAL ELEVATOR

The elevator could comfortably fit sixteen people in full hazmat suits on its square shaped floor so Wyler and Adrian have plenty of room to spare. SOUND EFFECTS and JOSTLING indicate the elevator is ascending rapidly but other than that there are no relevant details on the QUICKSILVER walls that surround them. They stand together idly for a few seconds before conversation begins.

WYLER

(Self-deprecating, W.R.S)

[This is historic. Now Vale has to write about us.]

ADRIAN

(W.R.S)

[Not if we don't come back.]

WYLER

(W.R.S)

[Nah. Either way, we might be the first people planet side in over eighty years.]

ADRIAN
(Understatedly sarcastic, W.R.S)

[That's reassuring.]

The two men are silent for a while, the rumbling of the ascending elevator the only NOISE between them. Each is looking up (Out of frame) where a digital floor indicator display would be. After ten seconds of this, Wyler speaks again.

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[What do you think of Tyre?]

ADRIAN
(Neutral, W.R.S)

[We've never really talked.]

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[But your general impression.]

ADRIAN
(Thoughtfully, W.R.S)

[I think he likes being left alone. And I think being trapped in an enclosed environment with others instills resentment and.. anger in him.]

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[You think he's dangerous?]

ADRIAN
(W.R.S)

[Everyone's dangerous.]

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[Yeah, but some more so than others.]

ADRIAN
(Flatly, W.R.S)

[True.]

Hold shot for seven seconds as the two men continue waiting.

MEDIUM SHOT

TRANSITION TO INT. HAB DOME

The two men in the elevator but now from behind with the doors in full view. Adrian probes his rucksack with a blind hand briefly but little else happens. Then the elevator stops. The doors open to the vault of a small white geodesic dome enveloping the elevator's extended section. The ground is a white linoleum-like material. TRACK forward as Wyler and Adrian step out of the elevator. They approach the barrier of the geodesic dome directly in front of them and Wyler comes up to a thin geometric PILLAR about four feet high. On it is a large button which he slaps.

After doing so a loud WARNING SIREN begins repeating with an accompaniment of FLASHING LIGHTS. The outer door opening sequence starts with a section of the geodesic dome almost as large as the frame itself PEELING inward. This is the first look outside. Beyond the doors little is revealed though except the level ground of a salt flat and a seething storm of ORGANIC PARTICLES reminiscent of pollen; the latter being the alien biome. But the light is radically different out there. In fact, it's NEAR INFRARED and all the exterior shots of the planet will be filmed in this. Meanwhile the NOISE of the violent winds themselves scream away.

FADE TO:

INT. HAB MESS HALL

MEDIUM SHOT

Yasmin is reading and sitting on the bench of one of the tables with Fatima in a basinet beside her. Yasmin has a CUP of STEAMING tea and an open PACKET of biscuits on the table as well. She seems somewhat forlorn but calm overall. Then the SOUND of someone approaching is heard.

VIEW ON Vale

Vale has their own CUP of tea and a PLATE of toast.

VALE
(Kindly)

You good here?

MEDIUM SHOT

Yasmin and Vale in frame as Vale draws near.

YASMIN
(Tired)

I'm okay, thanks.

VALE

Alright. (Beat) Hey. If you want me to watch Fatima again just let me know. I've been doing some deep delving in the archives lately and I'm happy to have a little distraction while I'm at it. (Laughs) She's such an unfussy baby it's hardly any extra work at all.

YASMIN
(Making an effort to smile)

That's kind of you. I'm alright for now. (Beat)
But I'll let you know.

VALE
(Pleasantly nodding)

Sure.

Vale departs and Yasmin goes back to reading her book. She frowns after a second thought and pauses, using her finger to preserve her place about three quarters of the way through the book. She looks at the cover. It's a first edition of Kazuo Ishiguro's THE REMAINS OF THE DAY. Then she looks at the back while simultaneously taking a bite from one of her biscuits and chewing. The light in the frame dims. She looks up.

MEDIUM SHOT

It's Ichabod, solitary in the frame. He watches her, contemplating what he's about to say.

VIEW ON Both of them

Fatima, looking sick and subdued, slowly places the half-eaten biscuit down. Ichabod disregards her discomfort.

ICHABOD
(Reptilian indignation)

How come you've been ignoring me?

Fatima, with one hand still holding her book, clenches her other free hand and rubs her thumb against her index and middle fingers in a stress behavior. Then, with a sense of resolve rising in her, she meets Ichabod's gaze.

YASMIN

I have nothing to say to you.

ICHABOD
(Smug)

Don't be irrational. I'm the father of that baby aren't I?

YASMIN
(Angered)

YOU'RE... you're not a father of anything. (In a seething whisper) You're just a beast.

Ichabod recoils a bit from this, surprised that his delusional expectations for how the conversation was going to go aren't playing out that way in reality. Yasmin gets up to leave, grabbing the basinet by its carrying handle but putting it on top of the table when Ichabod moves to block her way.

ICHABOD
(Menacing)

Hey! Did I say we're done!?

Yasmin falters for a moment but then the spirit of defiance imbues her.

YASMIN
(Eyes blazing)

After this crisis... there's going to be a reckoning.

CLOSE IN

Ichabod's right hand. It clenches into a fist. It seems like he's getting ready to hit her but then the SOUND of people approaching is heard.

WIDE SHOT

Ichabod and Yasmin in the FAR LEFT foreground of the frame. In the upper right, Minh and Inanna appear. They stop in their tracks and wonder at what they're interrupting.

VIEW ON Minh and Inanna

They're waiting for the others to say something.

WIDE SHOT

Yasmin takes the opportunity to briskly leave with Fatima. Minh and Inanna watch her go and then linger for a moment before unsurely continuing in their original path, passing along the top of the frame. Minh especially glances in Ichabod's direction and Ichabod looks back, as if inviting a challenge. None is issued though and both Minh and Inanna exit the frame.

MEDIUM SHOT

View on Ichabod. The others have left and he stands alone in the silence. He is pondering something but then is distracted by what Yasmin left behind. Reaching down, Ichabod picks up the half-eaten biscuit and consumes it in one unremorseful bite. Then, while still chewing, he snatches up those remaining in the packet too and departs.

FADE TO:

INT. DESOLATE GYM FACILITY

An area of the habitat long fallen into disuse due to under population. Evidence of the way things once were is everywhere.

Framed POSTERS of blown up PHOTOGRAPHS reveal happier times when hundreds of people still resided there. AWARDS and MEMORABILIA suggest that The Hab's population once participated in many group pastimes.

PAN LEFT

The SOUNDS of something being hit. Camera movement ends on a reveal of Tyre punching a heavy bag. He's hitting it like someone training for a serious fight.

ICHABOD
(Out of frame)

Not going to throw in any kicks?

MEDIUM SHOT

Ichabod and Inanna approaching.

ICHABOD
(In a dilettantish manner)

It's good to practice them too.

MEDIUM SHOT

Tyre stops hitting the heavy bag and wipes some sweat off his forehead before replying.

TYRE
(Imposing)

I could practice on you?

Ichabod subtly nods and purses his lip.

ICHABOD

I could think of others more deserving.

TYRE

How's that?

Ichabod gives Inanna a confident look before turning his attention to Tyre again and proceeding.

ICHABOD

You're unhappy. I get it. I'm unhappy too... and so's she. (Tilts head towards Inanna) We're all unhappy, unhappy people. Deeply unhappy. And you know what else we have in common?

Tyre smirks. He isn't impressed.

TYRE
(Dismissive)

No. What?

ICHABOD

The three of us aren't in charge. (Beat) But...

INANNA
(Viciously enthusiastic, looking at Tyre)

What if we were?

Tyre bends over to pick up a WATER BOTTLE and squeezes some water into his mouth from its nozzle. Then he thinks a while longer before replying.

TYRE

How would you be any different from them?

Ichabod ostensibly acknowledges this as a fair point through his calculated body language.

ICHABOD

Sure. A valid question. What can I say? Well, I don't believe in this nonsense of letting everyone decide for themselves about how they want to contribute to The Hab. I mean, what does Vale really do for anybody? And Quine? He should be working on practical utilities. Instead he's playing man-boy Da Vinci to a giant wind-up toy.

TYRE
(Forceful)

I'm not letting anyone tell me what I do.

ICHABOD
(Conciliatory)

Of course. But that's a different thing entirely. The people in charge, the people who decide things, they don't need to answer to anybody. That's what makes them natural leaders. And we're the true leaders. Here. We're not the puppets of social egalitarian nonsense like Paola and them. So I'm not saying we're going to impose ANY-thing on ourselves. I'm talking about the others. (Long pause) They... should work... for USSS.

The expression on Tyre's face indicates he's receptive to this.

TYRE
(Predatorily)

So we'd have some kind of understanding then?

INANNA
(Interrupting)

Better. We make it official.

TYRE

Official?

ICHABOD

We lay down a new law. And give them a lesson.

Tyre takes a deep breath and cricks his neck.

TYRE
(Rubbing his jaw)

Sounds fun. (Beat) But you're talking regime change. They... won't accept that.

ICHABOD

Not a problem. I've got exactly what we need. Let me show you.

Ichabod tilts his head, indicating Tyre should follow. Inanna adds to this by beckoning in a more seductive manner.

VIEW ON Tyre

He hesitates but then decides, why not.

INT. HAB HALLWAYS

One of The Hab's EVs is parked beside the gymnasium entrance. Ichabod and Inanna appear from out of frame and approach the vehicle. There's a HARD SHELLLED BRIEFCASE that Ichabod grabs off one of the seats and he places it on the hood. Tyre arrives, interested in what Ichabod has to show him. Ichabod unlocks the case with a quick thumb-scan and pops it open. Tyre draws near, looking inside at the obscured contents.

TYRE
(Enthralled)

I thought they were all destroyed.

CLOSE IN

Inside the open briefcase is a futuristic version of the SIG HAUER P226 handgun and some neatly arranged AMMO CLIPS, all embedded in individualized slots.

ICHABOD
(Out of frame)

That's what everyone else thinks too.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SURFACE -- DAY

Wyler and Adrian hiking through a fantastic and barren natural landscape while alien biome swirls around them. Although their faces cannot be seen beyond the MIRROR of their helmet FACE SHIELDS, their body language indicates an apprehensiveness towards their environment. Both of them frequently scan the areas around them, on the lookout for lurking dangers. The camera follows them as they make progress until Adrian stumbles and needs a moment to collect himself. He removes and readjusts his rucksack, testing the weight of it on his back. Wyler

meanwhile approaches from a couple feet away and the two men share a few hushed words.

ADRIAN
(W.R.S)

[Too bad we couldn't bring a vehicle.]

WYLER
(Sympathetically, W.R.S)

[Too dangerous. All that noise and vibration. Besides, we'd probably have to ditch it anyways once we get into the rougher terrain.]

Adrian finishes. Wyler offers a hand to Adrian, the latter takes this and gets to his feet. They continue their journey.

EXTREME WIDE SHOT

The two men are tiny figures among the vast desolation. LOUD FORCEFUL MUSIC paired with ANCIENT CHANTING is heard. The men make their way slowly over obstacles.

FADE WHITE:

EXT. SURFACE -- EVENING

WIDE SHOT

The two men are still making progress, staying in close proximity to one another. As they skirt the bottom edges of a clearing beside a ROCKY SLOPE, Wyler hurriedly motions for Adrian to freeze. The latter does and they wait with visible tension while looking in the same direction.

VIEW ON Said direction

WIDE SHOT

The frame remains empty for a few seconds but gradually a CREATURE enters in the middle ground. It has the leg characteristics of a RUMINANT but its torso and head are a hive of bulging masses. The creature walks in an erratic, staggering manner. It does not appear to be alert to anything.

MEDIUM SHOT

Wyler and Adrian crouched. Despite their suits, it's obvious that they are extremely fearful.

MEDIUM SHOT

The creature raises its amorphous head in the air. Then it kind of lists to one side and begins walking away.

MEDIUM SHOT

A gradual relief in the body language of Wyler and Adrian.

FADE TO:

INT. HAB MESS HALL

Everyone except for Ichabod, Inanna, and Tyre are eating together. The mood is relaxed but restrained. Many of them are thinking about their two comrades on the surface. Into this walks the missing trio; each of whom has a SMALL SATCHEL with them. Paola notes their arrival and comments.

PAOLA

I called all three of you over the intercoms. We were supposed to have a group meeting.

Ichabod shrugs. Paola shakes her head at that but turns back to eating. Observing that her attention has moved on, Ichabod makes eye contact with Tyre and then Inanna while simultaneously motioning for them to take positions at opposite ends of the room. He himself meanwhile chooses to stand in the center of the group, between the dispersed tables where others are having their meals. He stands, looking around, readying himself to make a speech.

ICHABOD
(Orating)

I'm not the most popular person here. Obviously. But, you know, sometimes the truth is ugly. Sometimes the truth is what doesn't make us feel good. Sometimes the truth means confronting DANGEROUS necessity. And, when those moments are upon us, the luxury of consensus is a poison.

Several people look up from their meals, including George.

GEORGE
(Irritated)

What are you even talking about Ick?

ICHABOD
(Aggressive)

It's a problem that you don't know George. It's a sign of how bad things really are when the very jeopardy on the verge of engulfing us all is something that most of us are completely oblivious to. You think if we manage to overcome our current predicament, that this'll have fundamentally solved anything? NO! The real problem is who we've placed our faith in!

Here Ichabod points in Paola's direction.

MEDIUM SHOT

Paola, sitting next to Hidalgo, impassively returns Ichabod's stare but doesn't say anything. She wants to let him unspool enough rope to hang himself with.

VIEW ON Ichabod

ICHABOD

The choices that led us here are destroying us. Look around you! We're probably the last of humanity... and we're DYING! Why!? Because incompetence! Because of gutless irresponsibility! And I'm asking you! HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH!?

Ichabod looks around the room but finds no supporters besides Inanna and Tyre. Paola notices this too and gestures with her hands towards Ichabod as if to say "What did you expect?"

HIDALGO
(Exasperated, to no one in particular)

This is really starting to get tiresome.

VALE
(Nodding)

Agreed.

Vale stands up with an empty BOWL that has a spoon in it.

ICHABOD
(Angry, towards Vale)

You're not going anywhere!

VALE

I've got better things to do than listen to the unHINGED *sturm und drang* pontification of some demented opera villain.

ICHABOD
(Enraged)

GOD DAMN IT! (Beat) Not today Vale! (Pulls handgun from bag and points it at Vale) SIT! DOWN!

VIEW ON Vale

Vale is completely dumbstruck by the fact that a gun is being pointed at them. Fear doesn't even come into their mind. In a halting, almost mechanical manner, Vale sits back down. Ichabod now nods towards Inanna and Tyre who also pull out their guns.

VIEW ON Paola

She looks around the room, seeing the situation for what it is.

WIDE SHOT

Ichabod, Paola, and Hidalgo in frame; the latter two still seated and both worried.

PAOLA

This is insane Ichabod!

ICHABOD

This is LOOOONG overdue!

Paola shakes her head and rises.

PAOLA

You can't intimidate us!

Ichabod bounds forward with his gun now pointed directly at Paola's face.

ICHABOD
(Foaming at the mouth)

I CAN BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF!

Spurred to act, Hidalgo stands up and quickly moves to intercept Ichabod. An alarmed Ichabod then instinctively pulls the trigger after switching his weapon to the old man. Hidalgo is hit in the throat and grabs the wound. Some blood begins to seep out of his hand as he stumbles to the side. He quickly falls to the floor though, out of frame.

FAST CUTTING

Paola, Vale, and George rushing to the fallen Hidalgo.

VIEW ON Ichabod

He's coldly dazed by his own handiwork and breaths in a deep metronomic fashion, watching the off-frame scene on the floor unfold while keeping his gun raised for other possible threats.

PAOLA
(Crying, out of frame)

DAD! DAD! Stay with me dad! Don't move your hand!
Daddy! Stop moving! We need to elevate the wound!

VIEW ON Inanna

She's a little taken aback by the intensity of the event but there's an undertone of vile satisfaction there too.

PAOLA
(Weeping, out of frame)

No... daddy. Please. Stay here. Stay. It's too soon. (Beat) Dad. DAD!

VIEW ON Tyre

He doesn't care about what's happening on the floor. His attention is on the other people not around Hidalgo, his gun sweeping large sections of the room.

PAOLA
(Wailing in anguish, out of frame)

Oh God dad! Oh God! Whyyyyyyy-yyy... whyyyyyy-yy...

VIEW ON Ichabod

He's already accepted the fact that he's a murderer now. The death of Hidalgo is a price he's more than willing to pay. Out of frame, Paola's whimpering can be heard.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVINE VICINITY -- DAY

WIDE SHOT

Wyler, left side of the frame, his back to the camera, standing with poise in the foreground while surveying the vista beyond. Adrian enters the right of the frame; he looks over at Wyler and then down at something immediately in front of them but out of the frame. Although there's still alien biome floating in the air, the WIND has ABATED somewhat.

WIDE SHOT REVEAL ANGLE

Both men are standing in front of a wide steep ravine. The water that once ran through it is long since DRIED UP but the obstacle itself remains impassible, by ordinary means, as far as the eye can see in both directions. Adrian turns to Wyler.

ADRIAN
(W.R.S)

[Are we screwed?]

Wyler turns his head towards Adrian.

WYLER
(Charismatically, W.R.S)

[I didn't bring any towels to throw in. Did you?]

Adrian shakes his head.

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[Good. (Wyler points across the ravine) And in any case, our solution's right over there.]

LONG SHOT

A DEAD TREE on the other side of the ravine. About fifteen feet high. Its bare torturous branches are reminiscent of the curled limbs of dead insects and the tree doesn't appear to correspond to anything natural on Earth.

MEDIUM SHOT

TRACK Wyler and Adrian as they walk along the edge of the ravine cliff, towards the area on their side directly across from the dead tree.

VIEW ON Wyler

He is reaching in his rucksack for something. When he eventually pulls it out we find him holding a small FLYING DRONE. Adrian, off frame, perceives his intent and soon hands Wyler a COILED LENGTH of BLACK MOUNTAINEERING ROPE. Wyler takes this and attaches one end to the drone.

WIDE SHOT

Wyler starts the drone and begins to guide it across the ravine towards the tree.

WYLER
(To Adrian, W.R.S)

[Hold the rope up. Over your head.]

Adrian complies and the drone now moves around the tree, the rope trailing behind it tight enough to bend around the mast of the tree but slack enough to slide around it as the drone moves

back towards Wyler. When it reaches him Wyler unties the drone and then moves with Adrian to a rock outcropping. There Wyler motions for Adrian to hand him the other end of the rope before he gives his counterpart further instructions.

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[Grab the rivet gun and put two triangulated rings in that rock face. One up, one down.]

SLOW ZOOM OUT from VIEW ON Adrian's rucksack

Adrian grabs a portable PNEUMATIC RIVET GUN and plants two widely set apart rivets in the rock while feeding these through the eye tabs of two METAL RINGS. Wyler then similarly feeds the ropes in through the rings themselves and ties them off with two YOSEMITE BOWLINE KNOTS while ensuring there's no slack.

WIDE SHOT

The two lines of rope form an ISOSCELES TRIANGLE in the air. Wyler now tests the down sloping section of rope with his hand. It's as tightly wound as a guitar string. The reason for all this quickly becomes evident when Adrian grabs a pair of WHEELED HANDLEBAR DEVICES from his bag. The two of them are going to zip-line across the ravine.

WYLER
(Jocular, W.R.S)

Go on. You first.

Adrian nods and zip-lines across after taking a deep breath. Then Wyler follows him. The SOUND of these trips is distinctly audible. Both men make it to the other side safely, albeit with Adrian having a mild collision with the tree before subsequently helping prevent this for Wyler. They both end up in good shape though.

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[Hopefully it's still here when we get back.]

The two men continue on their journey.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EMPTY HAB STORAGE ROOM

MEDIUM SHOT

Paola is sitting on the floor, level with the camera and staring directly into it. Her hands are bound with plastic ties and so are her feet. She's covered in blood. She's a broken shell of her former self. Hold shot. She stares without blinking.

WIDE SHOT

Paola, Vale, George, and Yasmin are all tied up here in a similar manner. The basinet is beside Yasmin and she frequently checks on a soundly sleeping Fatima. A long interval of silence as the captives idly wait. There is nothing in the room they could use to free themselves and the door to the room is locked from the outside anyways. Eventually the METALLIC CREAK of a BROAD METAL DOOR is heard and the lighting in the room BRIGHTENS correspondingly.

VIEW ON Broad metal door

Quine is led in with bound wrists by Ichabod and Tyre, both still armed. Ichabod pushes Quine to the floor and then looks over at Tyre. He thinks about asking Tyre to bind Quine's feet but decides it's better not to and does it himself. When he's done he surveys all the captives before speaking to Quine.

ICHABOD
(Mocking Quine)

What did it get you?

QUINE
(Defiant)

They're still coming back.

ICHABOD
(Amused)

They probably died yesterday. Their corpses might even be waiting right outside the dome.

Quine smolders but says nothing.

ICHABOD
(Exultant)

What you don't have Quine is what grows out of
the barrel of these.

Ichabod holds his handgun up to emphasize this point and two
beats follow.

ICHABOD
(Addressing everyone)

All right everyone! Listen up! (Grinning) Guns
weren't the only thing I managed to scavenge
under your noses. Oh! I found quite a few
goodies. But a special one in particular.
(Condescending, after beat) Does anyone here know
what a proximity mine is? I see some of you do.
(Big smile) Wonderful. That means I don't have to
explain what will happen if one of you tries to
go to the surface like little Daedalus here.

INT. WHITE GEODESIC DOME

CLOSE IN

The pillar with the dome entrance button. A BLACK PROXIMITY
MINE with a soft but ominous red light is attached to it. For a
brief moment an invisible lattice of lasers flashes in a grid
pattern warped by the curve of the dome. The view then returns
to what it was previously.

INT. EMPTY HAB STORAGE ROOM

Ichabod preening in front of everyone.

ICHABOD

Ah, what the heck. I'll give you a hint anyways.
It starts with a "Ka" and ends in a "Boom."

Ichabod then raises his eyebrows and grins to express just how
much he's enjoying his newfound power over them.

VALE

(Matter-of-factly to Ichabod)

You're quintessentially a piece of shit.

Ichabod pauses blithely before continuing.

ICHABOD

(Feigning exaggerated sadness, then cheerful)

Anyways. I'm off now to rebuild humanity. Enjoy your complimentary new lodgings.

Ichabod turns around with a smirk and even Tyre betrays a certain satisfaction on his face before he too follows. The doors are shut closed behind them. The HEAVY SOUND of the doors being locked is heard.

MEDIUM SHOT

The captives are mostly glum aside from Paola who's still in shock. Vale looks over at Quine.

VALE
(Flatly)

So?

QUINE
(Repentant)

They let Minh and I stay free for a bit. He might still be. I dunno. But I uh, I was going to try contacting Wyles and Addy. And then I got caught while I was suiting up. Cameras I guess.

VALE
(Begrudgingly)

Well, at least you tried to do something. (Beat)
Belatedly.

The group descends into silence again. George however is looking at Paola with concern on his face and after preparing to speak and then pausing, he finally manages to mumble something out.

GEORGE

There wasn't anything you could do Paola.

Paola shows no sign of hearing what George said.

GEORGE
(Hesitant)

I wish I had the words to... comfort you. If they even exist. And... I'm not good at this stuff. But Paola... we need you. Each of us. Everyone. Fatima too. And Adrian... and Wyler.

Paola stirs faintly.

GEORGE
(Pleading)

I know you Paola. And every day I think... wow. She's amazing. How does she do it? How does she keep us all from falling into despair? Because that's you. And I may not know "how" you do it but I KNOW we need that. Now.

Paola weighs George's words but doesn't turn towards him.

GEORGE
(Softly)

Don't let them win.

Paola clenches her jaw.

PAOLA

They won't.

FADE TO:

EXT. COPPER MOUNTAIN RUINS -- EVENING

Wyler and Adrian arrive at their destination. It's an old MINING TOWN from the 1950s nestled among PETRIFIED CONIFEROUS TREES, revealing moreover that the story in fact takes place on Earth. Among the older buildings though there's also some newer HYPERMODERN STRUCTURES as well. The alien biome however has COVERED everything in thick layers of itself, giving the whole

place an even more surreal and unsettling appearance than ordinary ghost towns.

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[Stay alert. This is a good place to get ambushed.]

ADRIAN
(W.R.S)

[Don't jinx us.]

They continue on in silence for a while.

ADRIAN
(W.R.S)

[You know anything about these new buildings?]

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[When the old orbital colonies started to fail, there was an attempt to recolonize the planet. Obviously it didn't work.]

ADRIAN
(W.R.S)

[How come they didn't link up with the survivors underground?]

WYLER
(W.R.S)

[As far as I know, every Hab gave them the proverbial finger. (Beat) You gotta understand, these were the descendants of those who'd been abandoned. Left to die.]

Adrian nods thoughtfully at this explanation and continues to follow Wyler as they both approach a RED TRAPEZOIDAL WAREHOUSE on the outskirts of town.

WIDE SHOT

Wyler and Adrian in the left foreground of the frame. The warehouse in the near upper right along the horizon.

EXT. TRAPEZOIDAL WAREHOUSE -- EVENING

EXTREME WIDE SHOT

The diminutive figures of Wyler and Adrian approach the building. They pause at a TWIN PANEL DOOR and Wyler jostles a FULL GRIP CYBERNETIC LATCH before successfully twisting it and pulling out the unlocking mechanism. Doing so, a rectangular opening now appears as the doors automatically slide apart. Wyler and Adrian then disappear inside.

INT. TRAPEZOIDAL WAREHOUSE

WIDE SHOT

The warehouse is almost barren, having obviously been ransacked long ago. A few scattered SYNTHETIC CRATES and an assortment of LOOSE DEBRIS is indicative of all that's left. There is one unusual object though, a BEACON of some kind, but Wyler and Adrian don't notice this at first. Instead they search the area frantically, hoping to find any of the items they expected to find. In despair, Adrian eventually falls to his knees.

WYLER
(Somber, W.R.S)

[I'm sorry Adrian. It... was always a possibility.]

ADRIAN
(Desperate, W.R.S)

[We can't go back with nothing.]

Wyler doesn't reply. His body language says he's ready to leave though. Adrian however gets to his feet and starts frantically throwing things around in a rage, tossing them aside like he expects to find the answer to his prayers underneath. Doing so he stumbles closer to the beacon until, at last, he notices it.

WIDE SHOT

Adrian lurching to the beacon and then exploring its surface with his hands.

ADRIAN
(Yelling, W.R.S)

[Hey Wyler! Hey! What's this!?!]

VIEW ON Wyler

Adrian is a TINY REFLECTION in Wyler's mirrored FACE SHIELD. Wyler hesitates but then begins walking towards the camera in the direction of Adrian.

MEDIUM SHOT

Adrian and Wyler standing around the beacon. Adrian now finds a button and, pressing this, causes a rotating HOLOGRAPHIC SYMBOL to appear: it's a modernized ANKH graphic. Along with this, an AUDIO RECORDING starts to play.

PLEASANT FEMALE VOICE
(V.O)

Today is August 14TH 2109. My name's Fumiko. I am a member of Haven City. (Gives coordinates) From a scouting party. We've requisitioned the last of the valuable materials from this place and are unlikely to return. However, since this location is a logical target for others, we decided to leave you this message. Please be advised, our population is stable but we still have room for several hundred others. In fact, we're expanding our facilities in anticipation of future growth. If you are seeking shelter, you will be welcomed among us. Good luck. (Buzzing) Today is August 14TH 2109...

ADRIAN
(Excitedly speaking over the recording, W.R.S)

[That's less than three years ago!]

The two men at first are simply awed but then erupt into pure happiness and embrace with jubilation. Wyler claps Adrian on the shoulder excitedly.

WYLER
(Amped up, W.R.S)

[Let's ghost this ghost town!]

Wyler and Adrian separate as Wyler heads for the door. Adrian follows him a few feet but then stops. Reaching into a FLAP on his suit he pulls out a PEN and PAPER PAD, frantically writing something down. Exactly as he's doing this, Wyler turns around and notices.

WYLER
(Giddily impatient, W.R.S)

[Come on! Hurry up!]

WIDE SHOT

Adrian now rushes to catch up and the two start jogging in tandem through the center of the frame.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY HAB STORAGE ROOM

TIGHT CLOSE IN

The last of the captive's legs being loosed by a hand holding a THIN TRIANGULAR PIECE of SCRAP METAL. The ad hoc blade takes a few seconds to saw through the plastic ties.

MEDIUM SHOT

Vale, holding the blade, crouching at Yasmin's feet.

WIDE SHOT

George, Paola, and Quine included now. Quine is rubbing his wrists. George and Paola are examining the broad metal door. George puts his ear to it. Vale stands up.

VALE
(Quietly)

You hear them?

George nods.

GEORGE
(Also quiet)

They're still out there.

QUINE

(Hopeful and not quite so quiet)

Maybe they're trying to keep Minh from making contact with us?

VALE

(Sarcastic, quieter)

You might be overestimating Minh a bit.

YASMIN

(Whispering to Paola)

So what are we going to do? There's only one way out.

Paola glances directly at each of the other captives.

PAOLA

(Gathering focus)

We need to lure them in. And jump them. (Beat)
Vale, give me the knife.

Vale does so somewhat reluctantly.

PAOLA

(To Vale)

I want you to grab their attention. Okay? Knock on the door. When they come in, you'll be the one they're looking at. I'll be standing on the other side and take the first of them hostage. Ichabod presumably. Hopefully. That way I can negotiate us out of here.

GEORGE

What if it's not Ichabod?

PAOLA

(Returning George's gaze)

Then we need to take them all out. Go for the eyes, the groin. Hit them hard. Don't let them

make any distance between us because then they'll just shoot us down. If it turns into a fight, remember the stakes. They're killers.

The others in the group absorb this with grim acceptance.

PAOLA

The rest of you besides Vale, sit down and act like you're still tied up. Take cover as soon as I make my move though. And don't look in my direction before then. We're only going to get one chance at this.

WIDE SHOT

VIEW ON Broad metal door

Paola gets in position on the right hand side and then gestures for everyone else to do what they're supposed to. Vale crouches by the door, sticks their ear to it, before they rap on it with their knuckles. Then they listen. And frown. Now they bang on it with the bottom of their fist. Again, their ear is to the door but this time they hear something.

VALE
(Whispering)

Someone's coming!

A moment passes as Vale carefully moves to the left side of the door. After the SOUND of the door being unlocked is heard, it opens inward and to the right, aiding Paola's ambush. Ichabod enters as hoped for and when he sees Vale unbound he reaches for his gun. Paola however intercepts him with the blade, getting it pressed up against his throat. Tyre in the background is surprised but he still manages to get his gun out. However Paola is now behind a half-petrified Ichabod and positions him to shield her while also shouting at him.

PAOLA
(Yelling)

HAND OVER THE GUN! HAND IT OVER!

Instead, Ichabod drops the gun and kicks it to Tyre who steps on it, holding it in place with his foot.

ICHABOD
(Angry but nervous)

This isn't going to work!

PAOLA
(Authoritative)

Shut up! (To Tyre) Drop the gun Tyre!

Tyre continues pointing the gun in her and Ichabod's direction. The other members of the captive group meanwhile are pressed against the wall on the left side of the door, out of Tyre's line of sight.

TYRE
(Dismissively to Paola)

I'd rather shoot him.

Paola growls in frustration as she manhandles Ichabod from behind, all while keeping her blade pressed against his neck.

PAOLA
(To Ichabod, leaning in)

Tell him to stand back. I'll slit your throat you snake, I swear I will.

Ichabod is frozen for a moment before he calls out to Tyre.

ICHABOD
(With a lump in his throat)

She will. She will. Stand back.

Weighing his options, Tyre decides to slowly step back but HEEL KICKS the gun on the ground backwards first before doing so. Paola meanwhile pushes Ichabod just outside the door.

PAOLA
(To those inside)

Come on! (Beat) All of you!

Filing out with Yasmin in the middle of the pack carrying Fatima, the previously captive group disappears off frame. Paola stands, staring at Tyre for a moment when Ichabod makes a move. He hits her with an elbow but it's inadequate. Paola then stabs him in the back, just above the kidneys and pushes him into Tyre. She now runs in the direction which her comrades left and disappears along with them. It takes a second or two for Tyre to recover but he does and starts shooting in the direction of his fleeing adversaries. The LOUD BANGS resound against the walls of the predominantly METALLIC CORRIDOR.

VALE
(Out of frame)

GEORGE!

CUT TO:

EXT. RAVINE VICINITY -- DAY

WIDE SHOT

Wyler and Adrian hurriedly near the location of the dead tree. The tree is in the background of the frame and Wyler and Adrian are in single file. A certain amount of tiredness is evident, indicating that they're been pushing themselves to reach Habitat 3 as soon as possible. It's at this point though that Adrian looks behind him, off to the left behind the camera, and sees something that frightens him. He pulls on Wyler's arm who, after some initial confusion, follows Adrian's lead in crouching. They gaze anxiously in the direction of the danger.

WIDE SHOT

An entire herd of infected ruminants, like the one previously seen earlier, are converging on the area. They are quiet except for the eerie SHAMBLING NOISES they make, their bodies swaying and lurching with disjointed movements. Still, they seem attracted by something, however obliviously, leading them to the position of the two men. Also some of the creatures have ANTLERS protruding from their misshapen heads and now it becomes clear that the creatures in question are DEER infected with the alien biome.

MEDIUM SHOT

Wyler and Adrian huddled together.

ADRIAN
(Worried and whispering, W.R.S)

[We can't outrun them.]

WYLER
(Grim and whispering, W.S.R)

[And we can't fight them.]

ADRIAN
(Whispering, W.S.R)

[So?]

WYLER
(Tense and whispering, W.S.R)

[Give me a second.]

MEDIUM SHOT

A cluster of the creatures advancing. DETAILS of the alien biome sprouting from their distorted bodies. The mammalian flesh is falling apart, split by the parasitic fungus that now inhabits it. As a result, one of the creatures stumbles into another. A ripple of zombified excitement spreads. The baying, drooling creatures become violent. Finally one begins to jerkily gallop and fully crashes into its closest neighbor. The bulbous hunch on a third creature reacts to this by shooting out a huge TENDRIL that coils the offending creature in a flash. The creature attacked by this mindless automated defense is wrapped in a vice grip and then squeezed like an orange, the pus-colored BODILY FLUIDS inside it flowing out in a great splash and the husk of its flesh disintegrating. Similar tendrils of varying sizes emerge from the other creatures, even from the pieces of the one just destroyed, and they all stretch out at length, spasming in a terrifying spectacle that seems to have at its roots in some insatiable cosmic hunger.

CLOSE IN

The reflection in Wyler's helmet, highlighting how close the creatures are.

EXTREME CLOSE IN

Adrian's trembling hand as he tries to resist the fear. Then the trembling stops.

MEDIUM SHOT

Wyler and Adrian.

ADRIAN
(Whispering, W.R.S)

[Nah. I've got it.]

Wyler tilts his head towards Adrian and watches as the latter very slowly, very carefully, slips off his rucksack. Then he opens it and painstakingly removes their FLYING DRONE.

CLOSE IN

The reflection in Wyler's helmet again. The creatures are getting closer.

MEDIUM SHOT

Adrian slowly places the drone down and then tugs on Wyler's arm. They creep a few feet away, into the center background of the frame.

CLOSE IN

The drone starts up, its ROTORS spinning with a slight WHINE.

EXTREME WIDE SHOT

The creatures are attracted to the drone's NOISE off frame. Then the drone flying past them in the foreground. In response, the creatures trample forward ravenously. The bulges in their flesh burst apart and swarms of TINY PRICKLY FUNGAL SPORES are launched after the drone with astonishing speed, almost like volleys of miniature arrows. The fearsome scale of the mindless assault is incredible. The herd begins to chase after the drone in a large chaotic wake.

WIDE SHOT

Wyler and Adrian watching as the swarm disappears. Then they make haste towards the tree and home. The shot ends with the

camera tracking Wyler along the zip line to the halfway point.
The NOISE of the zip line featuring prominently.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. HAB MAINTENANCE TUNNELS

A flash light, held by Paola, is turned on, revealing herself, Quine, Yasmin, and Vale (Who's also carrying Fatima) They are all huddled together in a crowded space, their attention frequently indicating a state of wariness and alertness.

YASMIN
(Whispering)

They seemed to give up looking for us last night.
Maybe we can sneak through the core section and
hide in one of the abandoned annexes?

Paola shakes her head sympathetically.

PAOLA
(Whispering)

No. There's cameras at every major juncture.
Besides, nothing about Ichabod suggests to me
he's going to let us lay low. He's in it for
vengeance now.

VALE
(Angry, whispering)

He was a monster all along. We just didn't know.

Paola holds her hand up as if to dismiss this kind of talk.

PAOLA
(Whispering)

What we need right now is a course of action.

QUINE
(Whispering)

We should go to my workshop. Fuzz could be a lot
of help.

PAOLA
(Whispering)

Good idea. But you go there first. Vale and I will try and find some things we can use as weapons. Then we'll meet you there.

YASMIN
(Whispering)

What about me?

PAOLA
(Whispering)

You and the baby need to stay somewhere safe. That room we passed in the last tunnel should be good.

YASMIN
(Whispering)

Okay Paola. I wish I could be more help.

Paola puts her hands on either side of Yasmin's face with emphatic tenderness.

PAOLA
(Whispering)

All you need to do is make sure nothing happens to you or your child. That's your job.

Yasmin nods and the group indulges in a series of HUGS between all the parties that are separating. Then they go their separate ways.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINE'S WORKSHOP

PAN WIDE

Everything seems quiet. The slow camera movement eventually reveals Fuzz in frame. The android stands there motionless and it's unclear if it's powered on.

VIEW ON Entrance to workshop

Quine, hunched, peeks around the open entrance before quietly slipping inside. He begins sneaking through his workshop.

VIEW ON Fuzz

The android abruptly comes to life.

FUZZ
(Loudly, I.R.V)

[[Maestro! This unit is glad to see you not undergoing a state of decomposition.]]

Quine gestures for Fuzz to lower their voice.

QUINE
(Shushing Fuzz)

Shhhhhh. Keep it down, okay?

FUZZ
(Loud comical whispering, I.R.V)

[[Question. What is the nature of the acoustic oppression? Please reply.]]

Wincing, Quine ignores a verbal error on Fuzz's part that he'd normally take the time to correct.

QUINE
(Emphatic whispering)

Ick, Tyre, and Anna are... are now an opposing team. You know, like our game theory programs.

FUZZ
(Still whispering loudly, I.R.V)

[[Response acknowledged. Thank you Maestro. Analyzing... (Beat) Information... superseded. Input data is obsolete.]]

QUINE
(Confused)

What? Why??

FUZZ
(Not whispering, I.R.V)

[[A member of the opposing team set is aware of our location.]]

QUINE
(Worried)

How!?

FUZZ
(I.R.V)

[[Thank you for participating in this dialogue. As an artificial, algorithmic learning entity, conversation is an invaluable part of my cognitive development...]]

QUINE
(Frantic)

Fuzz! Answer me!

FUZZ
(I.R.V)

[[Human person Ichabod is observing us from across the room.]]

VIEW ON Other side of the room

Ichabod is sitting on a small SYNTHETIC CRATE with his gun in his lap. The bulge of a large COMPRESSION BANDAGE encircling his waist and lower torso can be discerned. His stare is a mixture of wrath and triumph.

ICHABOD
(Venomous)

That's the thing about the average person. They always drink from the same well. And they forget that that's where their enemies will be waiting for them.

QUINE
(Startled)

Ick! It's not too late to...

Quine's plea is interrupted by a bullet ricocheting off the wall a few feet from his head. Quine runs and takes cover behind the impassive body of Fuzz.

VIEW ON Ichabod.

He walks deliberately towards Quine, firing a few more shots.

ICHABOD
(Maniacal)

Your knight in drab armor! Worth a boy scout badge maybe! But not much more than that!

Ichabod fires again.

VIEW ON Quine

QUINE
(Afraid)

ICK!

A couple bullets ricochet off Fuzz.

VIEW ON Ichabod

Holding his gun with both hands now, he's still walking towards Quine. Shooting but now more careful in looking for an opening.

ICHABOD
(With distaste)

I hate being called Ick!

WIDE SHOT

Both Ichabod and Quine in frame. Ichabod pauses, annoyed that Quine is making this difficult for him.

ICHABOD

Why couldn't you be more like Minh? (Laughs and then speaks in a tickled comic tone) He offed HIS OWN self.

QUINE
(Incredulous)

I don't believe it. You killed him, didn't you?

CUT TO:

INT. HAB KITCHEN

MEDIUM SHOT

Camera level with the floor. Minh's head and face in the extreme foreground while his dead body lies motionless. Hold shot as a suicide recording plays nearby.

MINH
(V.O, lo-fi)

What happened to us? I mean, yeah, this is it. This is the end of humanity. But... why'd we have to go and make it so ugly? (Laughs darkly) It's like some stray dogs fighting over the inedible scraps of a rotting civilization. We could've just enjoyed the time we had left. "Shuffled off" in a pleasant manner. Unnhhhh. I don't get it. I guess that's why things went this way in the first place though. We can't help it. The extraterrestrial apocalypse... that was just the instrument of our euthanasia. You know, all I wanted was to be a chef. Cook. Be creative. That's it. And I could almost put up with the meaninglessness which our lives had become but... not if we're going to go at each other's throats. I've... I've had enough. I'm out.

Continue to hold shot on Minh's body.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINE'S WORKSHOP

MEDIUM SHOT

Ichabod smirking.

ICHABOD
(Serenely evil)

Believe what you want. If it makes you feel any better, I AM going to kill you though.

WIDE SHOT

Ichabod approaches Fuzz, trying to get a clean angle on Quine with his gun. Quine countermoves like someone standing behind a tree, trying to avoid someone else in a game of tag. He quickly decides on an alternative gambit however.

QUINE
(Barking)

Fuzz! HUG Ick!

Before Ichabod can react, Fuzz clinches him in two huge android arms and squeezes the man, lifting him off the ground.

MEDIUM CLOSE

The traumatic nature of the hug is clear. Ichabod's body is being crushed. The SOUND of his bones breaking is sickening. But as quickly as the hug began, Fuzz let's his victim go. Ichabod's body falls limply to the floor with a THUD.

VIEW ON FUZZ

The android turns around to face the camera and Quine, undisturbed by its unintended lethality.

FUZZ
(I.R.V)

[[My physical affection parameters may require re-adjustment.]]

CUT TO:

INT. HAB HALLWAYS

LONG SHOT

TRACK backwards as Paola and Vale run forwards in the near middle ground. Hold tracking as Paola and Vale turn into a room off frame. Tracking continues as Inanna and Tyre run into view, turning from off frame in the background. They continue forward in haste but the view quickly shifts.

INT. COMMUNAL SHOWERS

WIDE SHOT

The large open space has a long bench running parallel down the middle. On either side, individual alcoves wait in rows and these each have OPAQUE SHOWER CURTAINS. It looks like the sort of facility that a military barracks would have except it's not maintained with the same degree of fastidiousness.

PAN SLOWLY

The camera moves past a row of alcoves, parallel but diagonal. No evidence of anything out of the ordinary.

INT. HAB HALLWAYS

Following Tyre and Inanna from behind. Both are moving cautiously with their guns out, Tyre slightly ahead. He looks in when they pass by the communal showers but only briefly and continues on. Inanna does too however, and lingers, before taking a few steps ahead and whispering for Tyre's attention.

VIEW ON Inanna

INANNA
(Smiling wickedly, hushed)

Psst. Tyre. You need to see this. Tyre! You NEED to see this. (Beat) TYRE! You NEEEEEEED to SEE this.

VIEW ON Tyre

He stops and turns around.

MEDIUM SHOT

Inanna creeps back to the entrance of the showers, beckoning in an odd sultry manner, as Tyre follows in tow. Then, without saying a word, she points at something inside.

INT. COMMUNAL SHOWERS

SLOW ZOOM On boot

In one of the far stalls, just barely visible, one of Vale's BOOTS can be seen underneath the hemline of the shower curtain.

INT. HAB HALLWAYS

VIEW ON Inanna and Tyre

Tyre smiles at Inanna and they head inside.

INT. COMMUNAL SHOWERS

Tyre and Inanna walk in carefully, double checking to make sure there's no possibility of being ambushed, and then relax when they realize they have nothing to worry about.

TYRE
(Loudly)

Guess hide and seek isn't your game!

For a moment Paola and Vale do not move or speak, desperately hoping that Tyre is just trying to flush them out with a ruse.

INANNA
(Bullying)

Knock it off. I can see those hideous boots you like Vale!

MEDIUM SHOT

Realizing that they're caught, Paola and Vale now slowly emerge. The look of grim fear is in their eyes.

MEDIUM SHOT

Inanna enjoying a moment of satisfaction. She dangles her gun in a flamboyant manner. Then she looks over at Tyre.

INANNA
(Perversely thrilled)

It's perfect. We shoot 'em and there's already drains. Easy clean.

TYRE
(Flatly disagreeing)

We're not gonna kill them just yet.

Inanna is mortally offended by this surprising and casual rebuke. Especially because it's so casual. Her attention shifts entirely now to Tyre as she unleashes her anger.

INANNA
(Shrewish)

Oh, so you'rrrrre giving the orders? Mis-ter Sulks-by-himself who didn't do squat until Icky and me? And... who let them escape... in the first place. Lis-en!

VIEW ON Paola and Vale only

They watch the conflict unfolding with anxious interest.

INANNA
(Increasingly obnoxious)

You might think you automatically get to be the boss because I'm younger or whatever but that's not the way it is. Okay? You need to wipe yourself off a minute. Yeah! Because I ain't! That girl!

MEDIUM SHOT

Inanna and Tyre standing only a few feet apart. Both have their backs more or less to the camera but Inanna is slightly turned towards her counterpart as she continues to berate him. In the far unfocused background, Paola and Vale watch.

INANNA
(Neck swerving)

That's right! Big man! Big! Dumb! Ugly...

Having had enough, Tyre shoots Inanna twice in the chest. The pistol is held close to his breast with his far hand so it's

obscured but the loud BANGS and MUZZLE FLASH convey what happens. Likewise, Inanna drops to the floor. Paola and Vale flinch in the distance but do not otherwise move. Ichabod then pauses a moment to look down at Inanna off frame on the ground before deciding to put a couple more bullets in her. This is performed perfunctorily, without even any display of anger or gratification. Then he looks at Paola and Vale.

WIDE SHOT

The three of them saying nothing. It's completely unclear what's going to occur next and every second adds to the tension. AMBIENT SOUND EFFECTS fill the void.

MEDIUM SHOT

Tyre looking past the camera at Paola and Vale.

TYRE

(Not fully conscious of his temerity)

I'm thinking I should go my own way now. Head to a dead hab. (Beat) Let's talk amnesty.

VIEW ON Paola

PAOLA

(Honesty overcoming her better judgement)

I... I still owe you for George.

TYRE

(Philosophical)

Well... (Points gun at Vale) How about I spare Vale's life and we'll call it even?

A pause. Paola realizes she's dealing with a psychopath and speaks accordingly.

PAOLA

(Torn yet acquiescent)

Fine.

TYRE

(Nodding)

Good talk.

Tyre turns and takes a couple steps away, then looks back, eying Paola and Vale detachedly, before making his exit.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HAB MESS HALL

EXTREME WIDE SHOT

All the survivors together, exhausted by their ordeal. Fuzz is present as well. There's no great urge for conversation but Paola, sitting near Vale, Yasmin, and Fatima, is struggling with her conscience.

PAOLA
(Somber)

I didn't see the poison until it was too late.
(Shaking her head before gesturing listlessly)
And now this.

YASMIN
(Reassuring)

The losses are hard.. but the battle goes on.

Paola nods at this and, despite the deaths of her father and her good friend George, the ones who are still with her offer just enough to go on. In fact, there's a thin ether of gratitude between everyone right now for being able to be together for the moment without any immediate jeopardy encroaching on them. Hold shot.

WIDE SHOT

Fuzz standing at attention in the far right of the frame. The android notices Fatima though in her basinet and their mechanical curiosity is piqued. The android addresses her.

FUZZ
(I.R.V)

[[Human baby. Question. What is your preferred designation? (Beat) Please reply.]]

This question elicits a few tired chuckles from the group.

VIEW ON Quine

With the sliver of a smile, he decides to explain.

QUINE
(Speaking as if to a precocious child)

Fuzz. She lacks the "programming" to respond.

VIEW ON Fuzz

Fuzz performs a calculation and then speaks to Fatima again.

FUZZ
(I.R.V)

[[Human baby. Apologies. A mute existence is an
equally valid form of life.]]

VIEW ON Paola

She nods to Vale, concurring with faint warmth.

CUT TO:

EXT. SURFACE -- AFTERNOON

WIDE SHOT

Wyler and Adrian press on, delirious from pushing themselves so hard. Their bodily movements suggest that they are sore and hyperventilating. A muscular ELECTRONICA INSTRUMENTAL begins to play. The two men are fighting for every second. They are so close to making it home.

EXT. VICINITY OF HAB DOME

LONG SHOT

Their destination in view, the two men are nearly running now. They are incomprehensibly eager to share their good news. Electronica instrumental continues.

INT. HAB DOME

WIDE SHOT

It's empty except for the proximity mine that's CONSPICUOUSLY in view in the near middle ground. The electronica instrumental meanwhile hasn't stopped. Due to the actions of the men outside the dome, the entrance starts to peel open. Wyler and Adrian appear at the entrance in the deep background and start to come into the foreground. Time slows. As they near the proximity mine, it explodes silently. The flash of this expands to blot out everything else in the frame.

FADE WHITE:

INT. HAB RECREATION CENTER

WIDE SHOT

The group of survivors is relaxing together. Most of the décor is strictly utilitarian but there's some prints of FAMOUS works of art, a TABLE TENNIS corner, some FREE WEIGHTS and exercise EQUIPMENT, and a large flat screen TELEVISION against one of the walls. Quine is sitting near this watching a movie: Steven Soderberg's SOLARIS.

MEDIUM SHOT

Vale is sitting at a COMPUTER TERMINAL with their back to it. Instead they're momentarily distracted by the movie.

CLOSE IN

On one of the terminal's monitors a small POP UP WIDGET is flashing red. The border area of the widget reads: Outer Doors, and the flashing inner area is a blinking: Doors Open. Doors Open. Doors Open. Over and over. So the warning continues but goes unnoticed for the moment.

MEDIUM SHOT

Vale's distraction ends and they turn back towards the camera and, incidentally, the monitor with the flashing widget. Once it catches their attention though, their face rapidly goes from curiosity to horror. Their eyes bulging, they scream.

VALE
(Leaping up)

NOOOO!!!

WIDE SHOT

Everyone looking in Vale's direction. Vale starts running while simultaneously turning to them and shouting.

VALE
(Anguished)

WYLER AND ADRIAN!

The group is puzzled by this as Vale exits sprinting. It sounds like good news. Until Paola remembers also and rushes after Vale, crying out when she's halfway across the room.

PAOLA
(Screaming)

THE BOMB!

Now reminded, everyone rushes after the other two in a panic. In fact though, Fatima is left behind but all that's shown of this on frame is the basinet sitting where it was left.

CUT TO:

INT. INDUSTRIAL ELEVATOR

Everyone suited up in HAZMAT GEAR but therefore almost visually indistinguishable except for HEIGHT. However, something of each of their personalities is evident as they wait together while the elevator ascends upwards. Stress their impatience and frustration. No speech. Instead, a sorrowful ANGELIC MUSIC pervades the moment. Long take.

WIDE SHOT

TRANSITION TO INT. HAB DOME

The group still in the elevator but instead of them facing the camera, their backs are to it as they face the doors. And their wait isn't over. The music continues as the doors finally open and the group rushes past them. Now the sorrowful angelic music swells louder as the rescuers near the lifeless bodies of Wyler and Adrian in the background.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HAB MORGUE

WIDE SHOT

OVERHEAD. 35 DEGREE ANGLE

Although recognizably a section of The Hab, the startlingly WHITE monochrome environment provides a STRONG CONTRAST to the earlier darker visual palette of the subterranean parts of the film. Here we find the bodies of Wyler and Adrian, each on its own BRUTALIST SLAB TABLE and each covered in a PLASTIC SHROUD. Beside these corpses, Paola and Yasmin are seated in close proximity to their individual spouses.

MEDIUM SHOT

Paola reaches under the shroud to hold Wyler's cold pale hand.

PAOLA
(Whispering, sorrowful)

I'm dying soon. I won't be long.

She rubs the hand of the corpse, the look in her eyes staring past everything in sight.

WIDE SHOT

Quine arrives through an open entrance. He approaches tentatively, a SATCHEL slung over his shoulder and two TALL CUPS in his hands. When he nears the two grieving widows he pauses before speaking in his softest voice.

QUINE

Do... either of you want coffee?

Yasmin looks at him. Her eyes red from crying.

YASMIN
(Gentle and wounded)

No. Thank you.

Quine nods, full of sympathy, before he looks in Paola's direction.

QUINE

Paola?

Paola closes her eyes as a pang of emotion floods her.

PAOLA
(Heart aching)

No.

VIEW ON Quine

He stands there unsure, holding both cups in a symmetrical fashion. Eventually he turns and puts them on a large COUNTER where a few assorted SUPPLIES are stored.

MEDIUM SHOT

Quine draws nearer to Paola. He has some habitat business he feels he should discuss with her despite her condition.

QUINE
(Soft and hesitant)

Um. The last notes on Ichabod's tablet show that, ah, he wanted to begin bioengineering trials.. for manufacturing new human colonists. (Beat) He was completely delusional at the end. (Beat) I have them here if you want to..

Quine, seeing that Paola is completely preoccupied in her grief, trails off and stops talking. He stands there for a moment, awkwardly, before turning to Yasmin. He sheepishly slinks over to her.

QUINE
(Even more hesitant)

Hey Yasmin. Uh. Speaking of personal effects... these are yours.

Quine reaches in his satchel and pulls out Adrian's SHRAPNEL DAMAGED NOTEBOOK.

YASMIN
(Sadly)

Adrian's?

QUINE
(Apologetic)

Yeah. I found them when I... removed his suit.
(Beat) Here.

Yasmin accepts the notebook with two hands. Quine looks at her briefly before leaving. He disappears from the frame. Yasmin is alone with the notebook.

MEDIUM SHOT

Yasmin looks at both sides of the damaged notebook before opening it and examining its contents.

CLOSE IN

Her hands slowly turning each page. Finally she stops on one. There the following is written: HAVEN CITY! (Coordinates) HOPE!
Hold shot.

MEDIUM SHOT

Yasmin, her head down, is staring at the notebook. OUTRO MUSIC begins to play in the background. Then, suddenly, a LAUGH full of sadness and appreciation escapes from her lips.

MEDIUM SHOT

Paola raising her head from the invisible darkness and looking in Yasmin's direction.

PAOLA
(Speaking over outro music)

What?

CLOSE IN

Yasmin's face rising. The tears of pain in her eyes transmuting into tears of gratitude. She smiles. It's a smile as pure as anything. Delicately freeze shot.

CUT TO BLACK:

Roll CLOSING CREDITS as the outro music CONTINUES.

THE END



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